Vale

Charles 'Kevin' McCoy

2nd February 1950 - 8th November 2025

Dad was born on Norfolk Island to Ena Christian and Philip McCoy at Bishops Court on the 2nd of February 1950, he was Ena's first child and Philly's sixth after Florence, Celeste, Vivienne, Rodney, and Philip. Dad's sister Nita arrived a year later. Ena and Philly then separated, and Ena moved the little family to New Zealand. She was in her early 20s, raising two young children under five on her own, which was no easy task in the fifties. Sadly, for a short time, Dad and Nita went into foster care. Dad was fortunate to be placed in a kind family, but Nita wasn't so lucky and Dad, even as a boy, worried about her and would walk to where she was living so that he could walk with her to school, making himself late to every day. His caring spirit was clear from an early age. Eventually, the family came together again, and Ena married Tom Jope, and Dad gained a little brother, Terry. Meanwhile on Norfolk, Philly also remarried and Dad gained another brother, Robbie.

As a young boy Dad started working on the family dairy farm rising early to milk cows and working late in the evening. When his Mums marriage to Tom broke down and they left the farm he started a milk run and lawn mowing, and by 15 he'd left school to begin an apprenticeship as a carpenter in Tauranga and by 19 he was running the sites. It was the start of a long and proud career where he built around 40 houses, many on his own with little outside help. He was also a talented furniture maker and loved restoring old cars, including the Model A now owned by the museum. He also fully restored an Essex, and a Pontiac and was working on getting the Morris Minor Roadster back on the road when he became ill. I still remember him towing the old Model A home to Burglars Lane from Rocky Point, Mum was following behind watching Dad who was completely unaware that rats were bailing out of it all the way down the road!

In 1969, Dad met a cute young nursing student named Noeline. They married on the 10th of March 1970, 55 years ago this year. Toni came along first, followed by twins Jase and Miles 18 months later, and then Kally. Dad worked tirelessly to provide for us. In 1979, we moved back to Norfolk, where Dad reconnected with his island home and large family. Dad was humble, generous, and deeply loving. He would do anything for his family. In 2000 he became a proud grandfather — first to Sonny, then to Zack, Tom, Scarlett, Cassie, George, and Lachie.

As many of you know, in 2008 our brother Woody, or Miles, passed away suddenly in his sleep. It devastated our family and changed our lives forever. Dad stayed strong for all of us — stoic despite his broken heart — and we were so grateful for the next generation of grandchildren who helped bring joy back into his world.

Dad was a strong man, strong in body, spirit, and yes, opinions, but soft as putty with the grandkids. He could also be hard on himself, always striving for perfection. He held himself and us to high standards, but he was always there when we stumbled, our biggest supporter and the one we could always call. Whether it was a car breakdown or a broken heart, Dad could fix almost anything.

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In March 2023, Dad suffered a severe brain bleed and was never quite the same. Mum spent many weeks by his side in Brisbane and Sydney, not knowing what the outcome would be. Though he made it home to Norfolk, his brain injury led to dementia, and over time he needed more care. When it became too much to manage at home, he moved to Daa Randa, where the hospital staff took wonderful care of him over the past year. Those were difficult times for us, but Dad's charm still shone through. The stories of his dementia adventures still make us smile — like when he sat by the hospital roundabout waving to every passing car, walked to Foodies or when he hitched a lift "home" with Artie who didn't realise he was meant to be at the hospital… luckily, Dad couldn't remember where home was. Or the time when him and Mum went to meet the plane and he wandered through security after going to the bathroom and went left through screening into the departure lounge instead of back to where Mum and Jase were looking for him and wondering "where's et?" And of course, the day Mum's car disappeared from P&R when she had popped in for groceries — only for Karina to find Dad happily driving down the road oblivious.

We're so grateful to the hospital staff and our beautiful Norfolk community, who cared for and protected him. Only on Norfolk could he have been so loved and looked after. Dad loved his mother Ena and sister Nita deeply, and in his dementia, he often believed they were still with him, chatting to them as if they were in the next room. In a way, it was a strange blessing that softened the pain of their loss.

As I mentioned before Dad was a skilled builder. His cousin Jenny D told Kal she recently looked up at the high beams in their house that Dad built and wondered, "How on earth did you do that, Kev?" He also built a beautiful suite of baby furniture from Norfolk pine for his first grandson Sonny, a cradle, highchair, cot, and change table that has now been used by at least fifteen other babies over the last 25 years.

Dad was a wonderful Grandad. The kids remember his lolly jar, his biscuits, and his horsey rides — complete with "This is the way the ladies ride" and wild bucking at the end. He loved a good laugh, a bit of banter, and his famous "Dad-isms": "On we go", "Eat your vegies, they'll put hair on your chest." (A bit off-putting for us girls!), "You're a gentleman and a scholar", "You're as handy as a closet", "Be good, and if you can't be good, be careful" and of course, "Play the game." He loved to travel too, and his trips with Mum to Papamoa in their self-converted campervan were among the highlights of his retirement.

We love you, Dad, and we'll miss you so much, your smile, your laugh, and your steady presence in our lives. Rest easy now. Your hard work is done. Say hi to Woody for us. We'll meet you on that beautiful shore…bye and bye.

Sonnys tribute

I don't know all the facts of Grandads past, but I know it was not an easy life so I'm going to speak on the Grandad I knew. Grandad was a hardworking man; he had the brains and the brawn all in one. He had the patience to sit and draw designs, the brains to bring those plans to life and the brawn to build it himself.

I've loved all his houses I've stayed in and each time he would sell I'd be confused and upset why on earth he would want to leave after spending all this time on it. Then he'd start to build another one, and all the furniture to go with. Slowly as I'd tag along with him, I started to understand. He wasn't just building for the sake of making a profit and moving on, he built for us, his family. He built houses, that Grandma would turn into homes for the family to live in.

As the family grew older, he built homes for their families. He built the house Uncle Woody lived in, that Zack and I would spend our weekends at building tree huts in the valley. He built one just up the driveway, where Zack and I would throw the ball for Hilli until WE were tired and build our new Lego after a toy shop run. Further up the same driveway we had the big family home with a tree house under the avo tree. Where Great Grandma gave my stepdad Mat a true welcome to the family.

When we moved to Cairns, Grandma and Grandad came right on up to help Mum and Kal with the new additions Tom and Scarlett. We had a big family wedding for Kal and Ric. They'd host birthday parties, sneak me ice cream and always keep the lolly jar full, no matter how hard I tried to empty it. When Mum and Mat eloped to Fiji, they showed up unannounced to show their love and support.

Back on Norfolk years later, by this time there were even more little grandkids running around. He built another house for Kal and Ric. Where they raised Scarlett and George and hosted big family dinners on the back randa. Uncle Jase lives in their old house down in the valley where I found a disliking for mustard for the first time as a young kid when they lived there and where Cass and Lock spent their early years growing up. Cutters Corn was home base for what felt like a lifetime to me. That house saw many memories, from the whole extended family sitting around playing zilch, to us all sending Hilli flying down the valley after a tennis ball, to Grandads dodgy bets involving me eating a pile of mustard covered taties in order to see him eat his hat. Well Karina got him out of that one by baking him a hat shaped cake, which he then happily ate.

He would sit all us grandkids on his knee and sing his song of cowboys and Indians until he'd buck us off. We'd all give him cheek about supporting the Raiders. We took the Morry for its first test drive down the road after all his work on it.

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The car ran great…until the floor fell out, and us almost with it. He even built two elaborate dolls houses for his granddaughters, Cassie and Scarlett.

I thought Cutters Corn would be the last, but he wanted one more so he built his last one, Grandma made it a home one last time and he could finally rest. By rest I mean work all the gardens, tend to the land, continue to draw plans, shout me tatie top pies if I helped, give me and all my friends lifts in the school holidays, and looking after all my cousins, and trust me I was the easy one! All the family dinners and gatherings on the randa. And Poor Hilli finally had a forced retirement from the ball throwing. He'd pile all my cousins in the back of his truck, and you'd hear them screaming go faster grandad the lions are catching up as he'd go up and down the off-road driveway.

Every house he built tells his story more than my words can, they always had a beautiful garden, the chooks always got a 5-star hotel, he always had big, covered verandas to park up on and a big timber dinner table to fit his family around for Wednesday night family dinners. Now some houses have different families in them, making their own memories and I know that would bring him joy in itself. I only wish I'd had more time to learn, and maybe he could've hung around long enough to help me with my own one day, but such is life. As Grandad would say… "Play the game". Well, you played it well Grandad, we don't get to pick how it ends unfortunately, but you left behind a family prepared for life ahead, a family that will look after each other, and a family with hearts and minds full of memories. You were compassionate, generous, smart and loving. But most importantly you really were "handy as a closet". I love you and I'm going to miss you thanks for the memories.

Kallys tribute

I wanted to say a few words in honour of my Grandma Ena "Ette" Wood, nee Christian, whose ashes we are burying with Dad. She passed away in 2017. This is the last verse from her poem "Norfolk Island" and means a lot to our family:

En I Praey, when ar breeze blow myse soul out t sea, Let I sleep "daun a taun", dere gen all myse faem'ly, aide em pine gen ar sea carst de shaed right crorse me, En fe awa I yaa dem suff breken. You see

Dars myse Heawen

This is a dedication Grandma had to her mother Ma Ette at the start of her poetry books; I've done a little alteration so that I can dedicate it to Dad.

A special tribute to one who's gone away
Thinking of you dear with love
On this, a special day.
We never did appreciate
the best, until it was too late,
You were not only Dad, but mate.
You taught faith, said 'love, don't hate'
One thing you said, I think of most
When things go wrong, I mind it
'If God a doorway has to close
His light will shine through a window
And if we seek, we find it."

We love you Dad and will miss you forever. Thanks for us.

Thank you

Noeline and family wish to sincerely thank the following people:

The amazing hospital staff for their care and kindness.

Everyone who helped with the funeral, including Shane, David, the Gravediggers, Vince, the Coffin Makers, Ushers, the Police, and Wayne and the Paradise Hotel for the vehicles.

Toni at Photopress for the beautiful service sheets.

Special thanks to Hen, and to everyone who provided the sweet wetls.

To the talented wreath makers — your arrangements were truly beautiful — and to Sam for the stunning floral tributes.

To Trent Christian for providing the sound system and sharing his voice.

To all others who may have been unintentionally omitted, please know that your support has meant so much.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to our wonderful community for your love, care, and compassion.
