



Stephen Roy Nobbs

Affectionately known as 'Snobbles'

27 November 1957 - 18th August 2018

Stephen Roy Nobbs was born in Auckland, to Roy Ffrench and Maisie Joy Nobbs on 27 November 1957. He was the eldest of seven and he was followed by Joy, Debra, Michael, Darren, Gaelene and Michelle.

Roy and a number of Norfolk Islanders, including brothers Short and Alec, Ernie Christian, Turk, Wiggy, Plute and others went to seek work in New Zealand around 1952.

Roy and Maisie bought their family home to Norfolk in October 1965, at least the first five of them, when Steve was almost 8 years old. They moved in to 'Cobby's', the old Robinson family home at Rocky Point, and he slept out on the verandah. Steve recalled that his Mum cried a lot in those first few years, having become used to all sorts of mod cons in N.Z., ...like "electricity". She found her new home had no electricity (just a generator), kerosene fridge and lamps, and a Vacolight iron (which you had to light), and no running water...this had to be hauled out of the well in a 44-gallon drum.

This was where Steve first learned to drive, using the old Willies Jeep to draw water, no mean feat when you're 8 years old and your legs aren't quite long enough, so you have to sort of stand up and drive! He mastered it but unfortunately Joy never quite did, but she did create a nice new gateway through the hedge, which is still used as the entry to 'Cobbys'. It was 2 years until they moved across the paddock to the new family home, which wasn't yet finished.

Some might say that Steves' younger years on Norfolk were quite tough, and there's no argument that he had to work hard for a young boy, plus try to keep his brothers and sisters in toe or he might ketch-it, and there weren't too many luxuries either or much time to spare, but it was the same way for lots of Norfolk families at the time and it was what made

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Snobbles - continued

him the capable, strong, hard-working and determined man he was. Anyway, Steve disagreed about life being tough, he was so grateful and proud of his upbringing, his parents, his uncles and aunts, and later on when he had time to get to know them better, his brothers and sisters, multitude of cousins and the extended families which included the Reeves and Ernie / Margie Christian clans, among many others who gravitated to Rocky Point. Steve loved them all and in recent times they have given their love and respect back to him in bucket loads.

Steve used to say, and his classmates, the Class of 73', confirmed it, he never got up to too much mischief...he puts that down to the fact that he was usually too knackered to get up to any mischief by the time he had done his chores.

In 1973 he was sent to New Zealand to finish his schooling at Longburn College. He tells of how he cried himself to sleep for those first 3 weeks at boarding school and how hard it was, because unlike our kids, he couldn't come home each school term. After graduation from college, came an apprenticeship as a Fitter/Welder and his first job was at the Sanitarian Factory and then on to a quarry in Wellington. As you can imagine he was very highly thought of and his former bosses visited him on Norfolk over the years.

He met and married Sue Etuale and they had a daughter, Rebecca. It was a great sadness to him that he never maintained contact with his daughter and this was one of the few real regrets in his life.

He had been homesick for the entire 12 years away from Norfolk so when his first marriage ended he headed home in 1988. Steve and Becky met on the squash court that same year, and in those days she used to beat him with monotonous regularity, which he put down to two facts, that quote: A. "he wanted the games to last longer" and B. "she had really good legs"! Steve loved his squash and when able he played 3 times a week with a regular crew and in all the annual competitions, picking up a number of titles along the way. However he had 2 most special claims to squash fame. Number one that he competed in the Melbourne Commonwealth Games in 2006 playing doubles with Puk, and signing autographs afterward - Puk still calls him "showboy"! Number two was that he is the only player to have a spot on the tin named in his honour! He swears that there were others that hit that tin as of and the company of all his squash mates...Smudgies racquet sales will definitely take a dip, but we all know that he gwen miss him for more than that. Steve also loved his Sunday tennis up Uncle Joes and especially

dem delicious afternoon teas that Aunty Jan always made.

One of the things he told Becky when they first met was, "he couldn't care if he never left Norfolk again"! She had news for him because she wanted to travel and although he continued to say, "I se homesick already", before dem even get on ar plane, he learned to enjoy some travel and they were lucky enough to see some lovely parts of world in recent years... but he never ever saw anything that he considered better than home, not even close.

Now, Steve has a bit of a reputation for vehicle ownership, of varying shapes, sizes and ages. Well lets face it, the age of some of his vehicles was often the most notable thing about them, beauty is the eye of the beholder he tull, but it was lucky that he the skills to keep those trucks on the road! That pleasure now falls to Joseph.

Actually, the first vehicle he ever owned was "one HONDA 50", which he acquired from the late Greg Quintal. The price was set at .50 cents plus one live chook, and the deal was done. As you all know he progressed slowly (Grandma's leg...) brakes or no brakes, and his collection of vehicles over the years has known no bounds! Becky preferred the ones that made a little money, but Steve's criteria were somewhat different...he liked a challenge and put a positive spin on what could and couldn't be fixed, or on more than one occasion, what could be hidden from Becky until it might eventually get fixed! For example, a 4-ton Allen Oxford Crane that he bought at an Admin. Auction, while Becky was off island for the weekend! He purchased this treasure for \$25, but was nearly outbid by Kim Friend who, rumour has it, had offered \$15. At any rate he got the thing home and thought he had concealed it quite well behind one hedge. This was in the days of Norfolk Air and night flights so he was feeling fairly safe when they drove in to the yard around 8pm, but some sullen gut no manners...them se string a set of lights along the boom of that crane, jes in case Beck might miss it!! Mind you he did get the last laugh cos he reckon he gut 2 grand worth of tyres off it, that fitted straight on to his trucks!

Grave digging was Steve's community service of choice, but it was way more than that! It was an opportunity to do an important service for families at the toughest times of their lives, and to be part of a very special team. Steve loved it, and his time spent down here with the 'grave diggers' were the best. On any given day they solved many of the problems of

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When driving... be considerate
SLOW DOWN FOR HORSES!

Snobbles - continued

the world and they took no prisoners, if you dished it out you had better be able to tek it too! In better days Steve used to be on the pick, as pictured on the front of today's sheet and the boys used to have to tell him "dars nuff"! Due to his failing health, his eventual demotion to what he termed "the old mans job" - shovelling and tidying at the top of the hole, was inevitable and a bit sad, but in the way of things down here the guys assured him that he was worth having just for entertainment value alone! That's why he loved it because dem newa pull punches and he was one of the team to the end, last coming down just a few weeks ago to thank the boys for passing the hat around for him and to pick this beautiful spot for him and Beck, next to his Mum. Once again he gut the last laugh when the boys struck concrete digging this grave yesterday.

Steve and Becky, 5 year old Adam and 3 year old Samuel became a family in 1988 and in 1991 Joseph was born and the little flat behind Branka House became a bit small. Steve felled some beautiful trees out at Ralph Weslakes, cut dem stick on Dad's mill, and he and Becky stacked and dried it and cleared the family land overlooking Bomboras, where they built their home. Steve did all the preparation and much of the work himself and nailed every floorboard. He got Darren Buffett and Skents in to do the more technical stuff. It was a 3-year project but the result was a beautiful Norfolk pine home that will stand the test of time. He has rested peacefully there at home until today when his loving family have bought him here to his final resting place.

Steve's battle with cancer started in 2010 and he has fought long, hard and bravely. He had always led a healthy lifestyle, enjoyed good fresh food, fitness and had no real vices except 'passionfruit pies' at Bounty, and whenever else he could enjoy them. Following his reoccurrence of the disease about 3 years ago he tripled his health regimes and tried so hard to stay with us. He had a special rapport with his original specialist Dr. Maurice Stevens and a good relationship with his new oncologist Michelle Nottage but they could offer no further treatment. His recent trip to Mexico was everything he had hoped for and he received wonderful care and treatments there, but sadly it was too late for him. He never ever gave up in his fight with cancer and he did not let it define who he was.

Steve believed a mans word and his handshake were binding beyond any piece of signed paper, and anybody here who has shaken hands with him will know that Steve meant what he said, delivered what he promised and could be trusted to keep his word. His generosity, fairness and good nature were legendary and he was so often referred to by people as 'salt of the earth', would give you the shirt off his back sort of man, and just one special fulla. Steve was many things to many people, many of who are here today. He was a good friend, a great cousin, a very handy man to have around, a loving brother and brother-in-law, a very loving son and a wonderful Dad and amazing husband. But without a doubt the most important thing to Steve was that he was a proud Norfolk Islander and that is how he would want to be remembered.

Message from Andre

"Get orn with et!" was the first thought that came to mind when I tried to put on paper a brief note of how proud and thankful I am to have had a life with Snobbles in it. His no nonsense, no beg your pardon manner meant that some people missed the fact that he was a man with incredible heart and integrity... to me Snobbles was an inspiration, and an indestructible action man who stood up for all the things that mattered for family and for Norfolk.

When we were growing up it was often Snobbles who would drive the tractor, fix the rotary hoe and combine three motorbikes to make one that worked.... although quite often the power of the motor took precedence over whether the brakes were in any sort of working order. And if it was a boat, right way up or upside down was sometimes an option too. I am pretty sure that some of Becky's grey hairs were compliments of Snobbles "have no fear" spirit and the often heard phrase – "nothing fe stop et". Along the way, Snobbles and Becky made a home that was always inviting and the family that has embraced most if not all of us.

From the tennis court to the pier, a building site to the timber mill, Snobbles mixture of maximum effort, respect for auwas elders and gut busting sense of humour has always been inspirational, and a reminder to everyone of how incredibly lucky we all are to have friends, family and our beautiful island home. Last Tuesday morning while my father was visiting Snobbles he tull "don't ever give up orn awas Norf'k" and we nor gwen!! Snobbles has always been my hero, I have witnessed firsthand as he has stood up time and again for others who could not, I've tried to keep up as he worked at 200 miles per hour and I have lost count of the contributions he has made to other peoples lives through his and Becky's incredible heart and soul connection.

Rest in peace Snobbles, thanks fe aklan and most of all thanks fe you.



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Snobbles - continued

Nothings a problem out Rocky Point

*Nothings a problem out Rocky Point
Nuthen we kaa maik
Domine how big or small
Ulla how lorng et mite taik*

*Nothings a problem out Rocky Point
Gut nothing we kaa cart
Domine bout dem powerlines
We'el soon tek dem start.*

*We el fix anything out ya
Timber, electrical or steel,
Ef gut a engine, "no problem"
Orn a water ulla orn a wheel.*

*We el drive anything out Rocky Point,
Cranes, loaders en diggers with ease,
Drotts we el operate orn dems side
En bobcats under trees.*

*Loggen; we es de masters
Fell dem tree in any side
Hills and valleys side a got kaa get
Crouss roads en fanses een uwus stride.*

*Side we realy show dem skills
Es out dare orn dem seas
how we cut through dem big suff,
El fetch Poseidon gen hes knees.*

*Dou we dwell orn de too lorng,
Bin write bout boats en suff before,
Noo use a fetch up daa nigga head
We el talk fu daa no more.*

*Been known fu swing a pick
Especially when daa sexton pleaded,
little bet o encouragement, en gwen
go down much fia den needed.*

*"Please dou go down no fia"
"Es to much fu I trim"
"I gen need a counsellen lata"
"Domine, time you starta slim..."*

*Growen up orn Norfolk
Es special thing fu do
Dem you go du school weth
Go through yours life weth you*

*All dem days tegadda
Dem good times en dem bad
Daa class ess all stell close today
End daa did maik he glad.*

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Snobbles - continued

*A masta orn daa squash court
Cussed en cunnen orf da tee
All dem in dem games in Melbourne,
lucky he kaa see...*

*Fridey night fu squash
Tun up gut thick skin,
Wine up let daa black ball howet
En listen fu dem tin...*

*Now de baas fu mention,
His greatest luw to call,
Baas described as "family"
En he luw dem, one en all.*

*Nothen he wouldn't do fu dem
Ef dem all togaada or apart,
Domine how big de suff with hem
Dem always een hes heart.*

*A wirey lettle giant,
Strong een body en mind
Honest, fair, reliable,
Definatly one of a kind*

*De essence o de man
Es Norfolk through en through
De man he luw hes island home
Family en friends too.*

*When I think o awus sullun,
He de fussun orn myse mind
All dem who know hem would agree
He es Norfolk Sullun defined.*

*"Respect," a word I thort
Sum hem up de baas
Taada word es "Integrity"
He wai above de raas*

*You leaw uwa much to early
En we nowa gwen forget,
You always een uwus hearts en minds
No worries, en no regrets.*

*So thanks fu all de halp you giv
Fu deferent sullun en a thing you done,
From all your friends en family
We daa grateful, each en everyone*

*Thanks fu all dem guidance
God times en good cheers,
Thanks fu all de laughter
En thankyou fu de tears.
Where ever de future tek uwa
One thing I el say,
Ownee nort fu you*

"Awus sullun" wouldn't be who we es today.

Written By Joel Reeves 18/8/2018

Thank You

Becky and Roy and all the family would like to thank the following wonderful people who have given Steve and us so much help, support and love:

- Dr. Maurice Stevens and Dr. Michelle Nottage in Brisbane for their care
- Dr. Jenny Sexton for 7 years and Dr. Alec John for the past couple of weeks at home
- Gabby Beaumont, Steve's Naturopath and friend
- Peter and Mudgi for making sure there was always supplies when we got home, the plants weren't dead and putting fresh flowers on the window sill when I needed cheering up
- The nurses and auxiliary staff at the hospital
- Tardi for bringing Steve on his final trip to Kingston
- The Grave Diggers and The Ladies at the Usual place
- Gavin Snell and Tardi for guidance and help to Mike and Nathan building the coffin and Howard Christian
- Everyone for the amazing flowers delivered to our homes
- Jodie Williams for the service sheet
- Wayne and Sarah Bedford for the Vans
- Pastor Dion for our service today
- Milton Bradley and the Lions Club for the music and sound system
- The Ukulele Band and Don for leading the Anthem
- His Class of 73' for the guard of honour
- The people who have sent innumerable messages / cards and phonecalls to comfort us
- The people who have boughth endless amounts of delicious food and produce to our homes. We could taste the love in that food.
- A very personal thank you from Becky to her extraordinary sister-in-laws. Joy, Deb, Gae and Shell for too many things to list her...no wonderful Steve and Pop are so proud of you.
- The people who have gone to all sorts of trouble to get here today, especially, Adam and Sam and Sadie, Becky's sisters from New Zealand, Carol, Brud, Darc and Emmy, Dar and Jenn, Nathan Reeves, nephews Ashley and Tyrell, Trish, Wes and Deb Harper, Manda and others that we can't recall or don't know have arrived.
- Thank you also to all the others who wanted to be here but couldn't get a seat until tomorrow. We knew you were thinking of us.

Thank you to this loving community for supporting Steve in his last dash to Mexico, your generosity was humbling for a man who was already humbe, and will never be forgotten.

And finally, one more thank you that was forgotten on the day - thank you to Joseph for uprooting his life in Melbourne and coming home a year ago to help us and spend precious time with his Dad, and thank you to his fiancée Hayley (soon to be our daughter-in-law) for making it all work.