

## *Eulogy*

# Ian Charles Chapman

Some comedian once wrote there are two kinds of men in the world and we can tell them apart by the way they hold their cups when drinking tea: there are those who raise their little pinky (thus!) and those who don't. Ian Charles Chapman was definitely the latter.

I first met Ian back in 1991 at a funeral where he was busy making people cups of tea. He looked me up and down, took in the long, wavy hair I wore at that time, and, in that gruff, trademark voice of his, asked — "so, do you want a *real* cup or a *girl's* cup?"

Frankly, I wondered what I'd struck and remember thinking 'what a grumpy old bugger' — for I was yet to learn he was the biggest softie and a huge tease.

Ian met Annette 28 years ago, it was the early 1980s, Masterton, both were local scout leaders, and, from there, they went on, working together with a succession of dairy farms: Kaponga in the Taranaki; Morven; Ohoka; Oxford; and, Te Awa; before settling in Temuka 23 years ago — at which time Ian returned to the building industry where he worked until the end.

". . . Worked . . ."

Now there's an understatement! Daughter Haidee's strongest impression of her dad is of him always working. Constantly. Even on weekends he was always busy and the term "work ethic" epitomises him perfectly, she says. "*Dad worked so hard that he fell asleep really early while watching TV — but not before satisfying a huge appetite with his very*

*own pudding speciality, cornflakes or weet bix."*

It was this work ethic that saw Ian always helping people, and, the handwritten note on a condolence card arriving at his family's home these past few days says it well: *"we will always remember his readiness to help out when things fell apart."*

Son Richard put it this way: *"any job he done, he done his best."*

It wasn't always work, though. Ian loved . . . his salmon fishing at the Rakia Flats where they had their batch; and, the purple camper van in which he toured the country with his beloved Annette.

Ian also loved his shed; his singing; his karaoke; country music — anything country in fact: guitars, hats, cowboy boots, the annual golden guitar event in Gore — and, lollies.

Ian l-oved lollies!

When she was little, granddaughter Cassandra was found by her nanny "testing" granddad's lollies — licking them, then putting the ones she didn't like back into the jar.

Teasingly, sister-in-law Sandra would give him bags of chewy, lolly aeroplanes — and always with their wings or tails bitten off.

*(reference to the floral "spray" on Ian's coffin — comprising pink & white carnations, symbolizing the flowers Ian always brought for Annette, and, the lolly aeroplanes, each with their wings chewed off)*

Sandra says this:

*"What I loved about Ian was his sense of humour and his fierce loyalty.*

*I always felt safe with Ian.*

*I have a lost a friend and protector this day."*

Annette . . .

*"My husband was my life, my joy, my everything. He always promised to look after me when I got old — he tried so hard to make sure I would be okay no matter what happened.*

*His jokes, his laughter, his strength, and, my feeling of love and safety will be with me forever."*

Richard: *"proud to call him dad."*

Brent (in a word): *"funny."*

Georgie Sharpe had it in one word, too: *"cheeky."*

Younger members speak of his bear-hugs . . . *"so hard I couldn't breathe and thought they would break me. But I liked them . . ."* said one.

Ian's work ethic, sense of humour and willingness to always help out others may very well have been the mark of the man, and yet, today, this gathering of members from his wider family — many of whom have made long journeys to be here and pay their respects — must surely be a measure of the depth of this man.

Ian Charles Chapman: travel well, my friend — and, when we meet again, let's have that cup of tea . . .

I'll have the the *girl's* cup.

Patrick O'Brien

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