

Paul Francis Jackson

23rd May, 1952 - 28th December, 2023

Royal Victoria Regiment Pipes and Drums

Passed away at Mansfield Hospital after a long illness.

Late of Merrijig, formerly of Geelong and Echuca.

Second son of Kevin and Erna Jackson (both dec.)

Brother of John and devoted uncle of Shaun and Kevin.

MORE than 100 friends and family gathered at the Hunt Club Hotel at Merrijig for a memorial to mark the passing of Paul Jackson.

As was befitting there was a piper, a soldier playing the Last Post and a large collection of old photos and military regalia.

Paul's friend from childhood years, former journalist Geoff Easdown presented the eulogy for the occasion on Saturday afternoon January 21.

"These past few weeks have revealed the high regard with which Paul – Jacko or Jackson – to his mates – was held by so many," Geoff said.

"Paul realised that too, confiding before his death that he wanted a live wake at the Hunt club to celebrate his life with friends.

"That was not to be so it was agreed that the wake should go ahead.

"And that's why we are here today.

"Throughout our many visits during his illness, so many would say, 'don't forget to say g'day to Jacko from me'.

"Tell him we send hugs," a receptionist at the Delatite Vets told me while Big Dook, Paul's adored American Staffordshire terrier and shadow was getting a health check.

"Dook with his fondness for couches and beds visited his master during his last weeks, promptly climbing onto Paul's hospital bed.

"The big boy snuggled up to his master with as much to say, 'I'm here for you Dad and I haven't forgotten you'.

"Paul Francis Jackson who passed on December 28 aged 71, and I were mates for more than 60 years.

"The young Paul was full of cheek and good humour; that didn't change.

"He remembered birthdays, loved Collingwood Football Club and announced last September that his team was 'off to the big dance' at the G.

"He drank Bundies and coke, savoured Rutherglen liqueur Muscat and MON tomato sauce.



"There's none better,' he would say about the sauce.

"Thanks to Paul, five bottles sit in our pantry.

"He was a hoarder on an immense scale.

"On one occasion while living in Melbourne he arrived home with a box of top hats.

"He also had thousands; I mean thousands of LPs, CDs and DVDs in storage.

"Jacko was a man of many roles; a highlands' bandsman, fearsome patriot, high country horseman and chef extraordinaire.

"He was the beloved second son of Kevin and Erna Jackson and brother to John and adoring uncles to nephews Shaun and Kevin.

"Growing up he played baseball, went to tech school where his dad ran the English social studies department.

"He rode ponies, swam the Murray each summer and ran wild with his mate Leigh Love during school holidays.

"Paul was 15 when the Jacksons moved to Geelong in 1967, where he was made to swap an idyllic life in a then sleepy river town for the rush and bustle of industrial Geelong.

"He worked a range of jobs for numerous companies, including Pacific Dunlop as well as major shipping firms.

"At the height of the waterfront wars he distributed pay packets to members of the ship's Painters and Dockers Union, prompting a feared summons from the Costigan Royal Commission to answer why pay was being drawn by wharfies that were long dead...Paul survived a grilling but not the union.

"And that's another story.

"Paul Jackson loved things military; bugles, bagpipes, drums, and uniforms.

"He gave 25 years to the Army Reserves; served in what was 5/6 Victorian Rifles and the Hawthorn City Pipe Band.



"He went to Britain for a celebrated gathering of highland regiments from the Commonwealth.

"Paul's talent with the bugle was in demand on ANZAC Days.

"Dressed as a light horseman or bandsman he sounded the retreat and reveille at Merrijig and Yea.

"Jacko honed his culinary talent at the William Angliss Food Trades School.

"He worked in pubs across Melbourne until Louise Brennan, who he had met at Dunlop, told him that the Hunt Club needed a chef.

"He became a pivotal member of the Yea Pipe Band, and against strong opposition from the RSL, he founded the Merrijig Dawn service in 2004.

"Twenty five riders and horses came to the first event.

"Nowadays more than 300 people turn out each April 25.

"Paul is survived by his brother John and adored nephews Shaun and Kevin.

"His ashes will be interred with his late parents in the Geelong West Cemetery at a date yet to be determined.

Geoff concluded, "Paul Jackson was not a local, but such is the spirit of this community you adopted him and he became one of you.

"Thank you."