

December 7, 2010

Eulogy and Poems

Ben,

I'm so proud of you. But you know that and you appreciated it when I've told you in the past.

2 deep fond emotional memories we've shared in recent years were when you and I had a cry and a hug together for various reasons – one of them being you leaving overseas later that day. Sort of a sad memory but evidence to me of how deep our bond was and is.

Another occasion was after a long chat with you, just here outside. I had some tears of joy running down my cheek, and then I jovially went on to convince you for about 5 minutes afterwards completely unsuccessfully that I was totally putting on those tears, putting on an act, 'I don't cry! I'm actually pretending, see how much it looks like I'm crying' while simultaneously we both knew full well that the tears flowing were real.

When we were really young I remember humorously saying 'Benny laugh' and as if like a reflex you did. Benny laugh, and you did again... we had fun.

We grew up together. When Rutie got her own room in our Coogee place, you and I were in the bunk beds. We played together, all the kids' games – board games, card games, ball games, epic games of monopoly, chess, table tennis, handball, tennis, soccer, squash, basketball the list goes on and on – we played for thousands of hours together over the years. We got up to mischief together – I remember one time when my parents had guests over late one evening, we snuck out to hide behind a couch, me around 6, you 3, to watch. I recall I shifted you a bit so that you were in full view, before you scurried back before you were seen... Later in life we'd enjoy telling each other stories of pranks we've pulled.

We had a swimming pool and played many games in it, did somersaults, races, had pool parties. We used to have frequent BBQ's, and we used to enjoy taking sticks from it and making our own mini fires. Another memory is us using magnifying glasses to burn a hole in a piece of paper.

We were evenly matched in natural ability. I recall once we went to a knee-boarding theme park. I am so impressed how naturally it came to you. How quickly you learnt and improved and picked it up far better than me for a new skill for both of us.

I recall how much you loved Rutie. One time Rut was away at a school camp for a week or so and you and I were in the car with mum to pick her up around the corner from the school. As Rutie turned the corner walking towards us, you got out of the car and ran towards her to give her a big hug with me following in your footsteps.

I mentioned to you a couple of years ago that I'm impressed with all the hard work you've put in to get to where you are, being a pilot and all. You answered back I get that from dad.

Another memory I have when we were young was you loving to hold the video camera in your hand on one of our family trips to the rainforest. I imagine you commentating charismatically and humorously as you filmed the views.

In recent years we'd go to a café or get dinner together. I was always touched that you'd offer and often insist on paying when you had a pittance and you knew how much I had relatively and how comfortable I was in paying every time. I am glad that both you and I had a fun childhood and I appreciate that I got to have fun adulthood experiences with you too.

The amount of love in you is the same as in everyone, and because you're such a quick and keen learner you learnt the knack of sharing that love so well. I'm so proud of you for that.

I love your quickness of wit, your loud laugh, your appealing nature, you're fullness of attention whilst listening. I love how you crack me and everyone else up. I admire your adventurous nature, your persistence towards achieving your dreams. I am inspired by how positive you are, by how much you and the people around you smile and laugh, and by how close, deep, and extensive the bonds you've made are. You are so positive and it's in the positive tense that I speak about you too. It's really as if I'm talking to you or about you as I always did so highly, and you're at peace somewhere. I and everyone else miss out on seeing, talking to, hugging you and you seeing us and all the other positive things that you provide. I acknowledge this and am real glad of the experiences I have had with you at all. You brought out many great emotions in me and everyone else. I reckon I would have been proud of and loved you however you turned out. I know I am touched if at all you had an ounce of pride in me. Your memories, your love, your legacy lives on.

A good memory I have is that of you and mum having a sweet type of relationship - enjoying surprising her, joking around with her, giving her hugs, caring for her by volunteering to help around the house. I recall you frequently saying 'I'll do it' regarding the dishes, or putting things in place. I can see the love you have for mum.

With Eitan, you and him were a comedy duo. You got along so well together and like with Rutie, you and Eitan had a real comfort level. That comfort was the foundation for so much banter. There was a mutual respect and if anyone was going to have the last word in a battle of jokes with him, Ben it'd likely be you, where on the odd occasion Eitan would openly concede 'he got me'.

Ben, with Lishai, Maor and Shiran, you've been so great. With Shiran the dominant image in my mind is of you and him playing with mirth on both your faces. You wanting to and getting a laugh reaction out of him, and you'd be smiling too. With Maor and Lishai, I admire the way you'd ask them questions and also how witty you were around them. I asked Lishai and Maor of memories of you and I wrote them down. They said 'he was a great flyer', 'he was happy everyday', 'he was making us happy', 'I liked hugging him', 'he told me how to draw airplanes easily' (and then Lishai drew one you'd be proud of)

Your extended family and close friends and acquaintances here and around the world have been so touched by you. Their tears, compassion, consideration, sharing of good memories, words of encouragement, hugs, kisses, gifts, offers of help, their respect and good wishes, all the positive feedback has touched us in turn. The positive impact that you've had on such a massive amount of people is inspirational.

In the last few years when you've been back in Australia, I've been lucky enough to have played several seasons of my favourite sport, touch football, with you. You contribute so much to the team. Your camaraderie is so great to have. You are a great help to me in many ways. As an expert in instructing pilots, I enjoy our conversations on how to get the best out of the team. I really appreciate the support and consideration you give me. I love that I got to play with you - Ben that is forever my touch football highlight.

As close brothers tend to be – you knew what was going on in my head more than anyone. Throughout your life you brought us as a family closer together. It seems you brought your friends closer together too.

I remember how your passion for flying started for you. Every year or two when we were young we took long flights to Israel to see family overseas. Renowned for your capacity nowadays to somehow get some amazing bargain or get into places with restricted access – it may have had its beginnings as a 5 year old when you somehow managed to negotiate your way into cockpits of 747's, meeting the pilots and getting the best view on the plane.

It's a privilege being your brother

Love always
Dan

Benny,
Loved by so many
Of life's chips you made the most of every penny

Ben,
Recently so many words have been put to pen
By so many women and men
Expounding you're a ten out of ten

Benny G,
It has always meant a lot having you as a brother to me
Me who you could actually see
Really and deeply
You lived so freely
Clearly
You loved people intimately
And adventure frequently
Flying dearly
Living life extremely
Cheerfully
Many would see you as a sweetie
Humorously cheeky
You read books hungrily
Hungered for knowledge constantly
Took off to America around 20
Giving them another reason to be merry
Flashing your smile so readily

Benoss,
To eternal bliss a gain, to us a loss
By now you'd have already negotiated your way across
To the best view alongside the big boss
Laughing and smiling because

Danny Glattstein