

Family Hardship

Tragedy came in the guise of an unfortunate accident. My dad, only after a few months in the camp, was run over by a truck while riding his bike back to the camp. The accident was so bad that it even reached the newspapers. In the report it stated that a near fatal collision happened on the highway, where the patient suffered a fractured skull and other injuries. He was rushed to hospital and remained in a comma for a few weeks. Mum told me she sat with him every day. The doctors had warned her that he would never be "normal" and recommended he be put in a home. He did wake and even though he lost his sight in one eye, his hearing in one ear, had broken bones and other personal issues, which I do not care to mention, he survived. He did not know mum or me! But contradictory to the doctor's opinions mum took up the challenge and looked after us both when he came out.

There were tragic outcomes to his personality and physical health but my dad was a great dad who loved to read and re-read his encyclopaedias. Like all Slovenians he was a workaholic who loved his family. He also worked for eighteen years without a holiday. In fact he never had a holiday and for each holiday he had, he worked somewhere else. Sometimes it was, "Four and Twenty Factory" where we got great, fresh pies or doughnuts. Or he worked at the army barracks at Queenscliff or Porepunkah. Mum took on the task and held the reins for the rest of the marriage overseeing the bills and financial decision-making. Thus with the pay out for his accident, we moved to 16 Severn Street in Moonee Ponds. The lawyer years later said he could have got a lot more money, ironical isn't it? My brother was born on 12th June 1956 at Queen Victoria Hospital then in Lonsdale Street. Now torn down to make room for high-rise building.