

Eulogy for Lino Serafino Tonellato - by Andrew Judd (grandson)

22 September 1926 – 4th September 2022

Lino Serafino Tonellato, born in Caselle di Altivole, Italy to parents Secondo and Elisabetta 22nd of September 1926, or at least we think it was the 22nd! It may have been the 23rd, the story goes that his birth required registration in the next town and that his Uncle was given this task and he may have celebrated the arrival of his new nephew a little too much, so the details at the registry may have been hazy.

Lino, Nino, Len, Poppa, Pop and Poppa Lenny, these are all the names for the same loved man, to me he was Poppa, but throughout this story I will most likely use them all.

Poppa's Father, Secondo in a time of depression and after World War 1 wanted a better life for his family and so he decided to go to Australia in 1927 to begin to make a home here in Adelaide.

Lino arrived in Australia from Italy in 1935 aged almost 9 with his mother and all his siblings, Luigi 13, Rosina 12, Albert 10 and Orlando 8, but the Tonellato family was not quite complete until the addition of Assunta, Poppa's much loved little sister.

The Tonellato family settled in Findon South Australia on 6 acres of market garden land between Frogmore Rd and Findon Rd, where they had glasshouses, and also grew bunch vegetables. Their first home was a train carriage that Secondo purchased in 1935, even that had its own story as it was built for the state visit of the Duke and Duchess of York 1927.

Lino went to St Joseph's Primary School in Hindmarsh for his early education before moving on to his work life in the market garden with his other family members. During the World War 2 they supplied the ADF with carrots, cabbages and potatoes.

In 1948 Lino met Rosanna at the St Patrick's church dance, things went well as, they Married just 2 years later on the 16th December 1950 at St Patrick's Church Adelaide

In their early married life, they lived in shared accommodation with two of his brothers in different houses close to the market garden.

During this time Therese was born in 1952 and Lino was still working the gardens with family.

In 1957 Therese was 5 yrs old when Len and Rosanne made the life changing decision to start their own farm in Two Wells, this farm was a poultry farm as Len had thought that this type of farming would be less taxing on his bad back.

It was here that Poppa's talent for inventing really started to shine, he invented his own chicken plucker, he invented a hammermill that would mix his grains and then deliver the feed automatically to the chicken sheds. He also found other ways to improve production by installing speaker into the sheds where he experimented with various types of music and talk back radio to see what this would do for his chickens laying, as it turns out chickens love Classical music not so much rock n roll and defiantly not talk back, for laying eggs. Oh and shell grit!

On one occasion Nanna recalls he was collecting eggs and thought he was bitten by a snake but instead of letting Nanna drive him to the doctors he got his gun and had to kill the snake first.

Mum remembers working and listening to the radiogram and singing in the early hours of the morning with Poppa and grading eggs before school.

Poppa was always loved animals, and he had many over the years, he loved his dogs Scarlett, Oscar and then Elmo, even the stray feral cat, Peaches. I've been told he even once had a pig, that was going to be salami but lucky for the pig, he became a pet.

Steven was born in 1960 and helped Poppa around the farm while attending school and attending Black friers in his high school years. Poppa was very proud of Steven when he became a mechanic and worked at CMV.

Len worked his poultry farm for many years until 1980 when he and Nanna helped Steven and Gina settle on the farm, while they moved to Newton, Rocklin Ave

In that time Len also started work at the Bolivar treatment plant in 1978

Unfortunately, he had an accident at the treatment plant in 1981 which moved him into an early retirement where he had time to start on his list hobbies, one of them being lead light windows and he was also busy inventing all sorts of contraptions to do various jobs. And somehow accidentally became a handy man for all, doing painting and gardening for many years for friends and relatives. In my mind there wasn't anything Pop could not do. I think most of us saw him that way.

They moved to Athelstone Johnson Rd in 1986 after the-all-too-soon passing of Steven. This was the time of the grey nomad where Nanna and Pop began touring the country with Zio Albert and Zia Mary with caravans in tow. They went to so many great places.

1994 brought a new chapter to Pop and Nanna, when Mark came to live with them, this was a great time and Poppa enjoyed teaching Mark various things and being an important part of his life.

They moved back to Newton 2006 Louis Crt, their current home.

Finally Retired life.... Not really Poppa continued to do maintenance for many of us in our homes and painting was always his jam, although as the years past and his eyesight weakened, more and more light switches and power points were painted over.

The reality is I could go though year by year and there is a story for every year. And I will even miss something because each of us have had our special times with Len.

Mum remembers Poppa's love of life and his attitude that everything could be started over.

Mark recalls one story where Pop had given up smoking, but Mark caught him in the shed having a smoke, he quickly shoved it in his pocket and denied it, Mark said, "Oh, ok so why is your pocket on fire?"

Amanda said she used to fake illness for days home from school knowing she would get to spend them with Poppa.

I remember always wanting to go into one of Poppa's many sheds and see what he was working on, the old farm sheds where my favorites, I used to love the long drive from our home in Reynella out to the farm in Two Wells, back then it was so far away and it seemed that Poppa and Nanna lived in the country! And I thought they had the biggest house and I loved when I got to sleep over and stay so I could help out on the farm, I loved that ride-on lawn mower and the little tractor.

David's memories of Poppa (David's Words)

I learnt so much from Pop and whether he knew it or not he was a great influence in my life.

He was the first person to show me how to do a burnout and gave me lessons on how to handbrake turn and throw a car sideways.

Sometimes these lessons were after picking me up from school, quickly followed by DONT TELL YOUR GRANDMOTHER.

My earliest memories of Pop was in the shed, he was always building something usually powered by an electric motor.

Nanna and Pop made a lot of tomato sauce, so he decided to speed up the process. He built a machine to puree the tomatoes.

It consisted of a hopper, tumbling blades and of course powered by an electric motor. I arrived just in time for the test run. He turned it on and fed a couple of tomatoes in.

It worked great smashing the tomatoes in seconds, ejecting them straight into the ceiling.

I can't remember Pop ever getting mad at me, even when I pulled apart his ride-on lawn mower to make it go faster. Instead, he said it didn't have enough horsepower for what I was doing to it and then helped me to make it work.

He taught me so much without even knowing it. He wasn't really one for deep and meaningful, with me, but his actions spoke louder than words.

His empathy for animals and people was abundant and observing the way he was with Nanna showed me an amazing example of what true love looks like.

I will miss him so much but I'm so lucky to call him Pop.

PS He knew the stuffed dog wasn't real.

Poppa was very loved by everybody in his life none more than his dearest Roseanna or his beautiful children Therese and Steven. He welcomed and loved the additions to his family in Richard and Gina.

He loved each of grandchildren and equally he was always proud of our achievements and always keen to know more. He was especially excited as we then went on expanding his family and he became Poppa Lenny to 10 (soon to be 11) amazing Grandchildren.

He was a cool Poppa Lenny, he learnt how to fist bump as a greeting and as a goodbye with Lucy, Alex and Abby. He always was excited to have visits from Ethan and Amali and hear all about the Mount. And he loved playing with Charlotte, Iggy, Aidan, Stella and Phoebe and he loved having icecreams and chocolates with us all, when nanna wasn't looking.

"Hey Cookie" was Poppa Lenny's favourite greeting to us all in his later years and we all loved it, I think that was his own little trick while he remembered your actual name! and I will miss it

He was a kind-hearted soul, who had time for everyone, and we all love him, we will miss him and always love Lino, Nino, Len, Poppa, Pop, Poppa Lenny

Always Tinkering, forever Loved