

# The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

267 Canterbury Rd., P.O. Box 171, Canterbury, Vic. 3216

Telephone: 03 9888 4944 Freecall: 1800 641 091 Fax: 03 9888 4900

www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au Email: support@compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au



## Magazine Excerpts - Aug ~ Sep 2008

### A Toolbox and a Butterfly by Peter Thompson, TCF Vic. Aust.

Happy Birthday, Dad. This is also for Christmas.'

Euan had a big grin all over his face as he handed me a fairly heavy Christmas-wrapped parcel. It was the 24<sup>th</sup> of December, 1994, my birthday. 'Thanks, Euan,' I said, as I shook his big hand and unwrapped the parcel. It contained a black, plastic tray toolbox, full of assorted spanners, wrenches, wire strippers, screwdrivers and various other car-fixing tools. 'Since you bought a Ford, I thought this might come in handy,' Euan said with a smile. (He drove a Holden).



As I looked through the assortment of tools, I noted that their brands didn't match. However, that didn't matter. I knew the lad was doing it hard with a wife and two little girls in rented premises. He had obviously painstakingly scrounged the items one by one. It was all he could afford. To me, that tool set was better than anything that could have been bought in a hardware store. Little did I know at the time, that it would be the last birthday and Christmas present I was to receive from my son, my only child.

On the morning of Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, 1995, I received a call to come into the Alfred Hospital. Euan had been involved in an horrific accident where his motorbike had slid on wet tram tracks and he had hit hard against the bullbar of a small truck. Twenty eight days of mental fog followed. The mind is a very strange thing; have you ever looked all over the house for car keys and found them where you had put them, in the freezer?

On Thursday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, Euan's loved ones were gathered around his hospital bed as the life support systems were turned off, one by one. Despite the terrible injuries to his lower body, being in a semi coma and having enough drugs in him to supply half of Melbourne, he still sat up for a last, supreme effort to reach for his wife. He slumped back and we left the room and his lifeless body.

Six days later, I was attending the funeral service for my own son. Over 200 people attended and yes, I was continually finding my car keys in peculiar places. Little did I know then, that eleven years later, I would take up a new career as a Funeral Celebrant.

A few days ago, I had to do a little 'fix it' job around the house. So, I went to that funny little tool box that my son had given me so long ago. As I opened it to its odd assortment of tools, a smile came across my face. I remembered, 'Happy Birthday, Dad. This is also for Christmas,' and the feel of his hand in my hand.

A stray butterfly flew in through the open shed door and I was reminded of the line I often used in my services, 'Happy memories are the butterflies of our minds.'

### Time is all I Have

You'll get over it - soon,  
not right away.'  
How long is 'soon?'  
I still can't say.

'Call me any time,  
I'm here for you.'  
When is 'any time?'  
I don't know what you can do.

'Time is all it takes  
to heal your broken heart.'  
How long is this 'time'  
that still tears me apart?

Night and day,  
and weeks go by,  
months and season, too.  
years and years and floods of tears  
no matter what I do.

Time is all I have  
no matter what I do.  
It's not the answer,  
it's not what it takes  
for living without you.

Years of time - a decade  
with memories of you.  
Love and friendships  
built with time  
*moment by moment  
by moment.*

Mariette Buckle  
TCF Vic Aust.

## Joel

**I think of you all day and night  
With pain and sadness in my heart  
Your beautiful smile  
Your beautiful eyes  
Are in my memory.**

**"My beautiful boy" I referred to you  
You'll never grow old like me  
"My little man" you only reached a quarter century**

**I remember all your ambitions  
And all your achievements too  
I remember how proud you were  
When we flew Jet blue, with you.**

**Thank you "mate" for all you've done  
My angel up above  
I know my love, when I look above  
You're watching down on me.**

Written for my only beautiful son Joel Andrew Parkinson  
whose life was taken by a drunk driver on 30th October 2006

Your heart-broken mum  
Lesley (Parkinson) Tate, TCF Vic. Aust.