

Funeral Service

Rachel van Run, 85

Tobin Brothers Funerals
Service: Cheltenham Chapel:
147 Park Road
Cheltenham

Thursday 31st January 2019

SERVICE: 2:00pm

(Total Service: +/-55mins)

ENTRANCE SONG:

“Mother” - Isla Grant (4:12)

Welcome everybody!

On behalf of Peter, Chelly and myself and our families, I am very pleased to welcome you all, our extended family and friends, to celebrate the life of our mother, Rachel van Run who, sadly but mercifully, passed away peacefully in her sleep in the early hours of Thursday 24th January, aged 85 - just 6 weeks short of what would have been her 86th birthday.

Some of you may have to pay a little extra attention here because both mother and daughter are called Rachel, and I also have my late father's name, Martin. It can get confusing, as I have found out looking at family trees. It's a Dutch thing!

Our mother, Rachel, was a vivacious and tenacious woman, who made friends easily and had complete love for her family.

She was a devoted and loving wife to Martin for over 62 years, till his death just over four years ago.

She was also a devoted and loving mother to the 3 of us, mother-in-law to Peter's wife, Margaret who died in 2011, and my wife Becca, and also welcomed Rick into Chelly's life.

She had 4 grandchildren, being Oma to: Chrystal & Jocelyn, and Matt & Emily. And of course, she was especially proud and loving of Breanna, her first and only great-grandchild.

Given that we are an international and somewhat dispersed family, we are webcasting this service. In spite of the unfriendly hour in different parts of the world, I would especially also like to welcome Rachel's sister-in-law, Lenie and her children, our cousins, as well as her in-Laws from Dad's family: Riet, Wim & Atie, and Nel and their children, also our cousins, and Jan and Willi in Holland. I think that cousin Cynthia, snowed in in the USA, might be watching this, if not live, then later on.

And we are thankful to all of you for making the time and effort to share this service with us and reflect on your own personal relationship with our mother, a remarkable woman in so many ways.

Over the course of the service, you will hear stories, and songs chosen by us to reflect what was important and meaningful to her, in our celebration and tribute to her life.

You have already heard "Mother" by Isla Grant as you came in just now. Mum and Dad were both very enthusiastic about her music and performance, and went to see her in concert at least 3 times. High praise indeed.

Later, there will be a time for quiet reflection supported by images from Rachel's life, and set to the music of Edith Piaf. From a very young age, I can recall how empathetic Mum felt

towards the fragility of Piaf, and the harshness of her upbringing resonated in her own life.

At the end of the service, we will commit her body to leave the chapel for private cremation to the song, Sunrise Sunset from Fiddler on the Roof, one of her favourite stage shows and one which we attended together just three years ago when it last returned to Melbourne. It was the last show she went to see, and she was still well enough to enjoy it. It meant a lot to her because it was a connection with her father's faith.

Regardless of each person's faith and beliefs about what happens to us when we die in this world, we know that when someone goes, we can have a feeling of loss and grief. But I hope this service helps provide a measure of comfort and connection for all of us, and also be an uplifting celebration of the life of a wonderful woman. 4-5 mins

1st Eulogy – Chelly 11 min

I'd now like to call on our sister, Chelly to give her Eulogy to our mother. There has certainly been a wonderful connection between the two of them ever since Chelly's birth.

2nd Eulogy – Peter 11 min

I'd now like to call on Peter, the oldest of the three of us, to pay his respects to our mother. I think that Chelly and I have always suspected that the first-born has a special place in their mother's heart.

3rd Eulogy – Martin

11 min

I would also like to say a few words that may reflect how and why our mother grew into the woman that she became.

4th Eulogy – Emily

3-4 min

I would now like to call on Emily, one of her grandchildren, to reflect on some of her memories of her Oma.

REFLECTION & AV

Let's now take a few moments to reflect on some of the happy images that we have of Rachel, from the days of black and white to full colour photography, alone and with loved ones, doing the things she loved. I'm only sorry that we don't have time and images to show each person's relationship with her, but this may help to trigger your own private memories and thoughts. This montage of photos is set to Edith Piaf, singing "No Regrets" in English, a performer whose life and music Mum related to quite deeply.

1 min

"No Regrets" Edith Piaf (English version)

2:45 min

Post Reflection

2-3 min

I'm sure that everyone here has lost loved ones at various times, and knows it can be painful, and can leave a feeling of emptiness where there used to be joy and warmth. It is up to each of us to keep our loved ones alive by remembering the

love and gladness that we felt when they were physically part of our lives.

We have fantastic memories of our Mum, Rachel, as I'm sure all of you do. Memories are what we are left with, to cherish the countless ways that she has enriched our lives. While it is not possible to have each and every one of you share those memories here and now, I hope that some of you will take the opportunity to share memories and photos with us on the memorial website that we have set up. The address is on the last page of the program.

I have already learnt new things about Mum from stories shared from Holland, for example how she and our Aunt Riet were pregnant at the same time when we were leaving Holland and both were hoping for Christmas babies but both missed out by about 10 days either side of Christmas; and how at her wedding reception and still only 19, she took the microphone and started singing to our Dad, and everyone joined in. Beautiful stories and memories.

However, her final 4 or 5 years have been quite difficult with the onset and growth of dementia. We can only imagine what anxiety, confusion and frustration she was living with as the grip of dementia became tighter. Short term memory was the first to go and eventually long term memory and the ability to think and speak went too. But I am sure that, right up to her last days, she knew who we, her children, were. Such was her fierce love for us.

For the past three years, Mum lived at Victoria By The Park in Elsternwick. We could hardly be happier with the love and

care with which she was treated there by the staff and other residents. We would like to congratulate and thank them for what they did for Rachel throughout her stay, from her arrival with still mild dementia to her last days when she was unable to recover from her broken hip.

COMMITTAL

1-2 min

Rachel lived her life the best way she knew how. She was a fighter and a lover. She leaves a legacy via her family and the way she has touched each of us here today. Quite simply, she had no regrets!

It's time now to say goodbye to Rachel, however you knew her, by her full given name or Mum, Chelly, Oma, or Tante Chel. She has passed away and we commit her memory to our hearts and minds. I have no doubt that the world is a better place because of her.

It's time for Rachel to go to our Dad, and be reunited with her mother, father, brothers and sisters and all those loved ones who have gone before her.

May you rest in eternal peace!

We will now escort Rachel to the hearse outside, to the sound of "Sunrise, Sunset". She will then be taken to the crematorium. Later, her ashes will be united with her Martin's ashes.

On behalf of the family, thank you again for sharing this with us.

I'd also like to invite you to join us for refreshments in the function room outside. It will be a great chance to share some more stories and celebrate her life.

FINAL SONG

4 min

Sunrise, Sunset – Topol and the cast from Fiddler on the Roof.