

**This eulogy was given by Bob Calnin's son Dale on the occasion of his funeral service at St Coleman's Catholic Church in Orbost in July 2010**

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**Eulogy - Betty Frances Calnin**

Thank you everyone for being here today to help comfort and support us through this very difficult time.

**A Wife, Mother, Nana, Sister and Friend**

Betty Calnin was born on the 28/3/1931 -in the Orbost hospital. A daughter to Thomas Gordon and Lena Katherine Warren  
She attended Newmerella Primary School-then later the Orbost High School

**Throughout her early teen years/school years** - Bet enjoyed playing a variety of sports and attended local dances. She did well at school - to a point that her teachers encouraged her to go to University to become a teacher.

**Bet - sat for her HSC Certificate** the day after her Father died - a testimony to her strength and will power to succeed - an attribute that we would continually see during her 79 years.

Due to circumstances at the time Betty did not fulfil her dreams of becoming a teacher.

**Bet grew up during the depression** - you can imagine they were tough times. To make things a little more difficult for the Warren family - she was one of 13 children (obviously no TV in those days). Bet would often tell the story of how she would hide her shoes in a hollow log on the way to Sunday school and pick them up on the way home.

**In 1954 Bob Calnin was stationed at the Orbost Police station.** Bob soon began courting Betty. We don't know too much about their courtship - but I am sure it would have been interesting.

2 years later they were married in St Anthony's Church in Melbourne. 1956 was the year of the Melbourne Olympics - Bob was part of the Vic Mounted Police Force - worked at the games.

**In 1959 and 1962** - Bob and Bet had 2 wonderful children in Dale and Robyn.

**In 1964 the family moved to Buchan.** Bob became the local policeman of Buchan a position he held for 23 years. During that time Bet was great support to Bob - she continually took phone messages, made endless cups of tea.

**Because the Police station** was connected to the house - most police business took place in Bet's kitchen.

There are many stories about those who after spending the night in the clink (jail) would receive breakfast in the house kitchen in the morning.

**There were many interesting moments** for Betty as the Policeman's wife - none greater than the night Bob got locked in the jail with one of the local drunks. Bob was putting this particular drunk to bed - making sure he was comfortable when he heard the door of the jail slam behind him. Bob had the key in his pocket. Betty had to get the axe and cut away the bottom of the door to allow Bob to slip the key out.

**Betty always maintains that was her biggest mistake in life**

**In 1987 Bob retired** from the Police force and moved out to the farm on Timbarra road. Betty's efforts were recognised by the local Buchan and Gelantipy community when she was presented a painting of the Buchan area - this really meant a lot to her and still hangs proudly in their Timbarra home

**Bet - had a small but very dear network of friends** - both from her early days in Orbost and in Buchan. Not that she would see them a lot but she did treasure the times when they did catch up together.

**Some of these times included**

**The trip** to Tasmania with her very dear friend Alice Robinson - Bet would often re-live their good times spent in Tassie and often spoke about going back one day.

**Good times spent with Margaret Seddeline** in her house at the Slips at Corringale Beach. Margaret was a very good friend who became Margaret Lynn - Brett's mum.

**And her holidays with sister Nelva** - particularly their trip to Expo in Queensland.

She also had some great times in Buchan with good friends Laurie and Pam, Melva & so many others.

**Betty built a strong relationship** with both Gail and Brett - they were very good friends with Betty and were able to communicate better than Robyn and

myself. So Robyn and I would both use this to our advantage if we need to swing Betty's outlook on something or to get her to agree with us.

**Betty had an iron will power and was very determined. Once she made up her mind on something that was it - she would not change her mind.**

**Without doubt she** would have to be the toughest person I have ever met.

She never complained about anything - except the amount of chocolate that Bob would eat.

**She was stubborn** - boy was she stubborn - and yes I have been told on occasions that an apple does not fall far from the tree. Because of this Robyn and I would at times lock horns with Mum - but she always got the better of us.

**A classic example was her love for garden monuments** scattered throughout the garden which annoyed me because I had to move them in order to mow the lawn. I would move them all - **BY THE NEXT DAY** Bet would have them all back in the same place as before.

**Bet enjoyed the simple things** in life and didn't like to complicate things. She lived one day at a time - never worrying too much about what had happened or what may happen in the future

She didn't care much for extravagance or care for materialistic things - they weren't important

**Bet loved nothing more than her grandchildren.** She always protected them from their grumpy parents if she thought we were being too hard on them. She loved spending time with them - this usually involved reading books, playing cards or going for walks in the paddocks and kicking the footy. Bet would have to be one of the best female kicks of the footy that I have seen - she played a game for the Buchan female team - kicked a couple of goals.

**She also loved Brett's 3 children Abby, Ben and Grace** and enjoyed getting to know them and keeping track of what was going on in their lives

**She loved to cook** and she was good at it. I survived 4 years in a boarding school on her biscuits

**She would spend hours in her garden** - it was her escape from everything.

Bet loved most sports particularly tennis. She was part of the Buchan tennis club and often reminisced about all the fun she had with Laurie, Bill, Ruth and others. She would sit up to all hours watching tennis if on TV.

She followed the AFL footy and always kept an eye on how the Cavemen did each Saturday

She loved Music - played the piano (Bob always thought the piano was out of tune)

**She loved to dance** - Bob and Bet would attend local dances and I always admired how good they looked together on the dance floor.

She loved living out on the farm - it was her refuge

**Betty loved painting** - everything had to be white

She would keep paper cuttings of everything from newspapers, magazines - about her kids and grandchildren, plants or recipes

**As a wife** Betty was Bob's rock for 56 years. She cared for Bob - she took particular care of Bob's sugar levels by hiding his chocolates and lollies. They both kept one another honest. There was always a bit of banter between them - but deep down we all knew they would be lost without each other.

**As a Mum** - she taught us about what really matters in life - good values and good friends - and not to get caught up in the trivial things in life - they can block your judgement

**Bet had some wonderful sayings** that would amuse us - particularly Ben & Erin  
These included

"Never mind" and "Not to worry" and "We'll see" - *which usually meant we do not need to talk about this anymore*

"Absolutely" - well that's the way things are

"Have a spell" - Betty would often tell both Robyn and myself not to train too hard - you need to have a bit of a spell

**Betty always spoke of heading away for another big holiday** - unfortunately this never eventuated

**Betty suffered for some time with her health.** She never complained - just kept pushing ahead. She was a great fighter.

Betty is now at rest and resides at the Heaven Holiday Resort for special people. I am sure by now the pearly gates have received their first coat of paint and there are numerous garden monuments scattered everywhere throughout the garden.

**Not to worry Bet** - we will see you again. It's time for a bit of a spell.

There is absolutely no doubt you are in good hands.

We will treasure you forever.

Love you always