



Wout (Wally) Ackermann

15/1/30-15/10/2001 born in Holland. Australia had been his beloved home since 1961. Prostate Cancer Victim

The most significant thing I remember about my father, was that he was an absolute Trojan!. He was a healthy robust man. I cant remember a day that he was ever sick, no colds, no headaches, anything. He just kept going and going.

Dad came from a family of thespians, all of them artists, writers, actors; bohemian intellectuals. He never saw the practicality of such a lifestyle, and steered his creative abilities towards designing and building. At age 11 he hand built a rifle , as wild rabbits were the only free food source legally obtainable during war torn Holland. No one was buying art in those days.

He also had engineered a system of obtaining free

gas, at a time most utilities were coin operated, allowing his poverty stricken family to cook and keep warm. Within months he had gone to the aid of other desperate families rigging their gas meters to provide essential warmth during the freezing months. He saved many lives that winter.

By the following winter the family had made their way to peaceful Sweden. They had found an idyllic farm located by a lake. When the lake froze over he built a light catamaran on wheels so that they could access the village on the opposite shore of the lake. It became such a hit, he built many more for the locals, thus providing an income for the family while art was produced

for the summer months.

There was once an argument in the family about the "precision" of art. Dad declared that any fool could paint and to prove a point he did. Within 15 minutes he orchestrated a symphony of coloured brush strokes on a canvas. Much to the aghast of everyone else, he included his one and only painting at a group artists exhibition months later. Not only was it the first painting to be sold that evening, it was sold within 15 minutes.

It was his one claim to artistic fame. Although from there the family achieved great success individually, dad never painted again, though his appreciation of art improved! I guess it had to, 2 of his 3 children became artists.



This tribute has been written by his daughter Sjorcha Daynes

Wife — Rita

- ☺ **Children**—Ivor Ackermann, Alwin Ackermann & Sjorcha Daynes.
- ☺ **Grandchildren**— Ryan, Drue, Zjarie, Ritchie, Asjaya, Sven, Kurt & Teja

Dad's Saying
"I'll sleep when I'm dead"

When Dad met Mum

I loved this story. It's unique and really epitomized their relationship to a tee!

2 years after the end of WW2, life was starting to return to normal for the Dutch. The city cinema was now open. After the movie was finished (I always forgot to ask what movie

it was?) Dad and his friend Hans were walking behind 2 girls, one really good looking girl was wearing a rabbit coat. Both boys whistled, the girls looked around, sized them up, then ignored them. Dad called out "Hey rabbit, where are you going with that girl?" Mum promptly swung around and walloped

him with her handbag. She then interlocked her arms with her gal pal and marched off. Hans turned to find dad smiling "Why are you smiling? I don't think she liked you." Dad said "It doesn't matter, I just met my wife". 2 years later they met again, then never parted.



Dad & Mum on their wedding

Coming to Australia

I was born about 18 months after my parents and my 2 much older brothers immigrated to Australia from Holland,

As very little girl, I was always found snuggling up to everyone. I just couldn't get warm, even in summer. My parents relished the reprieve from the hot summer months when winter came., I was utterly miserable.

That's where the legend of why they came to Australia, I was their daughter who refused to be born in Holland.

My mother had wanted a 3rd child for a long time, when my brothers arrived quite quickly, she couldn't understand why it wasn't happening

Dad being Dad!

Dad truly was an adult that had ADHD and harnessed the potential possibilities that came with it. I just assumed that all parents had the same energy and tenacity that both my parents possessed. Learnt much later in life that ADHD is a fiery gift.

There wasn't a thing he couldn't do. He could build, fix, mend, everything. He spent his whole life devising projects to make someone's life better. He thrived on it. He wouldn't

Bugger! The Diagnosis

All it took was 20 minutes to totally erase months of physical hard work. I had left Ritchie with dad so that I could get timber to build canvasses for a series of paintings. Dad rang my mobile "come home" he demanded and hung up. The street was full of fire trucks, in the middle stood my neighbor, my dad holding young Ritchie, all 3 were black from the soot. A fireman whispered in my ear that they had called an ambulance,

again.

I used to question why there was such a big gap in age, and why I didn't have grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, when the family next door had them. Dad told me that I appeared in their dreams, and pleaded with them to come to Australia, so that I could be born. He told me that in his dream I would be shivering and shaking and telling them I missed them, that they should come to the land of everyday sunshine and sparkling beaches. I replied "I don't re-



member that"

Actually my dad was asked to come due to his engineering capabilities during the 1960's immigrant tradesman drive.

I had wanted to see the other family on the cold side of the world. He said "no, too cold for you".

In reality, it was dad that never wanted to

go back. He loved it here that much, that there was never a yearning for it.

Yes I still suffer the cold!

stop till he had come to the best possible solution. He absolutely never gave up, ever, right till the end. He would help anybody. I think he needed to so it kept his mind and body activity levels sated. He was prone to irritability if there was nothing to do.

3 months after retiring, he had completed all the projects around the house (Mum was in a state of panic) He decided to get a part time job. I wasn't confident of his chances at

his age. Against my warning , he went for 3 jobs that week, then had the dilemma of having to choose which job, as he was offered all 3.

He had stayed with a local manufacturing company for another 5 years, when I was expecting yet another child, we had decided to build an extension to our home. Dad, at the age of 70, built the 3 bedroom extension with garage. He was in the last throes of finishing, when our youngest son accidently set fire to the house.

as my father was having difficulty breathing. The doctors suggested he stay overnight for observation. Next day visiting him at the hospital, the specialist pulled me aside. He was going to organize some tests, it seemed apart from smoke inhalation, something far more sinister and insidious was at play inside his body.

Some weeks earlier, dad was trying

to get a rather high cupboard door aligned without success. It was a 2 man job. I casually told dad to wait till the school holidays, and the older boys could help. His reply reeled me "I have to finish this".

Discussing the results a few days later with a team of specialists. I knew then he had known something was up, he needed to finish his project. He was gone 6 months later.