**AGENDA ITEM 1.8**

**OBITUARY**

**PROFESSOR ERROL JOHN MAGUIRE FRACS  
GENERAL SURGEON  
15 JUNE 1940 – 12 APRIL 2022**

***Attached obituary provided by Professor Maguire’s sons, John Maguire (FRACS) and***

***Richard Maguire***

So, where do you start with his life? A life lived many times in the timeline of one life. I guess in the beginning, this is as good as anywhere. Professor Errol John Maguire AM, RFD, FRACS, FRCS (Edinburgh), FRCS (London), PHD, MBBS (QLD). That is some title.

Dad was born on 15.06.1940 in Cairns, the middle child of three. He was of Irish, German and English descent. His grandfather Patrick, was an Irish Catholic from Northern Ireland.

He spent his early years living and schooling in Caboolture, Tolga (near Atherton), and Salisbury in Brisbane. His father Clarence, worked for the PMG (post office) and his mother Mona, did various jobs and cared for the three children. He had a younger sister Suzanne, who is still with us today and living in Melbourne. Following a family tragedy involving his brother Richard on 17.04.1949, the family moved from the Tablelands, permanently South to Brisbane.

Dad then attended schooling in his secondary years at St Joseph’s College, Gregory Terrace which was a stretch financially for the family. It is quite ironic that his three sons were schooled at St Joseph’s College, Nudgee, the arch enemy of dad’s school, Gregory Terrace. Dad being loyal to a tee, cheered for his old school when rugby matches were played and other sporting events which amused him to no end.

In secondary school, he excelled both scholastically and at sports. He played first 15 rugby union and was a talented hurdler, winning both GPS and State titles in the hurdles. He remained friends with his Gregory Terrace mates and his good friend John Handy, I am sure can attest to that.

After school, he studied medicine at the University of Queensland and continued playing rugby union for University of Queensland and the Med15. The UQ Red Heavies rugby union side (University of Queensland rugby side) has had three generations of Maguire’s in their ranks.

Dad took a government scholarship in his final years to assist with family finances. As a result, he had to do a return of service in country areas for several years. He graduated in 1964 then spent one year as an RMO at the PA Hospital in 1965. He was then sent off into the country areas and

after tossing a coin between Richmond and Julia Creek, he was sent with his new wife to Julia Creek.

During the same period of his late schooling and early university time, he met the love of his life, our mother, Marcia Antill. They allegedly met as Dad’s sister Suzanne went to the same school as Mum at Lourdes Hill. They met when he was collecting his sister from the bus stop and their relationship flourished over several years. They were married in 1965 and as stated previously, the young couple headed off to Julia Creek in 1966. The family was then transferred to Babinda in 1967-1969 with Michael and Melinda, my brother and sister, being born during this period.

We then transferred to Townsville in 1970 and 1971 where Dad worked as a general surgical and orthopaedic registrar. My sister Bridget was born during this period, one week prior to Cyclone Althea at Christmas in 1971. Dad was encouraged by Dr Norman Scott-Young to continue training and studying in surgery. To this end, the family then jetted off to The United Kingdom with four children under the age of 5 years, for Dad to pursue further studies in general surgery.

We lived in Balham, Raynes Park both in London and Amersham, near Oxford. Dad was working as a registrar in general surgery and attempted to pass various surgical qualifications. During this time, he undertook and completed his FRCS (Edinburgh) and then completed his FRCS (London).

He became fully qualified and registered as a surgeon in 1972. This was as a general surgeon.

Having been coaxed back to Australia by Dr Norman Scott-Young, the family returned to Australia at the end of 1973, moving to Townsville where Dad worked at the Townsville General Hospital, James Cook University, Ingham, Charters Towers and Ayr. He also started private practice in Townsville.

The family lived here from the end of 1973 to 2005 when Mum and Dad moved from Townsville to Mt Tamborine in the Gold Coast. Two more children were born during this period – Kate and Richard. As you know, Dad was involved in everything. He was medically very dedicated to his work and I remember him missing my 30th Birthday when one of his patients presented with a complication of internal bleeding which they were unable to control. Dad having O negative blood which is able to be universally donated, un-scrubbed and transfused fresh blood into the patient. I believe two units were used. The bleeding ceased and the patient was saved. I remember seeing the same patient a number of years later and she was in awe of him having saved her life in such an unusual way. She was so proud and it was quite an insight into his life.

Dad devoted an ordered amount of time to the Catholic Church. He used to read at mass, served communion and sang in various choirs. One of his favourite accolades was being ordained into the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre – a Papal order and ordained by or on behalf of the Pope. He was very proud of this achievement.

Voluntary work

Dad once said to me, if you ever volunteer for anything, be the president. We have been trained to make decisions and delegate quickly. Very wise words indeed. As such, he was president of everything – The Lions Club, his beloved golf club, General Surgeons of Australia he was head of the State and National committee’s for RACS and the list was endless. As such, dad was either president or vice president of all of them.

Army

Dad’s other great passion was his Military Service. This began at Gregory Terrace as a Cadet. He served in Timor and Bougainville and was CO of the 9th Field Ambulance in Townsville. I believe he also served at one stage as an Honorary Colonel of the Cadets in Cairns and Rockhampton. His official discharge rank was Lieutenant Colonel. He was also heavily involved in the RSL and was vice president of the RSL at Mt Tamborine.

Family

Dad loved his family. He loved his wife Marcia and he was proud of all of his children and his 11 grandchildren. The last grandchild, young Patrick Alexander Errol Maguire was born the day before Dad passed away. He loved his patients and they loved him. He loved teaching and his students and registrars and they were all rewarded with knowledge when they were associated with him. The Military and golf were true passions. He was the life of the party, singing songs with a glass of red wine or a beer in his hand. He lived every day to the fullest.

We will miss you Dad. May you rest in peace.

***This obituary was provided by John Maguire FRACS (Ortho)***

Dads later life and achievement:

My father had always enjoyed teaching the new generation of doctors whether they be registrars, residents or medical students. He had endeavoured to ensure medical students no matter if they were interested in surgery as a career or not have a good foundation in general surgery. In the later half of Dad’s career he played an integral role in the establishment of the JCU medical program. Having lived and worked in Townsville for the better part of 30 years, he understood the need for a program based in North Queensland to provide opportunities to regional Queensland. Prior to JCU’s program, the University of Queensland had a clinical school based in Townsville. Dad pushed hard for the JCU medical school to get over the line, alongside people like Prof Ian Wronski, Richard Hayes and Vic Callaghan amongst others.

Dad’s passion for teaching lead him to seek the position of Professor of surgery to ensure he could impart his knowledge on the doctors and in particular the surgeons of the future. He was involved in the JCU program as an associated professor but he saught a higher role so he could develop the teaching program for students in their surgical rotations. Once Bond medical school had been approved Dad was headhunted by an old colleague who he worked with in establishing JCU’s bid. He was the inaugural professor of surgery at Bond University and moved his life and practice in 2005 to begin in this role, fulfilling a lifelong dream of his. He stayed in this role for a few years but ultimately moved onto Griffith University in the same role as Professor of Surgery. A role he stayed in until his retirement in 2014 from clinical practice. He was granted the title of Emeritus Professor for his contributions to the Griffith University medical school after he had retired.

Moving from Townsville to the Gold Coast in 2005 was a big decision. He had proved surgical services to North Queensland for over 30 years and he had a busy private practice to consider as well as his role as VMO at the TTH. I remember packing the records from up his rooms prior to him leaving and seeing the sheer number of people Dad had treated in his private practice alone over those years. With a heavy heart mum and dad set off on their new adventure to SEQ. Given his professorial duties and being in the twilight of his surgical career dad opted to work as a staff specialist and do away with private practice. He worked initially at the old Gold Coast Hospital in Southport and at Robina hospital as it developed into a public hospital to service the expanding southern part of the Gold Coast. He was there for the move to the new Gold Coast University hospital in 2013. Dads guidance helped me to obtain at position as a resident medical officer in the new hospital just prior to his retirement. He was on long service leave from his clinical role when i started working there so I didnt have to worry about having to work for him!

Mum and Dad had moved to the gold coast and had primarily been based up on Mt Tamborine, with frequent trips down the coast. He still kept himself busy reviewing new surgical products for the TGA and being involved in QCAT, before he was finally convinced to give it all away. In retirement Dad continued to mentor medical students, this time working with a surgical interest group at Griffith university, mentoring the surgeons of the future. He also began to play a more active role in the RSL, Dad took on the role of Vice President of the Tamborine mountain RSL, a role he thoroughly enjoyed allowing him to engage in the community of the Mountain. In 2017 after many trials and tribulations, with the guidance of my father over the years I was selected in the general surgery training program. I could tell that he was proud as punch, and finally one of his sons had followed in his footsteps in general surgery, and he didnt have to endure another orthopaedic surgeon in the family!

Recently mum and dad had permanently moved to the gold coast to be closer to family and a few handy modifications thanks to DVA and mums determination allowed him to be there to the very end. We miss you dad

***This obituary was provided by Richard Maguire***