

Eulogy for Ted Cook

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. My name is Joseph Edward Turco and I am proudly named after both of my grandfathers—the late Giuseppe Turco and the man we are paying tribute to here today—Albert Edward Cook, more affectionately known as Ted, Teddy or Grandpa Ted. I know he would have been happy to see everybody here today and on behalf of my entire family, we thank you for joining us as we collectively celebrate my grandfather's life.

Sadly, less than a month ago I also gave the eulogy for my Nonno, Giuseppe Turco. At first I was extremely nervous to perform this daunting task. But now as I look back to his funeral, I am so proud that I was a part of the service. Today I feel the same way. I am privileged and honoured to talk about my Grandpa Ted.

When I was preparing to give that speech, the first step I took was to look up the word Eulogy.

A **Eulogy** - is a written or spoken speech in which an individual is praised very highly. Well, after watching my Grandfather battle for his life during these past two years, praising Grandpa Ted will be an easy task.

But before we can adequately begin to praise Ted, we need to quickly examine some of the hardships he endured throughout his life. By only his second birthday, Grandpa Ted's father died of pneumonia. Shortly after, his stepfather also died. After only eight years of marriage, his wife Joan Louisa died of Leukemia. Grandpa Ted survived two fires, he fell out of a tree and broke his back, in fact during his life he broke several bones—including both hips during the last two years, he suffered a stroke, he suffered from ulcers, he had his gall bladder removed, he had a twisted bowel, and he also battled prostate cancer, bladder cancer and stomach tumours which caused internal bleeding.....

But, through it all, Grandpa Ted loved life and he loved to live. He loved to cook—he would make cookies, tarts, pies, jams, rice puddings, bread puddings, and many more delightful treats. He loved sports—he curled, he golfed, he played darts and in his younger days he played soccer professionally. He loved to travel—he had been back to England six times, he had traveled to Texas and to Florida and he took many other trips within the province. He loved to celebrate—he sang, he danced, he laughed, and he enjoyed the odd drink. He loved gardening, he loved to tell stories and jokes, he loved the \$1.99 breakfast special at the casino. Ted Cook lived life to the fullest.

However, the way in which he lived, or better yet, the way in which he battled during these past two years fully demonstrated his love and zest for life. I have always loved my grandfather, but not until these past two years, when I spent so much time with him in the hospital, did I fully appreciate the strength of his character. I believe these past two years can serve as a blue-print on how to live life. Grandpa Ted is truly a role model for all of us.

Grandpa Ted is a picture of Determination.

Determination-the act of deciding definitely and firmly, being resolute

During the second weekend in October of 2002, Grandpa Ted fell and badly broke his hip. The doctors said he would probably never walk again and he would probably have to be moved into some type of home. However, Grandpa Ted decided definitely and firmly that this would not be the case. He rehabilitated himself so that he could walk and he moved back into his apartment.

Unfortunately, in April of 2003 he fell again while purchasing his favourite British tabloid at the Cambrian Mall. This time he broke his other hip and the prognosis was the same—he wouldn't walk again and he would have to give up his apartment. But the doctors

underestimated his internal strength. He would walk again and move back into his beloved apartment. To Grandpa Ted's dismay, his license was taken away shortly after he moved back into his place. But again he was determined to maintain his independence. He purchased himself a scooter; a scooter which would take him from Wellington St. up Bruce Hill and over to Rome's so he wouldn't miss out on the special they were having on broccoli. That same scooter would also take him down to the Station Mall so he could purchase new pots and pans to continue baking up delicious treats. When it comes to courage, strength, will and determination, Grandpa Ted is a true inspiration.

Optimism-having a positive outlook; a doctrine that this world is the best possible world. Grandpa Ted was the most optimistic person I have ever met. With him, the glass was always half full.....and that glass usually had rye and ginger. Despite all of his physical ailments, Grandpa Ted always maintained an upbeat attitude. Even in his last few days, he would talk of taking a cruise. In fact, the exact way he put it was, "I'm going to ask the doctor if a can take a few weeks off in May, so I can go on a trip." ... all the while he was having daily blood transfusions and a supply of oxygen just to keep him alive. However, Grandpa Ted was certain that all he needed to do was get his strength up a little bit. I believe, and everyone who knew him well would also agree, that Grandpa Ted's eternal optimism kept him young even at the age of 87.

In addition to being determined and optimistic, the character trait in Grandpa Ted that I also admired was his appreciative nature. In the past two years he spent time in eight different hospital rooms on six different floors. And in each different setting, Grandpa Ted made it a priority to get to know all the nurses. He appreciated all of their efforts and he would often joke around with them to try to make their job more enjoyable. Several nurses expressed how

much they enjoyed Grandpa Ted as a patient. Grandpa Ted would often buy flowers for the different nurses and a little bubbly for special occasions. Grandpa Ted was also appreciative of all the people who visited him in the hospital to lend their support. In fact, this past Christmas he purchased seven Christmas cards and attached them with a dozen carnations each and sent them to the special women in his life. Grandpa Ted appreciated his life and all the individuals that he shared it with.

Within this past year all three grandsons have left home. Both, Dan and David are in school in Waterloo, and I have finally left the house after marrying Vicky this past summer. Our mother found the house to be quite empty. So this past Christmas our mother decided to adopt a cute kitten. In the first few days we all noticed that this cat was extremely enthusiastic, energetic, and above all feisty. On the second day our father appropriately named him Teddy after our enthusiastic, energetic, and feisty grandfather. And since cats have nine lives, we think Teddy is a great name for this kitten. This kitten will always be a reminder of Grandpa Ted.

Grandpa Ted proudly served in the army in World War II. While he was aboard one particular naval ship, a gypsy fortune teller predicted that he would get married, he would have a daughter, his wife would die shortly after their marriage, he would move to Canada, and he would become rich. This fortune teller was accurate in most of her predictions, and because of this Grandpa Ted would religiously play the lottery hoping to hit it big. And even though the final prediction from the gypsy didn't materialize, Grandpa Ted has left us with a lifetime of fond memories which are priceless.--Thank you once again for coming and honouring Grandpa Ted and knowing his nature, he would have really appreciated your presence here today.

Thanks again and God Bless Albert Edward Cook.