



Vale

Eric Nelson Craig MBE

18th April 1923 – 10th November 2020

A funeral service for the late Eric Nelson Craig was held at St. Barnabas Chapel on Wednesday the 18th of November. Eric and his wife Moyna (nee Christian) retired to the island in December 1988 after a musical career spanning over fifty years in Auckland, as a violinist, teacher and conductor. Eric and Moyna's family was made complete again when son Reuben also settled on the island. He would later marry Michelle (nee Scott).

The service began with a welcome from the Chaplain, before the congregation sang Holy Holy Holy. Maureen King, who had known Eric since 1954, and who had remained a faithful friend until his life's end, prepared and delivered an excellent eulogy (which has been included in its entirety below). The Bible reading chosen for the occasion was from 2 Corinthians 4 and was read by the Chaplain, *"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all"*. Afterwards the congregation sang Abide With Me and Amazing Grace. Before the coffin was removed from the church, silence was kept, and the Chaplain led the congregation in the Commendation. The bells were tolled, and the mourners prepared to drive to Kingston cemetery. At the graveside the RSL offered their tribute, Don Reynold's read from Psalm 23 and a letter of condolence from Reuben's cousin, Leyton Craig was read (this has also been included below). The short graveside service included the singing of What A Friend We Have In Jesus before the Committal and the Pitcarin Anthem. The family wish to thank those who joined them on the day, as well as those who have offered their love and support both near and far. The family would also like to thank the staff at Care Norfolk for their "in home help" over the

(continued overleaf)

Thanksgiving Day Service



Wednesday 25 November - 10.00am

Uniting Church Hall, Cascade Road

There is a change to our normal routine.

A combined Thanksgiving Day Service

**Uniting (Methodist) & All Nations (Fijian) will be held this year in the
Uniting Church Hall.**

This enables us to maintain a 'Covid Safe Seating' plan for a larger gathering.

The Church Hall will be open the day before (Tuesday) to receive produce and gifts.
Tables will be ready.

*We welcome you to worship, to count your many blessings
and purchase produce at the auction.*

Eric Nelson Craig MBE - continued

years, as well as a number of faithful visitors which include, but are not limited to Maureen and Lorraine, Donald and Ron. We thank Maureen for preparing the delivering the eulogy, Phil McDowell for playing the organ, Rev. Fell for the service, and Don Reynold for reading by the graveside. A special thankyou to Tardy for driving today, Shane and the gravediggers, the ladies who prepared the beautiful flowers, and the RSL for their tribute. We acknowledge and thank the Auxiliary for catering a wonderful wake afterward. Finally, the family wish to thank the doctors and nurses at the Norfolk Island hospital, and in particular the staff on Dar Randa for their care and concern.

Eric would have me say: *"An old friend is my violin, it lies within its case*

And each day I take it out to play and reminisce.

The joys of life it brings to me as I pick up that treasured bow

And over the strings I play the tunes that are the very best to know.

My problems seem to dwindle, my thoughts soar high to God

When the music flows so gently in the tender tunes of love.

There's nothing else can take its place than my music in this world

That brings that special joy of life I love

But no more arpeggios, runs and trills.

the applause dies ... my performance is done

my violin now rests for placing in God's hands

my life ... I find my world is now at rest."

As the Psalmist wrote: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saint."

My name is Maureen King ... a friend of Eric Craig for over sixty six years. I was a foundation pupil in 1953 at Mount Roskill Grammar School, in Auckland New Zealand, and it was in my second year in 1954 that I first met, "Mister Sir" as I have always called him.

Eric Nelson Craig was born on 18th April 1923 in Manurewa Auckland New Zealand to Samuel and Evelyn Craig and brother to Gordon, father to Rueben and father-in-law to Michelle.

In 1928 Eric attended Manurewa Primary School and then to the august Auckland Boys Grammar School in 1937. It was in 1931 at the early age of eight that Eric began his life-long career in music. His first music teacher was Neville Walker from 1ZM Radio Station. Then in 1933 it was Miss Violet Lewis commenced her music teaching with young Eric.

1934 Eric passed Grade 4 Violin Theory and from then onwards passed with Distinction in Grades 5-6-7 and in 1938 again passing with Distinction was runner-up to New Zealand's best gaining the Silver Medal. Eric then went on to register for the twelve months tuition for the Schubert Scholarship and gained the Scholarship Award two years in succession. So began a truly masterful musical career and continued until his passing on 10th November 2020.

1941-1942 Eric Craig was called up for service in the NZ Army Corps as a 19 year-old, served until

August 1946 and rose to the rank of Sergeant in the NZ Army Corps. When Eric and Moyna returned home to Norfolk Island, Eric became a Member of the RSL Branch Norfolk Island. ... "Lest we forget."

Eric was employed at the Auckland Electric Power Board in 1952 and in 1953 commenced teaching music accompanied with his violin, in many Auckland Secondary Schools.

Eric was employed at Mount Roskill Grammar School in 1954 as the Music Master for one day each week. Music with Mister Craig was really terribly boring! True. Then the following year, 1955 my School Certificate year, Mister Craig took we Form 5 students for two compulsory 40 minute periods weekly. It was during these music lessons, playing his violin, and sharing his love of classical music that I fell in love with the classical writers and their music.

To this day I still love classical music. Thank you Mister Sir.

I have loved, respected and admired Eric for his strength of character, his love for Christ and his strong, fervent Christian faith. A revered friend to so many peoples.

One day, when Eric and Moyna were courting they spent a day at Cockle Bay beach (in Auckland) In the afternoon, and sitting on some rocks Eric said to Moyna: "Well, how about it?" Moyna said "Yeah, okay" and so began the most beautiful love affair which lasted sixty three years. They were married 12th November 1949. Moyna passed away in the arms of her Eric on 22nd September 2012.

I will continue to be inspired by the music he played, as will so many peoples the world over. The many, many years of willing service he and Moyna gave to 'The Friends of St Barnabas'. Finances raised continue to this day to support when required, the St Barnabas Chapel restorations.

Then the weekly, musical recitals Eric on his violin and Donald Reynolds strumming his guitar, entertained so many guests at The 'Norfolk Hotel', then called 'The Colonial' and is now known as 'Paradise Hotel'... Yes, they entertained the hotel dinner guests each Tuesday evening for over 15 years ... and so many other music recitals on Norfolk Island. Eric and Donald remained loyal and true friends up until Eric's passing.

Donald would visit Eric most Mondays and together played their music, for both gentlemen were classically trained. Eric and Donald produced a CD the title: "Eric and Donald" and on the CD are twenty pieces of their chosen music. In the past few weeks the CD was played for Eric to enjoy and to remember, in his ward at the Norfolk Island Hospital... ever so precious.

In 1974 Eric established and maintained a symphony orchestra of young people in South Auckland, New Zealand. It was Eric's vision to promote and foster music in the community. This orchestra under the baton of Eric Craig performed in New Zealand and overseas.

(conitnued overleaf)

Eric Nelson Craig MBE - continued

It was in the mid-eighties when the family moved back home to Norfolk Island, Eric resigned his position as Teacher/ Conductor of the South Auckland Symphony Orchestra.

Eric then began to tutor many young and older folk here on Norfolk Island and the numerous recitals held at St Barnabas Chapel from Eric and his pupils were so enjoyed by our community folk.

The orchestra Eric established in 1974 continues today in 2020. In 2001 a younger group of string players was formed, together with the older orchestral players to form what is called: The Manukau Youth Orchestra. A heritage left by Eric Craig.

It was in 1977 when Eric and Moyna brought the Manukau Youth Orchestra to Norfolk Island. The island folk and tourists alike were thoroughly entertained by these young musicians.

The Norfolk Island Rotary Club Members were equally impressed that they gifted one thousand dollars to the youth orchestra players. That was a huge amount of money in the 1970's. Thank you to Rotary Members and their generosity.

Eric Nelson Craig has left us all a tremendous music legacy. A violinist – teacher – conductor.



“E pai rawa atu” --- He was excellent.

Eric Craig was an active member of the Auckland West District of the Free Masons prior to returning home to Norfolk Island.

Eric was a member of the Norfolk Island Rotary Club from 1989. Prior to this he was a Member of the Mt Roskill Rotary Club. (1987-1989) Eric was President of our N/I Rotary Club 1990-1991 and Secretary 1992-1993. Eric was awarded the honoured “Paul Harris Fellowship” in 1997 for his services to Rotary. A Paul Harris Fellow, well deserved.

The Norfolk Island White Oak was established in 1999 and Eric joined as a charter member. At the weekly Thursday morning meetings he simply had to win the games of “Cribb” and other cards games! He did so enjoy these White Oak meetings.

Eric was Secretary/Treasurer of the Norfolk Island Historical Society from 2012 to 2016 and retained his membership up until his passing.

In 1985 Eric Nelson Craig was honoured by Queen Elizabeth II as a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in recognition of his world-wide services to music.

Most Tuesday mornings, up until Eric went to stay on da randa, Lorraine Boudan and I would take a plate of, what we called, ‘sticky buns’ and share a cuppa tea with Eric. Eric and I would spend hours reminiscing about his life in New Zealand, the peoples he met, the places he visited with his Moyna, and his musical achievements. He possessed a great memory. Teacher and pupil together! Fortunately for me, Eric never told tales out of school! He was warned by his pupil! While ‘sharing’, Lorraine would busy herself in his kitchen which often needed that ‘woman’s touch’. Her tasks were so appreciated by Eric.

Eric will live on in all our memories. Up until his passing on Tuesday 10th November Eric was the oldest member of our Norfolk Island community. To you Rueben and Michelle, all that he did for you, do treasure the memories you both have of your father and be so thankful. He truly was a pretty all right father.

God never sees His children die; He simply sees them coming Home.

Rest dear Eric: a loving husband and father, a dear friend to so many folk world-wide, and my ‘Mister Sir’.

“His life was gentle, and the elements so mix’d in him, that Nature might stand up, and say to all the world. This was a man!” (William Shakespeare ‘Julius Caesar’. Act V Scene V)

WITH LOVE WE REMEMBER

(Maureen King)

Message of Condolence from Leighton Craig

On behalf of the Craig family, today I express our heartfelt condolences to Reuben and Michele for the loss of my Uncle, Eric Craig.

I also pay my respects on behalf of my father Gordon Craig, who is unable to articulate these thoughts himself, but who I can attest loved his brother dearly and I know would wish me to convey this message today.

This past week I’ve had cause to pause and reflect on my vivid memories of a childhood growing up in Auckland, and in particular my visits across town to a house in St Heliers on Waitemata Harbour to visit Uncle Eric, my much loved Aunt Moyna and my cousin Reuben.

As a child the St Heliers home always held a certain other worldly charm. There were many Christmas lunches, Reuben’s enviable and significant Lego collection, building forts under the upturned boat and sandpit in the backyard and exploring the beach and local neighbourhood, including the enticingly named Dingle Dell bush reserve. It was a boys-own adventure land.

There was a guava tree in the yard and an unmistakable red VW Beetle in the garage. And there was always Aunt Moyna’s irrepressible laughter, and Uncle Eric who equally enjoyed a good laugh. And there was music.

(continued overleaf)

Eric Nelson Craig MBE - continued

Christmas lunches inevitably ended in a concert in the lounge with Reuben and I reciting our latest pieces from weekly piano lessons, before Uncle Eric finally picked up his bow, usually accompanied by my father on the piano. What transpired would always have that special touch of magic.

In 2008 Uncle Eric and Auntie Moyna visited Brisbane to help celebrate my father's 80th birthday. At dad's party, the duo reunited to give a recital that will stay with me forever. Fortunately I was able to record the performance that evening and save it for posterity.

What the performance highlighted for me was the extraordinary tone my Uncle was able to coax from his violin. In his hands the instrument came alive in a way I've seldom heard, as though he could channel the very life and history of the timber and strings. His vibrato was mesmerising, and he could indeed give his instrument a voice. Such an intimacy of touch with an instrument is testament to a life immersed in the joy and love of playing music, something my uncle did every day.

Reuben and I recently discussed just how many music students Uncle Eric had guided over his distinguished life in music. When Reuben calculated the number who had been involved in the various iterations of numerous school and youth orchestras over many years, it was a staggering number of young people who had been under his tutelage.

Earlier this week when my sister Sue-Ellen acknowledged Eric's passing on her social media page, I noticed one of her friends responded that Eric had been a wonderful teacher to him. Such was his widespread presence.

In recent years I have been fortunate to see Uncle Eric on his visits to Brisbane for medical treatment. It was only last year he sat at our dining table flicking through photos on his smart phone like a teenager, proudly showing images of his beloved Norfolk Island home. We enjoyed a glass or two of red. And at 96 years of age, he still enjoyed a good laugh.

I am pleased I was also able to bid my own farewell when Uncle Eric was recently hospitalised in Brisbane

and it was apparent that his time with us might be drawing to an end.

And so on behalf of my family, I acknowledge and pay tribute to Uncle Eric, who has left an indelible footprint in our lives and the lives of many others.

November 21

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

November 21 is the 325th day of the year (326th in leap years) in the Gregorian calendar. 40 days remain until the end of the year.

1877 – Thomas Edison announces his invention of the phonograph, a machine that can record and play sound.

1905 – Albert Einstein's paper that leads to the mass–energy equivalence formula, $E = mc^2$, is published in the journal *Annalen der Physik*.

1910 – Sailors on board Brazil's warships including the Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Bahia, violently rebel in what is now known as the Revolta da Chibata (Revolt of the Lash).

1953 – The Natural History Museum, London announces that the "Piltdown Man" skull, initially believed to be one of the most important fossilized hominid skulls ever found, is a hoax.

1969 – U.S. President Richard Nixon and Japanese Premier Eisaku Satō agree on the return of Okinawa to Japanese control in 1972. The U.S. retains rights to bases on the island, but these are to be nuclear-free.

1969 – The first permanent ARPANET link is established between UCLA and SRI.

1985 – United States Navy intelligence analyst Jonathan Pollard is arrested for spying after being caught giving Israel classified information on Arab nations. He is subsequently sentenced to life in prison.

1992 – A major tornado strikes the Houston, Texas area during the afternoon. Over the next two days the largest tornado outbreak ever to occur in the US during November spawns over 100 tornadoes.

2017 – Robert Mugabe formally resigns as President of Zimbabwe, after thirty-seven years in office.

HEAD FOR THE SHED

Norfolk Island Men's Shed Inc

Come and join us at the top of The Village on Wednesday afternoons from 1-3pm.

Want to help with community or individual projects?

Steve is your man to help you with your skills. or do you just want to pop in and relax, play cards, have a cuppa and a chat?... see you there.

Ring Bruce on 53058 or Paul on 23431 for more information on what's happening at the Men's Shed



Australian Men's Shed Association
SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

**The Norfolk
ISLANDER**



Anglicare



Norfolk Island

**KIERNAN
AGENCIES**

