

Aidan's celebration funeral service - Tuesday 2pm - 26/10/10.

Good afternoon friends and family of Aidan. My name is Emily Jade and as some of you would know from Aidan and Aleisha's wedding's I am a civil celebrant in my spare time and I have been so honoured over the past few weeks to play an important role in Aidan and Aleisha's life.

I married them 3 times....sort of. But I'll get to that later.

Before we start I just want to thank Champagne Jazz for their time here today. They played at Aidan and Aleisha's wedding last week and just played Wonderful World as that was a song Aidan loved and would often play on the Saxophone down the phone to Alison's best friend Renee all the way over in South Africa.

On behalf of Alison and Aleisha, I want to thank you all for coming here today to celebrate an inspiring young man's life. And that is exactly what Aidan would want us to do today. He would want us not to be solemn, he would say don't fuss...chill out people. Hence the reason why Aleisha asked us to wear colour today and to smile when we remember the achievements of Aidan's short but poignant life. Plus in honour of our Pirate Chef, you will notice some chef hats scattered around the room...go on, be brave, let's put them on, in honour of Aidan and his love of the kitchen.

When we think about Aidan's life, although it seems devastatingly short, there is much to reflect on. A-dog...A...Mr Miagi and our Pirate Chef was a unique character, he was so important and loved by many people and some of those people today will help us recall and reflect on the relationships we shared with Aidan and what a genuine person he was. As we celebrate his life today we can take satisfaction in knowing that Aidan has been, still is and will be, a part of our lives forever. His influence endures, and will continue to endure in the unending consequences flowing from his character and deeds.

But first I want to make special mention of some people that were incredibly important to Aidan

His parents Alison and Neil. Aidan's sister Laila who he has crossed over to be with. Geoff, Alison's brother and Aidan's special Uncle. His South African Grandparents Rita and Fanie, who couldn't be here today but are sending love and thoughts from SA as are The Cornell Clan who were like family to Aidan in South Africa. The Ellen family who were also his family. His new family and in-laws Jackie and Keith and his Brother in law Daniel, his good mates Sam and Dan and of course Aidan's beautiful wife.....Mrs Needham..Aleisha. I know your love and dedication to Aidan would have been of great comfort and strength to him and your love will keep his memory strong.

Another way for all of us to keep Aidan's memory strong is through something he loved, cooking. Alison told me that when he was deciding what to do in his career, he couldn't decide between being a psychologist or a chef. He was always a great listener and empathetic so his friends and school mates would confide in him with their problems. But as we all know he chose cooking, and for the same reasons, to help bring people joy. I'm sure you will agree, he helped many more people through his cooking skills than he ever would have being a psychologist. You will notice on the back of the order of service is one of Aidan's favourite recipes, and we have included it in the hope that in your grief, or when you want to include Aidan in a special event or just to quietly remember him,

you will take that recipe and cook it in honour of the Pirate Chef. Personally I can't think of a better, more delicious way to commemorate such an amazing young man.

I believe through my limited time of knowing Aidan and Aleisha that although Aidan had many achievements, becoming a chef, his cookbook, his marketstall business, his greatest achievement would be his relationship with firstly his amazing mother Alison and his beautiful wife Aleisha. Whom he married three times...my mistake...which I think he forgave me for.

Firstly at the Wesley hospital on a very special date the 10.10.2010....but I spelt his name wrong on the certificate didn't I...so I had to go back and do it again the next day....and then we all met again Friday week ago for the beautiful wedding at New Farm. But I say there is nothing wrong with being married three times to the same person...I myself have done that....so welcome to the club Aleisha. And maybe being married 3 times was more significant for your love that we could have first thought. Three is a spiritual and mystical number that shows up repeatedly in life. In mythology: three fates, three muses, three graces. In religion Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Three is a prime component of fairy tales: three wishes, three bears, three fairies. Three is a basic structure of life: past, present, future. Three represents our minds, hearts, and souls. I know, and everyone that knows you, knows that your love for each other had that enviable spiritual power of three, one that penetrated the minds, hearts and souls of not only each other, but anyone who came in contact with the both of you.

Continuing with the theme of three, to read Aidan's eulogy, three special people will reflect on Aidan's life. Firstly dear family friend Renee Vincent, Alison's best friend for over 40 years. Aleisha, Aidan's greatest love and Sam, Aidan's best friend.

Renee...

Aleisha...

Sam....

Now to take some time to reflect on what we have just heard, Champagne Jazz is going to play a special song in honour of Aidan. Moondance. When Aidan and Aleisha were studying Film and TV at school, they were making a short film in different groups, spilt into girls and boys. Both groups wanted to use Moondance as their theme song. Being the true gentleman, Aidan graciously let the girls use the song.

Moondance.

A family isn't necessarily bonded by blood, it is bonded by heart, so therefore Aidan had a BIG family. On behalf of his big family, 3 family members will now read tributes to Aidan

At the wedding Aidan's brother in law Daniel wrote some lovely words, that I think would be nice to hear again.

Daniel.

The Ellen Family played an enormous part in Aidan's life, Fokel his adopted step sister will speak on behalf of them.

Fokel..

Finally Friday Aidan acquired a new legal family, so his Father in Law Keith would like to say a few words.

Keith.

While today is hard because we are parting with someone we loved so deeply, we are not alone in our loss, we are all here for each other, and no matter what our spiritual beliefs are we all know that Aidan is in a place of no pain, suffering or illness any longer.

Alison's reflection words – read by Emily Jade

And now as we say our final farewell today, Aleisha has put together a beautiful reminder of how Aidan squeezed every last moment out of his 24 years.

Slideshow.

As we leave today, remembering Aidan with Joy....we ask one small thing....a cheer for Aidan, taken from his favourite TV show, the Iron Chef... it goes like this Alla Cuisine...throw your chef hats in the air at the same time on the count of three...one two three Alla Cuisine!

The celebration of Aidan's life will continue at Sirromet winery just down the road, all are welcome to join. Thankyou everyone for attending.