



*Alek, Lee, Kathy, Paul and families would like to thank everyone for their love and support and expressions of sympathy.*

*Please join us for refreshments in the Diamond Room at Maitland City Bowling Club at Rutherford following the interment.*

## *Peter Schulha*

*10.07.1926 to 30.05.2019*

*92 Years*



*St Peters Anglican Church*

*William Street East Maitland*

*11.06.2019*



Peter Schulha was born on July 10, 1926 at Noweselowka in The Ukraine. He was in a family of six children. His parents were Daria and George Schulha. They owned and operated a flour mill that supplied the local village.

Peter's father George served as an Officer in the Russian Army during the Second World War. As the German's retreated out of Russia they began to imprison all able-bodied men to work in Germany. Peter and his Father were forced to leave their home and their family. They found their way travelling by night and hiding during the day, to a displaced persons camp in Judenberg (Austria), where George became a Camp Supervisor and Peter a chauffeur for the Camp Commandant. It was here that George met Monica and Peter met a young Nada Fedas, where Nada the Camp Commandant's secretary.

As Austria were only accepting Austrian citizens, the foreign camp occupants had to make a choice to resettle elsewhere. So George, Monica, Elizabeth and Peter along with Nada, Luba, Nikolai and Natalie travelled by train ending up in Naples, Italy, where they boarded the ship the "Anna Salen".

The party of eight arrived in Sydney on June 14, 1949 and travelled by train to Bathurst, NSW, where they lived for six months in an Immigration Reception Centre at Kelso. After Bathurst, the families were once again on the move – George, Monica and Elizabeth were sent to Brisbane for George to work in the cane fields; Peter, still single at the time, was sent to work in the steelworks at Port Kembla; and Nada also single, was sent to Fly Point in Nelson Bay – a camp for single women. Luba, Nikolai and Natalie made the trip to Greta Migrant Camp.

Nada left Fly Point and was sent to work as a nanny for a Sydney QC making weekend visits to Greta to visit her sister and niece. Peter then moved to Greta to work in the transport division, driving buses, ambulances and trucks. Peter travelled to Sydney in an open-top jeep, he'd borrowed from the Transport Department to collect Nada and bring her back to Greta where they eventually married on April 16 1950 in a traditional Russian ceremony. They were the first couple married in the Russian Orthodox Chapel at Greta Camp, officiated by Father John Lupish.

Together with his brother-in-law Nick, they decided to venture into a business partnership by buying an International tip-truck from R H Taylor for £500 (\$1000).

The truck was in a poor state of repair and the men spent most weekends fixing it. According to Peter, they made "a few bob".

Whilst still living at the Camp, Peter and Nada had a son, Alek in the Greta Camp Hospital in 1951. They both worked very hard and saved enough money to then buy a house in Smith Street, Maitland shortly after. Nada then started work at the nearby Queens Arms Hotel in High Street Maitland as a cook, while Peter still continued to work at Greta Camp. He eventually obtained work with Mr Joe Henry at Joe's Used Car Yard at East Maitland, repairing and respraying cars. While there he was approached to work at R H Taylor, Maitland, where he repaired and resprayed cars, trucks and farming machinery for over 30 years. He also detailed new cars. He had tractor accident in January 1973, which forced him to retire early. He was 47 years old.

After the 1955 Maitland flood, where the Smith Street home was completely inundated with floodwater, the Schulha family relocated their house to higher ground at 3 George Street, East Maitland. Luba, Nikolai and their children relocated their house to number 5 George Street, next door. While at this address, Peter and Nada's second child Katherine, was born in 1962. Nada obtained work running the kitchen at Maitland Golf Club, where she remained in employment for 25 years. In 1972, the family moved into a new house at 5 Chelmsford Drive, Metford.

Nada passed away in March 2006 (aged 80). Peter remained at this address until his passing. Peter is survived by his son Alek and his daughter-in-law Lee; daughter Katherine and his son-in-law Paul.

Lee and Alek have 4 children – Brendon married to Belinda with children William and Sophie; Bree married to Stephen with children Nadia, Olivia, Darcy, Mia, Alexandria and Georgia; Daniel married to Lydia with children Riley, Isabelle and Mackenzie; and Alyson.

Katherine and Paul have 2 children – James and Larissa.

Peter will be missed by all his family and friends.



## Understanding the Orthodox Christian Funeral Service

The Orthodox Christian funeral service is different from other contemporary Christian funeral services in three main ways:

- The casket is open, and the priest and congregation make physical contact with the departed one;
- The priest stands at the head of the casket facing the sanctuary, rarely addressing the congregation directly during the service; and
- Very little, if anything at all, is said about the past of the departed one; instead, various prayers are read and hymns are sung, expressing Orthodox Christian belief about death and hope for the one departed.

It is helpful to know a little about these things and why they are done before the service begins. With such knowledge, one can participate more prayerfully in the funeral service and properly farewell the Orthodox Christian who has departed this life.

In these times and in Australia, an open casket is for some people confronting and even disturbing. It has from ancient times, however, been the usual practice of Orthodox Christians to have the body of each departed Christian visible to all. Many of the hymns and prayers reflect this, and an important part of the service – the “last kiss” – is impossible without it.

The body reverently in the casket, and is prepared in a way that gives expression to the Orthodox Christian faith. A simple paper “crown” bearing the words of an important prayer – “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us!” – is placed on the head. The crown is an ancient symbol of victory, and this custom shows that faith in God expressed in prayer will give victory over death. The body is covered with a white shroud bearing symbols of the resurrection of Christ. A cross is placed in the hands, symbolising the departed one’s confession of the Christian faith. Later, a “prayer of absolution” is also placed in the hands, bearing witness to the prayer of the Holy Orthodox Church for the forgiveness of the departed one. The body is treated as something precious, what remains to us of one dear to us. It is kissed at the end of the service for one last time in this world. At the cemetery, the casket is lowered with prayer and reverence into the grave,

there to await the general resurrection.

Funeral services now often focus on the needs of the living: for consolation, for reminiscence, for a sense of the value of the life of the one now removed from us. These are important needs, but they are not the immediate focus of the Orthodox Christian funeral service. The focus of our service is not on the past of the departed one and the present and future of the congregation, but rather on the present and the future of the one who has died. As Christians, we believe that there is life beyond the grave. The Holy Orthodox Church prays at the funeral service that the departed one will find rest in this new life beyond the grave, rest in place where there is no sickness, no sorrow, and no sighing, but everlasting life in the presence of God. It prays that God will forgive the sins of the departed one – for there is no man or woman who lives without sin – whether sin that is voluntary or involuntary, known or unknown. It follows then, that the priest faces the sanctuary symbolically to address these prayers to God, and leads those present in prayer.

Some of the prayers and hymns in the service are very theological in content: these express the Orthodox Christian faith of the departed one and those who pray. Some prayers refer to the Christian martyrs, for whom death was not a thing to fear or dread, but an entry into eternal life. Some are written as if in the words of the departed one: “I beg and entreat you all, that you pray without ceasing unto Christ God for me”. Others are simple requests to God for mercy, forgiveness, and loving-kindness. The readings from the Holy Bible encourage faith and hope. Although not primarily directed to this purpose, one finds that these beautiful prayers, hymns and readings do bring consolation, and that they do inspire one with a sense of value of the life of the relative, friend or acquaintance now taken from us. One feels that the Orthodox Christian is farewelled fittingly, with all the reverence and solemnity due to a faithful servant of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Dear Orthodox Christians and friends! Treasure the services of our Holy Orthodox Church that with such beauty express our faith. What faith is this? The faith that God loves us and desires that we share eternal joy with Him: that His love is so great that He endured suffering death for us; and that by His death, the pain of death is for us forever overthrown. May the hope given us by this faith be fulfilled in the one for whom we pray today!



