

Lino Manuel Teixeira LOPES



17th February 1951

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27th November 2017

May you Rest In Peace Lino.

Anyone who knew Lino or knew of him will be both shocked and saddened to hear Timor Leste has lost one of its most loyal and hard working sons. The story of the life and achievements of this fine man is best told by his family. The following is in the main, an edited version of the Eulogy delivered by Lino's eldest son, John.

Lino Manuel Teixeira Lopes was husband to Lurdes, a father to John, Lito and Ruy, a father in law to Rachael, Mira and Yani and grandfather to Lino, Kenny, Ethan, Gabriel and Aurora. He was a brother, a brother in law, an uncle, a cousin, a good friend to many and a boss.

Born the second youngest of eleven children consisting of six sisters and five brothers, he had a happy childhood, saying that he didn't grow up with much but he was happy. As a young man he had a keen interest in things of a mechanical nature; toys, bicycles, motor bikes and vehicles.

He had to study at boarding schools in Maliana and Bobonaro, a good five days horseback ride away.

First task when he returned home for school holidays was to repair the Land Rover that would have been broken down for months in his absence. Once he repaired the wrecked Land Rover he would then drive it to Kulit (their family's farm) to meet up with his eldest brother, to help him with the cattle.

He eventually moved to Dili, where he lived with his sisters and brothers in law to study at the Liceu where a rather pretty Chinese girl caught his eye. He and Lurdes were married on the 19th of June 1971 and remained happily married for 46 years.

Lino volunteered for national service and went on to do a further six months to become a sergeant. He then moved into the public service which took him to Lete Foho and was later transferred to Tutuala. The family eventually moved back to Dili where Lino became a bank worker for Banco Nacional Ultramarino. The job at the bank did not last for long as Timor Leste fell into civil war and shortly after was invaded by Indonesia.

The family spent some time as refugees in Atambua before arriving in Portugal. They then migrated to Australia in December 1977 where they settled in Darwin. Lino found work as a mechanic and after a few years moved to a job with Toyota Australia. He fixed cars after hours and on weekends to earn some extra money then in the early 1980's Lino and his wife Lurdes bought a service station business in Darwin. They worked very hard 7 days a week and the three sons helped on school holidays and weekends until the opportunity arose to purchase the property freehold.

During this new found prosperity that his hard work had brought him, he never forgot where he came from.

He gave what time he had to spare to the Portuguese and Timorese community. He would often buy tickets to parties held at the Portuguese and Timorese Social Club, only to spend most of the night working behind the bar serving others.

Two of Lino's sons John and Lito can proudly say that their names stand beside Lino's name on the plaque at the entrance to the Portuguese and Timorese Social Club in Darwin.

Lino was also generous to those who were less fortunate than him. One such person was an ex army buddy of Lino's named "Varella". They met by chance when they stood and spoke for quite sometime. It turned out, that old friend was homeless, living at the Salvation Army hostel and mentally ill. Lino insisted he come home for dinner, and he was a frequent guest at the family home, which was typical of Lino's warm and considerate heart.

In the early 90's he sold the service station and moved to larger premises in Winnellie, expanding the business into JEC Transport. The family prosperity continued to grow but again Lino never forgot where he came from. His door was always open to anyone who needed help.

Then in 1999 Timor Leste was liberated from Indonesian oppression. Going back to Timor at the age of 48 was like a second lease of life for Lino. Through sheer determination and hard work he built the Timorese business EDS to what it is today. His work ethic surprised most people. He just never slowed down.

Lino truly believed that he had a duty to Timor Leste to impart what he had learnt in Australia so that they could build a better nation and he reinvested every dollar he made back into the local economy.

He employed a huge number of people and remunerated them well. He would often boast that some of his employees were better paid than the Government's Ministers. He was a believer in giving people a hand up and not a hand out.

Lino's sons used to joke with Lino that he was never happy with a vehicle or truck he'd bought even if it was new until he'd modified it in some way. It had to be "linoised" to be any good.

He could be a tough man to deal with, but overall people found him to be a fair man. Lino was straight talking and never left you in doubt as to where you stood with him. He was fiercely loyal and demanded the same in return.

It was a shock to all when he was diagnosed with cancer. He was not just a father to his sons but their mentor. Lino fought an uphill battle bravely with as much dignity as he could muster and his wife Lurdes supported him to the bitter end receiving at the same time invaluable support from his extended family in Sydney.

The family choose to remember Lino for who he was before he became ill. He will be celebrated for everything he achieved and what he meant to his family and many friends. There will always be a place in our hearts for this great man. Lino will be returned to his beloved Timor Leste and laid to rest in Suai.