

## Notes on Ron Smart's Memorial Service from Jack Richardson

"Thank you for jogging my memory to "do the right thing". I will document and distribute what I experienced at Ron Smart's Memorial Service on Saturday, June 8, 2013 in Frankestown, NH. The following is very close to the final draft. I am waiting for the Eulogy from Bob Ritchie. It hasn't come but I want to get it into circulation.

"Many of you know that a good, long-term and beloved friend, Ron Smart, passed away on Sunday, March 10, 2013. On Saturday, June 8, 2013, I attended his Memorial Service in Frankestown, NH. Because of the respect that all those in attendance had for Ron, it was in many ways a joyous occasion, "A Celebration of the Life", that had profoundly and positively affected so many people. At Dot's request, the service was conducted by Pastor Bob Ritchie of the Bennington (NH) Congregational Church. Bob has been a personal friend and frequent adviser on the spiritual dimension of Ron's writings of what I would call his "Magnum Opus". (Ron would chuckle, but would be much too humble to admit that *that* designation applied to his life's work that he was working on right to the very end!)

The service was attended by upwards of 100 people. Dot was her usual buoyant self, surrounded by her family and close friends from the Frankestown area to support her. One of Ron's brothers traveled to the service from Australia. As well, several colleagues from Ron's days at Digital attended: Stan and Betty Olsen and one of their sons, Ed Jafarian, Debbie Amidon, several folk from the Westminster and Westfield plants, and myself.

About half a dozen family and friends also shared memories of their experiences with and respect for Ron. Max Burnett, the Managing Director of Australia for so many years, sent a long, warm, written memory of Ron that was read at the service. Many shared strikingly similar insights into how and why we held Ron in such high regard:

- his warm hospitable, nature towards all people -- both personally and professionally,
- his optimistic vision and insight into what the future *could be*, and the courage to voice those insights - popular or not, and
- last, but perhaps the greatest, his towering intellect that was able to grasp and even create complexity in so many fields, yet bring them down to the level where us mere mortals could understand them.

One of the areas that showed so prominently in the service was Ron's diverse appreciation of many kinds of music. His favorite pieces, selected for the service, included two gorgeous classical excerpts, one from a 19<sup>th</sup> century French opera!, two simple gospel songs, and a rousing rendition of "Waltzing Matilda", with all four verses and choruses sung by the congregants. We could have closed our eyes and been transported to sitting around a roaring camp-fire on a pitch black night in the Australian Outback.

At the reception afterward, it was implied in several conversations that Ron's final work on the Organizational and Business Models and Principles that Ken Olsen built into Digital will be published "soon". Ron passionately believed that these held the keys to the success that Digital enjoyed for so long, and the love and allegiance that so many of Digital's employees held for the company, and still hold.

As implied above, the program for the Memorial Service called our time together that day "A Celebration of Life". It truly was.

Sincerely, Jack Richardson, [jrichardson@visionnewengland.org](mailto:jrichardson@visionnewengland.org)