



## Liz Taylor – Civil Celebrant

*Taylor made Ceremonies for all Life's Celebrations*

---

### Where do I start with a Eulogy?

“A Eulogy is a speech or writing in praise of a person(s) or thing(s) especially one recently deceased or retired”. (source: Wikipedia)

In writing a Eulogy, the life story of your loved one is often a big part of what is included. Especially for the very 1<sup>st</sup> of the funeral addresses given.

Sometimes it is the only tribute. And sometimes it's a tribute which expresses who that person was and captures the essence of their character or personality without going into their history or background.

This task can be daunting and with everything else going on in your head you can find yourself staring at a blank screen or page for ages not knowing where to start.

Having met so many in this predicament I have created a guide to help you either put your loved one's story together, or immediately below, a couple of hints in writing a short and simple tribute or Eulogy.

I should note that I like to insert these Eulogies into the body of the script of the service I read from, which I then hand to the family at the end of the service. There is history there, family history that can then be referred to as new generations grow up and come along.

I hope it helps.

### **Life Story style of Eulogy**

Here is some help with putting a Life Story (or Eulogy) together.

I tend to write as if I am actually telling a story so it isn't just a 'list' of facts, dates and places. A bit like a biography.

*For example:*

Name..... (Maiden name) was born in (place/country/city) on the (date/month/year) to parents .....&.....

She/He had (No.) sisters (names)..... and (No.) brothers (names).....

*You may like to continue on with the family lineage to present day perhaps saying something like “..... is survived by her/his dear husband/wife .....who she/he met.....”*

*Or simply continue on as follows:*

She/He met her/his husband/wife (*name*) at (*place/activity*) at the age of..., he/she was..... years old.

They were married years/months later in (*year*) at (*church/place/city/country*) and had (No.)... children (*names*)

*Who are here today with their (partners, wives, husbands – names). And their children, ..... 's Grandchildren.....*

(No.)..... grandchildren (*names*) and her/his beloved (No.)..... Great grandchildren (*names*)

*Of whom .....(names or number if a few) are also here today and will miss her/him greatly.*

Then go on to describe their life from childhood, career, hobbies, holidays, achievements, organizations, sport, family, travel and experiences and most of all their personality.

i.e.: ..... grew up in..... and attended .....school going on to .....school where she/he attained (level, certificate) or left school at 15 and started working, joined the forces, travelled, fell in love..... etc.

### **Tribute style of Eulogy encompassing the essence of the person.**

If you are having difficulty getting started with this type of tribute I often suggest you just write or type the following 2 words: “*Name.... was*”.

Or another way to start is in the form of a letter, especially helpful if children or Grandchildren/Great Grandchildren etc would like to contribute ie: “*Dear Name.....*”

That way you can flow on: .... “*Liz was my Mother, my best friend, a brilliant writer/athlete but a lousy cook!*”

It's nice to have a few ‘I can relate to that’ moments to put a warm smile on people's faces.

Of course the letter format can be expressing feelings eg: ‘I will miss your warm smile, cuddles’ or simply to say ‘I'll never forget you and will always love you’.

### **Letters or Notes**

Some might like to simply write a letter or note on a card which is private, between them and the person it is intended for. Never to be read out but placed with their loved one, either prior to the service or during Reflection time, on top of the coffin, to be with them forever.

I should add that this can be done with letters or tributes that have been read out during the service too.

***Here is a list of prompts, or memory joggers:***

- early family life –where they grew up,
- school life (primary, secondary, tertiary studies) – friends,
- career – workmates, career moves
- sports, achievements, memberships
- Marriage, how they met, where they lived.
- Children/Married life - an outline of those years as a family
- holidays, stories of travel
- community involvement, clubs, assns
- hobbies, interests, (cooking, knitting, gardening, cars, collections, fishing, sport, reading, puzzles)
- leisure – i.e. watching sport, racing, bridge, dancing, golf
- Fave actors/Shows/TV/Radio/Films
- favourite Music, tunes, prose, poems
- Fave colours. Foods, flowers, collections
- quirks/habits whistling, superstitions, appearance, Sense of humour, strict, laid back. Organised, tidy.
- personality/characteristics ie: Happy, strict, quiet, busy, generous, kind, straight up and down, of few words, caring, a loner, life of the party, etc
- social life/ family gatherings/importance of family
- Good/best friends, work colleagues
- Carers, Nurses, Doctors that may deserve a thank you or mention.  
Even if it is a general “The family cannot thank the Medical Staff and in fact all who looked after .....’s needs while at .....  
Hospital/Nursing Home who really did care and went above and beyond their duties to ensure ..... was comfortable and we were informed at all times”
- *Note that some don’t get a mention as they were just doing their job and it may simply be a case of not being applicable. I always ask as I have experienced a broad spectrum of responses to this point.*

I do hope this helps you put together a wonderful story that you can then keep and show your loved one’s Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren, nieces & nephews as they grow up and ask about her or him.

Good luck and let me know if I can be of any assistance.

Kindest regards,

Liz