



We'll miss you mate

Balloon tribute for loveable larrikin Andrew

By LOUISE THROWER

SCORES of coloured balloons with loving messages soared over Goulburn last Saturday, the day Andrew Skelly would have turned 19.

Those letting go saluted their son, brother and mate, the man who'd touched their lives and would have loved the celebration.

"All his mates, 40 or 50 of them, wanted to give him a birthday party," Andrew's mother Bev said on Monday.

"They had it here at home, gave him a cake and messages written on helium balloons which they released into the sky. It was beautiful."

Family members turned off Mr Skelly's life support last Thursday night, following a work accident at Bungendore two days earlier.

He and a crew had been felling and chipping trees at a Currandooley Rd property, 6km from the town, when Mr Skelly fell from the truck. He suffered major head injuries.

Police could not confirm he was run over and were still investigating the cause.

Mrs Skelly, a Goulburn Base Hospital nurse, said her son was unconscious from the point of the accident.

Workmates immediately rendered assis-

tance before emergency crews arrived and a helicopter flew him to Canberra Hospital.

The family made the difficult decision late Thursday night to turn off his life support, something she says no one should have to go through.

"It was the best thing for him," Mrs Skelly told the *Post*.

He was surrounded by family and friends.

Numb from grief, she and husband Clyde said the whys, hows and ifs surrounding the accident were simply incidental. They did not change the outcome.

"It was just a tragic accident," she said.

They and brothers, Matthew and Dean and sisters Rachael and Nicole prefer to remember the good times.

He took his time coming into the world – more than 24 hours of hard labour – and set about making an impression from young.

He was loving and thoughtful with an eye for mischief.

His family can't forget the time he made a cobweb of wool throughout the house in a genuine attempt to "keep the burglars out."

Or his "mammy trap" – a hole dug around the clothesline camouflaged to trip his mother. They affectionately dubbed him 'Bob the Builder' because he simply liked to fix things.

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OUR MATE: Andrew Skelly passed away last Thursday after a work accident at Bungendore. His family and many friends have paid tribute to his fun-loving outlook on life.

Facebook tributes

"Happy birthday, Skelly, love ya' mate. You were a great man and always fun to hang with, always cracking us up. RIP mate, I will miss you. Won't be the same without you. I will always hold onto the great memories we have had with you..."

"Happy birthday, my man! I guess no one will be sleeping up there tonight, huh?"

"Happy birthday. You will be greatly missed by all and you will be remem-

bered by your great jokes or that big smile you always had on your face. RIP"

"Rest in peace, Skell, one of the funniest guys I'll ever know. My thoughts go out to your great family and friends. You'll be greatly missed."

"Really can't imagine a world without you. So many perfect memories from all the years that we've known each other. You were such a great guy, always had everyone laughing. Love you so much, Skelly. Miss you already."

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