

## **STEVEN**

Sometimes when you wish for a miracle, you get two. For us, this was Twin 1 and Twin 2... which after drawing a couple of names out of a hat and checking with a midwife, we named Henry and Archie.

Funerals often resemble a party. The eulogy is typically a recount of the great, long life lived, and a celebration of accomplishments.

The reality is, Archie was only with us for 167 days... and many of you might be wondering how we are managing. The truth is, in those 167 days, and in particular, the last week, we have had some of our most difficult, as well as our happiest memories with our boys.

We are extremely grateful for Henry, he gives us strength and it is simply not possible to be sad and stay in bed all day. Henry is definitely a du Preez, he makes it very clear when he would like something, even if it is just a cuddle. Henry also started on solids this week, and whilst we miss our little super hero and wish he was here, we can't help but enjoy these beautiful moments.

## **JENNA**

I remember the day the boys were born, Henry was in a massive hurry to join us earth side. They were taken away from me immediately and apart from a quick 2-minute stop on my way back to the room, I didn't get to see the boys until around 12 hours after they were born. I vividly remember walking down the NICU corridor and Elizabeth, our Neonatologist, caught us in the corridor on her way up to see us. We stepped into an interview room... I've seen enough medical drama TV shows to know that these meetings never end well! It was then that our expectations were set around Archie's condition. That being a rare unknown lung disease.

Our little superhero kept defying the odds and came off high frequency ventilation to a standard ventilator. Then, onto CPAP. It's safe to say Archie didn't like CPAP and was clever enough to be able to face plant on the right angle to disconnect his mask – he was such a clever boy! At least it kept the nurses busy! From CPAP we had one failed attempt at high flow before trying again and Archie remained on high flow where he was much more comfortable.

Archie underwent surgery for a lung biopsy and had numerous procedures done and each time, surprising the doctors at how well he came through them.

Throughout Archie's journey, he continued to show nothing but love and trust and if you worked hard enough you could get one of those gigantic gummy smiles. He had the most striking blue eyes to match his beautiful smile. Archie loved visitors especially his Granny, Nanna and Big Brother Henry.

Those who knew Archie, knew how he loved to be cuddled... all of the time. He would often fall asleep in your arms, but the moment you stopped swaying and sat down, he would wake up and let you know that he wants you to stand and sway!

The last week has been an emotional roller coaster for us both. We of course had Archie's Great Adventure and we were able to bring our little superhero home for the day and stop in at the botanical gardens. Archie was full of smiles from the moment he laid in his cot and then played with his brother in the lounge room. It was the most perfect day and we can't thank the team enough for making that happen.

As you all know, Archie's condition worsened quickly last week. Our little man was growing so well and starting to become more active and his lungs just weren't able to keep up with it. So, we

decided to get out of the hospital once and for all and come to this beautiful place, Hummingbird House. From the moment we arrived, we made our way out to the garden and that is where we stayed.

We chose tonight to have Archie's service because it marks one week since Archie's high flow was removed. He had the most beautiful night. The four of us stayed out under the stars for over 10 hours. It was unforgettable.

We are so thankful for the incredible outpouring of financial support to help our family. It is humbling. We will be putting some of that money back into Hummingbird House as well as other charity organisations that have helped us along the way.

Archie touched many lives, and we are continually being told this. One example of how I feel Archie has helped others... We had a photographer come to the hospital to do a family shoot for us. Archie's story moved her so much that she is going to provide her services to the organisation Heartfelt, which is free of charge photography service for families who are in a similar situation to us. They provide memories that are often not possible any other way.

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to thank all of our family and friends, PwC as well as EY who have been a constant support for all of us.

- To Elizabeth and Suresh for never giving up on Archie and trying absolutely everything for our little super hero.
- The Mater Mothers NICU, you guys became family for us and helped make our time in the NICU enjoyable.
- The nurses in Ward 9B at Queensland Children's Hospital. You went above and beyond when it came to helping us get out and about to visit Santa, decorating Archie's room and for the personalised onesies.
- To Karen and the team from Palliative Care together with the Queensland Ambulance Service for making Archie's Great Adventure happen.
- To Henry, for being our constant and always making us smile, even when things are hard. Waking up to your smile gives us a reason to keep moving each day.
- And finally, to Hummingbird House. Words cannot describe what it has been like for us to spend Archie's final day here and outside. Each and every single team member here has been amazing, from the welcome cuddles to dinner packed away for us to take home. Thank you for allowing us to farewell Archie at the place that has such positive memories. Thank you.

Archie, fly high our angel. You will forever be in our hearts and your smile imprinted in our memory always. I know you will keep an eye over your big brother, and for that we are grateful.

Goodbye our superhero.