

Hi,

My name is George Hougiazos and I dedicate this love letter to my late father Harry Hougiazos.

The year 1976. My late father and mother ran a Milk Bar in Brunswick East.

In the morning of Melbourne Cup day 1976 my late uncle arrived at my dad's shop with another gentleman. My uncle was a typical Greek punter. Small bets on everything!!

They persuaded my dad to come along to the races and my father agreed but as my father always did, took me along. He wasn't only my father, he was my best friend!!

It was miserable in the morning I recall, however what was to come was beyond words.

The heavens really opened up and 1 hr before the cup and the racetrack and surrounds were flooding!

We were around the bookmakers and if anyone recalls how the old rails where it had a small dip, similar to a spoon drain. Well it flooded. Punters couldn't get to the bookies to collect!

Well I knew that was the reason I was meant to be taken to the races that day. Punters were giving me their tickets, get across to the bookmakers, collect and take the money back to the punters. All under the watchful eye of the punter, bookie (who were communicating across the water) my late father and off course the stewards (LOL). Tips were handed to me and I collected over \$50 back in the day when this was a pretty large sum.

PS Dad did put \$ 2e/w on Van Der Hum ridden by Bob Skelton and \$2e/w on Gold and Black which ran second for me.

My love for racing started at this time and my friendship with my father was ever special on Spring Carnival days.

Dad has been gone for 7 years and even though I enjoy the carnival the void left is still there.

I hope you enjoy my love story, Win, lose or draw it has a special moment in my heart.

Until we meet again dad, Keep backing a winner until we can one day share our stories together.