



Dianne Bruce

11/3/1946 – 24 June 2024

This past week Di has been described as a nice lady, one of the best, a best friend, the best Gran you could ever have, Best Mother in Law, the best of everything, a true lady, kind, gentle, generous and confidential - your secrets never left her lips, in fact they go with her today.

Dianne was born in Sydney in 1946, making her the eldest daughter of Gwen and Ronald Keir, Rhonda is her younger sister and she also has two half-sisters Nerida and Helen.

Her dad Ronald, a wool buyer and member of the Keir family who invented the Akubra hat separated

from Gwen when Di was three, the family moved to Coffs Harbour where they lived with Gwen's parents, Di was co raised by her Grandparents as her mother remarried Ned when she was 13 years old and her youngest sister Helen was born. Di was a difficult step daughter who enjoyed her mother's attention but as she grew she learnt to appreciate Ned and described him as a good stepfather who cared for the family well.

Di attended St Augustine's School in Coffs Harbour, after leaving school she worked as a receptionist in the Roy Riddle Dentist. Her appreciation for quality dental treatment stayed with her for many years and she passed on her knowledge for good dental hygiene to the family however she still managed to lose her false teeth numerous times.

In 1967, at the age of 20, crazy in young love, Di chased her sea faring yachtsman boyfriend through the South pacific. Deciding she would not board such a small vessel for the journey, she travelled by cargo ship aboard the MV Jacques del Mar captained by Captain Savoie, Di described the Captain as a creepy drunk, but love had no bounds and she endured this journey to meet her man in every port. The ship was able to carry 3 guests, the first stop was Lord Howe Island and then to Norfolk Island where the best of her story begins.

The love interest with the adventurous yachtsman did not work out and Di continued to stay on Norfolk

(continued overleaf)

Castaway



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Dianne Bruce - continued

Island where she enjoyed the company from a Morewa gentleman this too did not last and distraught with heartbreak she fell into the arms of another Morewa gentleman, Maurice Bruce- affectionately known as Nobby- and never left, continuing to be his loyal bride to the end. She would visit Nobby on her Honda 90 and enjoyed spending time with Gary and Jenny Holland, as well as many other Norfolk friendships.

Nobby and Di were married May 1971 in Coffs Harbour, they enjoyed a honeymoon on the Gold Coast and fell pregnant with Stephen. They returned to Norfolk Island and lived at Aloha for a short while whilst Nobby worked on their home at Rocky Point, transforming a 1 bedroom cottage to what it is today – still a work in progress! Stephen was soon followed by Michael, Nigel and Aidan. As a mum with 4 boys under the age of 5 at home she described life as hard, hectic and you had to make do with what you had around you including using pallets for a dining room table which would now be seen as modern and upcycling.

Di was a generous lady, she enjoyed membership in 1970 with the Wives and Mothers Club and later a very active role in the Lions Club of Arthurs Vale including the role of president. As a wife of a Scout Leader she supported Nobby in the growth of scouting on Norfolk Island.

When it was time for the kids to attend school, the school bus service ended, Di filled the gap and ran a little school bus from Rocky Point, collecting Danny Nobbs, Eliana Grace, Jason and Di Richards, Aaron and Justin Pye in Douglas Drive. She would pick them up and return them each day, she was lovely to all the children and they really liked her as well, the parents were ever so grateful as it took the pressure off them and they gladly contributed to petrol costs.

Both Nobby and Di were dedicated to providing what they felt important for their children, so at the age of 12 each son was sent to boarding school in New Zealand, during this time Di maintained 8 part time jobs, whilst quietly grieving the loss of her sons from her day to day care.

She worked at Foodlands for 26 years along with other jobs house cleaning, the milkbar, Café au lait in the mall, Leaside and where most Norfolk children will remember her from, with Agnes Hain at the Bounty Centre and minigolf almost meeting the milestone of 40 years. Di was 100% reliable, an ideas lady with fabulous customer relations especially her

warmth and engagement with children and the number 1 Easter bunny helper. She was effective at ensuring Santa Claus visited the toy shop annually also.

Di's fondest memory of the house cleaning jobs was caring for the Commonwealth Bank boys house down Burglars Lane. This fondness invited them to every family Christmas out Rocky Point where they were treated as an extension of the family. Di was so good at her job that she maintained the bank boys POT plants, they flourished with regular watering and care, they budded prolifically bringing great joy to the house occupants, Di was 100% reliable however was confused as to why these POT plants never produced tomatoes!

Di was the best Gran Ever! There is always ice cream in grans freezer, Lego for birthdays and Christmas, hugs and kisses always, a treasure to be had from her cupboards, grans taxi on a rainy day – even at the slightest sprinkle at Rocky Point she was there to pick up anyone grandkid wanting a lift and always sent her love from afar in the mail. Di has 9 amazing grandkids; Finnly, Lewis, Cameron, Connor, Dylan, Ryan, Zoie, Issac and Isabelle. All she ever wanted was a daughter – hence 4 boys under 5, she just kept trying. The Bruce genes are particularly strong and after 14 boys in a row over 3 generations finally a granddaughter was born. This made Di extremely happy – as we all know it's easier to buy for girls and she set about decorating a girl's bedroom, buying all things pink and loved dressing her princesses.

Di's journey came to an end on 24 June 2024 at Norfolk Island Hospital. Di succumbed to cancer and had spent the last 151 days of her life in hospital with Nobby by her side, her loyal husband and friend tending to her every need. She rests here today with friends and family surrounding her and we thank you Di for the wonderful memories, good times and support you have given us, you're one of a kind that can never be replaced.

Thank You

The Bruce family share their deepest gratitude to all who helped make Di's Celebration of Life a seamless event and to the Hospital team who cared for her in her journey to the final moments of life. Thank you.

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