



Vale
Edith May Mack

It was a warm and sunny winter's day last Wednesday as the community laid to rest a dear Norfolk Islander, Edith May Mack, affectionately known as Edie. Many relations and family friends gathered around daughter and son-in-law, Sandy and Steve Nutley, to pay their heartfelt last respects. It was a traditional Island service Edie would have appreciated.

The Rev. David Fell welcomed those assembled and then asked Rick Kleiner to lead in the singing of the favourite Norfolk hymn, "In The Garden". And after a reading by Rev. Fell from Ecclesiastes (There is a Time), David Buffett read Edie's Eulogy:

Born at Simons Water on the 3rd June 1926 to Fred & Theresa Gabbutt, a daughter, Edith May. A sister for Dulcie & Grace.

So began a lifetime which would span ninety years.

Edie, as she was known, grew up in the family home at Cascade but spent a considerable amount of time with her grandparent Ma Gad & Pa Dickie at Three Oaks down Store Road or Middlegate as it is now known. She would often reminisce about helping to pick beans or passionfruit or whatever was in season at the time. She told of Pa's horse who must surely have been able to tell the day of the week and thank the Lord for Sunday afternoon which was his only half day of rest once the family had been to church. Sunday lunches were a family occasion and often upwards of 20 would pull up a chair to enjoy Ma's cooking.

Edie and her sisters would walk to school along with all dem liddle sullen from down Cascade en Mill Road. They were not allowed to talk Norfolk in the school grounds and as her father was English, Norfolk was also discouraged at home so those walks to school and the time spent playing were very important in not having to watch your tongue! In later years I could always tell when she had been talking Norfolk because even though she switched to English that broad lilt was still evident.

(continued overleaf)



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Edith May Mack - continued

Recently she sadly mentioned that she was the last of her class. Boonie, Kik and Jimmy among those having pre deceased her.

At 15, having completed her schooling Edie left on the "Morinda" for Sydney where she joined Dulcie, Grace and cousin Chrystal at the "spinster's retreat" as they dubbed their flat at Rosslyn Gardens. Her first paying job was for a florist supplier but she later joined her two sisters as a seamstress in the Strand Arcade. In those days you had an in-house designer and pattern cutter and then the seamstress would sew a one off garment to be modelled for a potential client. The sisters would rush home and sew up the latest design to wear out on a Saturday night. They all well remember being "busted" by the boss who found himself at the same venue one Saturday night and saw his as yet, unreleased latest design jitterbugging across the floor.

During this time in Sydney Edie's uncle David Wingate Buffett (Winnie) who was working on a sheep station came to Sydney for a holiday and stayed with his nieces. He bought with him a shy 17year old work mate from the same station who had never been to the city before. Edie's was smitten.

Jack went on to join up and saw active service in New Guinea but they kept in touch for 3 years and were married at St Thomas's North Sydney just 10 days before Edie turned 21. She continued as a seamstress whilst he studied Wool Classing at night and worked on the wharves during the day.

With the precious Wool Classer ticket obtained and the promise of work in South Australia they moved to Adelaide. With Jack away on shed runs for much of the year Edie was delighted to have her cousin Chrystal, also living in Adelaide, for company. In September 1951 they delivered within 3 days of each other. For Edie & Jack a daughter Sandra and for Chrys & Mick a second son David who is here with us today.

Within the next three years Jack & Edie had moved from Adelaide to manage a 50,000 acre property in the south east of the state. Five years later they scaled down to just 7,000 acres. Life revolved around three square meals a day, 2 smoko's and numerous other jobs. Edie's Norfolk upbringing meant milk to be separated, butter to be made, chooks & turkeys to be bred and fed, fruit to be bottled and pickles made. All this fitted between the morning and afternoon school bus run. In itself a 10mile round trip each time on a limestone road. It was no wonder she loved to relax with a game of tennis. With a court built next to the house it soon became the social hub for women and pre-schoolers one afternoon a week.

By 1976 Edie owned a bright yellow Holden Torana and could be seen racing off to her beloved Floral Art classes in the closest town, just 22 miles away. She would attend numerous summer schools and eventually went on to become a Floral Art judge. Around this time the family were also inundated with her attempts at enamel jewellery and cake decorating.

Edie was now an aunt to 23. Strictly speaking this was mostly due to Jack's 6 siblings! Speaking

to some of these people over the past few days they invariably mentioned their treasured trips to the farm and aunty Ede. She followed their lives and was so proud of the special milestones, be it a "C" for a test or a university degree, their marriages and the births of another generation. Dulcie's son Malcolm who is unable to be with us today gives yet another in sight... "I remember being mortified when I used to get the job of driving mum and aunty Ede to the shops. They always ended up at the butchers and aunty Ede would draw herself up and reprimand the butcher for trying to sell mum the wrong cut of meat or argue with him over the fat content or the promised tenderness". Sandy well remembers being equally embarrassed when, out shopping, Edie would demand to see the manager if the poor shop assistant didn't serve her as promptly as she required.

In 1979 Edie acquired a much cherished son in law in Steve. She could usually wheedle anything out of him and over the years he has continued to repair a million household items, work on her car, sharpen her knives and cut her hedges on a regular basis. For the past 17 years they have been neighbours down at the end of Collins Head Road.

The farm was sold in 1980 and Edie was looking forward to retiring to a beach side town. First on Jack's list was to buy a camper van and have a look around Australia. They managed to get as far as Qld when the South Aust. Ag Department contacted them and offered a position on a pilot project with the Kurdish people of northern Iraq. Always up for a challenge and obviously not looking quite so forward to retirement, Jack was gone within a month. Edie was now in charge of a building team and a renovation project on the newly purchased retirement home...in Australia. Twelve months later she joined him in Iraq and spent the next 5 years living within a compound and adjusting to life in a Muslim country. One Friday shopping trip a week – if there was a male to drive them, negotiating a different culture and stones in the rice to mention a few.

During all her years away Edie always harboured a longing to return to Norfolk. There had been the odd holiday and the block at Collins Head was calling. In 1984 she got her wish and she and Jack returned home.

(continued overleaf)



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Edith May Mack - continued

She taught Floral Art classes, was a Life Member of the Royal A&H Society, judged the Floral Art section at the show for a number of years, enjoyed her tapestry and reconnecting with her cousins Dolores & Jean and old Norfolk friends and going to White Oaks on a Thursday but above all she loved her home and garden.

In April of this year, after 4 years of failing health, Edie decided she could no longer manage at home and checked herself into the hospital. She was grateful for the Dr's and staff and the excellent attention she received. For the many visitors and those who sent cards. For her clean laundry each day and before April for the Care Norfolk Team and the wonderful volunteers who delivered Meals on Wheels and a kind word each day.

To Grace, Mal, Franz, Miles and all other family members who were unable to be here with us todaythank you for the phone calls and moral support.

During the floral tributes which followed, the congregation sang a moving rendition of the "23rd Psalm" (The Lord is My Shepherd). And as the body was committed to the ground, again lead by Rick Kleiner, we said our final fond farewell to Edie Mack with the singing of the "Pitcairn Anthem".

Vale

David Keppie

We've received the sad news on the passing of David Keppie, who passed away on 22nd July 2016 in Nambour hospital after a term of illness with cancer.

David owned 'Nic Nacs in the Mall' with his wife Maria and left the island about 2010.

A celebration of his life will be held on Sunday 7th August 2016, Ridgewood Hall, 2 Donnelly's Road Ridgewood, QLD 4563, Australia from 12 Noon - 2pm.

Thank You

I would like to thank everyone for their best wishes, phone calls, cards & gifts on the occasion of my 90th birthday. It was lovely to have family & friends come from near & far, including Norfolk Island, to celebrate with us at my birthday luncheon.

Best regards

*Lorna Christian,
Scarborough, Qld*

FREE music concert

This Wednesday 10 August 7pm at St. Barnabas Chapel

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