



Vale

Helen Victoria Sampson

28/01/34 - 16/03/18

Helen was born in Burnside, Adelaide, to parents Ronald & Edith Beevor (nee Pritchard). The Beevors were one of the founding Adelaide families, descending from the youngest son of an English baronet who, not being eligible to inherit the family title, first served in the East India Company in the 1770's and then tried his luck in the new colonies. During the Great Depression, however, the family's fortunes had dwindled away and Ronald worked whatever jobs could bring an income, including working as a cameleer delivering mail in the outback & a packer at the fruit markets. Edith was a kind and gentle soul, who was very involved with the Red Cross because, as she said, she had an 'organiser's bosom'. Lynn, Helen's older sister, was born in 1932, with Helen following in 1934. Helen remembered growing up to the sounds of a private zoo belonging to the property next door, which may have sparked her life-long love and interest in the animal world, which, by her own admission, she generally preferred to humans.

Although she was very intelligent, in those days women had limited career choices, so instead of going to University to study science, Helen attended business college. From all accounts, she and her sister were quite wild as debutantes, in one instance being cautioned by the police after 'borrowing' a white peacock from the Adelaide zoo, only being caught because they had shut the tail of the unfortunate bird in the back door of their mini, which could be seen from behind. At 19, while working in the bank at Port Lincoln, Helen fell in love with Bill Wade, a dashing young man who ran a sheep station on Thistle Island, a small island in Spencer's Gulf. Their unusual mode of transport to and from the island was a 52 ft wooden trading ketch called the 'Hecla', built around 1900 and recently restored at the Port Lincoln Maritime Museum. Tori was born in 1955, however the marriage broke down soon afterwards and Helen returned to her family home, bringing Tori up with the assistance of her parents. During this time she worked as a bookkeeper at Chrysler, which she recalled with great affection. She owned a 250 cc motorbike and loved cars and car-racing, participating in hill climbs and rally driving, and happily told us that she used to 'do the tonne' in an MG, which today translates as 160 km/per hour. Later in life we joked that she still drove in the same manner around Norfolk, cutting corners with impunity and always flat-out. Her other enthusiasm at this time was training and showing dogs, in particular her cattedog "Bennie", who was awarded Australian Champion, which afforded her great pride.

Helen was a shrewd investor in the stock market at the time, so when her father died the family was able to make a fresh start in Bowral NSW, closer to her sister Lyn, who had married an airman in the Fleet Air Arm located in Nowra. Helen met Hugh who had the dairy farm next door to Lyn, and they were married in

(continued overleaf)

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1969. Margarita was born in 1970 and Alice followed two and half years later in 1972. Having sold the farm that Hugh had run with his father for many years, they started up Archgate Nursery, which they built up to have a large wholesale section from which they supplied other nurseries. In time they expanded to second nursery in Berry. It was around this time that the Pyree Literary Institute had their annual fete. Helen had heard that there was a Bren gun from the war stashed under the hall, so she took the opportunity to let herself in under the stage at one end of the hall, and re-emerge with the Bren gun under her arm. Family legend says one of the old ladies at the fete asked her 'and did you find something nice, dear?' Apparently, she and her mates also found some rounds and managed to fire off the gun over the hills outside Bowral, making a terrific racket to their utmost satisfaction.

In 1975 Hugh & Helen saw an ad for a nursery for sale on Norfolk Island. Hugh had terrible asthma and needed to move for health reasons, and being dyed-in-the-wool Liberals they had become concerned about the changes brought about by the Whitlam Government in Australia. Hugh came over, liked what he saw, and the family moved shortly afterwards. Ironically, the day they moved to the island was the day of the Whitlam Dismissal, with the Herald front page reporting this among Helen's possessions to the end.

On the island they ran an extensive nursery out at Steel's Point, the fruits of which can still be seen in many island gardens. Helen, who was always very interested in politics, later went on to serve two terms in the Legislative Assembly. Kicking off her shoes the minute she got to Norfolk, she would only put them on to see the bank manager and reluctantly daun-a-taun, although sometimes she took them in her basket as a half-measure, figuring if they were nearby that might count. She was an active member of the Norfolk Flora & Fauna Society, & was later involved in the Green Parrot Breeding program, nipping around the island in her red Datsun ute, dragging in great branches of porpay and special treats for 'her' parrots. With Alice and Margie away at Uni, Helen became increasingly frustrated with her missed opportunity for higher education, and encouraged by her family, resat the last two subjects she needed for matriculation at the Norfolk School. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Archaeology at the University of New England, and upon returning to Norfolk after several years away, Helen began working at the Norfolk Island Museum, which was very fulfilling for her and where she was able to work until retirement at 79. Her great joy was participating in the dig for Polynesian artefacts at Emily Bay with Athol Anderson and maintaining the collection at the Archaeology Museum. She kept up a lively correspondence with many history buffs and was a font of information regarding the convict settlements. While at the Museums she also wrote 3 books on Norfolk history and geology. Helen enjoyed her grandkids Ella and Cameron coming to visit her after school and consistently spoilt them with sweets

and chocolates, which also gave her the excuse to knock a few off herself, having a considerable sweet tooth.

Hugh passed away in 2010 and Helen was able to live at home with assistance until 2 years ago, and a special mention to her carers Rhona Christian and particularly Linda Blucher who was able to wrangle Helen when the rest of us couldn't, as she pretty much did exactly as and when she pleased. Helen counted many friends on Norfolk, across a wide spectrum of people. She never spoke down to children, but treated them as intelligent equals, and many people have told us over the last few days how much she meant to them, both in terms of her friendship and in her example of not giving a fig about what other people thought of her. She was defiantly in, and of, herself.

Helen passed away peacefully on Friday night surrounded by her family. We can't thank the nurses enough at the hospital who were also her family for the last 2 years, and who cared for her like their own. We will miss you Helen. You would have left big boots to fill, if you'd felt like wearing them.

Thank You

The Family of Helen Sampson : Alice, Margarita, Tori and their families would like to thank the nursing staff at the hospital (thank you, thank you, thank you), Mum's carers and friends who supported her in the last few years, and to the island community who come together at times like these to see our loved ones off in style - Janelle for taking the service with such care, the Pall-bearers: Tim, Zac, Mark & David, Shane Quintal, the wreathmakers for the beautiful wreathes, the gravediggers, those who gathered flowers and helped us decorate the mound, Tardy for driving the hearse, Gavin Snell for the coffin, Tim for the Police escort, Chris and Simone for organising the music, the ushers, Colleen for helping with catering, the Museums, Juliette for getting us all home, and all of our friends and relatives who have been such a support.



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