

OBITUARY

Lynette Mary
Silverman
nee Philbey

1944 - 2010

A passionate
Gardener
now at Rest



Lynette (Lyn) was born in Melbourne in 1944, the first child of Alma and Arthur Philbey.

Arthur was a farmer's son from country South Australia who had enlisted in the Air Force and served as a sergeant, training Air Force crew - he had met Alma at a dance in Melbourne, where they had married.

After Arthur left the services the family moved to Horsham where a second daughter was born.

When Lyn was four the family moved back to South Australia and settled into farming sheep and growing crops at Alford on Yorke Peninsula - four more children were born that completed the family - five girls and one boy.

Lyn went to primary school at Alford, six miles from the farm and did her secondary schooling at Kadina.

As the eldest of six children, Lyn felt a great responsibility for the rest of the family and always kept an eye out for her younger siblings, they in return always knew they could rely on their big sister.

After leaving high school, Lyn trained as a nurse at the Kadina Hospital, maybe this was an extension of her role in looking out for her siblings, as she was a caring, compassionate person who became a good nurse.

However, Lyn decided she wanted to see a bit more of the world and when she was 20, she went to Darwin where she made her life for the next 30 years.

In 1964 Lyn arrived in Darwin to spend time with her sister who was living there.

Lyn's first job was as a waitress at the Bayview Hotel and on her first day soup was on the menu and she was expected to carry three plates at once, one of which ended up in the lap of a diner.

She never returned to that employment and to this day no-one knows for sure who let go of who.

Lynette Philbey meets Peter Silverman

Lyn shared a flat with her best friend Katie and Peter had a great friend named Graeme.

Graeme and Katie decided to get married and asked Lyn and Peter to be their bridesmaid and best man and it was love at first sight.

Three months later, in September 1966 Lyn and Peter were married, with Graeme and Katie returning the favour as their best man and matron of honour - this was to be a romance that lasted for 44 years.

Their first home was a single man's galvanised hut with only one room and after the double bed was set up there was no room left, so if they wanted to cross the room, they had to walk over the double bed and as you would imagine, it would have been pretty hot living in a galvanised hut in Darwin.

In 1969 Lyn gave birth to their first child, a daughter and in 1970, a son was born.

Lyn gave up outside work and devoted herself to being a mother and by this time the family had moved up the accommodation ladder to a lovely home at Nightcliff, however on Christmas Eve 1974, Cyclone Tracey blew the family's home and 99% of all others in Darwin away.

Lyn, Peter and family, like many others were left literally with only the clothes on their backs after sheltering from Cyclone Tracey in a vehicle under their house.

The family moved into a guard's van in the railway yards until Lyn and family were evacuated out of Darwin on a RAAF Hercules - Peter was required to stay in Darwin to help clean up and remained separated from the rest of the family for three months.

Lyn and Peter's daughter was only five years old when Cyclone Tracey hit, but she says she remembers it now as if it happened yesterday.

The flight out in the Hercules is remembered too - there were no seats, just the bare floor of the cargo hold and the flight took Lyn and the children to Adelaide via Sydney.

After being reunited back in Darwin the family spent a year living in a caravan under a demolished house while their home was being rebuilt and then they settled back into a normal life.

The children went to a school close by and Lyn stayed at home, while Peter was working as a bookmaker, also doing government contracting.

Lyn and Peter opened various businesses - news agency, real estate companies and a travel agency to name a few.

Lyn loved travelling and although Peter was sometimes reluctant, they travelled overseas nine or ten times for holidays to places including Europe, Canada, Japan, Mexico and China as well as crisscrossing Australia several times.

During this time Lyn worked with Bishop Ted Collins, the Bishop of the Northern Territory, as his personal assistant and outside of their work environment, they shared a great friendship and mutual respect.

In 1991 Lyn and Peter's son passed away at the age of 20, it broke their hearts.

In 1994 Lyn felt that after 30 years in the heat of Darwin it was time to move south to a cooler climate and to be closer to her parents and siblings.

Over the years Lyn and Peter had driven from Darwin to Adelaide 20 or 25 times and had passed through the little country town of Strathalbyn - they both fell in love with the town, its friendly people, the river and bowls club and decided to retire and move to Strathalbyn.

That is how Lyn came to be in Strathalbyn, a move which she said on many occasions was the smartest decision she ever made.

Within a short time of moving to Strathalbyn, Lyn became heavily involved with the Bowling Club, the Catholic Church, the Quilters, the Library and she also assisted the Red Cross at the sale yards as well as supporting Peter in Rotary.

After waiting many years, one of Lyn's greatest joys was becoming a grandmother.

One of Lyn's passions was gardening which she enjoyed with her husband Peter - she had only recently joined the Strathalbyn Garden Club prior to her death.

Many thanks to Lyn's family for the use of her eulogies.