

## **Paulette Curtis (nee Berney)**

**28 December 1957 - 6 August 2019**



Paulette Rose-Ann was born in Blackall Queensland on 28 December 1957. She is the 5<sup>th</sup> child for Lillian Rose. Shirley and Glen older siblings from a previous marriage did not reside with Lillian. Paulette grew up with her 2 older brothers Tony and Rowan in and around coastal and central Queensland. Her father Wilfred Berney was an ambulance bearer, so the family often moved to accommodate his work.

Her mother and father separated, so Lillian returned with the 3 children to Maleny in late 1961. In January 1962 another child was born a brother Peter, and 2 years later in 1964 the 7<sup>th</sup> child for Lillian a girl Krista.

As a young girl Paulette and her siblings attended the catholic church in Maleny. Following service, the children would visit with grandparents Bill and Maud Dickson, who by this time had retired to their home

in Macadamia Drive, a short distance from the church.

Paulette was challenged with health issues from a young age being diagnosed with scoliosis. To keep the spine straight whilst her young body grew, she wore a full body brace. At 14 she received surgery. She spent 6 long months in a full body cast in hospital recovering, then many more at home still in the restrictive cast. Whilst in the hospital she studied by correspondence completing her high school leaving certificate.

Paulette moved to live with the older brothers in Petrie Terrace, Brisbane. She sought work, eventually finding employment in the office of the University of QLD at St Lucia. Here she become involved with a group called "Friends of The Earth" providing an outlet for her passion to save the environment. She was fully involved in organizing rallies and protest marches wanting to bring attention to issues of the environment. One such rally which she participated in, was a bicycle ride from Brisbane to Canberra.

Paulette moved on from the University offices to take up employment at Thorn Lighting in the accounts department. On an evening out she met David Curtis. They were married in Maleny at "High Tor". In February '79 Paulette gave birth to her first child, Christian.

Shortly afterwards the family moved to Sydney. In the subsequent years of life in Sydney Paulette gave birth to 2 more sons, Jamie in 1980 and Joshua in 1982. The family returned to Queensland in '84 taking up residence on the Sunshine Coast.

Whilst in Sydney her husband reconnected with his church and his Maori culture and continued these upon the families return to Queensland. Paulette fully embraced her husband's choices, raising their children with respect for people's religious beliefs and respect for their own ancestry.

In 1986 she gave birth to a daughter Kara and the family settled in Beerwah. Paulette established the family in the community, going to the local school, joining the Beerwah Bulldogs and serving on various committees and social groups. Paulette stayed home to raise her children and to provide support to her Mother who lived alone. In 1990, Paulette took up work at the new Beerwah High School as a cleaner, she continued working there till her untimely passing.

The years passed. Her life changed, she separated and later divorced. Some time later she met Greg Alford. Together they joined their families and created a life together. Over their 15 years together they remained in Beerwah, now a family of 6 children and 14 grandchildren.

Paulette's love of her family was always evident. None more so then when a new baby arrived. She was always there offering her love and care for mother and child.

Paulette became the family historian. A hobby she pursued with passion. This hobby led her back to her roots in Maleny and the rich history of her family as early pioneers of the town.

She is lovingly remembered by her family and friends and greatly missed by all.

Written by Krista (Berney) Taxis and forwarded by Kara Davies

August 2019