

# Donna Patricia Robinson

## Eulogy

Saturday 22nd July 2023

*"We know that from time to time, there arise among human beings, people who seem to exude love as naturally as the sun gives out heat".*

That's my Mum.

For those of you that I have yet to meet, my name is Amie and I'm Donna's first born.

Mum will have told some of you her life story - in pieces or in its entirety and it will have had the appropriate depth. I don't want to stand here and dictate too many dates and life events. Instead, to describe and celebrate Mum's life journey with the flavour it deserves, I want to focus on three traits that made Donna the incredible human she was: **determination, integrity and generosity.**

Donna Patricia made her first appearance in January 1960, the seventh child of ten to Patsie and Harry Malligan, in the town of Chinchilla. Mum is described as quiet and kind by her siblings. The quiet bit may come as a surprise to some of you.

After growing up in Toowoomba and finishing school Mum joined the Navy and relocated to Melbourne. This was January

1978. Soon after she met another Serviceman, Guy and 12 months later she had a belly full of me. We can make the assumption that I was a delightful baby and Mum was a natural mother because over the next 9 years she and Dad produced three more delightful children - Laura, Jessica and Joshua.

People come in and out of your life as appropriate and after 14 years Mum and Dad parted. In time, Ken Robinson appeared in Mum's sights - her blonde-haired cowboy (though now a greyer shade of blonde). Ken came to us in a package with two beautiful children himself, Lacey and Ricky and the 8 of us soon became a well-functioning, noisy, packed household. This was quite the feat for everyone, most of all Mum who was the matriarch, the ship's captain, the cook, the shopper, the life coach, the mediator... And all of the other titles that make a big, complex household work. Mum and Ken's 28 year relationship has been one of love and mateship, a beautiful co-dependency between two incredible people.

### **So. Determination. Integrity and Generosity.**

Mum's **determination** meant that us kids were mothered to within an inch of our life; we were to be well-spoken, well-dressed, well-behaved, well-educated and we were *not* to loiter or forget our manners. She was **determined** that her children would have opportunities greater than those proffered to her. She was **determined** that we would represent all that was good in humanity, that we would live well and prosper, and to walk this Earth with an inner confidence and a kind heart. What a determined woman she was in ensuring that the most

important role she played was a successful one and I know that she's proud of each and every one of us.

Mum's **determination** also saw her build a resume after 15 years of mothering, and approach all three funeral homes in Toowoomba for an opportunity to train as a Funeral Director. A long-held dream of Mum's, we were so proud to see her flourish and quickly become the Manager of Kevin McGrath Funerals after a beautiful mentorship from Kevin and Jackie McGrath themselves. Some of you may have witnessed her in action here and know that she shone in this role. She was the most outstanding professional, helping families to say goodbye to their loved ones in the most respectful way, no matter what their circumstance or budget. It will come as no surprise that she prepared this Service herself today. What a **determined** woman she was in creating her own opportunities.

Mum's **integrity** manifested in a number of ways; she offered an honesty that was sometimes raw, and sometimes hurt but it was always to achieve a positive outcome. She defended those who didn't have the capacity to defend themselves. She was steadfast in her principles and never missed an opportunity to remind anyone who wandered off the path - especially her children. Mum's **integrity** was rock-solid and this allowed her to be the proud woman she was - right to her last breath.

Mum's **generosity** was immeasurable. Her home was always warm and welcoming and what was hers was everyone's. Hoarding money was never important and in fact it more often than not ended up where she felt it was needed more. Access she had to any resources meant they were shared with anyone

who needed them. I loved this about Mum especially and it's influenced me immensely.

She was extremely **generous** with her advice; I'm sure there are quite a few people here today that have been on the receiving end of Mum's sage wisdom - solicited or unsolicited. Her life journey and the many paths she travelled meant that she had a swathe of anecdotes and experiences to offer and her approachability meant that there was no problem too small or too large for her to help you with. What a **generous** woman she was.

Mum's passing will take a significant toll on us all. She was too young and it all seems very unfair but if she was standing here today, she would encourage us to focus on all of the positives, and not to waste too much energy elsewhere. And she's right - there is so much to look back on and look forward to, all the while with Mum in our hearts and our very being.

To this community here in Muttaborra, our family is forever grateful for the remarkable support, opportunities and connections that Mum regarded so highly during her time here. There is no doubt in my mind that Muttaborra is the place she was supposed to be, and the place she will always be.

Just to finish; Mum used to say, "I loved you first"... well now Mum, we say "We loved you last".

*We now invite anyone else who would like to speak, to come forward.*