Celebrating the life of

Catherine Mary Carey

18th September 1937 – 23rd May 2024

Catherine Mary Carey

Beloved wife of
John Peter Carey

Loved Mother and Mother-in-Law of
Genevieve & Michael Wells
Cate & Bernard Fetherstonhaugh
Lynne & David Christopherson
Michelle & Scott Sutherland
Jane Carey & Gary Beesley
John-Peter & Nicolle Carey

Adored Nanny and Great Nanny of
Jessica & Joe Koch (Charlie, Ted & Florence)
Millicent Wells & Tim Duffield
Henry Wells
Harrison Wells
Sam Fetherstonhaugh & Shelby McAllister (Bailey)
John Fetherstonhaugh & Nikki Raszyk
Leah Christopherson (Elliot & Quinn)
Nic & Cam Carling (Hugh & baby Carling)
Matt Christopherson & Demi Freer
Tyson Christopherson & Georgia Werhmann
Hunter Sutherland & Xaan Borbasi
Belle Sutherland
Jude Sutherland
Jesse Beesley
Billy Beesley
Ruby Beesley
Kodi Carey
Jaden Carey
Pippa Roberts

Beloved daughter of
Donald & Mary Crossman

Beloved sister and sister-in-law to
Bernice (dec) & Bob Ward
Lucy (dec) & John Clark

Eulogy - Catherine Mary Carey

Catherine Mary Crossman was born on the 18th of September 1937 at Jamestown Hospital. She was the eldest daughter of Donald and Mary Crossman and sister to Bernice and Lucy.

She grew up between Caltowie and Georgetown before moving to a farmhouse south-east of Caltowie near Teetupeenie Creek.

Cathie, Lucy & Bernice

Schooling began in Caltowie and as her mum didn't have a drivers licence she usually stayed in town during the week with her grandparents and aunts and uncles travelling by buggy or dray.

Mum arriving in Caltowie for school

Once she had completed her primary school her parents decided for her to undertake her high school years at St Joseph's Convent at Peterborough starting in 1952. She travelled over and back by train and often recalled the freezing cold winters in Peterborough, suffering from terrible chilblains. They were tough times for mum due to homesickness and the nuns being very firm. When learning to play the piano the nuns sat alongside her, ruler in hand ready for punishment if a wrong note was played! She did however make some lifelong friends who she later spent time with as part of Catholic Womens League.

Following school mum returned home to Caltowie where she helped her dad on the farm and once she gained her drivers licence she taxied her sisters Lucy and Bernice to school in Caltowie. She played netball for Caltowie-Georgetown and continued to enjoy playing music and attending dances around the district and made her debut.

Proud of mum at her debut

In 1962 aged 25 mum was asked to take a group of Caltowie School students to a concert in Booleroo Centre. That night there was a handsome farmer working the curtains at the local hall by the name of John Carey from east of Booleroo Centre and mum made a big impression on him. But, unfortunately mum had eyes for another man at the time. Following this Dad went to a dance at Caltowie with his good mates Colin Sanders and Don Jarvis and yet still had no luck convincing her. Being persistent dad managed to get his sister Joan to talk mum into going to the Gladstone Drive in with him and that was the start of an amazing life together.

In 1963 mum and dad were married in a morning wedding at St Killian's church at Caltowie with mums two sisters Lucy and Bernice attending her and Dads lifelong friends Don and Col attending him.

Cathie on her wedding day with her sisters and flower girl Jan Hocking

They went on a 3 week honeymoon to Albany Western Australia which was quite adventurous, both enjoying their first plane ride with TAA.

Upon returning home to the farm at White Cliffs, Arwakurra Dad's first job was to move his parents Miah and Elizabeth to Fulham in Adelaide. John and his brother Terry took over the farm. Mum's friendly nature made it easy for her to be welcomed by the locals and so began many lifelong friendships.

The farm house at "White Cliffs"

She attended here at St Agnes Catholic church and started to play the organ which continued for close to 60 years. Mum also started her long and varied volunteer life joining the local Booleroo Centre Hospital Auxillary and Catholic Womens league.

When Nanna and Poppa left "White Cliffs" mum endeavoured to keep them updated and wrote a letter to them every Sunday to share what was happening on the farm and with the family. This continued for many years and Nanna and Poppa would always oblige with a reply sent by Wednesday and the return letter received on Friday. The mail was so much more reliable back then! These letters continued for many years despite the business of her life and were always appreciated by Nanna and Poppa. When Cate moved to WA mum picked up her letter writing again and she and all the Fetherstonhaugh's a knew that Nanny's letters would arrive with all the Booleroo news every Friday until she learned how to email – what a commitment.

In 1964 their first child Genevieve was born, quickly followed 18 months later by Catherine in 1966 and 18 months later by Lynne in 1967 meaning mum had three children under 3 ½. Michelle arrived 3 years later in 1970 followed by Jane in 1975 outnumbering Dad 6 females to 1. Finally, in 1977 they were thrilled to welcome John-Peter on David and Veronica Zubrinich's wedding day. You can imagine how quickly this exciting news spread.

The family wearing mums matching overalls

Mum was 41 by this time and you can imagine how hectic her life was. Especially as this was prior to the days of disposable nappies so you can imagine the washing! With 6 busy kids to look after she didn't have much time for herself but always tried to help on the farm however she could.

As the kids started school mum became involved in the school's parent club being president for several years. This meant catering and raising money to support the school. She encouraged all her children to play an instrument and spent countless hours and kilometres taking us all to Melrose to Mrs Fuller to learn the piano, Jenny Bishop for the Guitar and later Margaret Carpenter in Wilmington.

By this time the kids had all started sport and mum's involvement continued this time with the netball club committee eventually becoming president of the netball club and countless hours driving to practice and school SAPSASA.

Mum was firm but fair. The girls were expected to help out with the washing, clean the crystal cabinet and polish the steps and the silver. Whilst we grizzled about this at the time we now realise this was a good life lesson. We are not sure how JP got out of this? Maybe he was pretending he was helping dad? Mum never complained about the amount of housework or cooking that she did for our family of 8 (that we can remember!).

Faith was a big part of mum's life and we were encouraged to say our prayers and would often kneel to say the rosary together before bed or on our way home from somewhere in the car. Mum and Dad said the rosary every night for 61 years and this was right up until last Wednesday. She said so many prayers for us all as well as many others. She was devoted to St Gerard who is the patron saint of mothers and children and sent many St Gerard medals to people who were having babies or had sick children. And if we ever lost anything a Hail Mary to St Anthonys was always Mum's suggestion. I am sure her prayers got us all through important or difficult situations in our lives.

Cathie with Father Nick Canny and the Booleroo Catholic Womens League

Mum did somehow find time to become a fantastic gardener and built a beautiful garden both on the farm and in Booleroo. She had a great vegie patch and at one stage a very extensive herb patch, and orchard of fruit trees. Her favourites were always roses and geraniums. She was the queen of cuttings and shared these with many people in Booleroo Centre.

Cathie's garden at White Cliffs

Mum taught herself to become a fantastic cook – especially baking and desserts. There was always a slice, biscuits or cakes in the cupboard! Our house was always open to visitors including priests and nuns, new teachers or nurses.

Like many women on the land she seemed to manage events like cooking for the shearers with ease. We would hate to think how many chocolate cake's mum made in her life and her Christmas puddings were legendary. She did yeast cookery and was always taking on new and modern recipes.

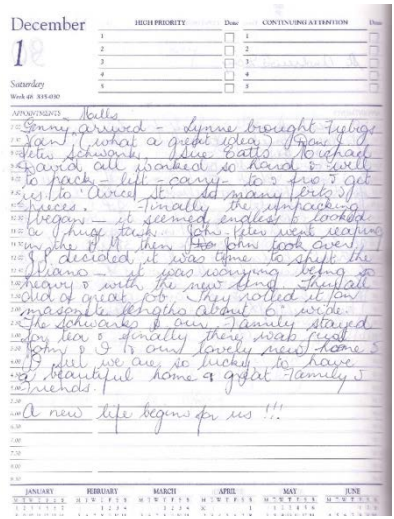
Mum always had time for others. Friends were incredibly important and no matter how busy she was she always made time to check in on people and drop off food if something difficult was happening in their lives. She loved keeping in touch and we often joked about how much time she spent on the phone when we were little but this was important for mum and she never stopped caring for others. We fondly remember Sundays when mum would invite the neighbours for lunch or tea getting out the best china and silverware, preparing beautiful food and creating great memories.

Cathie with the Butchers Quartet and Joylene Koch

Mum was a gifted musician who played the piano her whole life. She played for many musicals, cantatas and the Patchwork Players, also the local butchers quartet. Until only recently she played regularly for the residents of the homes and hospital and undertaking church services as well with her dear friend Lyn Jarvis. She also listened to children read at the school for many years and receive a Ministers award for volunteering there. She also continued with Hospital Auxillary which later included the Lavender Ladies with close friend Audrey Kelly visiting and entertaining patients in the hospital.

Cathie playing the organ at Mt View Homes

She was an amazing sewer who made clothes for the whole family. At one point she made 5 identical pairs of overalls for the girls for their annual family photo. We are not sure where she found the time. She also made many school costumes and bridesmaid and wedding outfits. She made treasured quilts and special toys, teddies, lego bags and quiet books for the grandchildren. She was also talented with needlework, embroidery, knitting and crocheting.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Saturday

HIGH PRIORITY

CONTINUING ATTENTION

Mum kept detailed diaries every day for much of her life and often referred back to them when we needed to remember something on the farm and in our lives and these will be a precious memento for us to keep. Mum loved animals and at one stage had a beautiful aviary of birds on the farm. She kept the mouldy bread for them and had a laugh one morning when she found out her 3 prospective son in laws decided to make this into toast after a night out at the Booleroo Pub.

Cathie's diary entry on the day they moved into Avice Street

She had a lot of shoes and we were never sure what happened to them because they never seemed to fit right and she always seemed to need just another pair ….

Mum never had idle hands and when we all finally left home she took up furniture restoration which she was very talented at and spent countless hours restoring some precious pieces which her dad had stashed in sheds and treasures which she had kept from her early home.

Family was incredibly important to mum. As her grandchildren arrived she doted on and adored each and every one of them. She was so proud of all 19 of them and each of their achievements. Mum kept in touch with them all and always wanted to know what they were doing in their lives. She became a whiz with her phone and Ipad and sent photos and messages and mastered her laptop computer even managing spreadsheets for the Lavender Ladies budgets. Mum was so thrilled when great grandchildren started to arrive and loved whenever any of the family popped in to Avice Street and they always knew where "little nanny" kept the toys and a special biscuit tin with triple wafers to spoil them.

Mum was very close to her sisters and loved to have a laugh with them – she had a special relationship with their husbands Bob Ward and John Clark and always ensured they caught up. Mum was terribly sad when Lucy then Bernice passed away.

Cathie with her sisters Bernice & Lucy

She was also very close to Dads brothers and sisters and formed close bonds with them and their partners.

Despite being very busy on the farm Mum and Dad managed to take several trips around Australia. Mum loved to travel and she would often be dropping hints to us girls to encourage Dad to take her on adventures when he probably wasn't so keen to leave the farm. We spent beautiful summer holidays at the beach at Semaphore and made lifelong friends from other areas which mum always kept in touch with.

Cathie & John at Coopers Creek crossing with their dear friends Lyn & Don Jarvis

In her last few years mum needed more care and we are so grateful for the wonderful and patient staff and doctors at the Booleroo Pharmacy, Booleroo Medical Centre and Booleroo Centre Hospital who were so kind and reassuring to her during this time and particularly last Thursday.

Mum and Dad were such a great team and shared 61 amazing years together. They talked lots and shared the highs and lows of family, community and farming. Mum was such a cheery person who was the centre of our family. We feel so very blessed to have had her as an amazing example in our lives. Whilst we wish we could keep her with us forever we feel so lucky to have her with us for 86 precious years. Mum we are pretty sure you will be tending your garden in heaven. We will miss you dearly,

Cathie & John on their 60th Wedding Anniversary

As mum would say when we went to end a phone call Hooroo and Cheers. **Xx**