

EULOGY

Celebrating the life of: **HRH Princess Shirley Joy Casley**

19th July, 1928 to 7th July, 2013

On behalf of Len, my brothers and sisters and our families we would like to sincerely thank you all for being here today to share the celebration of Shirley Joy's life. She has touched us all in some loving way and that is why we are here. We all have had those treasured moments with her that has made our lives so much richer.

This special loving attribute of hers has not only touched and influenced those here in this room it has reached out across the town, state, country and across the world.

HRH Princess Shirley of the Principality of Hutt River has had many out pouring's of love, respect and honour with many messages of love and condolences from around the world. We have heard that in Peru a mass was held for her.

So who is this beautiful lady, Shirley Joy?
Her story is a story of Love.

You may ask, "What is the purpose of life?"
Well it is, LOVE and Shirley Joy is the epitome of LOVE.

Shirley was born in Fremantle on the 19th of July 1928, to loving parents, Jessie and Ern Butler. She was the eldest child with two sisters, Valma (deceased) Lorna and Brother Robert (Bob).

She went to Palmyra Primary School and then Princess May Girls High School. What a fitting place to have completed her schooling.

After completing secretarial school, Shirley worked in the Solicitors office Howard Bath (Later in the service we have a photo montage and you will see this beautiful young woman striding down London Court looking like a model. That is Shirley Joy on her way to work in St George's Terrace determined and full of life – and nothing changed 66 years on!!) So back at Howard Bath her office duties included taking shorthand and typing. She didn't know then how useful these skills were to become. Dad just recently told me that at 60 years of age Shirley could still read her shorthand notebooks. Yes she still had them after all those year!! Our Mum was a bit of a hoarder. Even in more recent times, just in the last six months I was up at Hutt River with Mum and Dad and on leaving she gave me a plastic bag full of cards that she had kept for every birthday, Mother's Day and Anniversary from me and said "I thought you might like these, Graeme". Whilst she may have hoarded things she knew exactly where everything was including Dad's notes, messages, books and papers of which there were many. This sharp mind and wit stayed with her to the very end, just her poor body was tired and gave out.

So back to Shirley Joy's story: At fourteen and a half she met Dad at a dance in Fremantle (the man who would become the love of her life) he was then sixteen and a half. They kept in constant touch and company and after Dad's stint in the Air Force they were married on the 19th April, 1947. As Dad had a vegetable export business to run they only had a couple of days honeymooning in Geraldton (a place they would come back to much later). Mum's very interesting life began to develop quickly. Although she never changed, always humble, everyone else's needs came first, loving, caring and always interested in your life.

Then over the next 11 years she had seven children. There was lots of cold nights and no television, hey Dad?
An interest in farming grew and the extended family (as it was then) moved to Westonia (near Merredin) to start their farming life.

Their spirit of family and community continued and there was many a dance or social gathering with children in tow that Dad and Mum attended. After some years of battling with the weather the farm was sold and the family moved back in to the city.

There in Como in 1958 Dad built a block of 60 flats and a two storey home. Whilst Mum wasn't a seamstress she did learn to knit and sew. She often made the clothes and jumpers for the family. All the curtains for the 60 flats she made. These were the full length windows, floor to ceiling aluminium windows. Shirley was resilient and not phased she just got in and did what was needed to get the job done. These traits helped her in bringing up her seven children, all of whom loved a laugh and a prank to which Shirley Joy would laugh along with or say. "dear oh dear".

The yearning for farming called once again and so Dad went off in search of a new farming property. He found one approximately 100km north of Geraldton which became known as Hutt River. Shirley's resilience was put to the test once again as Dad had to commute between Como and the farming property he was developing with his two eldest sons. The rest of the family stayed in Perth for work or to attend school and Mum stayed in Como attending to the many needs of her family. After a fight with the State, Federal and UK Governments over wheat quotas Dad declared the farm its own sovereign country in 1970. Mum's typing and office skills were once again called upon as Dad wrote many legal documents between all these Governments and their departments.

The Hutt River phenomenon took off and things became very busy on the farm. There were now three sons, Ian, Wayne and Richard helping Dad. In 1974 Mum moved permanently up to the Principality of Hutt River where she was an integral part in supporting Dad in Hutt River's development. Over the next 40 years Mum liked to stay out of the lime light but was a strong force-behind the scenes and a big support for Dad in her various roles including organising passports, greeting tourists, tour guides, hosting dignitaries and media interviews. Throughout these years family still always came first. Her family continued to grow, now with many Grandchildren and later many great grandchildren. To date there are 22 Grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren of whom she knew all their names, birthdays and special interests. Up until approximately 12 months ago when ill health hampered her, she would always send all of them a birthday card every year.

Whilst talking with the tourists, Shirley's humility and interest would come through and she soon knew their story as she became a part of theirs. This bond she developed was her love of life and the love she gave to others. This ability was even greater with family members. When family came to visit and enjoy the open spaces, Mum's love and hospitality was cherished by all. When family members brought friends, they were given the same warm embrace as if they were family themselves. Nothing was ever too much trouble, whether it was for 5 or 50. At many social gatherings there were often more than 50 plus family and friends in attendance and her favourite saying was "Would you like a cuppy?"

During these years Mum was able to embrace her love of flora and fauna with the wide open spaces and the natural bush she embraced all nature's beauties, whether it was feeding orphaned lambs, stray cats, feral kids, picking wild field mushrooms, everlastings and other wild flowers when in season. She even joined the digital age when given a digital camera to which she took many photos of nature including sunsets which she loved. She also loved hearing the birds around the homestead and seeing the animal tracks across the driveway. She would tell me which birds were nesting, which flowers were in bloom, which animals made the tracks, and when an animal was injured or bird fell out of the nest needing some loving attention, she ensured they got it.

As the harsh weather environment made gardening difficult she still tried and loved to potter in her garden. Of recent times, in front of Dad's vegie patch she built a patch of everlastings. These are just growing up now ready to bloom in August.

God bless you, Mum. You will be remembered forever more.

Here she stays by Dad's side. Until about three months ago she had to leave Hutt River and move back to Perth for medical attention and the roles were reversed where Dad has been by her side looking after her and caring for her.

To quote Johann Friedrich von Schiller (1759– 1805)

A BEAUTIFUL SOUL HAS NO OTHER MERIT THAN ITS EXISTENCE.

Sherryl's verse:

From daughter, Sherryl – a message given from Mum in spirit early hours of Monday morning and this summarizes the legacy she would like to leave.

Joy To Life

**Through the squabble always hear bells.
Through the rain always see sunshine.
Through the darkness always see light.**

*This Eulogy was authored & delivered by:
Prince Graeme Ernest Casley (youngest son)
At the Funeral Service for Princess Shirley.
Fremantle Cemetery, West Chapel
Friday July 12 2013*