

**WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE**  
**BEVERLEY PATRICIA HALL**  
**SR CARMEL MSS**  
**30<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021 ST JOHN'S CHURCH, GLENORCHY. TAS.**

We, Missionary Sisters of Service, acknowledge and welcome you all today – those who have gathered at this celebration of Carmel's life at St John's Church, Glenorchy, and those who are on livestream from many parts of Australia and New Zealand, especially our sisters in Whyalla, Toowoomba, Mackay, Beechmere near Bribie Island, and Melbourne. Our apologies that no other MSS are with you in person today in Hobart as you honour Carmel's life at her funeral. However, we are all united as we give thanks for the life of Beverley Patricia Hall, our loved Sr Carmel. Many of you have known and worked with Carmel in unique ways and in various situations.

Our condolences to Carmel's loved family, especially to her niece and nephew, Gill and Chris, and their families. You have been very important to your Aunty Bev and she would want to thank you very much for being part of her life and for being here today. We thank you too.

Beverley Patricia, Carmel, is firstly a Tasmanian. Born during the depression years in Latrobe on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1931, her parents Wilfred, affectionately known as Toot, and Violet Hall, moved from one country place to another because of Toot's work as station manager on the railways. This took them to places especially down the midlands, such as the siding at Antill Ponds from where her mother would travel by train to Launceston for shopping, Parattah, Tunnack, Ross and New Norfolk. Carmel used tell the story that she was there at Ross, with the whole town, the day in the 1940s, that the sacred heart statue was removed from on top of the tall spire on the catholic church, because it was considered a danger and a serious risk of falling on anyone below.

Carmel had a younger sister, Jenny, who she loved and was very involved with her family throughout her life.

Carmel moved from school to school and part of her education was done by correspondence, distance education; she was also a boarder at Our Lady of Mercy College in Deloraine. She had cried and pleaded to go, then when she got there she cried and pleaded to come home! Her last eighteen months of schooling she attended St. Brigid's School in New Norfolk where she completed a commercial course. No wonder she was ready to take on so many roles involving shorthand, typing, office and administration skills! She knew Officeworks well and loved to shop there!

After her schooling and before Carmel's parents moved from New Norfolk to Mowbray in Launceston, Carmel worked at the Australian Newsprint Mills at Boyer, travelling on the little train, of course. She also worked at Metro Motors in Hobart, the Lachlan Park Hospital and at the local newspaper office, type-setting The Gazette at New Norfolk. In the local parish she was involved in the Catholic Social Movement and the Parents and Friends Association.

Carmel loved life. Back in the 1950s, she and a couple of her girlfriends would plan every detail of their trips to different parts of Tasmania on gravel roads, then take off in a little yellow VW on their adventures. Wherever Carmel would go on holidays, she would meticulously research every tourist attraction and gather every brochure to bring home. She recalls having a good social life during the years after she left school – dances, outings, and a lovely sense of belonging which can be part of country life.

Carmel joined the Missionary Sisters of Service in August 1958, at the age of 27 when the congregation had been established just 14 years. She began her formation programme at 432 Elizabeth Street, North Hobart, (recently sold for \$3million – not by us!). Numbers of other young women from different parts of Australia were there in various stages of formation. Joining at the same time as Carmel was Singaporean Sister Genevieve Ng, so completely different – they were like chalk and cheese, but they always remained close until Genevieve died in Singapore in 2015. Within her first years with MSS, Carmel became very ill with TB and remained in hospital for many months following surgery. Her health suffered and she continued to have health issues throughout her life. Life was precious to Carmel and her health condition never stood in the way of her commitment.

Except for six years in Melbourne in the 1980s, Carmel lived her life of commitment in Tasmania between Hobart and Launceston. However, Carmel's journey, her highways and byways, reached beyond borders in her heart and mind. She always had a big vision and she would so often have heard John Wallis say - "always look at Big Maps". She was interested in everything and everyone. Amongst the many aspects of her life's work were the Correspondence school courses that families used in the home with their children, printing of resources, publishing, working with our artistic Sr. Venard, Marriage Tribunal work, the Archdiocesan archives, and over fifty years as MSS Archivist.

Carmel has left us a wonderful legacy of photos which she took over many years. One story remains in the MSS folklore and is often told as we gather and story-telling begins: it is the story of the visit of the sisters to the lighthouse keepers on Tasman Island south of Tasmania. The family were enrolled the MSS religious correspondence courses. Carmel joined Pat Quinn and Marcia McMahan for the mission particularly to take photos. Reaching the isolated island involved hitching a ride on a boat delivering supplies there, jumping into a dinghy in the rough waters, being hauled into the flying fox, literally a basket, and pulled on to a landing across the waves. From there the three of them lay on a trolley that was then pulled by a cable up the 900 feet cliff face. All with their veils on. They hung on while Carmel in the middle, holding her precious camera and terrified, took photos from the trolley, while Marcia sang "Nearer my God to Thee". The family were so very grateful to have them there for the couple of hours before they returned the same way. Just another adventure in the course of their work, but one not to forget.

In the past eleven years, Carmel has been greatly committed to development of the mission entity set up by the sisters, initially known as the John Wallis Foundation and now Highways and Byways: A Community of Service.

Some days after Carmel's death, 20 out of the 24 MSS from around Australia, gathered on Zoom for a sharing of memories of her life. The tributes from the sisters were heart-warming,

the words repeated of Carmel were her warmth of welcome and hospitality, her kindness and graciousness and her ability to listen and hear one's story. She loved to receive news of the sisters wherever they were and whatever they were doing.

Carmel loved to have fun and adventure. She was an actress – and could flutter the fake eye lashes she wore in incognito dress, as she knocked on the door of Rosary House in High Street, Launceston on one occasion, as she pretended to be someone interested in coming to the community. Carmel enjoyed a brandy and entered into life with subtle humour. She was gifted with an intelligence that could sift the dross of life, and wisdom that touched the essence of humanity and the greatness of the Divine. In humility, she also knew her limitations and could laugh at herself when challenged. She knew what was true, what was right, as well as forgiveness.

Carmel loved nature, she was proud of her garden and the colour of all she produced. She enjoyed cooking and preparing a dinner for people to gather around the table. She loved bringing groups of people together to spend time in reflection and prayer, as well as good conversation where people could feel safe to share their stories of grief and laughter.

Carmel gathered the story of John Wallis, having worked so closely with him over many years. She grew close to him and was one of his confidants. She held the stories of the sisters particularly of their mission, as well as the story of her ancestors. A gatherer, an historian, and an archivist. In her creativeness she was also a designer – using her trusty tape measure to check the actual millimetre so that something would fit somewhere. Holding history enabled her to use her creativity to present impressive displays on various topics.

In recent years, there were a couple of projects that she wanted to complete, a major one being the memorial of the story of Father John, MSS, and the mission entity set up by them, Highways and Byways: A Community of Service. This wonderful memorial, project-managed by Carmel and the dedicated team, has been there for all to see at the church on Bruny Island since 2018. It was on Bruny Island that the seed was planted that led to the foundation of the Missionary Sisters of Service in 1944.

The second project was the restoring of the graves of our early sisters and those who followed at Cornelian Bay. That was completed in 2019.

Carmel's focus this year 2021 was the arrival of her great, great nephew Archie. Carmel was taken up to the family farm at Plenty to meet little Archie at the age of two weeks. The new life emerging was such a delight for her. Her eyes would light up any time her great, great nieces and nephews visited. Grandmother Gill had regularly brought Darcey, who loved her Aunty Bevy, and Archie to see Carmel at Fairway Rise Aged Care. However, on the Wednesday before Carmel died Gill had Archie with her and placed him on Carmel's lap. He was hungry. Gill gave her the bottle to give to Archie. She could not take her eyes off him as she fed him, captivated yet again at the miracle of life. A beautiful moment!

Carmel's family was so very important to her. She was important to you too, Gill and Chris. Thank you to you Gill for the caring of your Aunty Bev and carrying out many tasks. You took

on the commitment to support her practically with such love and compassion especially during the last 18 months. Carmel loved you very much and she listened to your wisdom.

Carmel's 63 years as a Missionary Sister of Service was clearly a work of love. She always regarded herself as living something of a "hidden" expression of mission, not so much out in the public arena. Hers was the mirroring of the hidden years of Jesus in Nazareth before his public ministry, and of Mary of Bethany as she sat at the feet of Jesus, listening, completely immersed in an intimate moment of relationship. Carmel treasured deeply the call she had received from God to become part of the life and mission of the MSS community of women. She lived the call with great generosity of mind and heart to the moment of her death, on her feast day, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel,

On behalf of MSS, thank you to so many who have supported and befriended Carmel - and Frances and Lorraine. Carmel, Frances and Lorraine have been such a witness to us all in how they have cared for one another especially in recent years. Thank you.