

LYNETTE MADDOCK nee COX: CHILDREN SERVICES PLANNER



Background

Both my parents, Jean Thomas and Russell Cox, were born and raised in Sunshine, so I am definitely an Aussie girl. Dad's father had moved from Ballarat as a young apprentice with Sunshine Harvesters. Mum's family owned a butcher shop in Sunshine.

Both families were predominantly of English stock. The earliest arrival was a family of seven who arrived by ship at Geelong in 1852; one child died and another was born during the sea voyage from England. The family then drove by bullock dray to the goldfields at Ballarat. The latest arrival from overseas was my

maternal grandmother who migrated from Scotland with her parents around 1910, at eleven years of age. Her father was a Swedish sea captain who'd lived in Scotland, overseeing a country estate, prior to migrating to Australia. They settled in Bacchus Marsh where he managed the local racecourse.

Choosing St Albans

Mum and dad met at McKays where they both worked, dad as a toolmaker and mum in the pricing section. (McKays was previously Sunshine Harvester, later McKays Massey Harris, Massey Harris, and finally Massey Ferguson)

Before their marriage in 1947 mum and dad bought a block of land in Percy Street St Albans, with the aim of building a house once they could afford to. At the time these blocks were about half the price of those in Sunshine and Albion.

As was customary at the time, mum left her job once they married, and to save money, they lived with dad's parents in Albion, occupying separate rooms at the back of the house.

I was born at the Sunshine hospital in 1949.

Arrival in St Albans

In 1951 dad started building our house in St Albans, a two-bedroomed weatherboard home. He and his father did all the construction themselves, a task which took 12 months of weekend work. We moved there in 1952 just before my brother Robert was born. Some years later the third bedroom and back verandah were added.

At that time older established houses stretched from the tennis courts on the corner of Main Road East and Percy Street down to our block. Around the time our house was built there was rapid development going on in the area due to post-war migration and within a few years houses stretched all the way to St Albans Road and behind us to the High School.

As a young child I remember lots of open space, the grass and the Scotch thistles, the creek over the road (later filled in), Errington Reserve around the corner, bike riding, and playing cricket in the side street - good places for playing.

Primary Education

I attended St Albans Primary in West Esplanade then moved to St Albans East when it opened in 1956. I seem to remember we had 52 kids in our grade 6 class. Could that possibly be true?

Some of the happiest memories of these years are of walking to and from school with friends from around our street: Denise Rodgers, Lorraine Grant, and Valda Brown. We had fun talking and playing along the way.

Secondary Education

I went to St Albans High School from 1961 to 1966. I started off in 1C and was made Girl Form Captain but wasn't there for the official class photograph. Then I was Girl Form Captain again in 1962 and have that photograph as proof.



Lynette Cox (second from left, front row) and other form captains, 1962.

My best memories of the high school years are:

- Sitting with Helen Smith, in front of Nicki Szwed and Joe Ribarow, and laughing a lot;
- Buying a sausage roll or pastie for lunch, a meringue, and spending the rest on lollies;
- Fun group outings - picnics, bus trips, the Melbourne Show;
- Saturday night dances at the St Albans Youth Club;
- Fifth form (Year 11) - being the only girl in the class with 16 boys.



Lynette Cox and Helen Smith with their admirers, 1964.

My worst memories of the time are:

- One school sports day falling over in my new spiked runners and coming last;
- Being chastised by the Principal for picking a rose from the school garden;
- Studying German in junior forms and Chemistry in fifth form - I was hopeless at both;
- Fifth form - being the only girl in the class with 16 boys. It had its challenges. I was almost, but not quite, one of the boys, and not sure how to behave - overall a fairly discomfoting year.



Lynette Cox and a bevy of boys with Miss Butler, 1965.

My best friends were Helen Smith, Nicki Szwed, Joe Ribarow, and Peter Barbopolous. I was secretly keen on David Dusting for many years, but my first romance was with Vova Karol, in Year 11.

As for favourite teachers, I really enjoyed Miss Goodwin's Australian history lessons. Mr Rayner and Miss Taylor were sensitive to my situation in fifth form and allowed me to sit with the boys instead of alone on my side of the room as other teachers expected of me.

After High School

After High School I began a course at Emily McPherson College with the intention of becoming a Domestic Science teacher. After a year of studying Organic Chemistry, as well as facing the weekly cooking class and subsequent sink full of dirty dishes, I decided it wasn't the career for me.

Then I enrolled at Melbourne Kindergarten Teachers College and graduated with a teaching Diploma in 1969. Some years later I completed the newly available degree in Early Childhood Education.

After teaching pre-school for 10 years in various locations (Sunshine, Warrnambool, Carlton, Hobart) I moved into childrens services planning and management, working in both State and local government positions (Sunshine, Melbourne City, and Community Services Victoria at Essendon). From there I progressed into broader community services management and planning roles, again mostly in local government (Wangaratta, Hobsons Bay, Sydney).

Since leaving Sydney for Brisbane 5 years ago I've pursued another big interest and dabbled in property development - buying and renovating houses for resale. This has been a real enjoyment but alas not very lucrative - at this stage I don't plan on continuing with it.

Personal Life

At the age of 22 I married a local St Albans boy, Garry Cameron, and we moved to Koroit (near Warrnambool) where he studied accountancy and coached football and I taught pre-school. The marriage was short-lived, and we separated three years later.

At 29 I met Gregroy Maddock, a Queenslander, working in local government in Melbourne. We married in 1980 and have two daughters, Jacqueline (25 years) and Katherine (21 years).

As a family we've moved around quite a lot following Greg's rapidly progressing career in local government. We've lived in Brunswick, Keilor, Wangaratta, Williamstown, and then Sydney for the lead up to and staging of the Olympics (a definite highlight). Five years ago we moved to Brisbane, which I enjoy very much. My brother Robert and his wife (Kuki Zsolnai, another St Albans girl) also live here now, as does my mother.

Unfortunately, my private life has recently hit a rocky patch. I am now a widow, having lost Greg suddenly and unexpectedly 18 months ago. I do, however, have wonderful memories of the truly great person that he was and the interesting life we shared.

As for the future, I plan to indulge in all that retirement has to offer: socializing more, reading more, exercising more, improving my bridge, travelling more, maybe even cooking more - and be ready to embrace whatever the next stage of life brings.



Lyn Maddock, 2006



Peter, Lynette, Nick, Jutta, Joe and Stefan, 2006 reunion.

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Nick Szwed and Lynette Maddock-Cox in front of Japanese shrine, 2013.
