

*Celebrating the Life of*



**Alex Woodcock**

26 January 1962 – 03 July 2023

**In Loving Memories**

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Funeral Service for the Late

# Alex Woodcock

Wednesday 26 July 2023

St Margaret's Anglican Church  
Aumuller Street. Earlville

Quiet Reflection from 9am  
Service Commencing at 10am

Officiated by  
Father Charlie Loban

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Placing of the Christian Symbols	<i>Father Loban</i>
Gathering in God's name	<i>Father Loban</i>
Matthew 5. 1-12a	<i>Johanne Nona Filewood</i>
Psalms 121	<i>Noeleen Selke</i>
John 14. 1-6	<i>Liam Nowlan</i>
Gospel	<i>Father Loban</i>
Eulogy	<i>Lorna, Lullie &amp; Paul</i>
A Brother's Poem	<i>Mark Meaney</i>
Tribute to Alex	<i>Family Friend</i>
Tribute to Our Bala	<i>Family Friend</i>
Reflection of Readings	<i>Father Loban</i>
Thanksgiving	<i>Father Loban</i>
The Farewell	<i>Father Loban</i>

# Alex Woodcock

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26 January 1962 to 03 July 2023

***It is hard to know where to begin the retelling of our Dad's life for he had many passions, interests, and a lot of stories cultivated throughout his 61 rotations of the sun. So it's best to simply begin:***

Alex Woodcock was born on Friday 26 January 1962 in Cairns hospital to Alex Woodcock and the late Eleanor "Joy" nee Dubbins. Eldest brother to Bill, Noeleen and Mark, he also acted as an older brother to many others providing mentorship, support and guidance. But his biggest joy and greatest pride was his children: Lorna Aramina, Lullianne Joy and Paul.

Alex was intelligent, smart, curious, and always learning; he would often say goodnight with a big book in hand and when greeted in the morning you would find out he had read every single page and could tell you what he learnt.

Attending Edge Hill State Primary School and Trinity Bay State High School, Alex then went to Griffith University to undertake his Bachelor's Degree. He was happy when his kids followed in his footsteps with Lullie attending the same primary and high schools, Lorna the same high school, and Paul the same university 20 years later. Alex would often walk the Griffith campus with Paul, reminiscing about his time there, and retelling stories of the adventures he got up to. This included establishing the first University Bar and Griffith Cricket Club, a club that he would manage in between his studies.

Whilst Alex didn't graduate from Griffith, he later undertook his undergraduate degree with Curtin University. Graduating in 2015 with Bachelor of Applied Science (Honours) and on the Vice Chancellor's List, he commenced his PHD studies in 2017 with James Cook University, exploring regional autonomy in the Torres Strait.

Alex was a lifelong student and a hands on teacher, tutoring and motivating others to complete their studies. When Mark was struggling to complete his schooling in Cairns, he moved to Brisbane where Alex greeted him with open arms. Alex arranged a tutor for Mark and would often play chess and Scrabble to expand Mark's mind. Alex always saw the potential in others and cheered them on to see the same within themselves. Through this support Mark passed his studies.

Alex was passionate about every endeavour he undertook, especially sports. He was fiercely competitive but a fair sportsperson. The competitiveness began on the streets of Whitfield and Earlville, where he would often be found outside playing with his siblings. Admittedly Alex learnt sportsmanship later in life as growing up he would often change the rules to ensure his victory as he thought of nothing more than winning whatever game he played.

Alex's passion for cricket was the most fierce out of all the sports he played. He was a fast bowler having refined his skills in backyard cricket where he bowled fast and hard at his siblings. Alex played for Cairns representative teams and had a "feared left arm quick throughout the late 80s to early 90s... holding his own with a bat [to] torment the opposition". This reputation formed while playing for Rovers Cricket Club in Cairns.

Alex enjoyed socialising and meeting new people. He could always find a connection or common interest that he could yarn about for hours. We all know that when Alex got a phone call it had the potential to become a long yarn. If you were with him before he got a call, you knew that after 10 minutes it was time to say 'Yawo', else you would be there waiting 1 hour later.

As a child, Alex and his siblings never stayed still for long and would always be found in places away from the watchful eyes of their mother. Whether walking up the grassy hills in Edge Hill or through the trees to Chinaman Creek, Alex would be booming with laughter, a glimmer in his eyes, and a mischievous grin. It was the same look he had throughout the years whenever he was getting up to something cheeky.

Marsh Street in Earlville, where our family has lived for over 50 years, was the social centre for Alex. A house filled with many people and only 2 bedrooms, the boys ended up living downstairs, which became the perfect spot to come home to after partying so as to not wake up the household or to have a group together to drink and yarn until the early hours of the morning.



After his mother passed, Alex permanently moved into Marsh Street where he would often be visited by friends or members of the community asking for his guidance and help. Continuing the legacy of his Grandmother, Jumula “Aramina” Dubbins, and his mother, who would open up their homes to support their family and community, Alex would also welcome people to stay at Marsh Street while they set themselves up in Cairns.

Alex was never religious but appreciated the community that religion supported and how Torres Strait Islander culture and values was incorporated and reflected. The same Christian and Ailan values that his mother raised in him guided him when he used his gifts in the service of others, creating and connecting people and communities.

Joining the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in the early 1990s down in Canberra, Alex would connect with many Indigenous colleagues who became and have remained lifelong friends, while establishing many initiatives that supported his people.

Alex was well-known for his work in the secretariat for the Torres Strait Islander advisory committee and later the Office of Torres Strait Islander Affairs, working to set up the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). During Alex’s time in Canberra he would also join many sporting communities, such as the Shadows Basketball team, and continued his passion for cricket through his work, arranging matches between the ATSIC Chairman’s XI and the Prime Minister’s XI, as well as the Imparja Cup. Alex loved retelling the story of taking Paul and his childhood mate to one of the Prime Minister’s XI matches where Steve Waugh ignored the boys but John Howard offered them his hand which the boys themselves then ignored. He had a mischievous tone to his voice and a cheeky grin, booming with laughter at the audacity each time he told the story.

After leaving ATSIC and escaping the Canberra winters, Alex worked in the Torres Strait as the Regional Director, Far North Queensland and Cape York for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Returning to the Torres Strait had been a dream of his for many years, as was fulfilling a pledge made to his late Aunty Flora “Lulli“ Filewood to return before the age of 40. The role provided him the opportunity to continue to make strong contributions to the future of the Torres Strait, whilst also the opportunities to meet and be with his family, taking part in traditional events and helping out where he could.

Alex served the public in many other roles over his 30+years of service in the Federal and State public services, motivated by a sense of purpose to ensure respect; self-determination; and empowerment for his people.

Alex loved to serve his community and would never say no to someone in need, supporting them however he could. When someone sought advice or asked for a loan, Alex would stop everything he was doing to help.

Alex joined the Kozan board in 2015, where he was Chairperson for 8 years before his passing. Kozan provides housing for people in need and participating on the board ensured Alex continued his family's legacy. A planner who thought about the future, Alex pushed a program to undertake all the unexciting maintenance work on all the Kozan houses that would see them continue to serve his community. Many Kozan people will now live in houses that have air conditioning and don't leak because Alex sorted it out. One of his greatest aspirations was to buy Marsh Street from Kozan, to honour his mother and continue to provide a place for his family and community.

Alex passed away on Monday 3 July 2023 at the age of 61, days before the headstone unveiling for his mother. He was determined to ensure that the unveiling would honour the person who played such a significant role in his life, and would often talk about how much it played on his mind over the years that it was taking so long as he tried to engage his siblings in the process.

Based on the outpouring of messages, it makes us proud to know that Alex will be remembered as a gentleman with a high level of intelligence, a strong sense of purpose, and thoughtfulness that earned him the reputation of a gentle giant in a complex world and a pillar of strength and compassion. His unexpected passing has been a great loss of knowledge and guidance for his family.

**He will be so dearly missed.**



# Family Tribute

## Lorna

Dad was one of my best friends who I could turn to whenever I had a complex issue to work through, required someone to soundboard an idea, or for a laugh.

Dad loved telling me the story of my birth on a Friday evening. Whilst mum slept, he went to the pub and shouted everyone a drink to celebrate the first of his children's births. He often joked how considerate I was to have been born on a Friday, the same day as him and Grandma.



I will miss our Sunday yarns where we would explore many topics, debating the implications of outcomes and determining the strategy behind political and public service decisions. We would often joke that we would send each other our consultation bill afterwards, especially for those 3+ hour yarns. Sometimes when we came across a topic of which we had limited knowledge, we would agree to discuss the following weekend using the week to do research.

Dad was there for every one of my university graduations, either virtually or in person, and I will miss his physical presence for future ones. This will be felt the most during my PHD as we had made a pact to be “Dr Woodcock and Dr Woodcock” as a way to motivate each other throughout our research.

I will miss being able to talk about work but will cherish his comments “Lorna Aramina, just like your daddio” when I told him about the work I was doing and my motivation and aspirations. I’m proud to continue his legacy of creating and holding space for others and advocating for Mob in the workplace.

I was fortunate to have faceted Dad for the last time on Sunday, the day before he passed. I still cannot bring myself to listen to my voicemail in case I do not have a recording of his voice – but know that like Grandma, Grandpa, and others I have loved so dearly his voice will eventually join theirs as they guide me.



# Lullie

My Dad had many songs and enjoyed singing them loudly with the biggest grin. He would pick me up from school and would have Pump It by Black Eyed Peas playing. He would put his fists in the air every time we got to the chorus, he would always tell me it was his gym song and every time it comes up I am brought immediately back to driving with him with the windows down singing together. I have so many songs that bring up these moments that are hard to listen to at the moment but I know those memories will live on forever.

My Dad was happy that I 'followed his footsteps' when we moved to Cairns, he would always say 'Ah Edge Hill and then Trinity Bay just like your daddy'. I would laugh and roll my eyes at this every time. He tried to teach me Cricket but I never listened. I loved to watch him fall asleep on the couch and then get grumpy when I changed the channel. He knew I was not a sports fanatic but this never stopped him.

Dad was a storyteller and a really good one. I'd ask him what time I was born and he would tell me the same story. 'You were born at night, I took you for a walk in the halls and I would be looking down at my Lullie. I tried to go out to find a pub but they were all closed because it was Good Friday so I got a bottle of Jim Beam and celebrated your birth.' He always explained the background of my name and how proud he was to call me Lullie.

He never cared what time my flight back to Brisbane was, it could've been 3am and he would be at the front waiting to take me there without hesitation. Some trips home were short and this would be the only time I got to see him and I always apologised and he met me with 'I know you are a busy girl' and 'I will always love you my daughter'



Dad taught me passion, he taught me to be competitive and he showed me how to love people. I will cherish our 15 minute goodbyes, where we would compete to say the last Yawo or the last Love you or the last goodbye. I would always wait 2 seconds before hanging up for his last 'love you millions'.

My Dad was everything to me and I admired him.

Our Gentle Giant.

# Paul

Dad met Mum in Brisbane where he took on the role of being my Father when I was 4 years old. I can't remember a time where he wasn't in my life.

We had a house in Holland Park, Uncle Mark came to stay with us and continued his schooling. Dad, Uncle Mark and I always played backyard sports together. Dad trained myself and my friends in the cricket club in Canberra when I was young.

Dad always showed a hands-on interest in my Childhood sport activities.

I remember when Dad taught me to play chess and never went easy on me. He taught me to play better and not give up on the board-game. I still wish I could have had that one match where I beat dad in chess.

Dad was always there for me no matter what happened in my life. Even when I got into trouble, he was always there supporting me no matter what. He often told me to focus on my studies and my music.

I know he was proud of me and never talked me down from anything but did the opposite and showed he believed in me. He supported me with his encouragement with finishing my studies and starting my own business. I will always take this approach that dad told me 'Don't just talk about it, but do it' and he is one of the main reasons I have gotten this far in my life. I will always miss having this strong pillar who met me with acceptance and belief in my abilities.

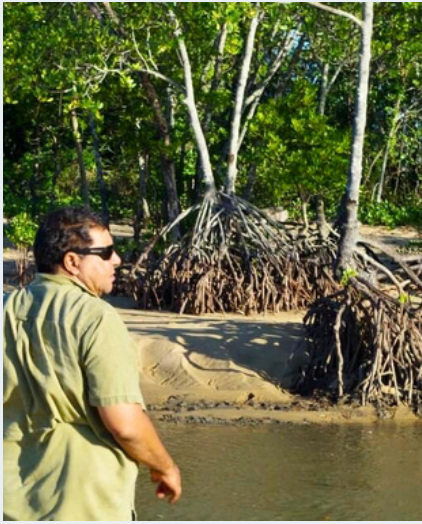
I feel honoured that he was my father and I will love and miss him for the rest of my life.

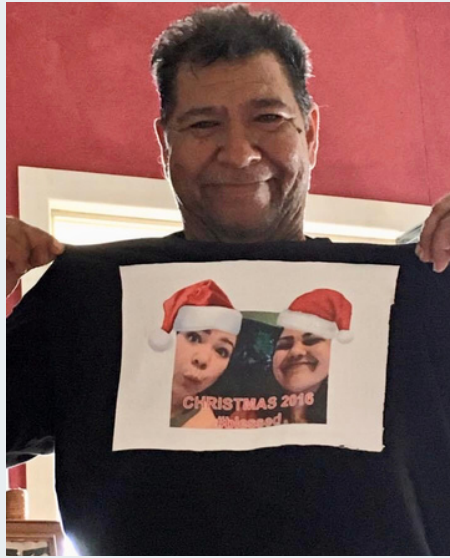


# My Brother

As kids, we lived together  
We fought, we laughed, we cried.  
We did not always show the love,  
that we both had inside.  
We shared our dreams and plans,  
and some secrets too.  
All the memories we share,  
Is what bonds me now to you.  
We grew to find we have a love  
that is very strong today.  
It's a love shared by our family,  
that will never fade away.  
You are my brother not by choice,  
but by the nature of our birth  
I could not have chosen a better one  
you were the best on earth







# Ailan Hymns & Biblical Readings

## Entrance Hymn - As Alex enters the Church

Jesus e sing out you  
Em beg you for teke em long side you  
Because you number one blong em  
Come now while em ya wait  
Come now the way you are  
Abundant life e blong you for good

## Hymn - before the Gospel

Malungu ngapa nagaidhin buya  
Malungu ngapa nagaidhin buya  
Ninu mith imith ngoelmuniya thayaik kruig  
Kodhai urukam a malil urukam  
Ina Gospel angaik gatha ngu  
Adhaka maluka

## Departure Hymn - as Alex leaves the Church

Journey, Journey, Journey home  
To the promise land, journey, journey home  
Pillar of clouds by day  
Fire by night journey home  
Filled with the spirit  
Led by the spirit of the Lord  
To the promise land  
Journey, journey, home

## Matthew 5. 1-12a

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down.  
His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

### The Beatitudes

He said:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## Psalm 121

I lift my eyes to the hills:

from where is my help to come?

My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

The Lord will not allow your foot to slip:  
your guardian will not sleep.

See, the one who watches over Israel:  
shall neither slumber nor sleep.

It is the Lord who is your keeper:  
the Lord is your shelter on your right hand,  
So that the sun shall not strike you by day:  
neither shall the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil: it  
is the Lord who shall guard your life.

The Lord shall watch over your going out  
and your coming in.

Both now and for evermore

## John 14. 1-6

Jesus said,

“Let not your hearts be troubled;  
believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many  
rooms; if it were not so, would I  
have told you that I go to prepare  
a place for you?

And when I go and prepare a place  
for you, I will come again and will  
take you to myself, that where I am  
you may be also. And you know the  
way where I am going.”

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do  
not know where you are going; how  
can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him, "I am the way,  
and the truth, and the life; no one  
comes to the Father, but by me.

# Celebrations

Tuesday 25 July

**Requiem Mass - 6pm**

Saint Margaret's Anglican Church  
Aumuller St, Westcourt QLD

Wednesday 26 July 2023

**Quiet Reflection - 9am**

**Service - 10am**

Saint Margaret's Anglican Church  
230-232 Aumuller St, Westcourt QLD

**Internment - 12pm**

Cairns Cemetery, Western Lawns  
Anderson St, Manunda QLD

**Wake - 3pm**

Balaclava Hotel  
423 Mulgrave Rd, Earlville QLD

## Esso

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Lorna Aramina, Lullianne Joy and Paul thank you for joining them to celebrate the life of their Dad.

