

❖ FAY STAPLETON ❖

Marcia Fay Stapleton (Fay) grew up in Highgate Hill, Brisbane. In her early working life (the late 1940s), Fay practised Child Mothercraft care in family homes. In the 1950s, she worked at Montrose Home in Corinda (Brisbane) – a facility for children affected by polio. She then worked for the Brisbane Chest Hospital and then as a nurse in Hobart. On her return north, she became the Clinic Attendant at the Queensland Radium Institute.



In September 1960, she married Neil Stapleton, a builder and stonemason. He and Fay spent happy times in the early years of their marriage building their new home on Neil's 13-acre property just down the hill from the centre of Buderim. 'Possums Possie' became home for their three children – Kylie, Matthew and Rachel – who were born over succeeding years.

Participation in pre-school activities for Fay's eldest child, Kylie, necessitated a trip to Maroochydore. Recognising that this wasn't an option for all, Fay established a playgroup/kindergarten at the Buderim War Memorial Hall in the 1960s with help from many other Buderim residents. Fay and Neil then threw their energies into supporting community and social activities to raise funds for the development of a permanent facility - despite opposition from some who wanted to preserve Buderim as a haven for retirees.

The Gabriel Poole designed Buderim Community Kindergarten in Townsend Road was completed in 1973 – the result of five years of planning and fund-raising attained with the help of Fay and Neil's friends including the Crosby, Wherritt, Guy, Antoine, Sheargold, Warren, Henderson, Hughes and Crisp families. Fay maintained her involvement as volunteer and employee with the 'Kindie' into the early 1990s.

She then embraced other opportunities for community involvement in Buderim including 'Friends of Buderim', a happy group of volunteers renowned for their catering support for Buderim community events. She was a highly valued member of this group for many years.

She initiated the practice of providing tea and refreshments after Buderim's Anzac Day Dawn Service. Preparations commenced the night before and resumed pre-dawn with Fay ensuring that the fine touches and reverence befitting the day were heeded. Friends and family who were co-opted to assist from start to finish attest to her remarkable organisational skills.

In keeping with her love of nature, Fay was a long-standing and active member of the Buderim Garden Club. She was normally on duty in someone's garden on open garden weekends.

In 2015, Fay was made an Honorary Life Member of the Buderim War Memorial Community Association (BWMCA) for her outstanding contribution to community life in Buderim. The award particularly recognised her roles with 'Friends of Buderim' and the BWMCA Hall committee where she played a major role in fund-raising activities and input associated with modernisation of the hall's kitchen. Together with her various other contributions to the Buderim community, it was considered that she exemplified the 'Buderim spirit'.

Fay's legacy is impressive. The Buderim Community Kindergarten continues to thrive. Its 50-year record of nurturing Buderim's young and facilitating community connections continues to be felt throughout the Buderim community. Buderim's renown for liveability can also be partly attributed to Fay, her friends, and others with like-minded views, who fostered the notion of inclusivity for all age-demographics at a crucial stage of Buderim's development.

Fay died in Brisbane in September 2021. That day was the 61st anniversary of her marriage to Neil.

Donor: A collective of special friends