

Margaret Craig

Oh the joy in being able to participate with fabulous women lying in red sand, holding my favorite flower – what an amazing experience. THANK YOU

Luckily life has been full of many wonderful experiences. It has not been all rosy but thankfully I've had wonderful friends to support me in this journey of life when it turned ugly. The power of nurtured early years and being loved gives you a good life force. We need to try and ensure that every child has access to this.

When a friend of a friend suggested I move to Alice Springs after a relationship ended, this felt like the right thing to do. I was in for many life changes! Alice Springs is a place of opportunity and I have been able to pursue many interests – most memorably a partner, a daughter, life long friends, a wonderful community school, new careers and a creative life... and many unfinished projects.

ORANGE – my favorite colour – and there is so much of it here! No wonder I fell in love with the landscape of Central Australia. I came for 3 months and THRIVED here for 16. My first adventure on my first weekend was joining the bushwalking club and hiking near Glen Helen, sleeping under the stars, falling into spinifex on Ormiston Gorge hike and having to ask fellow hiker to remove them from my bottom [weird way to get to know someone – she is still my friend!]. These are all still such powerful memories hiking through the landscape – bless you Mark and Steve's.

My childhood was spent growing up In Papua New Guinea – a privileged life full of great memories and delicious fruit. Sadly my mother died from breast cancer at 46 when I was 10 and my world and perspective changed. I try to appreciate everything in the moment because life can change at a blink. Maybe this is why I love flowers, butterflies and red sand. .. oh and good cheese, chocolate and champagne! I spent my high school years in boarding school on the Gold Coast which in hind site wasn't that bad – just the food! I am still very close with many of my friends despite our very different life trajectories.

Imagine my surprise at 23, protesting against apartheid in London with my South African friend, when someone said "Australia is just as bad for race relations". Oh my private school education must have skipped the distressing history of Australia. The memory of my first week - packing dosettes for Aboriginal people who I could not communicate with let alone explain how to take their medicines. Sadly this is still the case, despite my best efforts - the health system has a long way to go – as does the education system. Both need more advocates.

*"Keep your heart in wonder of the daily miracles of your life."* Kahlil Gibran ... this photoshot opportunity was one of those!