

## Of Service and Compassion: A Precis of the Life of Lori Harloe, 1947-2000

The caring professions ask of their members the combination of service and compassion, the highest clinical and ethical standards and the advancement of knowledge in one's chosen profession. All this and more was true of the life of Lorraine Joan (Lori) Harloe, an Australian nurse of special skill and compassion and singular outreach.

Born on 1 June 1947 at Nundah in Brisbane to Irene and Lawrence Harloe, a public accountant of Queensland, Lori's life was to be spent in exemplary clinical service in many parts of the world. She was a pioneer of both nursing research and the history of nursing in Australia, and one of those dedicated clinicians within the profession of nursing who worked within the World Health Organization to raise standards of hospital practice so that patients of all nations might receive optimal care.

Lori attended the Good Samaritan Convent in Innisfail for her primary schooling, and later went as a boarder to the Townsville Convent. North Queensland was to forever hold a special place in her heart. She commenced her nursing studies in 1965 at Maryborough General Hospital in central Queensland, and completed her final year of training in 1967 at Townsville General Hospital. Thereafter she travelled to Melbourne, where she was engaged in private nursing.

Lorraine Harloe married Seppo Hauteniemi, a gifted artist who specialised in large abstract canvas work, and together they established a gallery and antique business of fine antiques in Oxford Street in the Sydney suburb of Paddington. In 1975 they moved this enterprise to Townsville, where Lori worked part-time in the Townsville General Hospital's Recovery Ward and was relief matron of the Nellie Bay Clinic on Magnetic Island. Always a lover of art in all of its forms, she was appointed the art critic for the *Townsville Advertiser*, and for several years wrote weekly features for the art page reviewing theatre, cinema and art displays of all types.

Sadly, her marriage to Seppo Hauteniemi was dissolved in 1983. In search of renewed meaning in her life, Lori went to Calcutta in 1984 and worked as a nurse for Mother Theresa, one of a group of volunteer expatriates based in the city's former British Army Barracks. Later that year serious physical ill health forced her to return to Australia. After her convalescence, she worked as a clinical nurse in Queensland. It was there that a lot of us came to know of Lori's outstanding clinical skills with patients, so many of whom had cause to be grateful for her outstanding clinical professionalism tinged with the compassion and humanity for which she was universally known. She worked for eight years as a clinical nurse and a nurse tutor with the North Queensland Society for Crippled Children, based in Townsville, and as a postgraduate tutor to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander tertiary students at the Anton Breinl Centre for Tropical Health (James Cook University), Townsville General Hospital.

In 1992 Lori was appointed the foundation Assistant Director of Nursing (Research) at Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital in Brisbane, and in this inaugural position implemented and developed nursing research infrastructure within the goals set by the National Health & Medical Research Council. She served in this pioneering post for four years, during which time she established the basis of nursing research in that hospital and laid the foundations for interest in research, particularly clinical and qualitative, for many of her colleagues. She collaborated widely in the area of clinical research and in the history of health in Northern Australia, and was one of the pioneer group of Australian nurses to receive a Doctor of Philosophy in the history of nursing, awarded by James Cook Univer-

sity in October 1996. Lori's thesis, *Health in the Mining and Out-back Camps in Northern Australia in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, was a culmination of some eight years indefatigable research. In it, she delineated the special role of bush nursing in the gold and other mining townships of North Queensland.

In April 1994, Lorraine Harloe delivered the second Fabiola Oration to the Australian Catholic University in Brisbane. Entitled 'The Footsteps of Fabiola: Issues in Recognition, Communications and Professional Development in the Discipline of Nursing', it was to summarise her past and future contributions to the profession of nursing and the broader community of which it is a part.

She contributed most significantly to nursing history in Australia, and served for three years on the Marks Hirschfeld Museum of the History of Medicine within the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Queensland. She was also an active member of the Australian Society for the History of Medicine, and on the executive that ran a major international conference held in Norfolk Island in July 1995. Members privileged to attend that congress remember Lori, dressed in period colonial costume, greeting the 480 registrants as they arrived by a series of aircraft at Norfolk Island. She contributed much to the development of an awareness of the importance of nursing history by serving as an elected member both of the History Society and of the National Oral History Project, and as an invited member of the National Nursing Archival Project, all within the Royal College of Nursing of Australia. She was also a Foundation Member of the Executive of the Queensland Nursing History Society. In addition, Lori wrote three book chapters, including 'Health in the Tropics' (in 1991) and 'Nursing—Across the Frontier: from the bush to tertiary education' (in 1990), nine published papers, and gave more than twenty major conference presentations.

It was in her wider humanitarian vision for nursing that Lori will be especially remembered. For what were to be the remaining six years of her life she worked as a 'Teacher of Teachers' within the nursing professions in Indonesia and in Bangladesh. This aspect of her career began in 1995 when she was awarded an Asia Fellowship by the Asia in Australia Council, 'To undertake a needs analysis [as to] how the Australian Nursing Profession could help implement programmes for tertiary nursing education in Indonesia'.

From her base in Jakarta, she travelled extensively and networked widely with nurses in Samarang, Ungaran, Kudus, Solo and Kendall.

In October 1996 Lori was appointed as a World Health Organization (WHO) consultant to assist with improvement in Quality Management of Nursing and Midwifery Services, based in Dacca. In March the following year, she became the Bangladesh Nurse Administrator for the WHO, with specific responsibility for Bangladesh Women's Health and Development and the WHO's 'Poverty and Health Programmes', also in Bangladesh. In this role she assisted in policy development, planning and monitoring of the nursing and midwifery components of the Bangladesh Health Services. Her terms of reference, ably discharged, included 'the promotion and development of gender sensitivity within the [Bangladesh] Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and all its Directorates'. She worked particularly to strengthen nursing and midwifery participation in national health planning processes, and in the field of monitoring and evaluating Bangladeshi nursing education and service. It was during this important outreach service (in December 1999) that Lori was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer; she died on 29 March 2000 after a tragically short illness, stoically borne.

Lori Harloe was a gregarious person, and cemented many enduring friendships. She delighted in the sparkle of good company, of conversation and debate about clinical and historical and artistic subjects. Her warm and sometimes zany persona was treasured, in friendship, by the widest circle of academic and professional colleagues, her many Aboriginal friends from North Queensland, and those whom she met through women's professional organisations and in the world of art.

In 1986 she was created a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing, Australia, an acknowledgment of her clinical service, and of her community and teaching achievements. It was an accolade she held with greatest pride. Lori Harloe is survived by her mother, her sister and brother; and is remembered with esteem and deep affection by all who were privileged to know her.

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& John Wilson,  
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