



MABEL KATHLEEN WHITE

Mabel was born at Mascot on 14th September 1927. She was the sixth of eight children. Her father was a market gardener and there were always tasks that had to be done by family members. The family moved to Eastwood about the time of the outbreak of World War II and Mabel entered the workforce shortly after. During her business life she worked with three companies for intervals of between 10 and 16 years. She retired in the mid 1980's.

Mabel married Allan Brooks in April 1951 and 20 years later they moved to Kariwara Street, Dundas, where she lived until the time of her passing 2 days before Christmas in 2006.

In August 1996, about a year after Allan's passing, Mabel married Albie White. Theirs has been a happy union of two people of high integrity and with remarkably similar interests. They were long time members of Oatlands Combined Probus Club and have been keen club supporters.

They worked together in the Ability Options management team for about 20 years.

Mabel and Albie were recognised by neighbours as a caring and trustworthy couple. They became almost adopted grandparents to some. Photographs of the happiest children you could possibly see are those of neighbouring children with Mabel and Albie. Theirs was a safe house.

It was almost impossible to visit Mabel and Albie without leaving with a gift from them. This gift was always something created and cooked in the kitchen or grown in the garden.

Everything Mabel did was done with enthusiasm. One of her basic rules was that a job worth doing was worth doing well.

Mabel was a foundation member within a group of 12 people who met more than 30 years ago after an open day at the Rydalmere Hospital. They believed that the group could make a difference to the lives of parents and friends who were caring for people with disabilities. In those days people with disabilities usually lived in the hospital and in institutions not in family homes. This was because of the considerable difficulties in providing suitable care for them. The group of 12 formed the Rydalmere Hospital Parents and Friends Association which later amalgamated with the Marsden Parents and Friends Group. This then became the Western Sydney Intellectual Disability Support Group.

Mabel was a foundation member of AAISH – the Association for Assistance to Intellectually and Socially Handicapped and was a Director for 27 years. She resigned from this position only a couple of years ago because of her failing health. AAISH became known as Ability Options in the 1990's.

Ability Options provided accommodations and support for 55 people directly at present in caring communities. There are hundreds of people now living in the open community who have been assisted by the determined stand taken by the small group originally known as Rydalmere Hospital Parents and Friends Association. The Rydalmere group took the courageous step some 30 years ago and was instrumental in moving the first people out of the hospital/institution life into the community. This was done before the Richmond report was tabled for the general public.

One of Mabel's treasures was a framed membership certificate which reads "In recognition of outstanding accomplishments and contributions to Ability Options over many years."

Mabel was instrumental in forming and developing these support groups.

A gracious lady who added so much to the lives of those people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Lovingly remembered by her husband Albie and family, her sister Helen, niece Ann, nephew Ronald and their families.