

Janet Mary Campbell

Tennis played an enormous role in Janet's life as many of you would know - the magnitude of achievements is quite outstanding.

Janet began playing tennis at age 6 on the family court at Magill. She was coached by Tom Joy and quickly made her mark in the Junior ranks, competing in all the State Age Tournaments. I am informed on good authority that she was a "Winner" from the start. She had amazing talent, determination and that "never say die" attitude. I know she partnered Annie Birrell for several years and they became lifelong friends. Later, she teamed up with Raelene Henningson and they were a formidable pair who were always seeded No. 1.



During much of this time, she attended Norwood High School and was Captain of the school tennis team. She was lucky to travel all over the country playing tennis - from Broken Hill to Port Augusta, to Canberra.

When she was 20, Janet travelled overseas with Jenny Butcher and played in the qualifying for Wimbledon, but unfortunately, they just fell one match short. She was so proud of meeting and chatting to Billie Jean King in the locker room. It was a highlight in her life. They then went on and played some tournaments in Europe on the clay.

There was a short period in her career that Janet played squash and soon reached a very high level, but found it interfered with her tennis so she stopped.

I first met Janet at an Easter Tournament in Jamestown when she was 18. We played each other in the Ladies Singles Semi Finals - I have conveniently forgotten what the score was and I am sure I don't need to tell you who won. In all the years I have known Janet, she has always played Division 1 No. 1, firstly for Keswick and Wayville, and later on for Tranmere. Until she became ill, she was still playing Div1 No. 1 some thirty years later. It was a magnificent achievement and very inspirational for many younger players that she was able to maintain her fitness and competitive spirit over such a long career. Along the way, she made many wonderful lifelong friends.

On the court she was known for her fierce determination and her will to win. AND off the court, she was always the first to socialise over a couple of champagnes and regale everyone around with her latest jokes. Over the years her joke telling, karaoke and 'party spirit' became as legendary as her tennis. I am sure most of you here will have heard the familiar words *'Have you heard the one about "Aunt Mary had a canary she also had a duck....."*

Janet played Monday night Mixed Double at Millswood for many years and later Monday night Veterans Tennis. as a member of the Vets her passion was such that she got involved in everything. She always played our City v Country matches, The Berri Tournament, the Mildura Tournament and also many times represented the Veterans at the Australian Championships, still as the No1 player in the Team.

Berri was one of her favourite Tournaments from the ride up there in the car full of jokes and laughs to getting on the court each day (after a bit of partying of course) and having a shot at beating those "dreaded Vic Chicks". They seemed to get us every time.

Mildura was another absolute favourite of Janet's. One year I happened to win a Minibus for 3 days at a fundraising auction, so 10 of us girls decided to travel top Mildura together - conditions of getting of the bus where you had to take a bottle and some food. Janet brought her guitar and her song books from school. We ate, sang, drank and laughed all the way to Mildura - we then played our 10

sets in 2 days - I cannot remember who won that year - but we all stocked up and got on the bus, and repeated the fun all the way home - with a few extra unmentionables added in - namely the latest version of the "Twelve Days of Xmas". I am sure we will all treasure those memories forever. There were so many wonderful times we shared with Janet.

Several close friends have commented to me on the irony that Janet would have loved the thought of "Going out with the Stars"; Farah Fawcett from Charlie's Angels' - as Janet would often greet her dearest friends with "Hello Angel" and the same with Michael Jackson as Janet was a "legend" on the dance floor.

Janet fought her long hard battle over the last many months just like she played tennis. Absolutely determined and positive she would win and overcome all the obstacles thrown at her. She retained her sense of humour all along the way - it was only a short time ago Marilyn, Wendy, Annie and I were visiting and after a while, I stood up to go and the other girls followed and Janet went....."Is there something wrong with me" and we had a good laugh.

Janet was so grateful and absolutely overwhelmed by all the support she received over her difficult journey. She didn't realise so many people cared about her. She may not have been able to acknowledge her gratitude to everyone, but she truly did appreciate it.

Janet had one last wish which was to stay at home amongst her great family and friends - Johanna, Wendy, Annie and Robyn - who were so committed and dedicated to looking after her and making sure she got that wish. They did an amazing job!

We all loved her and will miss her enormously.

Tennis will never be the same again.

Marie Stevens