

Maureen Anne, Twinny, Miss Anderson, Mrs Massey, Maure, Moz, Nana, Nana Moz, Mum.....

You were many things to many people, one thing is certain you were loved.

All Mum's are fierce, they need to be.

Birthing and raising a child is not for the feint hearted.

I always felt I had a lioness in my corner, at the ready, there whenever I needed her.

Being the eldest of a family of nine and mother to six meant we had to share her attention at times, but if you were really in need of her support, she was there, all guns blazing...

An early memory is of me walking home on my own from school. I'm 5 or 6 (it was the 70's) and three slightly older boys were being little shits, teasing and throwing stones at me. I get home in tears and I tell Mum what happened. She was furious. She gets me in the car and we drove off to find those boys. Which we did, they were still buggerizing around probably hassling another kid for fun. Moz pulled the Valient station wagon up beside them and proceeded to tear strips off them. Much to my delight. What I didn't know but soon found out was Mum had first hand knowledge of what a small rock could do to an eye. Mum's dear sister Trisha lost her eye at the age of three to silly boys throwing stones, a traumatic memory etched on everyone in the Anderson family.

As for me boys didn't harass me again, thanks to the lioness.

Looking to the new day and embracing the challenges ahead was almost a mantra for Mum. And got her over many hurdles.

I'll never forget sitting on Mona Vale beach before sunrise with Mum, Brian and Dean, waiting for the new day. We're eating rivilas with butter and vegimite, salty sandpaper best describes it. I can't remember Mum's words that morning but the feeling of possibility and hope was everywhere. It was a cataclysmic time in our lives as Mum and Dad had recently split up and big change was around us. Much more than we knew at the time. A bit like now.

I'd give anything to be sitting beside her on a beach somewhere watching the sun come up eating salty sandpaper.

I can't really talk about Moz without talking about Maggie too. The Twinny's were a force of nature. The closeness of our families lies somewhere between cousins and siblings, as our lives were intertwined in so many ways.

When Maggie passed away in 2015 the affect on Mum was profound.

Mum lost her sister, her dearest friend and in many ways a part of herself. Today my grief and sadness is tempered with the thought of Maggie and Moz together again hatching a plan. Smoking ciggies, graph paper out.

As long as it doesn't involve bloody Amway ladies

Over the years Mum recounted many stories and memories. One that is etched on my mind is the day World War II was declared over. Maggie and Moz would've been 5 years old. The Andersons lived in Rozelle, inner city Sydney where many of the poor Irish Catholics lived.

The girls are hidding under the kitchen table hugging each other and crying.

The adults of the world had gone mad. They were singing, dancing, drinking, laughing and crying, spilling from their homes and into the street. The biggest and best street party ever. Philomena played the piano so their house was filled with people.

From their vantage point under the table they held each other and watched the emotional explosion both afraid and elated but not knowing why.

These two ladies weathered many an emotional storm together.
They did it with courage, determination and a wicked sense of humor.
They both loved Billy Connolly, I think Moz enjoyed swearing almost as much as Billy.

Moz you are the Queen of the F bomb
My heart is broken but you taught me that in time it will mend.
You taught me kindness and respect for all people.
You taught me to speak my mind even if it makes others uncomfortable
You taught me to be a lioness

Till we meet again old girl

xx