

## Matthew Edward Lavis

By Ann Lavis

IN MEMORY OF MATTHEW  
10/6/1981 16/8/2003

Mt Garnet is a diminutive township west of the Atherton Tablelands, gum trees and tall dry grasses create the landscape. Eddie (my husband) spent his childhood here, and over the years shared with our children stories of fishing in Return Creek, attending school in bare feet, patches on shorts and bread and dripping for lunch. He grew up with friends you keep for life, and values that seem to have disappeared over time. We holidayed here regularly while the kids were young and they have memories of adventure in the bush with a shangi and safely walking to the shop to buy bags of mixed lollies.

Our boy Matthew spent most of his holiday on the ride on mower which Pop (Eddie's grandfather) let him use to mow the paddock. Matthew not only mowed the paddock but neighbouring yards the council nature strip anywhere that he could. Technology has by passed Mt Garnet and our kids never seemed to miss TV, Pop would bring out his projector and we sat and watched slides of his prized mangoes, grapes and roses. Amazingly they would eat anything Pop ate, cream cheese that had a thin layer of mould on it, — won't hurt you just scrape it off Pop would say, mince stew with whatever was available in the pantry thrown in, there is no way they would have eaten this for me at home.

Today is 10th June 2010 we are snuggled up in our campervan listening to the myriad of birds Eddie can identify each one by their own distinctive song. Our daughter Christine has just rung from Mackay her children Ava and Matthew chattering away in the background, we talk about how the trip was and how the kids are, I feel sad that we are not all together today, maybe next year we can all come.

In the car we don't say much we have our own thoughts but Eddie holds my hand the whole way, I feel the familiar stinging in the chest, the trembling bottom lip, my eyes burn and my heart hurts, the sadness overwhelming. We arrive at the Mt Garnet cemetery and there is a blanket of frost, you can just make out some of the taller more prominent headstones, two small wallabies hop among the graves then halt to check us out. It is so cold and moisture from the fog drips from the trees, we walk carrying flowers to the small black stone figure sitting with his arms wrapped around his knees sitting at the end of the grave. Christine chose the figurine as it gives a sense of peace and contentment. We bend down and kiss the photo of a beautiful young man our son Matthew.

*Happy 29th Birthday Matthew.*

*Submitted by Ann Lavis TCF Mackay, in memory of her precious son Matthew.*