

LOCAL COMMISSIONER PROFILE



HOPE VALE COMMISSIONER CHERYL CANNON



I am the eldest of six children born to Amy and Herbert Mclean of Hope Vale. I myself have five children and 11 grandchildren, and I love each one of them with all my heart.

My fond memories in the early years are with my parents, siblings and cousins walking to favourite fishing spots and camping by the riverbank at Bulls Crossing. Later when we had a vehicle all of us would pile into it and go to the beach. They were fun days that I will never forget.

At the age of nine I was billeted out to a Lutheran family in the Riverina district of NSW. I attended Alma Park Primary School for two years and then attended St Pauls Lutheran College in Walla Walla NSW for four years. I went back for a reunion in 2015. It was great to see old friends again.

I got very sick at the end of my last year at college which had me hospitalised for a number of months in Cairns Base Hospital. My parents would make the long trip from Hope Vale to visit me in hospital. I lived for those visits. That's why I was very grateful to them, and I made it my life's ambition to make them very proud of me in all that I did.

My first employment was as a domestic help, then as a sales assistant in the local store, followed by an assistant's position at the George Bowen Memorial Kindergarten. I went on to study Kindergarten at Brisbane City Hall. That's when I found my passion for teaching. I also found my future husband in Brisbane, and a taste for city life.

We married in 1975 at St John's Lutheran Church, Hope Vale, and then moved to Brisbane where we lived for six years. I decided to return to Hope Vale so my three boys could have the cultural experiences at home they couldn't get in the city. They enjoyed the camping and fishing trips their grandparents took them on.

After being a stay-at-home mother for a few years I enrolled as a mature aged student to study through the Remote Area Teaching Education Program. Since gaining my teaching degree I have taught at Hope Vale, Cooktown, Laura, Coen, Yarrabah, Yam

Island and Aurukun. Some of these roles were as Principal and Deputy Principal.

In my role as Principal Coach with Good to Great Schools Australia I worked with principals and teachers in Western Australia and Northern Territory schools. I would never have visited these schools or gone interstate if I wasn't in this role. I'm grateful for the experience and the opportunity to expand my networks.

My other passions are travelling, sewing and gardening. I enjoyed a seven day cruise to Vanuatu with my daughter, niece and a special friend. I travelled to the United States three times, twice for work and once for pleasure. Loved Disneyland!

I took the opportunity to buy my home through Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) in 2013, the first person to do so in Hope Vale. I chose to build on McLean Drive because McLean is my family name; it seemed appropriate to live there. It was a proud moment for my family when I was handed my certificate from IBA for being the first person in Queensland to own their own home on traditional community land through an IBA home loan.

I am president of the Church Council which works as a team with the pastor and other members to support the people of Hope Vale in any way we can. No one is excluded.

I saw an opportunity for me to broaden my experience in working with people through the Family Responsibilities Commission. I approached the Hope Vale Local Coordinator and signed up to be a Local Commissioner. Every day as a Local Commissioner has been different. It has allowed me to have an insight into people's lives, their trials and triumphs. Being a Local Commissioner has allowed me to demonstrate empathy, support and discipline when the situations arose.

I believe my role and responsibility as a Local Commissioner has gained me respect within a community which I hold in high regard.