

***Preserving the memories
of our son***

Airileke John James

(16/7/02– 17/7/02)

My husband and I tried for 5 years to have children before being referred to IVF and finally having our first baby girl on 1998. Her name is Moale which means happy or celebration which we thought quite appropriate! 3 years later we decided it was time for Moale to have a younger brother or sister and once again thanks to the scientific wonders of IVF I became pregnant.

In June when I was 20 weeks pregnant I made a trip to Western Australia for a work Conference. Unfortunately after my flight I found myself alone in King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women in Perth for 4 weeks trying my best to stay pregnant for as long as possible.

On the 16th of July 2002 at 9.50pm our beautiful little boy was born at only 24 weeks gestation. He lived for a short 5 hours and died in my arms on 17th of July some time after 3.00am. My experience of getting pregnant, being pregnant, discovering that I had major placenta previa, early labour and then finally the early death of our son has been both devastating and uplifting at the same time. His coming and going has taught us so much and I wanted to never forget what we had been through.

The 4 weeks before his death was a journey which I had to take on my own as it was not possible for my husband and daughter to be with me. One of the things I did to try and help come to terms with what I had been through was to gather every little bit of memorabilia including photos. After my son's funeral was over I began making a Creative Memories Album dedicated to his memory. Making this album has been a wonderful form of self therapy. It allowed me to share my experience of being pregnant and then the five hours after Baby Airi's birth with all the people I care about who were not able to be with us during his last 5 weeks with us.

I carried the album every where with me for weeks before being able to leave it at home. My daughter often goes into the album and looks at the pictures. She can't read the words I've written yet but she will be able to one day. She also very proudly shows everyone that will give her the time the pictures of her baby brother and shares with them her version of his story.

Creative Memories has allowed me to create a keep sake album which is a celebration of the life and death of our little boy. It is there with his story in it for his big sister and any other younger brothers and sisters he may have in the future to be able to meet him and share in his memory. I would strongly recommend this as being one of many ways of keeping memories alive of someone close to you who has passed away. There are also many other things you can do with Creative Memories Albums but for me this has been the most important.

If you would like some more information on Creative Memories and the safe, meaningful and creative preservation of photos, memorabilia and stories or if you would like to make a Creative Memories Album of your own I would be happy to give you some more information on it. I can be contacted at home on 8932 4235.

Ranu James