

Luciano 'Lou' Leonard Morris La Puma, was born at Cairo, Egypt, on 15 January 1948 to Attilio La Puma and Irma Renata Marie Abolefio. He completed his secondary education at Mt Lawley Senior High School, Mt Lawley an inner northern suburb of Perth, WA. He then studied at the Perth Technical College, completing a Diplome of Accountancy in 1970 and was employed as an Accountant, C. P. Bird and Associates. Lou commenced his NS on 28 January 1971 as 5718059 at 2 RTB, Puckapunyal. Selected for officer training Lou then commenced at OTU with Class 1/71 on 15 February 1971 in 6 Section, 3 Platoon, Monash Company. In his senior term Lou was in 8 Section, 4 Platoon, Monash Company. He graduated with his class on 14 July 1971, was allocated to the Ordnance Corps and posted to No. 5 Base Ordnance Depot. Lou was discharged at the end of his NS on 27 Jul 1972. Lou later joined the RAAF. He served in Canberra and was posted to the RAAF Base at Williamtown, NSW, and was living at Medowie, north of Newcastle.



In February 1998, Lou was in Maitland District Hospital. Without warning, his condition became critical. Lou's wife Dawn remembered Lou telling her that: 'If you 're ever in trouble and can 't find me, call the Duty Officer on base — they will know what to do!' Dawn called the base. 'The Chaplain, FLT LT Mark Willis, arrived in what must have been a record time, Lou had lost his battle and the sight of Mark and the familiar blue uniform was an anchor in a very turbulent sea.' Lou had died on 27 February 1998.

Dawn said: 'Lou and I had been booked to travel to Vancouver on 27 February, we were to be present at the birth of our daughter Christina's first baby. This was a moment of our life that we both looked forward to. Jakob William Luciano Ruck was born in Vancouver, Canada, on 2 March weighing in at 6 lb. The date was 3 March in Australia and the time of Jakob's arrival coincided with our leaving to attend Lou 's memorial service.

'The RAAF has provided us with opportunities that other people only dream about. We have travelled and lived in many wonderful places. We have been separated from our families but this has given us the opportunity to depend on each other. We have also had the opportunity to make many wonderful friends. It is with deep sadness and regret that I withdraw from the military part of my life. Lou loved his life, a full happy life and the RAAF was a large part of that life. He embraced the philosophy of mate ship and camaraderie. He always sought and developed the best in himself and in others. I am sure that Lou would have been proud of how we have been treated after his death. He would have been impressed with the military aspects of his funeral. I know that as he looked down on that day he was saying 'Great, they all got it right!' Lou left behind his wife Dawn, daughters Christina and Joanne, son Paul, grandson Jakob and sons-in-law Peter and Dave.