

In Loving Memory of



*Kathleen Louise Bannister*

*(née: Cravos)*

*21st July 1931 - 29th April 2022*

*THE FAMILY OF KATHLEEN WOULD LIKE TO SHARE HER  
EULOGY WITH YOU.*

Where, indeed how, does someone begin to describe Kathy.

I suppose by finding a quote that sums her life up and for that I found a quote by Robert Browning;

*“ Motherhood; All love begins and ends there”*

That I think sums Kathy up. Her joy of life, her fun her adventurous nature. Just look at the amount of trips and holidays she had. More of that later.

To some they knew her as Kathy, to some Kay and to some of the family Girlie, but she will always be mum to us boys and mummy in times of problems

So how did it all begin.

For that we have to go back to July 1931 and Cardiff where mum was born to her parents Patrick and Teresa more commonly known to us as Tessa. She grew up there in a carefree life in the company of her friend opposite Rita Josephson, except for the intervening war years. I remember her telling us of a time they were taken to Weston Super Mare, to avoid the bombings in Cardiff, but where she went and picked the flowers from the hotel grounds where they were staying much to the managers and Tessa's annoyance, but her father found it amusing especially when asked why and she replied I just liked them.

Life continued back in Cardiff where she went to Our Lady's Convent where 3 people entered her life, Sally, Odette and Sonia who were to have a deep and lasting impact on mum. Their friendship and love grew, but did not stop the mischievous side of them coming out to the point of even dressing identically all be it in different colours and to go on trips to Howells department store just to go down the grand staircase.

Her final year at Our Lady's saw what was soon to become her career start, when she Sally and Sonia and the others started going to play readings. Mum and the girls performed a skit on "I'm leaning on a Lampost" and "I had a Drink an hour ago" dressed up in Sonia's father's Tux and top hat and Sonia in bright red bloomers which she flashed to the sitting nuns when mum flung her over her shoulder.

They did not bat an eyelid.

Her teenage years saw her venture further into theatre life when she and Sally went and joined the Kirby's Flying ballet in Cardiff.

Boys began to enter their lives culminating in trips to the Green Man pub in St Fagans for a sly smoke and drink of sloe gin and cycling trips up to Lisvane to go horse riding. Yes she did get drunk and get nicotine poisoning.

The 3 girls were even allowed to go to Butlins in Pwllheli but under a chaperone escort.

That early love of the theatre soon turned into both Mum and Sally getting places at LAMDA in 1949 and so they moved to London living together in a flat in Earls Court.

During this time, she qualified as an elocution teacher and also got a job as an usherette at the Odeon Kensington where during the now infamous line from Doctor in the House of "You Sparrow What's the bleeding time" Dirk Bogarde replies "10 past 10 sir" when they were referring to how long blood takes to clot in surgery. This in 1954 was a very risqué line but mum loved it and to watch people's reaction every time it came up going down to front to look at the audience laugh.

On a memorable visit of Princess Margaret to the cinema an exuberant usherette managed to break mothers nose bursting through the door she was looking through to get a glimpse of her.

Being in London meant Tessa and the family would travel to London to see her perform. Inevitably this would include visits to the Lyons Tea shops and all that involved, but all the while her mischievous and slightly rebellious side would still be there. Who is going to see me walking barefoot and gloveless down Regent street. She would ask. You guessed it she walked into friends of Tessa and were sure panic ensued. We have just seen Kathleen was reported back.

It was while she was in London that she met Trevor(Dad) and soon the flame of love was lit and they were soon married. However, both their careers continued all be it in separate repertory companies for a while and performing up to 3 different plays in a week.

Before long families began to form during the 60's when Mum had Simon Timothy and Jeremy, Sally had

her girls of Abigail, Emma and Sarah and Mathew and Dominic for Odette. What was a strong bond became even stronger as all 3 families became very close. Lives became entwined with Kathy and boys becoming regular visitors to Sally and her girls in Barnes and Odette and her boys in Battersea and they in turn visiting us initially in Kensington and latterly in Twickenham.

That gave birth to the now legendary Christmas morning drinks sessions at Twickenham. Including the incident of Sally's girls rolling some dubious tobacco product in front of Tessa and the Aunts and Mum. She never did tell us what it was!!!

She often looked on Abigail and her sisters as her surrogate girls and Dominic and Mathew as extra boys always wondering what they were all up to. Indeed even Sally's friends of Nancy and George became our family friends including their daughter Katie.

All this time though she never forgot to take her boys home to Wales and to Cardiff and to Tessa.

Those early years during the Easter and summer holidays and sometimes Christmases were a wonderful carefree time for us boys as we were able to enjoy a carefree time running around the lanes. On talking to her long time friend Val at mums passing she said the street came alive when we all arrived. A great testament to her enduring spirit of fun and joy in life that rubbed off on us boys. Many a late night you would hear mum stand in the gate shouting for us indeed all the local kids we played with to come in at 10 o'clock at night.

But the fun did not stop there as she would take the opportunity to see all the family visiting Gill and Mike and their children Nick and Sue especially when they moved to The Old Rectory even becoming a Local at the Cefn Mably pub. She would also make sure she also saw her other cousins Judy, Jen, Steph, Charles, and Patrick ensuring she was the centre of attention. These visits would often end up in marathon shopping trips to M&S in Cardiff and occasionally Culverhouse cross with Gill and the girls and antique shops with Gill and Mike.

These visits would later become visits to see Sue and Sean and Millie and Tara.

But her wide circle of friends did not end there. There was Eira who she met during a Pantomime of Mother Goose in Cardiff

Ann and her children Hugh and Emma through dad

And Vera and Ray and through them Graham Tony and Paul.

She was so outgoing that it naturally led her to do marketing/demonstration work including things like the Boat show, The Motor show, with Vera and several others but one of her favourites was the time she Drove courtesy cars during the Wimbledon Championships along with Sally. Her mischievous side came out one memorable day when while stuck in a traffic jam and running late with an important passenger she decided to tag on to the end of a police escort for some other VIP's and jump the cue to the entrance only to be pulled over by a disgruntled policeman and told off. This soon came to an end and so she found a new outlet working for Vera and Ray at their shop Le Sac. She loved working for them, as bags were and continued to be a bit of a passion. How many boys?

This in turn came to an end and she found herself working for Curry Motors. Not the most natural progression but again her personality shone through, and they loved her working there and at several branches.

Again this came to an end in 1990 so she sought out another outlet for her attention and energy finally settling with tap dancing classes.

This was the outlet she needed for both her love of performing and dancing. So after initially starting at the local education centre she then joined tap classes around Twickenham. Even then she was never far from being the centre of attention. She truly loved being with people and to be sort of an exhibitionist.

She continued to do tap until 2018 taking part in shows and the odd trip to Torquay for the odd show even after her hip was replaced in 2003. Throughout all this she was surrounded and looked after by such wonderful friends. Your kindness these last few years making sure she got out and about for tea, coffee and cake and the odd theatre trip was truly wonderful and again during her fight with pneumonia in 2018 visiting her in hospital to keep her spirits up. Thank you.

Tim reminded me of an incident when she dislocated her hip in the pub and was unable to move so rushing round he arrived to find her sat upright on the stretcher holding court and giving a royal wave to all. So mum and thank god for NOX.

The turn of the century saw her boys begin to settle down, with Simon and Laura in their home in Wales and Tim with Lorraine and her family.

Her life seemed to be completed with the marriage of Jem and Sara in 2011. Such a lovely day for her especially as she had Sally with her as an escort. This was further fulfilled in 2016 with the arrival of Jemima her first Grandchild who she adored from the first time she met her and positively loved buying her dresses and clothes ensuring her love of fashion will be carried on.

Mum lived life to the full none more so than going on holidays with all the wonderful people who had come into her life. There were the trips to Tenerife with Val including Sally and Ann.

Wonderful trips to the South of France with Vera and Ray and their boat in Beaulieu sur Mer. I remember her telling both Tim and I to do just what Vera says when we acted as her crew. Vera did appreciate it.

There was the case of the very windy donkey on a holiday to Rhodes with Ann, Roger and Emma, Tim and Jem.

The trips to Corfu where every night at dinner she turned heads with people curious as to what she was going to be wearing such was her fashion sense.

The wonderful holidays with Gill and Mike and Sue and Nick to Majorca and Camp de Mar and then later to Porto Andrax. The routine of the daily swim to the rope then the Island with the Bar.

Trips with Eira to Spain

And our first family trips to Ibiza with Tessa and Claire on several occasions

Finally there were the skiing trips.

Not to be outdone by Dad going skiing she was determined to go skiing so buying her and I a skiing outfit at C&A's she then went and booked a holiday to Bled and so began her love of Skiing. Sorry correction Apres ski. The incident with the Jagertee and the Mozart chocolate balls have passed into history.

There is so much more that I have missed but I wanted to let everyone know how much she enjoyed her life with us. We shall miss you terribly but will constantly remember you mummy with so much love and gratitude we were part it.

God bless. Sleep tight.