

A celebration of life

Sharon Louise Berry

6 March 1971 - 23 July 2019

3.30 - 4.30pm, 16 August 2019, Aylesbury Vale Crematorium



a personal goodbye

Humanist
Ceremonies

Remembering Sharon

Sharon was born to parents Val and Rod on 6 March 1971 at Hillingdon Hospital. What was the world like then? The postal workers were on strike, Joe Frazier was beating Muhammad Ali, Led Zeppelin had just written *Stairway to Heaven*, and the first Starbucks was opening for business.

When Sharon was two, the family moved to Hazlemere in Buckinghamshire. She went to primary and secondary school there; meeting Michelle when they were both 11.

I understand Sharon was a quiet introvert in her early years, but the tough and determined streak soon showed itself.

There were some spectacular childhood injuries - the broken arm after falling off a swing (Val...) and smashing her head through a glass front door after tripping on her skipping rope. And at 16, she left school to start work at a local estate agent.

When she was 21, the bright lights of Princes Risborough attracted Sharon to go and live there with Michelle. And in between the weekly karaoke and other fun, she worked at a number of other estate agents, before joining Brown's Solicitors; specialising in the complex and critical task of conveyancing.

I imagine that someone so methodical must have been perfect for the job - so it's good to have some colleagues from Brown's here today.

Into the 2000s, and Emily and Alfie came along, from Sharon's first marriage to Toby - and they immediately became the prime focus of her life.

Later on, having first met at Michelle's 40th birthday party, Sharon and Shaun eventually got together for a date a year later - a summer picnic at Woburn Safari Park.

Every season and celebration at Sharon's home was marked by amazing decorations and events. Christmas, Easter, Halloween, birthdays and more - all celebrated with her impeccable, trademark, pinpoint pizzazz and style. To mark the end of her first period of treatment for breast cancer, Sharon even arranged a Take That party (complete with tribute band), and before her last illness she and Shaun had planned a grand Mediterranean cruise.

Sadly, Sharon's condition meant that neither of these were possible, but Shaun is not a man to be easily deterred. He swapped his secret plan to propose to Sharon in the middle of St Mark's Square in Venice for the windy waterfront at Weymouth last October - a day not unlike today; livestreamed for all to enjoy, with Sharon complaining about not having time to do her hair, but accepting nonetheless.

Just a few short weeks to arrange a wedding before Christmas. Where do you go? What do you do?

In Sharon's case, she was interviewed by the local radio station, raising awareness about cancer, which led to dozens of donations to give Sharon and Shaun the wedding of their dreams. And of course there was only one place to hold it: back to Woburn Safari Park again!

There are some wonderful photos from that very happy day - including the one on the back of your booklet. And Sharon wears her wedding dress again now.

If we needed any further evidence of Sharon's enormous resilience, it's shown by the fact that, even after major treatment, she insisted on going back to work for a while - walking two miles to and from the office each day.

Earlier this year, Shaun, Sharon, Emily, Alfie, Samantha and Kimberley went to Disneyland in Paris for a 'making memories' holiday. Sharon provided one of her signature 'train picnics' for the journey, and although she wasn't able to go on many of the rides, it was a very special time together.

Sharon spent the last few weeks of her life at the Florence Nightingale Hospice in Stoke Mandeville. From where I think we have some of the team from with us today.

The whole family was superbly looked after there, and Sharon died peacefully, with Shaun, Val and Rod beside her, on 23 July.

But I'd like us all to remember and think of her just a few months before, back at Disneyland - with the family she loved. Making bright, lasting memories in a place with some of the same radiant sparkle, magic and good fairy-dust she brought to the world.