

Archive Tribute

Pauline Fiona Evans

25/04/59 – 9/12/18

Written by her daughter Carrie Smith

Ceremony conducted by Steve Parry

Humanists UK Accredited Funeral Celebrant

We're here today to celebrate the life of Pauline – Mum, daughter, Nanny Spain, Aunty Pauline, & Chris' darling.

She idolised her grandparents Iris & Arthur & adored her parents Anne & John. Her 4 siblings Steven, Helen, Nicola & David she loved differently, but equally. Being the eldest daughter mum knew how to get what she wanted and as a child she would round up her brothers and sisters and make them perform concerts for her parents and grandparents. It'll come as no surprise to you that as she entered her teenage years mum's favourite pastime was to play the hostess – my nan recalls one mother's day when her and grampa had been out with Aunty June and Uncle Billy and were instructed to come home for afternoon tea – mum insisted that they must dress up for the occasion so it was long dresses and hats for the ladies and suits and ties for the men. Needless to say, nobody would have had a better time that afternoon had they actually been at the Ritz!

Family was really important to mum and she delighted in being a doting aunty to all her nieces & nephews.

She was mine & Nick's mum. I can't remember a day in her company when she didn't tell us she loved us. It sounds crazy to say this now but as a child I was properly scared of upsetting her..... as you all probably know mum was not someone you wanted to cross. She once caught my brother smoking & dragged him home where she made him stand on the back door step & smoke a giant Groucho Marx style cigar in front of her to teach him a lesson. I can picture her now telling him to keep on smoking if he liked it so much - while he puffed reluctantly in between sobs!

Mum, like a Lioness would defend us to the ends of the earth. When I was about twelve, I had a new satin jacket - in reality it was vile - bright pink & orange, but I loved it. I begged her to let me wear it out to play one evening & she finally relented. One of the local boys made the mistake of his young life, by egging me & ruining the jacket. Naturally I went home in floods of tears to show mum what had happened. She dragged me straight back out with her to find the culprit. When we caught up with him she cornered him and started rummaging in her pocket - the next thing I knew she produced an egg! She proceeded to smash the egg right on top of his head in front of me & all of his friends, watching in stunned silence from the wings. She then produced another egg, this time for me to repeat the punishment - when I refused to take revenge she simply smashed the second egg on his head, then turned, and walked us back to the house, her daughters wrong righted! Needless to say, that boy never so much as looked at me for the rest of my childhood, crossing the street every time he saw me...or mum coming!

She has been a wonderful nanny to her four grandchildren - Betsy, Scarlett, James & Leon. It's been a joy to see how proud she is of them, how funny she finds them all, & how much she enjoys their company. Nanny Spain was completely committed and loving towards our four children, & me, Nick, Dan, & Sarah will never ever let them forget what an amazing grandmother they had.

She was determined that whatever was best for her grandchildren she would make sure it happened. One perfect example of this was when our girls were born, early and with poor lungs, Nanny Spain gave up a 30 odd year smoking habit pretty much over-night. Not just because the girls were ill but, as she put it, it wouldn't be nice for them to grow up seeing their Nanny smoking...& that

was that! What more could you ask for in a grandparent? The times they have had with her has been far too short, but in all of our memories and stories Nanny Spain will be with them forever.

In 1999 mum moved to Spain with the love of her life Chris. Chris has said countless times that those twenty years were the happiest of times for both of them and I'd agree. Mum has always been a grafter, always worked as many hours and as many jobs as necessary to make ends meet. And this continued after their move to the sun. Unlike Chris - She has worked so hard in Spain, running their own bar at 1st, and then setting up her apartment rental business - as you all know she never stopped! Being Mum, even though her and Chris decided to get married some 12 years ago, she put it off countless times so as not to steal the thunder of other people – my own wedding, the girls being born, Nick's wedding, the boys being born. She always put others before herself.

Earlier this year it was an absolute privilege to see her finally get married to Chris.....Now Chris might try to tell you that he was the funny one in their relationship, the life and soul of any gathering, but all of you know that mum was actually the hilarious one, the straight man in the double-act, the Wise to his Morecambe, setting up all the punchlines to his many overused jokes. And that's just one of a thousand reasons Chris and her were such a good team, and one of a thousand reasons they loved each other so much.

Moving so far away from their loved ones mum and Chris found a whole new family in Spain. They have many very close friends on the Costa but, when they first arrived they soon made lifelong friends in Jane and Mike. Over 20 years they've shared many a late night, long lunch, tears, laughter and mum & Chris

have helped to raise their children Alfie and Grace who both refer to 'aunty Pauline' as a second mum to them. At this very moment, right now in Montemar there is a celebration of mum's life at the Tahiti Bar. Several people have said it and it's true – Montemar just won't be the same without her. I'm sure the bar is packed out right now with many people who loved mum, and anyone who isn't there is probably right here in this room, as we know that people have made a special & long trip to be here today to say their goodbyes and I think that's testament to how well thought of mum was.

Mum was so generous - generous to a fault some might say, investing not just money & gifts, but time into her friendships & relationships. She would go massively out of her way to help people. For several years I would go out to Spain at Christmas but I had to stop as one year I found myself eating Christmas dinner on my lap surrounded by, to all intents & purposes, the waifs & strays of Montemar – anyone who she found out would be alone at Christmas, she just couldn't bear the thought of it - so they received an invite to spend it with her. This is how mum treated people who were pretty much strangers - so if you were a friend or a family member of hers you will no doubt have countless stories of the ways she has helped or supported you over the years.

The past few months have been incredibly tough on all of us but especially on mum. Her cancer was aggressive and her treatment was gruelling, with no hope of a cure. But, she never complained, she always told everyone she was fine, she didn't let it stop her socialising, shopping, cooking, ironing, reading stories to the girls, she attended a special afternoon tea with the family just a few weeks ago. And of course she continued looking after Chris and still keeping her business going for as long as she could. She was absolutely

amazing and we were all in awe of the admirable way she coped with what the illness threw at her.

In the end she went quickly & brutally. She was way too young to die, all of us feeling robbed of more time & the opportunity to make more memories with her. It's extremely painful and heart-breaking for us all and the emotions of grief that we are feeling – agony, sadness, the longing just to see her one more time, are at the forefront of all of our minds. But when we look back on a life with Mum, reflecting on all that she has given us - in these moments, when you really allow yourself to think about that, it's actually hard to feel any other emotion besides lucky.

The truth is, all of us here today who knew Mum, are all extremely lucky -

I'm sad for those people who never got to meet her or have a conversation with her - she was charismatic, warm, and considerate. If you spent just 5 minutes with my mum, you were so incredibly fortunate.

And just about all of you here today were lucky to have more than that - some of you raised her, went to school with her, all of you will have definitely socialised with her, you might have listened to David Essex with her, even gone to one of his concerts with her?

She no doubt did thoughtful things for you, she probably cooked for you, poured several pints for you, she asked after and really cared for your family, she will definitely have made you laugh, she would have always been on the end of the phone for you.....whatever your relationship with mum, if you are here today then she would have unconditionally loved you.

Try and keep that feeling close over the coming days, weeks, months, years. You - all of you - are so very lucky to have known mum, and I am enormously proud to have been, & will always be, her daughter.