

A celebration of life

Clive Edmund Thomas

25 January 1968 – 20 June 2019

11.00 am. 12 July 2019, Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend

Clive was born in Church Village on the 25th of January 1968 and grew up 49 Tyla Coch in Llanharry, with his two elder brothers David and Steven. His father Ken and mother Enid both worked in Llanharry, Ken in the Iron Ore Mine and Enid in the Childrens' Home.

David was sixteen years older than Clive and Steve eight years older, so it's not surprising that being the youngest he was very close to his parents. He went everywhere with his mum and dad and particularly with Ken, who he followed wherever he went, even to the pub when he was a little older.

When he was five Clive contracted meningitis and the effects of the illness were to affect him the for rest of his life. Shortly after that he was found to have a cyst on his brain which needed to be removed in an operation and he was given only a thirty percent chance of surviving.

He came through it, but for many years, until he was about twenty he suffered frequent fits, which lasted for several minutes at a time. As a result, much of his childhood was spent in and out of hospital.

Even as a child he didn't let the fits stop him doing many things or stop his enjoyment of life. He had many friends growing up in the village and attended Llanharry Primary School until he was eleven.

When he reached secondary school age he attended a special school in Talbot Green. When he left school, he attended the day centre in Treforest. Here He particularly liked working in the wood work shop, though his family suspected that he didn't do much work and spent most of his time talking to people.

Ken and Enid gave Clive a loving home and he continued to go everywhere with them and was Ken's shadow until he died in 1993. Clive and Enid lived at number 49 his until she also died in 2003, at which point he received help from support workers at home for five years as he learnt to live independently.

Then about nine years ago he moved to Stryd-y-Gollen, an assisted living facility. Clive was very happy living there and had great relationships with his support workers. Steve and the rest of Clive's family and friends are very grateful for help and support that Clive received.

Clive had several hobbies, so he was never bored. He liked to watch comedy programmes particularly old comedies, and had many DVDs of his favourites, Only Fools and Horses, On the Buses and the Carry On Films.

He liked football and supported Liverpool and Llanharry, watching Liverpool on the TV and going to many of Llanharry's home games.

He also enjoyed listening to music, mainly from the 1970's. He liked the Beatles, but loved Status Quo, having all their albums and DVDs and each year he and Steven went to Cardiff to see them in concert.

And he enjoyed going on holiday. Each year he had a week's summer holiday at the Glamorgan Holiday Home in Restbay, Porthcawl and another week there at Christmas.

He really looked forward to these weeks and loved spending Christmas there. One summer his week in Porthcawl coincided with the Elvis festival and he returned home with loaded down bags of merchandise including photographs, mugs and an Elvis wig and glasses which he wore proudly.

But as I am sure you all know his favourite hobby was talking to people and telling them stories of the things he had done. Two of his favourite stories were about what he got up to in work at Treforest, how much he liked it there and how heavily he was relied on.

He often spoke of the time there was a tree stump that needed to be removed and of his vital part in the enterprise; advising the contractors hired to do the job of the best way to go about it.

He also liked to tell of the time that he repaired a broken car down they had at the day centre, with no mechanical training or help from the mechanic in charge.

These experiences and the support given him at the day centre that they speak of, together with the support of his workers at home and the love of his family and friends gave Clive confidence in himself and his place in the world.

How many people can honestly say that they are as content as Clive seemed and that they know their place in the world. His world was his village and he had a routine to his life.

He was up early every morning and went to buy a paper, he never read the paper, but would look through it. Then he would go to work. On Mondays he helped clean a house in Bryn Sadler until one, Tuesday to Friday he worked at the Day Centre, then he would come home, pop out to the shop to buy something and then be in bed by nine at night.

On Saturdays he would go to the bank in Ponytclun. On Sunday he would be up early to get to the Newsagent's and help Craig get the newspapers. Then at ten he would arrive at Steven and Sharn's for his Sunday Lunch, he would stay until exactly two and then leave, even if he was in the middle of watching something on the TV.

In between these markers in his life, he would spend a lot of his time in the village, sitting on the bench by the Spar or in the park, talking to anyone and everyone.

Steven was always a bit worried for him, being concerned how people would react to Clive wanting to talk to them, but he and the rest of Clive's family have been amazed and deeply touched since Clive's death to learn that nothing could further from the truth.

People they have not known have come up to them to offer their sympathy and tell them how much they are going to miss Clive and some of their own memories of him. They have been told how Clive always brightened up some people's day with his infectious cheerfulness, what they spoke about with him and the stories he told them of his things he had done.

Often the same stories that he had told them before; like when in the heavy snows in the eighties he had once walked through the lanes to a farm to get fresh milk, or how he didn't understand why they hadn't built a dome over Llanharry, to protect it from the rain like they had done to London, when they built the Millennium Dome.

They have found out that he sometimes went to the Bear and sat with friends they knew nothing about, to watch bands and they have found out how fond many people in the village were of Clive. To many he was a part of the village and a part of their day involved seeing him and chatting with him. His family had always known what a happy and lovely man he was, but they have been very touched to realise that so many other people saw Clive in the same way.

Clive died suddenly on the 20th of June leaving his family and friends shocked. They have asked me to tell you that the kind words and the generosity of so many people has made this difficult time somewhat easier.