

# A celebration of life Yvonne Sandra Adams

27th October 1948 - 8th December 2019

*a personal goodbye*

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**Humanist**  
*Ceremonies*

## **Yvonne Sandra Adams (1948 – 2019)**

Yvonne Sandra Ann Adams was born on 27<sup>th</sup> October 1948 in Henbury, Bristol. It was a time of post-war austerity and many things were still rationed. Her father died when she was about nine years old, and the family believe that this had a significant effect on her. That said, as far as we know, she otherwise had a happy childhood. She had one brother, Ken, who died in 2018.

After leaving school, like many thousands of others in sixties Bristol, Yvonne got a job making cigarettes for W.D and H.O Wills; more widely known locally as Wills's.

Yvonne met her husband Stephen through family connections. After a few times of asking, Yvonne had nothing else to do one Christmas and agreed to a date with Steve. They married not long after.

Due to Stephen having polio at the age of eight, he didn't think he could have children – however, of course they had three healthy sons who meant everything to them. In fact, Yvonne recently said to Michael that deep down all she ever wanted to be was a mum.

Their marriage was generally very happy, focused on raising their three children. They started their married life in Bristol and then settled in Yate to bring up their three boys. Due to Stephen being disabled their recreations and social life were limited and their way of life was very home based. Their tastes were not extravagant, though Yvonne did enjoy the occasional glass of sherry.

Stephen was an electrical engineer. He worked for BAE systems and was involved with the development of one of Bristol's most iconic products: Concorde. Sadly, he died in 2007, when Yvonne was 58. During the last ten years or so of his life, Yvonne returned to full-time work to help support the family. She got a job with Parcelforce, which apparently, she quite enjoyed. This work enabled her sons Darren and Michael to gain work experience, giving them the opportunity to work with her and see another side of her.

Although she was a fairly quiet person, Yvonne took a keen interest in politics. She was a member of the Liberal Democrats and sometimes helped out behind the scenes during elections. She was pleased that, although she did not live to see the result, she at least managed to get her postal vote in for the recent election. This despite not being impressed by the recently resigned leader. Politics, and generally 'putting the world to rights' was a topic she often enjoyed discussing with family and friends.

When the boys were young the family opted for holidays in the UK. For years they enjoyed going to Portreath in Cornwall and staying in a caravan; where, due to limited space, the three boys slept under the awning. After the boys left home Yvonne and Stephen holidayed in Ireland, staying in cottages and guest houses.

Particularly in her later years, Yvonne liked routines. Well, don't most of us as we get older? Every morning at 8.45 precisely she would set off to walk the dogs on the common, meeting with like-minded friends to 'set the world to rights' as they went. She would return an hour later at 9.45, happy and satisfied that the routine was being scrupulously maintained. Like most lovers of routine, it was suggested that she could be, at times, a tad stubborn.

The walking group had started off ten years ago with just Yvonne and Diane walking their dogs. However, over the years, more people joined; and there are now around ten people in the group. In recent years they have started meeting up for a meal at Christmas, with Yvonne always at the hub of things.

Yvonne looked after many animals in the course of her life. But Jack the dog had a special place in her heart. Jack was bought, aged 7 months, shortly before Steve died.

A humanist outlook manifests itself differently in different people. For Yvonne it was her support for the Liberal Democrats, who have always supported human rights causes. It was also her keen interest in the welfare of animals. She especially enjoyed looking after cats and dogs. And the home also featured an aviary and fish tanks.

Yvonne was also a keen gardener, growing vegetables as well as flowers. Another interest was reading, mostly crime novels and thrillers. When the boys were at home the family enjoyed watching TV together: politics and sport were the regular options; in particular cricket, snooker, darts and Formula 1. This combination of concerns and interests made for a very occupied and meaningful life.

Yvonne's three sons have all been successful in their own way, and are a tribute to her. Lee worked as a security guard. However after being made redundant he became a carer to their nan as well as helping Yvonne following her knee operation. He has two children.

Darren is an IT director and travels frequently. He mentioned that Yvonne often acted as a sounding board and was always there to listen to him through difficult times. He also emphasized how much Yvonne had helped with looking after his children when they were younger; taking them out, spending time with them. More recently, they routinely spoke

by phone on Mondays and Thursdays to catch up, discuss work, politics, family, and anything and everything that came to mind. Darren commented that he thinks of this as a special time that he cherishes for many reasons.

Michael is head of IT in a large company. He had two children with his first wife Helen, who died in 2013. After this tragic event, Yvonne would arrive every Wednesday to help look after the children. Michael would already have the lunch prepared and they would chat for a while until he went back home to work. Yvonne would then be busy with washing and gardening.

Yvonne was so proud and happy that Michael found happiness again after marrying Catherine and becoming a father to her two young children. She commented many times how lovely Catherine is and what a lovely couple they are.

More recently they routinely talked during the week on the phone. During one conversation Michael noted that he wasn't seeing his mother much due to her knee problem, so he made time to drive over to Yate to take his mum out for dinner a few times. He now thinks of this as a dedicated time which he cherishes.

It is now time for Lee, Darren and Michael to speak about their mum in their own words.

*[Contributions of Lee, Darren and Mike]*

Yvonne absolutely adored all her grandchildren and would sit patiently with them reading or playing. As already mentioned, she also loved animals, especially dogs and cats. At one point she somehow had nine cats and loved them all. Dogs were always a large feature, especially Jack, a large Golden Retriever Yvonne and Steve bought together just before Steve passed away.

Sadly though, the happy way of life was disrupted when Yvonne was diagnosed with cancer in mid-November. She died only three weeks later on 8<sup>th</sup> December. Until her illness she had been helping to look after her 96 year old mother-in-law, despite still recovering from her recent knee replacement operation.

Yvonne's death was, of course, a great shock to all who knew and loved for her. Through the later part of 2018 and all through 2019 Yvonne suffered with her knee. She was so happy to have had it replaced in September 2019. Since then, and after recovery, she had had a new lease of life and was looking forward to being more mobile. Sadly, this was not to be.

Yvonne's life was not spectacular; but it was a conscientious life, a caring life, and a well lived life, rich in the love of her family and friends. Her main ambition was to be a good wife

and mother, and this we can see she achieved with honours. Her secondary ambition was to be a good citizen, and this we can see manifest in her political convictions, her loyalty to friends and her concern for animals.

We have met here today to pay tribute to this well lived life... and we now bid Yvonne a final goodbye.