

A celebration of life

Ian Yates

28 November 1960 – 30 August 2020

Tuesday 22 September 2020, Huddersfield Crematorium



a personal goodbye

Humanist
Ceremonies

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Ian was born in Barnsley General on 28th November 1960, the youngest child of Rhoda and Ken Yates, and little brother to Joan, Geoff and Denise. He was barely a teenager when his niece Terrie came along, and she remembers 'Our Ian' introducing her to the joy of the Star Wars films, always accompanied by dandelion and burdock and half an Arctic roll each! Terrie looked up to her uncle, while growing up and as an adult, though she admitted he could be a bit of a jack the lad. But Ian was always a charmer, with those gorgeous eyes; when she was young, Terrie would often stay with her nan and grandad, and remembers Friday nights when the whole household seemed to be involved in getting Ian ready for a night out! He'd be washing his hair in the kitchen sink while his mum was ironing his shirt and someone else was cooking him tea.



Ian took up the drums when he was young, a passion that stayed with him all his life, and he was always happy to bring his drumsticks to the aid of any band missing a drummer. One of his oldest friends, Kev, had a bit more to say about that, and their childhood together:

I met Ian when we both started school, but it wasn't until we both made a rush for the exit after a gruelling day and both got stuck in the doorway, followed by much laughter, that we became best friends. We'd have been seven then, fifty-two/three years ago. We grew up together, and laughed a lot, to the point once where my mum sent him home because he was making me laugh so much! It's a miracle how we ever made it to adults, the antics we got up to; the speed we achieved on an old pram, the routes we took when we both got bikes, the mountaineering we did along the 'Banking', and tree climbing at Notton Woods.

It was Ian that handed me my first guitar, a tatty, battered old thing with missing strings, but it inspired me to ask for a Woolies-special electric guitar for my 11th birthday and I never looked back. I'd play, he'd sing, he started drumming, and we'd practice and mess around in my room and his kitchen - yes, there were tapes, but I've no idea where they went and likely haven't survived. We both ended up in the Barnsley Music Centre Concert Band following individual routes, and grew into adulthood following a musical path. Eventually Ian became a copper and morphed in Rowdy, and I continued performing. I moved over to Holmfirth as an adult, only to discover that he too had moved there; it's like we were destined to be in the same place throughout our lives.

We were never in each other's pockets as grown-ups, but when we got together, it was like no time had passed at all. I was devastated to learn of his passing and feel like a piece of me is missing. I'll miss you, we all will, every one of us whose lives you've inhabited and inspired. Truly, a great friend.

A sentiment echoed by band member Stuart, who simply said:

I have many happy, crazy memories of my close friend Ian. Taken from us far too soon, you will be missed.

Another friend from those early years in the Barnsley Concert Band was Fiona, and she wrote:

I met Ian when he joined the band as the kit drummer in the mid 1970s; we were both young teenagers. The band was a huge influence in our lives and we grew musically together but also developed from young teenagers into young adults, thus the friendships we made then are still strong today.

There are so many tales of us touring Scotland, Germany and Austria and having a blast, be it singing rude songs on the bus, sneaking into bars underage, or simply experiencing the applause and appreciation from various audiences for the hard work and commitment we had all invested in our ourselves as musicians and band members.

Ian was the kind of kid who was easy going, friendly and always fun. He was popular with the other members and with the adults who worked in the background to ensure concerts and tours ran smoothly. My parents John and Ruby Gourlay were on the committee and both had a soft spot for Ian and admired his musicianship. Mum always managed to make sure there was an extra biscuit or something for him!

When I moved away from Barnsley, I only saw members of the band at significant anniversaries. It was always easy to just drop back into the friendship with Ian, as if we'd seen each other regularly. I feel very grateful to have met up with Ian and a few others in June 2019, in Jedburgh, one of our touring destinations.

We had a great weekend and I remember the warmth and love that Ian greeted me and everyone with. A cuddle, a laugh and a drink with old friends, reminiscing about the fun times we had together in the band and catching up on where our lives were now, what could be better! Another get-together was arranged in April this year but sadly Covid made it impossible.

Ian had a big heart, he was kind and funny, a great person to give you a hug and make you feel like you belong and were wanted. I'm so sad that he's no longer here. Even though we didn't see each other often, I will miss him, I already do. The world was a better place with Ian in it and he will be missed by many. He was a humble, unassuming guy and I doubt he had any idea how much he was loved, by so many.

Thanks for the love, laughter, music and memories, Ian. God bless.

Ian started work on the market, for Haigh Carpet Stall, before he decided to train as an officer in the West Yorkshire Police. He was proud of what he did, though as his role involved a lot of undercover work, it was tough going, physically and mentally. He would drop off the radar for months at a time, but when he came back on the scene he liked nothing better than a pint of Guinness with his mates up at The Cricketer's. Some of the locals there said of him:

Ian 'Rowdy' Yates was seen by many as the life and soul of the party. He enjoyed life, particularly watching live events - both sport and music. He was a best friend to many, and left a lasting positive impression on those he met even only once or twice, always making them feel welcome when they visited. When you got to know him well, you knew that he was also a person who was happy in his own company, and was comfortable in times of silence in others' company as well.



He was a voice of reason, and would provide an impartial opinion if you needed it. He was discreet, and would often act as 'agony uncle' to many - normally discussed over a beer. He was generous, loaning his property and money to people he trusted would treat it properly and bring it or pay it back. He also had a determined nature, and would rarely change his mind once it had been made up. His presence will be sorely missed by all - he was a local character who cannot be replaced.

Ian threw himself into music nights and karaoke at The Cricketer's, also getting involved with the annual charity band night they held there. As was already mentioned, he really enjoyed live music himself. His own tastes were eclectic, from Queen to the blues, and he was happy to cross the country to watch anyone play, simply because a friend wanted company at a gig.



He was always going away with his mates too, including on a number of golfing holidays to Tenerife organised through The Cricketer's, where Ian was part of the team on the fairway and at the nineteenth hole.



More recently he travelled as far as Singapore and Malaysia, and was blown away by all he saw. It wouldn't have mattered where in the world Ian got to, he could walk into a pub and make friends; he just had that knack of being able to talk to anyone.

Terrie ended up settling down in Cornwall, with her husband Neil and their boys, Jack and Ethan, and Ian loved to go down to visit them all. He was there thirteen years ago today, when Terrie and Neil tied the knot, and he wasn't impressed when Terrie made him stand up in front of everyone at the church to do a reading! But he enjoyed many happy evenings with the family, Ethan on the computer manning the play list, sharing good tunes and many laughs over a few bevvies. Ian also loved to be by the sea, though despite never being seen without a pair of shorts, he was apparently too nesh to dip his toes in, obviously preferring the warmer waters of the Canary Islands!

Terrie said she idolised Ian, and I can't think of many people who would be a better role model: honest, loyal and loving, and, as Terrie said, 'My guide through life. He made you feel special, like you glowed when you were around him.' Ian was a good friend to many, and he was lucky enough to have good friends around him, especially Steve and Jock, who were by his side to the end. Terrie said how grateful she is to them, and to her boys, Jack and Ethan, who have been absolute stars in looking after her over the past desperate days.

Ian should have been with you all for many years to come, but hopefully you can still find something of him in the stories you will continue to tell over a pint, or a dandelion and burdock, or in the music you shared together.