

A celebration of life

Patricia Pinch

16 May 1929 – 31 December 2019

4.00 pm, 20 January 2020, Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium

a personal goodbye

Humanist
Ceremonies

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Patricia Pinch (1929 - 2019) was born in Barry on the 16th of May 1929, the middle child of George and Iris Follett and grew up with her older brother Eric and younger sister Jean. Though she didn't speak much about her childhood to her own children they were left with the impression that it was happy.

She was part of a loving family and was very close to her sister Jean. Her father was a clerk and later a manager in a large shop and both her parents were very strict, setting high standards for their children. There was always the threat of the stick that hung on a mirror to back up what the parents said, though in fact the stick was never used.

Pat grew up in a different world to the one we live in now, she was ten when the Second World War started and lived in a house facing a busy dock that was bombed several times. Hers was a childhood of rationing, black outs, air-raid

drill and gas-masks carried to school. She attended Holton Road School with all her friends from the area.

When she was fourteen she met Brian, the love of her life, at a dance. He was also fourteen and from then on, they were inseparable. Brian lived in North Walk and they used to meet each other in the shelters in Romilly Park, whatever the weather, braving rain and snow to see each other.

Pat was always immaculate when meeting Brian, even at this young age. She followed her mother in this, who was always smart and glamorous which must have been difficult given that clothes rationing didn't end until 1949.

When they were young her father didn't approve of her and Jean wearing make-up, so Pat would apply it after she'd left the house. As a result, she was able to put on her lipstick without a mirror, a skill which always impressed Vicky.

Both she and Brian left school in 1944, aged fifteen. Brian worked on a farm on the land that Highlight Park now occupies, and Pat trained as a hairdresser at Raymond's in Cardiff. Once she was qualified she became a mobile hairdresser, walking to her client's homes to do their hair.

They were married on the 18th of March 1950 and their first home was a top floor flat, sharing the building with some unpleasant neighbours who gave them a terrible life.

They didn't have much money, but both worked hard. He left the house at four in the morning to go and milk the cows and she was often visiting her clients in the evenings.

Mike was born in May 1951 and they continued to live in the flat and work hard, saving up until when Mike was five they were able to buy Hatch Cottage, Bridge Street, where Vicky was born in 1959 and their family was complete.

Hatch Cottage had a large garden with fruit trees and Brian spent much of his time in his beloved garden producing things for Pat to cook. Pat was a very good cook but as she suffered from Meniere's Disease, which sometimes affected her balance, Brian often insisted "Pat you just sit down and look pretty" and he would get on with the house work. So, she did all the cooking, but he did almost everything else.

She was a good and very adventurous cook trying many foreign dishes which became family favourites years before they were common in other homes. She was particularly fond of cooking fish but this was probably because it was Brian's favourite.

While the family tucked into the wonderful food that she cooked, Pat would pick at her food and ate sparingly so that she could maintain her slim figure and glamorous looks.

Brian trained as an electrician and Pat began to work part time in shops, first in Shardlow's Wine Shop and then the fashion departments in Dan Evans Department Store, Barry and later Howells in Cardiff. Money became less of a problem and they were able to enjoy their lives much more than their early married years.

Brian had a 500cc Norton motorbike that the family got about in when Vicky was young. Pat would ride pillion while Mike, Vicky and Nell the dog rode in the sidecar. When they went on camping holidays to the West Country there was also a trailer behind with all their stuff. Later on, they bought a Ford Thames van and Brian fitted two seats in the rear for the children. These were normal seats from the house screwed to the floor.

School summer holidays were spent at Jackson's Bay, the kids playing in the sea and Pat working on her tan with the help of olive oil and vinegar liberally applied.

When not looking after the children they were a very social couple and had many friends. Pat played skittles, they enjoyed going out in the evening to the nearby Three Bells. And whenever she went out Pat was immaculately turned out wearing smart clothes. She loved clothes, shoes, hats and bags and rarely passed a clothes shop without going in.

When they bought Hatch Cottage it was what now-a-days may be called a doer-upper. There was no bathroom and the children remember sitting in a bath in the kitchen being washed when the Avon lady called. But Brian and Pat had bigger ideas for the cottage than just doing it up.

Brian was as an electrician, his father a builder and Mike by now a carpenter so in the early nineteen seventies Brian set about building a new home in the grounds of the cottage with their help. The build took several years as they did all the work including digging out all the footings and drainage ditched themselves and Pat oversaw family life on what was effectively a building site.

Once the Bungalow was built and the children had left home Pat and Brian began to travel more widely, visiting Portugal, Spain and Cyprus where Pat could enjoy the sun, though unfortunately Brian was not fond of the heat.

Family remained the center of Pat's life and she and Brian were a big part of their children's lives. They told me of the many parties at the new bungalow and barbecues in its garden in the summer. They also told me of their trips to Whitmore Bay when the tide was out in the winter, long-net fishing. With Mike, Terry and Brian in the sea pulling the net while Pat stayed dry on the beach making the soup to warm them up.

Soon grandchildren started to come along, and when Vicky needed some help so she could go back to work after Tom was born, Pat retired and happily took on childcare duties.

Pat spent a lot of time with her beloved grandchildren; Carl, Neil, Jennie, Tom and Emily, as they grew. She and Brian were a huge part of their lives, baby-sitting, playing with them in the front garden, holding family barbecues and family teas on a Sunday and building strong relationships with them all.

She enjoyed watching this generation grow into adults, shared in their sorrows and triumphs and then celebrated with them as her great grandchildren Joseph, Olivia, Jacob, Evan, Nia, Ella, Evie and Charlie were born.

She and Brian remained a very social couple, they enjoyed going out to the Three Bells or the to the King William to see their friends. Often for nights out with their family who remember Pat looking immaculate, in lovely clothes, laughing and enjoying herself.

She always drank whiskey while out and they remember her having to rush the last few as Brian tried to hurry her home, and then the two of them walking a little unsteadily home, still laughing.

In 2006 Pat's life changed dramatically when the love of her life died. She never got over this loss and often said that she was waiting to join Brian. The next two years were very hard for her. Her children helped her all that they could. Every evening after work, Mike called at her house and took her to the King William for a drink, to get her out of the house and meet her friends and after two years she started to go on her own.

Vicky and Terry took her on holiday to Tunisia where she had a wonderful time. The following year aged eighty she went on a cruise with Mike and Natalie, which she also really enjoyed. The photo on today's order of service was taken on the cruise.

Though she continued to miss Brian deeply, she made the most of her life. She enjoyed time spent with her family, going to the King William to see her friends,

having a whiskey in the pub or a sherry at home. She had said for years the sherry helped with the dizziness caused by her Meniere's.

And she enjoyed shopping, still never able to pass clothes shop without going in and when shopping in Tesco would often end up with more clothes in her basket than food.

Pat's health deteriorated as she aged and more conditions made her life less comfortable. Last year her family and friends celebrated her ninetieth birthday and her long and well lived life. A long life came to an end on New Year's Eve. Still, this was too soon for her loving family and friends who miss her deeply.

31 Dec 2019