

A celebration of life

Pauline Evelyn Williams

28 April 1941 – 15 June 2019

12.45 pm, 11 July 2019, Thornhill Crematorium, Cardiff

a personal goodbye

Humanist
Ceremonies

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Pauline was born on the 28th of April 1941 in Cardiff and grew up in Bradford Street in Grangetown with her brother Robert and her parents Charles and Mary Taylor. Her father was a “rivet warmer” and worked on the docks.

Much of our personal histories are passed on by word of mouth and captured in photographs. Although they have always had the impression that Pauline had a happy childhood, she didn't tell her own children about her childhood, so that part of her story is blank. Perhaps there are people here today who can pass on

some stories to the boys that they were part of, or that Pauline later told them about her early years.

So our story today starts when she met Ron O'Dare in 1962. Ron was working as a bouncer in a club in Charles Street and struck up a conversation with Pauline. Her friends warned her that he was already in a relationship, but she decided to ignore them and five months later they were married in September 1962.

They first lived in Pentrebane Rd in Fairwater with Pauline's mother and father. But they soon moved to their first home as a couple, which was a caravan in Fonmon when Ron started work as a stoker in RAF St Athan, and it was here that Mark was born in 1965.

Craig came along two years later and Shaun three years after that. Shortly after Shaun was born they moved to a caravan site in St Athan and then in 1972, to their house at Glebeland Place, St Athan, which had a large garden.

It was a house where the boys were to have happy childhoods and their memories of their mum are of a loving mother, very gregarious and outgoing, with many friends in the village, she was always the first one on the dance floor at any events and she was always busy.

The boys told me she ran everything in the house and was active in organising many other things in St Athan, as a result of which she was very well known within the village.

She was a member of the Young Wives' Club where she often organised bus trips to the Stardust Club and the annual village bus trip to Weston Super Mare.

These involved arranging everything and collecting the money for several coach loads of neighbours. She also arranged regular discos at the Boys' Village and for

the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1976, she was responsible for the street party and another party at Aberthaw Boys' village, where she worked.

Ron was never in well-paying jobs and so he worked long hours and each week he handed over his pay packet to Pauline who took care of everything. She was also a grafter, often working three jobs at a time to make ends meet, including cleaning at the Boys' Village, the Aubrey Arms and working in the chip shop.

But still, there was never much money and Pauline was in charge of the finances, so the boys remember her often sitting at the table, working out the money and the bills on the back of envelopes, a habit she never lost.

She was very good at making the money go far enough, she was an excellent cook and baker; her cooked dinners, especially pork, and her mince pies stand out. She was always able to stretch out the money and the food so that the boys never went hungry, and she made sure that they had plenty of presents for Christmas, usually more than their friends, and they now realise this meant her going in debt for most of the year to pay it off.

But the boys weren't as happy about some of the clothes they had. Their wardrobe for school was often a combination of steel capped boots and green trousers from the Aberthaw Cement Works stores catalogue, paired with a jumper Pauline had knitted, so they looked like the Weasley family setting out in the morning.

The whole family loved camping and they had a big six berth frame tent which they towed in a trailer Ron had made behind the family three-wheeler car. They all loved to see people's faces when they saw five people and an Alsatian dog climbing out of their three-wheeler Robin Reliant Supervan.

Ron always drove as Pauline never learnt. This was because every lesson Ron gave her ended the same way; Pauline getting out of the car slamming the door and storming away.

In the late seventies and early eighties, the family became very involved with the CB radio and the Rhoose Breakers Club. Pauline or "Miss Muffett" was the treasurer and Ron, "Tugboat" the Chair. Mark was "Nasty Pasty;" Shaun "Warlock" and Craig "Boomerang".

They developed a big circle of friends in the club and across the wider area including the other side of the Bristol Channel, friends who they would often visit.

Relationships are often the most complex aspects of our lives and not all of them last a lifetime. When the boys were grown Pauline made a new life for herself in Llanederyn in Cardiff with Ray Williams who she married in 1989. She worked as a caterer at Maskrey's and at a café on Broadway.

She remained close friends with Ron's sisters Jackie and Nancy and Nancy's daughter Nicola. Her children and grandchildren were regular visitors and spent a lot of time with her and Ray and they helped a lot with childcare. But whether she saw them several times a week or less frequently, because of great distances, she was very close to all her grandchildren and to the children of Ray's youngest, Jane, who she also thought of as her grandchildren.

She was very proud of her grandchildren and three of them, Charlotte, Ashleigh and Ryan are going to pay tribute to their grandmother.

Grandchildren's Tributes

Charlotte

My Nan was a wonderful, caring and generous person.

I feel blessed to have spent so much of my childhood with her and feel she really helped shape me into the woman I am today. I know she was always proud of me.

Nan's children and grandchildren meant the absolute world to her and she was in her element on the days she was surrounded by them. My heart swells thinking of all of the memories we created together. I will always remember the school holidays spent with my cousins and siblings, playing boy, girl, fruit flower or even rummy in Nan's living room.

I'm lucky to have spent a lot of one-to-one time with Nan, trips into town on the bus, visiting other family members or even staying at home, keeping ourselves busy with tv, cooking and games. And of course, I cannot not mention Nan's Roast Dinners and Cherry Bakewells!

As I grew older, my visits would consist of later nights, sitting playing Who Wants to Be A Millionaire on the Play Station One. Nan with her two fingers of vodka, topped up with coke, the two of us laughing and shouting at the TV. I don't think we ever did manage to win the Million!

I could talk all day about the memories of my Nan. I could make you laugh, and cry with some of the stories I have about her. These stories will continue as I share them with my own little family. She was a truly incredible woman and I couldn't have asked for a better Nan.

Our lives have taken us to different places, I know that some of us may regret the lack the time we were able to spend with her. The memories we do have, we will treasure forever.

Rest in peace Nan, take all of our love with you.

Ashleigh

I realise I have to talk a little slower because of my accent so everyone can understand but my Nan was proud.

She was proud of the two grandchildren that live in Glasgow. She would show us off and every time we would visit she would tell everyone.

I remember while my dad was working away, she agreed to look after my brother David and I for a few weeks. She would do everything for us : take us into town, into Barry Island and make sure we were always entertained. One night whilst playing rummy, she was asking about our lives and asking about school. Like a normal teenager, I may have skipped school a few days so I told the her the truth. However, being from a different nation, we have different slangs so I said " Well the last week of school was rubbish so I decided to start dogging it instead" and I swear her face was a picture I'll never forget. David and I learned something very quickly, "dogging" means something completely different in Wales. We pretty much laughed all night and talking about different slangs. We taught her Scottish, she taught us Welsh.

She was a generous Nan, allowing us to stay pretty much every summer, Christmases, eating her food but she didn't mind, I think she loved doing it. Telling us stories mainly about my Dad and uncles. We loved those ones. Mainly I think so my brother could have leverage against my Uncle Craig. That's the kind

of person she was. She was always nurturing and kind to everyone she met, especially her sons and her grandchildren.

All in all I would just like to thank her. For being a strong woman in my life and shaping me for the woman I am today. A woman that will tell her children one day what a terrific mum and nan she was to us. Showing me how important family is. She always encouraged me to do what I wanted and what was best for me and that's something I will carry on.

I'll hold you close forever Nan

Ryan

Nan was bold and honest, if not sometimes a little macabre - But undeniably loving and warm. She was a special person who greatly influenced my life by being there for me. I never felt unwelcome when we were together, she treated me with respect and was always attentive to what I had to say.

Some of my earliest memories of Nan were cold days and Sunday roasts with giant Yorkshire puddings, which weren't just big relative to a child: they were just huge! But more importantly than the Yorkshires, that was when I started to really grasp how our family was composed, and how much of an important part Nan was. She expanded my understanding of the meaning of family, getting us together and creating shared experiences. As I got older, I would share my summer holidays with Nan, my siblings and my cousins. She happily provided her home for us to run around in, but we would sit with her and she would play games with us and talk on our level. Mutual respect turned to friendship and for the many summers that followed, we would count down the days till we could return to her, our beloved family and friend.

I saw Nan only a few days before she passed – She told me that she had spent some time recently trying to work out the meaning of it all; the one thing that she kept coming back to were her boys. She said she was proud of how she had raised them. She said that no one could say that she didn't do that right, they're good boys and they have grown up to have beautiful families of their own. In that moment she smiled as if recalling hundreds of fond memories within a heartbeat. I realised that among all the negativity surrounding her last few weeks, she had been able in that moment to find her meaning and take the step back to realise how important she was to her family. Our memories can fade as we get older, but some stay as clear as a picture. I'm sure you all have these clear memories of Pauline/ mum/ nan/ friend held in your head, and right in our heads and our hearts is where she will she will live on.

If there is one thing that I regret, it's that I didn't pester Nan more to learn about her journey as a young lady. It would have been nice to have connected with her in that way. But I am so thankful that many of you, who cared greatly for her like I did, will share your memories with me.

I love you Nan, my memories of you will always be ones of warmth.