A Celebration of the Life of

(Lister) Clive Beeley

25 November 1937 – 15 May 2021

9 June 2021, Grenoside Crematorium
Celebrant: Hannah McKerchar

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Clive's life

Clive was born on the 25th November 1937 to Fred and Gladys Beeley in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, where Fred worked as a Plant Pathologist for the Rubber Research Institute. Clive's brother, Antony, was born two years later and they spent an idyllic childhood there until the Japanese invasion in 1943. Gladys and the two boys were on board one of the last ships to leave Singapore. Fred, a volunteer with the army, was captured and sadly died as a prisoner of war working on the notorious Burma railway.

Bradford became home and Clive's childhood was spent happily with the families of his uncles' Stanley and Jack. Summers passed with his Beeley uncles and aunts at Worth Hall Farm in Poynton, Cheshire, helping with the hay making – the origin of Clive's enduring fondness for cows.

He attended Bradford Grammar School, where he counted the artist David Hockney as one of his friends at the time, and from there he went on to read Chemistry at Bristol University. After teacher training, he joined Firth Park Grammar School in Sheffield where he made lifelong friendships with Trevor Jones and Barry Smith.

In 1968, on a weekend at home in Bradford, he met Carolyn at his favourite Saturday night local. Thereafter, weekends were occupied and summer holidays spent camping in Scandinavia, Spain, Portugal and Italy – the latter a particularly memorable trip with Barry and Di.

Clive and Carolyn were married on 27th July 1972 - 27.7.72 – a palindromic date to aid memory! – and they moved to Stannington in 1974. Simon was born in 1976, followed by Fiona in 1978. Clive's children were his pride and joy, and he loved every aspect of fatherhood. With both Carolyn and Clive being teachers, travel was limited to school holidays, and so many happy summers were spent camping around Europe, usually ending up with a week or two catching up with Barry and Di down in Geneva and enjoying the beautiful Swiss countryside.

Clive saw Firth Park progress from a boys' grammar school to a co-educational comprehensive school. Although he enjoyed teaching Chemistry, when the Education Department offered early retirement packages in the early 1990s, along with many others he grabbed it with both hands. So began Clive's new role as a house husband and a chauffeur for Simon and Fiona to and from university.

Once Carolyn retired in 2005, they embarked on foreign holidays outside school times. They travelled the length and breadth of Australia and New Zealand, often joined by Antony and Mary, who had lived in Australia since the 1970s, and spent time with Antony's family in Western Australia. The surprise 80th birthday present from the children of a balloon flight over the Hunter Valley vineyards was a particular highlight, plus a trip to Hawaii where sipping Mai Tai cocktails in the evening was the order of the day! In recent years, Antony and Mary revisited the UK, and all four also enjoyed holidays wine-tasting together whilst cruising down the Rhone and the Rhine.

As Simon and Fiona's chosen partners, Cheryl and Stuart were welcome additions to the family, but the most important events were the birth of Melissa in 2010 and Jessica and Jasmine in 2013. Clive adored being a grandpa. No-one's granddaughters were as wonderful as his. He was a master 'driver' of the little red-and-yellow pedal cars, pushed swings for hours, built endless towers and played very inventive games of hide and seek!

After suffering increasingly ill health, Clive spent his last few months in Alexander Court, where he received wonderful care and kindness, and where he died peacefully in his sleep last month. All his family and friends will miss him very much.

As well as telling the story of Clive's life, Carolyn, Simon and Fiona also wrote about the man he was and the many and varied interests that brought him joy over the years.

Tribute

In his younger days, Clive liked walking in the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales, climbing, playing tennis and ice skating. Later, with his friend Trevor, he even took tap dancing lessons, much to everyone's amusement! Whilst a teacher, Clive was a keen member of the staff cricket team – his first date with Carolyn being to one of the staff matches at Low Bradfield.

In the early 1970s, Clive spent several years at night school learning silversmithing – proudly having his own mark registered – and raising a coffee pot, bowls and dishes, and even making Carolyn's wedding ring! Interested in Sheffield's 'Little Mesters', he got to know Stan Shaw, famous for his Bowie knives. Stuart was a little taken aback, on his first visit to Stannington to meet Fiona's parents, to be invited to "come and see my knife collection"!!

Clive also loved to play the piano, preferring melodies that he remembered from his childhood in the 1930s and 40s, some of which have been chosen for you to hear today. Sadly, he wasn't able to do this in the past few years, so hearing these tunes will bring back lots of memories for us.

He was a fan of Westerns, but also Jane Austen and A.E. Houseman. Other interests ranged from the weather and astronomy to canals and propagating plants, most recently coffee plants, which took a great deal of dedicated care using special heat lamps! As far as his culinary tastes went, he tended towards big flavours – draught Guinness and wine, steak and blue cheese – and he enjoyed being a generous host with the drinks when entertaining, as anyone who has been on the receiving end of a 'Clive special' martini can attest!

Clive had a dry sense of humour, and he found the TV series ‘Blackadder’ and the radio show ‘I’m Sorry I Haven’t A Clue’ particularly amusing. He admired anyone who was a good raconteur and could make people laugh – something that, although he could be very funny, he sometimes struggled with, as he often used to laugh so much at his own joke that he couldn’t speak. Of course, this helpless laughter was often a lot funnier than the joke itself by the time we eventually got to the punchline!

In the 1990s, Simon introduced Clive to clay pigeon shooting. At the Hallamshire Gun Club, he enjoyed the camaraderie of Sunday morning shoots and acted as Treasurer for the club for a number of years. It was a proud moment when he and Simon were able to bring back the ‘Father and Son’ trophy. In fact, the last social event Clive attended was a gun club annual dinner, which he always very much enjoyed.

Clive was never happier than when spending time with his granddaughters. Melissa, Jessica and Jasmine all have special memories of him: Melissa remembers flying a kite with him on the beach, and playing a game where she and Jasmine were chefs and they had to cook naughty Grandpa his least favourite food – strangely enough, when he said that he definitely didn’t like chips, they didn’t believe him!; Jessica always loved playing ‘fee-fi-fo-fum’ with Grandpa and being tucked up like a sausage roll inside a blanket; and Jasmine has happy memories of playing with Grandpa at being snakes and lions, and having her baby lion toes nibbled.

In his temperament, Clive was kind and considerate, which many of you have echoed in your messages to us. A man of few words, he believed that actions spoke louder than words. Above all, he was a family man, and his family meant the world to him. He meant the world to us too, and he will live long in all our memories.