

The Celebration of the Life of Margaret Stewart

18th June 1927 - 27th August 2012



**Margaret wore a spray of three bronze chrysanthemums
on her wedding day 1st October 1948**

MARGARET STEWART



Wife of 64 years of William,
and mother of
Mary, John, Jean (d. October 8, 2009), Peter, and David,
was born on June 18, 1927
and Promoted to Glory on August 27, 2012.
She is now with her Lord and Saviour
and rejoicing to be reunited with her loved ones
who have gone on before.

The funeral is at Wessex Vale Crematorium
at 11:30 on Tuesday, September 11, 2012.

Margaret requested bright clothes if possible and no flowers.

Donations for the Piam Brown Ward,
Southampton General Hospital,
where Margaret worked as an Auxiliary Nurse for nine years,
to be sent to
the Cooperative Funeral Service,
10 High Street,
Eastleigh,
SO50 5LA.

The family will welcome you to refreshment afterwards
at the Methodist Church, Sedgewick Road, Bishopstoke.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF MARGARET STEWART

18th June 1927 - 27th August 2012

Service arranged by Margaret Stewart and conducted by Reverend Lesley Martin
Wessex Vale Crematorium, 11.30 a.m., Tuesday, 11th September 2012

1. *Ave Verum Corpus* by Mozart

2. What a Friend we have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge;
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee;
thou wilt find a solace there.



3. The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,
which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
on earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day
our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them
that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever,
Amen.

4. Minister Rev. Lesley Martin will read *Psalm 23* and pay tribute to Margaret

Dad's Tribute to Mum

If I said all I could say about the woman I spent nearly 64 years with, we would be here all day and beyond. It was love at first sight, and our love deepened throughout the years.

Margaret and I were a great team and supported each other through thick and thin. She supported me through years of study and for twenty years she travelled the world as an Army wife and brought up our five children to be thinking, caring people.

I look back on all those years and thank God for bringing Margaret into my life, for she taught me so much about caring and unconditional loving. Without her my life would have been poorer.

She leaves a wonderful legacy of love and devotion that touched all who knew her. What an example of Christian living! She was a sincere Christian who never talked about her faith, but her life was her witness.

MARY'S TRIBUTE TO MUM

My mother and I had an affinity, always. We knew what the other was thinking – laughed, and cried, at the same silly things, listened to the Saturday night plays on the wireless. We knew when the other would ring, often lifting the phone simultaneously.

Sometimes we clashed though, especially when I was an arrogant teenager. But Mum found the perfect deterrent - an accurate and deadly karate chop delivered to the big beehive hairdo! A couple of hours' work reduced to a mass of backcombed hair lying at a 90 degree angle.

Then there was the time I got conned into a pyramid scheme, selling make-up. One weekend I took home the demonstration vanity case, which my father showed me this morning; he's still got it – and offered to make Mum up. She didn't wear make-up but she let me loose. And I gave it the full Monty. I thought it looked great. She would have said that it did. My father said that they would recall the incident from time to time and scream with laughter at the memory of Mum – the painted doll.

That bond was there on the day Mum died. And then ... there was nothing! Just an emptiness where the bond had been for so long. I could feel Jean's presence strongly, though, and took comfort from visualising that she, the gentlest of people, would lead Mum by the hand at some point.

Suddenly – out of nowhere later that evening – there was an explosion of pure joy. Mum and Jean together! Followed by another, and another! It was like a firework display. Before one had finished, another began. So many times. So many different spirits. I've never experienced anything like it and feel privileged that, through the bond with Mum, I have glimpsed the beginning of her new life.

Goodbye for now Mum, with love from Willie, William, Cara, Kaz and me.

JOHN'S TRIBUTE TO MUM

Mum was the first woman to smile at me.

She was the first woman to take me out to public places.

She was the first woman to defend me.

She was the first woman to make me Marmite sandwiches.

She was the first woman to help me overcome fear.

She was the first woman to read to me.

She was the first woman I went around the world with.

She was the first woman to show me the world was a happy place.

Mum was the first woman I loved.

Mum by Dave

“All men are created equal,” wrote Thomas Jefferson in 1776. My mother believed the sentiment of those words every bit as fiercely as did the American statesman. And she lived them every bit as ardently. I can’t explain how she came to the view that every individual has the same value in society regardless of their wealth, their skills, their capacities, but she did, and that respect for humanity and sense of fairness pervaded her outlook on life. The concept that some are born to rule, that they come into this world inherently better than others, was anathema to her, to her sense of equity, to her sense of right and wrong. She detested the arrogance, the tyranny of such a philosophy, as did Thomas Jefferson.

Mum’s egalitarianism was not something assumed, something learned, something constructed - it was in her bones. She interacted with every person she met in exactly the same way, irrespective of who they were or who they thought they were, and she did it as a bird sings or a breeze rustles grass - for all, the same; for none, a distinction. On one occasion I saw her refuse to rise from her seat in honour of an official whose apparent sense of highness and mightiness offended her. Her action epitomized who she was.

For Mum, an equal regard for human beings extended to the natural sphere. To her, a sparrow or an elephant, a mouse or a horse, a minnow or a whale - and the plains, the rivers, the woods, and the seas they inhabit - all deserved our consideration, all demanded our compassion. She was a true naturalist. She did not like zoos or circuses, because they took creatures out of their element. She empathized with the animals in cages or being paraded around a sawdust ring. She felt for them.

In essence, empathy was at the heart of Mum, and it determined how she interacted with the world. From her empathy came a readiness to defend the defenseless, to protest an injustice, to uphold the weak, to preserve the good. And in my father she had a partner who shared her commitment to fairness and to caring. They disagreed on certain issues, as people do, but on essential rights and wrongs, on a respect for this planet and for the creatures who call it home, they were in accord, and they passed those values on by example.

I wish I could be there today at this service. I wish I could be there for Mum. I wish I could be there for Dad, for Mary, for Pete, and for all those present who knew and loved Mum. I hope in some small way that these words might be an elbow of support here or there, a soft hand around a shoulder.

I miss my mother, not being able to see her across the table or talk with her on the phone. I miss her intelligence. I miss her knowledge. I miss her willingness to laugh, at herself as much as anything else. I miss her generosity, gentleness, kindness. I miss . . . her. But my feelings weigh little, very little, against the peace she has now achieved.

From over the seas we send our love to you, Mum - Cheryl, the wee doggies, and I. Fare thee well, and so many, many thanks to you for what you have given.

*Last, but not least is the tribute from Pauline,
whom I am so pleased to call my honorary sister.*

PAULINE'S TRIBUTE TO MUM

My friend Margaret,

I first met Margaret in 2001 when I became a support worker for Jean. I soon realized Jean came from a very loving family. Margaret was such a positive, gentle, loving person who put others way before herself.

Over the years our friendship blossomed and Margaret became a very special person in my life, to the point where it became easy for me to call her Mum.

I looked forward to our time spent together; I always felt better after seeing her than before I went in. I know she had that effect on a lot of people. This is evident from the friends she still has from way back.

Over the last three years I recall lots of laughter and lots of reminiscing about Jean. This brought us both joy... I know Jean will be very happy to have her Mum back. This verse reminds me so much of Margaret.

In each waking flower and each singing bird,
The promise of new life is witnessed and heard.
Spring is God's way of speaking to us
And renewing the promise of Easter again
For death is a season we must pass through,
And, just like the flowers, God will waken us too...
So why should we grieve when our loved ones die
For we'll meet them again in a cloudless sky.

Now Peter, who is, indeed, a rock, and to whom - along with Marion - my brothers and I are so very grateful, will carry out Mum's special wish – to tell of her love of nature.

7. Peter's Speech

Hello (*waving*). Dare I say Good morning (*pause*)? My mum would appreciate the joke. She kept her sense of humour right to the end. In the last few days in Winchester Hospital, there were two incidents worth mentioning. Because her oxygen level was lower than normal, she was getting a bit confused. She beckoned me over (*beckoning*) and said (*lean in to mic*), "Do you know the doctors and nurses are all Dutch"? Well . . . she must have sensed what I thought and asked, "Am I in Holland"? I said, "No, you're in Winchester Hospital". This really made her laugh. She found her own confusion amusing.

Then there was the episode of the vanishing hearing aid. She had lost the hearing aid from her left ear. My dad had looked everywhere for it. But no luck. Eventually I figured out there was only one place it could be. I said, "*She must be sitting on it*". My mum was pretty deaf and she couldn't hear what I'd said, so she asked me where it was. I said (*mime*) "*bum*".* She still couldn't understand so I stood up and pointed like this (*pointing gesture towards bum**). Then she said, "*Oh, it's up there is it!*" She found this really funny. So she kept her sense of humour even in those last few days. I think that's a sign of the greatness of the British people. She wants us to be happy. I use the present tense, "she wants", because that's only her body in the coffin. Her spirit is (*indicate upwards*) everywhere. The bond we had in life has not been broken in death.

6. Margaret asked Peter to say a few words about how much she enjoyed all things in nature, and to read an old children's hymn, "*All Things Which Live Below the Sky*", which she used to sing at the Methodist Sunday School in Horsham, Sussex.

A few months ago she asked me to read the words of a hymn which she used to sing as a girl in Horsham. I didn't think I could do it. But I can because I understand what has happened to her now. I'm also stubborn.

(*At this point Dad said out loud, 'No..really?' and those of us who know Pete laughed*).

I also have to thank her for my hair. In fact I thank her every morning for that. I've also got to say a few words about how my mum loved nature. Dave has already said something about that. I'll say a little bit more. I took her a magnifying glass one day and she loved looking at things through it. The same with the microscope. She loved all creatures . . . great and small! Especially the life cycle of the butterfly, from the egg, to the larva, to the chrysalis and finally to the butterfly. I think that's got a special significance today. I've got so much to thank her for and so many great memories (*pause*). Well . . . that's me done. Thanks.

* With apologies from Mary to Jean for her brother using the 'b' word!

7. All Things Which Live Below the Sky
To be read by Peter

All things which live below the sky,
Or move within the sea.
Are creatures of the Lord most High,
And brothers unto me.

I love to hear the robin sing,
Perched on the highest bough;
To see the rook with purple wing
Follow the shining plough.

I love to watch the swallow skim
The river in his flight;
To mark, when day is growing dim,
The glow-worm's silvery light.

The seagull whiter than the foam;
The fish that dart beneath;
The lowing cattle coming home;
The goats upon the heath.

God taught the wren to build her nest,
The lark to soar above;
The hen to gather to her breast
The offspring of her love.

Beneath His heaven there's room for all,
He gives to all, their meat;
He sees the meanest sparrow fall
Unnoticed in the street.

Almighty Father, King of Kings,
The Lover of the meek;
Make me a friend of helpless things,
Defender of the weak

8. All Things Bright and Beautiful

Refrain

*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.*

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colours,
He made their tiny wings:

All things bright ...

The purple headed mountains,
The river running by,
The sunset and the morning
That brightens up the sky:

All things bright ...

The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them every one:

All things bright ...

The tall trees in the greenwood,
The meadows where we play,
The rushes by the water,
To gather every day:

All things bright ...

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well:

All things bright ...

9. The Grace

**May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God
and the power of the Holy Spirit
be with us all ever more,
Amen.**

10. As we leave, let us wave farewell to Margaret while the music plays *The Happy Wanderer*, in memory of Margaret who spent twenty years travelling around the world as an Army wife.

Following the service, please join us for refreshments at the Methodist Church, Sedgewick Road, Bishopstoke.

Donations for the Piam Brown Ward, where Margaret worked as an Auxiliary Nurse for nine years, can be sent to:

The Cooperative Funeral Service,
10 High Street,
Eastleigh,
Hampshire,
SO50 5LA