

*In Loving Memory  
of*



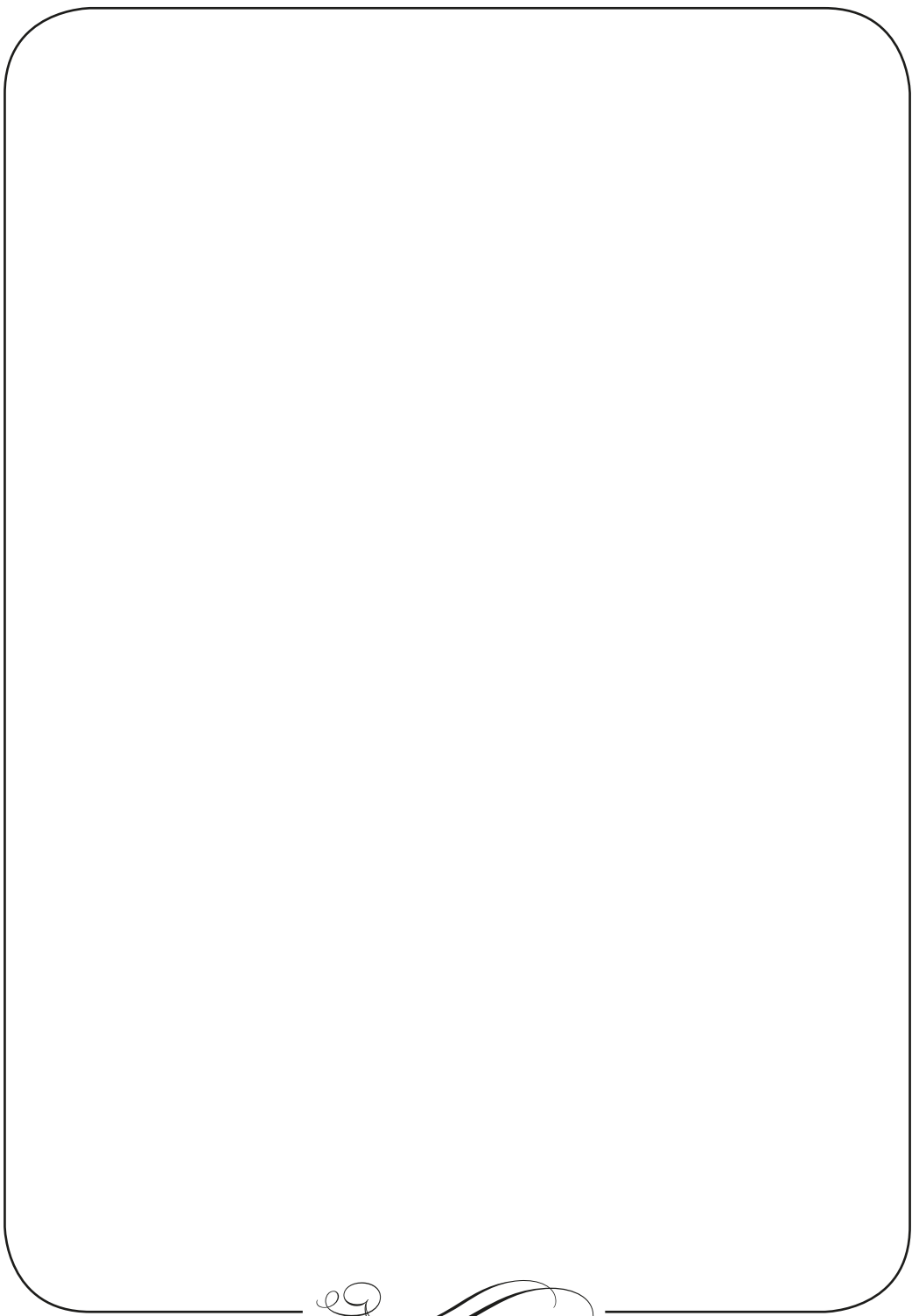
# Dr. Elizabeth Mulholland

29th August 1930 - 13th June 2020

Gedling Crematorium, Nottingham

Monday 6th July 2020  
at 1.30 pm





## **Entrance Music**

Prelude from Act I of *La Traviata*  
Verdi BPO Karajan

## **Welcome and Introduction**

by Celebrant, Richard Marshall

## **Elizabeth's Biography**

29/08/1930 - 13/06/2020  
read by Andrew Mulholland



Elizabeth was born on the 29th August 1930 in Clashmore, near Youghall, Co. Waterford, Ireland. Christened Kathleen Elizabeth Kennedy, she preferred to be known as Elizabeth or Liz.

She was born at home on the family farm, Ballinamultina, the second child of three. She was very close to both her brothers. The Kennedy family had owned the farm for many generations since the middle of the 19th century and Elizabeth always felt a deep connection to it, even after it was sold. Despite Elizabeth's love of life on the land, her mother, who had trained as a nurse, recognised her daughter's academic ability and was keen for her to become a doctor. So, at the age of eight, she was taken out of the local primary school and sent to a convent boarding school in Wicklow, just south of Dublin.

Elizabeth did well academically, but she was never happy at the school, greatly missing her beloved Ballinamultina, not least the happy times she spent there with her father and their springer dog, Shot, roaming the fields together. In the holidays, she used to return to Ballinamultina, where she had her own horse and was part of the local hunt. They probably did have a car, but in our childhood imagination they travelled everywhere by horse and cart.

She studied medicine in Dublin, at the National University of Ireland, qualifying in 1954. Her father became ill during this time, and she interrupted her studies for six months to come back to Ballinamultina and look after him until his death. After returning to complete her studies in Dublin, she decided to work in England, inspired we think by a sense of adventure, although her choice of town for her first job, Tunbridge Wells, may well have been driven by her memories of her father, who had gone to primary school there.

Elizabeth specialised in anaesthesia, working in Brighton and then St. George's Hospital in South London, where she became a registrar. She greatly enjoyed her time in this busy, international environment, meeting other doctors from Ireland and Australia.

It wasn't all play, however: she also passed her Primary Fellowship for the College of Anaesthesia during this time.



After two years, she went to work in Oslo, Norway. We don't know if the reason for this decision to move abroad again was driven by her innate love of travel and different cultures, the need for a change after such intense study, or possibly the ending of a relationship, but she often talked fondly of the year she spent there and of the people she met. Many decades later, she could still remember many of the Norwegian words and phrases she had learnt. We often picture her in one of their wonderful cardigans.

Following her time in Norway, Elizabeth returned to the East End of London, where she moved into a flat with her close friend, a fellow anaesthetist, Katherine. One of the hospitals she covered was Bethnal Green Hospital, and this is where she met Robert in 1963. Legend has it that their eyes met over a sleeping patient, though Robert admits that he was primed by his house officer that there was a rather charming anaesthetist putting his patient to sleep, and that he should charm her. Clearly he did, and over the next year, Elizabeth joined the social whirl of the doctors' mess at Bethnal Green: tennis, meals out and hospital parties. Their courtship blossomed and they married on 5th June 1965 at Ballinamultina. By all accounts, it was a riotous affair, and Elizabeth insisted that they stay for the party rather than leaving early, as was the tradition for newlyweds. They honeymooned in Corsica, including a week sailing, of course.

Having a few months to fill in on their return, they answered an advert for a locum post in Newfoundland. Here, they ran a small hospital in a fairly remote part of the island, Elizabeth as GP and anaesthetist, Robert as surgeon and GP. It was a unique experience, and my mother had many memories of the lovely people she met there, many of Irish descent.

Upon their return to the UK, they had some weeks in Ireland looking after the farm whilst her younger brother, Frank, went on his honeymoon. They then moved back to London, where Elizabeth worked as an anaesthetic registrar in Hackney Hospital, including neonatal anaesthesia, a highly challenging and responsible role. It was Elizabeth's gentle but determined campaign of persuasion at the accommodation office which opened the doors of the lovely flat in Charterhouse Square to them, a place in which they were very happy.

Whilst living in London, Elizabeth had realised that to pursue a consultant post in anaesthesia would be very difficult if she also wished to support Robert in his career plans and look after their children. Andrew was born in 1966, 18 months after their marriage, and soon after his birth, a new job for Robert took them to the Orthopaedic Hospital near Oswestry, Wales. It was a very rural location and they lived in a rather remote village called Gobowen: a great contrast with their London lives.



Elizabeth continued to work as an anaesthetist initially, but when her twins were born in 1968, she decided to become a school doctor, which could be better combined with her role as a mother. It was a job she greatly enjoyed, combining as it did her medical skills, working with children and driving around the beautiful countryside in North Wales.

In 1969, the family went to Seattle, where Robert had obtained a fellowship. Initially, they lived in university hospital accommodation. Originally built for returning Korean War soldiers, it was an exciting place to live, a cultural melting pot of postgraduate students from all over America and the world. After six months, a promotion meant they were able to move from this very basic accommodation to a pleasant bungalow in suburban Seattle, a move up in terms of comfort, but resulting in the loss of contact with many of the friends Elizabeth had made and valued in the University Village.

Elizabeth loved Seattle and both my parents were tempted to stay. However, they returned to England and in 1972, after a further year in Oswestry, they moved to Nottingham, where Robert had a consultant post and Elizabeth resumed work as anaesthetist, continuing to practice into the late eighties. Sadly, after their move to Nottingham, she developed bipolar disorder, which affected her for the rest of her life and required lifelong medical treatment, including at one point admission to hospital. Elizabeth showed again her enormous strength of spirit in managing her depression, and despite its challenges, she continued to lead a very full life. She greatly enjoyed travelling with Robert and the family. This included sailing, of course, especially around Brittany, but also trips to far-flung destinations such as Australia, India, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Africa and all round Europe on various cultural trips. She particularly enjoyed their three-week tour through Peru organised through the university, which offered her a combination of academic lectures, stunning natural scapes and interesting people to travel with.

Elizabeth became aware of her developing dementia in the early years of this century. She fought bravely against it, and when the DVLA removed her driving licence, she fought the decision, did a driving test, and had it reinstated. Her condition slowly deteriorated, and care at home became progressively more difficult, so in 2016, she moved to the Acorn Care Home. This is close to the family home, enabling Robert to visit daily when he was here. She was well cared for there and held in great respect and with much affection by her carers, who recognised her underlying intelligence and her indefatigable flashes of humour even in the later stages of her dementia. In her last weeks, she became increasingly withdrawn and died peacefully on the 13th June, just seven days after their 55th wedding anniversary.



## Tribute to Elizabeth

by her children  
read by Seamus Mulholland



It feels sometimes as if Mum was a woman whose body and spirit was ultimately stronger than her mind; she overcame many physical hurdles in the course of her life, fighting off several fractures and illnesses over the years with resolute determination. She once tried to insist on driving Dad to the airport despite having fallen and broken her wrist on the way back from an errand only a few minutes before. Later in life, Mum overcame cancer, and made a remarkable recovery from hypothermia at the age of 82.



It is however, above all, her strength of spirit which infuses our memories of her.  
You never knew how she was going to approach something,  
but you did know that it was going to be different to anyone else.

Mum was proudly Irish and always retained a strong and passionate sense of her Irish identity, never forgiving Cromwell his misdeeds against her motherland and often talking to us about Irish history, as well as her deep love for her childhood home, Ballinamultina. She insisted that I be called Seamus despite it being, for some people, such a Fenian name.

She was a natural pedagogue and nurturer, who praised much whenever possible, and criticised only when necessary. Her intellect, endless curiosity and powers of empathy, together with her lack of prejudice, meant she created connections with other people, wherever they were from or whatever their occupation.  
Mum didn't do small talk – when she asked a question of someone, she was genuinely interested and really cared.

One of Sarah's earliest memories of Elizabeth was of Mum stroking her head patiently when she couldn't fall asleep, never leaving before she sensed her daughter was ready, no matter how long that took. Endlessly patient, she rarely became angry with us; the only time I recall being shouted at was when I called my sister a pig; she impressed on us from an early age the importance of always standing together as family.

Her love for her family was often manifested in small but meaningful gestures and actions; her children long since grown up, she used to send Sarah parcels of garlic paste from the UK when she was working in a café in Germany, a job which required Sarah to prepare tureens of spaghetti al'oglio at 8 am each morning, despite her allergy to alium.





Mum embraced and nurtured the interests of her children with enthusiasm, whether that meant watching *Match Of The Day* with Seamus each weekend, dragging heavy bags of sand up the road for den-building projects, or patiently sitting through arcane, not to say sometimes incomprehensible, French art films with Sarah.

She always encouraged us to develop our own interests and personalities, accepting us as we were, and never tired of supporting us in our various sporting ventures and adventures, patiently ferrying us to an endless cycle of swimming galas, riding lessons, hockey games and football matches well into our teenage years. Andrew remembers her taking him on university visits when he was just starting A-levels and still thought a degree was something you found on thermometers.

Mum stayed calm and calming in difficult situations. Sarah recalls a trip to Bournemouth when the car broke down on the motorway during a heavy snowstorm and Mum calmly waiting with us on the hard shoulder, reassuring us, still all under 10, while Dad went to look for a motorway emergency phone. Ah, those pre-mobile phone days.

Mum shared her love of literature with us; two of her favourite books were *A Certain Smile* by Francois Sagan and Anita Brookner's *Hotel Du Lac*, reflecting her interest in people and their inner lives. She loved foreign languages and Sarah recalls how she used to teach French words to her well before we began learning languages at school; later, they used to practice Gaelic phrases together.



As many of you will know, Mum expressed her artistic sense perhaps most of all through her garden, which she carefully created over many years, showing a deep understanding of and talent for form and colour as well as botanical knowledge.

Robert still spends many hours in the garden crafted by Mum, and finds both peace and solace in its beauty and its memories. She also expressed this artistic gift in her embroidery and one of her favourite haunts was Liberty's in London, where she could spend hours looking at the various beautiful fabrics.

Mum's sense of adventure, combined with a serene optimism, has already been mentioned, and this came to the forefront in our holidays with her, whether caravanning in Ireland, skiing in Italy or camping in France. However, her sense of adventure and experimentation also had their limits, as we realised when, one spring, the somewhat dilapidated if strictly speaking functional caravan suddenly disappeared from the garden, sold while we were at school and Robert at work.

The greenhouse met with an equal fate another year, presumably after one poor harvest too many.

As we all grew up, Sarah continued to have some wonderful holidays with her; in Ireland, revisiting her family home Ballinamultina; in Morocco, riding on camels, watching dancing dervishes and haggling in the souks, and in Poland, exploring the wonderful city of Krakow, with its cobbled streets, innovative quirky art and modern jazz studios, all of which appealed to her very individual sense of beauty. Closer to home, when Sarah was working near Chester, Elizabeth took her to the races for the day, for she never lost her love for horses and the world of racing. Sarah still watches the Grand National each year with her own children and it brings back happy memories of the many times they used to do so together.

Alongside all her talents, her intelligence, intellectual interests and professional skill, I hope all of us who knew Mum will remember and cherish her irrepressibly mischievous and dry sense of humour, her kindness, her propensity for the gentle teasing of those she loved and her marvellous capacity for pure joy, expressed in the smile which transformed her face and the spirits of anyone around her.





## Tribute to Elizabeth

by Robert Mulholland



Elizabeth and I had over 50 years of love and happiness together. From my time as a junior doctor throughout my professional and domestic life, she was my stalwart support and companion, whether it was running the home, organising the children's education, our social life or joining me on our many very happy holiday together, even if they sometimes involved battling around the Brittany coast in mountainous seas and contrary winds, perhaps compensated by lazing in the warm seas of the Aegean. Happiness together means shared interests and one of these was poetry, so I am going to read a poem we both loved, which expresses her love of Ireland and a soft Celtic philosophy.



## Poem

### The Lake Isle Of Innisfree



I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;  
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

*William Butler Yeats*



## **Invitation to Reflect**

Richard Marshall



## **Reflection Music**

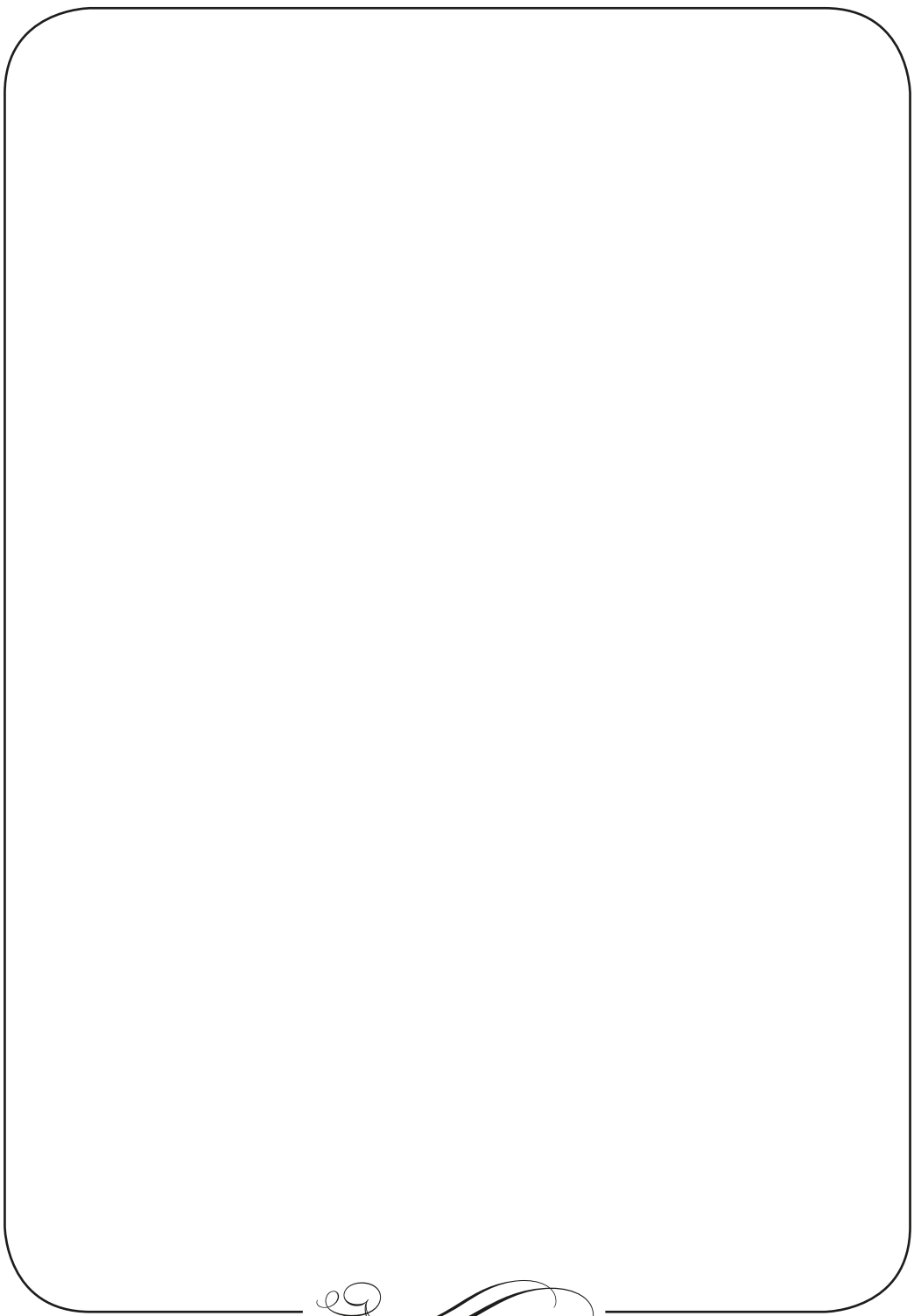
Waterford, My Hometown  
Kieran Boyle

## **Committal and Farewell**

## **Exit Music**

The Mountains Of Mourne  
Dominic Kirwan







The family would like to thank everyone  
for their kind words and support at this sad time.

Memorial donations for the  
**Alzheimer's Society**  
may be left online at  
**[www.lymn.co.uk/obituaries](http://www.lymn.co.uk/obituaries)**

**A.W. LYMN**

*The Family Funeral Service\**

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[www.lymn.co.uk](http://www.lymn.co.uk)

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