

A Ceremony of Thanksgiving
for the life of

**Shirley Ann
Haigh**

Died 12th May 2017

Aged 64 Years

Park House, Morley

Wednesday 21st May 2017

11.30 a.m.

Conducted By Richard J.W.Binks M.I.C.F.

Entrance music: Dancing In The Sky by Dani and Lizzie

Good morning and welcome to this funeral ceremony for Shirley. As you know we are gathered here to honour and celebrate the life of Shirley Ann Haigh and, by doing so, to bring consolation to her family and friends and I would particularly like to thank Stephen and Tracy for the assistance they have given me in the preparation of this ceremony.

My name is Richard and I am a member of the Institute of Civil Funerals. The family explained that Shirley would not have wanted a traditional religious service as this would not have reflected her life and that's why we find ourselves here today. I also feel very privileged that they have entrusted this ceremony to me.

Spoken Tributes

You all knew Shirley and you all know what sort of lady she was. She wouldn't have wanted a big fuss or lots of flowery words so this has been designed as a short but dignified and very sincere tribute to her life.

Shirley and her brother Alan were evidently the only set of twins to be born at Morley Hall Maternity Home. Or at least they were as of the 21st May 1952.

Shirley grew up in Morley with her mum and dad Joan and Horace, her elder sister Cynthia, brother Alan and younger sister Maggie.

Another first for Shirley and Alan was that after they had been to Peel Street and Cross Hall schools they were the first pupils at Bruntcliffe Secondary School. Literally the first because Horace dropped them off at 8.15 a.m. on the day the school opened and they were the first pupils through the gate.

Of the various jobs which Shirley had her favourite was undoubtedly as a Swimming Instructor at Morley Sports Centre. She got immense satisfaction from teaching children to swim and no doubt there are hundreds of people walking round Morley who are grateful to her including her sister Maggie who was four or five when Shirley taught her to swim.

Shirley first met her husband Steve in 1974 at the Sycamore Pub on High Street, Morley. It was love at first sight for both of them and, as Steve says, it still is forty three years later.

Shirley and Steve continued to live in Morley where they brought up their four children Tracy, Peter, Shaun and Ann-Marie. As well as loving all her kids to bits Shirley was also her doting Nana and great-nana to her many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Despite having lived all their lives in Morley Shirley and Steve found a house which they both fell in love with at Belle Isle where they moved twenty three years ago.

Although not a keen gardener herself Shirley loved her garden and always made sure that Steve did it exactly as she wanted it!

Shirley also loved dogs, she had one throughout their marriage and her current dog Susie has been with the family for sixteen years and no doubt she too will be missing Shirley.

It was about five or six years ago that Shirley was diagnosed with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and her health started to decline. Shirley had always been a fighter and she fought her illness as hard as she could. She wasn't being selfish, she worried about leaving Steve and wanted to have as much time with her beloved family as possible.

Despite her best efforts Shirley's condition worsened and she was in a lot of pain, the effort and strain eventually resulted in a fatal heart attack but released from the distress and suffering of not being able to breathe Shirley died peacefully at St James's Hospital on 12th May.

I know that Tracy wants me to say how selfless her mum was. How she was generous with her time and was always there to offer help and support to any members of her family who needed it at any time.

I will finish this tribute by quoting Steve: “Shirley was a great, loving and caring wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother who loved her family dearly. Her strength was an inspiration to us all. Shirley will be sadly missed by me and all the rest of her loving family. Shirley and I were twin souls who loved each other more than can be expressed.”

Music and Time for Reflection

We are now going to listen to a song called Jealous Of The Angels by Donna Taggart, which the family thought was very appropriate for today, whilst we reflect on Shirley’s life and what she has brought to your lives. Some of you may like to use this as a time for silent prayer.

Poem

I would now like to read some very personal lines written by members of Shirley’s family.

We just thought we’d say we love you and goodbye.

We’ll never forget our talks, how happy you were to see us when we came home.

You worried so much about us and we worried about you too.

This is the hardest thing we’ve ever had to do.

We know you’ll always be with us wherever we will go.

Thanks for being our mum.

We were blessed in every way.

Closing Words

“The separateness, the uniqueness of each human life is the basis of grief in bereavement. Look through the whole world and there is no one like the one you have lost but still lives on in your memories. And, though no longer a visible part of your lives, Shirley will always remain a member of your circle through the influence she has had on you, and the special part she has played in your lives”

It's now time to take Shirley to her final resting place at Morley Cemetery. As we leave the room we'll be listening to I Was Born To Love You by Queen.

Could I ask that you follow the family downstairs and get ready to follow the hearse to Bruntcliffe Lane. If there's anybody who is not going to the cemetery the family have asked me to tell you that you are very to join them for refreshments back at Thornfield House on Bruntcliffe Road where they will join you after the burial.

Exit Music: I Was Born To Love You by Queen.

At The Cemetery

The Committal

We have now come to the most solemn part of the ceremony. Would you please bow your heads for the committal.

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose on earth....a time to be born, and a time to die.

In love and respect we have been remembering the life of Shirley Haigh, and recalled the person she has been.

Here, in this last act, in sorrow but without fear, her character and her personality we commit to our memories;

Her love and her friendship we commit to our hearts;

Her mortal remains, we commit to their natural end.

Here to lie in peace and serenity and giving us to place to visit in the future and remember Shirley who meant so much to us.

Finally I would like to read a piece requested by Shirley's family called A Message From Heaven.

I have not left you.

I am simply enjoying the next stage of my life so please, do not cry.

Rejoice in the fact that I am happy, remember that I will always love you

And smile because one day we shall meet again.