

A tribute to my amazing sister, Sue

As Gill feels that she doesn't have Sue's ability to speak in public about deeply personal and emotional things, she has asked me, as a long-standing friend of Sue's, to read her words for her.

Thank you so much for making the effort to come along today. Sue would be absolutely thrilled that you are all here.

Sue's passing has made a massive hole in our lives, but today is about remembering the happy memories that we all hold dear in our hearts and to give thanks to her for all the love, support, kindness and strength that she gave unreservedly.

So where did her journey begin? For those who don't know, Sue was born Susan Jane Fletcher, in Forres, Scotland - a small town, northeast of Inverness (OS reference: [NJ034578](#) for our map enthusiasts!). She was the first born to our parents, Brenda and Bryan. They were in Scotland because Bryan was serving in the RAF at this time.

Sue was a lovely baby and child. Serious, calm, interested in everything around her, bright, brave and with a great sense of humour. These were traits of her character that remained throughout her life.

Sue always challenged me, teaching me complex games, and generally thrashing me – she didn't believe in allowing others to win! However, she was kind and patient too – letting her younger sister regularly join in with her and her friends. It must have been really annoying, but I honestly don't remember her ever getting fed up with me for tagging along.

Sue was always a high achiever and never one to rest on her laurels - I'm sure you have experienced this! As a friend, you would have been challenged to jobs, games and, of course, long walks! As a colleague, you would have encountered her high expectations to deliver top quality results. All of us, I'm sure, have experienced her courage and bravery and, of course, her unrivalled ability to delegate tasks!

You may also have experienced her incredible talent to be late for everything! Sometimes an hour would pass while we waited for her to finish the other 15 things she was trying to cram in. This all changed when she met Brian, who worked some kind of miracle and I remember Matthew and I being caught completely off guard when they arrived for dinner on time – we were nowhere near ready! Brian is to be thanked for many things and the change he made to her habitual lateness is definitely one of them!

Sue expected a lot from those around her but also from herself. She had to work very hard on her schoolwork to catch up when we moved from Ferndown in Dorset to Fleet in Hampshire. She toiled relentlessly to make sure she exceeded the expected standards at Calthorpe Park school, winning many awards along the way. Her expectations of herself were so high that disappointment didn't sit easily, and I recall hearing her crying in distress on O' level results day. I thought she must have fallen down the stairs, or at least failed all the exams, but it turned out that she was desperately upset because she only achieved a B in maths! Of course, most of her other results were straight As, but this was irrelevant – the A in maths was her expectation and that expectation had not been met. She was devastated!

After Calthorpe Park school, Sue moved on to Farnborough Sixth Form college and achieved her A levels along with some random further O' levels, including Russian! I'm pleased to say that her family can still say 'Good Day' and 'Cat' in Russian to this day!

Sue had developed a deep interest in science and went on to achieve her degree in Chemistry at Bristol University. This is where she made great friends – some are here today, and you will hear more about those times from them shortly.

Sue was dedicated to her family. She would often take Brenda away with her when travelling for work and would drive to meet us every Wednesday evening.

We had family get togethers every Christmas, Easter, major birthdays and other occasions right up to the end. These weekends were packed full of games, competitions, tennis tournaments and lots of laughter. We never just sat around talking – there was too much fun to be had with activities, along with much feasting. I have many fond memories of these times.

I'm not going to focus on her battle with MND, other than to give heartfelt thanks to her brilliant support team, including many of you here today who stepped up to tackle her list of jobs and to take care of her personal needs during your visits.

I would like to give special thanks to Aidan and Jess – not all children would have delivered your levels of care. Also to dear friends, Sarah and Neville for your constant support; to her wonderful carer, Nicky, who ensured Sue always looked immaculate, even doing her hair and makeup for today! And, of course, to her hero husband Brian, who was there 24/7 for her all the way through. I don't think many people in the world could have done what you did but not once have I heard you complain about your heavy load. Thank you.

Naturally, I must mention Sue's inspirational achievement of Walking the Positive Path for MND. What an amazing thing to do! Who else, having been diagnosed with a terminal illness which will take away all her mobility, would have chosen to traverse the long and tricky Pennine Way on foot?

I so enjoyed meeting Sue's friends and former colleagues and I'm delighted to see that people have continued wearing the famous t-shirts and bobble hats in far flung locations to raise funds. The adventure would not have been possible without the enormous help provided willingly by many of you, and I know that Sue was deeply appreciative of everyone's support.

Even to the end, Sue maintained her mental strength and sense of humour. Once Sue could no longer travel on Wednesdays, we would go to see her instead. We had lovely evenings, often joined by Sarah and Neville for the weekly multiple-choice quiz, which Sue enjoyed as she could easily manage the one-letter answers using her eye-gaze system.

There are too many accomplishments and memories to include in this brief tribute, I will end by saying; Sue, you have been an incredible sister and role model to me. You will be sorely missed and always in my heart. Thank You for all you have done and may you now truly rest in peace.