



Vale

Sheila Mary Grimshaw

7th September 1945 - 28th August 2017

“Sometimes, the best family are those that you come upon, not those that you are born into.” were the affectionate words Mrs. Kate Grimshaw, Sheila’s daughter-in-law, used to describe her love for Sheila and her family at Sheila’s service at the Kingston Cemetery on Saturday.

Following an introduction by David Buffett and the Hymn *Gethsemane*, Sheila’s son Jonathan and her brother Hamish delivered the following Eulogys.

“Sometimes, the best family are those that you come upon, not those that you are born into. It’s no secret that Sheila and I didn’t get along for the first few years. Finding out that your 28 year old son has moved in with his 21 year old girlfriend after three weeks would come as a shock to anyone. Then a year later, finding out they were getting married and having a baby would give anyone pause. It was a rocky few years there, with her not understanding why a 22 year old would want to marry and have children without seeing the world first. Why didn’t I want to study? Travel? It would be seven years and another two babies before our turning point came. Sheila had to come and stay with us for an extended period of time, and we had some very open discussions. We talked about feminism and how every woman had the right to choose what they wanted in life. We talked about how motherhood was something that truly fulfilled me and that I genuinely loved her son. And her. I don’t think she ever quite understood why I chose the life I did, but she certainly respected that as my choice. Even if it meant she was surrounded by tiny humans and furry creatures at every visit.

As time went on, we came to realise we were very similar in a lot of ways. We were both stubborn,

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Sheila Mary Grimshaw - continued

independent and didn't give a hoot what other people thought. Apart from a mutual love of shopping, and never, ever paying full price for anything, we liked the same TV shows, read the same books and were both keenly interested in home design. And we never, EVER let an opinion go unsaid, even if it was a harsh one!

In the past few years, as we spent more and more time together, we began to truly enjoy each others company. I told her secrets that I hadn't even told my own mother. She counselled me in ways that no one else ever had. She had a way of telling you what you needed to hear that was frank and to the point (and sometimes nosy as hell and bossy too), but she was almost always right.

As she got more frail, she learned to let me do more things for her, not because they needed to be done, but because I wanted to. The evening before she passed away, I tucked her into bed with her nightly cup of tea and shortbreads, we had a chat about the kids and their upcoming birthdays and I made her promise to call me when she got settled at home. Then I kissed her on the cheek, told her I loved her, and her final words to me were 'yes, well... be good'. It was an endearment that those close to her would recognise as an 'I love you too'. Losing Sheila as a mother in law is hard enough, but losing her as my beloved friend is heartbreaking. I will miss her in so many ways and my life will certainly be a whole lot quieter now. I miss her dry humour, her quick mind and her ability to fill silence. Rest in peace, my dear friend. I will never be the same without you, and forever be grateful that I knew you. I love you. - Katey"

Hamish then delivered the following - "Sheila Mary's sister Annabelle who many of you will remember can't be with us today as she has had eye surgery and was told that she can't fly.

We were originally 4 children, Sheila Mary, Annabelle myself and a younger brother Hugh who unfortunately died at the age of 10, 50 years ago..

Our Mother was a British resident in India and during the war our father was posted there as a Naval officer. They married in 1944 and 1 year later Sheila Mary was born in Bombay just a few weeks after the war ended.

Our parents returned to live in Dad's home town in Scotland and Annabelle arrived 2 years later with me following another 2 years on. Our younger brother arrived as a surprise 6 years later.

Life in a small town in post war Scotland was hard but of course we didn't understand that. We had a happy childhood and were surprised to be taken on the great adventure of moving to Australia in 1959. In Dunoon Sheila Mary was seen as special, born overseas, beautiful fair curly hair, pink cheeks and startling blue eyes very different to those around her including Annabelle and me. Annabelle still maintains she passed her earlier years invisible because visitors only noticed the beautiful fair haired angel and ignored her.

We arrived in Australia in the middle of a blistering hot summer straight from a cold Scottish winter and we all learned about sunburn the hard way.

7 years after we arrived our younger brother was struck down and left us. We were all heartbroken and

our mother never got over the loss but Sheila Mary was devastated. She reminisced about him for many years.

When Sheila Mary married Tom Grimshaw and moved to Norfolk Island we had limited contact for many years. The Island was remote and Tom gleefully preached to anyone who would listen the lack of the three Ts — Telephones, Television and Taxation. However following Toms death she returned to us and it was as though those years had never been. Sheila Mary and Annabelle went off to see the world together.

Unfortunately the joy of reunion was short lived. On her return to Australia Sheila Mary received a diagnosis of cancer. At the same time our parents started to go into decline. Sheila Mary had all her medical treatment in Melbourne however so we were grateful that at least she was near 4 or 5 times a year.

Sheila Mary bought a large house which accommodated our elderly parents in their last years and allowed her to stay with family when she was in Melbourne. A family home was a refuge to her during her long and distressing treatment.

When our parents died the house was sold and Annabelle and I moved to a little house close to the doctors who had become part of her life. Unfortunately DVA decided that treatment should be obtained in Sydney so visits became rare, but Annabelle did try when possible to be in Sydney when Sheila Mary was there.

We are still happy that we had the time we did with Sheila Mary in the last years but as movement became difficult and painful for her they were too short.

Annabelle was distraught that she couldn't be here to say goodbye however they spoke daily and just hours before she died she told Annabelle how happy she was to be going home.

This was her forever home, India, Scotland and Melbourne were only brief stops on the way to here.

She is missed by us all, brother, sister, nieces, nephews alike. James Stewart, Merideth and Geoffrey Langdale, Adam Masters and Mick Slattery. The next generation Emma and Aiden miss her too

The number of phonecalls, emails, cards and Facebook messages we have received have told us she is also deeply missed on this Island."

After the Eulogy those gathered sang the Hymn "*Be Thou My Vision*", before the Floral Tributes, The Committal, and The Lord's Prayer. The service concluded with "Come Ye Blessed".

Sheila

Sheila had a heart of gold and would always be there to help me when I needed it, and gave me a safe refuge to stay.

She helped me a lot when we were both on the Ambulance and going to skill drill together.

I will really miss having drinks and nibbles on her deck.

I am going to miss her tremendously....

Priscilla.
