

# Celebrating

THE LIFE OF



# Valerie Harkin

3rd September 1962 - 26th June 2023

# *Memory of Val*

*Val's life was a testament to resilience and an unwavering spirit. Despite the obstacles she encountered, she never allowed her disabilities to define her or limit her aspirations. Her infectious smile and warm personality touched the hearts of all who had the privilege of crossing paths with her.*

*At the age of 12, after enduring numerous operations, Val made a courageous decision to embrace life from a wheelchair. She refused to let anything hinder her pursuit of happiness. A natural rebel and troublemaker, she defied expectations and pursued post school education alongside able-bodied peers, proving that her determination knew no bounds.*

*Her tenacious will led her to secure a job that many would never have expected her to have, breaking barriers and shattering stereotypes along the way. Val's zest for life extended beyond the workplace. At the age of 17, she proudly acquired a car and embraced the freedom of the open road. While she later chose to retire from driving, she left a lasting impression on the town of Daventry with her memorable straight path across a traffic island that now stands adorned with trees. Coventry central ring-road is a safer place now that she does not reverse around it in the small hours of the morning.*

*It was during our time at college that Val and I first crossed paths, but it was during my student placement that we truly connected. To some, we may have seemed an unlikely match, and doubts were cast upon our future together. However, the universe had different plans. Val's unwavering desire to build a family laid a strong foundation, and shortly after our marriage, she joyfully gave birth to our son, Adrian.*

*Val's life was marked by a series of medical conditions that gradually presented new challenges. But she never allowed them to dictate her outlook on life. Throughout it all, her love for dogs brought immeasurable joy and richness to our lives. Our home was graced with the presence of Westies, each one cherished by Val with a boundless affection.*

*Val's unique charm extended to her sense of humour and her knack for finding unexpected bargains. She had a special talent for saying the wrong thing at the wrong time, but it always brought laughter and lightness to those around her. Her shopping adventures were an experience of their own. Val had an eye for the most unnecessary bargains, uncovering hidden gems in the most unexpected places.*

*Her cooking skills resembled alchemy, thankfully her recipe for fruit salad passes with her to the afterlife. But she always ensured a good dinner and more than well stocked kitchen cupboards and freezer.*

*As we gather here to honour and remember Val, let us celebrate the incredible journey she embarked upon—a life that defied limitations, challenged norms, and radiated inspiration. May her indomitable spirit continue to inspire us all to embrace life's adversities with grace, determination, and an unwavering smile.*



Remember and smile, Val would want that.