

Granny Jo

"From the Grandchildren"

READ BY: Katy Hendry

INTRO

Granny, Gran, Granny Jo, GJ.

I'm sure all 10 of her grandchildren would agree it's impossible to describe granny in a way that does her justice.

Thanks to Granny, every year we enjoyed:

- Springs of Easter egg hunts in her garden filled with bright yellow daffodils
- Summers splashing in the paddling pool and very merry family BBQs
- Autumns hunting for conkers in Mabie forest
- And Winter's hiding from the adults when they tried to kiss us at the New Year bells.

Of course, all of the above fuelled by her unrivalled millionaire shortbread and washed down some Robinsons squash

Whatever the memory it is sprinkled with Granny's special blend of warmth, humour and a bit of nonsense.

MISCHIEF

Us lucky recipients of Granny's hosting, were often the victims of her mischief. Recruiting grandad as her accomplice, Granny would go to great lengths to scare the family.

One dark, dreary Halloween evening, the doorbell rang and Uncle Robert opened the door to meet by a dark silhouette, with a glowing skull mask, dripping in blood. The anonymous figure did not speak and authoritatively strode into the house, cape flapping behind, wafting a stench of cigar smoke. The four boys were terrified, and Auntie Theresa scarpered upstairs to hide. Who was it? It couldn't be Granny or Grandad as there was no car parked outside and they'd told the family they were in Inverness. Just as Uncle Robert was about to physically throw the beast out, granny revealed herself from behind the mask with a big grin on her face. The Inverness trip was a ruse to pull off the prank, the Subaru was hidden down the road and grandad had cunningly used cigar smoke to mask granny's Chanel.

Even on one of her final days in hospital, Granny was lying in bed and had instructed me to brush her hair for the fourth time that morning. The nurse appeared with granny's usual cocktail of pills and asks her to open wide to prove she'd swallowed. Granny waits for the nurse to leave and spits the pills out from under her tongue into a tissue, slides to me and whispers "quick, destroy the evidence, dear".

RECKLESS

All things considered; it is a miracle she made it to 88. Over recent years, Granny enjoyed two visits from the bomb squad after finding WW2 bombs in the shed that grandad had brought back and she'd failed to declare. Fortunately for us, and the population of Mabie, they turned out to be harmless.

FOOD

I know everyone says their granny's cooking is the best. But they're all liars. And Granny took the trophy. Legendary roast dinners, beery beef (heavy on the beer), sticky toffee pudding, lentil soup, pancakes, coffee cake. The list goes on...

Catering for her nearest and dearests always took priority. On one occasion, Granny was late dropping Caroline at the station to catch the train back to university, heart pounding, Caroline made it to the platform just as her train approached. Hearing some commotion, Caroline turns around to see granny shouting and sprinting like Usain Bolt across the train bridge, bolognese and lentil soup in hand. Luckily Caroline made it back to Manchester and enjoyed a very tasty dinner that evening.

All of this gorgeous cooking and baking could only be made with the best, quality ingredients. And where do you source that? Morrisons, of course. Granny would not hear a bad word said against the supermarket. Even Andrew, Rosie's husband, had his initiation into the family in Morrisons with Granny, where he spent hours scooting up and down the aisles foraging for Granny's favourite items.

GENOROSITY

Granny's generosity didn't stop with food, she was always showering us with gifts, encouraging gambling by buying us scratch-cards and sneaking money into our pockets "don't tell your mother and father" she'd whisper. She was, however, an inelegant recipient of generosity. Every time a gift landed on her lap she'd look at the parcel in disgust, put her head in her hands and shout "OCH WHYYYYYYYYY?! Why you wasting your money on me?!" A simple "thanks" would have sufficed granny!

Her canine friends at the Dogs Trust and the donkeys of Santorini were also lucky beneficiaries of Granny's kindness.

We all know granny loved animals, and laterally became a vegetarian to respect the cows in the adjacent fields. She adored her spaniels, Dan and Ben, and her preceding four legged friends and poultry – including Jimmy the ferret, Lucy the domesticated sheep, and Jennie the Hen. Right until her final days at Mabie, granny was out feeding the birds who she called “the girls” every morning or at least robustly delegating the duty to one of the family.

SILLINESS

Granny was an excellent storyteller and had a magical ability to transform even the most mundane moments into fun and laughter.

From the comfort of her armchair, she'd have us all shocked with stories from her youth, Mabie misdemeanours and holiday anecdotes (which often involved the authorities, and Aunty Shelia).

She also kept us all giggling with her unusual talent at spotting faces in inanimate objects, amazing how a leaf could look so much like Paul O'Grady.

SIGN OFF

I could ramble for hours / days / months about granny's amazing attributes and silly quirks, but we don't have time.

So - Granny, Gran, Granny Jo, GJ – on behalf of your grandchildren, thank you for being the most perfect granny we could have ever wished for.

Lots of love xxxxx

For Granny

*88 years ago, into the world came Josephine Gallagher
With her 7 sisters and brother, John, she lived in a house in Arrochar*

*She spent a joyful youth playing at the torpedo range
To her so normal, but to us a bit strange*

*While working at the forestry, she soon got the hots
When in walked Fred Cowie, the handsome new boss*

*Having pushed aside the competition, she was whisked off on his bike
Where they later had three maverick children, and honoury son, Mike*

*Then came the grandchildren who she'd sneak lots of treats
And grant access to the "magic box" of unlimited sweets*

*A mother, aunty, granny, great granny, neighbour, friend, wife
Even after grandad passed she took such joy from her life*

*Whether that be meandering around Mabie forest or feeding the birds
Or entertaining her company with her silly choice of words*

*Ach away, you're JOKING, terrrrrible, full to the NECK
And watching the chase through her fingers, shouting at Bradley Walsh -
HECK!*

*It's no coincidence that my fondest life memories involve Granny Jo
The sweetest, kindness, funniest human I know*

*I'll miss her rolling her eyes and telling me to behave
And even endlessly heating up her cups of tea in the microwave*

*So goodbye for now Granny Jo, wherever you may be
You've left behind such a beautiful legacy*

