



“Brief Lives - Remembered”

2004-2016
Thirteen Years of Supporting Bereaved families

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Welcome to our 2017 Newsletter - *If this is the first edition of our newsletter that you are receiving, we are pleased that you have found our unique organization and hope that this newsletter brings some comfort in knowing you are not alone.*

It has been another busy and interesting year, as always we have been working on some very exciting projects and supporting many families newly bereaved and those bereaved many years ago.



Thank you to those for sharing their stories and poems in our newsletter. I never fail to be moved and inspired by all the families I speak too and feel honoured to share all your stories of your precious children.

Best wishes

Paula Jackson

*"Each new life... no matter how fragile or brief...
Forever changes the world."*

Author unknown



Website - *We have recently setup a new scheme for sponsoring the cost of our website.*

Families are invited to sponsor the website for a minimum of £10.00 per month or more if a family prefers. This can be done perhaps on the birthday / anniversary month of your baby or child's birth & death. We would include a piece on the Welcome page of the website saying who sponsored the website and who it would be in memory off.

Please let me know if you would be interested in honouring your child in this way and assisting with the running costs of the website.

We are continually adding new things to the website, please do have a look every now and then.

Donations - *It is always a privilege to receive donations towards the work of "Brief Lives - Remembered"*

Thank you to all; who have donated to our funds over the last year.

Donations can now be made to one of two accounts depending on where you would like your money to be used.

Brief Lives - Remembered - ***General Account*** is for the general running of "Brief Lives - Remembered" including; Baby Traces. Website, Administration etc.

Brief Lives - Remembered - ***Memorial Fund*** account is money designated towards fundraising for our memorial and garden.



Newsletter Contributions - *I would like to thank those of you who have contributed your beautiful and moving poems and stories poems to this newsletter.*



Would you like to contribute to a future newsletter with a poem, reading or your story? Do you know of any memorial services or other events that you would like us to publicise in the newsletter, please contact us at: briefflives-newsletter@outlook.com

Tracing a Baby's Grave - *"Brief Lives - Remembered" offers support to parents bereaved many years ago by advising how to trace a baby's grave or by tracing the resting place of their baby for them. This service is free of charge. If this is something that you or someone you know are considering, please do not hesitate to contact us.*



The Saying Goodbye events are the first set of commemorative services that are for families who have suffered a miscarriage or have had a baby stillborn or who died soon after birth.

The Saying Goodbye services take place across the country

In some very special locations.

For a list of locations and dates see either

the "Brief Lives - Remembered"

or the Saying Goodbye websites: www.sayinggoodbye.org

Baby Shane

My name is Erica Stewart, I am Baby Shane's Mummy.

Baby Shane was my third baby, he died on 29th May 1983 at ten past 1 on a sunny Sunday afternoon, following major heart surgery and 8 weeks in intensive care at Guys Hospital London.

Baby Shane was my first son!

We visited Baby Shane every day in intensive care, during that time we received two calls from the unit to say that he was about to die, but he fought on until 29th May when the final call came at 9.30am.

The sympathetic voice said 'I think you better come and give him a cuddle' I could tell by her tone that this was it, he didn't have long to live, he was going to die, but there was no mention of death or dying.

We rushed to his bedside as fast as we could. (Baby Shane had been on a ventilator since his heart surgery and every time they tried to wean him off it, he couldn't cope so they had to turn it up again) he was still connected to all the machines, his heart rate was low, but still beating.



My husband and I took turns holding him until 12.30pm when we decided to go for a cup of tea. There was no guidance or support from the doctors and nurses as to when he may die, or if we would like to hold him while he dies. We said we would be an hour, but we came back later at 1.15pm to be told that he died at 1.10pm. In our minds Baby Shane waited for us for 10 minutes, but we were 5 minutes late.

We walked into the unit, Baby Shane's cot had the green screens around him. He still had the ventilator over his mouth but it was now disconnected from the machines, as were his IV lines.

I picked Baby Shane up and held him tight close to me, I cried silent tears. When I gave him to his daddy, to my surprise, he cradled him and rocked backwards and forwards as he literally wailed!

I felt so guilty thinking 'I should be doing that' but of course I now realize that there is no right or wrong way to react, everyone is different. I was asked if I wanted to bath him, in that moment, I didn't know why he needed a bath because he was dead. Before I knew it there was a bath of water in front of us, and the nurse proceeded to bath him.

Looking back, I would have loved to have bathed him, but I wasn't given anytime to process it all.

If someone could have said 'many parents find it helpful to bath their baby' it would have felt normal and given me permission. It's just the way things were in 1980's I guess.

Leaving hospital without Baby Shane was one of the hardest things I have ever done. We wanted the world to stop, but it cruelly carried on. I remember the sun was shining bright, so incongruent with how we were feeling.

After a day or two, we decided we wanted him at home with us. We collected him from the hospital mortuary and put him in his cot in our bedroom. His sisters (then 2 and 7) came up stairs to meet their baby brother, as did other family members. We took photos and everyone took turns to hold him. In the evening, I read him stories, and changed his nappy. I just wanted to nurture him.



Baby Shane stayed with us at home for 3 days, on the day of his funeral we knew it was the right time for him to go. His appearance had changed! We organized the service ourselves and requested that everyone wore white to reflect how pure he was. I remember that two of my friends wore baby blue which really touched our hearts.

I got involved with Sands in the mid-90s working voluntary on the Sands helpline for 2 years, then I was offered a paid job as publications officer.

In 2005 I became a qualified counsellor and was offered the role of Bereavement Support Services Manager which involved managing the Sands helpline team, going out and talking about Sands to a diverse range of audiences, and supporting anyone affected by the death of a baby at the London office.

I have also been involved with helping the researchers and writers of EastEnders and Coronation Street when they covered the death of a baby in their storyline. They contacted Sands as they wanted to make sure these storylines were portrayed sensitively and accurately. They knew they had a huge responsibility to achieve this.

My role has now evolved even more and I am now in the role of Bereavement Support and Awareness Specialist.

As well as being a media spokesperson for Sands on TV, Radio, Magazines and Newspapers, this role takes me out and about a lot more, publically speaking about Grief and baby bereavement to non-medical audiences and others who are involved in caring for bereaved parents and families.

I enjoy working for Sands as much as I did the day I started. I believe Sands exists to show bereaved parents and families that there is a light at the end of a very dark tunnel, and that they will get to see that light in their own time and at their own pace.

Over the years I have slowly allowed myself to see some positives following Baby Shane's death.

All the bereaved parents and families I have come into contact with have touched my heart and continue to do so.

But I would give it all up if I could have him back tomorrow. Of course that is not going to happen!

Although I know I will never 'get over' Baby Shane's death, and neither would I want to. I have gradually learnt to adjust to my 'New Normal' and I have to credit Baby Shane for all the work I do. He lives on in my heart forever, my brave boy.

A Bud That Never Bloomed

My dear little baby,
that once inside me grew,
I'm so unbearably saddened that
I'll never get to meet you.

I will never be able to
watch you sprout and grow
and bloom into the person that
I wanted so much to know.

So for now I'll tend your memory
water it with tenderness, feed it with love
and one day I'll see you blossom
when we meet in Heaven above.

Why?

You did not breathe,
But in me you lived.
Kicking and turning, you were part of me.
Perfectly formed, you entered this world,
But you did not breathe.
Why did your life begin and end in me?
Unanswered questions tear at my mind,
There is a void, it cannot be filled.
Empty womb, empty arms
Breasts full but unwanted.
Aching body, aching heart, aching mind.
Time will heal, they say, try again,
As though you were an unsuccessful game.
Nine months you were mine,
My secret fruit, my heavy burden,
Joyfully carried, eagerly awaited,
Then anguish and unbelievable loss.
Yesterday with me
Today you are gone,
But alive in my memory
My child, my son.

I will plant flowers,
Token of my love.
Every spring they'll burst with blossom
Symbol of new life and hope.
Hope that birth will come with joy
Though it's hidden, like spring flowers in snow
Waiting for that sweet awakening.
Have faith, have hope,
That joy will come
Waiting body, heavy heart, anxious mind.
I must believe that time will heal
And bring me faith in life again.
Life is full of mystery
Sorrows that we cannot fathom,
Joys anticipated, pain unsought.
All are part of life's rich pattern.
Not understood,
But to be accepted
Wrapped around in my love,
My child, my son.

Maureen Jackson

Lone Twin Network

Between 1983 and 1986, 219 lone twins responded to an invitation from Joan Woodward to participate in her research project on the response of twins to the death of their twin. She presented her findings at the 1988 International Conference of Twin Studies in Amsterdam.

In 1989, 31 of the lone twins who took part in the project met up for a life changing meeting where they found they had a lot in common and so The Lone Twin Network was founded. We have had meetings ever since. The feeling of being in a room filled with lone twins is amazing as it doesn't matter when our twin has died, we all feel empathy and really understand the loss. Something singletons, however hard they try, do not feel.

The LTN comprises mostly of twins who have lost their twin from birth onwards, though there a few



whose twin died in utero (after the first trimester). Twins have to be over 18 years of age to join and attend meetings though we are trying out an idea where over 16 year olds can join our private Facebook page.

I am the chairman of the LTN, my identical twin sister Jacqueline died 2 hours before I was born as she was breech and was strangled by the umbilical cord. I was always a mardy baby and now realised that I was missing my twin.

I have always known I am a twin as 2 years later my mother gave birth to another set of twins, it made it easy to bring up the subject of my twin and she was acknowledged all my life. My brother and sister are both alive and in 2015 celebrated their 70th birthday.

My mother and father were very good at trying to make up for my loss but I have had a difficult relationship with my brother as I think I am jealous of his still having his twin sister, in fact, she is my twin sister, just not my twin!

Just before my 50th birthday, I found out where my twin was buried (she was buried with an older woman). On my 50th birthday, I found my twin's grave and left a chrysanthemum (our November flower) and rosemary (for remembrance) and a note. It was a lovely misty autumn day and my husband, my father and my sister were so pleased to be there at such a momentous time.

Many members have not find out about the death of their birth loss twin until adulthood and have difficulty coming to terms with the knowledge, often finding it explains the emptiness and loneliness they have felt throughout their life. One 94 year old had never spoken about his twin who died at birth until he read an article about the LTN in a newspaper. He was, at last, able to bring up the subject with his daughter. He was so happy to share his story before he died.

Jill Deeley

Chairman of the Lone twin Network

Thank You! - "Brief Lives - Remembered"

With the very kind help of Paula, my Aunt was able to find her son after 57 years. Last month, just before what would have been his 58th Birthday, she had a tiny plaque laid as a loving memorial for a son she never saw and struggled to believe had ever existed. On seeing this laid she said "now I know it really happened and I really had him".



My Aunt & Uncle (sadly deceased before we found him) would have made the most loving parents. Sadly they were unable to have any more children. I know that finding him & enabling my Aunt to "leave just a small token" to show he was ever really here has been a huge comfort to her.

Thank you again for making this possible.

Linda x

I gave birth to a full term stillborn baby girl in January 1980.

In those days which now seems almost like the dark ages, everything was taken out of my hands and in my grief I let it happen.

I have lived for the past 37 years regularly wondering what happened to my baby girl and where she is buried. The guilt I have felt over this time is immeasurable as I have always let my baby girl down.



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Last year however I decided I needed to do something about this and contacted the hospital where my baby was born who subsequently put me in touch with ' Brief lives remembered ' who I cannot thank enough for their help and compassion.

The result is that I now know the cemetery where my baby lies although not the specific plot and have organized for a memorial plaque to be placed in the children's garden of remembrance.

I now feel some peace and have somewhere to go with flowers and remember my darling daughter.

Christine

Rose Petal Garden

As you will be aware "Brief Lives - Remembered" are in the process of raising money towards a memorial, and garden dedicated to all babies and children who have died. This will be located at Aldershot Cemetery in Hampshire with the aim of being a place of support and remembrance for families whose baby has passed away, either recently or a long time ago.

Within the garden there will be a bronze statue which portrays two open hands, and the figures of a baby and small child. This is inspired from the biblical reading from Isaiah, "I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palm of my hands".

In the last newsletter we requested any suggestions on a name for the garden that encapsulates what the memorial and garden will mean to families and friends.



We are pleased to say that we have now decided on a name for the garden. The garden is to be called the "Rose Petal Garden"

“Leave only footprints....take only memories”

Focus On Books Focus On Books Focus On Books



Three Minus One - A powerful, groundbreaking collection that shatters the silence about stillbirth, miscarriage and neonatal death. A moving and beautifully written anthology giving a powerful insight into what it is like to experience the death of a baby.

Inspired by the film *Return to Zero* - the first Hollywood film to tackle the taboo subject of stillbirth - this is a poignant, inspiring anthology that offers much-needed insight into the unique, shattering, and life-changing experience of losing a child.

Focus On Books Focus On Books Focus On Books

We Remember...

*"An angel in the book of life wrote down my baby's birth.
Then whispered as she closed the book 'too beautiful for earth'.*

Leah Suzanne Gander - Stillborn 1st January 1972

Baby David - 3rd January 1966

Max Brice Rousham - Born 6th January & Died 21st November 1999

Brett Rosewell - Born asleep 7th January 1977

Christopher David Rosewell - Born 10th January 1978 & Died 6th December 2010

Hayley Caroline Hall - Born & Died 12th January 1977

Hannah Elliott - Born & Died - 15th January 1990

Donna Marie Davis - Stillborn 24th January 1967

Rosemary Dempsey - Stillborn February 1969

Baby Mark Rogers - Stillborn 6th February 1984

Eloise Clare Stewart - Stillborn 7th February 2008



Julia Chilver - Born & Died 23rd February 1971
Baby Mark Rogers - Stillborn 6th February 1984

Carol Ann Craddock - 10th March 1953

Michael Poole - Stillborn 10th March 1942

Hannah Woodward - Stillborn 11th March 1953

Baby Henton - 14th March 1975

Patrick Maloney - Born & Died 16th March 1975

Kirstie McNally - Stillborn 22nd March 1988

Lee Philips - Born & Died 24th March 1971

Elizabeth O'Sullivan - Stillborn April 1955

Victoria Taylor - Stillborn 13th April 1970

Lynette Judith Marie Green - Born 1st October 1970 - Died 22nd April 1972

Elizabeth Barlow - Stillborn - 14th April 1981

Fiona Lynne Meakins - Born 15th & Died 16th April 1956

Emma Daniel - Stillborn 20th April 1970

David Bulman - Born & Died 26th April 1978

Baby Barton - Born & Died 26th April 1991

James Brett - Stillborn - April 1970



John Holdsworth - Born & Died 30th April 1962

Baby Shane Stewart - Born 8th April & Died 29th May 1983

Grant Lanfear - Born 3rd Jan 1988 & Died 31st May 1988

Rachel Somers - Born 7th May 1973 & Died 6th May 1981

Clare Julia Woods - Born 31st October 1975 & Died 17th May 1980

Margaret McKay - Born 22nd & Died 23rd May 1966

Gerard O'Sullivan - Born & Died 27th May 1954

Joanna High - Born Sleeping 29th May 1968

Vanessa Jane Crombie - Died 30th May 1973

Baby Alan Prngle - Born 4th June 1958 & Died 5th June 1958

Laura Lewis - Stillborn 12th June 1984

Richard Jason Green - Born Sleeping 8th June 1969

Christine Finlay - Born Sleeping June 1979

Micah Smith - Born 13th June & Died 15th July 2013

Paul Daren Webb - Born 16th July & Died 20th July 1972

Marnie Louise Collings - 16th June 1968

Freddie Lowrie Gibson - Born 17th July 1939 & Died 1st March 1940

Paul Christopher David Rosie - 6th July 1984

Margaret Leigh - Born Sleeping 19th July 1960

Melanie Minton - Stillborn 20th July 1965

Alice Mellows - Stillborn 8th July 1968

Baby McGrath - Stillborn 25th July 1951

William Noy - Stillborn. 28th July 1963 & Buried 6th September 1963

Daniel John Hicks - Born 30th July 1972 & Died 31st July 1972

Zoe Karen Gentle - Born & Died 2nd August 1960

Emma Nancy Lampshire - Stillborn 2nd August 1980

Edward James Crowley - Stillborn 2nd August 1982

Baby Daniels - Stillborn 4th August 1964

Mollie Elise Gavin - Passed 6th August 2003

Luie Elyjas Gavin - Passed 11th August 2008

Paula Michelle McWhirter - Born 12th & Died 14th August 1971

Hanna Elizabeth Rousham - 15th August 2003

Henry McKay - Born & Died 17th August 1959

Alexander Steele McKay - Born & Died 17th August 1959

Colin Mark Tonkin - Born 26th & Died 28th August 1964



Emma Fountain - Stillborn 30th August 1976

Nicholas Stuart Balling - Stillborn 1st September 1983

Noah Brindley Miscarried - 5th September 1982

Louise Katherine Dodds - Born 9th September 1989 & Died 2nd September 2007

Christopher William Lawrence - Stillborn 18th September 1975

Lucy May Gavin - Passed 18th Sept 2003

Thomas Carl Underwood - 22nd September 2012

Baby 'Shaan' Taylor - Stillborn 29th September 1979

Baby Collier - Stillborn 30th September 1955

Guy Daniel Rhodes - Born 7th September 1972 & Died 1st November 1972

Jasmine Rousham - 9th October 1997

Brian Greenhalgh - Born & Died 12th October 1970 †

Emma Kate Radford - Born 3rd November 1997 & Died 26th February 2009

Roger Howarth - Born & Died November 1946

Georgina Walker-Oseland - Born & Died 4th November 1977

Dawnette Dionne Ethel-May Welfair - Stillborn 15th November 1970

Baby Chrimes - Born Sleeping 26th November 1973

Kay Woods - 10th December 1982

Shaun Mansley - 14th December 1966



“May their light shine forever brightly”