

My Life and Memories

Extract from Margaret's story

...One of my earliest memories was of being woken by the air raid sirens and rushing down the garden to the Anderson shelter. I was about four and mum would almost throw me over the fence while she carried my baby brother Brian in her arms. Sometimes we would be in and out of the musty smelling shelter all night long, and I can still smell it. It's little wonder that I grew up to be totally neurotic....

I left school at age 15 and headed for Clough's secretarial college. It was quite something in those days to be a "shorthand typist" and I got my first job as secretary to the managing director of an advertising agency. In 1965 I earned the princely sum of £3 and 10 shillings per week for a five and a half day week. I remember lighting my boss's cigarette for him in his disgusting smoke filled office....

... Babies didn't come along for us for five long years and this provided me with "another great excuse to be totally neurotic". Then, at the point when we decided to "stop trying" and I took driving lessons instead – along came Maria! I felt overwhelming joy when I had a daughter, and then a feeling of completeness when God gave us the gift of our son Graham a couple of years later.



The children have been "all that any mother could ever wish for" and I've never stopped feeling that way.

My life hasn't always been a bed of roses and I have always understood that everyone's life has light and dark patches. I was blighted by hormonal and nerve problems in my middle years and an early diagnosis of osteoporosis put paid to all my marathon hopes! My diagnosis with leukaemia has often left me feeling "short of a gallop", but I still continue to count my blessings.

My favourite expression? Definitely "no regrets". My favourite quotation? "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Mum, aged around four