

Dawn's Contribution.

When Eileen's family asked us to speak on behalf of her friends, we were extremely honoured, but also at the same time worried that we would not be able to adequately convey how special and loved Eileen was by her many friends.

They say a friend is "someone who understands your past, believes in your future, and accepts you just the way you are" – and that truly was Eileen, she always accepted her friends, just the way they were.

We remember so many stories to illustrate how special Eileen was, and I'm sure many of these will be shared by you later today, how she treasured and admired Lesley who she loved like a sister, and who amazed and inspired her, to Lynda who she was crazy about, who she would stay up all night gambling in Vegas with, and then lecture the next day about Lynda's extravagant lifestyle.

How she loved spending time with Katharine, and taking Ellie and Isobel shopping and birthday treats to the movies, gossiping and catching up with Diana, never forgetting to see how Chloe and Harry were doing.

When we think about Eileen, there are two very distinct personalities:

1. The smart business savvy, intelligent, intuitive, logical problem solving goddess!!!
2. Then we have her alter ego, the habitually late, scatty, unaware of her surrounding, or on occasion even which planet she was on!! For example,
 - How many times do you think Eileen has phoned train stations to find lost laptops, or hotels to find lost clothes
 - Turned up for camping trips with high heels and no sweaters
 - Walked around the office in non-matching shoes with her blouse wrongly buttoned
 - Turned up at events either late, or sometimes even the wrong day

As well as being a goddess and having an alter ego, Eileen still managed to have a unique way of connecting people, keeping you up

to date on what was going on with everyone she cared about, so you also felt part of Eileen's special group of friends.

I remember going to the hospice one day, Joseph said to me oh by the way Louise called from GMAC to say she was visiting. Shortly after I arrived a woman came in, gave Eileen a big hug and we all started chatting, a little while later another woman came in said hello and introduced herself as Louise from GMAC, as I had spent the last 5 minutes talking to this woman thinking she was Louise, I turned to her and apologised, No she said I'm Joan, Oh in that case I said – "how is your Mother, Eileen told me she was in hospital?" Such was the caring nature of Eileen that even lying in the hospice, she would still be concerned for other people in her life.

When I left Reading to live in the States I knew our friendship wouldn't change a bit, and it didn't, I still knew what was happening with her, the boys, friends we both knew, the Avco UK gang, Rob, Jamie, Tony, Susan and Andy and so many more who would take too long to name individually but I know most of you are here today.

Even though I've never met Lisa from Lloyds, I know about her and her darling daughter Emily who Eileen loved.

I feel I know Simon and Godfrey, Louise and Jackie, and many more from GMAC even though I have met them briefly, or some not at all.

The common theme I think we are seeing here with Avco, Lloyds or GMAC or even in her personal life with her Pre-natal or Maj Jong groups is that so many people have met, connected or been touched by Eileen's friendship, grace, humour, wit, intelligence, laughter, kindness and courage.

Many of Eileen's friends would turn to her for advice in times of trouble. She would listen, empathize, ask a few probing questions and help you find an answer and give you a hug to go with it.

In times of joy she would also be the first to celebrate with friends, send cards, raise a toast or travelling miles to attend weddings, christening and other special events.

She would share the love, joy and pride she had in all of Joseph and Lewis's accomplishments, be it the school plays, exams results or little jokes they told. To Eileen they were her life and she was more than happy to share the memories with you.

Truly great friends are hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget.

Eileen – From all of your friends, we love you and won't forget you.

And as you would say – It's all good!!