

*In Loving Memory of*



*Jane Elizabeth Kelsall Penney*

*27<sup>th</sup> May 1954 - 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019*



I've taken the liberty of using the information supplied by Ben (Jack's son – JJ's stepson) in his eulogy presentation & Jane's mother & brother's summation of her early life. There are occasions where the two inter-relate but I've decided to not edit, apart from spelling & grammar, in respect to their views.

First is Ben:

Jane Elizabeth Penney began her life in May of 1954, in Nakuru in Kenya, Africa. She was born to British parents, Dorothy and Jim, who hailed from the north of England, but spent years living and working in Africa, as a nurse and a civil engineer.

After Kenya, the family moved to Uganda during a particularly difficult and dangerous time in the country's history. When Jim went off to work and left the family home, Dorothy would have young Jane on one hip and a shotgun in the other. It's how they would get to the outside toilet.

Now Dorothy & Roger (her brother):

Jane was born May 1954 at Nakuru, Kenya. At the time the Mau Mau was active, and Nakuru was the centre of Mau Mau activity. Jim carried a gun at all times, but heaven knows if would have ever hit anything with it. It was not a safe place to be, and in 1957 the family moved to Kampala, Uganda. Jane went to Nakasero Primary School there. But Uganda too went through change, and following independence the family moved back to the UK a year later in 1964. They settled firstly in Davenham and then in Hartford, where Dorothy still lives. Jane went to the local school and passed a scholarship to Northwich Grammar School.

She was there for only two terms as in 1966 the travel bug bit again and the whole family moved to Hong Kong where Jim had got a job with the HK Government. Both she and her brother, Roger, went to King George V School in Kowloon. As the family lived on the Island, the daily commute was across the harbour on the Star Ferry.

She loved life in Hong Kong. The family bought a (small) boat in Hebe Haven, a sailing club in the New Territories, and spent most weekend sailing, diving and playing on the beach.

When Jane left school she was undecided on what to do next. She considered physiotherapy and was offered training at Guys Hospital in London. But then she changed her mind, except that she wanted to be in London. Eventually she settled down for long enough to complete a secretarial training course at the London School of Secretaries.

On the course she met up with Lishka, who was also brought up in East Africa, and on qualification both got a post in Nairobi at the East Africa High Commission.

In Nairobi she met and married Paul. Paul had lived in Kenya since he was eight, and both loved the life there, something Jane never lost. But Paul's company relocated him to Yorkshire, England. They bought a house in a village called Hunmanby, just outside Scarborough. Roger was at that time studying at the University in Hull, so briefly lived less than 50 miles apart. Both Paul and Jane hated Scarborough and managed to get Paul's firm

to relocate them again, this time to Malaysia. Due to the strict Muslim culture Jane couldn't work, and became very frustrated until she fell in with the Hash House Harriers, the social running group, which she loved. But the marriage didn't work out and they separated. Many of the Hash House Harriers were Aussies, and suggested Jane would love it over there.

She moved to Sydney where Jane rented a house in King's Cross, sharing with a girl friend from New Zealand. She joined the Hash in Sydney and it was there she met John. Dorothy still remembers Jane phoning and saying she had met this man, and her words were "Our eyes met across the room and he had the loveliest blue eyes". Clearly love at first sight.

And back to Ben:

Jane first met John 30 years ago. Through him she inherited an instant family. I was 9 and my sister Amy was 7.

Despite little experience with small people like us, she happily turned her beautiful Redfern bachelorette penthouse into something entirely child-friendly, and was soon taking me to all of my Saturday sports, providing homework support and packing lunches.

Jane was also an excellent cook. Her baked potatoes are literally world famous – the technique is now followed by an ever-expanding circle of people all over the place. Ask me later today if you want the secret – I know she would happily have me share it. The other dishes that ensured dad and I were always well-fed were her roast dinners and the most delicious curries. She also made a killer brunch long before it became hip to even have brunch. I will be reminded of her scrambled eggs, and the Christmas day spreads we shared with her and our kids, until the end of my days.

If you didn't know her during her youth, you may not realise what an accomplished athlete Jane was. One of the great passions of her life was running. She competed in – and even won – some very important marathons and half marathons including the KL Marathon, and had a trophy cabinet to prove it. Jane also loved her weekly run club, the Hash House Harriers dearly, and it was where you would find her every Monday for as long as I knew her. In fact, it was Peter from the beloved running group who introduced Jane to my dad. Anyway, when her knees started to give up – probably from a life time spent running – she would walk the course instead.

Jane worked for much of her career as an executive assistant – most notably at a large investment firm where she proved a dedicated employee for more than a decade, and she took immense pride and worth in the contributions she made professionally. She was an absolute whiz at the lost art of short hand and could copy down whole conversations without mistake. None of which is a surprise to me because she was incredible at organising everything, including crafting perfect travel itineraries or even just keeping Dad's schedules on track. I'll always remember the all-inclusive travel info packs she provided Amy and I before our trip to Europe and the UK. They were as heavy as my carry on, but appreciated none the less.

It is no surprise given how she started her adventurous life, but of course Jane was also a keen traveller, always looking for a new adventure and an exotic destination. Together with

dad, and often with other friends in tow, she cruised the Caribbean and New Zealand, visited India, Spain, Portugal, Africa – her favourite – and even driving all over France, to tick off elements of her bucket list like eating oysters from the Camargue in Provence.

From the backseat, she would shout instructions which were in direct contradiction to those provided by the navigational system. She was a hell of an organiser, but as many of you probably know, she couldn't tell her right from her left, so map reading was no forte. We laughed about it many times.

In Jane, John found someone who showed him how to have a sense of adventure. In John's words, "she opened up my life." The other way Jane expanded Jack's limited repertoire is fine dining. Jane scoured the newspaper, the Good Food and the Cheap Eats guide to find new places to try. They ate out, every Sunday, and took turns selecting the location. If you wanted to try a brand new restaurant, all you had to do was ask Jane if it was any good, because she had likely been there already.

Jane was also a voracious reader – reading any and all novels she possibly could. She loved a great crime story, but the subject didn't really matter. She was always hunting for someone else who had read the same book she had, so she could dissect and discuss the contents of the page. And Jane was certainly never short of an opinion. She had a lot of thoughts, a lot to say and she wasn't shy about sharing it, along with some personal stories for good measure.

In addition to being a sister to Roger and Linda, aunt to Suzy and Stuart, a mother and mother-in-law to Amy and I and our partners Adam and Sita, Jane was also a grandmother to Noah, Sonny and Joshua. Grandma Jane wasn't a title that she loved (in fact, she repeatedly asked the boys to call her "JJ" instead – I think she thought it sounded younger) but it was certainly a role she revelled in and one that filled her with great pride. Despite all of her protests each birthday and Christmas that she had no idea what to buy, she would arrive at the occasion with the most, thoughtful gift designed to inspire and challenge them. These are the gifts that would go on to be useful for months and years after, and they ones that we will now treasure forever.

In addition to the great love she had for her family, Jane was also passionate about animals. She was a bit of a cat lady – but in a good way. Her cats were her babies but she had virtually a lifetime of very well taken care of, well fed and well trained pets at home. She and dad recently enjoyed a trip to Jamala Lodge, where she got to pat a rhino and stroke a baby cheetah, which she described as "bliss."

The saddest part about losing someone so important so unexpectedly is really the regret of the things which Amy and I, and our dad, didn't get the chance to tell her. So I want to tell you instead. Jane helped to raise me into the man I have become. She faced up to a great level of responsibility without ever really being asked. She was clever, and quick, and capable. She supported us, encouraged us, listened to us and always took a keen and thoughtful interest in our lives, our problems, our victories. I will be eternally grateful to have had her kindness and her care in my life. Most importantly, she was a loyal and loving partner to dad.



And now to B2H3 & Goon's 1,000 run presentation:

Jungle Jane joined B2H3 in 1988, arriving from the jungles of Malaysia. She had been running marathons there and met Cannon Mouth on her travels. It is understood that this lucky coincidence was one of the reasons she joined B2H3.



Although she lives in the Eastern Suburbs, rumour has it that she loves the shire and is thinking of moving there. She already has the T Shirt and a Shire calendar.

JJ is a “giver” who contributes to our club in many ways and is always pleased to help and assist. She loves to arrange outings, weekends away, AGPU's and lunches. She has often served on Committee and is known for compiling whole yearbooks by herself.

### Committee Positions

Scribe – 89/90 (with Rinso), 05/06 (with Loaner), 09/10 (with Hannibal), 12/13

Grand Mistress – 92/93

Cash – 03/04 (with Taxing), 08/09

JJ set her first run at the Royal Hotel in Randwick 29 August, 1988 – run 99. Since then, she has set at least 44 runs - averaging a little over 2 per year (or every 25 runs). These are imaginative runs from a range of venues varying from Vaucluse to La Perouse and the in to the inner west. JJ has not set any regular runs in the shire, although records show that she did set the 333 run in February 1993 in Bundeena (with DNF)

She finished with 1,166 runs; some of them walks in the latter part of her time with us.



Aside from the love hate relationship with the Shire, JJ was a very intelligent woman, highly opinionated with a biting sense of humour, who loved nothing more than a heady argument. She was rarely defeated, much to her own amusement but not to her combatants. She also prided herself in being a non - conformist refusing to wear our Hash clothing, wearing twin sets & sandals to runs & telling anyone who listened that she didn't own an iron because she never bought clothing that required ironing.

As previously disclosed, Jane was an excellent athlete, with a running style that glided like a gazelle. Unfortunately, she required surgery for a hysterectomy, which created a sciatic nerve problem, restricting her ability to run as she wanted but it didn't stop her from attending all our runs. She would continue to walk with many of our members & partake of the talkathon, which seems to be a requisite of that community.

Her Hash involvement was universal, always offering to help when, for some reason or another, a committee member was unable to perform their duties, she would step in to fill the breach. Setting regular runs organising weekends away &, with Dirty Weekend, our annual pub crawl, her loss to us will be immense.

Jungle Jane, was & will remain one of our institutional treasures, we've been singularly & group – wise blessed to have known & experienced the friendship of an outstanding person, A woman who gave much more than she received. She may be gone from us in a physical sense but her spirit will survive as long as we continue to remember.



