

Sandy was a truly loving father and friend, a remarkable and caring gentleman, on behalf of his family I would now like to pay tribute to Sandy by speaking about his life.

Sandy McDonald was born in Penicuik, near Edinburgh in 1947, and grew up with his siblings, Roddy, Lyn, Fiona and Ewan. His parents decided they wanted to live the "Goodlife" and moved to Northeast Scotland. Consequently, they grew up in the wilds of Scotland, always out from seven in the morning till early evening. Sandy fished for trout and snared rabbits, which the family appreciated during their challenging times.

At eighteen years old, Sandy left to study for an Engineering Degree at Aberdeen University, which turned out wasn't suited to him and so, after two years, he went to London and found work on building sites. The Queen Cavalier Barracks are still standing in Knightsbridge thanks to him! After living in London, he decided to return to Aberdeen and on recommendation from a friend, began to study economics, which he absolutely loved.

Sandy and Irene met in Aberdeen in 1969 and just before his final exams, they married on 18th December 1970. Sandy took his finals and was given two job offers, one selling soap for Proctor and Gamble in Southwest England, another for GKN manager training in the Midlands. Off he went to the Midlands, finding a flat in Sutton Coldfield, and a pregnant Irene soon moved to join him. Very sadly, Irene passed away when Paul was three months old. Admirably, Sandy took on the role as a single dad in the 1970s. This was not easy, but Sandy told me, he was very grateful to Paul, he believed he needed Paul more than Paul needed him. They were very lucky and blessed with the addition of Edna Steele to their lives, the perfect childminder to help them at that time, who they are still in touch with to this day.

Sandy raised Paul as a single parent till he met Jenny in the mid 1970s and they lived together, in Streetly, holidaying in Southern France and Scotland, till she passed in 1990. Paul has really fond memories of his life in Streetly, the good life garden and German Shepherds, Max and Pepper, who were both out-growled by the semi-ferral ginger kitten Hillworth. Both Pepper and Hillworth made it to Malthouse.

There should be a book written about their adventures in Corfu, boats, storms, motorbike rescue and burnt down beachfront restaurant.

Sandy met Carole in the south of England and they married on 6th September 1991. Every weekend they went for walks in the Cotswolds together with the hope of one day moving there. And so, having been blessed with Sophie's arrival in 1993, and with Dougal on the way, they moved to their dream family home, which is such an important part of today.

However, this was a character forming moment for Sandy, as with a new family and a new mortgage, he lost his job. Sandy and Carole worked extremely hard to hold onto the house. The story of how Sandy encouraged the company finance team (who had let him go) to cash in his share options and how he then used that money to sue them is legendary! Carole helped at this time with the creation of her business, the Malthouse Furnishings. Sandy set to work and bought two small businesses, which became very successful; he quadrupled their turnovers. Following this success, the family lived a wonderful life at the Malthouse, including skiing holidays in Porte de Soleil for 10 years in a row and holidays from Cornwall to Corsica and Scotland to South Africa.

Lucy describes a wonderful childhood playing in the woods, with sledging in the winter, with barbecues roasting marshmallows, and with parties for birthdays and Christmas. It was a very special place for her childhood. She loved the chickens that she would dress up in her doll's clothes and adored the two Jack Russells, Izzy and Bonnie. They built a treehouse, with Sandy drawing on his log cabin building experience from when he was 15, (the full size one he built in Scotland is still standing!) Lucy told me she feels very privileged to have had a dad like hers, he was supportive in everything she wanted to do, gymnastics, swimming and horse-riding.

Sophie

Dad has been an absolute rock to me. He's worked so hard to give us a beautiful life, he has been an amazing supportive and understanding parent. We have grown and learnt so much from each other. My friendship with my dad has always meant so much to me and will continue to for the rest of my life. we have all been so lucky to have such a caring, loving and dedicated parent.

Dad has always been inspiring to me, his drive to learn has never wavered, his meticulous focus on what he does. Whatever he does, he does to the best of his ability, and through that has overcome every challenge that's come his way. He is such a multifaceted person.

He's always been very healthy and active, been to Nepal twice in the last 10 years to climb the Himalayas, walked trekathons in the highlands. grown a

massive and beautiful veg garden and raised cattle. regularly the food miles on his plate would be under 1, from field to kitchen.

He has grown his own fruit, made his own wine, jams and preserves. pickled gherkins, foraged mushrooms.

He has made many friends through walking groups and is dearly loved by anyone who knows him.

It is truly a massive loss the world will suffer when he leaves. Dad is truly one of a kind.

I am so grateful to have him as my parent and friend.

Dougal

Dad was a businessman in the weekdays, but man of the land during weekends.

I treasure my memories of watching my father tirelessly work away at different projects outside, as well helping him out in taking down old trees, chopping up wood, putting up fences and looking after (as well as appreciating) the great outdoors.

In my early years, Dad would often play Mark Knopler whilst we were in the car together, who I greatly enjoy listening to to this day. Without me realising, he would always put the volume very loud during a particular guitar solo in one track - I loved it, and thought the loudness was just part of the song!

We had many great adventures as a family together, all piling in the (Land Rover) discovery, then driving around different wildernesses in Cornwall, Scotland, Colonsay and Wales.

On one of our more extravagant adventures, in a safari park in South Africa we were chased by an African bull elephant, easily capable of crushing the jeep we were in at the time.

In more recent memory, walking of Stinchcombe hill to the Old Spot pub, and listening to a local folk band, known as 'Dead dog cider' perform, a number of times. After which, we would always opt to take the longer route back, as is was the more scenic. Unsurprisingly, we did actually get completely lost in the fog one night.

Dad always challenged us to do our best, and I am forever going to miss the source of answers and meaning I had in life, that I was fortunate enough to once have.

From 2008, Sandy decided to learn about self-sufficiency. The Dexters arrived, which he said he had a love-hate relationship with! He loved growing fruit and vegetables, and he relished making wine which he had begun in 1985, it made me laugh that he said his first bottles were terrible, but being Scottish, he still drank them! But his skill grew, and he became quite accomplished at it.

Another passion for Sandy was walking. Sandy has been above Everest base camp. He has walked for two weeks in the Blue Mountains. He has trekked twice in the Himalayas.

The Malthouse has brought the family so much joy with its land and beautiful space, from learning about the history to hosting Sandy's 70th birthday with a three-day festival, accompanied by a (proudly) self-reared hog roast, marquee, bar, stage and band. It was a wonderful celebration and that is what Sandy wished for you all today, he requested a day of celebration for his life. He wanted you to feel happy for the life he experienced with you. He feels blessed to have lived on this land, and to remain on this land which he so loved. Thank you for all being here to offer love and support to one another and to honour Sandy's life.

