

## Mummy's Tribute

I wrote this obituary in the week after Abbie died but I felt that Mike's tribute was more poignant at the time and therefore did not include this at her funeral. I came across it recently and have decided to put it on Abbie's web site.

Liz

Abbie Shaw

01 March 2001 - 11 September 2006

Abbie was born on St David's day 2001 at 7.21 in the morning. She weighed a hefty 8lbs 14oz and was an incredibly healthy baby. She sat up 6 months later, crawled the following day and stood up 3 weeks later. By the time she was 10 months old she could walk beautifully. At this time her favourite food was poached salmon sandwiches or roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. She had an incredible appetite and could eat a lasagne without spilling a drop.

Abbie loved Jamie to bits and they played incredibly well together. Jamie was quiet, kind and thoughtful and Abbie was extrovert, funny and feisty. We knew in Abbie we had an incredibly bright child. We thought we had been blessed with the perfect family.

It is incredibly difficult to write about Abbie without mentioning her illness and treatment because it was such a major part of her life. What you do need to remember is that Abbie tolerated chemotherapy very well and positively enjoyed her trips to the Marsden.

Abbie was only 21 months old when she was first diagnosed with cancer. Christmas 2002 was the worst Christmas for us because at the diagnostic biopsy we nearly lost Abbie and she only came out of intensive care a few days before Xmas. Worse news was to come as the cancer she had was not Wilms as originally thought but Neuroblastoma and Abbie being Abbie had the most aggressive type. However soon she was on the road to recovery and started Glenesk nursery in April 2002 when she was just two years old.

Mike and me thought she had had an incredibly lucky escape but sadly in July 2002 we were told that the cancer was back and then started the beginning of a very long period of treatment in which Abbie had intensive chemo, high dose chemo, a stem cell transplant and radiotherapy. Despite having all this treatment and nearly losing her life because of chemo side effects, Abbie remained happy and smiling throughout. The Marsden became a playground where we played hide and seek, baked cakes, did craft and had sleepovers. After 6 months of treatment Abbie returned to school and started radiotherapy. In the morning she would have a general anaesthetic, then a dose of radiation and be back by lunchtime for nursery. We thought Abbie had beaten the cancer as there was not a trace in her body and we had nearly a year off treatment when her hair grew back and she enjoyed life again. Many people commented on Abbie's vivacious nature and she loved being the centre of attention. We knew though that if Abbie relapsed she would not survive.

Sadly when the cancer came back it caused a fracture in her leg which never really healed properly. Abbie was in plaster for about 4 months. She was incredibly good natured about it because it was pink. She really loved her pink zimmer frame as well. Being a complete tearaway and never careful she managed to break it again at a friends whilst tearing around their house and had to go into plaster again. Some of you probably don't know that Abbie also had to spend several weeks in isolation when she had radioactive treatment. We worried she would be bored but she loved her room along with computer, telly and toys. We really thought she may have beaten the disease again and we had a few months of relatively normal life although by now her blood counts were finding it hard to recover because of the quantity of treatment she had. In April a routine scan showed the cancer was back and that time we knew her condition had become terminal so we packed as many holidays and special outings as we could.

On holiday in Spain in June she was the best we had seen her for ages - eating running and playing but a few days later and her limp became worse and she was rushed into hospital because it was thought she may have a tumour on her spine. Sadly there was a tumour found on her hip and palliative radiotherapy was done. The following week Abbie enjoyed her wish - which was to be a princess for the day and ride a pony. She had such a wonderful day despite being poorly half way through. Abbie and Jamie were also lucky enough to get tickets to the Queens birthday party in June. At the beginning of the summer holidays we really enjoyed a holiday to Hastings. Abbie swam every day and loved watching the badgers being fed. She also learnt to be an expert at Cluedo however she was beginning to deteriorate and it became harder to do things. We took Abbie away with her cousins but she only managed a few days before becoming very ill. At this point I thought she had days to live. However in true Abbie style she perked up and was on great form again in August for a birthday party. We managed to take her to Poole for a few days where she disco danced for two hours in the evening quite a feat for someone who really was quite disabled. We were told that she would probably die over the bank holiday but thankfully she pulled through for another two weeks.

Abbie was a bright vivacious girl who was robbed of her life so cruelly. During her life she touched many peoples hearts and in her name over £80,000 has been raised for Neuroblastoma Research.