

Dear family and friends,

As a record of Jenny's memorial service for those who attended, and for the interest of those who were unable to attend, below is a transcript of the service with links to the music that was played and to the images and slideshow that were displayed.

Thank you for all the love and support.

Kindest regards,

John

Jenny Lewis's Memorial Service



Placard outside door to auditorium at Manly Pacific Hotel

Gathering Music

**'Sailing' by Rod Stewart is played as people arrive
and sit down.**

(To hear this music and see the image displayed, click on
[johnsclassics.com/Rod Stewart - Sailing.mp4](https://johnsclassics.com/Rod%20Stewart%20-%20Sailing.mp4)



Welcome and Introduction

John Lewis

Welcome everyone. We're here to celebrate the life of my wife of 60 wonderful years, Jennifer Claire Lewis, or as many of us knew her, little Jen – or lovely Jenny or beautiful Jenny – who passed away peacefully, in her sleep after a long illness. It is a mark of who Jenny was and the esteem many had for her that some of you have travelled long distances to be here today. Two of Jenny's nephews for instance. who have travelled from

Townsville and Perth. Other close family members are here from Coffs Harbour, including her sister-in-law Pam. And there are several people here from Port Macquarie.

Significance of 'Stranger On The Shore'

The music we just heard: 'Sailing' by Rod Stewart, was always one of Jenny's favourite songs and Rod Stewart was one of her favourite artists.

Because 'Sailing' tells of a man longing to be back with his lover, I would like to think that my time in the navy had some influence on her liking that particular song.

But, '*Stranger on the Shore*', composed and played by the English musician Acker Bilk was Jenny's favourite tune, the tune that she and I adopted as our own when we were first going out in the early 1960s. The lilting melody was a great dance number, and we never missed an opportunity to dance to it whenever it arose.

Little did we know at the time and only found out years later that the name, '*Stranger on the Shore*' was not its original title.

When Acker Bilk composed the tune, he named it after his young daughter, Jenny. And '*Jenny*' remained the title until it became the theme tune of the British TV series *Stranger on the Shore*.

Because it was Jenny's favourite tune and its original title was Jenny, whenever you hear it in the future, don't think '*Stranger on the Shore*'. Think '*Jenny*' and remember our lovely Jenny.

Here it is now. Take a few moments to remember Jenny as you knew her.

'Stranger on the Shore (Jenny) is played by Acker Bilk.

(To hear this music and see the image displayed click on [johnsclassics.com/Stranger on the Shore \(Jenny\) 2.mp4](http://johnsclassics.com/Stranger on the Shore (Jenny) 2.mp4)



Nicole Edgerley, our elder daughter will now read short passages from the bible.

Reading

Nicole Edgerley

(Nicole Edgerley reads verses Ruth 1:15-18 and 1 Corinthians 13: 4-13.)

Memories of Jenny

John Lewis

Nicole Edgerley

Scott Lewis

Samantha Dawson

John Lewis

A concise version of Jenny's life would probably record that she was born Jennifer Claire Yeates to parents Keith and Claire Yeates in the Maitland suburb of Lorn in 1942, the youngest of four children. She was educated at Maitland Girls High School, where she was a prefect, and Newcastle University. She married John Lewis in 1963 and they had three children, Nicole, Scott and Samantha. Throughout Jenny's working life She was employed as a medical technologist in pathology laboratories, first at Maitland Hospital, then Prince Henry's Hospital in Melbourne and more recently in Sydney for several pathology practices including two that amalgamated to become Douglas Hanly Moir.

A more colourful picture would describe how, despite being mainly doted upon and spoilt by her older siblings – brothers John and Vic and sister Ruth – her brothers once left her suspended in a cot so high up in a tree, they had to call on adult assistance to get her down. It would also tell of her regularly racing barefoot through their house to throw herself into her father's arms every time he returned from a business trip.

Although the grounds of Jenny's home at the suburb of Bolwarra outside of Mailand ran down to the eastern bank of the Hunter River, the house was well above the high-water mark, and over 20 people sheltered with Jenny and her family during the record 1955 Maitland flood.

Because our families were close friends and our house at Lorn was thought to be in greater danger of flooding, three of these people included my mother, my younger brother and myself. My Dad remained at home, cut off by flood waters but with our house amazingly remaining flood-free. What I remember of Jenny at that time was that she treated me as the stupid teenage boy that I probably was.

When Jenny began work at Maitland Hospital, she bicycled to work each day across the Bolwarra flat and regularly had to battle against the fierce westerly winds that assailed the Hunter Valley through the Cassilis Gap in the Great Dividing Range.

When she began attending night classes at Newcastle, she owned a Lloyd Hartnett car and used it to drive two of her friends to and from the classes several times a week. This was during a bitterly cold winter and all three of them had to dress up like polar explorers because the car had no heating. Or so she thought.

You can imagine her embarrassment and the ribbing she received from her passengers when, after several weeks of enduring the freezing weather, a service technician asked her why she didn't use the car's heater and pointed out how to switch it on.

In the meantime, I had left my job in the bank that later became the NAB and had joined the navy. One day I arrived home on leave on the same weekend that Jenny and her mother, and my mother were going together to a play staged by the Maitland repertory society. I was invited to accompany them, and Jenny and I ended up sitting together.

Apparently, Jenny decided I was no longer the stupid teenager she had previously known, because she agreed to come with me to Neil Simon's play *'Come Blow Your Horn'* being staged at Newcastle the following weekend.

One thing led to another, and we were married at Maitland's St Mary's Church about one year later in 1963.

Our three children followed in 1964, 68 and 72.

We lived at North Turramurra during most of that time with the children, Nicole, Scott and Sam being educated at North Turramurra Primary, Kuringai High and Barker College before all graduating from university.

Jenny enjoyed many years bringing up the kids. This included taking them to sport and parties, using her exceptional needle work and sewing machine skills to make clothes and costumes for their concerts, watching and guiding them into adulthood including providing job guidance and even being the master wedding planner for our daughters' weddings, and of course providing the voice of wisdom for the births and the bringing up of all our grandkids.

What we particularly enjoyed were our many holidays at Port Macquarie and the Gold Coast, and at my uncle's and later my cousins' property on the Barnard River north of Gloucester where they had some eight miles of river front surrounded by towering rock escarpments and other magnificent scenery. As well as being able to enjoy the normal activities associated with country living, one day during our daily dip in the river, we found ourselves being joined for about an hour by a young platypus that apparently had forgotten

any lessons from its parents about staying clear of humans. During that time, it even took several breaks from nosing around in the shallows to lie on the riverbank and allow itself to be patted by the kids. A truly unique Australian experience that Jenny often reflected upon.

When the kids grew old enough to look after themselves, Jenny and I enjoyed several holidays abroad, including trips to London and the south of England, and Paris after travelling from London on the Eurostar, and later, Toronto and Niagara Falls, New York, and Los Angeles. Among the many highlights enjoyed by Jenny during these trips, some of the most memorable were having a daily lunch on the Champs de Elysees, being drenched beneath Niagara Falls while standing on the deck of *The Maid of the Mist*, meeting up with Jenny's nephew David Yeates in New York where he was working at the American Museum of Natural History, and seeing *Miss Saigon* at a Broadway theatre.

Seeing *Miss Saigon* on Broadway was particularly significant, because one of Jenny's main enjoyments was regularly going to the Sydney Opera House with me to see major Operatic and musical theatre productions after she was first captivated by a production of *Rigoletto*.

When Jenny returned to work as a medical technologist, she encountered many interesting situations.

This included having to take blood from a man who had been shot during Melbourne's Calabrian mafia-linked, Victoria markets' murders of the mid 1960's.

When she went into the room where the man was lying, his entire family crowded into the room with her and carefully watched her every move.

Back in Sydney, it also included discovering Malaria in a specimen she was investigating. Not something normally encountered in Sydney laboratories, one that caused her to disregard those colleagues who suggested the unusual appearance of what she had discovered was probably the result of contamination of the specimen.

Another time she was unhappy with the clotting time of a blood specimen she was examining, which resulted in the pathologist coming up to her the following morning to say, "We saved a life last night."

Jenny enjoyed her time working as a medical technologist alongside people including David Sinclair, who is currently working on curing aging, and prominent pathologist Simon Palfreman, who came to see her several times when she was in Hospital after her first breast cancer operation.

But as much as Jenny liked working as a medical technologist, the activity that she really enjoyed was entertaining our friends and family with delicious food. And the quality of her cooking probably attracted as much comment as her many other attributes. Although Jenny had a natural flair and love of cooking, she always kept herself upskilled with the newest cooking and menu trends, and consequently would attend many cooking classes. What she was able to produce was truly memorable, such as 3-course dinners including souffles that had to be served quickly, followed by main courses, including whole quail, and mouthwatering desserts. The kids and I remember how, at Christmas, the kitchen was filled with the smell of her famous fruit Christmas cake which she would make a month in advance so that the fruit and cake mixture had plenty of time to soak up the flavours of the spices and brandy.

But, as delightful as these were, her piece de resistance was her won tons, small fried Chinese dumplings. Her won tons were so popular that whenever she brought out a tray of them at a function, anyone standing between her and those who had tasted them before risked being knocked aside or trampled in the rush. As the result of Jenny's commercial decision to take them to the masses, for a time they were on sale at the gourmet section of the David Jones food hall.

As a mark of their popularity, once during a golf game at Port Macquarie, my ball landed a short distance behind a metal pole. So, I said to my nearest playing partner, 'If the ball hits this pole and comes back and kills me, please tell Jenny that I love her.' Quick as a flash he came back with, "If you are killed, can I marry her for her won tons."

The love that Jenny had for her kids and grandkids and the love they had for her could not have been better exemplified than the love for her expressed by our family pet, our beautiful bearded collie Jessica who absolutely adored her. Whenever Jessica heard Jenny drive into the garage, she would leap up from where she was lying and, at the risk of serious injury, tear down the steps to the living room and, with much spinning of wheels on the polished wooden floor, race to hurl herself at Jenny as she entered the house.

One day when our son Scott had to help Jenny to bed because she was in pain, Jessica followed them upstairs to the bedroom and, because she wasn't allowed on the bed, sat beside it with her head resting on the mattress with sympathetic eyes locked on Jenny.

Another time when Jenny was sitting on the top step of the stairs to the bedrooms wracked by sadness because she had just heard her father had died, Jessica came to sit beside her and rest her head on her shoulder.

But the empathy expressed by Jessica for Jenny was simply her responding to what many of us were already aware of: Jenny was the personification of unbounded love and affection for her extended family and for all those who were lucky enough to have known her.

All our children and grandkids came to see her during the past few weeks and, because she was lucid until the very end, they enjoyed chatting and laughing with her.

Our children will now say a few words.

Nicole Edgerley

Good afternoon, I am Nicole – the eldest of Mum and Dad's three children.

Mum was the kindest, most generous, thoughtful and loving mother you could ever wish for. She always made plenty of time for you and was the best listener. I will miss calling her at the drop of a hat to ask her some random cooking question.

She put on the best and most fun birthday parties for us – especially as children,

Mum said she wasn't artistic. That wasn't true. She was very creative. She was a fabulous cook, and she was the best arranger of flowers. She was also an excellent seamstress.

Mum was most attentive whenever we were sick. She gave us a bell to ring from our bedside. I used to ring it often – more often than was necessary – and she would arrive, breathless from downstairs. I remember guilty – one time I had already had a couple of days off school sick and was better. Mum gave me such great attention and devotion that I faked an extra couple of days of being sick – just to lap up more of her love and attention.

Mum had the greatest appreciation for quality and design. Dinnerware was Wedgewood or Royal Dalton, Manchester was Sheridan. She shopped at David Jones and appreciated Peters at Kensington.

Dad has mentioned mum's fabulous cooking, I must, however, mention my favourite dessert. Her Cassata ice-cream cake. I have incorporated it into my cooking repertoire, and it is a welcome addition at Christmas.

Mum was the most loving and devoted grandmother. She doted on each of her grandchildren and never forgot their birthdays. She made a special effort to gift each

grandchild, when they were young, with a cuddly teddy bear. These were much loved and a favourite.

Scott Lewis

I'm Scott, Jenny's and John's son.

Mum was a shining example of kindness, strength, and resilience.

She was devoted to the family and always had plenty of time to help my sisters and me. A typical example was when I was just starting school. When she realised I was struggling with reading and writing, she painstakingly and patiently taught me herself.

You have already heard a lot about mum's cooking prowess and many of you here today have been lucky enough to experience that first-hand. She taught Nicole and me just some of these cooking skills. Unfortunately, I think our sister Sam missed out, but luckily she married Ryan, a professional chef.

She loved her sport and was a Manly NRL supporter like most of her family including her father, her siblings and, of course, Dad. Mum had spent many Christmas holidays at Manly when she was a kid. So, she has always had fond memories of Manly. And it's fitting that we're blessed to be standing right here in the heart of God's country today.

But in terms of sport, her real passion was test cricket and she enjoyed watching the most recent Ashes series just a couple of months ago.

Mum also had a wonderful sense of humour and enjoyed watching comedies such as *Faulty Towers* and *Seinfeld*. Our house was always filled with laughter.

For the last few months Mum had to be looked after at an aged care facility because she had lost her ability to walk. The facility was state of the art and had only recently been completed. Mum had an excellent room with a great view. The food was good and, as well as receiving around the clock care, she had access to physiotherapy. Importantly the staff were excellent and very caring. Their treatment of Mum and the way they spoke about her was testament to her great character, her bravery, and her kindness.

She was a wonderful mother. She has left us and our children with a legacy of love, laughter, and resilience that will continue to guide us into the future.

Samantha Dawson

I'm Samantha, Jenny's and John's younger daughter.

Mum really was the mum you could count on, and you knew without doubt she was there for you, even with all of us living in different locations. Whatever big or small challenges we've had in our lives we could always find comfort that she loved you and was there by your side. She would eagerly listen to all of our exciting news or boring stories. And in the same way she was always with us, I was able to tell her in her final days, that just like when I was a kid running next to her car to farewell her as she left for work in the evenings, that we would always be next to her, by her side, running with her, in her heart, and her in ours.

'What a Wonderful World' by Rod Stewart is played.

(To hear this music and see the image displayed click on [johnsclassics.com/Rod Stewart - What a Wonderful World.mp4](http://johnsclassics.com/Rod%20Stewart%20-%20What%20a%20Wonderful%20World.mp4)



**‘Love within a family’
by TS Elliot
Samantha Dawson**

There’s no vocabulary
For love within a family, love that’s lived in
But not looked at, love within the light of which
All other love finds speech
This love is silent.

Conclusion

John Lewis

Thank you for coming. For many of you it wouldn’t have been an easy journey to be here. You’ll now see a slideshow of images from Jenny’s life, after which, please feel free to roam and observe the photos of Jenny on display and to partake in the refreshments and the light fare that you see on the surrounding tables.

**Concluding Music
and photographic
memories**

**A slideshow of images from Jenny’s life is displayed accompanied by Alker Bilk’s
‘Stranger on the Shore (Jenny).**

(To see slideshow and hear the accompanying, music click on
johnsclassics.com/Jenny_Slideshow.mp4

Attached are copies of photos that were displayed at the service.