

My Mother - 'No Act of Kindness, No Matter how Small, is Ever Wasted'

My mother, born in the early 20th century typified the values of that era. Some of these were honesty, hard work, aspiration, but especially kindness. The everyday kind: the kindness you want to have in your own life, the kindness that shines as a beacon of love and concern and permeates all those who come in contact with it.

Mam made a difference in many people's lives. If she knew someone was lonely, she would make a point of stopping to chat, if they lived alone, she would make an excuse to chap their door to check on them.

My Christmas memories are of having people I hardly knew sitting at the dinner table. She invited people who would have been on their own to join us at Christmas. At school, I had children from Bellevue Orphanage in my class and they often came to visit, on St Patricks Day the house was full of happy, excited visiting children.

As a child, one of my weekly Saturday chores was to carry a steaming hot plate of food to 'Margaret in the Fruit Shop' Her shop had no cooking facilities and Margaret was cold, especially in the wintertime. A warm meal was welcome and sometimes the 'chipped' apple or 'penny' caramel, given as a delivery reward, was welcome too.

It was the early 50's there wasn't a lot of money around, but that didn't stop my lovely Mother sharing what we had. She gave without an expectation of return. If there was a comment about her kindnesses, she would have been embarrassed, she hated 'fuss,' her practical approach overruled 'fuss' or being made a 'plaster' off.

On reflection, although my Mother's life was a sequence of small and big acts of kindness, they were not isolated acts, they were 'who she was'.

My Mother, even at a subconscious level taught me how to treat people, be kind, be compassionate, be non-judgemental. I learned to try to positively contribute to the lives of others and my community.

This was my Mothers Gift to me. Kate Kerlin, my Mother, on the face of it seemed ordinary, everyday women, but in my eyes, she was a wonderful, kind, compassionate woman a 'Giant amongst Men'.