

# treetops

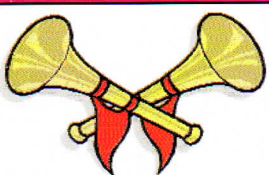


stories, poems, drawings and letters from children who have lost someone they loved

TREETOPS is the Child Bereavement Group of the Corrymeela Community



*I think my mum went to heaven.*



FREE TEDDY...  
SEE INSIDE !!

You can have YOUR own story, poem, drawing or letter published in Treetops!  
Tell us about the very special person in your life who died... and help other children understand how you feel...  
Just send it to The Editor...

### Corrymeela Community

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issue  
no







# From THE Editor

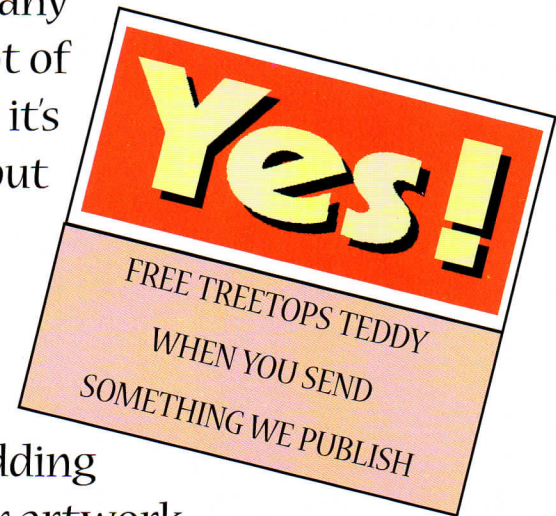
**Hello everyone,**

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Treetops Newsletter!

It has been really wonderful to hear from so many of you since our last edition. I know it takes a lot of courage to put your feelings on paper, whether it's a drawing or poem or letter, and send it to us; but by doing so, you really can make a difference in someone else's life. It is true that a problem, worry or experience that is shared becomes easier !!

We would love more drawings, so if you're a budding artist, please send us something colourful. Your artwork might even be on the front cover!

We would also really like to hear from anyone who has lost a close friend, as we've had some questions about how it feels and ways of coping. So if you think you could help with some answers, please write to us.



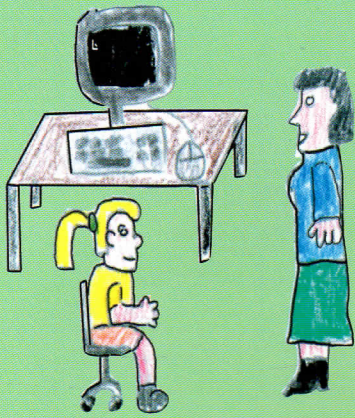
**Barbara**

(The Editor)

P.S. Thanks to Adam Leslie for our cover drawing.

P.P.S. Phone (028) 9050 8080 if you know of someone who might like a copy of the Treetops Newsletter and we will put them on our mailing list.





"If Heaven was on the internet, we could send e-mail to Grandpa!"

**Dear Father God,  
Please stay with me through  
the night when I can't see.**

**I'd like it best if you would  
stand beside my bed and hold  
my hand.**

**Amen**

**(Gillian)**

## **THINGS I REMEMBER**

(Susan's brother Barry died when he was 11)

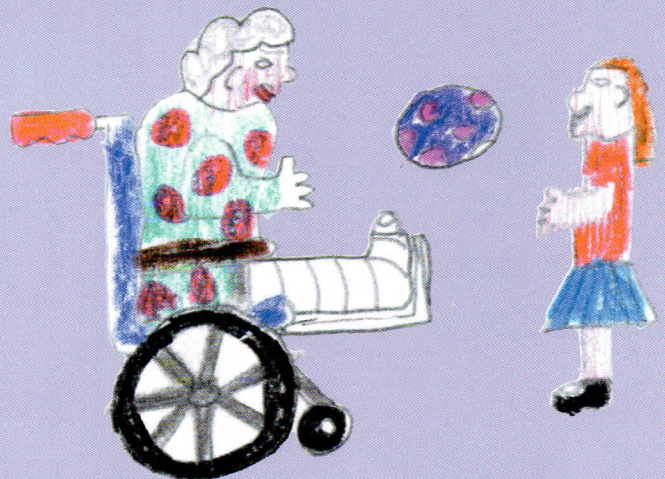
The way he laughed and walked. He would always walk on his tiptoes. The way he talked. He had a husky voice. Always telling jokes, acting the next door neighbours. The way he brushed his hair. Always making funny remarks about people the way they dressed. He loved his Man Utd T-shirt. He always smacked when he was eating his food. He always done this funny act of Father Ted when he asked for something and someone said "no", he would go to us "ach you will you will you will" the way Father Ted's maid said it, and we would all laugh at him because he was so funny. In the end he would always get it. His favourite song was the Cartoons because he always did a funny dance to it. He was very popular in our street. All his mates looked up to him and girls fought over him. I loved the smell of him. I used to say to him, "you smell like a rose" and he would say "that's for all the girls". I can remember loads of things about him, but I would be writing forever.

Susan (16)

## **MEMORIES OF NANA**

I remember when my Nana was down at my house for one of her last times. It was during the summer and it was hot, so Nana was outside in her wheelchair. Ruth had gone to sit outside to keep her company. I was playing with a ball and Nana wanted to see it. She threw it at Ruth and Ruth threw it to me. It went on and on. Nana really liked it. She laughed and we got a photo. I have been able to remember it and smile.

Grace



**Dear Lord,  
For so long I have kept my anger  
bottled up inside me.  
Then I would explode, usually at the  
wrong time.**

**Help me to let my angry feelings  
out in safe, responsible ways.**

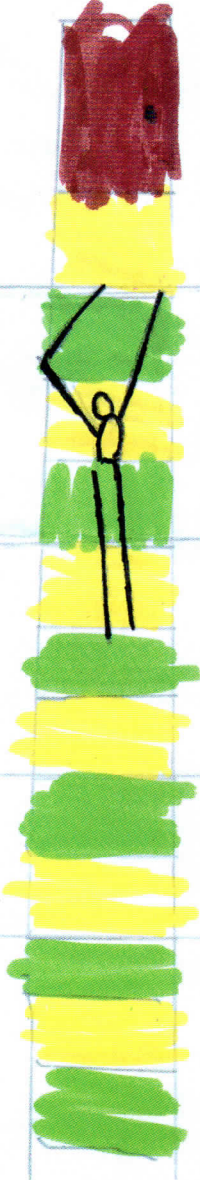
**Amen**



## THE BEST BABY IN THE WORLD

My baby brother Jack who was 2 years old got knocked down by a van at my daddy's bakery and he died on the 4th March 2000. I really miss him. There has not been a day I haven't thought about him. I visit his grave nearly every day. When I'm worried or scared I always ask him to help me. Hopefully he looks after me everyday. I will always remember him and love him.

Laura McErlain (10)



'Daddy going to heaven' with the doorway at the top, with Daddy climbing the ladder.

Jonathan Elmes  
Age 6

## LONELY CHRISTMAS

First I wake up  
And crawl out of bed  
Not eating breakfast,  
Waking Dad up instead.

I crawl down the stairs  
All excited to the full.  
I open the living room  
door

The room is full of  
presents, it's really cool.

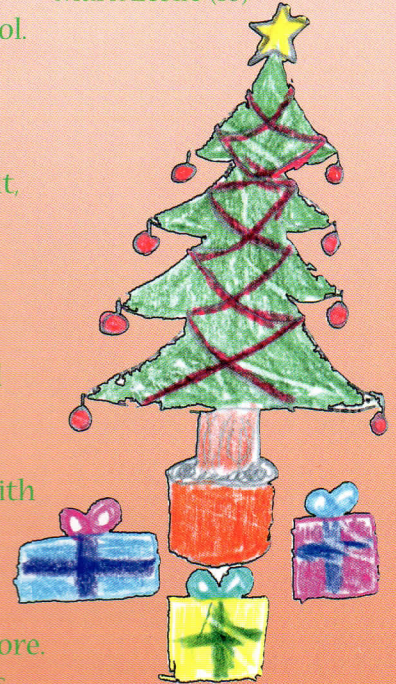
I open them slowly,  
One by one  
Enjoying every bit of it,  
It's really fun.

But my Dad is crying  
Because of my mum.  
He's very sentimental  
Because she is gone.

Gone up to Heaven with  
Jesus Christ.  
She's dead, sadly, and  
we are missing her.  
She's not there anymore.  
So my Dad's emotions  
really stir.

Now without Mum it  
isn't the same.  
Not having my Mum  
there again and again.  
So when a special  
Christmas comes  
Please everyone go hug  
your Dads and Mums.

Mark Leslie (10)



## TO DADDY

I love you Daddy very much,  
Even though I cannot touch.

I say my prayers each night to you,  
And I know that you'll pull me through.

I miss you very much you know,  
Even though I may not show.

I love you Daddy that's all I can say,  
And I'll offer my prayers to you each day.

Love and miss you very much  
Your daughter Mary.

Mary Loughran (13)



## TIME IS A HEALER

When someone you love dies it feels so awful that you can't imagine ever being happy again and living an ordinary life. The pain of loss doesn't just disappear, but with time the pain takes up less space, and you can begin to imagine life going on and start enjoying special memories. Here are two lovely poems written by Naomi Sambrook about her Dad; the second poem was written 3 months after the first one, and you can tell from Naomi's words that the pain and anger and grief have started to let go and fond remembering take their place.

## HEAVEN SENT

Time is passing by  
And I'm moving on  
I know your spirit is  
here  
Even though your body  
has gone

So many memories  
Of the times we spent  
together  
All of them happy  
I'll treasure them  
forever

I remember  
My little hand in yours  
Smiles all around  
And your love would be  
the cause

I can re-call your smile  
so clearly  
And how you stood so  
tall  
Big strong arms  
To catch us whenever  
we should fall

All the good things I  
achieve

I know in my heart,  
you'll be proud  
And just knowing that  
Will remove any dark  
cloud

Some days are hard  
But trusted  
companions keep me  
proceeding  
It was they who taught  
me  
I have a life that you'd  
want me to be leading

I'll try hard and do my  
best  
But no matter the end  
results  
I know you'll still be  
pleased even with my  
faults

One day the sun will  
rise  
Just like it is meant  
And I'll hear your voice  
As if from heaven sent

## QUESTIONS

It's been so long  
I bet you've changed  
What did I do wrong  
To make you leave

They tell me I did nothing  
So why do I feel so bad  
Why am I filled with guilt  
Please tell me Dad

To see you again  
Would be my one wish  
I'm going insane  
Without you by my side

Are you proud of me  
How will I know  
I've changed since you left  
So long ago

To see your face  
I'd give up everything  
Nothing can replace  
The love I have for you

Why does no-one understand  
The pain I'm going through  
At night I'm crying  
And I'm crying over you

I'm just sitting here  
Feeling sad and lonely  
Inside I'm filled with fear  
And afraid to let go

Please think of me  
And all I'm going through  
We'll meet again one day  
Oh, please say this is true

Dad why did you die  
I feel so all alone  
No chance for a goodbye  
So much left unsaid

So, when we reunite  
Will it be the same  
Dad, I'll never forget you  
Oh, please call out my name

There's so much I want to say  
I wish I could tell you how I feel  
But now after that day  
It's just to late

I love you with all my heart  
Is how it would go  
How much you meant to me  
No-one will ever know



## THE DAY BEFORE NANA DIED

Nana had been asking to see Kirsty and I, so Mummy and Auntie Meriel took us in to see her for the last time. We just sat and held her hand and told her what we had been doing the last couple of days. The last thing she said to me before I left was she would be thinking of me always. The next day we were in the car ready to go to the last G.B. Practice before the display, when there was a phone call from the nurse who was looking after Nana asking Mummy to come to the hospital immediately. We drove her there and Daddy then took us to practice. Nana died at 8:15 pm while we were at G.B. Mummy, Daddy, Papa, Auntie Meriel, Auntie Dorothy, Uncle Tom and Auntie Nancy were all with her.

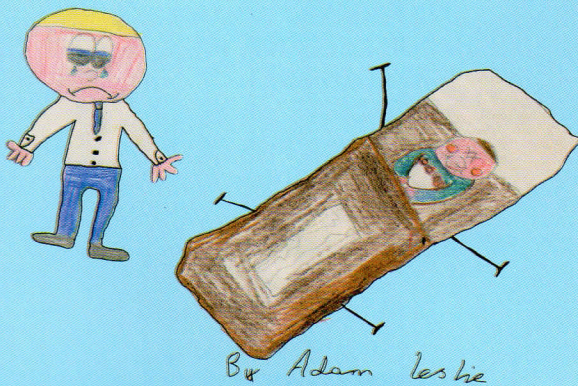
Kirsty and I didn't want to go do the G.B. Display last night but Mummy and Daddy said that we couldn't let the girls down and that Nana would have wanted us to be there. I was very disappointed when Mum said she wasn't going, but Auntie Edith and Daddy took her place. We will all miss Nana very much.

Helen Dunlop (13)

## MUM

When my mum was alive I loved her very much,  
But now it's hard to live without her special  
touch.

Adam Leslie (9)



## NANNY WAS SO BRAVE

(Victoria's Nanny died after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Here are some excerpts from a beautiful essay she wrote about her.)

"My Nanny died on the 17th November 1995, this was very sad for all her friends and family. I was especially very sad because this day was the day after my 7th birthday. I felt so heartbroken, but I know that the Lord only took my Nanny as he thought it was her time to go and live with him. I know that my Nanny is not actually gone even though I can't see her in person she is still with me."

"I still miss my Nanny terribly and I think about her a lot. I find it very difficult to understand why God took my Nanny at only 64 years of age. I am so proud to have such a fabulous Nanny and I will always love and remember her."

Victoria Gately (11)

## TO MY BROTHER

James, you know I love you more and more each second. You know you have a very special place in my heart and if you ever need me, go deep down in my heart and I will always help you. I know that if I need help you may help me. James, I love you more than anything.  
Love, Megan

(Megan is 8. Her baby brother, James, died a couple of hours after he was born.)



# ACTIVITY PAGE

Mary Laughran wrote to us saying, "facing the future without Daddy is hard and scary; like having one shoe without the other."

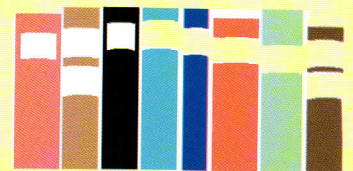
Imagine that the path below is your life. Starting from when you were born, or as far back as you can remember, mark (in words or pictures) some of the events, people and places that were important. Then mark on the path when the person you loved died. Now try and imagine what lies ahead of you on the path.....changing school, learning to drive, getting married etc.

I'm sure you will be able to fill your path with wonderful, colourful things!



## Book Review

**Kirsty's Kite** By Carol Curtis Stilz & Gwen Harrison  
Lion Publishing



After her Mum dies, Kirsty goes to live with her Grandpa as her Dad is away at sea. She loves to watch kites being flown on the beach and wishes she were a kite so that she could fly up to heaven and see her Mum. Her Grandpa buys her a kite and teaches her to fly it just as he had taught her Mum when she was a little girl. One day, after talking to Grandpa about her Mum's death, Kirsty decides to let the kite go so it can fly to heaven the way her Mum did. With this symbolic gesture she is finally able to accept her Mum's death.



The

# BACKPAGE

'Treetops' is a support programme for small groups of children who have experienced a sudden death in the family. It provides the opportunity to meet and share with other children who have had a similar experience. We use art, drama, puppets, games, songs and stories during our time together.

'Treetops' groups are for children between 8 and 12 years old. Parents are asked to come too and meet separately. Groups meet for six consecutive weeks.

If you think you would like to attend one of our groups or just find out more, please send for our leaflet and application form to 'Treetops', Corrymeela House, 8 Upper Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NT

I can't explain how I feel.

I'm really angry with the hospital for not making him better.

Everything I look at reminds me of Mum.

Will I forget what Daddy looked like?

Do people think I'm stupid for crying so much?

Where does the body go?

I'm worried about Christmas.

The subscription is £3.00 for 3 issues