

OBITUARY – MAUREEN PEARSON
1948 – 2005

On the third of May 2005, Heaven gained a new angel by the name of Maureen, much-loved wife of BSSG Chairman and Editor Ian Pearson. Maureen had spent all her 57 years practising and perfecting this role. She was truly over qualified to be chosen, but chosen she was and it was, in some respects thankfully quick and without great pain.

The care and love for others, for which Maureen was so well known across the World, commenced at an early age through her chosen career as a nurse. Her decision to be the perfect “Florence Nightingale”, however was cut short due to ill health which forced Maureen out of the profession. Her move into administrative and stock control work brought her the benefit (!!!) of coming into contact with Ian, where Maureen had the challenge set for her to join him on a blind date. That initial contact began a complementary partnership, including a thirty-year marriage.

There was no questioning from Maureen when Ian asked her to join him in travelling around the World. Maybe she knew he wouldn’t get far. In fact Manchester was the first destination and where they both stayed for several years. It was here where Maureen first showed her skills at spectator sports. During a visit to speedway both her and Ian were covered in grit from the track due to them both standing too close to the front. Maureen continued to watch all sports including athletics, snooker and rugby. Although she thought football was for wimps!

After Manchester, Maureen and Ian moved to Hemel Hempstead to join Maureen's parents and care for her mum as she suffered badly from arthritis, a condition Maureen could well empathise with, having too suffered throughout the years. In 1981 both moved to Caithness, Scotland, an area she loved (except for the weather!!). The local community welcomed them with open arms and Maureen soon established herself as the efficient carer by volunteering to be a child minder, then a foster mum. She was one of the longest serving members of the Caithness Samaritans and through Ian’s work with Second Thurso Beaver Scouts. She became known as Mrs Bison, (Ian is Bison). Many Beaver meetings were lucky to enjoy a visit from Maureen and her gifts, which she eagerly handed out. Accompanying Ian to several Burns’s suppers in the Scout hut her “Responses” to the toasts are legendary. She continued her love of public speaking by taking up the post of President of the Thurso Lady Speakers Group.

Maureen worked tirelessly for the BSSG and this continued to just a few days before she left this world. It was Maureen that placed each *Journal* in the right envelope, with the right address label and correct postage stamps. It was fitting that of the one hundred and eighty sympathy cards, one was from the staff at Thurso Post Office. She was a popular and regular customer. Maureen eagerly volunteered to take up the post of BSSG Advertising Manager as no member at the time wished to and she would not step down until a replacement was found. Coming from a non-member as she was, this is

remarkable, but for those that really knew her, not unusual. At least two symposiums benefited from Maureen's hard work (and it was so hard at times), in organising sponsorship and exhibitors. She received the "Chairman's Rosebowl" in 1996 and later in 2000 was awarded a glass "Certificate of Appreciation".

Sometimes the work that we all do goes un-noticed. Public acclaim is not, as some may think, proportional to the value of actions carried out. Maureen worked hard "behind the scenes" to ensure the BSSG *Journal* had minimal spelling and grammatical mistakes. Of course she focused on "Ed's Crack" and latterly the BSSG Chairman's Message! Maureen's personal contributions to the *Journal* is without parallel and this issue, (July 05) is dedicated to her memory.

At Maureen's funeral on the 9th May at St Anne's RC. Thurso, over 250 people gathered, not only to pay their respects, but also to celebrate her life in a most joyous manner. The large amount of sympathy cards, letters and e-mails received confirmed the love that Maureen enjoyed. Both Cancer Research and Arthritis Care benefited from Maureen's practical approach in wishing people donate to charity rather than offer flowers. The most popular comments read on the cards said that Maureen was a "lovely lady". She still is and will always be so.