

Pamela (Pam) Forbes

Memories of Sir James William Guy Mackenzie Bt. (known as "Guy")

When I was a child, my mother had often spoken of Cousin Pam (Pamela Forbes) who she was very fond of. She also did her best to help her (with our cast off clothing etc.) as she was very "hard up" in those days.

But I first got to know Pam in late 1985 (when she was running a very successful Nursing Home in Long Melford, Suffolk) and she was very kind, hospitable and helpful to me at a time when my mother was seriously ill and was not able to leave a very basic NHS Hospital (now closed) near Ipswich for several months!

Although I moved to Cornwall to live in February 1986 we remained friends and I used to visit (sometimes with my daughters Amanda & Iona) her until her death some 15 or so years later.

The last time I saw Pam, a few weeks before she died, was when I visited her with my wife, Sally and she told us about her life. This is, as far as we can recall, is what she told us:-

She believed her mother to be Rosita Forbes (who was the famous author and explorer-see [Wikipedia](#) and, for example, the recent write up in [The Daily Telegraph](#)). (I consider that my Uncle (Sir Ronald Gordon Berowald 17th Bt of Balvenie) Berowald Innes's comment about Rosita were probably partly, at least, "tongue in cheek"!)

Pam told us that she had been left in the Nursing home, where she was born, for about 2 years before family members came and collected her. She's had an unsettled and unhappy family life as she was left to be looked after by relatives as her mother had nothing to do with her. She remembered often being locked in a room as no one had time for her. She also told us she was not a good pupil and she hated the schools she was sent to and consequently changed schools yearly!

However things did improve after she left school and she married and had four children. However her husband couldn't cope with life very well and had difficulty holding down a job. He was evidently a weak character and prone to heavy drinking.

Pam finally left her husband after he pushed her through a plate glass window which left her permanently partially disabled - most noticeably in her left hand.

Things were then very difficult for her but she managed to get a council house and moved in with her children. She was extremely hard up and used to work night shift in, I think Norwich Hospital, so "she could look after the children in the day".

However around 1968 she was left a sum of money she told us, by a distant relative who she hardly knew (I consider that it was Rosita Forbes who died in 1967).

Pam then, bought a huge house in Long Melford and with her eldest son helped to turn it into the very successful Nursing Home it became when I met her! When I knew her well she was rightly very proud that she had become a millionaire partly thanks to the legacy she had so unexpectedly inherited but mainly through her own drive and determination! As she used to say to me "When the going gets tough, the tough get going and I'm very Tough! I come from a long line of fighters!"

Very sadly Pam's eldest son tragically died in a car accident in his 20s and her next 2 twin sons both died early by their own hand. I knew Ian (her then surviving twin son - from 1985 until his death in Australia where he moved to shortly after his mother's death) and got on with him well. Her daughter lives in Australia.