We were born two years apart and although we were boy-girl, we were always good friends growing up. Dad has since told us that when Nick came along and Bec had not long turned two she was right into books so Mum used to snuggle up with us both – reading to the toddler while feeding the baby to try to avoid any competition right from the start. So we thought it makes sense that we share our memories together.

One of our earliest reoccurring memories was the excitement of finding the Women’s Weekly Birthday Cake Book in Mum’s cookbook drawer and sitting down to pore over it and choose which cake Mum was going to be expected to make that year – be it the figure eight racetrack, the jelly swimming pool or the lolly train, to name a few. Not only did we expect Mum to perfectly recreate the images in the book, but inevitably a last minute drama would arise to raise the stakes – one year it was the toffee pop wheels melting on Nick’s train (his birthday is the beginning of August strangely enough), another year it was a nor-wester blowing off our front gate just before a dozen or so kids descended on the party food and cake. Now that we’re older we realise it was probably stressful behind the scenes, but as kids all we remember from our birthdays’ are fun parties and fantastic cakes.

Mum’s creative streak wasn’t just limited to baking, she was also very accomplished with a sewing machine and a pair of knitting needles. In something that was both a blessing and a curse, she was able to whip up a shirt, skirt or dress. A perfectly fitted one-off gown for a school ball: major pro...when you really just wanted the latest label that all the other kids had: major con!

While we may have painted a very stereotypical picture of the typical 80s mother, she was certainly by no means limited in her abilities. You’ve already heard from Dad – whether it was hanging off a trestle or with paint roller in hand, she was always the first to muck into the renos. It also turned out she had quite a penchant for gutting fish, which between that and Dad filleting the poor undersized specimens, all we had to do was catch them and eat them. Once again, neither of us really had any idea of the behind the scenes work involved in making these happy childhood memories a reality.
Times have changed, we’re both grown up now, but these experiences and memories have shaped who we are and will continue to stay with us forever. Nick is not averse to baking the odd cake or slice and Bec already looks forward to the annual birthday cake selection with Finn and Charlotte. Bec has also found comfort in the recent surprise remaking of her own favourite girlhood dress for Charlotte, which turned out to be one of the last things Mum made. We all expected there to be so much more time with her, and its so sad to think these good memories we had accumulated so far will be our last.

We’ll miss you Mum

Love Bec and Nick