

Obituary

Denise Elizabeth Allsop

A wonderful soul who had time and care for everyone and every animal she met.

DENISE was a wonderful and much-loved vet, friend, wife, mum, sister, daughter and aunty, whom we lost in June following a diagnosis of brain cancer last May.

Denise was born on 7 November 1976 in Bristol to her very proud parents, Pauline and Stephen, who later welcomed her sister, Nicola.

She was always an animal lover and possessed a fierce but humble intelligence. She would frequently revise while watching television and was often found talking in class, but had the most remarkable talent of retaining information while chatting (one of her favourite pastimes), and astonishing teachers when they attempted to call her out on this.

Her family kept cats, most notable of these was Whiskey, who slept on her bed and dribbled over her toys. She was musical, playing the clarinet, and was a collector of various items, such as paperweights, mythical dragons and stamps.

Denise studied veterinary medicine at Liverpool. Unable to keep cats at university, she branched out into chinchillas. After second year, she enjoyed an adventure interrailing with friends Mahala and Alex and, instead of taking a final-year holiday, she volunteered at a cat sanctuary in Cyprus. Denise graduated with distinction in 2001, the same year she met her husband, James, who was also a vet student.

Her first job was in Wrexham, north Wales, and after 18 months Denise and James moved to a small animal practice in south Wales. They were blessed with two children: a daughter, Isabelle, in 2007 and a son, Thomas, in 2010.

In 2006, she completed a feline practice certificate with the European School of Postgraduate Veterinary Studies, further developing her interest in feline medicine. In 2011, the family moved

Denise Elizabeth Allsop (nee Grinter), BVSc, MRCVS, (b) 1976, (q) Liverpool 2001. Died 16 June 2023

to Bristol to be closer to Denise's family and in January 2014 we were delighted to welcome her to Viking Vets and the 'Viking family'.

Denise was a truly gifted vet, with interests and capabilities spanning all disciplines. She was passionate about cats and all things feline. She also took a special interest in ultrasonography (much to her colleagues' delight). While enjoying medicine, she was also a keen and talented surgeon, relishing the challenge of emergency cases. She was particularly cursed on her Saturday clinics, often ending up with a surgical emergency, when she would stay late to operate and help to clear up so that everyone was able to leave together. Her calm, compassionate and caring nature was what drew so many people to her. As well as her knowledge and skills, she was pragmatic, sensible and easy going. Her work catchphrase was 'fair enough'. She was also an excellent teacher, encouraging nurse and vet students and new graduates to achieve their best, and supporting them through their training.

Denise had time for everybody. She was the 'go-to' person when people were sad or worried. The younger team called her their 'vet mum'. No matter what was going on, she would always have time to stop and talk, and with wisdom and compassion, help to steer them on the right path.

The Viking family had many social events. Denise would be found at every one of them! She was a keen baker and expert decorator of cakes, even taking commissions. As with all things, nothing was too much trouble and she would bend over backwards to make people happy.

Denise loved crafting, enjoying needlepoint, crochet, macrame, pottery, family games and puzzles. Even during her illness she handmade macrame keyrings for each of her colleagues, despite her manual dexterity being challenged by her tumour. Needless to say, we will treasure them forever.

Denise's proudest achievement was her family. We would have many discussions at work on children, from the early years to the teen years, the ups and downs, the highs and lows of parenting! She was a proud mum who loved her family more than anything else.

Despite her diagnosis, she continued to work as and when she could, until very recently. She did this because she loved her job, her colleagues, her patients and her clients. Being a vet was part of her identity.

After her first brain surgery, chemo and radiation therapy, she was stable for a few months and able to fulfil a lifelong ambition to go whale watching with her family in Norway. They also saw the northern lights and went sledding with dogs.

Sadly, the tumour was aggressive, and she passed away at home on 16 June.

Her kindness and generosity of spirit, her pragmatic practicality, her calm acceptance, her gentle humble wisdom and warm humour will be treasured forever in the hearts and minds of those who were fortunate enough to know her. Our thoughts are with her beloved family as they come to terms with a life without her.

Victoria Seal



Denise was a truly gifted vet, with interests and capabilities spanning all disciplines