

Dear Miss Morrissey,

I am writing to inform you that my sister, Karen Harrison, whom you were kind enough to include in your 'Famous Former Pupils' list, has sadly died unexpectedly whilst studying for a law degree at Harris Manchester College, Oxford. She was a remarkable person and, as such people often are, she could be challenging to deal with! Having said this, Karen was a person of great courage, who was not deterred by obstacles and had a strong sense of justice that led her to prominence in ASLEF, the train drivers' union. She faced prejudice and vilification as a woman in a predominantly male world, but also found real fellowship and support from more enlightened men who admired Karen for her doggedness and were benignly amused by her fashion sense. (There were not many train drivers sporting bespoke tailored uniform, bright pink hair and sparkly tie in the early 1980s). One of my fondest memories of Karen is of her going to a late-night comedy club, where the largely male audience was being simply foul to a female comic: Karen stood up and gave them a piece of her mind, her ready wit and command of street argot being deployed to wonderful effect.

Although her academic success came later in life, the seeds of confidence in approaching study were planted at St Michael's; Karen just didn't know how to nurture them at the time! She may not have been a model pupil but, in the final analysis, she was in many ways a model human being who, in the spirit of practical Christianity, always put others first, regardless of the cost to herself.

I wonder whether I could ask for her to be remembered in prayers.

Yours sincerely,

Marie Harrison