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GOODBYE KELLY TURNER



Mourners gather at St Mary's Church; scooter riders at the front of the funeral procession

Moving tribute by fellow teen cancer sufferer and friend

"She will always be my rainbow and for that reason I'm glad I am not colour-blind."

These were the touching words of Kelly's friend Emmie May Roper.

The 18-year-old from Rochester was given a cancer diagnosis just fourth months after Kelly received hers. They met on Miss Roper's first day of treatment at the Royal Marsden Hospital and became firm friends.

In a tribute during the service, she described the Dover teen as a gillyflower, representing endless beauty, with the personality of a forget-me-not.

She spoke in the present tense "because Kelly is still alive in all of our hearts."

"Kelly lived for education and everything that was given to her she was grateful for," she added. "Kelly will always be my friend and a big part of my life."

Speaking exclusively to the Mercury afterwards, she said: "Losing my first friend since I've been diagnosed is just heart-breaking. You can't imagine losing someone your own age until it happens to you.



Emmie May Roper and Kelly Turner together. The picture was taken in Dover a week after Emmie started chemotherapy

"I thought the service was absolutely beautiful.

"Kelly's coffin was amazing. She loves colour and music. She would have loved it."

When asked how she will remember Kelly, she said: "For her artwork. I went round to her house just before I lost all my

hair and her art was just everywhere. She was just a colourful person and it showed in her personality as well."

Miss Roper has an astrocytomas brain tumour. It is being controlled through chemotherapy and radiotherapy. She attended the funeral with her mum, Kay.

'HER BRIGHT STAR GUIDES US THROUGH THE DARKNESS'

Kelly Turner's bright star still shines in Dover, even after her passing, Dover's MP said.

Charlie Elphicke, who attended the funeral service at St Mary's, has spoken of Kelly's courage.

He said: "We see that we were all part of Kelly's battle. That while she may now be gone, her spirit still inspires us all. That Kelly's bright star will always shine on Dover - and always lead the way."

He added: "She was an inspiration to us all - showing us that no matter what the odds, the most important thing of all is to take up the fight.

Mr Elphicke said that the £600,000 raised in 17 months for Kelly was a "stunning effort."



Charlie Elphicke MP

He said: "We felt like we could never do enough to match Kelly's own superhuman efforts. Yet Dover did rise to the challenge - the way our town always does when struck by tragedy.

"Dover and its people have a unique spirit which draws them together at times like this. No

matter what changes in the town, this spirit never dies. It is what keeps the town together through the toughest times."

Mr Elphicke said that Kelly had successfully brought people together and praised the bravery of her parents Linda and Martin for their strength in speaking of their sorrow in front of hundreds of people in church.

He added: "When we so cruelly lose someone like Kelly, a beautiful, kind and bright 17-year-old girl, the world in that moment feels like a dark place.

"Yet what the words spoken of Kelly on Friday tell us is that she leads the way in times like these. Her bright star guides us through the darkness."