

# My amazing 90 YEARS!

Corrie star Barbara Knox celebrates a milestone birthday with a special documentary...



**NEW**



Classic exit...  
Rita at the scene of Alan's death in 1989



The Kabin co-workers...  
Rita (left) and Mavis



Carry on abroad... (From left) Betty, Emily, Hilda, Rita and Mavis in 1974

**S**oapland is known for its dramatic exits and revolving door of new faces, but Corrie legend Barbara Knox has played Rita Tanner for 58 years, first appearing on the cobbles in December 1964.

Now, to mark her 90th birthday, Barbara talks to Bradley Walsh about her life, career and Rita's most memorable moments, including her three marriages and her comedy friendship with Mavis Wilton, played by Thelma Barlow, who also appears in this nostalgic documentary.

'I remember my first day like it was yesterday; I was terrified,' admits Barbara. 'They were all legends, and

**BARBARA KNOX AT 90**  
Friday, 9pm, ITV1 Factual

I lost my voice. It was nerves. But the scripts were so funny and so wonderful!

### Memories

The one-off special features a host of Barbara's co-stars, while the veteran soap star talks about Rita's marriage to Len Fairclough, who met his end in 1983, and revisits the site of the Blackpool tram accident in 1989 that killed villain Alan Bradley, who'd subjected Rita to years of abuse. The shot of Rita breaking down with Alan's body in the background is one of the soap's most iconic images.

But Rita's storylines haven't all been grim. The antics in *The Kabin* have provided plenty of comedy gold over the years. And in 1974, Rita, Bet, Deirdre, Betty, Annie, Mavis, Hilda and Emily headed for Majorca, where Rita ended up running around with a Spanish Romeo!

However, despite turning 90, Barbara has no plans to retire. 'What a filthy word,' she laughs. 'I haven't thought about retiring. I tell everybody I know to keep working; it's so good for you. It certainly is for me!'

**NEW**



# Where my heart belongs

Julia Bradbury explores her roots during an eventful trip around Ireland...

**JULIA BRADBURY'S IRISH JOURNEY**  
Saturday, 8.35pm, C4 Factual (box set, Channel 4)

Ireland holds a special place in Julia Bradbury's heart.

The presenter was born in Dublin to a Greek mother and British father and lived there until she was two years old. Since then, Julia's connection to the Emerald Isle has deepened – her husband Gerard Cunningham is Irish and their children are, too.

In this four-part travelogue, she goes on a nationwide tour of Ireland to learn more

about the place she first called home...

### Emerald Isle tour

'Ireland has cemented its place in my heart, so it's a real gift to film this,' says Julia, who kicks off the series in the south. 'I was only two when we left, but we have fantastic family photos. There's one of me on top of Killiney with my dad, sister Gina, and our Pyrenean mountain dog, Llara, who was the size of a horse!'

During her travels, Julia explores the country's history, cuisine and culture. Travelling to Cork, Galway, Donegal and Dublin along the way, she tries her hand at everything from pottery and woodturning to surfing and foraging.

'I wanted to experience as much as possible,' says Julia, who returned home with some special souvenirs. 'I had a go at pottery and now have two pots that take pride of place in my kitchen.'



Childhood snap...  
Julia as a baby with Llara

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PHOTOS: C4, GETTY IMAGES, ITV, SHUTTERSTOCK, CHRISSY BRADBURY