

Norah Anderson 2.9.1919-18.4.2010

Donald Davies

Norah once told me she wanted to be remembered as a practising eccentric. How do we capture 90 years of such a varied, active and fulfilling life? As you would expect by that age she had outlived more than a few friends and family. Perhaps more than her fair share.

At these times, despite her own grief, she always put her pain to one side to care for those around her.

I believe there were three things that always gave her the strength to do this:

- She had an unshakeable faith in God
- She believed that death was only a temporary separation from loved ones and
- She had a very strong sense of duty



I knew her for 40 years and these three things were a constant in all that time. She achieved so much in those 40 years it is hard to take in that she had lived a very active 50 years before I even met her.

Let me give you a brief potted biography.

- Norah grew up on a farm in Horwood in North Buckinghamshire, her roots very much from farming stock.
- Her 20's saw her in "war service" in Winslow post office, waiting anxiously for the return of her fiancé, Hunter, from active service.
- Her 30's and 40's were spent as wife and mother. Hunter joined the Diplomatic Wireless Service after the war and her life became a flurry of two year postings abroad, with spells at home in between. It was during this active period when she was required to be the gracious hostess that she

honed her natural instincts to entertain and nurture.

- Her 50's were full of both sad and happy moments. The loss of father, husband and mother in the space of a few years, almost too much to bear, counterbalanced by weddings galore of friends and family, and babies arriving in abundance.
- In her 60's, when most people think of slowing down, Norah found a new lease of life. After Lis died Norah, once again, put her own grief to one side and moved with us. She saw it as her duty to help bring up her grandchildren.
- In her 70's, when they had all flown the nest, she decided it was her turn, so she moved here to Hertford to be near her family.
- She spent her 80's here, content to be among friends and family. Although she became physically frail, her mind was still sharp almost to the end.... as those who played Scrabble with her will testify!

Throughout all of those years there were some common threads:

- Every time she went somewhere new, she would find the local church and become involved in its activities.
- Everywhere she went she made new friends.
- She had over the years become a good cook.
- Her cooking came at a price. She left a trail of buckled pans behind her. Cooker hobs were full on or off. She never quite mastered the settings between. And the scrap yard is full of exploded microwave ovens. Norah didn't do mechanical.
- With one exception... her beloved portable typewriter. Norah loved to write. Letters were written in pen, with her own, unique handwriting style. It was more than just letter writing. Norah was the conduit through which news passed.

If that's being a practising eccentric, then the world would benefit from a few more like her.