

Judy's Eulogy

Judith Meriel Sutton was born on 1st December 1930 in Great Yarmouth.
Her younger brother, David, was born in January 1934.

Judy wrote:

Our house faced the sea.

Life was good as we grew up.

We had a family hut on the beach in Gorleston and there was always a crowd of aunts, uncles, cousins, friends – it was great.

Then war came.

In early Spring 1940 Daddy was working with Grandad in the herring industry.

They exported herring mainly to Greece and adjacent countries, as well as owning several trawlers.

David and I always knew when Daddy was on the way home: a flock of seagulls would be flying around his work car!

Daddy was at work when the harbour master came to our house and said that all the folk who lived on the seafront were to be evacuated immediately because there was a rumour Hitler was going to invade.

Mummy hurriedly put some things together and drove David and I to our grandmother's bungalow by the river Thames at Wraysbury.

As it was term-time David and I were sent to the village school.

After a while we moved to Amberley, near Stroud to a large house with all the Sutton family.

David was then sent to a boy's school and I went to a convent school.

When the summer holidays came, we returned to Gran's while our parents went house hunting.

They bought a house on the Broads.

David and I joined them and this time we went to the same school in the next village.

We had to take our lunch.

Mummy often made Macaroni Cheese, which we took in a basin in my bicycle basket. It sat by the fire until lunchtime in the classroom.

I remember David and I would cycle to school listening in case we could hear a German plane - we were quite near to Cottishall Aerodrome. If a pilot saw us, they fired at us so we had to jump into the ditch!

Then tragedy struck (in April 1941). Mummy and Daddy returned home from Norwich to be told that there was a message from Grandad, wanting them to go to the Ferry Inn to meet some airmen who were visiting from Cottishall. Daddy had already received his "call up papers" and was to go into the RAF.

Very reluctantly our parents went to the Inn. David and I were in bed. We had a babysitter. Soon after our parents arrived at the inn a lone German bomber flew overhead and dropped his remaining bombs, getting a direct hit on the inn - there had been an air raid in Norwich.

When we woke up the next morning, we didn't know what had happened, but our babysitter – a young girl – was still there. She had been told to stay with us until our grandmother arrived.

I was 10 and David was 7 years old.

Our Grandmother told us that our parents had been killed: a beam had fallen on Daddy and Grandad, and Mummy had died in the ambulance going to hospital.

Five members of our family died that night as well as 40 airmen and other folks.

It took a while for our grandmother to get custody of us. Daddy's two remaining brothers wanted to put David and I into a Masonic home. There had to be a court case, (as the brothers did not want us to inherit.) Daddy had been the eldest son and the government had brought out a law that if father and son died together the father would be said to have died first followed by the son, so the son's family could inherit.

David went to live with Gran first, and later that June, I followed. We didn't go to school for several months.

We had a good childhood.

The river was our playground; Gran gave us plenty of freedom.

We had a punt and a rowing boat.

The bungalow was built on piles so there was space underneath it which became David's den.

David went to a small Catholic boy's school and I went to private school in Slough.

In 1949 Judy started a 3 year teacher training course.

Judy wrote: Tragedy struck once again.

It was the time of the King's funeral (1952) and I was at teacher training college in Bedford.

Gran 'phoned me saying she didn't feel well.

Something told me I had to get home.

We now lived in Maidenhead and it wasn't easy travelling, as arrangements were in place for the king's funeral and stations were going to be closed while the king was moved to Windsor by train.

I arrived early into Windsor and was met by Uncle Jim. Like lots of people, we watched the funeral on television. The next morning Gran died – she had had a stroke.

I had to tell David and someone had to fetch him home from school.

I started working in a girl's boarding school near Horsham. I was a bit of a nomad as I had no home base and spent holidays staying with friends. I mainly saw David at Christmas and New Year although we tried to see each other in the summer holidays when possible.

Judy then got a job again teaching 7-year-olds at Earlswood School near Redhill in Surrey.

Ellen was the headmistress and she & Judy became good friends.

Judy continued her teaching career and stayed friends with Ellen. Before she retired, she was Headteacher of an infant's school in Croydon. Judy was an active member of the National Association of Head Teachers and became President of the Croydon association. She lived in Sanderstead near Ellen & attended the local church there.

Judy wrote: We had visited the Island as children. I had always said I would like to move there and once David & Brenda were settled, I too moved to the island living first in Bembridge with a friend and then when she died, I was able to buy my bungalow, the garden of which backed onto David and Brenda's garden.

David put a gate in the fence so we could visit one another easily.

Judy told me that as a child her mother insisted she attend church although her mother never did.

She continued attending church throughout her life.

When Judy moved to the Island she joined Holy Trinity and helped with visiting. She enjoyed attending Taize services with Ellen. Judy loved to travel and spent many holidays abroad as well as in the UK. A friend has

said that she loved to perform sketches and apparently caused uproar on more than one occasion as everyone was laughing so much.

Judy and I became close friends after we started helping Clare & Rev Amanda at Messy Church.

We ran an art and crafts table together.

Judy loved art and gardening and attended many groups including the WI.

In 2017 Judy had a stroke and reluctantly gave up driving.

Judy & I attended art classes together and joined in Rev. Amanda's Monday afternoon Bible studies.

When Trinity Church Mice started Judy became the storyteller,

a role she enjoyed until the covid lockdowns.

Throughout her life Judy remained close to her cousins, Gillian, Valerie, & especially Lynne & her daughters Melodie and Emma.

Judy enjoyed seeing her nephew Daniel and her cousins Mel and Emma and looked forward to their regular visits & trips out together.

We will all miss Judy. I thank God for her and for the happy memories we all have.

After the burial Daniel, Mel & Emma invite you to join us for afternoon tea to celebrate Judy's life at the Birdham Hotel.