

Personal Memories
of
A Very Special Lady



82231
/ 2564

ANNIE SUNTER (née MASON)
8th Sept 1918 to 14th June 2003

Happy are those who know love
in their hearts!
They bring peace and joy to others;
They face life's obstacles and struggles
with patience and trust.
Opening their hearts to the Friend,
they learn to look for blessings
– even in times of trouble.

With gladness and joy they listen quietly
for the gentle voice of the Friend
within.
As migrating birds fly directly to their winter
homes, so those who dwell with love
are led to safe places.
Instead of a house of fear, they live secure,
Giving thanks to the One who abides in their
hearts forever.

An extract from:
Meditations & Mandalas by Nan C. Merrill

Introduction

It was on the day of my Grandma's funeral, 20th June that I thought about producing this booklet. The day brought back many memories for us all and I was deeply touched by all the stories that friends and family were recounting as we spent the day together. This booklet allows those memories to be shared with all who knew and loved her.

After spending a few days with my Mum after the funeral I returned home to Edinburgh and picked up a book by Nan Merrill and it fell open at a particular page, containing the poem opposite. My Grandma immediately came into my mind; it was as if this poem was written about her!

I would like to think of this booklet as the first edition. If you have any further memories that you would like to share, please contact myself (Tel: 0131 332 2520) or my Mum, Eileen Briggs (Tel: 01282 618650) so that your memories can be included in the next booklet.

The booklet has been produced free of charge but if you would like to make a voluntary donation to either Horton-in-Ribblesdale Church, Village Hall or any charity of your choice in memory of Annie Sunter, please do so.

"Thank You" to everyone who has sent in their stories so far.

Helen Briggs

We will remember Annie as a very special lady
(Brian & Sheila Plummer)

We are all of one mind that Annie was a kind & caring lady involved in many good works in the village, but in a warm & quiet way. It was a privilege to know her.
(Marian Greenway)

How do I remember Mrs Sunter? In one word – *contented*. A sign of a happy life.
(Caroline Thompson)

Annie was so quiet & hardworking, always unfussily efficient & interested and ready to participate. I appreciated her friendship.
(Kay Vandenbriele)

I will remember her as a kind & gentle person. It has been a pleasure to know her & we are all the better for it.
(Annie Cobrey)

She was such a lovely lady in every way & I remember her for her help. She was so kind & such a lady. She was so interested in *life!* And the way to *live it*. We shall miss her.
(Arthur & Jean Butler)

Fondest memories of Mrs Sunter, who always made me so welcome when I used to stay on numerous occasions with the family at Selside, where the trains sounded as if they were in the house.
(Audrey Whitaker)



Annie Sunter, Selside

I remember that Annie started her married life in a railway cottage in Selside not far from her former home, Lodge Hall. She used to come and help on the farm at busy times. She was part of the W.I., the History Group and many events in the village. Her chocolate cakes were always in great demand. She loved gardening and I remember she was always successful with her carrots in the village show. I will always miss the company of a faithful sister-in-law.

(Betsy E. Mason, Lodge Hall)

I have tried to list memories of different things about Aunt Annie and tried to say something different about each, but have come down to just one thing – “*She was there*”

She was there when I often spent a week of my summer holidays at Selside and have many memories of these, like time in the signal box at Selside and then Horton with Uncle John, walks down the track or down to the river or to collect the milk from the village, the board games we used to play in the front room.

She was there when my Mum was very ill and when I found out she was not going to live much longer.

She was there, like a second mother – no real fuss, not pushing herself on us, but there when she was needed. I know how close my Mum felt to her.

She was there when I came to visit her when I came to see Dad. She was always very welcoming (home made food!) and I enjoyed our chats about family, what was going on in Horton, what she was making for the Gala or other events in the village, her plants and her garden, her photographs...

I still have, from many years ago, some knitted Christmas decorations that she gave me. They go on the tree every year and will do in the future.

Like all the things that were said during the funeral service, she is still there in our memories, and always will be.

(Brian Rawsthorne)

I will miss our little chats. We've been pals for over 70 years. She certainly loved her garden & other interests.

(Winnie Sunter)

I will really miss Aunt Annie. She was tremendous support to me throughout my life. I will always remember her with love & fondness. She was also an inspiration as regards garden, craftwork & general way of life. She left me with fond memories.

(Elizabeth Mason)

Aunt Annie was a very special person. My trips to England over the past decades always included enjoyable visits to her, either by myself or with other members of my family. She was always kind and thoughtful and made us feel welcome. I will miss her but I will remember her always.

(Christine Mason, Las Vegas, USA)

My childhood memories of my Mother were that she was always busy. This was not surprising as she did the cooking, baking, washing, ironing, sewing, jam-making, gardening amongst many other tasks, and without the modern conveniences that we have today.

I remember her cycling everywhere, and she had 3 miles to the nearest shop, bus and train, yet she still found the time to take us for outings, walks and picnics, and being involved in helping with events in the village.

When I left home to go to work, I remember feeling very homesick but my Mum was always very supportive by sending me frequent letters and parcels. Mum has always been there when needed by family and friends. She cared for her parents and her sister before they died. It was something I remember she did with love and understanding. I know she was tired during this time but she never complained.

Mum was always interested in the village and all the events. She always wanted to be involved.

I always remember Mum enjoying being in the company of friends and relatives and talking about 'old times'. She always had a wonderful memory. I shall miss her so much, but will always have plenty of memories to live on.

(Eileen Briggs)



Three Generations, Silverdale, 1963
Eileen Briggs, Annie Sunter, Grannie Mason

My Grandma was always cheerful and pleased to see us when we visited. The kettle went on & there were always various tins full of freshly baked cakes & biscuits.

We'd all sit chatting by the open fire watching the flames dancing. We'd go for walks around the fields and lanes and down by the river, collecting sticks for the fire. We'd go for drives around the countryside, Grandma pointing out all the farms on the hillsides, naming them and remembering all the families who used to live there, there was always a little story to tell us.

We'd have lunch; often a stew made with vegetables fresh from the garden. I had never tasted carrots & potatoes like the ones Grandma grew. Likewise, her jams (from her home grown fruits) and marmalades were the tastiest I've ever had.

I remember Grandma enjoying singing, and sometimes she'd have a little dance around the room too. Grandma was always a happy soul.

(Helen Briggs)

One of my favourite memories was of my Grandma in her garden. She worked hard in tending the many varieties of fruit and vegetables that she grew. I remember helping and learning from her whilst carrying out most tasks from weeding to harvesting the fruits, which were regularly transformed into delicious jams.

Grandma enjoyed baking on a regular basis that meant there was delicious home made bread and cakes on offer whenever anyone called round for tea. The baking was also entered in annual shows in the village and was often rewarded with several prizes. After most visits to her home there was always a jar or two of home made jam or marmalade and some home baked cakes or biscuits to take home to enjoy.

(Steven Briggs)

Dear Annie was very special and I will miss her – we all will.

(Margaret Holmes)

We have some very happy memories....she was a lovely lady

(Peter & Mavis Bird)

How I met Mrs Sunter.....It was in 1989 on the train from Skipton, she came and sat with me as the train was filling up. We got talking and discovered we came from the same village. We had just moved from Littondale and Mrs Sunter was the first friend I made.

She was one of a rare breed of ladies left in this world. We all had many happy hours of pleasure with her. Of course she was a Virgo so she loved her plants and garden. She gave me a small fern, which is now quite big and a cutting from her fuchsia, which is a big bush now. I call them both Annie.

Mrs Sunter was much loved in this village and will always be remembered. I miss her and hope God will hold her in his arms and keep her safe forever. I am proud that she was my friend. Much Love....

(Anne Warton)

She was such a lovely person, very talented and artistic. She will be sadly missed in the village of Horton-in-Ribblesdale in many ways.

(Mary Waterston)

The Address given by Roger Wood at the Funeral Service in Horton-in-Ribblesdale Church

Annie was part of the fabric that holds Horton together – not bad for someone who wasn't born here, but who had wandered over the hill from Deepdale to see what life was like on the other side in North Ribblesdale.

As part of the farming community at Selside and then part of the railway community – it's not surprising how many people she was linked with or even related to.

Annie was part of the fabric that holds Horton together - she was one of those people who helps turn a village into a community. She was one of the original members of the Women's Institute; part of the History group; involved with the craft class and a key player on the village hall committee.

She was part of the fabric that holds Horton together – one of the army of cake-bakers and jam makers – someone you knew you could call on and count on. She was reliable, trustworthy and gave her best – as seen in the meticulous way she handled bookings for the village hall. She was there when needed. She was there for her parents when they needed her – especially for her Mother. She was there for her younger sister through her suffering and early death. She was there for her daughters, grandchildren and now great-grandchildren – and our hearts go out to them at this time of loss.

Annie was part of the fabric that holds Horton together – a faithful, loyal member of the Church. I believe that she used to clean the brasses in Church. If there was a Church "do" or something special, you could be sure that Annie would be there. She came regularly to worship God and I suspect that she probably felt very much at home at the Book of Common Prayer service of Evensong – a quiet reflective offering of the day's achievements and a life spent in the presence of God.

Annie was part of the fabric that holds Horton together – and as our bible reading (Proverbs 31) said: "Give her credit

for all she does: she deserves the respect of everyone." But death is not the end of all this: she will live on in the memories that help hold Horton together and which help make a village into a community. She will live on in her family's love and affection – indeed she will be held in the love and affection of many for years to come.

Annie helped hold Horton together by being a member of the Church community and the Church claims to do even more than this – it is part of the fabric that holds earth and heaven together; that turns life after death into a community of love – and Annie is part of this fabric.

She is part of a fabric of angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, faithful Christian folk of every land and tribe and people – a community centred on God, whom death cannot touch and who share divine glory for all eternity.

Annie, the little girl in Deepdale, walked to Sunday School; Annie, the woman full of years walked to Church with the aid of a stick; Annie now walks through the valley of the shadow of death. But she never walked alone – Jesus skipped and hopped with her in Deepdale; Jesus walked with her throughout her life; Jesus walked with her in her deep fellowship in her latter months; Jesus walks with her now through the valley of death.

And Jesus will introduce her to the Heavenly community where she will certainly play her part and where I'm sure she will feel very much at home.

Rest eternal grant unto Annie, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon her.

She will be missed by many but always loved by God

(Roger Wood, Vicar, Horton-in-Ribblesdale)



Selside Signal Women, 1945
Annie Sunter, Winnie Sunter, Edith Sedgewick

My earliest memory of Annie Sunter was when she came to our cottage at Selside selling poppies. That was in 1957 and we'd recently moved there from Bradford. She asked how we were settling in and wondered if I'd like to go to a WI meeting with her to meet other ladies. She was so friendly. I did become a member and found a good friend in Annie. We joined English Folk Dancing Classes and she even encouraged me to join sewing classes. We moved away after about 7 years first to Bentham and then to Morecambe but we managed to keep in touch and saw each other whenever we could. When we met up she was always the same. Always smiling and welcoming. I am so glad to have known her.

(Sheila Keighley)

Annie was a lovely lady
(Jim & Hazel, Keasden Head)

I shall miss her sage advice
(Dora)

Annie was always quietly in the centre of things. I loved her quiet modest unassuming enthusiasm whenever I called she was busy with a project, sewing, gardening, baking, making jam or marmalade.
(Brian & Sheila Plummer)

My memories of Annie... Annie was a member of the lip-reading group for a number of years. When we met at the Town Hall upstairs room she would have a very busy day on Tuesday. She would travel into Settle from Horton on the 9 o'clock bus to do some shopping then lip-reading, followed by a sandwich lunch. It was during lunch that we would chat, mostly about what she was doing in the Craft class, which she attended in the afternoon. Annie would show me her wonderful creations. She would also tell me about the other things that occupied her time; looking after the village hall, gardening, sewing, baking, entering the local craft show with craft work, pies and cakes as well as being a member of the WI.

She impressed and amazed me with the amount of work that she got through, without making a big fuss. At the lip-reading she would join me in a quiet way, and always pleasant with everyone. The world will be poorer for the loss of Annie.
(Carol Riley)

My friend Annie....

I first met Annie when nearly 30 years ago, as a new arrival in Horton with my family, I was invited to join the Women's Institute. Annie took me under her wing and made me feel welcome and "at home". A few months later, Mary Waterston, the WI chairman asked me to get some members together to form the WI Drama Group, and of course, Annie was one of the members who didn't have to be asked twice! Monday evenings were turned into hilarious rehearsal nights, and we often wept with laughter as we worked out opening numbers, comic songs, dialect plays, dance routines and choral songs, of which Annie's favourite was "Bless This House". Annie joined in all these acts, and her nimble dancing feet proved most helpful in sorting out occasional awkward moments in our short dance routines. Annie was such a clever needlewoman and when we mounted floats in Horton Gala, she sewed costumes and trimmings for all who needed them – teddy bear heads and paws for "Teddy Bear's Picnic" (We sweltered on the hottest Saturday for years!); flimsy boleros and baggy trousers for "Fry's Turkish Delight" (We shivered and turned blue on a bitterly cold Saturday!); and for a well remembered float "Quality Street" Annie made and wore a pretty lavender coloured dress and bonnet.

Later on Annie and I joined company as members of the rota to clean the church brasses. This was quite a social occasion for us and I would join Annie in Chapel Lane for coffee and her delicious scones and biscuits. We would

have a good chat and put the world to rights before going over to the church to shake the Brasso tins and apply the elbow grease to make the brasses shine as brightly as possible. I well remember Annie pointing out with pride, the brass plate which tells us that the people of Selside had raised the funds to install the door into the bell tower. I think that a part of Annie will forever linger in Selside.

(Audrey Daley)

After becoming a member of Horton WI at one of the meetings it was decided that we would make small boxes out of wrapping paper for the Christmas Fair. I rather took to this occupation and made many boxes. In time we moved from Horton and the box pattern was lost. After a short time we moved back into the district and I was asked to make the boxes again. Alas I couldn't find the pattern and couldn't make them from memory. I was about to give up the project altogether. I was attending a meeting at Horton again with the sad news "no boxes", when out stepped Annie – she had brought the full pattern and measurements!!!! She just said "I thought you might need these" Annie to the rescue again!!! Annie also introduced me to the Lip reading Class in Settle. We attended every Tuesday to listen to Carol Riley's stories, after which we mimed them, each taking our turn and going through the motions of lip reading. It was a jolly class and it was Annie's influence that made sign language so interesting for me. Thank you, Annie. God Bless.

(Marjorie Whittle)



Crimdon Beach, early 1970s
Annie Sunter & Nancy Thompson

I often visited Mrs Sunter on dark winter days and of course she always wanted to make a cuppa. I felt guilty as she wouldn't allow me to help make the drink and I could never understand why preparations always included a trip upstairs. One day I plucked up courage to ask why. Her reply was "Well, I keep my good fruit cake in a tin under the spare bed so I don't eat it all myself and have nothing special left for visitors" As often we had a good laugh about it.

(Dora Tattersall)

Annie was always there with lots of help, no matter what the project in hand was. She unstintingly gave time, effort, knowledge and expertise quietly, without any fuss and without looking for any reward or recognition. Give Annie a piece of material or cardboard and she could make anything. Not only could she sew, knit, make beautiful cards, she could also bake! Her cakes, buns and biscuits would always appear whenever there was a tea, a show or an exhibition. She must have shown countless number of people how to make peg bags, boxes, cushions and patchwork – and that's only a few of her talents. Annie was a very independent lady and would politely refuse any offers of help before her health started to deteriorate. She was good company and had a fund of interesting tales to tell about days gone by, but for all that kept up with current affairs. We miss her at the Craft Class, the Thursday Club and the Drop In. I only knew Annie in recent years, so have no long term memories, but I do know she was a leading light in the Church, the WI, the Village Hall and many more groups in the village. For many years she looked after the bookings diary and rent ledger for the Village Hall with great care and dedication and whilst she was able, was also caretaker there. We all have a lot to thank Annie for, and I, for one, feel privileged to have known her and to have been included amongst her many friends.

(Margaret Holmes)

OBITUARY

The death occurred recently of a popular and well know village lady, Mrs Annie Isabel Sunter of Chapel Lane, Horton-in-Ribblesdale. Born in 1918 in Deepdale, Dent, and one of the four children of Christopher & Agnes Mason, her early school years were spent at the small village school in Dent. The farming family moved to Lodge Hall Farm in the parish of Horton-in-Ribblesdale when Annie was in her early teens. She worked along side her parents. In was in these years that she was likely to have learnt the traditional skills that she was to be become so recognised for in her later years. Annie married John Sunter, whose family also originated form Dent but had moved to the nearby hamlet of Selside farming at Top Farm. John was a railway worker formerly a plate layer and then a signal man. The couple's new home was to be at Selside Railway Cottages where they spent many happy years with their two daughters, Norah & Eileen. During the Second World War, Annie & two other local ladies, sister in law Winnie Sunter & Edith Sedgewick, were to play a part for their country. They took on the unusual but important duties of signal women at Selside signal box, which had the distinction of being one of the first main line boxes to be operated on all three turns of duty by women. In 1970 John & Annie moved to Chapel Lane, Horton-in-Ribblesdale. John died in 1974. Annie had a strong sense of community spirit & was involved in almost all village activities. Quietly conscientious in all she did. She was a founder member of the Women's Institute and a former treasurer. She was a member of the local history group, Thursday club, Craft Class and a regular attendee at St Oswald's church. Annie was also caretaker of the village hall for many years and looked after the booking system. A gifted lady, she was both an accomplished needlewoman and baker. Her skills won her many awards at both, the Women's Institute group show & Horton-in Ribblesdale show. She was a keen and able gardener and was still seen tending to her garden up till a few months before her death. Annie will be sadly missed but warmly remembered as a kind & contented lady who had time for everyone both young & old. Annie leaves two daughters, three grandchildren and two great grandsons.