

# My Father, Bishop John Robinson

Bishop John Robinson and his wife Ruth moved to Prospect House in 1980. Their move there was by a glorious happenstance. The house was owned at the time by a distant relative by marriage of their daughter, Buffy, who had rented it for years to two elderly ladies who subsequently died. The relative, very protective of both the house and Arncliffe, did not want it to be sold on the open market (few Arncliffe houses came on the market in those days) so they contacted all the family, even distant members, and asked if they might be interested in buying Prospect House. Bishop Robinson's daughter, Buffy, who lived just over the border in Lancashire, knowing how Ruth, then living in Reigate wanted to return to her northern roots, visited the house and told them it would be perfect - and Bishop John and Ruth purchased the house.

Bishop John made his home in Arncliffe in the holidays from Trinity, enjoying the quiet retreat from the hustle and bustle of Cambridge. Ruth lived and thrived, establishing a beautiful garden, took long walks up on the tops and played her grand piano. Ruth became fondly known as Mrs Bish and the village children loved visiting and viewing the massive doll's house that stood at the top of the stairs. Buffy's daughters spent many weekends and holidays with grandma, playing on the green and up on the fells, so Arncliffe became a wonderful second home for them growing up. Mrs Bish lived in Arncliffe for 30 years until her death in 2010 and was a well-loved member of the village community. She was a mine of information regarding wild flowers and could usually identify them immediately. She continued to tend her beloved garden. Buffy was a regular too, coming to look after Ruth in her later years and still comes often to stay in the village she calls home from home.

Bishop John died from cancer on 5th December 1983, living his last 6 months at home in Arncliffe, with a few precious hours each day spent finishing his last book. His funeral service was unlike anything the village had seen before. In a veritable flood many bishops came up Wharfedale and became stuck in the deep sections of the flooded road by Kilnsey. Tractors were despatched to rescue the bishops all dressed in their finery. Many members of the Trinity College choir came and the magnificent sound of their singing of the *Paradisium* from Faure's requiem filled St. Oswalds. The village bier was used to carry him from Prospect House with the family walking beside it, four-year-old granddaughter, Sophie, gently patting the coffin on its journey to the church. Bishop John's grave can be found to the left of the church's path with Ruth now lying beside him.

Buffy Robinson 2020