

## **Cynthia Royle Broad 1930 to 2017**

Cynthia was born and grew up in Cheshire. She spent her life in and around schools from boarding school as a child which she enthusiastically recalled in later years, through Froebel College in Bedford, to her first job as a preparatory school teacher at Branksome Hilders in Haslemere. By some accounts this was a rather 'Dotheboys' Hall institution (and 'Dotheteachers' – Richard remembered getting up at the crack of dawn to stoke the boilers). Here Richard and Cynthia started a discrete romance – though given the boys would break into 'Walking Miss Crowther back home' to the tune of a popular song perhaps not as discrete as they thought.

They married and moved to Enniskillen in Northern Ireland where Richard taught at Portora Royal School, soon becoming the headmaster of the new preparatory school, Gloucester House. Cynthia became a headmaster's wife (a title which doesn't really do justice to pastoral responsibility for well over 150 boys). She excelled at this and also in her role as hostess at dinner parties and organiser of dances; the parquet of the then brand-new assembly hall still bears the damage caused by stiletto heels during one summer ball.

Nicholas and Paul were both born in Enniskillen and the family eventually moved back to England. At Brandeston Hall in Suffolk, Cynthia continued to support Richard through some often challenging times as he put his (their) stamp on the school. She entered into village life enthusiastically particularly with the Women's Institute and church flower arrangements. She raised some eyebrows judging the arrangements at a neighbouring village's annual show by choosing creativity over not always exemplary foliage.

They later moved to Surrey and King Edwards school. Here Cynthia, in a departure from being a headmaster's wife, moved to the state sector and became a popular and creative primary school teacher in Busbridge. On retirement they moved to Dunkeswell in Devon where they integrated completely into village life. They continued to travel widely, and Cynthia had time to develop her skills as a pianist, accomplished watercolourist, and creator of a small but perfectly tended garden. She also continued playing an active part in the WI both locally (she created much praised scenery for the village panto) and regionally (organising a short story competition for the South West and giving the speech of thanks in Exeter Cathedral on the final day of the annual WI gathering) And she still found time to be an attentive and fond grandmother to Iain, Will and Ludwig, knitting many of their earliest garments.

They finally moved to Yate to be nearer to Paul. Richard became ill and spent some time in hospital before passing away. Cynthia courageously drove in virtually every day to visit. She felt Richard's absence very deeply, but again courageously, carried on. The large congregation at her memorial service at St. Mary's church attested to the affection felt for her in the parish and among family and friends by whom she is sadly missed and fondly remembered.

Penned by son Nick.