

Celebrating the Life
of
Brenda Rooke



29th May 1921 – 2nd February 2021

Brenda Rooke

Anyone who knew Brenda wouldn't be surprised to know that she lived to be nearly 100. She lived her life with true north-eastern energy, grit and determination, extending warmth and generosity to all she met, and valuing the friends she met along the way.

Brenda Govan was born into a shipbuilding community in Stockton on Tees. She was sister to Audrey. Before the war she trained to be a shorthand typist. Brenda was proud to tell us that her work for I.C.I. during the war was top-secret, and indeed I.C.I. Billingham was the target of enemy bombing raids. During the war, Brenda met Wilf Rooke, who was with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Their romance blossomed and, 6 days after the war ended in 1945, they were married. They visited Wilf's relations in Canada, but decided to settle back in the north-east, where Wilf joined his brother-in-law's printing business, the Billingham Press. In 1949 Paul, their only child, was born. In 1955 the family moved to Milngavie, near Glasgow. Wilf was working for Quaker Oats. His job required him to travel a lot, and, eventually, they moved to Burnham, Bucks. Once again, Brenda made a new home for the family. Sadly, Brenda and Wilf divorced in 1971 and Brenda moved to Isleworth where she began a working life again. She told many stories about her work as a secretary with Firestone and as a medical secretary. It is a testament to Brenda's character that she retained friendships with old work colleagues and neighbours well into her later years.

Eventually Brenda moved back up north to live in Haslingden, near Paul. Here she settled into a new life. She enjoyed good company and adventures, whether this was at home, at family parties, eating out or on holidays. Brenda was an active woman who did most of her own DIY and decorating. She was an enthusiastic sculptor, entering work into local exhibitions. She was also a member of the Spiritualist Church where she made some life-long friends. Brenda was a proud mother to Paul and mother-in-law to Jackie. She was a loving Nana to Adam, Elliot and Gemma, and to their partners, Claire, Sasha and Martyn. Her two great grand-daughters, Erin and Eliette, gave her much pleasure during the last few years when her health was declining and she was losing her sight.

Family mattered a lot to Brenda and she kept a keen interest in the lives of her nephew, Peter, his wife, Marguerite and their daughters, Danielle, Melanie and Justine. She was also very proud to follow the career of cousin Marlene. Even at the age of 99, she lived independently (with Charlie the Budgie!) in her own flat. Before lockdown she would always be on her feet, offering sandwiches and biscuits to visitors and during lockdown she was always ready for a telephone chat.

She will always be remembered for her welcoming smile and caring nature.



You can remember her and only that she's gone
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.

David Harkins



***"Bye, everyone!
I've had a good do,
and I'm off now"***



You can shed tears that she is gone
or you can smile because she has lived

David Harkins