

JUNE 14 2023

**POINTER Lynne Rosemary**

Passed away peacefully on the 31st May 2023,  
aged 77 years.

She will be sadly missed by all of her family and friends.

Funeral service to take place at  
South Oxfordshire Crematorium, Garford  
on Friday 30th June at 12noon.

No Flowers. Donations in lieu to Maggies  
may be made on the day or may be sent  
c/o Peter Smith & Son Funeral Directors Ltd,  
135 Burwell Drive, Witney, Oxon, OX28 5LP.

Tel: 01993 702000.

Lynne Rosemary Pointer was born on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1946 in Thorpe, a village suburb of Norwich, in a house built mainly by her Father and Uncle after WW2. The 23<sup>rd</sup> of April is St Georges Day and she apparently narrowly missed being Christened Georgina, for which she remained eternally grateful.

Her two older brothers, Rodney and Eric gave Lynne her earliest memory of lying in a pram, seeing them looking down at her with a cherry tree Blooming in the background. They were amazingly long suffering and supportive to a much younger sister, particularly after she had a major accident. One of her most treasured possessions is a book they made by hand recounting the adventures of Lindy Bear and her Teddy Bear which accompanied her in her recuperation. Sometimes if Eric was charged with delivering a Telegram in the village, Lynne would accompany him as he told her stories along the way.

When Lynne was 4, the family moved to a small village, Field Dalling in North Norfolk, where her father Reginald and mother Florrie ran the village shop and Post Office. This involved long hours and hard work delivering papers and food orders around the villages.

The shop was an ever-interesting centre of village life along with the school and the pub. The shop windows displayed posters advertising social events such as Whist Drives, Scout and Girl Guide meetings and very occasionally a cup, if the village cricket team or football team had won.

From an early age all 3 siblings helped out in the shop. After school they might be found weighing goods which came in bulk in those days, into smaller amounts ready for the next day. For example, large blocks of Cheddar were cut with a cheese wire and gave Lynne problems when starting geometry at Grammar school. Her father would say “No you want a bigger angle for half a pound”, so Lynne thought that angles and degrees were a measure of weight. Behind the Post Office counter was a large chest of many small drawers, each containing spices and small items. Lynne measured her growth by being able to reach the next row up.

Her father also had a habit of privately giving people nick names such as “Lisa Hutt” who became “Renta Shed”. One summer, the village had a locum vicar and Lynne was worried that she would be alone in the shop if the locum should call. She had to be polite and say

“Good morning Reverend....” But was his real name “Tugwell” or “Pullgood”??

The Primary School was small, about 40 pupils at most. True to form at age 6, being asked to knit with thick needles and dish cloth cotton she soon put these away and picked up a book instead. She has hardly ever been without a book to hand since.

One teacher in particular inspired the school with a love of folk tales and put on a performance of a Mummers Play. Lynne was the Turkish Knight in a turban made from a cushion cover and a stick-on moustache which she twirled in the manner of Terry Thomas in an Ealing Comedy. These films were a family favourite.

The whole school was involved in a pageant, especially written by Mrs Greenwood for the 1953 Coronation. Such an event had never happened in the history of the school before.

Fakenham Grammar School also gave more dramatic experience thanks to another inspirational Teacher, Mr Appleton. Usually there was an annual Shakespeare production and another more “modern” play which were at best late 19<sup>th</sup> century pieces. Her first English lessons were enthralling, as another teacher read T H White’s book “The Sword in the Stone”.

The now battered copy given to her that Christmas shows how often it has been read. It gave Lynne a lifelong love of the legends of Merlin and King Arthur.

Years later in a way of serendipity, Lynne was given a lift in Tasmania and noticed the driver had a historical novel about Merlin for his wife. A conversation followed and led to spending days on their boat around the island, ending with a spectacular sunset under Hobart Bridge.

The family moved to the Norfolk Broads and Lynne attended North Walsham High School where she frequently joined a group visiting the Maddermarket Theatre in Norwich, renowned for its Shakespeare productions in a small version of The Globe, built 50 years before the London Globe Theatre opened. These tickets were organised and often paid for by the head of English.

Other teachers engendered a love of History and Art.

Domestic Science was less popular with Lynne as there seemed an emphasis on theory rather than actually sewing. Lynne’s mother, an accomplished needlewoman had taught her how to sew clothes, embroidery, and smocking skills which she has always valued, and enjoyed using for the rest of her life.

At North Walsham she also met Ruth Featherstone, lifelong friend, and whose family warmly embraced Lynne after her mother’s death. An abiding memory was waking up one morning after a sleep over at Ruth’s to see an O gauge model steam locomotive trundling along a garden railway loop around an apple tree outside.

Models had always been an attraction. On childhood visits to Norwich Castle Museum, if Lynne got separated from the family, she was to be found looking at the tabletop model of medieval Norwich.

Railways were now added to the list of interests and remained one of her preferred ways of travelling all her life. She never forgave Dr Beeching and Co for closing

the Midland and Great Northern Lines to passengers, so she could not get to school by train as her brothers had done.

Exams were a mixed blessing and Lynne's school record was variable. North Walsham had a daring policy of allowing the pupils to vote for the year's prefects – the in-house Police. When Lynne was elected Deputy Head Prefect the Headmistress dryly remarked "Set a thief to catch a thief".

Lynne was not clear what courses college had to offer. In the 60's careers advice for girls was nursing or teaching until one got married. So, working on the principle that whatever one did well at A level was what you did next, Lynne qualified as an English Teacher, specialising in the 8-13 age range.

Once in London in the "swinging sixties" she discovered there were courses in Scandinavian Studies, covering the language, literature, history, and archaeology which she would have loved, but unfortunately did not have the correct A-levels for. However, she made up for this in retirement by pursuing what a friend called a "Self-taught PhD in Nordic Studies", teaching herself to read Norwegian, Old Norse, Danish and Swedish.

Curiosity led Lynne to joining a group of fellow students in the buying of an old London bus for travels through Europe and onto Asia. Single decker, not like Cliff Richard's film, as they wanted to be able to drive through Swiss tunnels into Italy. Each member of the group had to have a specific job. It was obvious what the medical student was in charge of, and Lynne remembers that the economist handled the complicated finances – no euro then- using the Irish Punt as the base currency which was then strong. At every border the members surrendered their coins and were doled out their "pocket money" in the next currency.

Given that Lynne's degree was strong on Old and Middle English she was appointed the translator. She used "Teach yourself Turkish" but found a mixture of elementary French and German with outrageous mime got the meaning across. It was not always successful. In one small Turkish town for example, the railway station looked as if it had been deserted for years. Lynne understood this from her "conversation" with a local. It was hard to say who was more surprised at 2am the next morning: The group sleeping scattered along the platforms or the driver of the large freight locomotive steaming through.

Marriage to Phil took them to Exeter, where interest in traditional music was rekindled. After 5 years, a shortage of Maths and Science teachers drew them to Oxfordshire via a tempting monetary offer. They were able to put down a deposit on their first house and Phil purchased a very large greenhouse for his cacti and succulents. One of the local Constabulary was convinced that behind its white shaded panes Phil was growing cannabis. The conversation during which Phil

answered all his questions truthfully without revealing exactly what he was growing gave much pleasure.

They soon found the Witney Folk Club, meeting at the Bell Inn in Ducklington – well known for the standard of its regulars, Pam Ayres among them – and the lively inhouse Mummings plays and Pantomimes. The club also organised many Ceilidhs and a memorable one-hour radio show for Radio Oxford. The success of this was celebrated in style with a barrel of beer and Chad's elderberry wine, which almost proved fatal to some. The memories of the music, fun and friendship of those years remained strong for Lynne.

After some years teaching, itchy feet got the better of Lynne and she took a year off to travel. She sold the house and packed a rucksack and from then on was always ready for a trip at a moments notice. One year became nearly three as she back packed her way up the Himalaya, down South East Asia, on to Australia, New Zealand and South America. She had plans to settle in New Zealand, but didn't have the correct subjects for the available teaching vacancies. However she loved her time there and from the start felt it to be another home, especially Devonport, Auckland.

Again, friends for life were made.

During a New Zealand flu epidemic Lynne answered a cry for help from a local school and taught there for a term. When she queried her lack of official paperwork, she was told that the Education Department computer in Auckland did not talk to the Employment Department computer in Wellington so not to worry, Kiwi practicality.

A colleague's husband ran a market garden and brought in a variety of tropical fruits that they were experimenting in growing and breeding.

So morning break was enlivened by "How to attack something unknown and exotic". After that, the Kiwi fruit in the UK were nothing, compared to the misshapen but vine ripened ones she became accustomed to.

One of her best jobs had been working as cook-cum-deckhand on the Te Aroha out of Auckland, delivering provisions, animals, passengers and generator oil to and from the coast and islands of the Hauraki Gulf.

This was again serendipity.

She arrived on the quayside to look up a friend and discovered her being loaded into an Ambulance having injured herself in a fall. Over a mug of tea with the Skipper she was offered the job in her friend's place and sailed off the next day on NZ's oldest working vessel.

One special trip was the loading and then unloading by hand, of hundreds of Kauri saplings to repopulate a small island nature reserve with these special slow

growing native trees. Another trip helped her learn how to offload a pregnant Nanny Goat into a rowing boat with no jetty or pier.

She also hiked extensively, skied wherever she could, including down and active volcano in a white-out, and enjoyed the folk music and Morris Dancing scene.

Lynne returned to the UK and took up teaching again while studying at home for a degree with the Open University. She was one of the first cohorts to study online, studying mainly Social Sciences and early IT, although it took about 30 minutes to get online through a specially installed BT socket.

She found the courses interesting and was amused at the Summer schools to see 40 and 50 year old throwing off the traces of behaving as she had as a student 20 years before.

Somehow with Morris Dancing, Trekking and Folk Festivals, the years passed in a happy and rewarding fashion.

She managed to buy a small inconvenient house in Bampton and with skilled help from friends, gradually made it habitable. After 30 years the stairs remain unfinished, which will surprise no one.

Not finishing something before embarking on the next has always been a feature of Lynne's life. There always seemed some concert in Norway or art exhibition in Helsinki that got in the way.

By chance she got involved in developing programmes of study with other teachers and ended her working life as an Educational Consultant helping teachers avoid the mistakes made in the way Mathematics had been taught to her.

Retirement led to perhaps one of the richest stages of her life. 15 years full of music, dance, patchwork, books, travel, museums, art galleries, theatre, festivals and much fun with friends.

The languages, literature, art and music of the Nordic countries, and courses from Oxford University gave the impetus for many trips by rail and boat wherever possible.

On a Faroese boat to Iceland she was offered meals in the crew's mess and, as the only UK passenger, had a great time learning unusual phrases in the Scandinavian languages. She enjoyed using these in more polite circles later on.

Oslo, Goteborg, Fredrikstad, Helsinki and Copenhagen joined Sidmouth as other of her 'Home Towns'.

In Bampton she enjoyed helping save the local library from closure, and being involved with the SPAJERS charity whose events are fun, legendary, and unique to a village with a strongly supportive community. Even a short trip to the shops

invariably involves a chat with a neighbour. Many of these were especially helpful and supportive during her last illness, for which she was ever grateful.