

Sheila Crooks (1921 - 2014)

Sheila was born in the West Midlands and as a child spent many happy hours on her grandparents' farm where she developed her love of animals. She moved to Suffolk when her father took over the White Horse pub at Holbrook. During the war she met and married Peter Crooks and after he was demobbed they moved to Fynn View in Tuddenham where sons Bernard & Jim were born. Sheila lived there for over 60 years

Here is an extract of the tribute paid to her by her Grandson John:

Throughout their time together Grandma & Grandad developed their love of gardening and flowers, and even bee keeping. - until Grandma got on the wrong side of the bees!! Fuchsias were a large part of their lives with Grandad being a keen shower at flower festivals and show. After his death in 1983, Grandma, demonstrating her determined nature, carried on in fuchsia world on her own to show that she could do it. She went on to develop her own varieties including the "Sheila Crooks" and, needless to say she was very good at it if the number of trophies in her home were anything to go by!

Grandma always kept very busy and in her 60s she started running respite care at her home, looking after the elderly. She did this well into her 70s - sometimes caring for people who were younger than her! - but that was Grandma, always looking after everyone else and never asking help for herself.

Being very keen on village life she entered into most things - whether it was donkey rides with Gilbert at the village fete, collecting jumble with the donkey, or the thousands of cakes and hours put in for the WI and Over 60S club.

Grandma has been a feature of Tuddenham life for nearly 70 years - she made an effort to meet people and hardly anyone she met came away empty handed - either the infamous marrows or other garden produce- but that was her generous nature.

Grandma never let age dictate what she could do - still gallivanting round the country lanes with her dog or snapping a garden fork in two digging up some stubborn frozen leeks (at age 92!) She was constantly on the go, looking after others, the dog and the garden. She was a great inspiration and will be missed.

I think her last diary entry sums up her attitude to life –

"Jim & Bernard working together on shoot
Day spent in greenhouse - sprouts are up!
Fish & chips for tea"

