

# Margaret Astridge

1942 - 2012



Margaret was born in the Channel Islands in 1942; the only child of Sid & Bunny Strickland. She moved to Ilminster as a child and went to the junior school.

In 1957 she learnt to ring with Mary Smith at Ilminster and surrounding towers. She was elected to the Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers in 1980 and became Secretary of the Crewkerne Branch in 1982.

It was while she was ringing at Curry Rivel that she met Derek, and was married in 1987. I had the honour of being their best man. After the wedding they moved to live in their house 'Pegasus' at Huish Episcopi.

It was through his Italian connections with his work on helicopters that Derek got involved in Italian exchanges.

I think that at that time they were based at Somerton, but later Margaret became regional organiser for Somerset, Dorset and Shropshire, hosting foreign students. The link with Italy meant trips to Tuscany on bell ringing tours.

It was in March 2000 that we learnt of the death of Derek while on holiday in Brindisi, Italy. It was a sad occasion but they had been happily married for 13 years. It really was a perfect match. Margaret and Derek were keen on similar things and supported each other in so many ways and in different ventures.

Margaret continued to live at 'Pegasus' and was very keen on her garden, and was fully involved in community life as a bell ringer, a friend of Langport Church, member of the Mothers' Union and a friend of Langport Medical Centre. This indicates the sort of person she was, loving, kind, and caring; always concerned about other people.

Margaret was a trustee of the Edna Grabham Educational Fund from 1993, and rang many quarters at Huish Episcopi, Langport, Drayton, and Curry Rivel.

The past two years were very difficult for her. She developed a lung infection, and died just before Christmas; a sad end to the life of a kind, loving and very talented person. She will be sorely missed.

EDWARD HANCOCK  
Ringing Master, Crewkerne Branch