THORPE HAMLET HISTORY GROUP

Article 12 : EULOGY FOR JUNE MARRIAGE
By Barbara Miller

A version of this article was published in St. Matthew's Church Magazine for October/November 2018. The eulogy was delivered by Barbara at June's funeral at the Rosary Cemetery on 9th September 2018

June had a happy childhood in an unusual household. As well as her parents the small house was shared with her grandfather and twin uncles. Jim told me: "l don't know how they all got in and I never asked!". Leaving school early, June was first a Nursery Nurse and nursing was to be her life-long calling. Later she qualified as a nurse and then a health visitor enjoying the work and the study to achieve better qualifications.

June had a questing mind. When she, Jim and the family settled in Norwich she threw herself wholeheartedly into the life of both Norwich and the village of Thorpe Hamlet, the area of the city to which she devoted so much of her time and expertise, writing regular articles for the parish magazine and supporting St. Matthews church with practical commitment. Thorpe Hamlet is interesting and retains something of a village atmosphere while being part of the city.

The regular articles she wrote have been drawn into a book, now part of the city's archive. They are varied, succinct and warm produced by a woman who loved her fellow men but abhorred triviality. This was sorely tested by Jim's devotion to the Canaries, for June thought sport a waste of time! June loved her family, Anne, Michael, Philip and the grandchildren and I know she was a loving, supportive mother and an interesting, inventive and fun grand-mother. It was June's love of history, in particular the history of Norwich, that led her to study for a history degree at UEA and to graduate with honours. Before embarking on her UEA studies, June and Jim had become Blue Badge guides for the city which they enjoyed together.

When June could no longer tramp the streets as a guide she became the Queen of the coach tours, using routes devised by Jim to circumvent road works and traffic restrictions in the city. June's kind and generous nature meant she accepted people as they were and with her ready sense of humour she forgave much.

Another intense interest June and Jim shared was their work for the War Memorial Trust, and for their research they travelled all over the county to find neglected memorials hidden in churches and parish halls. When an invitation to Clarence House came in recognition of their work and research June was quite at home chatting to Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, as if to an old friend. As Jim said: "she could talk to anyone". She was willing to go the extra mile for the causes she cared about and so willingly dressed up as Mrs. Toppes for open days at Dragon Hall. There they supported Chris Barringer as part of the King Street History Group. What a wonderful life June and Jim have had,

secure in their love for one another, rejoicing in their family, able to pursue all their varied interests. When June's devastating stroke robbed her of her mobility, her work for Muscular Dystrophy and her compassion for both the children and adults she met who grapple with that debilitating disease may have helped her cope. Jim cared for her wonderfully and said: “although she did not do much for some weeks before she died except sleep, I miss her terribly”.

It is right that June will lie here in the Rosary, near her home and overlooking the city she loved, enfolded in the heart of Thorpe Hamlet. We miss June, her ready smile, her sparkling blue eyes and aura of white hair, her huge knowledge generously shared, her sense of humour and her humanity. I don't think June lost her faith, I think she lived it.

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