

Dr Dorothy Pearson (15th August 1924 – 12th March 2012)

Dorothy lived in Whaley Bridge since 1966. I met her **father** once, a retired engine driver, who spent his last years in the former Anisca nursing home in Whaley Lane to be near her.

For 20 years we were **neighbours**. Dorothy's and Catherine's house, Ekaby, looked out across the road known as 'Meadowfield' over the garden of my house which was in Hockerley Lane. At first, we exchanged chats about **gardening**, an interest that we had in common. A year later I was introduced to the new Whaley Bridge **Amenity Society** by the Society's first Chairman, Dr John Henshaw. A little more about the Amenity Society later.

Dorothy's work within the Parish of Whaley Bridge encompassed **many interests**. At Taxal Church, **this church**, she was an assistant churchwarden, and sang in the choir. She served on the management committee for the parish rooms at Holy Trinity. Dorothy was a lifelong **Labour Party** member – like her great friend Catherine Harlow the former Vice-Chairman of Derbyshire County Council. Dorothy herself was a local **Town Councillor**. She served one term for the Furness Vale division. But one term on Whaley Bridge Town Council was enough, even for someone with Dorothy's determination and commitment! Dorothy was a supporter of **Helping Hand**, which provided practical support to those in need.

Dorothy was a long-time Governor and some-time Chairman at the **Peak School** in Chinley, and a member of Soroptomist International (the worldwide service organisation for professional and business women) and of the Whaley Bridge **Allotment and Gardeners' Society**.

Returning to **Whaley Bridge Amenity Society**: Dorothy was a Founder Member in 1967. For over 40 years she was a Member of the Executive Committee, and served as our Honorary Treasurer, and Chairman for many years. Last year, at our Annual General meeting, Dorothy was elected **President** by acclamation. She was a team worker encouraging others to step forward and to become involved. Over the years, we became a Registered Charity, acquired the Club Room in Old Road, promoted the listing of Listed Buildings, campaigned for the Whaley Bridge Conservation Area, carried out dozens of Litter Picks, and River Clean ups, campaigned for the Meadowfield Initiative (the traffic-free walk from Dorothy's house along the stream to the Children's Recreation Ground in Jodrell Road, and its subsequent extension through Hockerley New Road to Hockerley

Tunnel and the Canal Basin), and developed and maintained the integrity of the beautiful Public Rights of Way (PROW) network within the Parish.

Dorothy was an **assiduous worker** at Saturday-morning **Coffee Mornings** at the Mechanics Institute raising funds for causes in Whaley Bridge and beyond. Coffee mornings in Whaley Bridge are an 'institution' – for many an important part of their **social life** and of their **community engagement**; I notice many here today who need no reminding of what I am about to say. Dorothy planned and executed Coffee Mornings to the last detail. Often first in the queue on a cold morning outside the Mechanics, when many would still be in bed, she would be able to book the dates in the forthcoming year that she wanted. She would continually be on the look-out for raffle prizes. She organised helpers on the day. The unloading of her car in Market Street on a Saturday morning and the ferrying of baskets and boxes into the Mechanics, and three hours later the reverse operation were memorable sights. Cakes, jams and the legendary St. Ann's Chutney produced revenue for the St. Ann's Hospice in Heald Green (established 1971) and later the East Cheshire Hospice in Macclesfield (established 1988) and local charities and organisations.

One of Dorothy's patients was a little boy from Whaley Bridge. Forty years ago, he was detected with cancer aged 2. Following his recovery from a four-hour operation at the old Royal Manchester Children's Hospital at Pendlebury in the summer of 1971, he was transferred to Dorothy's care at Christies. There he received radiation followed by many periods of in-patient chemotherapy treatment over the following two years. Last year, now aged 42, he brought joy to Dorothy when he and his wife and their one-year old son (my grandson) paid Dorothy a visit.

Many will treasure the friendship and love of a hard working member of the community of Whaley Bridge.

Thank you, Dorothy.

29th March 2012

John Pritchard (Chairman: Whaley Bridge Amenity Society)