

## Ivy Benfield 1918 - 2008

Ivy Himpsom was born on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1918 at Ascott Park, Stadhampton, Oxfordshire. She was one of twelve children and grew up in Sunningwell, Oxfordshire. As a young woman she moved to Milton-under-Wychwood to take up a post 'in service' at a house in Frog Lane. It was here that she met her first husband, Don Pittaway, from Shipton-under-Wychwood. The couple were married in Sunningwell Church on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1940.



It was in Cirencester that Ivy gave birth to their daughter Georgina (Gina). In 1947 Don returned to his trade as a cabinet maker at the 'Till Yard', Station Road and Ivy, Don and Gina moved back to Shipton-under-Wychwood to set up home in Meadow Lane. This idyllic life was brought to an abrupt end in September 1964 when Don died suddenly from a brain tumour. Ivy was 46 and Gina was 20.

Ivy then needed to find work and was fortunate to be offered a position in the offices of FWP Matthews Ltd of Shipton-under-Wychwood. Office life was new to Ivy but she relished her new environment and enjoyed meeting customers.

It was here that Ivy met her second husband, Philip Benfield, of Ascott-under-Wychwood. Philip, like Ivy, had been recently widowed. They were married at Chipping Norton registry office on Valentine's Day 1970 to the delight of Gina and Philip's son David. Philip moved over to Meadow Lane

where the couple spent a further nineteen happy years, continuing to work at 'the Mill' until their retirement. At home, Philip took over the vegetable garden whilst Ivy concentrated on her flowers and took up painting. In 1989 they moved to a more manageable bungalow in Ascott-under-Wychwood. Philip died five years later in 1994 at the age of 81.

Sadly Ivy did not reach a silver wedding anniversary with either Don or Philip, both marriages ending after 24 years. However, Ivy always said that she was fortunate in having had two good husbands. She maintained a positive approach to life and a mischievous sense of humour and was always well presented, and a pleasure to meet and to spend time with.

From her 82<sup>nd</sup> year Ivy battled with Alzheimer's disease but she remained good humoured and considerate to others and enjoyed her weekly trips to the day centre at Shipton's Beaconsfield Hall and the new friends she made there.

As her illness progressed, Ivy was well supported in her own home by the Wychwood Surgery, community nurses, carers from the home support service and Age Concern Flexible Care and her family. Ivy enjoyed everyone's visits and shared many of her happy early memories with them. Ivy was dearly loved by her family and will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

**Gina Murphy**