

## **SIMON PLEYDELL-BOUVERIE (1928–2012)**



was born in London on 24 April 1928, the son of the Hon Bartholemew Pleydell-Bouverie and Lady Doreen Clare Hely-Hutchinson. His mother was killed during the war when he was about 15 and later his father remarried an American. Simon and his sister went to live in Westbury, Long Island for the duration of the war. On his return to Britain he went to school at Harrow and did his national service with the Life Guards Regiment which he hated. He was serving in Palestine when the British pulled out in May 1948.

He spent three happy years at Cambridge and joined Cooper Brothers to qualify as a chartered accountant.

The rest of his working life was spent in various businesses, mainly co-owning a small manufacturing company specialising in building small furnaces and kilns where he ran the financial side. When that business moved to Bletchley the family moved to Deddington in 1965. His last job was with Norbar in Banbury.

He married Vivien Eleanor Keane in 1961. They had four children, Grania, David (Archie), Juliet and Alice, and there are eight grandchildren. He was a true gentleman, considerate, loving and generous, kind, principled and full of integrity. He was a real family man and was at his happiest when he was surrounded by his extended family. He was also loyal to his many friends. He loved anything American, particularly burgers and ice-cream and delighted in treating his young children to cream teas.

In his earlier life he played tennis and was a member of the All England Lawn Tennis Club. He was a passionate golfer and knew his way around the UK, not by towns and villages or even motorways or pubs, but by golf clubs. He was hopelessly impractical, whether helping with the shopping, changing an electric plug or packing the car.

During his recent illness he never complained and was fortunate to have been able to spend a holiday in North Berwick with the extended family.

*Vivien, Grania, Archie, Juliet and Alice*

## **VIVIEN PLEYDELL-BOUVERIE (1940–2016)**

Vivien was born to Sir Richard Keane and his wife Olivia, followed by brothers, Charles and David. With her father in North Africa, the family moved to Cappoquin, Donegal, to live with her paternal grandparents. Her father's service obligations finished in 1948, they moved into Cappoquin House and bought a home in London.

While Charles went to boarding school, Vivien's education was left to a series of governesses and her love of reading. Otherwise it was a life full of self-reliance, catching and skinning rabbits and riding and hunting ponies: most famously a Connemara called Bluebell (not allowed to be ridden until she had pulled the milk cart round Cappoquin on the daily round) and a beautiful skewbald known simply as The Pie.



Finally, at 13, she, too, went to school, at Downham. After the relative isolation of Cappelton, she initially found the company of so many girls her own age daunting, but academically caught up in a year. However, her very good brain was not to be challenged beyond 16 when she was sent to a finishing school in a remote corner of Denmark where she was the only foreigner and no one spoke English. Here she learned to speak Danish, care for babies and cook very skilfully. She then acquired some secretarial skills, did the Season (in the last group of girls to be presented at Court), worked for an MP and met Simon. Twelve years her senior, he was very much a gentleman about town, allowing himself an annual budget for taking girls out to dinner. Within a few weeks he had blown the lot on Vivien who reciprocated by agreeing to marry him. For the next 51 years they were hardly ever apart.

They married at Chelsea Old Church when Vivien had just turned 21. Grania was born the following year and Archie two years later. In 1965 they moved to Deddington where Juliet and Alice followed quickly. They settled into the familiar pattern of Simon's work, raising the family, schools, Brownies and Guides. The year always seemed to be marked by Cheltenham, Wimbledon, summer at Gregganore in North Berwick and Christmas in Ireland. There were always lots of ponies and lots of sport. In keeping with the family's competitive spirit, Vivien finally overcame her early disdain of golf, going on to become a ruthless strategic player for whom the score, not style, was all important.

As the children grew up, Vivien took tremendous pride in their many achievements. She was their champion and fierce protector and never stopped caring for them, even in her last days, and she especially loved spending time at Gregganore in the company of a throng of grandchildren to whom she strove. As the children grew up, Vivien took tremendous pride in their many achievements. She was their champion and fierce protector and never stopped caring for them, even in her last days, and she especially loved spending time at Gregganore in the company of a throng of grandchildren to whom she strove to impart her high standards.

Vivien cared passionately about Ireland in general and the countryside in particular. To broaden her horizons, her mother gave her the first volume of Stella Ross-Craig's masterwork *Drawings of British Plants* and Vivien went on to collect all 31 volumes, containing over 1300 plates of exquisite botanical line drawings of all Britain's flora. It became her lifelong hobby to find as many of these plants as possible and then colour the plates from life, using watercolour. It reflected so much of her personality: dedication to the cause, tenacity, adventurousness, enthusiasm, competitiveness, energy, sense of humour and fun, and above all her love of nature.

Her other passion was Guiding. She became involved in 1969 as District Commissioner for Deddington, having had no previous experience of Guiding. She held numerous posts, beginning in 1983 as County Commissioner for Oxfordshire, and subsequently chair of finance for Anglia Region, chair of finance for the whole Guide Association, and President of the Anglia Region. For her services she was given a Laurel Award for Services to Guiding and later an MBE. Locally, she ran the Deddington Brownies from 1973 until 2001, as well taking on temporary positions to avoid other units closing. Castle House hosted the Guide Shop for many years, as well as countless events, meetings, trainings, garden parties, fund-raising events and camps.

She was stoic through her final period with cancer, never complaining and, if asked, always made light of any discomfort, an attitude which, as a neighbour commented, 'makes it easy for us'.

*David Keane and Vivienne Smith*