

IRENE CLARK (1918-2015)



Irene, or Rene as she was always known, was born in Culworth in 1918. She was one of a family of 12 children, with Kit, Edna and Billy as her only surviving siblings. When she was old enough, she went into service as many girls did back then. It was during this time that she met Henry, better known as Joffa. They were married when she was just 16 years of age and they remained faithful and happy for many, many years until Joffa died.

Life was not easy for Rene. She had to bring up three of her children on her own while Joffa was away at war. They had only a tiny cottage with no kitchen and barely any living space. She managed, however, and despite being strict with her children which, under the circumstances, was probably necessary, they agreed that she was loving, kind and as generous as she could be.

Eventually, in 1947, the family moved to The Paddocks where they had more space and a better environment to grow. Christmas it seems, was a particularly happy time at The Paddocks, when the family enjoyed many Christmas parties that were especially joyful and happy occasions. Rene also knew how to enjoy herself. During the war when she was able to let her hair down, she loved to dance and have a social life. She was a pretty good card player and enjoyed going to whist drives. Her special talent though was playing Scrabble – a game she enjoyed right up to the end.

Rene has also left the remarkable legacy of her family. She had four children, eight grandchildren, a staggering 18 great-grandchildren and more recently, two great-great-grandchildren, all of whom she loved dearly. Rene moved to Holly Cottages about 20 years ago, and it is there that she ended her days on 2 March, quietly, with some of her family around her. She brought such love to her family. When I met with them they agreed that they were truly fortunate to have had her for their Mum.

Revd Annie