

A Celebration of the life of

Judith Margaret Lamle
14 January 1947 – 20 March 2024

8 April 2024, Grenoside Crematorium
Celebrant: Hannah McKerchar



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Judith was the first child of Gwen and Ken Roebuck, born on 14th January 1947 and not joined by her siblings Peter and Sue until seven and eight years later. Her little brother and sister struggled to pronounce Judith, and instead christened her 'Boot', a moniker that continued into adulthood, much to Judith's annoyance at times. The three of them all grew up in Kitchenroyd, going out on walks through the countryside with their dad. That inspired a love of nature in Judith that informed both her life and her art, and she was always an enthusiastic walker, armed with a stick not for support but to prod things and investigate the undergrowth. She knew all the plants and trees, and delighted in pointing out rare finds to any companion.

Judith's artistic temperament was evident from a young age; her collection of Just William books were all adorned with doodles and scribbles and practice sketches in the margins, and she would carefully construct beautiful models, which she could always rely on her younger brother and sister to barrel in and destroy! Judith was a well-behaved student for her piano teacher Miss Hopton in Cawthorne, and worked hard at school too.

One of her oldest friends, Celia, wrote:

We first met at Scissett Church of England School and found ourselves in Miss Pear's "top group" expected to pass our 11 Plus. Always in trouble for talking too much, we had plenty of ruler reprimands across our hands. Both of us chose Penistone Grammar School, and started our secondary school journey travelling on the daily special school bus, sometimes being very daring and not wearing our berets!

Judith soon began to develop as an artist, her talent being fully recognised by our art teacher Mr Senior. Our friendship blossomed and we began spending most of our spare time in each other's company. Best Friends! We loved walking, experimenting with nail varnish and make-up, and, of course, talking about boys. Annual event of Skelmanthorpe Feast was the place to hang around the waltzer and the Caterpillar wearing your best clothes and posh shoes usually sinking into the mud!

In 1961 we went on holiday together, with my parents, to Rhyl. We made lots of friends in our hotel, including Glenda Philips, who was in the Welsh national swimming team, so we went to the championships cheering her along, and we all bought blow-up gonks!

*We were both very musical and I have vivid memories of us round the piano at Kitchenroyd, Judith playing and both of us singing duets and solos from some books of Gilbert & Sullivan, with highlights of all the popular operas. Who would have thought that we would find ourselves, almost sixty years later, treading the boards at the Lawrence Batley Theatre with the Huddersfield Gilbert & Sullivan Society in *The Gondoliers* (this time I'm a Duchess) and *Pirates of Penzance*.*

*As soon as we were allowed, we both joined Scissett Amateur Operatic Society, throwing ourselves enthusiastically into *Oklahoma* as our first show. Adding to that we joined Joe Hirst's Concert party, performing in all sorts of venues. Judith's speciality number, which she sang very seductively, was Gershwin's "Do Do Do What You've Done, Done, Before, Baby!" To be honest, I was a bit envious, as I always had the comedy songs to sing!*

Although so many years have passed, and we have not met as much as we should have done, all those memories are special.

I have just taken out my old autograph album from 1960. Here Judith has drawn a pen picture and this is her message to me:

*Leaves may wither
Flowers may die
Friends may forget you
But never will I*

Saying goodbye today, Judith, I will never forget you.

With love, Celia

Judith went on from grammar school to study at Huddersfield School of Art, and then Leeds (though she always said that her preference for fine art was not modern enough for the Leeds school), before training at Bretton College. Judith was always something of a free spirit, accepting a commission to paint the Charlotte Rhodes sailing ship and ending up sailing on it over to Holland to present the picture (and, rumour would have it, to paint a portrait of the Dutch Queen).

That story may be difficult to corroborate, but Judith used to tell her own tale of her first encounter with Peter Lamle; she was 17, he 21, and they met in a nightclub where Judith was singing, vivid in a gold lamé dress. The two of them fell in love, and enjoyed many adventures while courting, including travels across Europe (with a chaperone, of course, Judith's friend from Bretton, 'Lynn Pin'). They would load up the Mini with camping equipment and all squeeze in, bunking up with the Austrian army at one point, and going as far afield as Yugoslavia, where Judith and Lynn caused outrage amongst the old women of the village for attempting to go to the supermarket in their bikinis!

Judith and Peter had a passionate relationship, and fortunately both believed in the benefits of healthy debate. Peter was also supremely protective of Judith, and always did all he could to look after her. They married on 7th September 1968 in Scissett; Peter's Tante Lotte and Edeltraud came over from Germany specially and made it into the local paper as the 'Flying Aunts'! Judith and Peter went over to Germany for their honeymoon, having already been regular visitors to Peter's family over there. In fact it was there that Peter got Judith's beautiful opal engagement ring.

Judith had been working in Wakefield as an art teacher, and when Peter's work took the two of them down to Norfolk, and they settled in Ormsby-St-Margaret, she found work at The Hospital School. She didn't just take lessons there, also joining in with the after-school ballroom dancing classes, and taking students down to London for art competitions. Judith strongly associated with the labour movement, and was active within the Labour party in Norfolk; she had strongly-held opinions, and could be a force to be reckoned with. She continued with her own art too, and landed herself a London exhibition in her own right, at the Hahn gallery on Albemarle Street. Judith became good friends with another teacher at the Hospital School, Marilyn, who she asked to be godmother when Judith and Peter became delighted parents to Sophie. Judith was keen to be nearer to her own family, so they moved back to Yorkshire when Sophie was small, along with Judith's cat Charlotte, one of several feline companions she loved and enjoyed over the years.

Judith and Peter's first foray into business together involved home-made candles, which he had started making in Norfolk, and which proved very popular during the miners' strike; when they landed a large order from Boots the entire kitchen was covered in wax as they worked together to fulfil it! Judith became first a governor and then a teacher at Scissett Middle (as well as doing some supply at Kirkburton), and her friend Lorraine said her own children had 'fond memories of Judi teaching them, and found her both motivational and inspiring.'

Judith and Peter also set up in business together, running a gallery first in Scissett and then Denby Dale; Peter did picture framing, and Judith produced original art and commission pieces, as well as diversifying into everything from decorative biscuit tins and jigsaws. The gallery brought new people into Judith and Peter's life, including David Price, who, along with his wife Janice, became close friends. Judith, or Judi as she always signed her pieces, was justifiably proud of her art, and was especially pleased to be invited back to Penistone School, to speak at their speech day as a successful alumna.

It wasn't always easy, running the gallery, especially when Judith suffered a brain haemorrhage – her recovery took more than a year, and it did have lasting effects. And the business took up a lot of time; Sophie would have to go there after school, and on Saturdays. But on Sundays she remembers walks in the woods, her mum still a font of knowledge about natural history. And they would curl up together to watch Corrie or University Challenge (though her mum would know all the answers), or enjoy a meal out at The Fountain. Judith was an excellent cook herself; she inherited her mum's recipes and would make all sorts of fancy pastries, as well as continuing the family tradition of chocolate eclairs. And she went all out at Christmas, very particular about the special foods they needed and the way the tree was decorated.

Judith did her best to pass on her artistic skills to her daughter, but by Sophie's own admission she was not so inclined, and submitted more than one piece of art homework without any direct input! Mother and daughter did share a love of music, both listening and playing together, Judith on piano, Sophie duetting either next to her on the ivories or playing flute or clarinet. Judith really enjoyed making music, often accompanying Sue to the Folk Club at the Pie Hall and singing soprano in the Denby Dale Ladies' Choir (as Celia mentioned, she had cut her teeth on Gilbert & Sullivan and in Scissett Operetta as a teenager). Sophie said her mum and dad were both really chilled parents; she remembers Judith picking her and her friends up from a night at The Clothiers before they should have been drinking there, and sitting up late with her laughing at the naked German of the Week on EuroTrash.

Chilled Judith may have been, but she was also very glamorous, never seen out without her hair done and a full face on. She and Peter would take Sophie on holiday over to Germany, long car journeys through France, without the benefit of air con or sat nav, but which often took them through the Dordogne and always involved plenty of good food and beautiful countryside (they did also tend to involve nudist beaches, much to Gwen's consternation the one time she accompanied them all!). Judith and Peter had good friends in Bebe and John (Judith had met Bebe at Bretton College), with whom they would go on boating holidays.

Bebe and John recalled a lovely time with Judith and Peter, on their boat cruising the canals of France. They moored near a picturesque garden and lake, and Judith went off to explore, striking up a conversation with a lovely French family. As a result of this chat, all four of them were invited for morning coffee on the family's terrace the next day, as well as for a meal at the restaurant they owned, all because of Judith's way with people. As they gradually wound their gallery down, Judith and Peter enjoyed more days away, to the Dales, or to the races at Ripon, or Wetherby on Boxing Day.

When Sophie spread her wings, Judith and Peter visited her in London and in Oxford, Judith particularly enjoying the summer garden parties at the Oxford colleges, but she wasn't one for big cities really, and was happier when Sophie and her partner Tamer settled in Switzerland. They took the Glacier Express down to see the Matterhorn (whilst making the most of the three-course meal and wine, of course), and Judith was so excited by the view of the peak from their hotel window in Zermatt that she woke Peter at 5am to see it. She also loved to stay in Sophie and Tamer's apartment in Wengen, by the Eiger, where she did as much hiking as possible, and even tried her hand at sledging aged 70! And they visited Lake Lucerne, and explored Basel many times. However far Sophie's path took her, the connection she had with her mum remained strong; they always spoke, they always made the effort for each other, and they always remained as close as ever.

Judith had welcomed Tamer to the family ever since he and Sophie got together at 18; she loved to feed him when he came (as she did the rest of her family, though her mum and dad might have preferred she not go so heavy on the garlic!). Getting together with family over food was one of Judith's delights, at home, or out at a restaurant, or any branch of her favourite tea room, Bettie's. Judith was exceptionally proud of Sophie, and not only for her high-flying career (though she did make a point of telling everyone when her daughter was made Global Head of New Products!) but also for the woman she grew up into. She was so glad to see her happy with Tamer, and overjoyed to become a grandma to Lily, who she adored.

Sadly, for health reasons, Judith wasn't able to spend as much time with Lily as she might have liked in the last few years. But she was able to stay with her beloved Peter, Sophie and Sue making sure they could settle into Scissett Mount together, and receive all the care they each needed.

Lorraine again described Judith as 'such a talented person, not only through her beautiful art work but also for her love of music. Even in the last months of her life, it was lovely to see her still enjoying singing to Sue's ukulele accompaniment.'