

Ann Dorricott 17 September 1958 - 15 August 2003

My lovely wife, Ann, was born in Brierley Hill, in the Midlands, when her father, Sidney Booth, a Methodist minister was in charge of a church there. Although we teased her that she was a "Brummie", she really grew up in Sheffield, and was a no-nonsense Yorkshire Girl at heart - the daughter of Kathleen and Sidney who themselves were from nearby Wakefield. As Sid's ministry developed, he was called to Colwyn Bay for a season to be Superintendent Minister - and Ann went along, although vowing she didn't want to go.

Ann was always a bit of a rebel (determined rather than stubborn) so made sure she joined a different church than the one where her father was Minister. She loved her dad dearly - but didn't want to be known as "The Minister's Daughter" but as herself. It was because of this that I first met her on October 20th, 1975 during a youth weekend at Nant-y-Glyn church, during a game of musical knees! She was my first and only girl-friend – but I think I was Number 17 – well what do you expect when you live across the road from a boys boarding school and look a million dollars? Love and commitment to one another soon grew to the joyous dedication we have shared through almost 26 years of marriage - today is our anniversary.

Ann was no Academic - but she loved kids so chose to study Nursery Nursing, at Aston College in Wrexham, where she gained her NNEB qualification. It was during this time that our relationship and our love for one another grew - and we still laugh about the time she wrote to me about a handicraft project of dressing a rag doll "... and I'm making some Formica Wellies" she said, meaning, of course, Fablon - or the "Sticky Backed Plastic" of Blue Peter fame - rather than the stuff that worktops are made from. She was a keen Badminton player - and could always get the better of me in a game - we picked up the sport again here on the Island over the past two or three years: and she still beat me hollow - her smash was greatly to be feared.

We became totally in Love, and spent every possible hour together - mainly at weekends when she was home from College and I stayed with my Grandparents - as I was studying for my Forestry Degree at nearby Bangor. As penniless students we spent most of our time walking the byways and paths around Colwyn Bay - and I guess we became a regular feature kissing and canoodling on some street corner or other. It was during this time that Ann led me to the Lord - for although I'd been a regular church-attender - it was the challenge of Ann's obedience in turning away from Astrology and discarding a Zodiac ring that made me realise that the God I knew about was real and meant business. Since these times God has always meant business in Ann's life - she simply took God's word at face value and built her life and our marriage around it.

Ann and I were married at St John's Methodist Church on 20 August 1977. Typically Ann broke all the rules - we chose her dress together, and she fought to do things her way and against the accepted traditions. We even met for communion together earlier on our wedding morning so that we could privately acknowledge the God we worshipped together at the church where we'd met and were members. Ann was determined that she was having Pork Pie at her wedding do – and she did: we have a photo of her cutting it! Pork Pie – and lots of Puddings: Ann liked puddings. We were so hard up, having just finished college that our honeymoon was one night in a Travel Lodge, one night in the back of our Morris Traveller, and then home to the house we'd bought in Montrose.

As newish Christians and as newlyweds, we settled in Montrose Baptist Church whilst I began my forestry career, and Ann eventually gained a Nursery Nurse post to complete her NNEB probation in Arbroath. These were exciting times in the Kingdom of God - a new wave of the Charismatic Movement was sweeping the land and Ann and I had big visions for what God wanted to do - and were impatient to get on with it. Not understanding why so many in the church were sitting on their hands waiting to build a new church to serve a nearby Council estate, Ann and I had the opportunity to purchase a 45 seat ex-service bus. We called it "Exodus" and used it weekly to bring children in to Sunday School - and for a variety of youth, church and outreach events. We were still far from flush with funds - but Ann valued souls far more than things - so there never was a question in her mind about what was called for. Ann & I ran the church youth outreach – and soon realised the false barriers that churches could put in front of young people – so started to attend worship in jeans and causals – instead of “Suit & Tie” to make worship more accessible. - she rejoiced in the freedom that exists now to come to worship God “as you are” and without pretence.

We continued to share as much time together as possible - and this included Ann sitting in the back of the car doing sewing and housework whilst I was fixing the engine, travelling with me on my frequent work journeys - and even mucking in and hand-loading prickly Christmas Trees onto lorries going to London's Covent Garden markets: to the amazement of the rugged forestry contractors we were working with.

In 1980 Ann & I moved to Ayrshire - we used the bus to flit with - and began to plan our family. There was a heck of a tussle with our new GP when we discussed our family plans and he suggested to Ann that an early scan might give the opportunity to “reconsider” any pregnancy. Ann held strong Pro-Life views every day of her life - and mourned the tragic loss of valuable lives through abortion. Latterly, here in the island she added her voice and prayers to those seeking to prevent the legalisation of medically assisted killing. Number one Son started his journey to birth in early 1980 - but our house was far too small, and building plans had been delayed by bureaucracy. Ann simply rolled up her sleeves, pregnant or not, and got stuck into helping build the extension we needed: indeed it was whilst at the Builder's Merchants buying some plumbing fittings that she fainted - and so made us lift the lid on the pregnancy that till that time was secret!

When the family moved to West Kilbride in 1983, Ann's commitment to the family meant that she wanted to be at home and available for her children, so with a few hundred pounds, began a home based business, to which she gave her name "AFD Enterprises". It allowed her to be there for Stephen - and later Philip - but still have potential to supplement the family income. Our vision was that not only would the firm help provide for us, but would provide quality employment especially for young people in the church - and would generate funds for the Kingdom of God.

From the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s the business Ann began, was used by God to provide computing resources to a wide section of the Christian Church - with me travelling to serve customers and Ann managing family and firm back at base - which began in our loft, but grew to take over the whole house. Ann used to joke that she didn't work from home - but lived at the office! - and it was in an attempt to spend a bit of quality time together that in 1990 we took a brief sailing holiday in Majorca. Although neither Ann nor I had ever sailed a yacht before, we both loved it so much

that we began a leisure love with sailing that lasted from then till now - and which provided quality family time and adventure for her and us for 13 years.

A change of direction in 1995 gave rise to the second AFD business - AFD Software Ltd - which quickly grew as a major supplier of Postcode Software. So successful was this new firm that a takeover offer was received in 1997 - but whilst the negotiations were proceeding, Ann's father Sidney was taken ill and subsequently died. Ann always felt the loss of her dad, and this was a sad time in her memory.

The sale of AFD was cancelled, and Ann and the family left on our annual sailing holiday to recover and reflect on this difficult time. That trip brought us to the Isle of Man. We'd heard that the Island offered attractive taxation advantages - but were unsure how they might help the business, which by now was becoming very successful. It was clear that only by moving to the Island could these advantages be applied with integrity - so Ann never questioned the need to move to do so. The Island could provide a quality place in which her family could complete their education - but could provide a place in which the business could grow and flourish and provide profits to do God's work with.

The move - of house and home, family and business was hard work. Ann arrived here to get the boys started in school, whilst I stayed behind for 3 weeks to close off things in Scotland. It was the longest time in our 26 years of marriage that we were ever apart - and it was as tough on both of us as could be, because we were so much in love and missing one another.

Ann's vision for AFD has been realised - and our time on the Island has been fruitful: releasing profits for charitable work just as she planned. Ann remained "hands-on" right to her last week of health: as our resident "Rotweiler" collecting money with our credit control team, as general dogsbody and, typically unpretentious, even emptying the office wastebins. Ann never desired to live up to her means, and remained a regular watcher of charity shop bargains: and would never resist the "Reduced for Quick Sale" stand at the supermarket!

Eighteen months ago a tremendous opportunity arose - to be involved in the vision of Spring Harvest Holidays to establish a holiday site in France. Ann gave herself to this vision wholeheartedly: financially and practically. Free from day-to-day needs of her family, she was once again able to travel with me to meetings in England and to France. Typically "behind the scenes" she did dozens of little jobs - cleaning, catering, going errands, arranging travel - with dedication and joy. The compensations of having to sample some delightful French cooking (and the occasional pudding) were not lost on either of us.

This year the French project came into being when the site opened in May, just a few days after Philip & Becky's fabulous wedding here at Broadway, followed shortly afterwards by Stephen's engagement to Kath. It was a time of great happiness for Ann - the wonderful culmination of two aspects of her lifetime's work in family and firm. Our hobbies of sailing and walking remained part of Ann's life - and she walked over Ballaragh Head with me less than a week before her call home.

Three weeks ago, an accident at Whitehaven Harbour when landing from our boat, caused bruising and injury. Sharp pains in her chest, were treated by the Medics as part of that accident, whereas it is clear now that they were the first signs of the

terrible disease which had attacked her body. Further mistakes and delays in diagnosis meant that the truth of this situation was only revealed last Tuesday - and confirmed by further tests on Wednesday evening. Ann took the dreadful shock calmly. As always, she wanted the truth and faced it. Even when she realised that the disease was untreatable and she was facing death, she insisted that we be open and honest. Together we knew our final destination was certain, through the victory that Jesus won on the cross of Calvary, so as a family we were able to give her back to God and let him take His daughter home. God in his infinite mercy had undertaken in so many ways for this difficult time - and allowed her a short and peaceful final journey to be with him. Ann died and went to be with her Lord at 12:15 on Friday 15th August, knowing the love and care of the family she adored and served, and taking lots of hugs and kisses with her.....

Ann provided a warm and welcoming home and brought up a wonderful family. She was too busy for "spic and span", so gave us cosy comfort and warm, totally dedicated, love and joy. She fed the Dorricott appetites - and those of dozens of visitors with great delights of cooking that appeared from nowhere - and her Chicken Lasagne, her Cherry Scones and her Puddings and Pudding Parties were legendary.

Ann helped build her businesses on Kingdom principles - and they now serve over 5,500 organisations across Britain. They employ over 24 people, and donate enormous amounts to charity. They stand as statements of Truth and Integrity - and role models in an age of distrust and greed.

Ann gave herself to the Le Pas Opton campsite and God is now using it in mighty ways - many yet to be revealed. Ann's investment of her vision, her resources and herself in Le Pas Opton will bear rich harvest for the Kingdom of God for years to come - but already hundreds of people have been touched by God through its ministry. As news of Ann's death reached Le Pas Opton last Friday, 25 young people committed their lives to the Lord. There is profound mystery in this transaction in God's economy, but there is no shadow of doubt in my mind that the two events are part of the same.

Ann,
As Girlfriend, Wife, Lover, Companion and Friend,
As Housewife, Mother, Comforter and Protector,
As Daughter, Sister, Mum in Law, and Daughter in Law
As Colleague, Cleaner, Credit Controller, Director, Servant and Boss,
As Neighbour, Carer, and Fellow Citizen
As traveller together on the journey to Christ
You filled a big space - and we'll miss you

We remember your beauty, your determination and absolute loyalty,
We remember your dedication, faithfulness and commitment,
We remember your compassion, unselfishness and simplicity
We remember the rebel in you, your sense of fun and your laughter
We remember the warmth of your love - and your body

So..... it's hardly surprising that God wanted this wonderful Daughter be with Him
We praise God for the joy of knowing and having you for a season
And look forward to that time, when we'll meet again in Glory.

A year ago today we celebrated 25 years of marriage – then left for a surprise holiday aboard the world's largest sailing ship, Royal Clipper. Ann loved the ship - and the holiday was a highlight - for us both - of our lifetime together and, if anything, we were more in love than ever.

To make sure we could take full advantage of all the marvellous food on offer – including the puddings – we dragged ourselves out of bed early each morning for Keep Fit – usually as the ship was coming into her anchorage for the day.

The music we exercised to each day became totally evocative for us both. Ann no longer needs to work-out before enjoying her puddings – but let's listen to this track in celebration of all she meant to me....