

Miss Marjorie Scott 1914 - 2001

By Dicky Riding.



Above. Marjorie Scott at the 1999 Reunion.

Following a fall at her home at Goring, Sussex on May 6 2001 former SGS Biology teacher Marjorie Scott died in hospital on May 8 2001, aged 86.

Marjorie Beatrice Scott, the second of seven children, was born at Muswell Hill in North London on January 16 1914. She was the daughter of missionaries born while they were on furlough from Ceylon, where members of the family had served for years. In fact the family produced generations of Methodist ministers going back to the time of John Wesley and at least one son from each generation, including Marjorie's late brother Ted, was a Methodist minister.

Marjorie was educated at Trinity Hall Wesleyan Methodist School in Southport, Lancashire, a school established for the education of Methodist ministers. Marjorie then went on to study Biology and Botany at Reading University. Fellow students were my mother and my aunt Elvina and the three women became lifelong friends and all became teachers. On graduating from Reading Marjorie's first teaching post was at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School at Wimborne. During her time at Wimborne Marjorie lived with Elvina's mother, my grandmother. Later Marjorie successfully gained the position as Biology teacher at SGS and moved into accommodation in Swanage. She often spent weekends at Wimborne and continued to do so until the early 1950's by which time I was living with my grandmother while attending Broadstone Primary School. Weekends with "Aunty" Marjorie were eagerly awaited and it was probably her influence that started my interest in the countryside and its wild life, particularly birds and butterflies. In fact I still have a book on birds that she gave me nearly 40 years ago. When I scraped through my 11-plus I opted to go to Swanage because Marjorie was there, though I do recall that on my first day I was told not to refer to her as "Aunty".

After renting flats Marjorie eventually moved into an apartment opposite the tennis courts in Beach Gardens. A keen player herself she was often seen on the school courts in her early days, playing with the Rawlings sisters, Frank Stretton and Hilda Sheffield. She retained her interest in tennis throughout her life, along with watching Match of the Day on TV on Saturday evenings. As a teacher Marjorie was a great favourite, particularly with A level pupils. She was gentle in her approach and greatly respected but could be very firm when necessary. Her enthusiasm and knowledge of biology and particularly botany inspired many of her pupils to further studies in these subjects. She led expeditions into her beloved Purbeck where a sample of turf would be extracted, carefully examined and every plant and type of grass identified. A country walk with Marjorie was never a dull experience.

Though she remained unmarried, family life to Scottie was important. Although her heart was in Swanage she made her home with sisters Betty and Mollie in Goring. She never failed to offer support and encouragement especially to younger members of the family. Every generation was important to her and any crisis found her to be calm and approachable.

After her retirement from teaching Scottie divided her time between her flat in Swanage and the house at Goring. She spent much time with former SGS headmistress Hilda Sheffield, who had retired to nearby Brighton and they spent several holidays abroad together. As the years passed her visits to Swanage became few and far between and eventually, a few years ago, she let the Swanage flat go at about the time she gave up driving. SGS patron Marjorie Scott attended most of the SGS reunions, including the last one in 1999.



Above. The late Hilda Rawlings with Marjorie surveying Swanage Bay in 1952.

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