

## Jenny and Malcolm Coffey

Jenny's parents, who both came from Yorkshire, were living on the south coast during the war. When her mother was expecting a baby, she was determined to return to her native Yorkshire for the birth just in case it was a boy, because he would then be eligible to play cricket for Yorkshire. The rules of the county at the time stipulated that all cricketers who played for Yorkshire had to be born within its boundaries.

The baby turned out to be a girl, Jenny. She was born in Calverley, which is between Leeds and Bradford. Jenny and her mother moved back down to Bournemouth, where her father worked, and Jenny grew up and went to school there,



before going to Bedford College, University of London, where she studied Physics.

On leaving University she got a job with the Admiralty Research Laboratory at Teddington, and whilst she was working there, she studied for a Masters Degree at Chelsea College in Fluid Dynamics. She worked at the Admiralty for three years, and then went to work for the Gas Council in one of their laboratories in Fulham.

It was while she was working for the Admiralty that Jenny met Malcolm. They married and moved to Woking to a new Georgian-style housing estate. Within the first year of living there, 12 babies were born so there was a

wonderful community of young families. On the day that Jenny had her first pregnancy confirmed, Malcolm came home and said that he was being posted to Holland.

Jenny and Malcolm left their new house and went to Voorburg in Holland, where their first child, Jane, was born. It was a wonderful year, after which they returned to Woking and had another



Jenny and Malcolm's Wedding Day 1970

child, Julian. Whilst living there, they were visited by Peter Searle, the Vicar of Christ Church, in Woking, who invited them to join his Church, where they became very involved.

In 1978, their

daughter Jane fell ill. Initially it was thought that she had appendicitis, but she was eventually diagnosed with a rare and, at that time, unidentified, cancer. Jane was in hospital on and off for 6 months, with Jenny staying at the Marsden in a relatives' flat, whilst friends stayed at home with Julian. It was a terrible time.

Jane died at the very young age of 6. A month later, Jenny's father was diagnosed with cancer and he died nine months later. It was a real 'annus horribilis' but Jenny said that she was glad that she was a Christian. She felt that God was always there for her and she felt blessed because of that.

Malcolm also felt that he was given special strength to combat the tiredness that would normally have followed nights of broken sleep looking after Jane. He always felt refreshed in the morning. Their Church at the time was a

wonderful support, both practically and spiritually. Jenny and Malcolm then went on to have a third child, Ralph. He is over five years younger than Julian, but Julian was wonderful with him. It was good to have a baby again. Julian is a doctor based in Northumberland and Ralph is an engineer in the Royal Navy.

When Julian was about two, Jenny taught at adult literacy and numeracy classes in Woking on a voluntary basis and really enjoyed it. After Jane died, a friend persuaded Jenny to re-train as a teacher and she went on to teach Maths part-time at Nescot as well as working as a tutor for the Open University.

In 1988, Jenny and Malcolm moved to Worcester Park because they wanted their boys to attend King's College School, Wimbledon, and Malcolm's job had moved to Leatherhead. They tried various Churches before settling at St. Mary's,

mainly because of the warm welcome they received when they first visited.

Malcolm was born in a nursing home on the shores of Lake Windemere in 1942, the eldest of four boys. At the time, his father was working for Short Brothers who made flying boats in Rochester and tested them on the lake. At the end of the War, the family came back and lived in Knowsley where Malcolm attended the local primary school and then got a scholarship to Prescot Grammar School. He went on to University in Manchester (UMIST) and studied Maths.

On graduating, Malcolm also went to work for the Admiralty Research Laboratory in Teddington. He then got a job with Esso, where he remained for 36 years. In 1969 he went to New Jersey and Venezuela for nine months. On his return he and Jenny were married. At Esso he did a variety of

jobs. Starting out in operational research, he worked in the Supply and Distribution, and then moved to HR.

Malcolm subsequently worked for Esso Africa for 5 years, travelling three or four times a year, which was a stressful time for all. Malcolm eventually became the Pensions Manager for about the last 15 years or so. He retired early at 60, which beautifully coincided with Ralph graduating and starting work. He felt he had got to the stage where he wasn't performing to the best of his ability following a heart scare on Millenium eve. He felt ready to retire.

Malcolm has always gone to Church. He attended Sunday School and then joined the church choir, a male choir, as a treble, and can still remember how to point psalms. Malcolm continued to go to Church on and off at University, and he and Jenny visited local Churches when they lived in

Teddington and Kingston. Jenny and Malcolm both read the lessons in Church, and Malcolm often leads the intercessions. They have led a house group and are fully involved in the life of the Church.

Their faith has helped them through periods of intense sorrow in their life, and they provide a lesson in overcoming adversity with faith and love.