



Vale
Helen Payne

3rd June 1924 - 9th February 2019

Helen Payne was interred in the Cemetery on Wednesday the 20th of February 2019, ending more than 50 years of residence on Norfolk Island.

Mum was born into a time of turmoil and danger.

It seems her family were anti-Soviet and fled from Moscow to Vladivostok during the Russian Revolution.

They were driven out of Vladivostok and went to Harbin, a Russian city in Manchuria where Mum was born on June 3rd 1924.

Mum did not know who her parents were, as by the late 1920's she and her infant sister were orphans in Shanghai. I can't think of a worse place to be destitute. Trucks went around each morning to pick up the corpses of people who had not lasted through the night.

Dick an ex British sailor now bar manager and Zoya a Russian dancer took over Mum's care.

Mum's sister Edie went elsewhere and they did not meet again until old age.

Mum spent her early childhood in Cheefoo, a coastal city.

It was there she became seriously ill with meningitis. Her life was saved by two American missionary doctors and a Chinese goat. To get the milk that Mum needed, one person had to milk the goat, another had to feed it Chesterfield cigarettes one by one. No tobacco, no milk.

Their next stop was Manilla in the Philippines where Mum continued her schooling at an American convent with difficulty due to the effects of the meningitis.

By her early teens the family had returned to China, back to Cheefoo.

Not many years after that the Japanese invaded and Mum, Dick and Zoya were interned in a camp at Weih sien. There followed some years of starvation and brutality at the end of a rifle.

Mum worked in the makeshift camp hospital.

We found Mum's name on a monument there a few years ago.

For many years afterwards Mum felt nervous anywhere near a person of Japanese race.

After camp, they settled in Tsingtao, another seaside city. Mum worked for the Red Cross, and then for the US Navy that was based there. From what I could gather there was a lot of dancing and dating in Tsingtao with handsome American sailors.

Losing everything once again, they escaped the Chinese Communists under cover of dark in a US destroyer and landed in Hong Kong.

From Hong Kong they came to Australia in 1947 in a flying boat. Mum found Sydney very quiet and boring, especially the food.

Mum and Dad met when they both worked at Qantas.

Eventually Dad had a mid life crisis and decided to come to Norfolk.

Mum flew over to check the Island out around 1965.

She hated the place! Staying at the old Paradise across the road, it was rainy and miserable and the food was not to her liking.

Dad prevailed and we ended up over here in early 1966.

They built Mokutu Inn at Steele's Point.

Mum cooked 3 meals a day for guests at Mokutu, shopped and helped with the cleaning. This went on for 16 years.

Many of you may remember the Chinese banquets out there and Mum's wonderful hospitality.

This was really hard unrelenting work, but even as she was in her final days in hospital we talked about this and Mum said how contented she was that her food made so many people happy.

Mum enjoyed presenting a radio programme on VL 2NI, and also a newspaper column, "A Little Chat with Helen Payne" centred on recipes of course.

Food has always been very important to Mum (probably because of the times she starved) – she became a great cook but was also pretty unforgiving of anyone's culinary failures!

Dad died soon after they left Mokutu, and Mum was on her own for over 35 years. She found this difficult but like every other setback in her life she pressed on and made light of her problems, often with the help of a glass or two of brandy and the companionship of her little mutt of a poodle, Lucy, and a bunch of friends. Mum had a great sense of fun – she loved people and was always the life of any party.

Foreign languages were pretty easy for Mum. She used to be able to speak many, and was a fluent reader and speaker of Russian to the very end.

In her early days here she used to interpret when the Russian ships brought in their injured crewmen.

Mum worked in a few shops, and also ran the Homestead restaurant with her friend Marie Collie who has expressed a deep sense of loss at Mum's death.

(continued overleaf)

Helen Payne - continued

Despite Mum's initial unwillingness to live here, Norfolk and its people really helped Mum gain a sense of belonging and personal identity which she never had before. It was such a good place for her.

Even after loss after loss after loss Mum bounced back to have another go. She had a deep religious conviction and was quite a fatalist but underlying all this was a keen sense of humour.

Mum loved her daughter in law Beth and was very proud of me as her only child, but even more so I think of her grand daughter Ruth and great grand children Elena and Hugo. She often expressed wonder at her part in the chain and liked to be known as Baboushka.

The last few years have been hard for Mum, as her capacities have ebbed with age. Many people out of kind compassion and generosity went out of their way to help Mum stay in her unit till the end. It wasn't always easy for them as Mum could be very demanding at times.

We all really appreciate that help, and Mum did too.

A month ago Mum asked "When am I going to die?" She knew her time was coming, and had even come down here to inspect this plot.

In the hospital a couple of weeks ago we were discussing the fact that she would probably die as a result of her illness.

Mum said she would go out "With a sense of humour!"

Mum had style, courage and a sense of fun, and that's how I will remember her.

- Richard

Family History and Norfolk Island Research Zone

Monday 4 March from 4.30pm

Norfolk Island Leagues Club

Douglas Dr, Burnt Pine

This is open to all, a community fund raiser for the Norfolk Island Jnr Rugby League.

Discover your family history and ancestors land.

Research Zones include from the 1st Settlement:

- Convicts
- Marines
- Shipping Records
- Land records
- Marines
- NSW Corps
- BDMs
- DNA
- Law and Orders
- Historical records

Norfolk Island trading tables and lots more. Enquiries Martin Snell direct NIJRL President president@nijrl.nlk.nf

The Norfolk Island History Lovers in March is hosted by Arthur and Cathy Dunn from Heritage Tourism.

There are people are from Tasmania, Victoria, NSW and Queensland on the Tour.

Their family connections with Norfolk Island are Andrew Goodwin, Lydia Munro, Michael Hayes, Susannah Hufnell, James Clark/Hozier, Thomas Chipp, Jane Langley, Ann Forbes, Thomas Huxley, William Dring, William Tunks, John Arndell, Sarah Lyons, Jacob Bellett, Ann Harpur, Thomas Bishop, Mary Davis, Samuel Pigott, Mary Thompson, Samuel and Margaret Beachy, Fane Edge and Family, Andrew Fishburn, Daniel Humm, Mary Hook, Thomas and Sarah Gregory, Edward Fisher, John Dalton, John McCarty and Ann Beazley, Elizabeth Thomas, Mary Thomas, John McCoy, Dr Thomas Jamison arrived March 1788, Elizabeth Colley, Sarah Griggs, John Townson (Commandant of Norfolk island) James Hunt Lucas. This includes convicts, Marines, NSW Corps and free settlers from 1st Settlement.

Then from Second Settlement: Richard Norris and Joseph Round. Plus William Purcell HMS Bounty (On Purcell's return to England, he was court martialled for the Mutiny) and some general history – heritage lovers if Norfolk Island.

The Family History and Norfolk Island Research Zone is open to all to view resources and records and to discover their family history and maybe meet a cousin or two.

Heritage Tourism is also hosting the Andrew Goodwin and Lydia Munro family muster on Norfolk Island in October 2019.

“Send the Kids to the South Pacific Games”

NI Squash Club Raffle Group wish to advise Draw 1 “Send the Kids to the South Pacific Games” raffle was drawn in front of 14 Visitors who were on a culture tour. The Raffle was drawn by Mark Gunningham from the police.

The winner for Draw 1 - Ticket # 0867 was Megan Magri.

Congratulations Megan

We would like to thank everyone that supported Draw 1 and just a reminder Draw 2 is out and will be drawn on the 2nd March so be in quick for a ticket . Tickets can be purchased from various outlets in town or you can from our squash players

Issues with Local TV

The local TV programs 350 to 353 have been missing due to equipment failure this week, these have been replace by a temporary service.

If you want to watch, you may need to rescan your TV via the menu settings otherwise be patient and all the services will be back. To be advised.
