

**In Loving Memory
of
Sister Peggy**



**Born 28th July 1922
Went to be with the Lord 18th June 2014**

Margaret Wilson

1922-2014

I have been given the honour of writing this Obituary. It is difficult as I'm not sure I could do justice in a few words to sum up the wonderful life of Peggy. It is also emotionally difficult to write about someone to whom we were really close.

Peggy was born in Blackburn, to Mr Slater and Mrs Esther Wilson, who were members of the church at Hamilton Street. She had an elder brother Jack and a younger sister Betty to whom she was very close. Peggy had a difficult childhood, as she was born with a severe skin condition and problems in her chest. Schooling was difficult but she managed to study in the local Grammar school and started to work in her father's herbalist shop.

We know more about the life of Peggy when she was 21, from Brother Joe Nesbit's 'Historical Survey of Churches of Christ in the British Isles.' The Story of Peggy Wilson is a remarkable read. In it we learn that Peggy was a timid and sensitive 21 year old when, in September 1943, she became prisoner number 1186.

She went to this grim institution for refusing to accept military service. She was a conscientious objector; she was a follower of the Prince of Peace. In a letter to Brother Joe she wrote: "I was a little naïve, but sincere in my desire to do what was right in accordance with my conscience. I was desperately shy, and found it very difficult to put my points over at the tribunals and in the court at my trial. I was sent to prison for one month for not obeying the Government direction to do full-time work on the land or in hospital. I did not object to the work, *per se*, but I objected to the direction because I would be replacing someone else who would be freed to do the work I was not prepared to do myself working in a munitions factory or other war effort task."

The irony of all this was she found herself to be in the same jail where her uncle Arthur Wilson had died on December 11th. 1918. Her Uncle Arthur, Uncle Jack and Father Slater Wilson were all conscientious objectors in WW1.

Her lifestyle changed very cruelly, and she was detailed to sew mailbags. The coarse material and heavy needles caused havoc

on her sensitive skin. Her medical condition was a source of concern to her parents. In spite of her incarceration, she remained determined and cheerful, which were reflected in the letters to her parents: "It is early to bed here, and early to rise, as for making me healthy, wealthy, wise I don't know!" Brother Leonard Morgan wrote to her: "We have been amazed at your courage, and deeply admire you. We wish you to know that you have our prayerful support." She spent the time in prison courageously and joyfully, as she was following her saviour, and two weeks prior to her release she wrote, after requesting Weetabix, blackcurrant jam and a BIG rice pudding. "There are people in worse places than I am today."

Soon she was released from Prison but she was directed to work in her parents' herbalist shop and was not allowed to take any other employment until the Government released her from that Directive.

After her release from prison, she was a source of encouragement to many. She, according to her family, was a calming and constant influence in their lives, the one who would always treat them all the same, 'the one constant in their lives' and a wonderful aunt.

Peggy later on in her life around the age of 47 took up employment with Mrs Mary Borrowdale, and worked in her pet/garden store. They became very close friends, and Peggy spent some of her best years there. She spent most of her life caring for people, which included her mother, father and even Mrs Borrowdale. She never married as she didn't want to burden any one due to her sufferings, and the church has always been a massive support.

She became an active member in the new congregation which started in Mill Hill, Blackburn. When Mill Hill closed, the congregation met at her home in Darwen. They would have visiting speakers from Skelmersdale, Hindley, Ulverston, and Stretford. Eventually there were only three remaining members. At that time the author joined them.

Within a few years, the other two members went to be with the Lord, but Peggy never once closed her doors for Sunday morning worship. In spite of her frailty she would make sure that everything was prepared before brethren arrived.

We all had the joy of knowing this wonderful lady, and even to the end she had the same love for all of us. The author could keep on sharing experiences with you: her hospitality, the knowledge that she had about herbs, her sound scriptural knowledge and her humour.

She had a beautiful personality which was evident in most things. She was very kind and generously contributed to the needy. The author learned much of what was achieved in helping many in needy due to Peggy's generosity. Even the author himself was offered help when she barely knew him.

During her years of suffering her niece, Janet, consistently looked after her. She was hospitalised several times during her last few years but she would like us to break bread with her even whilst there. When she was in hospital for the last time, some of us spent some time with her in the days before her death and will always cherish those precious moments.

Her memorial service, held at the Green Hut in Stretford, Manchester on the 12th of July 2014 was a fitting tribute to her life. Many gathered to pay their last respects. Several brethren who knew her spoke of her kindness, steadfastness, scriptural knowledge and memory, but most of all about her love for Christ and how she lived her life for Him.

To summarise, Brother Frank Worgan's words written to the author could be a fitting tribute to Peggy:

“The last time I saw her was at Longshoot, Wigan, at the funeral of my dear friend and brother, Brian Stevens, when she was in a wheelchair. I mention this fact because this was typical of Peggy. Many others would have found poor health a reason to miss the occasion, but she was a ‘stalwart of the faith’ an expression seldom heard these days! Who ‘kept the faith’ after life-experiences and in health conditions which some people would have found unbearable. I am confident that we shall meet again ‘in the morning’! I know where she is!”