

JOAN HOOPER...

JOAN HOOPER WAS A MEMBER OF WILLESDEN SCOUT DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 43 YEARS AND SECRETARY OR CHAIR FROM THE LATE 1980S UNTIL HER DEATH ON 1ST NOVEMBER 2007.



Joan also looked after the District property, and advised and assisted many Groups with meeting place problems. She was never one to shirk a difficult matter. Her endeavours made a significant difference to the District support mechanisms we have today. When in May 2007 she had to give up all her voluntary appointments because of illness, it was Scouting that she stuck with.

Our AGM in June this year was the first one she had missed. Yet during the summer she carried on, with her husband Wally by her side, attending to the management of Scout House and discussions on the next phase of our development plan just two weeks prior to her death. She never forgot that the young people are central to all that we do. It was a great disappointment that we were unable to get her to the World Scout Jamboree because of treatment. She would have loved that. She really enjoyed seeing the pictures of the young people at the event.

Joan has been a shining beacon of unremitting hard work done for Scouting, done with gentle humour and

impeccable manners and without any thought for her person. She was employed in youth work for all her professional life and for 20 years was the Principal Youth and Community Officer for Brent until her early retirement in 1984.

We have identified 18 different organisations she has supported, some of these, like being the Chair of Brent Youth and Community Service Council, and others, like the 3 different Youth and Community Centres in Brent, Middlesex Young Peoples Clubs and the Pakistan Welfare Association. These were very long-term commitments and give a small indication of her widespread willingness to help.

A small group of us were in the process of distilling information into an application for a national honour when this tragedy struck. I hope we can construct an archive of achievement to the amazing work Joan did for others, particularly the young people of the Borough of Brent and its forbears.

That is the Joan that many knew but there was another Joan who with Wally, enjoyed a broad life to the full. Annual visits to The Royal Chelsea Flower Show and the Glyndebourne Festival; meals at favourite restaurants; meeting people and enjoying keeping old friends of many years standing; looking after the livestock at her brother's farm (or rather managing others to do it), and sending birthday and anniversary cards to people who had no idea how she found the information. Her spirit was certainly there with the 150 people from every part of her life who crowded into the chapel at her funeral conducted by Captain Don Woodhouse.