

Sarah Patricia Clifton Gwinner (25th December 1945 – 22nd June 2020)



The funeral of Sarah Gwinner, a much loved and long standing Ansty resident, took place on July 16th at St James Church where she was laid to rest beside her late husband Martin. Sadly, the current restrictions due to coronavirus meant that only Sarah's family and close friends were able to attend the ceremony in the churchyard, but many villagers were able to pay their respects by following the hearse as Sarah's family walked behind it down the High Street from her home to St James' Church in Ansty. It seemed a most appropriate way of saying farewell to someone who will be sorely missed.

The churchyard ceremony, conducted by The Reverend Dr. Graham Southgate, was very moving in its simplicity and the number of folk who came out to participate at a distance was so appreciated by the family. The mourning party kept to the rules as drawn up by the authorities but it was sad that despite the size of the church graveyard, the villagers were unable to stand around the perimeters to pay their respects.

Two or three dozen villagers lined the High Street directly opposite the churchyard and although it was a solemn occasion all those present felt strangely uplifted as the clouds cleared and the warm sun shone and one of the family thanked them for being there and supporting the family. It was an honour to be there and residents were deeply moved as they watched Sarah's wicker style coffin being carried into the church grounds. It really was the final goodbye.

These times might be still troubling but as Sarah was laid to rest, a butterfly flew over the coffin and the sun came out.

Sarah (and her late husband Martin, a former R.N. Commander who died in June 2013) were both much involved with St. James Church and its activities. They were truly 'one offs' and represented a vanishing world in that they were quaintly old fashioned 'English people' in demeanour (even though they were well travelled) and they really did enjoy life to the full.

Sarah was a kindly soul: very supportive of all Ansty village events; wise and practical but with a droll sense of humour. She was a great organiser too although her quiet nature probably led a few folk to under-estimate her great strengths. Sarah's death was so untimely and we will all miss her forever.