

OBITUARY FOR PAT RODLEY



Former long serving **ROC Officer Pat Rodley**, aged 90 years, died in Pottles Residential Home in Exminster on Thursday 24 September 2020. Although she was suffering from mild dementia and diabetes, Pat just faded away. Pat lived with her sister Pam, who was her carer, and when Pam died in January this year, this led to her going to a care setting.



The funeral was held on Friday 9 October 2020 at 1000hrs at Exeter and Devon Crematorium, Topsham Road. Due to the corona restrictions only seven people attended the short service including Peter Bryan UKWMO, Dave Flower and Rose Mason from the Exeter Branch ROCA. The service was conducted by the Rev Bernard Lane. After the Welcome there was an audio hymn but no singing by attendees. The minister gave a short Eulogy, address and prayers. Another hymn was played followed by the Committal. There was no reception. Donations in memory of Pat to 'Lundy Field Society' and sent to c/o M Sillifant & Sons, 19-20 Holloway Street, Exeter, EX2 4JD.

Pat Dunthorne was born on 25 August 1930 in Stamford, Lincs, but when she was 4 years of age she moved to Poltimore, Exeter, which was her mother's home area. After normal schooling Pat worked for the Inland Revenue eventually becoming Supervisor of a large Typing Pool in Exeter. She remained single until she met Sector Controller Ken Rodley and they married in 1975 and she became Pat Rodley. Pat and Ken lived in Exeter all their married lives, and the two of them became a very well known and popular couple at many ROC and UKWMO events. They holidayed in the Canaries and in 1996 they travelled in Concorde and the QE2. Ken and Pat loved the island of Lundy and they were members of the Lundy Field Society. A little known aspect of Pat's life was her interest in Exeter Rugby Club and she liked watching cricket. Pat and Ken together had no children.



Top is Pat Rodley in retirement. Above photo 1970, left to right is Mr P Damners, Exeter CWO, Obs/Lt Bill Bennett, W/Obs/Off Pat Dunthorne, Obs/Off Gerald Scott, Obs/Lt Ken Tyers before he became 10 Group Commandant.

Pat Dunthorne, joined the ROC on 1 June 1949 as an 18 year old girl, and served as W/Obs on the crew at 21 Group Exeter Ops Room located in the ex RAF Sector Ops Room at Poltimore Park. 21 Group became 10 Group in 1953, the Corps began the nuclear role in 1955. 10 Group protected accommodation was built adjoining the Sector Ops Room and opened in 1961. The Ops Room became the 'Control' at Poltimore Park, Exeter. Also in 1961 Pat was awarded her ROC Medal for serving 12 years. By the mid 1960s Pat had become Ch/W/Obs Dunthorne. She excelled at the Master Tests gaining a Red Spitfire Badge and Red Star before becoming an officer. In late 1969, when the ROC set up a new and secret NRC at Wyvern Barracks, Exeter, Pat applied for the Team Leader's job. She was successful and was appointed on 1 April 1970 as W/Obs/Officer. For five years the NRC team trained at Poltimore Park 10 Group ROCHQ. In 1973 she was awarded her first clasp to the LSM on completion of 24 years service. However, the life of the Exeter NRC was short and in 1975 the unit was closed down and was re-formed in Truro. Pat remained an Officer but on 1 January 1976 became a local Group Officer in charge of five posts in the South Devon area. Pat's varied ROC career to date was recognised by the award of the Lord Lieutenant of Devon's Certificate of Merit in 1976.

She was a very successful Group Officer and Barbara Bolt, Mike Soper, John Gale, Pat Brooks and Peggy Purslow were all part of her very enthusiastic crews. Pat was appointed W/Obs/Lt on 1 May 1983 and on 1 July 1985 received her second clasp to the LSM on completion of 36 years service.

Pat was an avid and faithful ROC attender being present at many camps, courses, social events, parades and services, all her ROC life. Like others she enjoyed air experience flights and on 15 December 1972 she went on a mammoth 8 hour Nimrod flight from RAF St Mawgan. That was some Christmas present ! Her final accolade came on 16 June 1990 when she was awarded the AOC Strike Command Certificate for service to the ROC in the Queens Birthday Honours List.

In August 1990, on reaching age 60 years, Pat left the Corps. The ROC stood down 13 months later. She served 40 years in the ROC. Pat also joined 10 Group ROCA in 1987 and was a faithful member until 2017 when her membership lapsed, perhaps a sign of her deteriorating health. But that was another 30 years of excellent support and attendance to the organisation.

Pat Rodley was one of those rare observers who was awarded LSM and two clasps and served in control, post and NRC. She could not be bettered for attendance, enthusiasm, knowledge and was utterly faithful to Corps and Association. She was admired by many, envied by some, and loved by her local observers. She will be remembered.

(Thanks to Peter Bryan former UKWMO member for the extensive help in putting together this obituary for Pat).

