

Absent Friends

By Christina Roper, Clarion Reporter

Quite a few of those featured in the last Clarion are unfortunately no longer with us. We mention them here – not to be sad – *but to be proud* that such lovely, graceful and kind characters have been, for so long, such important links to the life and times of those connected with the Clarion and the Castle Comfort Team.

To begin, MR JACK BLOOR, CCC's most senior gentleman client would have been 99 this year – but he left us during the printing of the last ever all black and white Clarion. His family however proudly gave permission for us to go ahead with his story.



Jack Bloor

NORMAN BREEZE, a truly remarkable character aged 96 passed away leaving his framed picture, provided by the staff of CCC, hanging in the Marquis of Granby Pub at Penkhull where he had been a stalwart regular for over *seventy* years!



Cheers Norm!

The Wolstanton provider of comfort aids asked us to make a special mention on the departure of their oldest ever client – ANNIE MAYER of Biddulph – who was marching on to reach a remarkable 104!! Cheerio Annie – and you were right – you never were to need that stairlift!!



Annie Mayer

The sun-blessed Canary Island of Lanzarote, as featured in our last publication – contained numerous native local and ex-pat characters – but the sudden departure of Briton DICK ELLIS shocked everyone. He was 86.



Dick Ellis

Normandy veteran ERNEST FROST sadly passed away too at the age of 86. The Clarion in 2004 appealed for contact from his friends of

bygone years which resulted in welcome reunions. He will certainly be missed at CCC's offices in Wolstanton. Rarely a week went by when Ernie didn't journey there for a chat and a coffee – all the way from his home in Bradwell on his Vaya Bien travel vehicle – showing off his medals to all on route!

Ernest Frost marches on!



Many of you will have noticed that this Clarion edition is somewhat later than usual – for various reasons, but one in particular is that we wanted to await and report on the outcome of the terrible fall that TERESA MARRON suffered before Christmas. Teresa of Madrid who has been the adopted 'Spanish Granny' to CCC chief Keith for over 20 years (as well as inevitably becoming CCC's first overseas client) fractured her hip. Even the renowned Spanish Princesa Hospital predicted that she would probably not survive corrective treatment. But the health service there, whatever the odds, always attempts to preserve life (unlike in many other countries) and went ahead with an operation that required general anaesthetic. They perhaps hadn't allowed for this remarkable lady's physical and mental strength – with courage to go with it. Teri had survived 10 years being tortured and jailed by Franco's men after the Civil War – *for just being a nurse aiding the opposition*. Such spirit and faith to overcome that experience surely helped her come through major surgery, and at the age of 96! Miraculously, Teri woke the following day, chatting and joking ... whilst having breakfast! Tragically though, she never left the care of the hospital and, despite battling away as ever, survival was to be until February when other complications set in and she sadly slipped away. *Adios, Teruka, ha sido un placer conocerte.*



Teresa Marron

**"Death is nothing at all,
I have only slipped away
into the next room"**

*Thanks to the Rev Cecil Mann
of Newcastle*

The eventual departing of loved ones is tragically inevitable – and undoubtedly much more upsetting when the loss is that of a child. RYAN KELSALL of Hanley was born with a rare condition that gave him a life expectancy of just 14 years. Only weeks after Castle Comfort Centre provided him, without charge, with a much-needed stairlift, Ryan died at the age of just 9. Sincere condolences and respects are sent to his distraught parents who have been dedicated to ensuring that Ryan's short life was, despite the odds, as happy and comfortable as possible.

Last but not least, as reported elsewhere in this edition, the sad death at the age of 79 of DOREEN after a long and cruel illness, leaves the Castle Comfort Centre group, especially son Keith (Wolstanton Managing Director) cherishing the memory of someone who played a giant part in the inspiration for the formation of the business. Doreen's own personal needs caused the beginning of the birth of a little homecare products firm ... that just went on ... and on ... and apart from being Company Secretary, Doreen's modelling skills and product assessments were invaluable.

None of us have seen the last of Doreen. She will continue to grace many of the promotional leaflets produced at Castle Comfort Centre.



DOREEN 1926-2005

(see 'Charity begins at home' p10)

Footnote – We apologise for not mentioning all CCC clients who have passed away recently. Please contact us for a special mention of a friend or relative that you have lost in the next Clarion