

## Molly Brodie

This is indeed a sad day for the Brodie family. The matriarch has gone to her eternal rest. Her life was a perfect example of great happiness on the one hand and deep depression on the other. Strong character that she was, she took the rough with the smooth with equanimity.

Molly was born a Yorkshire lass in Grassington, a place she would return to time and again and who would blame her. A place of great beauty set in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales it was reflected in her. Born in 1915 she lived there until she was 15, then lived with her grandmother in Esholt in a house which is next to the famous public house in the centre of the village. She worked as a sales assistant at Marks and Spencer and met her sweetheart James Horne whom she married in 1939. He became a bomb disposal officer in the forces and in November 1940 whilst attempting to dismantle an unexploded bomb on a beach in this country he was most tragically killed. Molly was pregnant at the time and one cannot imagine the devastation she must have gone through. She was so deeply traumatised that she never spoke about it. Michael was born two months later.

Most fortunately she met Arnie who was Jewish and she wasn't. She took lessons in Judaism, passed the rather stiff examination, and they married in 1947. Her ship had come home. Arnie officially adopted Michael who in turn regarded Arnie as his father, a credit to both of them. It was a very happy threesome family.

Michael got married to Pam and they had Amanda. Then tragedy struck again when Arnie died absolutely suddenly 26 years ago. Again Molly was devastated. But with the help of Michael and family she surfaced and continued to live a useful life. She loved being a grandmother, but ill-health set in in a series of mild or medium strokes. She would be incapacitated for a short while, then bounce back with only minor hindrances to an otherwise active life. She, Molly, the sufferer from strokes, became an organiser for the Strokes Association based at Bierley Hospital. That is the calibre of Molly.

In turn Amanda had Rachel and Molly became a proud great-grandmother.

They say in Jewish circles that a converted Jew is sometimes a better Jew than one born Jewish. Though I would not wish to play a game of one-upmanship I can tell you, and I had told Molly to her face often, that she was an excellent Jewess, supporting Arnie in his Jewish activities, which included being chairman of the Synagogue and wearing her mogen david with pride. She became a member of the B'nai B'rith Lodge.

She also had a sense of humour often changing difficult words into other more funny ones, so for proselyte she would sometimes say prostitute. On one occasion when I was taking a service Molly sat in the front row, where she did not normally sit. For some reason best known to herself she fixed her gaze on me and inevitably I fixed my gaze on her in return, as sometimes happens in life. We both broke into a smile and eventually I, the serious service-taker, prompted by Molly, had an uncontrollable fit of the giggles, which as everybody knows, is extremely difficult to suppress. The end of the service could not come quickly enough for us both to collapse into hilarious laughter. It is matter of some regret that the two people most closely associated with Molly cannot be with us today because they are abroad. I refer to Eric Bentham and Lorle Michaelis. Both in their own way have made life easier and more tolerable and in their absence I want to thank them. I also want to mention that when Rabbi Michael Heilbronn was our resident minister 30 years ago he, Molly and Arnie formed a close

attachment and as soon as he heard that Molly was, to put it mildly, not very well, he sent her his love. I want to suggest that, though Molly's passing is very sad, this service should be viewed as much as a celebration of Molly's life with its ups and downs. If that is done then we can imagine Molly even now being safely in the care of God Almighty, where there is no illness nor pain, for Him to look after her from now on for ever and a day. Amen.