

**Bill Hudson, 1933-2019**  
**Founder of Roade Local History Society**



Bill and Jean signing the register - 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1961



Bill with Lord (Bernard) Donoghue - September 2006

We are very sad to report the death of our highly-regarded Chairman, Bill Hudson, on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> January. Bill founded our Society in 2005 and as a result he received a well-deserved Most Outstanding Personal Contribution Heritage Award in July 2006.

Bill played an important part in village affairs and served on Roade Parish Council. Although he worshipped in his latter years at St. Mary's, Wellingborough, prior to that Bill had been involved in many ways at St. Mary's, Roade. He was a regular Sidesperson and a long serving member of Roade PCC, acting as an efficient Secretary and also a Churchwarden. Every Easter Sunday he would take a group photograph of the Choir, Servers, Organist and Vicar and he was always to be seen with his camera at the various Church events. His photographic talent led to a brilliant St. Mary's Calendar of Roade being published and sold, which raised a substantial amount for St. Mary's Church Funds, and was posted to various countries across the world. (Many thanks for information extracted from an article for the March edition of "SHARE".)

He built up a wonderful collection of photographs of Roade people and places. Many of these appeared in "*Roade Through the Camera*" which was published in 2009 "*In memory of Jean Hudson (1938-2004) who was the inspiration for this book*".

After his stroke Bill continued to attend and contribute to meetings as much as he could. We shall miss him and are sorry that, hard as we tried, we could not persuade him to record his memories. We are grateful to his son Mark for allowing us to publish the following address given at the funeral on 4<sup>th</sup> February:

"William Hudson was born in Northampton and grew up in Far Cotton. He later moved to Roade, where his father ran the popular Co-operative store for many years, and where he spent the rest of his long life. William, or Bill as he was widely known, worked first at the Guildhall in Northampton but then started work at Pianoforte Supplies in Roade. There he met Jean, the love of his life. They married in 1961 and had two children, Mark and Susan.

Bill had a lifelong interest in and talent for various crafts; he was an accomplished woodworker and photographer. He also enjoyed gardening.

On National Service he was stationed in West Germany. Later, in the 1970s, he developed a close friendship with German politician Kurt Hamer and visited Germany many times, especially after retirement when he made frequent visits to see his daughter Susan and grandson James.

In 2004, Bill suffered the terrible loss of his beloved wife Jean. Despite the shock, he worked hard to cope, learning to cook and even make cakes. He also founded the Roade History Society in Jean's memory, a society which has become a vibrant and active organisation in the village and beyond. He also found comfort in his grandchildren, visiting museums and the circus with James and teaching Momo how to make cakes.

Suffering a severe stroke in January 2013 was a terrible blow, as the frustration of not being able to do all the things he could before became all too apparent. The simple pleasures of a little walk or driving to get his own shopping were denied him. He hated having to rely on others for help, but managed to stay in his own home, thus maintaining at least some of his independence.

Bill will be remembered as a kind father and grandfather, always supportive and keen to help. At a time of great sadness, the only consolation is that he is finally reunited with his beloved Jean."

The Society will have a display about Bill in the John Gwilt Memorial Cabinet in Roade Library and an annual photographic competition in his memory is planned.