Kathryn Benson Evans M.B.E.

Dr. Kathryn Benson Evans 1924 – 2005 was a legend. She was brought up in South Wales and with her family finally settled in Bridgend in 1935.

Many will remember her for her extensive scientific work or her interest in her local community or her enormous contribution to Girlguiding. However, we will all remember her for her enthusiasm, warmth, humanity and huge commitment to anything in which she was involved.

Kathryn's academic career began in 1944 in the Department of Botany at the University College Cardiff. In 1948 she became an Assistant lecturer in Algology and Bryology and in 1966 a Senior Lecturer. By the 1960s Kathryn changed her research to the effects of pollution on rivers in South Wales. She was a highly respected scientist both locally and internationally for her pioneering work in these areas. Kathryn published extensively, undertook consultancy work to help industry and local government to address the problems of river pollution and supervised more than 20 PhD students. After her retirement in 1987 Kathryn continued to teach and examine higher degree theses and in 1996 was the senior author of a book on the algae of South Wales – a subject on which her knowledge was legendary worldwide.

Kathryn lived in Bridgend for most of her life and was very much involved in her local community. She was a member of a number of organisations ranging from The Bridgend and District Horticultural Society to the Bridgend Civic Society. Her concern for her community stretched further as she was also a member of the Council for the Protection of Rural Wales and The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales. Kathryn was a committed Christian and regularly attended Sunday services at Hermon Methodist Chapel and meetings of The Bridgend Council of churches.

It was after becoming a Girl Guide in her youth that led to a passion for Girlguiding. Kathryn became a leader running a Guide Unit in Tiger Bay, Cardiff, a Cadet/Ranger leader in Bridgend, a trainer, a tutor to prospective trainers and a vice President for Guides Cymru. Guiding with Kathryn was fun, her enthusiasm and boundless energy was infectious to all who met her.

Kathryn was a member of the Executive Committee of Girlguiding (UK) and later became the Chair of The Europe Region World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. For her commitment and dedication to Girlguiding Kathryn was presented with The Silver Fish (Girl Guiding UKs highest award).

Elected to The World Committee (WAGGGS) in 1984, Kathryn's main responsibility as Chair of Constitutions was to re write the whole of the WAGGGS Constitution.

In 1998 Kathryn was awarded an MBE for her services to Girlguiding.

Kathryn's legacy to local, national and international Guiding will be long lasting. She has inspired and encouraged girls and young women across the world to develop to their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world.

Her gravestone reads 'She lived her life for others' which is so true.

Kathryn was a legend.

Kathryn Benson Evans M.B.E.

Roedd Dr Kathryn Benson 1924 -2005 yn arwres. Fe'i magwyd yn Ne Cymru a symudodd i fyw ym Mhen-y-bont gyda'i theulu ym 1935.

Bydd nifer yn ei chofio am ei gwaith gwyddonol, ei diddordeb yn ei chymuned leol a'i chyfraniad aruthrol i Girlguiding. Mi fydd pob un ohonom yn cofio'i brwdfrydedd, cynhesrwydd, dynoliaeth a'i hymrwymiad i bob dim yr oedd yn ymwneud ag ef.

Fe gychwynnodd ei gyrfa academaidd ym 1944 yn Adran Fotaneg Coleg Prifysgol Caerdydd. Ym 1948 fe'i gwnaethpwyd yn Ddarlithydd Cynorthwyol yn Astudiaethau Algâu a Bryoffytau a chafodd ddyrchafiad i Uwch Ddarlithydd ym 1966. Erbyn y 1960au roedd Kathryn wedi newid ffocws ei hymchwil i effaith llygredd ar afonydd De Cymru. Roedd ganddi barch cenedlaethol a rhyngwladol am ei gwaith gwyddonol arloesol yn y maes yma. Cyhoeddodd Kathryn gyfrolau lu o waith ymchwil ac fe ymgymerodd â gwaith llywodraeth leol yn ymateb i broblemau llygredd afonydd yn ogystal â goruwchwylio dros 20 o fyfyrwyr gradd athro. Fe barhaodd Kathryn i ddysgu ac arholi graddau uwch wedi ei hymddeoliad ym 1987 ac ym 1996 hi oedd brif awdur llyfr arbenigol ar algâu De Cymru - maes lle cydnabyddwyd ei dealltwriaeth yn fyd-eang.

Bu Kathryn yn byw ym Mhen-y-bont drwy gydol ei hoes a bu'n rhan allweddol o'r gymuned leol. Roedd yn aelod o sawl mudiad gan gynnwys Cymdeithas Arddwriaethol Pen-y-bont a'r Cylch a Chymdeithas Ddinesig Pen-y-bont. Roedd ei gofal o'i chymuned yn ymestyn yn ehangach gan ei bod hi'n aelod o Gyngor Diogelu Cefn Gwlad Cymru ac Ymddiriedolaeth Bywyd Gwyllt De a Gorllewin Cymru hefyd. Roedd Kathryn yn Gristion ffyddlon, yn mynychu gwasanaethau'r Sul yng Nghapel Methodistaidd Hermon a chyfarfodydd Cyngor Eglwysi Pen-y-bont yn rheolaidd.

Wedi bod yn Girl Guide yn ystod ei phlentyndod roedd gan Kathryn gariad angerddol at fudiad Girlguiding a daeth yn arweinydd o Uned Guides ym Mhorth Teigr, Caerdydd ac yn arweinydd grŵp Cadet/Rangers ym Mhen-y-bont. Bu'n hyfforddwraig, yn diwtor ar gyfer darpar hyfforddwyr ac yn Is-lywydd Guides Cymru. Roedd Geidio gyda Kathryn yn hwyl a'i brwdfrydedd a'i hegni diderfyn yn heintus.

Bu Kathryn yn aelod o Bwyllgor Gweithredol Girlguiding (UK) ac yn hwyrach yn Gadeirydd Rhanbarth Ewrop o Gymdeithas Girl Guides a Girl Scouts y Byd. Derbyniodd gwobr y Pysgodyn Arian (Silver Fish), gwobr uchaf Girl Guiding UK, am ei hymroddiad a'i hymrwymiad i Girlguiding.

Wedi ei hethol i'r Pwyllgor Byd (WAGGGS) ym 1984, prif gyfrifoldeb Kathryn fel Cadeirydd y Cyfansoddiad oedd ail-ysgrifennu Cyfansoddiad WAGGGS yn ei gyfanrwydd.

Ym 1998 derbyniodd Kathryn MBE am ei gwasanaeth i Girlguiding.

Mae Kathryn yn gadael argraff barhaol ar Guiding yn lleol, yn genedlaethol ac yn rhyngwladol. Bu'n ysbrydoliaeth ac yn ysgogiad i ferched a gwragedd ifanc ar draws y byd i ddatblygu i'w llawn botensial fel dinasyddion cyfrifol ein byd.

Mae'r geiriau 'Bu fyw ei bywyd er budd eraill' ar ei charreg bedd - yn deilyngdod triw.

Roedd Kathryn yn arwres.