

A photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair and bangs, wearing glasses and a dark top with a white collar. She is smiling and looking slightly to her right. The background is a lush garden with green foliage and some flowers. The entire image is framed by a teal border with white dots at the corners.

Living Villages

August 2016

*Water Newton, Thornhaugh,
Stibbington, Sutton & Wansford*

“Thanks for everything, Rosie”

As many of you will already know, our wonderful Editor, Rosie McDonnell, passed away suddenly and unexpectedly in July. She was 62 years old. Rosie meant a great deal to many of us for a variety of reasons, but of course our thoughts are with her husband Eddie, her family and closest friends at this time.

Rosie contributed to Living Villages for many years before becoming first Assistant Editor and then finally Editor in the Spring of 2010. When she assumed this responsibility the magazine was still being printed in black and white in David Powell's home. With characteristic grace and good cheer, Rosie put together a dedicated Editorial team, stabilised the finances and brought the publication into the twenty first century. We now use sophisticated, digital editorial software and professional colour printing techniques. Our finances are robust and we continue to enhance and develop the magazine, which is entirely self sufficient. This is mainly due to Rosie's vision, drive, dedication, hard work and her incredible ability to encourage other volunteers to share her passion for the magazine.

But Rosie was much more than Living Villages. As well as Eddie's wife, she was Head of the Stibbington Centre for 32 years, a nationally recognised educationalist, a keen environmentalist, singer, music lover and traveller. Her selfless work in the service of others, both professional and voluntary, touched so many people, particularly in her local community.

To us, Rosie **was** Living Villages. It's hard to know how to continue without her, but we will, because that's what Rosie would have wanted. Ours is an upbeat magazine and we could not bring ourselves to publish our usual August edition. Instead we have chosen to pause, reflect and give thanks for everything that Rosie did for us all in our community.

Next month we will be publishing our usual edition. Perhaps you have your own memories of Rosie? If so, please write in to our new Editor Tracy Sortwell at tracy.sortwell@btinternet.com. We will publish as many of your contributions as we can.

In order to recognise Rosie's amazing range of work and interests, Living Villages will sponsor a prize each year at the Wansford Horticultural Society's Annual Show, held in August. The Rosie McDonnell Prize will be awarded for a piece of artwork of any type or in any medium representing a piece of music. The music for 2016 will be "Flight of the Bumble Bee". Entries will be open to anyone; please see www.wansfordhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

The Living Villages Editorial Team

