

## **Anne Weldon Townshend [5C22]**

### **Tribute to Anne**

**By**

**Loftus Townshend Jestin**

**Grandson of Anne's half sister Theodosia Townshend**

My Great Aunt Anne lived a long and full life. She was born in Dublin on October 14th, 1915. Her father Thomas Loftus Uniacke Townshend and her mother Harriet Hockley Weldon Townshend sent her to Alexandria College, Dublin, and then to St. Johns Wood, an art college in London to which she was given a full scholarship. Like her mother and her sister Theodosia, Anne was an accomplished artist, producing beautifully drawn pastels and sensitively painted watercolours. In her youth, she was a fine equestrian. My mother, her niece, although only five years her junior, remembered fondly galloping with Anne over the sands along the beach at Blackrock, just south of Dublin, when both were girls during my mother's Christmas visits.

During World War II Anne served in the British Army as a Map Plotter, earning a distinguished record as a specialist in reading aerial photographs and plotting coordinates on maps for military purposes. After the war, she cared for her beloved father until he died in December 1953. In 1954 she became engaged to Leonce, Marquis de Douzon, and married him in 1955, moved to his family's chateau near Limoges, but soon thereafter they together sold the house and bought a villa in Vence, named Les Romarins. There they lived happily until his death in 1965 from Tuberculosis. They had no children. Anne remained at Les Romarins, from which she traveled back to Ireland at least once a year, and on occasion to America to visit us, her American relations.

Shy and self-effacing, Anne was difficult to get to know at first, but once her initial hesitancy or nervousness was overcome, she remained firm friends with many people who came to visit her on a regular basis. Members of my family often visited her. Whenever my wife Charbra and I came to Vence to be with her, she loved to go on long jaunts to see the neighbouring countryside or to visit places she could rarely get to in her later years. Off to her favorite villages we would go, each place a prompt for marvelous stories about her earlier trips there. During our last stay, not long before my mother died, she asked us especially to take her to Thorenc near the Swiss border at the edge of the Alps where the sanatorium was in which Leonce spent his last years, Anne living with him during the final two. We spent a pleasant and wistful afternoon looking over the beautiful lac de Thorenc filled with waterbirds, surrounded by green fields, and tall pines, an idyllic scene. I like to think of that cool and blissful vale now, perhaps representative of the peace I hope she has found.