

Centenarian with a cause

The Rt Hon Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Frank Ross, held a birthday party for Doris Keir to celebrate her 100th birthday. Doris revealed that her long life can be put down to staying active, getting out and about and drinking six glasses of water a day.



Accompanied by her family, the party at the City Chambers marked her immense contribution to others. She is still an active volunteer at the Northfield and Willowbrae Community

Services Group every Monday where she is responsible for the tea and biscuits, collecting the donations and offering support to those who attend.

Doris, who still lives independently, said: "It was a very special day. It was lovely to visit the Lord Provost and see the City Chambers, which I've never been to before. I've been a volunteer for 35 years and I've enjoyed it.

"When I retired, I thought I have to do something with myself. It has been worth it and if I wasn't volunteering, I'd be sitting at home and that would be boring! I like seeing everyone from the service centre every week, and if anyone is off unwell I like to ring them up and make sure they are okay. I've been volunteering so long now, I might as well keep going until I drop."

Edinburgh's Lord Provost Frank Ross said: "In my role as the city's Volunteer Champion, again and again I see how important volunteering is to the social fabric of this city. Edinburgh is a very friendly place to live and there are countless citizens who do so much for their communities, but rarely – if ever – do I come across someone who continues to get out and about to volunteer at 100 years old!

"Doris is an inspiration to us all and a formidable champion for those suffering from dementia and memory loss in her community. It is people like her who actively make the city a better place to live, and help to inspire more Edinburgh citizens to start volunteering for the benefit of others.

"I am so pleased to be able to show the city's appreciation and pride in her many years volunteering, particularly on this very special birthday. My thanks and congratulations on behalf of everyone Doris has helped over the years."

Born in Merchiston, Doris was brought up in Colinton and attended James Gillespie's junior and senior schools, where she sat in the same class as author Muriel Spark.

After school and following several jobs her main employment for many years was in the Civil Service working in the Transport Department, before she moved to the City of Edinburgh Council to become a Secretary at Parsons Green Primary School.

Doris was married in St Mary's Cathedral, Palmerston Place. Doris and her husband had five children, but sadly she lost her husband while still a relatively young woman, and two of her children years later.

Of her surviving children she has a daughter in Australia, and a son (David Keir) and daughter (Alison Kerr) from Livingston who attended her birthday celebration along with her daughter-in-law (Hannah Keir).

Doris has been a loyal volunteer with Northfield and Willowbrae Community Services Group since the early 1980s. She is a devout Christian and attended New Restalrig Church for many years, mostly as an Elder. She now attends the Christ Church at Britwell Crescent.

Many Happy Returns Doris!