

## Lady Anne Sophia Berry VMH 11 December 1919 to 8 September 2019



Lady Anne Berry at Hackfalls,  
29th March 2015.

Lady Anne was born at Wolterton Hall in Norfolk, England, to Sir Robert Walpole, fifth Earl of Orford and his wife Emily. When Anne was about nine the family moved to Rosemoor, a salmon fishing lodge with 16 hectares of farmland in North Devon. When her father died in 1931, she inherited the property and continued to live there with her mother. They made several lengthy visits to New Zealand during the 1930s as the carefree way of life suited her nature. In 1939 she married Eric Palmer, a colonel in the territorial army, and they moved around during the war.

In 1959 Lady Anne started to take a serious interest in developing the large garden at Rosemoor and, through various plant enthusiasts she met, started building up the plant collection that her garden became so well known for. She started travelling widely and collected plant material from around the world. In the 1960s she joined both the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and the International Dendrology Society (IDS) and soon was elected chair of the tours committee of the IDS. It was during one of these tours in 1977 that she first visited Hackfalls and Eastwoodhill and of course met Bob Berry.

In 1980 her husband Colonel Palmer died and in 1988 she offered Rosemoor, her home and garden, to the RHS. By this time the property was highly regarded as one of the finest gardens in the south of England and had developed a large and comprehensive mail order business.

In 1986, Lady Anne was awarded the RHS Victoria Medal of Honour (VMH) and in 1990 she received an Honorary Doctorate of Science at the University of Exeter.

In 1990 she led another IDS tour to New Zealand and of course Hackfalls was on the agenda. Bob's wife by this time had died and he and Anne married later that year, a friendship fostered through the love of plants.

Lady Anne developed the garden at Hackfalls and soon started propagating all manner of interesting plants. She supported Bob as he developed the Hackfalls collection of Mexican oaks and other rare specimens the property became so well known for. She also took a keen interest in the Eastwoodhill Arboretum and was never one to curtail her comments if she felt the need.

During the time I knew her Lady Anne often mentioned her old home and garden at Rosemoor and retained a keen interest in its progress under the RHS. It gave her great satisfaction to know how much the property was appreciated by so many visitors, more than 250,000 in 2019. What a wonderful horticultural legacy she has left the world, both in England and also at Hackfalls. Thank you Anne for all your enthusiasm and advice.

**Based on an obituary compiled by Rodney Faulkner and a Wikipedia entry ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady\\_Anne\\_Berry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady_Anne_Berry)).**

**Lady Anne became a Life Member of the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture following the death of Robert ('Bob') Berry on 2nd August 2018.**

