



KATHLEEN BLANCHE (KAY) HARMAN, 1914–2012

Kay Harman was a beautiful woman both in looks and in nature. Everywhere she went she brought gaiety and everyone she met was entranced.

Kay was born in Burma and educated in India and in England. She was working in London when some strange whim took her to Lundy where at once she fell under the island's magic spell. There she met Albion Harman and they married on 1 September 1939. They honeymooned on Lundy and there the news reached them that war had broken out. Albion, a mining engineer, was drafted into the mines and afterwards to India, and Kay went back to London to work as a codebreaker in the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in Baker Street. Later she was sent to Lisbon, then a hotbed of intrigue and counter-intrigue. Kay never spoke much about this episode in her life except to say that she hadn't been a very good spy!

So back to England and the births of John and Inez and to Albion's reign on Lundy. The photograph by Gordon Coward (see page 2), the then island vet, says it all. It shows Albion's steadfast character and Kay's remarkable beauty. Kay was, though, a bad sailor and the tossing of the *Lundy Gannet* on her two-and-a-half-hour voyage to Lundy from Bideford must have been purgatory for her, but she never complained; she just became the only person capable of turning a fetching shade of green and still retain her glamour!

After the island was sold in 1969 as a result of Albion's early death at the age of 51, Kay lived in a cottage in Cathedral Close at Salisbury for many years and then, tenderly cared for by Inez and by carers at a cottage adjoining Inez's house in Hampshire.

So, aged 97, Kay has gone on her way, leaving behind nothing but sweetness and light. As was quoted at her funeral, in Ezra Pound's words: "Your face will forever drift before our eyes, fast blown as does the wind a rose."

CHRIS PRICE

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