

Oxford Times - February 7<sup>th</sup> 2013

# Margaret Rosenthal

Former head of English at Oxfordshire teacher training college

**M**argaret Rosenthal, a former head of English at Lady Spencer Churchill College in Wheatley, has died, aged 97.

Miss Rosenthal, who read English at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, inspired hundreds of students and future teachers through her love of literature.

Her grandfather, Barbanel, who came from Lithuania, and her father, George David, were ministers in the Church of England.

She was born in 1915 and grew up in Birmingham, attending the city's King Edward VI School for Girls.

She came up to Lady Margaret Hall in 1935, becoming an enthusiastic member of the college's choral society.

Soon after leaving Oxford she began her teaching career at Varmdean Girls' Grammar School in Brighton.

After briefly teaching in Bradford, Miss Rosenthal moved back south to Christ's Hospital School in Hertford when the war ended.

After a short spell as head of the Grove School, Hindhead, which has since amalgamated with the Royal Naval Girls' School as the Royal School, she was given the opportunity to run the English department at Bletchley Teacher Training College in 1960. That was in premises taken over from the Bletchley Park codebreakers.

In the mid-1960s, when the college moved to Wheatley Park and became the Lady Spencer Churchill College of Education, Miss Rosenthal and her mother, Elizabeth, moved with it to staff accommodation in College Close.

Following her mother's death in

1971, Miss Rosenthal bought her own house in Farm Close Road.

Right until her retirement in 1975, Miss Rosenthal continued to instruct teachers at the college.

Retirement brought her the chance to explore the history of the village, particularly its parish church and primary school. She trained to become a lay reader and also served as school inspector, visiting many schools in Oxfordshire.

An invitation to talk at the harvest festival in Kirtlington Primary School was the start of a period in which she composed 300 sermons and preached in Wheatley, Forest Hill and Stanton St John churches.

Miss Rosenthal, who never married, died on January 14 in the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford.

She was cremated on January 28, with a funeral service held at St Mary the Virgin Church in Wheatley.

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•Margaret Rosenthal at her 97th birthday last year