

# From Scotland to America at Age 23



## MEET ANN CORDELL

Mrs. Ann Cordell has the kind of story that Hollywood makes movies about. She was born in 1925 in a small coal mining village called Hill of Beath, located in Fife, Scotland. She became a bus conductress at the age of 16, one of the few jobs available to women in the village. She did this for a few years, but she and a fellow coworker decided they wanted better opportunities for themselves. According to Ann, she said to her friend, "Let's go to America." Her family, as well as the entire village, didn't take the girls seriously at all and actually laughed at the idea. "No one ever left the village," says Ann. Nevertheless, she went through the several month long process to receive approval for travel. When the time was almost near to leave, her friend backed out, and Ann was devastated. She was very afraid of going alone, but she wanted to prove it to herself and to her village that she could. At 23-years-old, Ann boarded a ship and traveled to live with relatives in Maine in 1949.

When she arrived, her trunk had been lost, and she had very little money in her pocket. Her relatives suggested that she look for a job at the new resort that was being built nearby. Ann interviewed for a waitress position, despite having never worked in a dining room and not knowing what even "asparagus or sweet potatoes were". Also, her English was hard to understand due

to her thick Scottish accent. The owner saw how desperately she needed the job and decided to give her the chance. According to Ann, her very first customer was Alfred Hitchcock, who ordered, "a 3-minute egg, toast, and tomato juice". Ann said she was so nervous that when bringing his food, she dropped the tray and spilled his order all down the back of her new, white uniform. Now in tears, her boss told her to go change and come back that evening, when his wife would be hostessing and could show her the ropes of serving.

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It wasn't long before Ann made several new friends, who called her 'Scottie'. Eventually, the resort closed, and she and her girlfriends did quite a bit of traveling together, working various jobs across the country, and eventually settling in California. She met her husband, Clifford Cordell, while taking a typing class, and the two married in 1956. They moved to Clifford's uncle's farm in Smyrna, Tennessee the following year, and they inherited the property after he passed. Their only child, Janet, was born in 1958. Ann has experienced and done

so many neat things in her lifetime. She's traveled all across the U.S. and visited 8 different countries. She has a nephew who is a prominent actor in London, known for his role in theater as The Phantom in The Phantom of the Opera, and she beams when she discusses his work. She has donated several gallons of blood to the Red Cross, and in August this year, she received an award recognizing her 52 years of hospital volunteering.

After her husband passed, she left the farm and bought a condominium in Murfreesboro. However, after a series of health complications, including two hip replacements and open heart surgery, she began to consider more accommodating living options. She had stayed in AdamsPlace rehab several times and had such a good experience that she decided to tour Independent Living with her daughter. In 2014, Ann became a resident, and she says, "When I moved here, I thought, 'Why didn't I do this 2 or 3 years ago?'" 94-year-old Ann is thriving at AdamsPlace. She and the ladies she plays cards with recently started a Sunday night "food & drinks" get-together in the parlor, open to all residents, which she is very proud of. She loves her social network of friends and is full of stories to tell. Mountain moving residents like Ann Cordell keep our neighborhood fresh and on its toes!



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