

# OBITUARIES

Obituaries should be submitted by email to Ruth Doherty at [r.doherty@nature.com](mailto:r.doherty@nature.com). All submitted obituaries should be 450 words maximum in length (apart from obituaries for past presidents of the BDA where the length should be 800 words). Content of the obituary is down to the individual author, and the approval of the family should be given for the obituary prior to submission to the *BDJ*.

## WALTER DAVID SCHWARZ

1930 – 2015



Born in 1930 in Nuremberg, Germany, David passed away on Christmas Eve, 2015, after a short and perplexing illness that remained undiagnosed. I first met David

when I was a BDS student at the London Hospital Medical College Dental School in 1979. He was an excellent teacher and as a mentor he was first rate. I would spend many lunch times in his little room off Walden Street discussing articles on occlusion and its many facets.

He was one of the few American-trained dentists on staff at that time, having gained his prosthodontist training at Tufts University in Boston. His enthusiasm for excellence would drive me on to take my DDS and to achieve all that I could professionally.

He was very much a family man, with three girls Gabrielle, Jane and Nina (Julia), and ran a highly successful solo practice in Kent, where he was well respected and admired by his peers and liked by his patients. He was a kind and generous man and I've seen him quietly slip a patient some money for their trip to the dental school. As a man of high ideals and standards he was at times exasperated by the politics he faced at the dental school, but I know that he loved teaching those who wanted to learn.

When he finally retired he pursued an ambition to undertake a university course in European social history. Alas he found the loss of his wife, Christine, to cancer difficult and never really got over the loss of his daughter in November 2013. I know that he enjoyed his companionship with Chris and David's friend Pat during his later years as they

travelled together, keeping close to his family. Up until the end he remained an erudite and learned gentleman of the 'old school' – quick witted with a dry and sometimes mischievous sense of humor. He spoke several languages and while in the hospital for his many visits would converse with as many of the foreign nurses as he could, whether they spoke French, German, Arabic, etc. I will miss, but never forget, his kindness, wisdom, honesty, professionalism, wit and friendship over the 40 years we kept close.

Stephen Bray

## JOHN EDWARD CROCKER

1942 – 2015



John was born in Sydney, Australia, the son and grandson of dentists, he received his dental degree in 1963 from the University of Sydney. His first job as a

dentist was on the 'Dental Train', which crossed Australia, east to west, stopping at stations in isolated areas to provide dental care. He then applied to work with the Bush Church Aid Society which included a Flying Doctor Service to the Australian Outback where he met Wendy, a British nurse also working for the BCA, and they married in 1968. They travelled to the UK (by boat in those days!) for their honeymoon and stayed for 47 years.

John joined an NHS practice in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, where he and Wendy set up home, later buying into a practice in nearby Didcot, and continued to work there until his retirement in 2002.

He then ran a one man (John!) dental laboratory from his converted garage

and maintained links with his profession via the BDA, who awarded him Life Membership, and the LDC, where he had been the National Treasurer for the LDC conference for many years. In fact, John, in dental terms, was a bit of a national treasure himself, not just with his professional colleagues, but also his patients, using his magician skills to calm patients whilst waiting for an injection to work and always ready with a magic trick at any dental meeting. This included sawing a Branch President (me) in half with a rusty hedge trimmer that may not have passed all health and safety requirements. He was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Magicians, a volunteer at the local Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied Club for 42 years, a keen speaker at the Toastmaster Club, and no mean croquet and table tennis player. A keen photographer, all new patients to his practice were captured with his Polaroid camera – always with a smile on their faces because John would probably have magically just made a fluffy red ball or two come out of their ears!

He was much in demand for children's parties for most of his life, even continuing in this last year, and indeed was booked to do the children's party on Christmas day at the residential home where he was living, but sadly passed away on Christmas Eve, never recovering from a recent fall.

John was a very gentle person and an absolute gentleman. His desire in life was to give joy to others and he livened up any meeting.

He had a real and personal faith which sustained him in the highs and lows of life and through which he helped many others.

He is survived by Wendy and their four children; Steve, Cathy (who has carried on the family tradition and is an orthodontist in Sligo), Susie and Jeremy, to whom we extend our condolences from a grateful profession.

Alison Lockyer