

Christopher Saunders



To relate the life of Chris Saunders using just dentistry as his focus would only scratch the surface. It was a huge part, a part he embraced with drive, ambition, rare skills and human warmth few could emulate. A lifelong supporter of NHS dentistry, he refused to allow the ever-tightening financial constraints to erode the quality and time he believed his patients should receive, an approach that unfortunately caused an early retirement due to poor health.

Qualifying in 1964 from Bristol, Chris immediately moved to Cardiff and joined Eric Joseph in practice as an assistant, quickly becoming an associate and eventually running his own practice on the same premises. Loved by every staff member he employed over the years, his manner encouraged a similar loyalty in his patients, and his retirement is still bemoaned by many of them eight years since his retirement from practice.

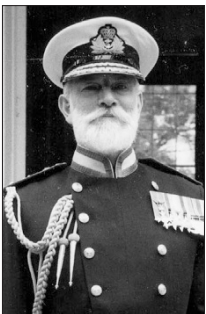
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A busy practice failed to exhaust Chris's boundless energy. He pursued many diverse interests, his manual skills extending into jewellery and all manner of DIY pursuits, and he also explored the arts, music and literature in some considerable depth. Indeed, in his younger years, he gained experience in professional acting and radio. Chris loved being in the saddle, be it on horse or motorcycle, and latterly enjoyed spending time in France with his wife Kate.

A raconteur with Pythonesque wit, Chris will be missed by all he touched, and all express their sympathy to Kate and their daughters Jane and Clare.

C. McCubbin

John Hunter



Surgeon Rear Admiral (D) John Hunter died on 1 April 2004 aged 88. He was Director of Naval Dental Services during the period 1971-1974.

John Hunter qualified from the Turner Dental School in Manchester. In December 1940 he was commissioned as a Probationary Temporary Surgeon Lieutenant (D) RNVR. A picture taken at that time shows the newly entered Hunter sporting a full set, a feature that was to remain with

him throughout life although at that time this physiognomy was jet black rather than the white beard which most of us remember.

He had a memorable war career. Appointed to the light cruiser HMS KENYA in January 1941, John took part in the hunt for the BISMARCK and was involved in supplying a covering force for convoys in the Arctic. In June she transferred to the Mediterranean area and escorted convoys from Gibraltar to Malta at the time when the Royal and Merchant Navies sustained some of their heaviest losses. KENYA herself was damaged by torpedoes in August. From 1943 to 1945, John served variously in HMS EXCELLENT, RNB Portsmouth, HMS QUEBEC and HMS NEWCASTLE.

In 1946 Acting Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Hunter got his 'straight stripes' and met his future wife Anne on the quarterdeck of HMS HOWE during a wardroom cocktail party. They married in 1947, and bought 'Horsewells' where they raised five children.

John cut an imposing figure. On casual acquaintance, he could appear quite daunting to his juniors and even some of his contemporaries, but there were very different facets to his character. Those of us who were privileged to witness these other aspects saw a devoted father and a man of deep kindness and friendly disposition.

He was sartorially correct. Junior officers serving with him were expected to meet his standards of dress, but a rare lapse occurred at the end of a yacht race. House rules demanded at least a jacket and neckerchief, presenting a dilemma. John scanned his crew, selected

In his capacity as yachtsman, country gentleman or parent, many different qualities emerged.

his mark and divested the victim of his neck ware before donning it himself. If the choice looked somewhat incongruous with his reefer it did at least satisfy club requirements.

An enthusiastic yachtsman, he started racing when the sport revived after the war. He was a member of the Royal Ocean Racing Club and was particularly proud of having won his class in the RORC Plymouth to Santander and Santander to Belle Isle races of 1952. He continued to sail into his mid seventies until ill health forced him to quit.

He was a respected clinician who worked hard and expected similar efforts from his subordinates. He honed his managerial skills in a wide variety of appointments, the first of which was as Assistant to the Director of Naval Dental Services. Promoted to Surgeon Captain (D) in December 1963, he held the appointments of Fleet Dental Surgeon on the Staff of CinC Mediterranean, Command Dental Surgeon on the Staff of CinC Plymouth and Fleet Dental Surgeon on the Staff of CinC Fleet before his final promotion to Rear Admiral and appointment as Director in August 1971.

Above all John will be recalled for the emphasis he placed on the need for continuing postgraduate training. The introduction, during his tenure, of MSc courses for the 'general duties' dental officers opened up a pathway that raised clinical standards.

After retirement he and Anne were able to devote more time to their house and gardens. His administrative skills were channelled into local government and he served for some time as a District Councillor for the South Hams.

He was appointed OBE in 1962, CB in 1973 and held the appointment of Honorary Dental Surgeon to the Queen during his term as Director.

J.A. Atherton