

BRYAN APPLETON GILLARD



Bryan Gillard, a past president of the BDA, died peacefully at his home near Chew Magna on 9 March 2012 in his 85th year.

Bryan was born, and spent his early life, in Cardiff. His secondary education was at Colston's School, Bristol. At the age of 18, towards the end of the Second World War, he joined the Welsh Guards seeing active service in Palestine and attaining the rank of sergeant.

On being demobbed he went north to St Andrews and Dundee to the beginnings of a long career in dentistry. He also embarked upon his 'political' career becoming vice-president of the Students' Union. Most importantly it was here that he met his future wife and soul mate, Patricia whom he married in 1954, the year following his graduation. He returned to work in Cardiff for a short while before establishing a practice in Tredegar, Gwent. It wasn't long before Bryan became active in dental politics becoming a member of the Gwent Local Dental and District Advisory committees, both of which he chaired for a period. For six years he was also chair of the Welsh Office's Dental Advisory Committee and in 1982, was also appointed to the Department of Health's Standing Dental Advisory Committee. Bryan had joined the BDA in 1971 and quickly became a member of the South Wales Branch Council and BDA Welsh Council. His national BDA career began in 1973 when he was elected to both GDSC (where he served on the Executive,

Ancillary Personnel and the Dental Formulary committees) and to the Representative Board of the BDA, becoming a member of council two years later. Bryan became vice-chair of the BDA Council and in 1983, was elected chair. Bryan's influences were not restricted to the UK, as he also attended meetings of the EEC Dental Liaison Committee and of FDI. Bryan was always a supporter of and active participant in continuing education for dentists and in 1988 was appointed to the Welsh Council for Medical and Dental Postgraduate Education and later chaired the dental sub-group.

Bryan retired from active dental practice in 1989 and in that year was awarded a fellowship of the Faculty of Dental Surgery in England. He was later to receive awards from the University of Wales who awarded him an honorary MScD in 1991 in recognition of his services to dentistry in Wales and the Faculty of General Dental Practice who awarded him a DGDP in 1992.

Despite his busy life in retirement, Bryan still had time for BDA committees in Wales when, following the untimely death of the BDA Welsh Secretary in 1992, he stepped into the role until a successor was appointed.

Bryan became BDA President in 1993 and spent his year travelling with Pat representing dentistry and the BDA in the UK and abroad. In 1996, he joined the ranks of vice-presidents of the association continuing to make his presence felt at the Representative Board until it was reorganised in 2000.

But the life of Bryan was not entirely dentistry. As a family man he was an exemplary role model for his children and grandchildren. He tended his flock with love, wisdom and generos-

ity. Whilst not outwardly sentimental, he was a very caring man, which was reflected in his activities with the Dentists' Benevolent Fund of which he had been treasurer. He was an active member of Rotary and a passionate supporter of his local rugby clubs in Ebbw Vale, Tredegar and Cardiff thus ensuring tickets for Wales' home internationals.

In retirement in the Vale of Glamorgan, sustained by a regular supply of jelly babies and dark liquids, he continued to hone his wood-working skills, rebuild stone walls, restore the local ancient wells and chair the residents' committee and edit and produce their newsletter.

Bryan was always on the lookout for 'younger talent' willing to take on roles in the dental politics of Wales. Known affectionately as 'Grandad' he encouraged, supported and advised many of those currently in offices in the BDA and in other dental professional groups in Wales.

Bryan was a man of considerable intelligence, guile and tenacity, full of common sense and at times incorrigible. Those who were privileged to number amongst his close friends will remember his warm companionship and his unfailing good humour that meant that time spent with him left one with a happier view of life. All these talents he applied to finding solutions to practical, political and personal challenges. At his funeral it was said that wherever he is now he will probably be looking to reorganise it to make it run more efficiently!

He is survived by his wife, Pat, his three children, their partners and his eight grandchildren. The dental profession, especially in Wales, owes much to Bryan and we thank his family for sharing him with us. We will all miss him.

Stuart Geddes