

OBITUARIES

Obituaries should be submitted by email to Annabel Nicholson at annabel.nicholson@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*.

SURGEON REAR ADMIRAL (D) DAVID A. COPPOCK CB OSTJ

1931–2014



David Coppock died last December at the age of 83 after several difficult years following a severe stroke. He will be remembered by many as a Director of the Royal Naval Dental Service, and additionally as the

Tri-Service Director Defence Dental Services from 1988–1990.

Those who knew him well will surely remember his larger than life personality, and his many wide-ranging skills. He was not only a well-read accomplished raconteur, fly fisherman and lover of the theatre, but he had an innate ability to befriend and take real interest in all he met. Few met him throughout his life, without departing with a ‘Coppock story or a gem thought’ to enjoy, ponder and remember!

Qualifying from Guy’s, his early years in the Royal Navy saw active service on HMS EAGLE in the 1956 Suez campaign. He then enjoyed overseas service appointments with his wife Maria in Hong Kong, and later as a family of four in Gibraltar with Phillipa and Nicola. These posts within close tri-service environments enabled him in later years to work easily alongside Army and RAF personnel at all MoD seniority levels.

David Coppock’s career advanced rapidly through important naval appointments in the UK. He had a highly successful married secondment serving with the United States Navy Dental Corps in Washington, gaining an MSc in Oral Biology and making many lifelong US friends. He additionally shattered any preconceived ideas his USN colleagues may have had about ‘typical British reserve’!

On return to the UK, senior naval dental staff appointments followed leading to

nine years of service in the London MoD. During that time Maria sadly died, but five years later he married Sally Arnold, who survives him. His career culminated in his final appointments as Director Naval Dental Services in 1985, and additionally as Tri-Service Director Defence Dental Services in 1988.

David Coppock left his mark on the Navy, and everyone who knew him will retain fond memories of this cultured and entertaining man.

A longer version of this obituary has been accepted for publication in the May 2015 edition of the *Journal of the Royal Naval Medical Service*.

T. J. C. Hall and E. J. Grant

ALAN SWEETMAN

1927 – 2015



Alan was born in East Barnet. His father was an accountant for boat builders on the Thames at Brentford. He was educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and in 1945 was awarded a major

scholarship to university. He immediately entered The London Hospital Dental School, where he became a prizeman, qualifying BDS and LDS in 1949. After completing a year as house surgeon he spent two years on national service as a commissioned officer in the Royal Army Dental Corps. It was while in North Africa that he met and married his first wife, Pat Maddock.

Returning to England he settled in general dental practice in Twickenham. He soon joined the local yacht club and subsequently the Hayling Island Sailing Club. He was an active club member and a natural sailor who braved the waters in a Flying Fifteen in most conditions. He received the Royal Yachting Association’s International Certificate of Competence in 2000 and enjoyed passing

on his knowledge of tides, winds and the nautical arts to many aspiring and grateful young sailors.

While studying for the primary FDS, Alan was asked on a temporary basis to teach in the Department of Oral Surgery at The London Hospital Dental School. This led to a permanent part-time lectureship which he also combined with running his popular and successful general dental practice. He qualified FDS in 1968 and was clinical dental tutor at the West Middlesex Hospital and at The London.

Alan was an excellent administrator – from 1974 there followed a series of posts as Dental Officer for Health Authorities in North and West London and North West Hertfordshire. He retired from general practice in 1993 and became Legal Affairs Manager for the West Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust.

His second wife, Patsy (née Edmonds), sadly passed away in 1999.

He joined the Hounslow and Twickenham Section of the BDA in the early 1950s where he was an active member and became President of the Middlesex and Hertfordshire Branch in 1977.

Away from dentistry his interests included membership of Le Cercle Français de Richmond, receiving the Academic Diploma in French from the Open University in 1977. He was a member of the Whitton Model Club with interests in model aeroplanes, model boats and above all model railways, of which he had an encyclopaedic knowledge.

He received the Class A International Licence in Amateur Radio in 1980 and a certificate from the British Model Flying Association in 2003.

In 2002, Alan married Dorothy Goodsir, whom he met when he was Legal Affairs Manager and who had worked alongside him in his practice in the 1960s. She survives him, as do his children Beverly, Bryan and Andrew, his seven grandchildren and one great grandson.

Michael Frazer