

Obituary

Obituaries should be submitted by email to Jonathan Coe at jonathan.coe@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*



Peter John Willard
1929–2017

Peter Willard, who died April 7 2017, will always be associated with the apogee of the Middlesex & Hertfordshire Branch immediately after the Association's 1971 Annual Conference in Eastbourne known as EC71. Already secretary of the Branch for nine years, he led a team in one of the last locally delegated Association's Conferences. It was a spectacular success with over 900 registrations, a record for that time. Later the same year Peter went on to organise the Branch Presidential Meeting in Rome, the first of forty-two such traditional meetings abroad.

Peter was born in 1929 in Welwyn Garden City and went to Stanborough Grammar.

Following National Service he qualified at Guy's where a fellow student, Dennis Picton, remembers him as having 'a most emphatical sense of dry humour and having great fun pouring hot metal all over the prosthetics lab.' Peter first became an associate in Dunstable then in 1952 moved to Hitchin where he practised family dentistry for the next thirty-eight years. Peter became involved in the North Hertfordshire Section and in 1962 became the Branch Secretary and so was on the Representative Board. His contribution in debates was always measured, modest and carefully thought out. He was far more interested in promoting the collegiate structure of the Association than the minutiae of its relationship with government.

Peter was frustrated by the lack of general practice career structure and so was always trying to develop new interests. For a while he became absorbed with the mysteries of occlusion and then, in the days before reliable bonded porcelain, in precision attachments which he later described as

'an expensive learning curve'. It was only natural that in 1979, aged 50, he was in the first group of successful MGDS candidates at the same time as being Hertfordshire's LDC secretary. A colleague, Peter Cranfield, said 'he was a very precise and efficient secretary but with a great sense of humour, never taking himself too seriously'. Peter became a BDA Life Member in 1992.

Peter prepared himself for retirement by taking a City & Guilds diploma in cabinet making. When he did retire in 1991 he moved to Debenham where he was a CAB volunteer in Ipswich and ran the Debenham Local History Society. He also sailed a Squib on the River Deben.

The funeral took place at All Saints, Kenton where Peter had been Warden and oversaw the installation of a restored organ in 2004. Peter is survived by Valerie after a 62 year marriage, three sons and seven grandchildren.

E. Gordon



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If you know someone who is finding it hard to cope, make sure they know about the BDA Benevolent Fund. If we can help, we will. Share, like and keep up to date with our efforts on our Facebook page: facebook.com/bdabenevolentfund/