

Derek Chandler 1938-2018



Derek was an only child, born to Dick and Peggy in Southgate, on 7 December 1938. He and his family were lucky to survive the Blitz – in 1940 a blast blew the back of the house through the front. Fortunately, they were in the shelter in the garden, although the infant Derek did disappear for a time under a pile of sand. The family moved to Oxford, and returned to the house when it was rebuilt in 1947.

An intelligent child, with 'a memory like a dustbin', as his wife Sue describes it, he got a scholarship to the Mercers' School in Holborn. But his reports suggest they may have been a little disappointed in him – describing him as 'erratic', 'lazy', 'perfectly capable but not always prepared to put the effort in'. What they missed is that he already had clear views about what was worth doing and what not. If it was worthwhile, he put the effort in and he did it well. One of the things Derek did particularly well, was to make lifelong friends.

Derek progressed to take a degree in electronic engineering at Kings College, Durham, what is now Newcastle University. Derek now had to earn a living, and he did so firstly as an electrical engineer, moving on to become a patent attorney, retiring in 1995.

He was a dedicated family man. It started with a group of friends, of which Sue was a part. They finally got together as a couple in March 1964 and married the next August. They moved around north London a little before settling in the

house in Golders Green where they stayed.

The house was in a bad way and they set to and put it to rights – Derek concentrating on the plumbing, heating, rewiring, fixtures and fittings, while Sue did the decorating – all of it, inside and out. It was years before Derek allowed a workman anywhere near the house, let alone in it.

The couple's first daughter, Helen, arrived in 1973, followed by Janet in 1980. They remember Derek as strict but fair. He had clear ideas on how they should behave and communicated them robustly. There were the inevitable tensions, particularly when the girls became teenagers, and some of their friends were just a bit scared of Derek – something to do with his height, perhaps, and the rather intimidating habit he had of becoming more and more quiet the angrier he became.

It was a close family. They always ate together and often took off to the Isle of Wight for a break. This meant it wasn't practical to have animals in the house. But put Derek next to a cat, and there was no separating them. And when Janet brought one of her rabbits to stay for a while, Bob Bunny and Derek bonded immediately – and sat watching the TV together.

He also liked to relax with music or a good book – preferably non-fiction but occasionally a Terry Pratchett or other fantasy novel – a taste he picked up from his daughters. He had a wry attitude to life, and a dry sense of humour, and he certainly enjoyed a good joke.

He kept his friends from school, university, and the workplace, and to those he added new ones near where he lived. Derek saw John the Barber, just round the corner, nearly every day for 20 years. They loved to chat, and Derek would take him the Evening Standard if he was passing his shop in the evening.

In his retirement he was able to devote more time to organisations promoting the general good. It included the local ward panel for the Safer Neighbourhood Team, the London Forum of Civic and

Amenity Societies, and Probus, for retired professionals. As Secretary of the Benevolent Association of the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys, he was, for 16 years, the main point of contact for anyone asking for their help in the form of a grant.

Derek liked to make sure people were comfortable, even finding seats for strangers on the bus. And the source of his good manners and his courtesy was his full engagement with everything and everyone around him.

KATE HOBSON

Peter Neville, chairman of the BTG Pensioners' Association, pays tribute

In my lifetime, I have been privileged to meet a handful of individuals who were entirely good and helpful, and of whom nobody had a bad word to say. Derek was one of them.

More than that – he had the gift, when you spoke to him, of making you feel you were the only person of interest to him. This is not to suggest he was some unworldly guru – he was intensely practical and knowledgeable.

Thus, a typical 'household problem' conversation with him might go like this: "Derek, my washing machine

won't empty properly."

"Oh, what model is it?"

"Whizzo 66."

"The 66E or 66F?"

"66E I think."

"Ah well, take off the switchgear cover plate, you'll see a row of copper contacts. Go to the seventh from the left, you'll see it's pitted. Just burnish it with fine sandpaper and you should be all right."

Problem solved. Of course.

He was the best Chairman the BTG Pensioners' Association has ever had, and the best Head that the BTG Patents Department never had."

Roger Cullis, long standing colleague and friend, reflects on what made Derek special

Derek, who died of systemic cancer, and I go back a long way together. In the 1960s, patent trainees were often recruited from corporate R&D departments.

We were originally engineers at Standard Telephones & Cables Ltd. I moved to the London Patent Department of International Telephone & Telegraph Corp. (STC's parent company) in 1963 and Derek a year or two later.

We shared an office and a double desk in Glasshouse Yard, overlooking the Barbican. Our entertainment was watching the wrecking balls demolishing the bomb site in preparation for redevelopment.

We both developed similar filing systems, based on the mnemonic value of adjacent documents in a heap of papers. A paper read at the British Association for the Advancement of Science later called this the Volcano filing system because the heaps were apt to collapse like a magma eruption.

We moved on, Derek to Westinghouse, EMI and the then National Research Development Corporation (NRDC, later BTG). His interpersonal skills are reflected in the following comments by some who worked with him.

Malcolm Carter (former NRDC Records Manager) said "Receiving his Christmas card with the note saying that palliative care was all that was left, made me aware of his plight but I am still shaken by the speed of his decline. Warm and generous just about sums Derek up.

"On a very personal note about his generosity and kindness, he

offered me use of his IoW flat when my son, Jamie, was just 2 months old and we had the first of many lovely holidays there and in the subsequent house overlooking the Solent. Those holidays over eight summers were a joy for us and I like to think gave Derek some pleasure knowing we enjoyed it so much."

My daughter Gemma wrote, "I look back on my holiday work at BTG with fondness – especially the mind-expanding and wide-ranging lunchtime discussions. He, in particular, was always kind, patient and indulgent of my questions.

"I often remember with a chuckle, an occasion on which Sam Radley decided to test whether he actually read the 'Powers' that she prepared for him as he signed and passed them back with barely a glance. She inserted the words "and verily, I do declare that I am a small aquatic mammal named Bill," in the middle of the text. He glanced at it and said "Nice try Sam, I'm not going to sign that!" We were all astonished, but he shrugged and explained that it made the text the wrong shape! I have to sign those documents myself these days and always do so with a smile."

Derek spent his life helping others. A huge congregation of friends from all stages of his life bade him farewell at a Humanist ceremony at Golders Green Crematorium on February 24. He leaves his wife, Sue, daughters Janet and Helen and three grandchildren who will all sorely miss him.

It is with regret that, due to lack of space, Suburb News has had to edit this issue's obituaries. Editor

P R HARTLEY CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT & REGISTERED AUDITOR Accounting & Taxation Services

Call 020 8731 9745 or 07850 634395
Email paul@prhartley.co.uk
www.prhartley.co.uk

Beryl Druce 1931-2018



Beryl was born in Guayaquil, Ecuador in 1931 and lived there, and in Santiago, Chile, until 1945 when her family came back to the UK on the troop ship SS Rangitiki.

The Heselton family eventually settled in West Hampstead in early 1946, and Beryl with sister Evelyn started at Henrietta Barnett School.

After school, she worked as a secretary in town and met Neville Druce, whom she married in August 1954, with her sisters Evelyn, Agnes and Mary as bridesmaids. The couple, with their daughters Katrina and Nicolette, moved to 68 Erskine Hill in 1960, where she lived for the rest of her life.

Beryl supported Neville's decision to leave the BBC to start a company, Better Sound, which led to the formation of Audio Engineering in 1965. Former neighbour from Coleridge Walk, Molly Davies, lent them £100 to help start their company, and Molly's faith in the couple was rewarded many times over.

Employees were valued as if they were family, and she kept the company going as long as possible after Neville's death in 1999 with it closing in 2015 – Beryl was really proud of all that had been achieved and of her many loyal staff.

Beryl loved cruising. She went around the world with husband Neville in the 90's, stopping off to see Nicolette in Turkey.

There were other cruises to all corners of the world, including a trip to Antarctica to see her favourites – the penguins! She thought they were a bit smellier than expected and although she was advised to keep away from them, the curious penguins had other ideas. Beryl continued cruising until 2017 and in fact had another one booked for the end of January 2018.

Beryl loved her garden. She spent hours de-heading her favourite "rhodos", which Neville

had planted decades back, and which give a wonderful display of blooms in Spring. Spending time in her garden gave Beryl great happiness.

A well-known face on the Suburb, Beryl often stopped to chat whilst out shopping on a Saturday; Dr Vadgama in Temple Fortune was a regular stopping place of hers.

She made many good friends at Abbeyfield when she stayed there whilst work was done on her house, and she felt it a wrench to leave. However, Beryl remained a regular for lunch after an invitation from Lynn and Lucy. She felt welcome at Abbeyfield and considered it a privilege to go there; she valued the company and friendship.

Family and work colleagues will remember Beryl's love of Post-Its to communicate. When the offices closed, yellow notes were on the walls from front to back of the building – reminders to remember keys, put out milk bottles, lock up.

Known for her lovely smile and sense of humour, she was always polite with a "Thank You" to finish. Beryl felt that she had had a happy life and done everything she wanted to do. She was always grateful, cheerful and laughing to the end of her life; loved, admired and respected by all who knew her.

NICOLETTE DRUCE

Ian Tutton adds a personal tribute

I knew Beryl for the last few years of her life. To me she was the epitome of a 'nice' lady – 'nice' being a word that my English teacher forbade us to use when writing – find another word she would say ...well, how about kind, considerate, patient, thoughtful, generous, polite, engaging, delightful, humble, straightforward, welcoming and so on... all words that could be used to describe Beryl, she was indeed, a very nice lady indeed.

Hall and Randall Plumbers

Plumbing and Heating Services • Property Maintenance



Central Heating, Plumbing Repairs & Advisory Service

Look no further... your local plumbers

Emergency repairs, blocked pipes, drainage, guttering, roofing, central heating and boilers.

12 months guarantee, 40 years experience

132 Manor Way, Borehamwood, Herts, WD6 1QX

Web: www.hallandrandallplumbers.com

Email: office@hallandrandall.com

Tel: 020 8953 2094 • Fax: 020 8905 1602

Evenings: Garry 020 8207 3286 • Greg 020 8953 9828



metiswealth

Advising clients in Hampstead Garden Suburb

Independent Chartered Financial Planners specialising in:

- Investment Advice
- Tax Optimisation
- Estate Planning
- Retirement Planning

0345 450 5670

enquiries@metiswealth.co.uk

www.metiswealth.co.uk

