

Keith Sambrook 1925-2019

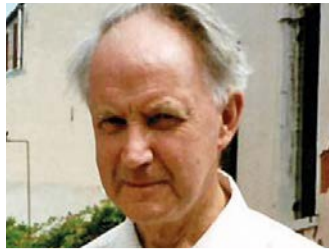
Publisher and Suburb resident Keith Sambrook died peacefully in hospital on New Year's Day 2019, following a short illness.

Born in Birstall, Leicester, in 1925, Keith was educated at Loughborough Grammar School, where he remembered fire-watching from the school tower as a sixth-former during the War. Keith served in the Royal Navy from 1944-47, first on Russian convoys (which he hated) and then in the Mediterranean, an experience of seminal importance in his life. Although he saw little action, the war in the Mediterranean being largely won by that time, he gained a lifelong affection for the Navy and his first visits to Italy and France inspired him with a love for European landscapes and culture.

Demobbed in 1947, Keith went up to Cambridge to read English Literature, graduating in 1950. Here he took his first steps in publishing, via one of the university's literary magazines; he remembered travelling to Oxford to interview the young Kenneth Tynan. His first job after graduation was with Manchester University Press, where he worked on academic titles in the social sciences.

In 1954 Keith moved to Edinburgh to take up a post with the leading educational publishers, Thomas Nelson where he worked on school and university textbooks. His work now often took him abroad and he experienced at first hand the 'Wind of Change' blowing over Africa, spending much of 1957, the year of Ghanaian independence, establishing a university press there and much of the following year in Lagos, establishing a Nigerian office for Nelson.

While in Edinburgh Keith met Hana, who shared Keith's love of the world of books, and they married in 1956. Born in what was then Czechoslovakia, she had come to Edinburgh



University in 1946, staying on in Scotland after the Communist coup of 1948 in her homeland.

Keith and Hana enjoyed their life in Edinburgh, where they had a wide circle of friends, but in 1963 Keith was invited by its chairman, Alan Hill, to take up a senior position at Heinemann Educational Books (HEB) in London, and he and Hana moved to the Suburb. Alan was himself a Suburb resident (in Northway) and Keith and Hana took an instant liking to the area and moved to their house in Farm Walk.

As overseas director at HEB, Keith was instrumental in the firm's international success, setting up Heinemann companies around the world. Perhaps his greatest achievement, however, was to oversee, in partnership with the novelist Chinua Achebe, the transformational African Writers Series. The inspiration of Alan Hill, it aimed to provide students in African schools and universities with imaginative works by their fellow Africans and to introduce African writers to an international literary audience. On his first day at HEB Keith found the manuscript of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's first novel, *Weep not, child*, on his desk, and Ngugi, Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Kwame Nkrumah were among the many leading African writers whose works were published in the series.

At Keith's funeral at St Jude's his former colleague James Currey read out a moving tribute from Ngugi wa Thiong'o: *Keith Sambrook contributed to the brook that streams through literary Africa ... He is part of the soul of a continent. And this ameliorates a*

little, the pain I feel at losing a friend, a great literary editor, and, for me, a literary mentor.

Keith's years at HEB were full and rewarding. Keith and Hana's daughter Katie remembers the family home as a frequent gathering place for authors and publishers from all over the world and Keith made numerous trips abroad, particularly to Africa, the Caribbean and the Far East.

After retirement Keith lectured in publishing at University College London and in book history at the Institute of English Studies, University of London, where he was an Associate Fellow. With characteristic generosity he refused to accept any fees for his teaching, asking instead that the funds saved be put towards supporting student bursaries. The university has honoured his wishes by creating a bursary scheme in his name.

Keith loved living on the Suburb. A keen gardener, he was a member of the Horticultural Society and won prizes for his roses. He was also a competent cook, with home-made ice-creams a particular forte, and enjoyed playing tennis.

Keith retained throughout his zest for life, his intellectual acuity and his keen interest in the world around him. In the last days of his life, though in intensive care with pneumonia and heart failure, he engaged the hospital staff in conversation about Brexit and made sure that he was up to date with the fortunes of Leicester City football club. A devoted husband and father, a supportive mentor to authors, publishers and students, Keith was an unassuming man of unfailing courtesy with a keen sense of humour. He will be much missed by his family and friends.

Keith is survived by his wife Hana and daughter Katie.

KATIE SAMBROOK
(with contributions from James Currey)

Free Church Night Shelter

The Night Shelter project ran in the winter months from October to the end of April, with each venue hosting one night a week for 10 consecutive weeks, in three cycles.

The HGS Free Church started its nine Tuesday nights of the middle cycle of the winter shelter on December 18 last year and completed on February 19, when we sadly said goodbye to the people we had got to know a little and gave them our best wishes for the coming months.

A total of 22 different guests had stayed with us. Being in the Suburb on the first night some guests inevitably got lost but all eventually arrived, wet, cold and very glad to find a friendly welcome, a hot meal and a warm, safe place to sleep.

It was a salutary experience but for the 50 volunteers who came forward to help from all communities within the Suburb, and a few beyond, it was a pleasure to be doing something to help, however little that felt. Each Tuesday night a new team bonded over a fine supper shared with the guests.

On average 15 guests, mainly men and a few women arrived at the Free Church Hall for a hearty 3-course meal prepared and donated by volunteers. We provided a range of small sized toiletries, tissues and sometimes socks for the guests to take away with them. After eating, some enjoyed scrabble or table tennis and then settled to sleep. We served them breakfast before they left.

During the day volunteers from the previous night shelter, in our case it was the New North London Synagogue, delivered the bedrolls to the Hall. These rolls were a thin mattress, sleeping bag and pillow all in a bag with the client's name on it. The following day our volunteers took these rolls by car to the Islamic Association of North London in North Finchley, which was hosting Wednesday night.

We have since been advised by the organisation Together in Barnet, who sent the guests to us through Homeless Action in Barnet, that a total of 13 people using the shelters this winter have been rehoused.

Now the last cycle of the 2018/9 Winter Shelter is coming to an end we have been asked if we are willing to help the Homeless through the summer months with a new 'Light Shelter'. This entails offering the space for the night, with two volunteers sleeping over as before, with no arrangements for meals, but with the usual transport of bedrolls. At the time of writing the Free Church has offered the premises and will organise this again at the hall, and the volunteers are being canvassed for their help.

If anyone else can offer to sleep overnight in the hall on a Tuesday night or can help with bedroll transport during May, June and July then please email jo_morris@btinternet.com. Volunteers must be over 18 years old, you do not have to be DBS checked but you will have to attend a training session (a couple of hours) at Housing Action for Barnet.

To our existing volunteers we offer our very warmest thanks for all of their help and support.

JO MORRIS



Repaircare London Ltd

Window Repair & Decorating Specialists

Suburb trust approved list

We love turning old, tired looking properties back to their former glory with the correct repair methods and the correct application of paint.

For the past 20 years we have operated in and around the North London Hampstead / Highgate area.

We would welcome the opportunity to earn your trust and deliver you the best service in window renovation, with the highest standards in decoration. Repaircare London have worked on many neglected properties, visit our website to see our work.



Before



After



We offer over 35 years experience of decorating internally and externally from large mansion blocks, colleges to domestic houses within Highgate, Hampstead and Hampstead Garden Suburb. We believe that we are the best in the business at what we do. Take a look at our external repair and redecoration procedures or if you want a free quote, visit our website.

"In this day and age, it's hard to find a company you can trust. Repaircare London Ltd was recommended to me by a friend, and now I know why – the quality of service I received was outstanding. Keep up the good work!"

Get in touch with Paul, for a free quote or for any questions you may have.



repaircarelondon.com



07904582816 / 01604 459625



Repaircare London Ltd