

Photo: From the Littaur family archives

David Littaur

1925 - 2022

A true gentleman in every sense of the word

RACHEL MONTAGU

David Allan Littaur, was born on the 10th September 1925 at home in Brook Street, Mayfair. The only child to Elsie and Marcus Littaur, my grandfather was raised in a privileged household and taught to appreciate the finer things in life. His mother was very particular about how he was dressed and behaved socially and this never left him. His shoes were always highly polished, he wore a suit, tie and jacket at every occasion and his manners were impeccable. He was a perfect gentleman.

David was educated by private tutors (he was invited to play at the Palace with the princesses Elizabeth and Margaret as they shared a French tutor) before being sent off to study at Clifton College in Bristol at the age of 13.

In 1939, the family embarked on a three week cruise, waved off by their good friends Cecil and

Evelyn Fox along with their youngest daughter Joyce. The cruise was cut short due the start of WW2 and the family remained in Argentina for 3 years. David and Joyce corresponded throughout this time. When David finally came back to London he enrolled in the RAF and spent a couple of years in Canada before finally marrying Joyce, his sweetheart and family friend, in 1948. It was a true love indeed. They celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 2018 with their local Suburb friends only 2 months before my sweet grandmother passed away.

David had a love and appreciation for culture and music from a very early age. He played the clarinet, violin, and piano, and enrolled at the Guildhall of Music. He followed his passion for music and became a conductor. My grandparents travelled the world with the various orchestras. They both loved to travel, meet new people (often forming lasting friendships) and they were both very particular about eating good food. My grandfather strived for beauty and perfection and this is probably why he was so successful as a conductor and arranging events; always determined that it would be perfect and beautiful for everyone. A regular ballet, opera, recital and concert goer, he loved the combination of the audio and visual. Before his hearing deteriorated he would listen, compose, and play music on a daily basis with a huge appreciation for tone and context. Along with Joyce, music was most definitely his passion.

In 1998, my grandparents moved to the Suburb from

Highgate and took to Suburb life like ducks to water. Both felt they had finally come home to a community they had craved. They relished the sense of camaraderie and the active community engagement and formed bonds, ties and friendships that enriched the rest of their lives. David's role as Chair of the Events Committee, his involvement with both Fellowship House and the Proms at St Jude's, gave him purpose and pleasure over many years. Well into his nineties, he managed to organise and orchestrate events through meetings, emails, and his iPhone which was never far from him. Technology certainly wasn't going to deter him.

Focused and always interested in others, David was an astute listener and so interested in the world around him. He was well respected by so many and made everyone feel special – from his family and friends to the taxi driver, receptionist or waiter. Non-judgemental, modern, warm, courteous, and charming, he would look you right in the eye with a beaming smile and child-like excitement. He leaves behind a wonderful legacy of appreciating how to be 'in the moment' and to celebrate life to the full, to be optimistic, kind and interested in others, to be well mannered and charitable. He believed in paying it forward.

Even with all of the many privileges life afforded him, my grandfather remained humble and grateful for the affection and engagement he received in return. David Littaur was a true gentleman who will never be forgotten in the Suburb and further afield.



Jean Neal

1922 - 2022



Photo: Colin Gregory

COLIN GREGORY

Jean Neal, one of the Suburb's oldest residents, died on 26th March just short of her 101st birthday. She and her husband Tim were active members of many Suburb organisations and were Honorary Life Members of the RA. For many years they organised distribution of Suburb News. Tim served as a member of the RA Council and later as the first chair of the newly formed Trees and Open Spaces Committee. They were both keen naturalists and loved the birdlife in their garden in Meadway, on Hampstead Heath, in Big Wood and Little Wood and further afield, where they often went on bird watching holidays. Tim grew up on the Suburb in the house his parents bought in 1914, and Jean continued to live there until her death. Tim was one of the narrators of the 1975 Suburb film, made to mark European Architectural Heritage Year, alongside Sir Donald Sinden. Tim

and Jean were great supporters of the Fellowship, running weekly musical afternoons, and of the Garden Suburb Theatre, which Tim joined as a young man, playing many roles, often in the open air theatre in Little Wood. He is particularly remembered by many for his portrayal of the Judge in Toad of Toad Hall.

Jean was born in Middlesbrough but spent most of her childhood in Norwich. She attended Newnham College, Cambridge, at a time when women were not awarded degrees: she was able to claim it only many years later. She went on to work at Bletchley Park where she met Alan Turing, whom she encountered again when she worked at the National Physical Laboratory. Later she made a career as a legal indexer, working for the publisher Butterworths. The photo shows Jean at her 100th birthday party last year, wearing the Légion d'honneur she was awarded by the French Government for her wartime work at Bletchley Park. As well as receiving a card from The Queen she also received the Defence Medal in recognition of her contribution to the defence of the Nation. Her passing marks the end of an era.

MARY WHITING

A number of people might remember Jean Neal for her long involvement with Fellowship House music sessions which she ran, and the also long-running pensioners' lunch club for which she did most (and usually all) of the cooking. Indeed Jean, and her husband Tim, were stalwarts of the Fellowship Committee.

Jean's cooking was famous! As members of the then HGS Gourmet Society, she and Tim, gave memorable summer and New Year parties for the whole society. In addition, Jean and Tim gave their locally famous 'Oxfam lunches' in their house, where, for a small fee, people crowded in to eat home-made rolls and soup and buy various donated items. Always an event not to be missed.

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