

DAVID ARTHUR YOUNG (1927 - 2020)



David was born in 1927 and lived in Frankland Road, South Chingford. He attended New Road School and then Wellington Avenue Senior School but he was able to take a post-11+ exam which he passed, and was accepted at the Technical College in Forest Road, Walthamstow. He chose to study engineering which he greatly enjoyed. He left when he was 16 and was offered a job at the Ever Ready battery manufacturers in Forest Road, Walthamstow, where he stayed for the next 12 years. He'd had some health problems for quite a while which may have

been aggravated by the continued inhalation of multiple chemicals. In 2014, he was interviewed by the Waltham Forest Oral History Group about his time at Ever Ready. It was amazing at how much he remembered - especially as he'd left there in 1955, some 59 years previously.

He was a life-long member of various organisations including the Youth Hostel Association. He applied for a job as a Hostel Warden on the north coast of Scotland. He found the scenery, the ever changing weather patterns, and even the isolation, good for his soul. "How did he get there", you ask? Well, he went all the way on his bicycle, complete with rucksack and paniers containing everything he thought he might need for the next six months. The journey of around 1,000 miles took him two weeks and he stayed at hostels along the way. Only once did he need to take public transport. He provided dried and tinned food to the hostellers who cooked their own meals and although there were 32 beds available, he once had to cater for 50 visitors, some of whom had to sleep under the stars. The site was rather remote with a weekly mobile shop, and a postman who also brought medicines. The Youth Hostel Association would have liked him to stay on but after six months he decided it was time to look for a more lucrative career. He then spent just over a year making colour prints from colour transparencies and advertised his services in the Amateur Photographer Magazine. However, as his workshop was also his bedroom, he grew tired of the disruption.

David then applied to become a technician at Queen Mary College, University of London, starting work in a new building housing the Physics department. After

three years he became chief technician in charge of all technical services. He worked on astrophysics and took a 2-week trip to the Pyrennees' Observatory. He extended his stay there and his wife, Lilli, went out to join him. He'd met her during his time with the Chingford branch of the CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament). Lilli, who was Jewish, had come to London from Germany just before the war as a refugee, to train as a teacher. They married in 1961 and took possession of their house in Whitehall Road the day before their wedding.

David joined the Chingford Historical Society in the 1970's and soon became an enthusiastic participant in many projects. He joined the committee and became Joint Secretary in 1985, then Chairman in 1986.

Many members will remember the annual Essex Mystery Coach outings when nobody knew where they were going until they were all on board the coach. He and Lilli spent a great deal of their time finding interesting places for us to visit, and



where we eventually sat down together for what was then referred to as a High Tea. This was usually held in a Church hall and often proved to be a tasty salad meal.

David prepared many lectures for the society and always produced interesting slides, all of which we hope to retain. One of our favourite lectures was when he built a little cabin cruiser in his front garden. With help from a friend, he and Lilli managed to get the boat down to the river Lea. They then took it all the way to Cambridge via different rivers, some of which had not been properly maintained for many years. The journey took two weeks so they had to leave the boat there when it was time to return to Chingford and go back to work.

David loved walking, camping and cycling the mountains of North Wales. He soon realised he would like one of the isolated cottages that were laying idle with only sheep as residents. He found 'just the one' nestling among the ferns above Betws-y-Coed. Happily, he was able to lease it from the Forestry Commission before purchasing it some years later. He spent many years renovating the cottage with his wife Lilli and the help of several friends who revelled in the challenge.



David developed an interest in sundials at a very early age and eventually co-founded the British Sundial Society in 1989. That society is still in existence and has members from all over the world. In the year 2000, as a Millennium project for the owner of Easton Lodge, Great Dunmow in Essex, David helped with the design and installation of a living sundial, now more than twice his height and still thriving. He last visited it in 2016 to make sure it was still pointing in exactly the right direction.

He also had a small collection of his own.

The last few years of David's life were something of a trial for him when he developed multiple myeloma and needed to make frequent visits to hospital for chemotherapy treatment. However, he always retained an interest in the society and gave his last lecture when over the age of 90.

Lilli died on the 6th March 2006. There were no children.

David died peacefully at a care home in Woodford Green on 26th May 2020.

With thanks to Waltham Forest Oral History Workshop for their help in the production of this obituary.

If you would like to make a donation in memory of David, you might wish to consider The Woodlands Unit at Whipps Cross Hospital. If so, please send your cheque to Barts Charity, Ground Floor, 12 Cock Lane, London, EC1A 4BU with a covering letter to specify that it is for the Woodlands Day Unit Fund, Whipps Cross Hospital, Ref: SPF 8469. It is also possible to donate on line.