
Obituary - Alan B Burke



During his teens, Alan suffered from severe rheumatic fever resulting in a diagnosis of a weak heart and a prognosis that he might live until he was 35 if he was 'careful'. After a year of being careful he threw caution to the winds and returned to playing cricket (now as wicketkeeper), hockey(now in goal) and golf. As a result the possible 35 years became 76 and he was working quietly on the day he died.

He was born in Dundee and the family moved to Knutsford in the thirties and he attended St Bede's College. After leaving he became a trainee accountant obtaining articles and eventually qualifying in 1950 at his own expense. This was no mean feat since his mother had been widowed with three children just before the family moved to Knutsford.

Alan began his professional life as an assistant in Manchester and opened his own practice in Knutsford in 1953. It developed into a highly successful practice, always under his personal supervision and was taken over by Messrs Haslams in the 1980's but Alan continued on a part time basis for a year or two.

Apart from being a successful and well respected accountant, Alan's voluntary work was prodigious. At St Vincent's church he set up the covenant scheme, he was a Governor at St Vincent's and Bexton Schools, a member Of the Abbeyfield Society, The Egerton Youth Club and the local branch of the British Heart Foundation.

He was a founder member Of Knutsford Circle and its first president. He also served as treasurer and was a provincial councillor for three years. His work on the Benevolent Committee was phenomenal and he came to be regarded as the 'Father Of the Circle'.

In 1950 even before he started his own practice he married Beryl Derbyshire and they subsequently brought up four children. Throughout his life she encouraged, supported and enhanced

his work and play and it was fitting that they should celebrate their golden wedding just a few months before he died.

Apart from his family, one of his joys in private life was as a member, then treasurer and then president of Knutsford Golf Club. In February 2000 the Pope acknowledged Alan and his work with the title of 'Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice'.

Alan's priorities were right and all of us were aware of his puckish sense of humour. Chaucer's description of the knight in 'The Knight's Tale', as 'a verray parfit gentil knight', is how many of us will remember him. Perhaps it is fitting that he should have died on All Saints Day.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE