

## Richard Eldridge 21.11.1935 – 22.11.2015

Many retired teachers of the Deaf will remember Richard as a loyal and supportive colleague. He led BATOD as president from 1987-9 having previously been Secretary. Richard was also an officer of the NCDT before the College joined with the STD to form BATOD.



After leaving school, Richard spent his National Service as a fighter controller in the Royal Airforce having obtained his commission as a Pilot Officer. On leaving the RAF he went up to Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge reading Modern Languages (French and German).

In 1959 Richard embarked on the teacher of the deaf course at Manchester, qualifying in 1960. His first job was teaching at a school for the Deaf in Woolhope, Herefordshire, but the school closed after a year. He then moved to Cornwall where he worked as a Peripatetic teacher, covering the western half of the county. In 1968 Richard returned to Manchester to gain the diploma in audiology. He then became head of service for Essex.

He moved back to Manchester to focus on audiology, working with the Ewing Foundation at the University and travelling the country, training health visitors to test the hearing of babies and toddlers. In the early 1980s he helped set up an audiology clinic for hearing impaired children with additional problems, working with a psychologist at the RSD Manchester.

Richard served as a Governor of the Mary Hare Grammar School from 1982 and was leader of the education committee retiring in 2006 after 24 years. Richard was made Life Vice President of the school. He was also a Trustee of the RNID.

Since 1959 and throughout his career he was happily married to Oenone, known to us as Nonie, who was also a teacher of the deaf, training in-service whilst teaching at Whitebrook when they were in Manchester. Nonie was minuting secretary for BATOD for several years. Richard and Nonie raised 2 children, have 3 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Richard was very active in his local community of Comberbach, Cheshire. He was elected to the Village Parish Council and became Chair of the committee responsible for creating a new village hall. He was also a

Samaritan. He and Nonie returned to his Cambridge College every year for the weekend and he was a founder member of the over 60s rowing eight, which has now spread to most of the colleges. He loved his sport and latterly, until about 2 years ago, he swam every day and played golf about three times a week.

I have happy memories working with Richard on the BATOD executive and always impressed by his sanguinity. I discovered he could sit through lively meetings and conferences calmly, no doubt helped by simultaneously filling in a Times Crossword.

Richard and I agreed to differ regarding approaches to communication: he strongly favoured an oral approach whilst I embraced the use of BSL. However we still worked closely together when he was president and Past President and I was secretary of BATOD 1988 - 1992.

Finally Richard and Nonie moved to Crew and it was fortunate that Richard celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with all the family at the nursing home, near to the apartment he shared with Nonie, the day before he passed away.

Richard is remembered for his great contribution to BATOD and with affection by family, friends and colleagues.

Sandra Dowe

With thanks to Nonie for her assistance