

Alan Stuart Beaumont

Alan was born on 28th March 1939 in Islington, just a few months before the outbreak of World War II, and he spent his formative years in war-stricken London, one of two boys and two girls. As a 9 year old he joined the Band of Hope at Mildmay Park Methodist Church, where he gained invaluable experience playing the piano for hymns and at Members' Evenings. He was promoted to Primary Sunday School pianist and played for the Senior School when Miss Birch was away. Alan started his education at Owen's Grammar School, Clerkenwell. He joined the church choir and had lessons with Allan Brown, FRCO, for whom he deputised on occasion at St Paul's Onslow Square SW7. Alan became organist and choirmaster at Mildmay, during which time he wrote a book to celebrate the church's centenary in 1961. When Mildmay closed, he became organist at Green Lanes Methodist Church, where he met his future wife Joyce after the evening service, as she returned from playing at the Middlesex Hospital Chapel. Alan and Joyce were married in Kirton Lindsey in Lincolnshire in August 1963, so in fact had just celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Alan was employed by the Port of London Authority between 1955 and 1980 and during these years he witnessed the decline and demise of London's shipping industry. He moved on to employment at Trinity House Lighthouse Service, working there between 1980 and 1986, seeing the computerisation of lighthouses and lightships. During these periods Alan became 'a legend in his own lunch hour' (his own words), practising the organ at local churches, including St Olave's Hart Street (the church of Samuel Pepys), and Hawksmoor's St George's in the East. Alan then found a safe haven in the Civil Service until his retirement in 1999.

Alan was invited by the Head of Keyboard Studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama to teach piano at Junior Guildhall while studying with him for RCM and Guildhall piano teaching diplomas. He retired from there after 28 years of teaching and 18 years of examining. In 1983 Alan was nominated by the Principal of the GSMD to become a Freeman of the City of London. After he retired he gained a BA in Humanities with English Language at the Open University. He had some poems published and his diary of 1956 was ready for publication. He also wrote the history of 100 years of Methodism in Bowes Park.

Alan and Joyce were together at Trinity at Bowes for 40 years. Alan was accompanist at choir and assistant organist. He was choir secretary and he always gave an amusing report at the AGM. He was as interested in words as in music, and enjoyed wit and humour and subtlety of language. His love of music embraced jazz as well as classical music. In the words of the minister at Alan's Memorial Service: through his music he led people into the presence of God.

Alan is survived by his wife Joyce and daughter Sarah. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.