

Obituaries

- **James David Kynnersley**
- **Michael Phillip Coffey**

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James David Kynnersley 21st March 1945 – 21st February 2023

This is a summary of the eulogy read by Dave's son Ian at his funeral. Our condolences go to Dave's widow, EDOA member Michaela Cottee.

James David Kynnersley, better known as 'Dave', was born at the tail end of WWII, He was the only child of Fred and Frances, and by all accounts he had a happy childhood spent mostly in and around Bingley on the outskirts of Bradford.

From an early age he developed a fascination for how things worked. He spent much of his childhood playing with Meccano and model trains, and this deep interest in trains was something that stayed with him all his life. I understand he also loved to ride his bike to the top of Ilkley Moor. Whether he wore any kind of hat on these trips is not known. After grammar school he went to the University of Leeds to study Chemistry - the first in his family to go to university. His new-found independence allowed him to indulge his interest in the railways and took trips across the UK and Europe.

While training to be a teacher at Exeter, Dave met his first wife Lynda. They settled in Langford in Bedfordshire and had three children: Sally, Heather and Ian. In the early eighties Dave and Lynda separated but Dave remained close to his children. Ian recalls Dave reading to them and trying to make them laugh with silly word play and spoonerisms or putting on an exaggerated accent reading Albert and the Lion, as well as seaside holidays visiting Dave's parents in Scarborough.

Dave found a new interest in computers and did an MSc in Computer Science which led him from teaching chemistry at North Herts College to lecturing in computer science at the University of Hertfordshire. Here he met Michaela, a fellow lecturer at the university, and as their friendship developed they fell in love and this relationship became the defining characteristic of the next phase of his life. They made each other happy and spent as much time as possible together, supporting each other and sharing their hobbies, from travel and reading to music and, in particular, the organ.

They married in spring 1998. and shortly after bought a house together in a tiny village in rural Essex called Ridgewell and it very quickly became their home and their happy place. They made many new friends and they loved getting involved in pretty much everything that happened in the village. Michaela helped Dave to overcome a fear of flying and together they travelled the world.

The new millennium also brought grandchildren. Dave enjoyed being a Grandpa. It allowed him not only to bring out all the old silly voices and word play but as they grew, he was able to do the thing he loved best, sharing his knowledge and helping people to enjoy the things he enjoyed, science and understanding how things work.

Dave was diagnosed with multiple myeloma around 5 years ago but he was determined to keep a positive outlook and not to feel sorry for himself. And while he may not have done as much as he would have liked in recent years, he focussed on the things that mattered most and made him happy. We will remember him as a gentleman, calm and with inner self confidence; caring about details. We remember his smile, his sense of humour and his infectious laugh.

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Michael Phillip Coffey
7th July 1935 – 2nd April 2023

Michael did not want a eulogy as such, but his nephew shared some reflections on his life which are printed below. Our condolences go to Michael's widow, EDOA member Anne Coffey.

I'm Simon Hall, Michael was my uncle. I wanted to share with you some memories I had of him.

Firstly, I had fond memories of his military background; the fondness and pride that he had when we discussed anything to do with my time in the Army. He was very proud of his military radiographer training which set him up so well for his career after service. I used to love the stories he told me about Corporal Coffey being berated by his Sergeant Major or Commanding Officer and inevitably ending in him proving them wrong. For me it was very special having someone in the family with that shared experience.

The next memory I wanted to share was Michael's passion for two wheels. As far back as I can remember Michael was on a bike. I remember the tandem when I was little and I couldn't believe that two people could ride around on one bike! That is something that requires a huge amount of trust. It still amazes and inspires me to think until how recently Michael was on his bike (the two wheeled one). If I remember correctly, it wasn't until he had a falling out with a pavement on one ride resulting in a trip to A&E and nearly losing his thumb that family stepped in and persuaded him to stop. However, not to be defeated and to continue his love of cycling he found the trike. This three wheeled bike, is less like a bike and more like a Harley Davidson motorcycle – quite a piece of kit, but it gave him that freedom once again, albeit briefly. I hope that I can follow Michael's example of cycling in later life.

A few weeks ago, I helped Anne clear and sort books from the bookshelf in the front room. A bookshelf that would put a small library to shame. The sheer variety and volume really struck me. Michael's passion for reading and researching parts of history from Dresden in WWII to the troubles in Northern Ireland, gardening, music, it's all there. Going through those books, especially the German history books reminded me of Michael's fascinating accounts of life in Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall and how very different life was in East and West Germany. I'm so glad that he continuously recounted those stories as I only really began to appreciate them the older I got.

I remember Michael being very handy. Repair rather than replace was probably his motto. It still amazes me that he managed to repoint 3 Grosvenor Road all by himself. The patience required to do this is such a feat in itself, but maybe the quote from the builder to do the work was just the motivating factor that he needed. Looking around the garden you can see all the examples of Michael's handiwork – planters & propagators all lovingly built from supplies in the garage. Another great example of Michael's handiwork was in France. We have a house on the South Coast of Brittany which is more of an ongoing maintenance project. Anne & Michael went there on holiday one summer. Now let me explain a little about the house: it has classic high French double windows almost floor to ceiling and wooden slatted shutters to match, which were in desperate need of repair. During the holiday, Michael painstakingly took them all down; five sets. Carefully stripped back all the peeling paint, primed them and painted them a beautiful French blue and re-hung them. It must have taken the whole holiday! The following year my Mum decided to replace those beautiful blue shutters with plastic ones. He was so livid! 20 years later and Michael was still reminding me of that incident.

There is so much more I could mention, whether it was the foreign languages he spoke, gardening skills, love of music, but I've really only just touched the tip of the iceberg with some of my fond memories.

What I remember is someone who was a family rock, dependable and always there for us. Determined in everything he did. So caring and so interested in everything that family and friends were up to.

You're leaving a very big gap in our lives Michael Coffey, but someday I'll see you at the great RV in the sky.

I salute you sir.