

REG STYLES...

BUT WHAT IS REPRESENTED BY THE DASH BETWEEN THOSE DATES? IN THE LAST WEEKS OF REG'S LIFE, HE ASKED ME TO ASSIST HIM IN PREPARING A EULOGY SO HE COULD SHARE HIS THOUGHTS WITH YOU ALL TODAY.

Reg remembers:

Firstly let me say that I have had an extremely happy and charmed life which is why I want today to be a celebration of my life and not a miserable occasion. Thank you for coming today, whether there are fifteen or fifty of you.

My memories start at five with my attending Uxendon Manor school at a time when World War Two was in full swing and I remember having many lessons in the shelters, armed with my Mickey Mouse gas mask. I also remember the stomach-churning wail of air-raid warning sirens; sleeping in the indoor Anderson shelter; the sound of anti-aircraft guns located in Jubilee Park; searchlights criss-crossing the sky; the rasp of the V1 flying bombs [the Doodlebug] and the unexpected huge explosions of the frightening V2 rockets, which came without warning.

A more positive memory is that of my being taught written English by the aptly named Mrs Inkpen who instilled in me the pride in writing correctly; this trait continuing throughout my life and resulting in my being somewhat pedantic as I became older!

One day at school I heard a teacher say she did not know why parents continued to send their children to school. When I told this to Mum she said "Right that's it; we'll get you evacuated".

Initially I remember my sister Joan and I going somewhere in Cornwall, Redruth I think, but later to Exeter to my Uncle and Aunt's. Fortunately this was after the Baedeker raids in Exeter which were reprisals upon non-strategic targets. I recall we lived on a farm and were kept out of the best room by being told there was a bull in the room.

After the war I joined the cub scouts aged eight, enlisting with the 2nd Kenton Methodist Church pack. Of course there were no uniforms or scarves available at that time and I remember Mum cutting up a sheet and attempting to dye the two halves red and green.

The eleven-plus examination took me to Kingsbury County Grammar School (now Kingsbury High) where it is fair to say I was not a high achiever in anything particular; albeit I was methodical.

Aged fourteen I chose to belong to the 2nd Kenton Scout troop but later my good friend Michael Griffiths dragged me into the 8th Kenton troop so he has a lot to answer for.

Upon achieving the dizzy heights of five "O" Levels; including English of course; my Dad, who was an underground train driver on the Northern Line, began to worry about what I was going to do next. His Guard, whose son worked for Legal and General Insurance, suggested that I should write to them to see if they had any openings. I duly did so; was called for interview and within a week had received a job offer at the princely sum of £210 per annum. This at a time when there was no requirement for a CV; so much easier than it is for young people today. I remained with Legal and General for the rest of my working career, aside from my time away serving my country.

In July 1956 I began my National Service with the RAF, going first to RAF Cardington, for kitting out; then onto RAF Bridgenorth for square-bashing. We wondered what had hit us as when we arrived we had corporals screaming at us to get out of the lorry quickly. We went through eight weeks of square-bashing; the type you have probably seen on television where you are brought down to the lowest level and then built back up to become a proud airman which I duly became.

I was allocated for training in the technical trade group being trained in the navigation system called GEE. The trouble was that, in typical service fashion, when posted to RAF Waterbeach, they only had single seat fighters so my training as a navigational assistant became somewhat limited. I really wanted to be a 'pen-pusher' but it was not to be and so at RAF Waterbeach I was given a job which involved my identifying problems on aircraft radios. Whilst I learnt to recognise the parts which needed replacing, I never did master the circuit diagram; a fact which no doubt would have done little to reassure the pilots for whom the radio was a very important piece of equipment!

My memories of RAF Waterbeach are of sunny days but of course there were unpleasant moments such as walking around creaking hangar doors at 3 a.m. on a winter's morning armed with a wooden stick; laughingly called a rifle; at a time when the IRA were pretty active. It is funny how it is the bad things you forget.

At RAF Waterbeach I formed a friendship with Martin Vinall who was a very unhappy boy entrant who had signed up at sixteen for twelve years service. This was later changed to allow such airmen to buy themselves out. Appalling really when you think about it. On a home leave with Martin, I introduced him to my twin sister Joan and fate intervened as they eventually married.

After my two years of National Service I rejoined Legal and General where I spent the next forty three years. In the last ten years or so, I worked with a small team of six colleagues in the Legal Indemnities department, an obscure and most interesting type of insurance which deals with defects in title to property; missing beneficiaries in a deceased's estate and such like.

It is never easy to pick out any particular individuals for mention as I have been blessed with a broad spectrum of great friends, colleagues and family but there are two people

who have royally supported me and to whom I now give my sincere thanks. Margot Barnikel has been a true friend for over fifty years and was present with me when I received the diagnosis of terminal cancer. She attended every subsequent hospital appointment and was a rock when I was adrift. Secondly to my niece Kim for all the love and support; especially over recent weeks whilst staying with me and assisting in my care; you will never know quite how much that meant to me. Thank you.

In preparing this eulogy I have realised that like my simple faith, I have been following the tenet of Cub Scout law which is: Cub Scouts always do their best, think of others before themselves, and do a good turn every day.

Keith Savage

REG STYLES – SCOUTING ROLES

- Assistant Scout Leader 8th Kenton -19/12/1955 to 14/7/1961
- Scout Leader 8th Kenton – 14/7/1961 to 14/4/1967
- Group Scout Leader 8th Kenton – 14/4/1967 to 31/3/1981
- Assistant District Commissioner Kenton & Kingsbury – 13/12/1967 to 11/2/1970
- Group Secretary 8th Kenton – 1/4/1981 to 1/1/1984
- Group Scout Leader 8th Kenton – 22/11/1983 to 31/12/1984
- Group Treasurer 8th Kenton – 1/4/1984 to 2014
- District Treasurer Kenton & Kingsbury – 1/1/1985 to 31/1/1995
- District Appointment Secretary Stanmore & District – 24/11/2004 to 16/9/2008
- District Treasurer Stanmore & District – 14/7/2008 to 2014

REG STYLES – SCOUTING AWARDS



- Medal of Merit – 1/7/1979

- Bar to Medal of Merit – 1/2/1985
- Silver Acorn – 23/4/2005
- Silver Wolf – September 2014
- 25 years service award – 10/2/1994
- 40 years service award – 4/1/2000
- 50 years service award – 6/1/2006