

### **Derek Watkinson (10 May 1932 to 23 July 2020)**

Derek was the oldest of three boys. Born in Redhill in May 1932, this is where he spent many of his 88 years.

The family were members of The Salvation Army and all the boys were taught to play brass instruments by their father. Derek took up the French horn and joined the local youth orchestra. This led to a lifetime love of music, in particular classical. In fact, when he did his national service at RAF Cranwell, he was seconded into the band and often said he spent two years 'flying a desk' rather than the square-bashing he could see from his office window.

On leaving school, and after national services, he joined the Monotype Corporation based in Salfords. This was his initial step into a long career in the printing industry, first with a firm in London and eventually leading to running his own company. He officially retired in June 1997, but his print knowledge was frequently put to good use long after this, at RLTC being no exception.

Derek's love of tennis started in his late teens at the Memorial Sports Ground in Redhill. He went on to join the Redhill Congregational Church tennis club where he met his future wife, Sonia. Over the years, he has been a member at Reigate Priory LTC, Redhill LTC and finally Reigate LTC. Prior to giving up playing just a few years ago, Derek felt tennis was only ever played properly when you were hitting the ball as hard as feasibly possible and he didn't particularly approve of drop shots or other such subtleties!

He was always keen to be involved and to know 'what was going on', so served on many committees and took on the role of Chairman at Reigate Priory LTC in 1979. Reigate LTC benefitted enormously when Derek became Chair of House & Grounds in 1999, taking on the responsibility to oversee the building of the clubhouse. His commitment to the Club was unstinting in many ways; he was a regular face serving behind the bar on Thursday night for many years. In 2011, he was given an award from the Mayor's Volunteer Scheme for his work at the Club. But it didn't stop there, up until the end of 2019, as President, Derek would turn out for Committee meetings, always smartly dressed and always with a smile.

Not only was he a stalwart of the Club, for ten years he was manager of the Friends Coffee Shop at East Surrey Hospital. His sociable demeanour meant he enjoyed being there alongside all the other volunteers and was pleased to see an increase in the funds raised which helped provide much-needed equipment for the hospital.

Derek had a full and active life but, above all of this, he was very much a family man. He was married to Sonia for 62 years, having two children, Amanda and Alastair, and three grandchildren, William, Joely and Zara. He was very much loved and is very much missed by them. Our thoughts are with them and our thanks go to Derek for all that he did for Reigate LTC.