

BASIL DEAN: 1924-2020

The King's School and the OPA are very sad indeed to have to announce the death last week of former senior teacher, Basil Dean, peacefully in a care home in Ketton, at the age of 96.

Basil taught at The King's School for 32 years, between 1952 and 1984, as Head of Physics, and Head of Science.

He was born in Cheshire in 1924, and educated at The King's School, Macclesfield, before graduating from Liverpool University in 1944. He then joined the Admiralty for the remainder of World War Two, serving at the Royal Navy Signals Establishment at Witley in Surrey, working on the design and development of naval radar equipment. After leaving the forces in 1946, Basil turned to Physics teaching, and held a series of posts, including at Whitgift, Thetford Grammar and Bryanston Schools. His extra-curricular interests included a Photographic Society, a Radio Society and involvement in plays and musical activities.

Basil took up the post of Head of Physics at King's on 1 January 1952, combining this with overall responsibility as Head of the Science Department. He was a gentle, scholarly and inspirational schoolmaster. In addition, he was a timetabler, Exams Officer and took charge of the lighting at school, supporting music and drama productions. His wife, Jean, was for many years the Senior Science Laboratory Technician, and responsible for first aid. Together they hosted barbecues for Year 7 students during Activities Week based at Stibbington.

When Headmaster Cecil Harrison left at short notice in 1969, his Deputy Ken Wheeler became Acting Headmaster in the interregnum. He selected Basil as his Deputy.

Outside school, Basil was for many years the local representative of the AMA teachers' professional association, supporting and advising colleagues across the region. He later became a tutor at the Workers' Educational Association and the long-time organist at Upton Parish Church. He was also an Honorary Vice President of the Old Petriburgians' Association, organising OPA dinners in Oxford.

He spent many years of his long retirement at his home in Yarwell, enjoying his garden, crosswords, sudoku and his pipe, but never forgot The King's School, which had been such a significant part of his life. His daughter, Claire, has worked at King's as a Cover Supervisor, and her 3 children are all Old Petriburgians. The Basil Dean Prize for Contribution in Year 12 is still presented at Speech Day each year. A very generous benefactor to the School, he made a significant donation to the later refurbishment of the Science Laboratories.

After their long cooperation, Ken Wheeler had praised Basil's sincerity, morality, compassion and patience, describing him as a ready friend, a man of breadth of understanding and interest, a colleague of unfailing cheerfulness, courtesy and ready wit, and for all of us a source of incisive, intelligent judgement and advice.

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