

IN MEMORY OF MR
WALKER
(THE FIRST HEAD
TEACHER OF ST.
TERESA'S)



Maurice Walker was the youngest of three, born in Gosport, Hampshire on 16 March 1922. On leaving school he was apprenticed as a Dockyard Shipwright but when the 2nd World War broke out he joined the RAF and served in Bomber Command.

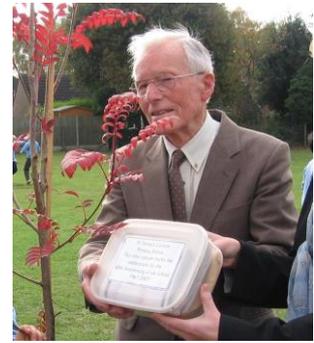
On leaving the R.A.F he returned to the dockyard, finished his training and attained his Indentures.

He married Gladys in 1947 and they moved to Cornwall. It was his sister who suggested that he took an accelerated course into teaching and after completing this they moved to Essex in the 1950s to take up a teaching post at Holland Road School in Clacton (now known as Holland Park School), where for many years he taught the older children in 'the 11+ class'. Three out of their four children attended Holland Park School and all three went through his class. To them he was 'Sir' in the classroom and Dad at home! But whichever situation they were in they always knew he had children's' best interests at heart.

The Headmaster at Holland Road encouraged Maurice to apply for a headship and in 1967 he was appointed to St Teresa's School. He put his 'all' into setting up the school and serving it in his role as headmaster. He loved the children and wanted the best for them, both academically and in their whole lives, and he cared a lot about the staff.

Following his retirement in 1984, Gladys and he moved to Surrey to be nearer to their son and one of their daughters. Their children and three grandchildren loved having them close by. Maurice and Gladys had always been very practical and managed most of the DIY tasks, decorating and building projects at their home and always encouraged their children to take an active part. Maurice was able to help build an extension to his son Peter's family home and also helped one of their daughters (Libby) with her allotment and reconstructing her garden. They loved gardening and very soon after moving to Haslemere Maurice acquired an allotment and this kept the family well supplied with fresh veg! They also enjoyed walking and Maurice and his older brother Ralph received awards for being the oldest men completing the Isle of Wight 28 mile walk for Mountbatten's hospice.

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Maurice continued to meet up with his brother and sister a few times each year. They affectionately called him, 'Younger Brother'. They all loved poetry and each had experience of different areas of teaching, Maurice with children's education his brother and sister with adults. (His older sister has recently celebrated her 99th birthday and his 97 year old brother still works an allotment and they both still enjoy reciting poetry and discussing politics and current affairs!)

Unfortunately Gladys developed Alzheimer's disease in her 60's and Maurice provided the most remarkable care and enabled her to remain at home for many years until the last 18 months of her life, when she eventually went into residential care. He continued to visit her on a daily basis. For several years after Gladys's death, Maurice continued to volunteer at the Alzheimer's Day Centre in Haslemere on a regular basis, helping to run activities and spending time talking and listening to the clients and carers.

When Maurice was in his late eighties, Peter and his family moved to Birmingham. They invited Maurice to move with them, which enabled Maurice to remain in close contact with his three grandchildren and have the joy of becoming a great grandfather. St Teresa's always held a very big place in his heart. He loved children and always wanted to do the best for them right up until the end of his life. His eldest grand-daughter, Rebekah wrote the following, 'He was the best Grandad any child could wish for. He never tired of being a patient, kind & considerate teacher, life coach, mentor and loving Grandad. He will always be missed.'

He died following a short spell in hospital but he remained alert until the end with his sense of humour intact. One day he was surrounded by the full medical team who explained everything they had done, were doing and hoped to do. When asked by the consultant if he had any questions for them he responded, "You don't know how they're doing in the Ashes do you?". Appreciating his humour one of the doctors left the ward, fetched his mobile phone and kept him updated with the score! The nurses referred to him as the '*gentle man*'. Although his life on earth ended in August 2013 his children and grandchildren are all thankful that he knew of God's love for him.

(Written by Libby Walker May 2017).