

## Richard Garrett

Richard was born in Witnesham, the son of Richard and Gabriel Garrett, but he grew up in Nacton where his father became Farm Manager on the Prettyman Estate. He and his sister Judy, three years his junior, loved the freedom of the farm - he became a proficient horseman, drove the tractor at the age of twelve, helped bring in the harvest and he met Percy Edwards, The Bird Man, who often visited the estate when recording for the BBC and would drop into the farm house for a chat. School was not a favourite with Richard and having survived Amberfield, Ipswich Boys' High School and St Joseph's he left with no formal qualifications.

Farm life was his passion during his teenage years - farm life and motorbikes! Scrambling meetings were a regular occurrence most weekends for Richard and his friends, courtesy of Mum's taxi, and as soon as he was old enough he would head off to meetings on his own motorbike. Practical hands-on chap that he was, Richard's working life took him into engineering with a number of local firms beginning with the Melton Engineering Company and eventually to Agri Hire who were agents for Dowdeswell Engineering demonstrating and selling Dowdeswell Ploughs. There his knowledge and expertise took him all over the country and those ploughs became yet another passion - he claimed that one year he sold thirty of them!

Richard married for the first time in 1966 and was blessed with the birth of his children, Simon, born in 1969 and Sarah in 1970. Richard and Brenda married in 1974, and he became loving stepfather of Rebecca, Grand-dad to Lucie and Daisy and step-grandfather to Thomas and Ben - he was very proud of all of them.

The practical skills Richard acquired during his working years made him a valuable DIY asset in his own home - and other peoples! He was ready to lend tools and helpful advice but Brenda recalls that he was 'fussy' - everything had to be just right and he was a bit of a workaholic! Brenda and Richard have always been involved in village life - Richard organised the Horticultural Show Dance in the village for many years, as well as helping to set up the showground and the marquee. During the seventies and eighties and beyond - he ran many events or charities, Air Ambulance, Suffolk Accident Rescue Services, and the G P Surgery among others, plus running discos and fancy-dress dances, and he would always set up the tables and chairs for the WI. In addition, he and Brenda held 'afternoon teas' in their beautiful garden in August for many years in aid of St Mary's Church. Richard loved his dogs; his favourites were golden cocker spaniels, and he liked people, so walking the dog was a great opportunity to get out and about in the village, stopping for a chat and a pat for the dog - he made people feel that he was really happy to see them.

Richard was diagnosed with cancer in October 2017 and although it did seem at one time last year that Richard had 'beaten the Beast' sadly this was not the case. He died at Rendlesham Nursing Home after a long period when he found it hard to deal with the fatigue and other symptoms of the disease since they prevented him from being the busy energetic person he loved to be. He will be fondly remembered - as a friend wrote ' he left his soul with you, Brenda, and with this village'.

Madge Nicholas