

William 'Bill' Aldworth

16-8-1939 – 31-12-2018

William, Bill, Aldworth was born on 16th August 1939, a mere 15 days before the declaration of World War 2 (read in to that what you will!). He grew up on Mitchell Way in Willesden, North West London and grew up playing on the bombsites around Willesden and Brent. By all accounts, he was a bit of a lad, often brought home by the local bobby for some shenanigans or another – frequently having been on the receiving end of a clip round the ear first! He always said he was never scared of the police, but his mum was a different matter entirely!

Mitchell Way was the centre of family life, with Bill, Dad Ernest, mum, Violet and his 5 sisters, Pam, Peg, Maureen, Joan & Barbara, living first in a maisonette on one side of the road, then later “upgrading” to a house on the other side so Bill could have his own room.

He wasn't much of a scholar, leaving school without any qualifications, but he was keen to work hard and, upon leaving school, he took up an apprenticeship with a local engineering company.

He started out small, sweeping the floors, but then put himself through night school to gain his HNC and eventually was promoted to a draftsman in the drawing office.

He worked continuously until he was encouraged to retire at the age of 70. If he was able, he would still have been working right up until the end!

Sport was a lifelong theme for Bill, with football, swimming & judo a feature of his youth.

He actually met first wife & mum to Guy & Lisa, Barbara, following an introduction by his Judo Coach (who was also Barbara's father!). Bill was quite good at judo, progressing through his gradings to become a 2nd Kyu (that's a blue belt to those of you who're not of a Judo bent!) Barbara's dad wasn't so much of a fan of him, however, , particularly after he started dating his daughter. But despite his objections, Bill married Barbara in 1962.

Lisa and Guy came along in the fullness of time, and, after a move to Colchester for work, the family settled in Little, then Great Cornard with Bill working originally for C.A.V, before branching out on his own in 1967 under the guise of Henstor Engineering.

Golf became a life long obsession (along with West Ham FC!) for Bill and after he and Barbara separated after 22 years of marriage, Bill took his passion for the game across the globe, from Europe to Canada (to visit his friend Bernard), and Asia.

He fell in love with Thailand and visited regularly. Initially for the golf, but in later years for a lady, Lek. They were married, and then they were unmarried. It was all a bit complicated, just like the rest of his life!

In his later years, he settled down in his house in Newmans Green with his flagpole and cross of St George flying proudly outside, and did a grand job of looking after himself, even though he did wind up the neighbours!. I am told, however, that although he did cook a proper meal for himself every day, he was a bloody awful, if enthusiastic, cook – and he used liberal amounts of garlic & red wine in everything he made; the red wine used to dispel the taste of garlic!

He also had a relatively short lived career in local politics, serving first as a Labour councillor in 1970 and then moving on to a spell on the county council. Although he was a member of the Labour party, Guy tells me that some of his views were equally right wing & on a par with Alf Garnett..!

Sadly, Bill became ill towards the end of last year, and after a series of hospitalisations, he died at the West Suffolk Hospital at the age of 79.

And so we find ourselves here today. That was the story of Bill's life, but what more can we say about him?

He was a man who liked stuff. Lots and lots of stuff! Apparently, he was a keen collector, mostly of dust and clutter & mostly related to golf! He was also an avid reader as an adult, and his house was full of books and papers he would be "getting around to".

He was always seen as the life and soul of the party, the centre of attention, even if he was telling some of his awful jokes! I'm told he was the absolute King of the "Dad" joke.

There were the family holidays, trips where the whole family would go off, then others where it would be just Dad and Guy, or just Dad and Lisa. One memorable time, Bill encouraged Guy to sign up for the school skiing trip to Italy, mostly because he fancied trying his hand at it himself, and he managed to get himself invited along to help! I'm told he loved it!

Bill loved his sport. From the Judo he played as a young man, which he sadly had to give up after a wrist injury, to swimming, skiing (often with his children) to football. Football was always a big thing in his life, and he would organise his whole week around the different games he could watch on his various sports channel subscriptions.

Guy also told me about going to watch the football with his dad. Although he was a West Ham fan, he was often to be found at an Ipswich Town home game when Guy was younger, even being present at Ipswich's memorable FA cup winning match in 1978 when they beat Arsenal 1-0.

Bill was delighted at that match. Not only did his team on the day (Ipswich) win, but even better, they beat Arsenal, and he could think of nothing better as a West Ham Fan. It was a memorable game. Ipswich were most assuredly the underdogs, so much so that when Roger Osborne scored his winning goal, he promptly fainted on the pitch and had to be brought round with smelling salts!

Of course there was his love of Golf. Bernard who lived next door was to blame for starting that affection off. Bernard has sent some lovely thoughts on Bill to Lisa, and I would like to read some of them for you now.

I've lost one of my lifelong "best" friends and I have countless memories from here, there and everywhere since we met way back in Colchester in 1965

I lived with Bill for 3 months in the spring of 2004, when I was sorting out my problems, and, besides lots of golf and pubbing, actually painted the outside of "Ashend" front and back while Bill made gallons of "Cabbage Soup" to reduce our weight issues!!

However, the lasting memory above all others was when I took Bill to Colchester Golf Club to show him the "Grande Old Game of Golfe"!

When we got to the 5th Tee, Bill already hated this stupid game. So I said "Bill, this is the closest we are to the Clubhouse and we can quit now and go back and enjoy a beer". He said "No, I'll hit one more stupid "frigging" ball" and make that decision". Well, Bill hit this 4 iron over the fairway tree and down the middle of the fairway. It was the finest 4 iron I've ever seen hit by anyone - including Nicklaus, and that shot changed Bill's life both in the UK and in Thailand! Bill became totally "hooked on golf" and, up went a golf practice net in his garage, and the rest is Bill's lifelong story, on and off golf courses worldwide!

Bill's friend Mick Gregory would now like to share some thoughts with you all :

"I'm not going to say much but the first thing I will say may sound to some like I'm talking about someone completely different, ay Lisa?

I thought Bill was a really good bloke. Let me qualify that contentious comment. He was really, really annoying at times, scratch that, most of the time but his heart was in the right place and we had many laughs.

I got to know him after I split up with my wife. He took me in, after much cajoling from his lovely daughter, and a 3 hour interview, sorry, visit. This caused much merriment from Lisa, nasty girl.

I lived with him for about a year, of which most of the time was spent sitting in his office, trying, in vain, to help him understand the big bad world wide web. A thankless task I discovered, daily. Never has one person shown so little common sense at that task than Bill. I actually think he was secretly quite proud of this skill.

He also loved a get rich scheme, boy did he love a get rich scheme. I'd like to think that in the end my endless nagging got through to him but i doubt it.

He, as you will all know, loved golf, we won't mention his love of football...West Ham. I did like a pitch and putt with him, and would spend the entire time getting stick for my wholly inadequate play.

Thanks Bill for all your help, I will never forget it."

Thank you Mick for those heartfelt words.

Bill was a stubborn person sometimes, often being a man to bear a grudge, but he could also share his enthusiasm and experience with those who were interested.

He was a fan of Ford cars & would drive nothing else in his lifetime, working his way through a whole range including a Popular, Cortina, Escort and a Mondeo – he liked to stick to what he knew – he did not believe in driving “anything foreign”!

He had an eclectic taste in music from the classics for his generation, like Eddie Cochrane, Buddy Holly and Credence Clearwater Revival, who we heard as you entered the chapel, to some rather more unexpected acts like Richard Clayderman, Perry Como and in later years, he enjoyed opera.

He was a great fan of Rock and Roll, and particularly became a fan of the German rock band, The Scorpions. He even once went to see them in concert... except, being Bill, he managed to fall asleep and missed half the performance.

And he was a man who was always in search of "The Next Big Thing" – always hoping his numbers would come up on the lottery, but sadly, he never quite got that big win he was hoping for.

I'd like to close this section of the ceremony with this piece of Bill's favourite poetry.

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.
No time to stand beneath the boughs,
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this, if full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.