

OBITUARY



JOHN SUSSEX - 2007

Our previous branch secretary for many years, John Sussex, whose death was reported briefly in the last issue, was brought up in Worthing, and spent his childhood during the late 1920s and 1930s enjoying "long hot summers, cricket, tennis and sailing" with his brother. On one occasion, their mother found John in control of a clothesline hanging from a bedroom window, with his brother halfway to the ground, John's explanation being that they were training to climb Mount Everest.

With the Second World War, John briefly joined the Home Guard, and then the Royal Navy, becoming coxswain on a motor launch. Following his Commission, he served with Combined Ops, commanding a landing craft: unfortunately this included the ill-fated exercise in which so many Americans perished, on Slapton Sands in Devon.

John took his 'Landing Craft Tank' to Normandy on D-Day, landing tanks and personnel, and subsequently made several more, similar trips. He was later given command of a 'Landing Craft Gun' which he took to the Far East. Demobilisation saw him return to the UK, with the distinction of working his passage as watch keeper on HMS London, although still an RNVR Lieutenant. His demob leave was enjoyed playing tennis and golf and enjoying mixed company again!

A career in Africa followed, beginning with an appointment in Accra, where, in 1950, he met Una at a tennis tournament: they married in November 1951. In 1955 they moved to Dar Es Salaam when John became overseas marketing director for a company in the Inchcape Group – he still played golf and tennis, and returned to sailing, racing with the Dar Es Salaam Yacht Club. His overseas employment continued in Tanganyika, Kenya and Nigeria, before retirement brought him and Una back to Blyth.

However, an appointment with the United Nations followed, conducting a fact finding mission in the English speaking colonies of West Africa. Final retirement brought the couple to Sedgeford, where they soon became active in the area by joining Hunstanton Golf Club, the Royal British Legion, and more recently Thornham Bowls Club; John also enjoyed fell walking and fly fishing. He is described as "giving service to his country; a keen sportsman, a good husband and an exceptional brother".

The Editor thanks Mrs Una Sussex for the loan of this tribute which was written by John's brother, Peter.