

Keith Garrard 1949 – 2012

Keith was born in the old N&N hospital and lived at Chapel Farm in Marlingford until he was 1 year old (his family was from a farming background). He then moved to Shotesham St Mary near Saxlingham until he was 5 years old and then moved with his mother, father and sister to Bowthorpe cottages, which was then rather more rural than the developed urbanisation we know today, until he was 10. He then moved to East Hills Road in Costessey. He had family connections with the Suffolk hamlet of Wickham Skeith, which when a lad, clearly made an impression upon him (a most interesting and amusing piece by Keith on the annual village fete can be found in the club's Summer 2004 news letter). He attended the local Secondary school at Costessey and left there at the tender age of 14 in July 1964 (becoming 15 that month). He loved the City and regarded himself a Norwich man.

Keith's first job was in the then vibrant Norwich shoe trade as a clicker, first with the shoe trade in Wensum Street and then at the Co-op shoe factory. Following a relatively short time in the shoe trade he became a bus conductor. A job he said he really liked, remaining in the job until 1981 when the profession was consigned to British history following the introduction of pay as you enter buses. It was during his daily bus routine that his eye alighted upon a young woman, then only 15. Coral was to become the love of his life. They married on 1st September 1973 and moved to Florence Road, where they happily raised two boys, Steven and Kelvin. Coral remains in the family home.

Following his time on the buses Keith took over the running of the Thorpe St Andrew Hospital Social Club, close to the Griffin pub. Having established himself in the licensed trade he then took on the management of the Canary Social Club on the corner of Rosary Road, where Coral joined him to add her support until 1991. Keith went on to work behind the bar of the Kett's Tavern on Kett's Hill.

It was in 1990 that Keith joined the august company of the Pipe Club of Norfolk at the Coach and Horses pub in Thorpe. His friendly disposition, contribution to activities and easy going nature made him instantly popular with members. Within a very short time it seemed he had always been a fixture of the club. He was to rise very quickly to become the Club's secretary and then secretary/treasurer. A double position that no-one has occupied before, or is likely to occupy again. He had an eye for detail and good organisational skills which carried the club through many changes of his 22 years as a member.

Keith was instrumental in organising the club's move to the meeting room in the Rosary pub in November 1990, and not long after the smoking ban came in it was Keith who found for us our current location in 2009. Like all of us, he was gutted by the implementation of the smoking ban which undoubtedly caused the demise of the Rosary pub which was Keith's local. Although never a heavy drinker, he could be seen in there at some time every day of the year, apart from holidays. On one occasion he won a

bottle of wine in the 'meat' raffle at the pub. When asked by Coral why there was a bottle of wine in a meat raffle – Keith said it was a prize for the vegetarians! When the Rosary closed Keith moved to the Jubilee pub on St Leonards Road (literally a stone's throw from his house), which he enjoyed as a second home from home until his hospitalisation. Keith was never particularly keen on our current club location – finding it cold and uncomfortable, particularly in winter (despite our best attempts at contemporary electric heating) – a sign perhaps of his impending illness.

Keith was the main organiser of the Norfolk Open Pipe Smoking Championship which the Pipe Club introduced in 1992 at the Lansdowne hotel in Thorpe. This was probably the zenith of the club's 39 year history to date. Coral confirmed that Keith spent many hours behind the scenes organising the 15 annual competitions that were held at the Lansdowne until the introduction of the smoking ban.

In the year 2000 Keith went into Churchill's tobacconists on St Andrews Hill in the City to get his usual supply of tobacco and was asked if he knew, because of his pipe smoking connections, someone who might be suitable to work behind the counter. He instantly said 'me'. Under the experienced eye of fellow Pipe Club member, John Elvin (50 years in the trade), Keith developed his knowledge and expertise. Keith bought the business in 2005 and kept the shop on for another 5 years, when diminishing trading conditions due to the combination of the recession and the smoking ban, coinciding with the renewal of the lease of the premises, made the shop no longer viable. Keith continued mail order trading as Churchills of Norwich and Coral is still running and developing the business. Churchills Christmas Mixture being a specialist blending put together by Keith – the popular recipe for which is now unfortunately lost – unless someone, somewhere, knows the secret ingredients?

Keith's profile in the tobacco world led to international contacts. A Japanese radio station once contacted him to ask him to tell their listeners all about the Norfolk Pipe Smoking Championship. Keith had to choose a piece of introductory music to the broadcast – his choice of Chris Farlowe's 'Out of time' was probably lost on the Japanese audience, if not to our contestants who couldn't quite get to the end of their 3 grams in the contest! Additionally, as a result of getting to know George Kristlik from Jan pipes in the Czech republic, both Keith and Coral ended up on a visit to Prague, where as much as Keith liked his food, a surfeit of Czech dumplings with every meal was **not** preferred to the facility to be able to smoke one's pipe in the comfort of a bar (remember those days?). Keith's other foreign pipe smoking forays (with Coral) included the world championship at St Niklaas in Belgium in 2002 – Keith was the only pipe club member to attend from our club. His time was rather modest at 39 minutes – only 2 hours 10 minutes behind the winner! Other pipe smoking events were attended more than once, in Holland, by Keith and fellow PCN members, Reg. Walker, Len Ellis and John Eason. When holidaying, regular visits to the Continent, Ireland and North Africa were among Keith's pleasures.

Back in Blighty Keith regularly supported the British Pipe Smoking Championships held at Solihull, where he would make a weekend of the annual event, often accompanied by fellow PCN members Reg Walker and Tony Lerner. Other club members would go down for the day and thoroughly enjoy this national, annual get together of fellow pipe smokers. Keith used to regularly attend the annual dinners of the Association of Independent Tobacco Specialists in London. A copy of the last program for 2007 is attached for members' interest – Boris Johnson was the guest speaker.

Keith's other interests included an avid following of the fortunes of Tottenham Hotspur football club, a love he shared equally with his son Steven, each regularly texting the other with news of their progress. Keith also had a passion for pub quizzes where he displayed a fierce competitiveness (accompanied by his best mate Ronnie Bobbin – a formidable duo in this setting). Keith took a keen interest in following all forms of sport and was a very competent bowls player, playing regularly up until the last two years of his life.

Additionally, Keith was an active member of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, first at the Ernest Kidd Lodge in Norwich and then the Canary Lodge. He competed weekly with fellow pipe club member, Frank King, to see who could finish the Times Crossword first on a Sunday lunch time. After this intellectual feat, accompanied by a few pints of bitter, Keith told me that he then retired his mind for the afternoon and said, apart from holidays, he couldn't remember when he last saw a Sunday at that time of day.

He is a sad loss to all who knew his dry sense of humour and friendly disposition, underpinned by an enquiring mind and competitive interest in Trivia. His was a life of daily routine and family that he absolutely loved. Coral said "So many people were very fond of him, which is lovely". Testament to his popularity has been shown by the raising of £784 for the Big C appeal in Keith's memory, an outstanding amount.

Keith is outlived by his mum, leaves a wife, Coral, his two sons Steven and Kelvin and 4 grandchildren (3 boys and a girl).

All of us in the pipe club mourn his untimely passing. Next time you sit back to enjoy a pipe of tobacco, take a glass of beer with your pipe and raise it to the memory of a gentleman and true stalwart of the Pipe Club of Norfolk – Keith Garrard.

John Betts

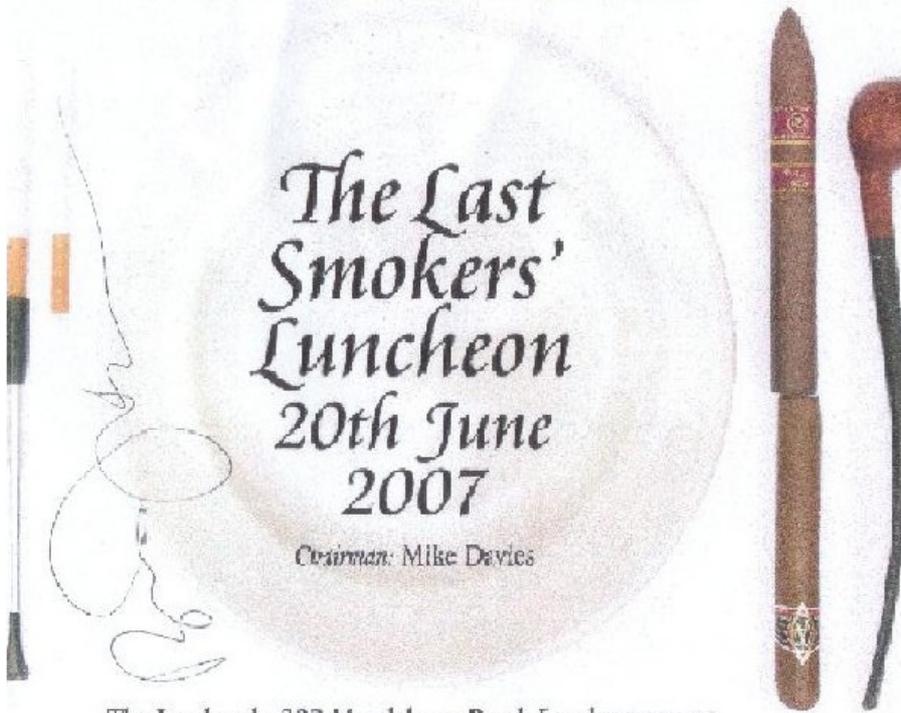
June 2012

The Association of Independent Tobacco Specialists

*The Last
Smokers'
Luncheon
20th June
2007*

Chairman: Mike Davies

The Landmark, 222 Marylebone Road, London NW1 6JQ



Grace

Loyal Toast

Mike Davies

TTBA Raffle

Bridges Chairman, The Tobacco Trade Benevolent

Welcome

Mike Davies

Guest Speaker

Boris Johnson MP

Raffle Draw

Master of Ceremonies **Rodger Oatley** FNAT

Magicians **Mike Davis & Peter Nardi**

Menu

Marinated salmon, fennel salad, avocado and
cherry tomato dressing

*

Cornfed chicken breast, spring onion and Stilton mash,
leeks and braised celery, red wine sauce

*

Yoghurt and cardamom mousse,
blueberry jelly and lemon sorbet

*

Choice of brewed Columbian coffee,
decaffeinated coffee, Landmark Blend tea
or herbal infusions

*

The Organisers would like to thank the following:



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Sponsor of the Menu

Gift International Ltd. (Rocky Patel Cigars)

Sponsor of the Tickets

Cadogan

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