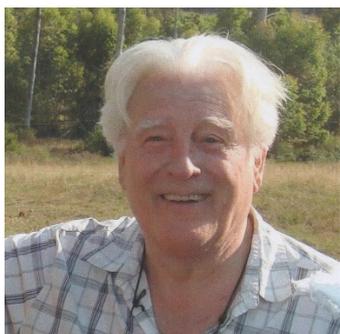


Ted Willis (20th June 1933 – 14th March 2023)



Ted Willis, a King's Engineer, died on 14 March 2023. Ted was a large man, both physically and intellectually, well-liked and respected by all his colleagues and friends.

Ted was born and brought up in Southampton although for part of the Second World War he lived in Bournemouth, where his school, Taunton's, had been evacuated. In addition to his school studies, Ted was keen on sports and at one stage played table tennis for Hampshire. From a young age he always knew he wanted to be a Civil Engineer.

In 1951 he was offered a place at Kings to read Civil Engineering and moved to London. At King's, he worked and played hard, graduating in 1954 with a first-class honours degree and the opportunity to carve a career in civil engineering.

After King's, National Service beckoned. He obtained a commission in the Royal Air Force and joined the Airfield Construction Branch where he spent his time in Germany and Norway. He enjoyed his time in the RAF and it fuelled his curiosity for different cultures.

Once out of the RAF he joined a London civil engineering consulting firm and was subsequently posted to Pakistan in 1961. It was a self-sufficient and resourceful experience. His fondest memories there were spent on a beach near Karachi – Sonmiani – which in later years became the name of the family house.

Returning to the UK in 1963, he brought a plot of land near Lingfield with his overseas savings – on which to build a house. By 1964 he was married to Trudy and working in London. He and Trudy spent the next 2 years building 'Sonmiani'.

By 1968, Ted was on the move again and, accompanied by Trudy, went to Abu Dhabi to work in the Public Works Department. One of his projects was the development of Abu Dhabi port. During his time in the Abu Dhabi Public Works Department, he was promoted to Director. He also became a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers, London.

Although he left the Abu Dhabi Government in 1977, he continued to work mainly in the Middle East for more than 30 years. Usually with British consulting engineers, mainly on the supervision of construction projects.

His relationship with King's remained strong and nearly 60 years after graduation he became an active member of the KCLEA committee, taking on the Honorary Events Secretary role from 2014 to 2020.

Ted and Trudy finally 'retired' to Eastbourne in 2008 but continued to spend time in the annexe at 'Sonmiani'. Very sadly, Trudy died in December 2021 after several years of illness. About this time, Ted's own health started to deteriorate, and he went to reside in a nursing home in February 2022. He finally slipped away peacefully on the afternoon of 14th March 2023. Ted is survived by his son, Paul, and daughter, Anna, and their families.