

Cowley Family History - Research Detail

Name:	Frederick John Bacon			Sex:	M
AKA:					
Birth Date:	29 Nov 1912	Place:			
Chr. Date:		Place:			
Death Date:	12 Nov 2008	Place:	Priory Nursing Home, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands		
Cremation Date:	26 Nov 2008	Place:	Robin Hood Crematorium		
Cause of Death:					
Spouse:	*Dorothy Ellen Marshall Cowley				

General:

The following is an extract from the address by the Rev. Elizabeth Cowley at Fred Bacon's funeral on 26 November 2008. Just a couple of weeks before he died, Liz visited Fred and, despite his weakness and the effects of the morphine that he was receiving, he spoke to her at length about his life. The words are Liz's, the reminiscences are Fred's.

Fred was born on the 29th November 1912 in North London, the second (I was told today!) eldest of 10 children. He was a very bright child, and despite a very difficult background to his life, he won a scholarship to Tollingham Boys School where he excelled in a number of subjects, but especially in languages. In his final report in the summer of 1929 he is recorded as having been a Boxing finalist, in the first eleven for Football and Cricket and the House Chess team. His House master said this 'He has always shown great keenness and is a most valuable member of the House.'

His head master, commenting on the Honours he gained at School Matric. and General School Certificate said, 'He has thoroughly deserved his success.' Fred then went on to gain a Distinction in Book Keeping at the London Chamber of Commerce, and later took up Articles of Clerkship at Edward Furnival Jones in 1932, where his brilliance at languages often determined where he would work. At some point earlier, he had also been a lay preacher in the Methodist church locally, and recounted that he regularly used to take 2 of his brothers on his bicycle, down to Sunday School.

He did a great deal in his life - and it would be difficult not to overstay our welcome here if I were to tell you all of those many things, but, here are just a few more of them!

Fred was in a reserve occupation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries during the war - one of his jobs being weighing offal! He was in the Home Guard too...from 21st November 1941 to 31 December 1944, and due to his brilliance in French, he worked at the Ritz in Paris from July 1st 1947 to the 30th September.

Some of his other enjoyments were Morris and Country dancing, and it was whilst the family were living in Cambridge that he met his first wife Rene during these sessions. During their early married life Fred was working in France, sometimes coming home for weekends or Rene going out to spend time with him there. Sadly, Rene died from Alzheimers in 1999 after a very difficult period for Fred, who visited her daily in the nursing home, for as long as he could.

But later Fred met Dorothy through a mutual friend, and as time went on they became good friends, marrying on the 12th December 2001. It was then that he came into contact with the Cowleys, and he is recorded as a lovely gentle person and perfect gentleman. He and Dorothy went out to Gran Canaria in October 2002 with Sheila and Ron, and Sheila recalls that he had a pair of shorts with teddy bears on, and says...'you have to have a sense of fun to wear those!' And yes! he did have a sense of fun - and plenty of jokes which he often shared with Roy over his difficult last few years - they would often try to outdo each other in the latest of their collection!

So this is just a series of very small snapshots of the person whom we know as Fred, and there will be time to fill them out as we meet later. But today we are here to give thanks for Fred, for all that he was, and for all that will be very much missed.

Last Modified:	22 Jan 2009
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