

John Murphy

BY PETER MEECH

The village has lost one of its characters in John Murphy, who died of a heart attack on 28 January, just five weeks after the death of his beloved wife Margaret. They had lived in Stanley Drive for over seven years and at White Chalet, the house they built on Glen Road, for the previous 40 years.

The esteem in which John was held and the affection he inspired were demonstrated by the large attendance at the celebration of his life at the Royal Hotel. Speaker after speaker, including Sir William Macpherson of Cluny and the Lord Provost of Glasgow, Bob Winter, paid eloquent tribute to John's many achievements and personal qualities.

Born in Slamannan in 1917, John originally studied Classics at Glasgow University, becoming a teacher in Alva after war service with the Tank Regiment and then the War Office Selection Board, as a commissioned psychologist at HQ, where he worked with



many renowned psychiatrists and psychologists. In 2007 the British Psychological Society published a major article by him on the work of the War Office Selection Board.

A former HMI for Approved Schools in Scotland and first Director of Social Work for

Stirling County and Central Region, John wrote the definitive history of Scottish Social services, *British Social Services – The Scottish Dimension* (1992). More recently, he led a team to record the centenary of Cornton Vale's establishment, soon to be published. Among his many other commitments he served on the board of, and subsequently chaired, the Bield Housing Association for 20 years.

Anyone meeting John could not help but be struck by his acute mind, his curiosity, his humanity and his sheer love of life. These qualities, together with a formidable memory, a facility with words and a mischievous sense of humour, he was fortunate to preserve till the end.

John's memories of the village were published in two parts in issues 17 and 18 of the *Bridge of Allan Times*. When the first of these was judged Best Article in the 2009 Community Newspaper of the Year Awards organised by Stirling Council, John boasted of having won the Young Journalist of the Year prize - aged 92.

We shall miss him and send his family our condolences.

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Going Forward With Bridge Of Allan Stroke Group

This is a new group, affiliated to Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland, starting up in late March for survivors of strokes and meeting weekly in the Chalmers Hall, Keir Street.

It is hoped to provide activities of interest and benefit in a sociable atmosphere. We need to build up a pool of volunteer helpers for Thursday afternoons.

If you can help, or indeed if you or someone you know might benefit from joining such a group, further information can be obtained from Dot Collie, tel. 831608 or Jennifer Cameron at 832228.

Second Open Lecture in Bridge of Allan Parish Church

The Very Rev. Dr John Miller will be coming to Bridge of Allan Parish Church on Wed. 21st April at 7.30pm to give a lecture on "Poverty". Dr Miller is a distinguished and compelling speaker and many will have heard of him as a former Moderator and long-time parish minister in Castlemilk, Glasgow.



He is now working in Zimbabwe, which should add extra richness to his presentation. We are very fortunate he has agreed to come to Bridge of Allan during his short break back in Scotland and look forward to a large audience.

The talk should last about 30-40 minutes followed by questions and tea or coffee in the church.

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