



DERMOT' GRAHAM

1938 – 2007

As the SGSA Webmaster Dermot was a great servant of the Association, despite a long and hard struggle with illness in his last years

Diarmid Neil Dermot, always known as Dermot, gave a full recount of his life in the 2003 issue of The Swan - see pages 14-15. The following details are taken from this and Dermot's own personal website:

Dermot was born in Bridgwater, Somerset on August 11, 1938. The name Diarmid is the Scottish Gaelic spelling of Dermot and so he always spelt his name the English way. He was brought up in Didmarton in Gloucestershire and attended primary school at nearby Tetbury before the family moved to temporary council housing on the disused Long Newton airfield. Dermot passed his 11 Plus exam and his mother thought that it would be good for Dermot and brother Alistair to go to a boys' boarding school. They started at the short-lived Milton Lodge School for Boys at Wells, Somerset in January 1950 where they remained until December 1951. After the family moved to Wiltshire the boys were sent to Marlborough Grammar School. In 1953 the family moved yet again and Dermot and his brother arrived at SGS, where Dermot remained until 1955, leaving with four "O" levels.

After he left school Dermot worked as a trainee with E.K.Cole Ltd., (EKCO) at Malmesbury, Wiltshire. During this time he studied at a college at Chippenham on day-release for his City and Guilds in telecommunications. He hated the course and never completed it due to the early deaths of both his parents, mother from cancer and father from heart problems, in 1958. Dermot moved to London, where his two brothers were working and he found work with Redifon in Wandsworth where he found employment as

a wireman/fitter working on instruments for the Admiralty. In 1965 Dermot, by now living in Battersea, started work with the embryonic Dolby Laboratories. In those early days Dolby's famous noise reduction system was hush hush and the patents had not been finalised. In 1966 Dermot moved to an electronics company in Richmond and soon after married Rose. After several changes of job and addresses Dermot and Rose moved to Banbury in 1971 under the "new towns" scheme, remaining there for eight years. In the meantime Dermot had acquired his City and Guilds as a mature student, working thereafter as a skilled prototype fitter/wireman for various electronics companies.

In 1979 Dermot and family moved to Manchester but two years later he and Rose were divorced. Though he was awarded custody of his son and daughter after three years Rose persuaded the children to live with her in Sunderland. Dermot found work locally but in 1989 suffered a heart attack and shortly after was made redundant. With deteriorating health Dermot was forced to take early retirement. During his retirement Dermot took great pleasure from his garden, his computer and the Internet. His other hobbies were photography, travelling throughout the British Isles and socialising with other like-minded people.

Tragically Dermot lost his son in June this year; he is survived by his daughter Nicola.

Dermot died on Thursday, 18 September 2007 and his funeral took place at Blackley Crematorium in Manchester

The SGSA owes Dermot a great debt for taking over the Association's website back in 2000. To date it has logged 17,451 'hits' and in conjunction with The Swan has kept hundreds of past staff and pupils in contact. And it worked both ways; keeping SGS alumni in contact via the website gave Dermot a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction. Interestingly, when the fledgling Friends Reunited website was set up Dermot became the first of more than 400 ex-Swanage Grammar School pupils to register. In July 2005 Dermot was made Guest of Honour at Friends Reunited's 5th birthday party - see the 2006 issue of The Swan.

With Dermot's very poor health the SGSA website has remained fairly static over the past months but, as with The Swan, its existence can only be sustained by your input. We are actively seeking a new Webmaster to carry on Dermot's excellent work.

Richard Riding 2007