

John Dolby and his wife Anthea moved to the village of Whitchurch-on-Thames in 1969, following his return to the UK after time working in the Middle East. They purchased 'Orchard Close' where the family subsequently spent many happy years before the children grew up and moved away.

They then relocated 'around the corner' into Highway Cottage to assist Anthea's Mother Lurleen Whitmore as she entered her final years. When she passed away at the age of 102, John and Anthea opted to stay on at Highway Cottage as, having now entered retirement, he wished to enjoy his increasing participation in Village life.

John Horatio Curtis Dolby was born on the 30th October 1928 to Winifred Lotus Curtis and Captain Allen Walter Dolby. A younger brother Robert was to arrive some some 5 years later. Sadly, there Father then passed away in 1943 following service in The Royal Berkshire Regiment when John was only 15. This left his wife Winifred to complete the two boys' upbringing an education alone. They lived in Camberley with John being educated firstly at Collett Court and then at St Paul's School, in London.

He was to undertake a stint of National Service with the Royal Berkshire Regiment himself, before commencing what was to become a lifelong association - and fascination - with the Middle East. Joining the international trading company Gray McKenzie in Bahrain and Iran, it was in the capital City of that country, Tehran that John and Anthea then settled down to the early years of their 58 year marriage.

This was of course the pre-revolution Iran of The Shah and the lifestyle at that time was essentially a colonial one. In due course, with two small children to educate, they were to return to Britain - and to Whitchurch, but whilst John had many further associations and periods of work in the Arab world over the remaining years of his life and career - he returned to live in Tehran (Iran) again, as well as Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), and most interestingly to the emerging Dubai - he always retained the house in Whitchurch as the primary family residence. This represented 'home'.

John, it is fair to say, was essentially a social being, and it was on the basis of that attribute that his career was to then flourish. He made friends easily. Following his initial period in the Middle East, he was established a sizeable reputation back home in the UK for putting together the right people in the Building Industry.

In Whitchurch, he served as a Church Warden at St Mary's and focused considerable time and energy into these duties. In London, he was a member of The Worshipful Company of Drapers in the City as well as being a Freeman of the City of London. He was a member of The Iran Society. John Dolby was a voracious reader with an abiding fascination for History generally and he retained an extensive and impressive knowledge of Ancient and Medieval history in particular. In retirement, he fulfilled an ambition to finish a book - co-written with Nick Brazil - on his direct relative Sir William Curtis, MP, Lord Mayor of London and close friend of George 3rd. He was extremely proud of this - and rightly so - it was a marathon undertaking.

John Horatio Curtis Dolby passed away peacefully at Eastfield Lodge Care home, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch on December 22nd 2014 and is survived by his wife Anthea, son Timothy and daughter Caroline.

The family are to have a Memorial Service to celebrate his life which will take place at St Mary's Church, Whitchurch on January 16th 2015 at 3pm. All who knew him are most welcome.