

Martyn Jordan, 1940 – 2021



Martyn, husband of Vicky Jordan, died on 26th June 2021.

In 2020 he wrote this summary of his career:

Martyn was born in Sidcup, Kent, in 1940 to Gladys and Fred. Fred was serving in the war maintaining Radar stations in Iceland. He attended Hurst Park Infants School in Albany Park and moved to live at Trenches Farm in Langley when 8 years old, a wonderful life for a child to wander round cherry orchards and hay barns. From there Fred joined EMI in Hayes and Martyn moved to Clayton Road and passed his grammar school entrance to go to Walpole Grammar School in South Ealing. He joined the school orchestra as a French Horn player, encouraged by Ossie Oswald the music teacher. He won a junior exhibition to attend the Royal Academy of Music, where he studied French Horn under Aubrey Brain (Dennis Brain's father) and Piano and played in the Academy Junior Orchestra. This inspired his love of music for the rest of his life.

Walpole Grammar School fast-tracked him to pass his A-levels at the age of 16. His talent at Maths was inspired by Harry Oldham, his Maths master, and he won a prestige Open Scholarship to Imperial College, London University at 17 years old.

After graduation he entered Trinity Hall, Cambridge University, to study at the Cavendish Laboratory and acquired a postgraduate diploma in Numerical Analysis, writing his thesis in Jacobi Quadrature. He became engrossed in bell ringing and was elected to the prestigious Ancient Society of College Youths, promoted by Philip Threlfall, subsequently breaking many ringing records in the 1970s in Watford with the country's top hand bell team of John Mayne, Kathy and Roger Baldwin, Julia Fellows, Gerald Penny, Frank Price and Chris Woolley. Some of these records still stand today.

Joining Elliott Brothers, a computer company in Borehamwood, he developed original software for structural design, helping Ove Arup to sort out the mathematics of the construction of the Sydney Opera House. He became Chief Programmer within a few years. But, more importantly, he met Vicky his future wife across an 803 Elliott computer, showing her how to wind up paper tape at high speed.

From there he became Chief Programmer at a chemical engineering company in Vauxhall Bridge Road where he pioneered a scheduling system for planning and costing large chemical production plant.

Martyn married Vicky in 1967 at Barnet Church, North London, and daughters Helen and Sally followed in 1971 and 1975. He was happier when developing software, not managing teams to do it, so he joined ICL in 1968 to develop production control systems for large avionics projects.

Eventually ICL Central Marketing persuaded him to join the strategy team developing their prestigious 2900 series mainframe computer systems, where he jointly developed the company's software development strategy. In 1984 he was approached by a French company to be their sales director and to jointly set up the British subsidiary of Alsys Ltd, conveniently close to his golf club in Henley-on Thames. He loved his golf, playing off a modest single figures for 20 years and served Henley Golf Club as Captain in 1992 and as a Trustee.

Alsys was eventually taken over by Thompson of France and Martyn Joined an American company, Tartan Inc, selling real time software as the European Sales Director for about six years until 1996. Retiring at 56, Martyn delighted in being the Parish Clerk for Woodcote for 12 years before at last stopping work at 69!

He spent his last years enjoying his family, which now included a grandchild Lauren, and they had wonderful beach holidays. He was treasurer and secretary of the Whitchurch & Goring Heath Twinning Association and enjoyed travel in Britain and abroad. His enthusiasm for golf and his newly acquired fascination for club bridge, in which he regarded himself as an average club player, kept him busy for the rest of his life.
