



OBITUARIES

John Brian Walker

Amanda Beale

Ophthalmic specialist (b 1924; q Oxford/London Hospital 1947), died from congestive cardiac failure on 15 October 2014.

John Brian Walker was born in Catford, London, and studied medicine at New College, Oxford before completing his studies at the Royal London.

As a final year medical student during the second world war, Brian and some colleagues were asked to go to Holland in 1945. He was immediately diverted to help manage the liberation of the Belsen concentration camp. Brian was one of the first to witness the shocking scenes there, which displayed inhumanity at its most bestial.

Drafted into the army on qualifying, he was sent to east Africa, where he became the army's eye surgeon for the region. Here he married Mary, a nurse from the Royal London Hospital. After demobilisation they returned to London and, with the support of Mary, took on his father's general practice, rather than continuing his specialist career as an ophthalmic surgeon.

One of his main passions in life was sailing. He was one of three helmsmen to dominate the "Hornet" dinghy fleet in the 1950s,

60s, and 70s and became commodore of the class. He and Mary were great supporters of young people learning to sail and, for many years, ran "cadet week" at Burnham on Crouch, Essex. Later Brian commissioned the construction of an Alan Buchanan 44 foot yacht. *Arrogant* launched in 1991 and he and Mary cruised around the Mediterranean for many summers. They would welcome many friends and more young sailors, often junior doctors, with their great hospitality. Brian died at home in Cornwall.

A celebration of his life was held on 1 November 2014 at the Harbour Club in Porthscatho, Cornwall, where he had been a longstanding member. There was no funeral as Brian had decided to donate his body to a medical school, to allow students to benefit from the study of anatomy, as he himself had done, so many years before.

Predeceased by his wife, Mary, in 2011 and their son, Giles, he leaves a daughter, Stephanie.

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