

Christopher Shaddock

14 Feb 1933 - 8 March 2012

Our man in Edinburgh, Gareth Howlett, (1969 – 76) very kindly and efficiently represented the Society of Old Priceans at Christopher's funeral, and wore the Presidential insignia and OP tie to do so. After the service he contacted Professor Alastair Gillespie and received this reply:

Dear Gareth,

Thank you for your email. I knew Christopher well as we were colleagues for around 30 years and I was very sorry to learn last week of his death. He was an established figure here in the Mathematics Department at the University of Edinburgh when I joined it in 1968 as a young and very inexperienced lecturer. I learnt much from him.

Unfortunately, records weren't kept particularly efficiently in those days but I think I can give you a very brief outline of his career here. He was appointed to a Lectureship in Mathematics here in 1962, coming from a position (I am not quite sure what that was) at Keele University. He stayed in Edinburgh for the remainder of his professional life, retiring in the late 1990's (it would almost certainly have been on the 30th September after his 65th birthday.) He was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1974.

Christopher was a key member of the Department, much respected for his common sense and the substantial contributions he made to our teaching activities. As a mark of the respect with which he was held, I recall that when the Chair of Mathematics was to be filled in the late 1970's, Christopher was on the appointment panel as the representative of the non-professorial staff.

He was also a non-professorial member of Senatus for many years. He cared about the welfare students and served as a Director of Studies for many years.

One final thing worth mentioning is that he served as Secretary of the Edinburgh Mathematical Society (EMS) from 1983 to 1992. I should explain that the EMS is in fact the national society in Scotland for university mathematics and plays an important role in the mathematical life of Scotland.

Sadly, I am not going to be able to be present at his funeral. My wife and I leave tomorrow for a few weeks in Australia, visiting our younger son. I circulated details of the funeral arrangements to my colleagues a few days ago, so I hope that the Mathematics Department will be represented at Christopher's funeral.

With kind regards,

Alastair

The Society made a donation to the charity nominated by Christopher's relatives as he would have wished. Gareth discovered for us that the charity close to Christopher's heart was a hospice for children where a young cousin of his had died some years ago:

Helen & Douglas House Hospice
14A Magdalen Road
Oxford
Oxfordshire
OX4 1RW

Should anyone wish to see a copy of the service sheet used at the funeral, please apply to the Secretary.

Paul Lewis and Peter Keemer, scientific contemporaries of Chirstopher, have added the following to the earlier notes on him:

Before Prices, Christopher was at Wykeham House where, at a young age, he rather stood out in assembly as the only boy in the middle ranks of girls behind me.

He was 5 years in the sixth form at Prices.

His chambers in Edinburgh, on the fourth floor up a winding helical staircase, contained several ancient keyboard instruments.

He was, in my opinion, the brightest boy Prices ever had. PL.

We were in the Sixth Form together and, if I remember correctly, he was 2/3 years ahead in academic terms and probably one or two years younger. He was a rather private person and, apart from the things already mentioned, I think he was very interested in (and inevitably good at) chess.

Captain ("Jim" to us, so presumably "James*") (Shaddock's Great War service left him with shell shock. He was a very good physics teacher who suffered the rickety 1st World War army hut as a laboratory and the way it wrecked his experiments when any one moved about. He must have been a good teacher as he helped me to get a respectable Higher School Cert result and then a good mark in physics in the Civil Service exam. PK