

## PHILIP RUDGE (1937–2014)



For over 25 years Phil Rudge Engineering in St Thomas Street was an enterprise with a well-earned reputation for integrity and reliability. Phil had a passion for engines and helped to maintain the Formula Ford racing car for the (then) King's Arms racing team. Their driver remembers him 'wearing a huge smile and even bigger beard – the quiet mechanic with a massive heart'.

Phil was born in Oxford on 26 June 1937 and spent his childhood in Swalcliffe where he can be seen at school in the documentary '24 Square Miles'. Leaving school at the age of 14, he started work at the Forge Garage in Brailes and then for 15 years was a civilian telecommunications operator at Banbury Police Station.

He and Jean moved to Deddington in 1974 and Jasmine Cottage in New Street is a tangible testimony to his skill and versatility as a craftsman. Son Michael was born in 1980. Philip was a long-standing member of the Deddington and District Rifle and Revolver Club, originally housed in a tin hut in the Castle Grounds.

He began learning the violin at the age of seven – reaching Grade 6 later in life. In Southerndown Care Home residents remember him playing at 5 o'clock in the morning. He and Jean were enthusiastic followers of the City of Oxford orchestra and attended nearly all their concerts. He also loved steam locomotives and a trip on the Settle-Carlisle line was a favourite day out.

In heaven he is perhaps playing his violin and tinkering with the lock on St Peter's door!

*Jean Rudge*