

**Don Bootle**  
**13<sup>th</sup> August 1931 – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

*This tribute to Don has been shaped by numerous contributions, and I'm grateful to Rosemary, Joanne and Katherine for the work they have done to provide this information. The fact that we've had to divide this into 3 is not meant to so sharply delineate Don's life, as you will hear, one area fed and led to another, but is simply a practical step, as there is so much to tell.*

### **Early Life and BP Shipping**

Donald Clyde Bootle was born in Enfield 13<sup>th</sup> August 1931. He had one younger brother Brian. Don was being educated at the Grammar School, but insisted that he transfer to Tottenham Technical to enjoy the more practical education on offer there. In 1947, he took up an Engineering Apprenticeship at The Royal Small Arms Factory in Enfield.

### **BP Tankers (later Shipping) 1952- 84**

In 1952 Don joined the BP Tanker Company as a Junior Engineer; his first ship was called "British Energy". 5 years and 4 ships later, Don had progressed and his Chief Engineer's Ticket in 1957. Journeys then meant Don could be away from home for up to 12 months, and so, having married Audrey in 1955, Don requested an appointment in Head Office. He became part of the Engineer Cadet Training Programme, monitoring the progress of candidates from their new days as school leavers, through college, and in continuing training on board ship. This connection of industry and education continues throughout Don's career, and he stayed in Engineer Cadet Training for 27 years until he 'retired' (the first of several retirements!) in 1984. He was dedicated in his role, to ensure that the company procured proficient and enthusiastic young Engineers, who will have remembered Don's part in their subsequent career successes. Amongst those who have now themselves retired, were those who rose to take on roles as Chief Engineers, Superintendents and Senior Technical Managers.

During Don's time at BP Shipping, Joanne was born in 1962. After Audrey's death in 1972, he met and married Rosemary and Katherine was born the following year in 1974. During these years he was also a member of various national training and technical committees (Chairman of some) at the General Council of British Shipping and the Merchant Navy Training Board.

### **Reading: "I am standing on the sea shore" [Paula Bootle]**

I am standing on the sea shore,  
A ship sails in the morning breeze and starts for the ocean.  
She is an object of beauty and I stand watching her  
Till at last she fades on the horizon and someone at my side says: "She is gone."

Gone! Where?  
Gone from my sight - that is all.  
She is just as large in the masts, hull and spars as she was when I saw her  
And just as able to bear her load of living freight to its destination.  
The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me,  
not in her.

And just at the moment when someone at my side says,  
"She is gone",  
There are others who are watching her coming, and other voices take up a glad shout:  
"There she comes"  
- and that is dying. An horizon and just the limit of our sight.  
Lift us up, O Lord, that we may see further.  
(Bishop Brent 1862 – 1926)

*Reminder that there are RNLi gift aid envelopes available for donations.*  
[www.rnli.org.uk/how\\_to\\_support\\_us](http://www.rnli.org.uk/how_to_support_us)

He was always a man involved with the sea – a major link to the RNLi was when Don and his brother with Joanne and Paula (then aged 11 and 9) were caught in a severe storm and the rudder broke and they had to be rescued by the RNLi. They were congratulated by the Lifeboat crew for handling the situation in exactly the correct way. Otherwise it could so easily have ended in tragedy.

## Remembering Don: Education & Engineering

When Don left BP Shipping, his career combined with great service to the community, in both paid and voluntary capacities.

In 1986 through a partnership between BP and Hertfordshire County Council to address the shortage of teachers of Maths, Science and Technology, Don and Margaret Du Boulay (then Darby, a head teacher) they set up HATS – Hertfordshire Action on Teacher Supply, which was to end up recruiting and, through the University of Hertfordshire, training over 100 teachers who had formally worked in business or industry. From the first task of equipping the office, Don's immense abilities were shown on every level. County Supplies at the time were an inflexible organisation, and to even procure the necessary order book, Don needed to come up with a flexible problem-solving solution. Moving from Industry to Education was a challenge, but Don and Margaret were a good team, prepared to collaborate, to step out and meet people in person and produce a scheme for teacher training that has shaped the current Licensed Teacher scheme. Interest was shown in Don and Margaret's work around the country, and in the States – where they met with the top BP man in North America, who was, naturally – one of Don's early trainees in the Engineer Cadet Training programme. Don's contribution to the team was immense: he planned meticulously, worked tirelessly, and overcame obstacles. Above all Don was a man who got things done with a practical, down-to-earth attitude.

Subsequently Don became Manager of the Engineering Council's nationwide Neighbourhood Engineer Programme that put volunteer professional engineers into schools to help promote science and engineering. Starting with just a few co-ordinators across the UK, the Neighbourhood Engineers programme reported "a few hundred" engineers visiting schools in 1994. By 2001, when Don "officially" retired from Engineering Council service, there were over 10,000 active engineers. Although I personally am not technically competent, I do remember Engineering challenges and visits from Engineers coming to my school, and it is amazing to think that Don's influence is still working to recruit young Engineers today. The Neighbourhood Engineer Programme formed the basis of the Science & Engineering Ambassadors programme, and Don was involved in this as East London co-ordinator, until 2002.

From the early 1990s he made a major contribution to the safety of life at sea and to the prevention of pollution through his work with Videotel Marine International. He was an initiator and provider of high quality shipping training, bringing to his work professionalism and support for seafarers well beyond the call of duty. His expertise, enthusiasm and influence spread to ships of all major shipping companies of the world and to the technical advisors of the International Maritime Organisation.

The East of England Engineering Science & Technology Association is what it is today largely through the good works of a few people. Don has been one of the stalwarts who engaged at the outset some ten years ago and at various stages took it upon himself to take on key roles, chairing the seminar committee for a period as well as becoming a Board member. Whilst he had tried to step back in recent times, he was always working away bringing his connections with IMarEST (Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology) and BP out whenever needed. It is fair to say that without Don EEESTA might not be where it is today, leaving a legacy for this group to take forward.

Don's enthusiasm for the profession and his strong desire to share the wonders of science, engineering and technology with young people was typified by his initiative to establish The IMarEST Don Bootle Award for Engineering. This was set up using the balance of funds when he retired from the Engineering Council and a personal donation. For a number of years this award has supported young people on Smallpiece Trust Marine Technology Experience Programmes and the Energy Challenge Programme. He also helped develop the Hertfordshire Education-Business Link Organisation, to link schools & work experience.

Don was a leading role model and ambassador for the engineering profession. His contributions are numerous and lasting. His effect in this regard, by any measure, is significant and lasting and his efforts for the greater good have touched many people, he will be sorely missed.

**Reading: 'Everyone's Friend' [Chris Seviour]**

You left quietly without a fuss  
You always had a smile to share  
A laugh, a joke, a time to care  
A wonderful nature warm and true  
These are the memories we have of you  
A beautiful life came to an end  
You died as you lived  
Everyone's friend.

**Remembering Don: "A man of many retirements"**

Don and Rosemary have been an excellent team, supporting each other. In addition to all the voluntary work that Don undertook, he also claimed that he was 'technical assistant to the Church secretary', and here at St John's we know that Don's steady background work has enabled Rosemary to contribute to our life, just as much as Rosemary supported and enabled Don. He was very much a family man and proud of his daughters Joanne and Katherine and his 3 Grandsons Christopher, Nicholas and Oliver. The family have enjoyed many weekends and holidays together

Don enjoyed sailing (until Arthritis made this impossible), trips varied from crossing the Channel with his Brother, or on smaller boats an annual holiday with Friends at Barton Turf and more recently cruising on bigger ships. Don always enjoyed Fishing, but as with many of his hobbies, he liked to get involved, and so joined the committee of the Fishing club and became Chairman!

Don had boundless energy and clearly focused commitment and dedication, not only to his professional duties but also to his voluntary work, from which many have benefited. He did not really retire, but continued to engage with and work for the local community in a variety of capacities

He served as Chairman of Governors for 14 years at Bengo Primary School, as governor of Bishops Hatfield Girls school for 4 years.

Don was Chairman of the Management Committee of Potters Bar CAB for 5 years, and later when the 3 Bureaux in the Borough were merged he was asked to manage the merger, working with his fellow joint manager Sue Pearlman through some difficult times for the local CAB. Don was then Chairman of the merged group for 5 years. Don ensured that the CAB was well funded, well governed and well managed, taking time to listen carefully to all opinions, to build consensus and prepared to thoughtfully change his viewpoint if so persuaded.

Don was Chairman of Heathways Residents' Association since 1993 – always working tirelessly to preserve the neighbourhood's amenities and environment. Indeed without his tenacity a number of battles fought would not have been won.

He was a long time member of his Masonic Lodge and one of its leading lights and went on to receive high honours in the Hertfordshire Province.

He had to undergo many operations. As said at one of his Retirement Parties "Don was a man of many parts – most of them supplied by BUPA". He always remained positive and cheerful while recuperating.

Don will be remembered for his sense of humour, his cheerfulness and enthusiasm, even in the face of ill health, and all the voluntary work which he undertook so willingly. He was always the one who would make the extra effort for others. He was a man committed to his family, steadfast in his work and prepared to advocate and work for others. A good citizen, and the Good Neighbour, that Jesus set before us as our example.

Don died on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009. He will be greatly missed by all.

**Reading: He is Gone      [Rachel Nockels & Peter Wallace]**

You can shed tears that he is gone,  
Or you can smile because he lived,  
You can close your eyes and pray that he will come back,  
Or you can open your eyes and see all that he has left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see him  
Or you can be full of the love that you shared,  
You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday,  
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

You can remember him and only that he is gone  
Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on,  
You can cry and close your mind be empty and turn your back,  
Or you can do what he would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.  
*(Anonymous)*

This service was conducted by Revd Alison Walker on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008  
at St John's Methodist Church, Potters Bar