

OBITUARY



OBITUARY – DESMOND GREEF – 1932 - 2008

Born in Thornham in 1932, Desmond lived all his life in the same house. He started work in the family business at the age of 14, and at the same age first became organist at Thornham church, having been taught to play by the organist of Sandringham. When his mentor was unable to play for Glebe House School at the 1956 speech day, Desmond played in his place, and such was his talent that three years later he was appointed full time Director of Music at the school.

Desmond was called up for National Service, and served relatively close to home, at Waterbeach.

Musical events, lessons and exams became a part of Glebe life, and the school orchestra went from strength to strength. Desmond arranged for the orchestra to accompany services at St Mary's, and he alternated between conducting, playing in the orchestra, and accompanying on the organ. He trained organists, and provided musicians for Remembrance services in the area; he was also responsible for the case work of the organ pipes, and arranged very popular concerts in aid of the organ fund: he also became something of a recording engineer in recording the organ, and in later years providing CDs of the organ's music to supplement the lack of an organist.

Only a few months ago, Desmond gave up playing the organ at Old Hunstanton because of ill health, although he had set himself a target of playing for 50 years.

He had set up a Music Room at home, where he taught children and adults to play many different instruments – church organ, piano, violin, trumpet, clarinet and recorder – and also kept a huge collection of books and music. The room was also used for concerts, as well as occasional church services and meetings.

One of Desmond's proudest moments was the award of the MBE for services to music in north west Norfolk, and the presentation was made at home in his music room.

He is remembered as a sensitive teacher and accompanist, who encouraged his charges, and arranged music to suit the abilities of the musicians and singers with whom he was working.

Grateful thanks are offered to branch member the Reverend Lawrence Campbell of Old Hunstanton, who kindly provided the information used for both this obituary and that of Desmond's brother Henry in a previous issue.