**EAST KNOYLE RBL REPORT - MARCH Ron Clark (Branch Secretary)**

**Tony Thresh**

A busy month for our Branch has been overshadowed by the death of long time RBL member and stalwart of our community, Tony Thresh. It is a rare occurrence that you meet a person who merits the comment “I have never heard a bad word said against him” but he was one.

Tony had been a member of our Branch since 1994 and over the years made a significant contribution to its success; arranging trips to France, outings to such venues as the Watercress Line but principally playing a major part in the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday and other services. Perhaps it will be his contribution as an organist and a mainstay of St Mary’s that he will probably be most remembered in the village. Music played a great part in his life, a passion that he nurtured within his family.

Sadly, in recent years his life had been dogged by ill health. Firstly with his beloved wife, Val, being struck down with dementia and then himself with the diagnosis of terminal cancer early last year. But Tony being Tony, he carried on as usual, pleased to see everyone, displaying no hint of the pain of his illness or what lay ahead for him. There is no doubt that his faith was an important part of his life and hopefully gave him great comfort.

This quiet fortitude was displayed by his determination to play the organ at Val’s funeral last autumn with musical accompaniment provided by family members. Others will be able to provide a fuller obituary and details of his life and achievements but for now ‘a good man is gone’ will suffice for this report. Our thoughts are with his family - Christopher, Emmy, Michael, Fran and Trish. The funeral will be at 12.00 on the 20th March at St. Mary’s, East Knoyle.

**SOCIAL EVENTS**

Our calendar of events for 2023 commenced on the 17th February when a party of 16 visited the REME museum in Lyneham for a guided tour by the Deputy Curator, Major (ret’d) Rick Henderson, whose personal insights and extensive knowledge added an extra dimension to the day, kindly arranged by Paul Naish.

The Branch had enjoyed two previous talks by John Inman so those attending his latest on the evening of the 1st March, covering his experiences as a young officer on a tour of duty in Northern Ireland, knew they were in for a well researched and informative hour or so. Thanks to Murray and Feargal at the Fox and Hounds for the use of the conservatory room as a venue and John, as always, for his time and effort.

**THE CAIRN AT STOURHEAD**

Many a keen dog walker or rambler will be aware of a small kiln built of stones near Stourhead House that marks the scene of the crash of an RAF Dakota in 1945. RBL member, Bernard Pike, has produced an illustrated booklet detailing the circumstances, people and the long research journey involved in bringing all the facts of the story together. There are just six copies left of the initial print run so if you are interested in purchasing a copy please contact me on 830354. All proceeds from the purchase price of £5 will be donated to the RBL.

**Next Branch Meeting:** 4th April, 6.30pm, Fox and Hounds