

Obituary

DAVID BLAGDEN MARKS

David Blagden Marks died on the 10th September this year. He had a very varied career; first in the merchant navy, then in acting, humanistic psychology and in management training. He fell in love with the sea as a child watching shrimp boats at Whitstable. His was the smallest boat ever to complete the single-handed trans-Atlantic race. That story was told in his book "A Very Willing Griffin". He combined both sailing and acting careers to complete a successful television series entitled "Plain Sailing".

He was best known to those in the humanistic psychology field as the Director of Quaesitor, described by himself as a centre for creative groupwork. He took over a chaotic organisation from Paul and Patricia Lowe and, with his immense energy and determination, built up a reliable and important resource, one of the greatest influences on British psychotherapy and counselling training in the 1970s.

He liked to think of himself as simply an entrepreneur - but with his characteristic courage he soon became an enthusiast and participant in the internal voyages of Quaesitor. His formidable intelligence often led him to question some of the cant and mystique which at times appear to surround the growth movement. This questioning frequently resulted in new insights.

There were frequent battles within Quaesitor about which he was often sad. He found it difficult to accept that the genuine giants of the groupwork scene could behave sometimes with considerable pettiness and childish petulance. In the last two years, his own personal difficulties - there was always an immense sadness beneath that boyish extroverted nature - led him to want to get out of Quaesitor. Quaesitor was disbanded and David became involved with the Coverdale Organisation, working as a management consultant. It was not long, however, before David's old enthusiasm reawakened and with characteristic energy he set up the Institute for the Development of Human Potential along with Frank Lake, David Boadella, John Heron, Tom Feldberg and others. This made available for the first time an experientially-based diploma in humanistic psychology. These courses are now flourishing and plans are afoot for a David Blagden Marks scholarship.

Two memorial funds have been established and donations to either will be gratefully accepted: The Director, Royal National Lifeboat Institute, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset (enclose note saying "David Blagden Marks Memorial") and Dr. Frank Lake, Clinical Theology Association, "Lingdale", Weston Avenue, Nottingham (note marked "David Blagden Marks Scholarship").

David Brandon