

Tribute to David Garrod on the occasion of his funeral on 29 December, 2017

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Colin Bannister, and I am a retired but still active fisheries and shellfisheries advisor. As with some of you, I experienced or observed much of David's successful working life in his chosen career as a government fisheries scientist, which Sally has asked me to commemorate today. I have assimilated the views of other work colleagues here and in the USA.

Professionally, David (who was born in 1934) was a product of the post-War higher educational system, graduating in the 1950s with a BSc in Zoology from Bristol University. He later gleaned a PhD from Bristol based on his published scientific work, as well as an Honorary DSc, conferred for his significant contribution as an international fisheries scientist, advisor and Director.

As with several of his contemporaries David's entry into fisheries research began in the late 1950s with UK Overseas Development Administration programmes studying African lake fisheries. He was based at Jinja in Uganda, where he first met Sally. In 1961 he was head-hunted and appointed to the Fisheries Laboratory at Lowestoft, which became the base for the rest of his professional life. At the Fisheries Lab, now known as Cefas, David enjoyed a very fulfilling and productive career spanning two broad phases. During the 1960s and 1970s, he moved serenely up the scientific grades on merit, to become a team leader, and then section head, in the field of fish stock management, and it is in this phase that many of us knew him best. In the second phase, from 1981 until 1994, when the Laboratory had become the centre of a larger Directorate of several laboratories and disciplines, he reached the executive level, firstly as one of the two Deputy Directors, and then as Director from 1989 to his retirement in 1994.

David arrived in Lowestoft at an auspicious time, when the Laboratory, originally founded in 1902, had become globally acclaimed. Tweed-suited early pioneers had explored the biology and hydrography of the near seas, but by the 1950s new key innovators had made a quantum leap. They had devised the mathematics that quantified the depletion of stocks by fishing; the benefits of regulating fisheries to achieve sustainable harvesting; and the complex interactions between population density, reproduction, the food chain, and the environment. Distant water fishing was at its height, with nomadic fleets of trawlers jazzing back and forth to the Arctic and both sides of the North Atlantic, so that Lowestoft teams were expanding to collect and analyse the data needed to resolve the biological, economic and political issues generated by these fish-hungry fleets. With its many counterparts elsewhere the Laboratory was at the centre of detailed international arrangements furnishing ministers (at that time the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food) and international regulatory bodies, with consensual stock assessments, and with independent advice free from vested interest, leading to the regulation of the fisheries.

David thrived in this dynamic and highly responsible world. He was interested in the biological and economic drivers of the fisheries; he was comfortable with numerical

applications of the new methods; and adept at carrying out fish stock assessments with the necessary rigour and independence. Colleagues have commended his gift for finding consensus among warring factions, exercised with a quiet and even-tempered authority as chairman of assessment committees on North American and Arctic stocks, and he was a highly respected participant in the international fisheries advisory processes, and on their steering councils. In this practical results-oriented context it was virtually inevitable that as a very safe pair of hands he would become a team leader, head of section, and Deputy Director, responsible for various incarnations of the assessment, stock management and fish biology programmes, as the configuration of the Laboratory and its other activities evolved.

The fisheries world was of course constantly changing. When 200 mile limits forced our retreat from distant waters, David was there to advise on the impact of the Cod Wars, and after the subsequent UK accession to the then EEC, his teams had to react to the development and implementation of the European Common Fisheries Policy, and the necessarily greater prominence of our inshore fisheries and shellfisheries. As one of two Deputy Directors David had to organise and oversee many of these types of change, and in his ultimate role as Director his responsibilities would have covered not just fisheries and shellfisheries management, but enhanced studies of fish biology, fish diseases, shellfish cultivation, radiological and environmental protection, not to mention the many support, accounting, and information services required to keep the bandwagon on the road. It is noteworthy that in this period David secured the finance to build the Research Vessel *Corystes*, now sold, and to set in motion plans to replace the *RV Cirolana* when funds became more fully available. In the 1990s his ultimate service to the Directorate was to prepare our transition towards a very new era when Cefas was set to become an Executive Agency of Defra, with the challenge of raising a significant proportion of its income from contract activities, activities at which Cefas is now highly successful. In the new agency David's replacement became a Chief Executive, so David was therefore the last to hold the old title of Director.

So what about David, the man? One of our previous Directors, Alan Preston, was a thrusting 'take-that-hill' kind of a guy, but that wasn't David's style. He was highly motivated, but usually with an even, some would say laid back, demeanour, often enlivened by an undercurrent of dry or wry humour. Unlike some of the old-style characters he was sometimes quite self-effacing, which was particularly appealing to some American colleagues. However, his clear view of the priorities for his teams sometimes made him pretty stubborn, and as some junior staff found, he was no push over. But he did not interfere with day to day work, trusting that if you were worth your salt you would find the right path and get on with it. He benefitted from always having very able support staff, so he did not keep a dog and bark at the same time. He certainly made astute and significant additions to the research staff, some present here today, encouraging them to pursue topics he knew to be worthwhile based on his own biological and fisheries interests. He also had an eye for moving staff from one job to another if he thought it necessary or if it would benefit them.

When fisheries science gets into your blood it can be hard to give it up when you retire, but when David reached that point he moved on, among other things signing up for a long stint

with the Citizens Advice Bureau, which I am sure he will have done well, without fear or favour. He was originally in Round Table, and then in Rotary, whose fraternity I know he would have enjoyed, and reciprocated. At one point his role with Rotary involved organising public events for aspiring musicians, which benefited my stepdaughter, now a professional violinist. For many years David also regularly joined a small periodic lunch group of ex-colleagues.

On the sporting front, David and other Laboratory stalwarts founded the Lowestoft Rowing Club, still in being, and Nick Brighthouse told me that before David was beset with illness he played golf with a set of pals, both locally and abroad, enjoying much fun. But perhaps my own fondest memories of David are on the cricket field, playing in the Lab side in the evening league, or in scratch games. He was a classical batsman of the old school, with good footwork, a straight blade, and an imperious cover drive, but he could play *all* the shots. He never took more than a couple of overs to get his eye in, and he usually got a score. On these occasions he was very much one of the boys, and at one with himself and his surroundings. Rest in peace, David, but please don't look at the Ashes score!!!

Colin Bannister, Cefas Emeritus Scientist, 29 December 2017.