



Obituary: Gerald Gurney – historian, collector, ESTTA stalwart

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Table tennis historian and collector Gerald Gurney, a Table Tennis England Vice-President, died on July 8 at his home in Great Bromley, Essex.

Born on March 10, 1931 in the village where he always lived, Gerald had the distinction of playing for both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Table tennis was not originally recognised for a 'Blue' at either university but Gerald, with the help of Ivor Montagu, persuaded the Blues Committee at Oxford to award a Half-Blue for table tennis. Shortly afterwards, Cambridge followed suit.

Gerald became involved in the administration of table tennis, firstly with Essex Schools Association as Secretary in 1966 and then with the English Schools' Table Tennis Association (ESTTA) as the founder General Secretary in 1968 and later Chairman, President and first Life Member.

John Arnold, former President of ESTTA, said: "Gerald Gurney was a driving force in the establishment of ESTTA. As head of the English Department at Colchester Royal Grammar School, he had promoted schools' table tennis for many years in Essex. In 1966 Essex claimed an entry of 390 teams in the six events of their inter-school championships as a record!

"It is not surprising that Gerald was elected as General Secretary at the inaugural meeting when ESTTA was formed in 1968, the Association having been run on an ad hoc basis in 1967. He was well supported by Jack Carrington (English Table Tennis Association Director of Coaching) as President, John Maxwell (Headteacher of Hartshill High School, Nuneaton) as Chairman and John Wright (Surrey County Schools' TTA) as Competition Secretary. Schools' table tennis owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to these founder officials.

"Gerald became Chairman of ESTTA in 1971, was elected President in 1973 and the Association's first Life Member in 1978. During his time with the Association, he saw the National School Team Championships grow from Under

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