

W.H. PETT

Bill Pett died on the 7th December 1986 after a long life lived with enthusiasm. He was 82, and had been actively involved with rugby Fives for most of his life.

He attended the Grocers' Company School (later to be known as Hackney Downs School), and joined the Fives Section of the Clove Club (the Old Boys Association) when he left the school. His contemporaries were Brooks, Hodgson, Pack & Puckle, with L.G.W. Puckle being his regular doubles partner. In 1926, he was appointed Secretary of the Section - a position that he was to hold for the rest of his life. He was one of the founder members of the R.F.A. in 1927, and served on the first Committee.

Bill played for many years until advised to stop by the legendary Dr. Edgar Cyriax. He then turned his attention to tennis, but always retained his interest in fives and the Clove Club. When his friend L.G.W. Puckle ('Puck') died, he once more became involved with the R.F.A. Committee, and quickly took on the mantle of Chairman of Committee. He was elected President in 1972 and served the Association well during his two years in office.

His working life was spent with the National Westminster Bank, and he was manager of the King Street, Hammersmith branch for many years. He belonged to the tennis club at the bank and, needless to say, was involved with the administration of the club. He was forced to resign from the R.F.A. Committee in 1986 because of ill health, but he continued as Secretary of the Clove Fives Section. He completed a remarkable 60 years in this post in 1986, and was presented with a gift from the club members to mark this milestone shortly before he died.

Bill did not win any major trophies at the game, but would surely have had several cabinets full if such things were awarded to the people who administer the game. I think that John Nye put this into words better than I could when he wrote "there is another band without whom no sport could flourish. These are those who have reached a reasonable standard of achievement which brings them into touch with the mighty and who, at the same time, play the game, not only for their own enjoyment, but for the enjoyment of all. These are the men and women who hold the offices in the various organisations, who arrange matches and run tournaments, who see that the lesser fry are not neglected and who handle the business affairs. Very often they know a great deal more about the game than its best exponents and they are prepared to lend their wisdom and give their services long after anno domini has robbed them of the ability to participate physically in the sport. When to this they are able to add real business ability their worth is above rubies." Such a man was Bill Pett. He will be greatly missed by his wife Peggy and by all connected with the sport of Rugby Fives.

J.W.D.

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