

# Pell~Mell & Woodcote

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## Round & About the Club

Harold Nockolds, a vice chairman of the RAC from 1975 to 1977, died on November 1st at the age of 75. Here Tim Keown, who succeeded him as chairman of the elections committee four years ago, pays a personal tribute.



My first meeting with Harold Nockolds took place over lunch one day in April 1976, shortly before I joined the elections committee. It could have been an occasion when the elder statesman held forth to the new boy, but it would have been wholly out of character for him to create such an atmosphere, and from that encounter a lasting friendship was born.

It was during his term as chairman (and latterly as a member) of the elections committee that I came to know him. In conducting our interviews of would-be members he was urbane, quietly spoken, unfailingly courteous and a superb listener. In our discussions he was good humoured and fair. He had an intuitive respect for the more sensible traditions of club life, and understood well the wider importance of the RAC as a motoring institution.

Harold's innate modesty tended to camouflage the distinction of his long career as a writer. This started with *Motor Sport* in the early thirties and led, after war service in North Africa and Italy in which he was mentioned in despatches, to *The Times*, where he was motoring correspondent from 1946 to 1960. He then moved to the IPC group, first as Editor of *The Motor*, and later as deputy managing director and subsequently deputy chairman of IPC Transport Press.

He was one of a family of seven, and it is remarkable to think that he and two of his brothers each made an enviable mark in three separate spheres of the arts linked to motoring and motor sport — Harold as an author and journalist, Roy as a painter (the club is

lucky enough to have some of his best work on its walls), and Conrad as a photographer.

Perhaps the best testimony to his own professional talent is a number of books on technical and motoring subjects. Pre-eminent among these are official histories of the Lucas company and of Rolls Royce ("The Magic of a Name"). They will long survive him as source material for students of the motoring and industrial scene, whose researches will be much the more enjoyable for Harold's rare mixture of technical accuracy and literary accomplishment.

In three separate years he was chairman of the Guild of Motoring Writers and later its vice president, and he was also an enthusiastic liveryman of the Coachmakers' Company, of which he was honorary historian.

The RAC has many reasons to remember Harold Nockolds with affection and gratitude. Elected a member in 1946 he served on a wide range of the club's committees, including a period of 23 years on the main committee. An appointment which gave him particular pleasure was that of honorary librarian — a role in which he took an ideally qualified interest.

Harold was blessed with a very happy family life. He and his wife Moyra celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in August, and we share with her and their two daughters, and their families, a deep sorrow at his death. With it, the club has lost the counsels of a wise and sensitive man, and the warmth of one of its truest friends.

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