



### **John Osborne – a Tribute**

Sadly, John Osborne passed away on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2011.

John, with his distinctive RAF style moustache and what I would describe as an “enthusiastic” voice, was a very keen Trust volunteer for some twenty five years.

He and his wife joined the River Stour Trust in 1984 initially to assist with the operation of our trip boat, *Stour Trusty*, which was a little outboard powered cabin cruiser. Latterly he was on hand to help with Trusty’s successor, *Stour Trusty II*, the electric craft still used today on the lower stretch of the river. As well as crewing he was very much involved with the important task of maintenance of the craft over the winter months. His engineering skills were most useful in this area and he became involved in all areas of the operation including chairing the Flatford boat committee for a while.

Soon after joining the Trust he also volunteered as a River Lengthsman on the stretch from Nayland Bypass Bridge to Boxted Mill Weir where, with my being the co-ordinator of the whole scheme, he kept me updated of any problems on this particular stretch of the Stour.

John was appointed to the Council of the River Stour Trust at the 1987 AGM and he became an invaluable member through his hands-on involvement. He also joined the Publicity Committee soon after and was an active member of that group.

During the years he was much involved with Trust events and fundraising activities, including participating in the Lengthsmen Cruise (precursor to the successful S2C event), Steam Days, working parties etc. He is especially remembered as working year after year on the bric-a-brac stall at our Annual Bazaar where he was always attempting to get the best price for the merchandise!

Even in his eighties he assisted physically with the Stratford St. Mary Lock restoration project.

He finally stood down from Council in 2005 and was ‘elevated’ to the role of a Vice President. His contribution to the Trust was manifold and we all should be grateful for all his efforts.

Condolences are due to his widow, Joyce and all the family.

David Rayner – Vice President, River Stour Trust