

A Tribute

Len Ward



From Len's daughter Vanessa

I'm sorry to be the bearer of sad news, but Dad died on Monday (4th). On Friday he was dancing and enjoying the jazz group playing in the Care Home and we'd planned an outing for today in Dunblane where he sang the old popular songs and we had the occasional foxtrot where he was still able to guide me round and tell me off for not following him! He suddenly became unwell on Sunday. He died in his sleep that evening. He'd had a good life and a full one and is now together with Mum. His sudden passing was a surprise to us all, even at 98, but we are so glad that he was still active right up till the end.

Len was 98 and, as the detail about the foxtrot indicates, he was fully alive in extreme old age. He was a founder member of SURSA. When I called the first meeting he was there and said, 'This is the first time I have been contacted by anyone at the University since I retired about twenty years ago'. He volunteered to be part of the SURSA steering group, and was a faithful member of one of the book groups from the beginning. He was totally supportive of SURSA, and gave constructive advice about financial and administrative matters. Until he moved into the care home he came regularly to the first-Wednesday-in-the-month coffee sessions at the Smith Gallery, and always counted the number of members present. He had an important role in running the University's finances when he was in the Finance Office and SURSA benefited from his expertise. Grahame Smith, who runs a literary discussion group in the Smith, relished Len's contributions on Dickens's novels as he often offered astute comments on, for instance, Dickens's attacks on his society's financial corruption.

From Angela Smith

SURSA members will miss Len's wry humour, his gentle courtesy and his intelligent insight into current affairs, literature and life. We were privileged to have his vigorous support when we were first thinking how SURSA might function and what it could do. He and his wife Rhoda were encouraging in the early days and Len remained so until his death. I'm

glad that we have a photograph of him at the University lunch for SURSA members in 2017.
He looked, as always, dapper and observant.