

Richard Filmer

1946-2017

Richard was born in Pluckley, Kent and educated at Ashford Grammar School. He became an Estate Agent and spent all his working life in the Ashford area where he was well known. I have known Richard since the early 1980's, we met after I read his books on Kent trades and the hop growing industry. It was obvious that first meeting that we had a mutual interest in tools and trades. My friends Tim Muddle and Colin Maughan and I visited Richard regularly from then on to see his collection and new acquisitions, often spending most of the day there and, after supper looking at slides of people working in various trades.

Richard built a workshop in his garden to house his collection, but after a few years it was obvious that there was a need for more space, so a larger building was added hopefully freeing up the garage space to house a new car. Unfortunately Richard lived up to his reputation as "Fill it Up Filmer" and I do not think the car ever made it into the garage!

Richard gradually became more and more interested in the cooperage trade, visiting the remaining cooperages in this country and then travelling to many parts of the world, including Eastern Europe, Turkey, Vietnam, South America and Mongolia, where he always managed to find tradespeople to talk to and photograph.

Over the years, Richard amassed a large and varied tool collection encompassing many local trades including coopering, wheelwrights and woodland crafts, often backed up with slides of the sometimes last-remaining examples of the work.

Richard had an extensive library and was a keen local historian, giving talks and lectures about local industries and history.

After Richard was diagnosed with his terminal illness I visited him regularly and his enthusiasm for collecting and talking about tools was undiminished. He gained great pleasure searching out items from boot fairs and antique fairs as well as continuing to his work as an estate agent, which he carried on doing until just a few weeks before he died.

I am endeavouring to keep his extensive cooper's tool collection together as a fitting tribute to his endeavours.

Richard never managed to attend a David Stanley Auction but he was a postal customer from the early days and I would view items for him. He kept saying: "I must make the effort to go just once" Unfortunately this was not to be, but as he said: "I must be one of David's oldest customers".

A.Gardner (Digger)