

# Fond farewell to theatre stalwart and paper editor

Many who had been affected, encouraged and influenced by Abbey Theatre actor and director Nick Strudwick during his life joined his family at St Albans Abbey on Monday to bid farewell.

Nick, who was 84 when he died on February 14, was known to countless audiences over four decades as actor and director at the Abbey Theatre.

His greatest legacy lies in the number of plays he directed in The Studio and on The Main Stage, including *Abelard and Heloise*, *The Crucible*, *Betrayal*, *Mill on the Floss*, *Wit*, *Taking Sides* - which brought together his love of music and theatre - *My Boy Jack*, and *Eclipsed*.

Nick was directing rehearsals for his next production, *Rope*, when he became unwell.

Direction was taken over by long-time friend and fellow actor/director, Terry Prince who said: "As a director Nick was a pleasure to work with. As an actor, he gave you time to explore and experiment; he encouraged and moved you on, questioned and suggested possibilities of interpretation.

"Cast and crew positively enjoyed working with him. Although, like all of us who direct, I'm sure there were times when he could be exasperating.

"But we loved him none the less for that. He was enthusiastic about and committed to every production he took on."

As a member of St Albans Bach Choir, Nick performed at venues such as London's Albert Hall and the Cadogan Hall in Sloane Square. He toured with the Choir to Prague and Lille, and was a member of its Celebration Choir - whose members sang at the Abbey service. He was also a founding member, performer and director of St Albans Chamber Opera.

Nick impacted again upon the local community as editor at St Albans and District Talking Newspaper for over 20 years.

He was recently in action explaining so enthusiastically about the talking newspaper to the Junior Dragons Apprentice team at SS Alban and Stephen Primary school that they raised £300, winning two key awards.

Nick was also a volunteer at The

Abbey Education Centre, creating and leading role play tours with local school-children, helping them to understand the Abbey.

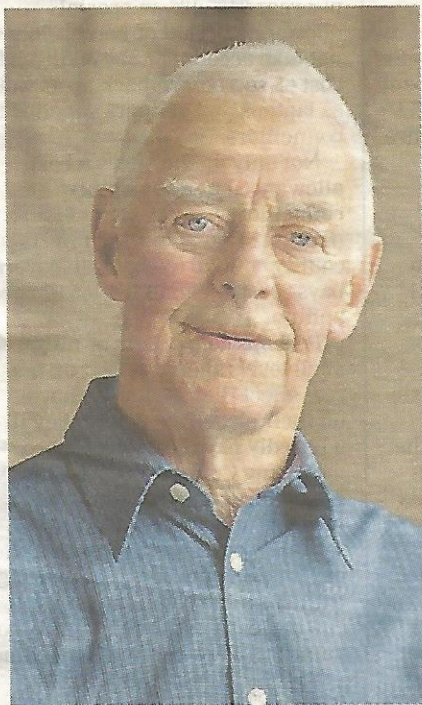
Terry Prince remembers: "Nick was often at Clarence Park following the fortunes and, more often than not, misfortunes of St Albans City FC. And sharing his love of cricket was a great joy whether at Lord's or one of the out-grounds of his beloved Middlesex CC.

"Nick was a true and close friend in whom one could confide in confidence and share joy and sorrow in equal measure.

"His sense of humour, natural empathy and genuine interest in others endeared him to all who met him.

"Those parts of the local community in which he was involved owe Nick a great debt of gratitude for the work he did on and off stage, and the lives of those of us who knew him have been made the richer."

Nick Strudwick is survived by his wife Pat, children Katherine, Peter, Anna and Rosie, by his grandson Thomas and brother Bryn.



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