

OBITUARY

Donald Alvey

by Nicki Alvey and
Chris Bazlinton

DON ALVEY, businessman and long term Guernsey resident, has died aged 93. Don first moved to Guernsey in 1959 to help establish the European base for Tektronix, the world's leading scientific electronic measurement instrument manufacturer – this eventually became the largest private sector employer on the island. In 1968, he married Guernsey-born Diana Gaskin, cementing his connection to the island, and later became a non-executive director of Guernsey Press. He was highly respected throughout his life, known for his consensual, non-hierarchical management style: he believed in giving people a task or responsibility and leaving them to complete it without interference. This carried through to his private life where he never attempted to dominate proceedings or 'pull rank', and was always a valued guest/participant at any social gathering. The scientist in Don meant he had incisive analytical skills, and could cut through to the crux of an idea or concept. He was able to appreciate differing opinions and views, and inclusive in his approach to everyone, appreciating diversity wherever he found it. His philosophy was that everyone should enjoy themselves – 'are we having fun yet?' was a familiar refrain of his. He was a generous man, and supported many charities such as the RNLI and World Wildlife Fund, as well as many smaller local good causes.

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Don Alvey was born on 7 January 1926 in Ossett, West Yorkshire. He graduated from Leeds University in 1945 with a BSc (Hons) degree in Electrical Engineering. He married Barbara Tait in 1948, and the couple moved down to London to take up jobs with Philco where he worked for eight years before moving to Livingston Laboratories. In 1958, they set off for America, driving an open top MG across the States, eventually ending up in Beaverton, near Portland, Oregon where he took a post as field engineer with Tektronix. Despite his aim of working in the US, he was rapidly promoted to European marketing manager in 1959 and transferred to Guernsey where work had just started on building the European factory. He and Barbara built a house in St Saviour's. Daughter Nicki was born in June 1959. Within two years, Don was moved on to Zug in Switzerland, and in 1964 back to Beaverton where he became international marketing manager, rising to become group vice-president by the time he left Tektronix in 1977. He travelled more than a million miles all over the world, promoting the company and setting up subsidiaries and partners. During this time he separated from Barbara and in 1968, married Diana



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Gaskin. His son, Jason, was born in May 1970, and daughter Danielle in October 1972. Don's next venture was running his own company, Alfred Neye GmbH, in Hamburg, Germany, which he sold in 1980 when he, Diana, Jason and Danielle returned to Guernsey where they lived in Castel. Sadly, Diana died from cancer on Don's birthday in 1990. In 1991, Don was appointed a non-executive director of Guernsey Press, representing major investor 3i, a post he held until the Guernsey Press was taken over by Jersey Evening Post owner the Guiton Group in 1998. He commissioned a house which was built in St John's in 1996, and moved in the following year. Don continued to travel extensively,

visiting former colleagues, friends and relatives, mostly in the United States, New Zealand and the UK. He was a frequent diner at many Guernsey restaurants. In recent years, after celebrating his 90th birthday with family in Antigua, mobility issues and frailty restricted his travel, and during his final year, he needed increasing support. To the end, he maintained his friendly demeanour and quick wit. Don died peacefully early on Christmas Eve with daughter Nicki and son Jason by his side. He is survived by Nicki, and her spouse Chris and stepchildren Alex, Stephanie and her daughter Scarlett; Jason and his spouse Gordon; and Danielle, and her spouse John and their daughters Natasha and Minnie.

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Donald Alvey. Born 7 January 1926 in Ossett, West Yorkshire. Died 24 December 2019.