



The media world, my parish

Description

The media world was his parish. Society tenant Eric Blennerhassett was ordained as a Methodist minister – but swapped pulpit for production studios. TV and radio became his ‘district’ for more than 20 years.



BETTER WORLD

Born in 1921, Eric was brought up in a Methodist home at Erdington, Birmingham. Imaginative teachers showed Eric the power of storytelling. 'To see a Shakespeare play brought to life on the stage instead of on the page was a revelation,' he said.

'I decided that was going to be the life for me. I'd like to be an actor.' But soon he was to play a role in the much bigger theatre of war.

Eric's father was president of The Birmingham Jewellers' Association. Guest speaker at their annual dinner in 1938 was Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain – who'd just met Adolf Hitler at Munich. In a private conversation, Eric's dad asked the PM what he thought of the Führer. 'He's a mad dog!' was Chamberlain's response.

'Within a week or two, my brother and I had joined the Territorial Army,' Eric recalled. Eric rose to the rank of captain and met his future wife Babs. When war ended, Eric changed his plans from plays to pastoring. He wanted to help build a better world.

FAMOUS THEATRE

When the BBC needed Methodists to join its ecumenical religious broadcasting team, Eric was appointed. After his many years in broadcasting, Eric returned to lead churches in Winchester and Southsea.



When he retired, Eric and Babs moved into an MMHS property at Chichester in 1989. They watched plays at the city's famous Festival Theatre. 'The housing society take over from what the Church would normally do,' Eric said of MMHS, 'and I'm grateful.'

Sadly, Babs died in spring this year. 'All the people who'd known her well and worked with her, sent me messages,' said Eric. (*Read the full article in the [Autumn 2016 edition of 'Roof "N" Roots'](#)*)

Category

1. Our residents

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