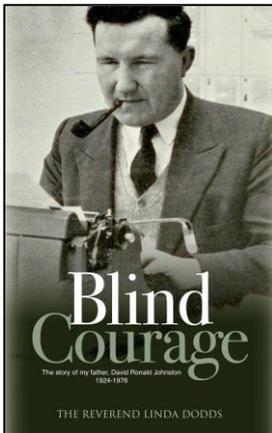


MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE

The inspirational true story of the remarkable David Johnston
who overcame blindness to become one of the leading lights of the charity Oxfam

PUBLICATION DATE: 5th June 2017



BLIND COURAGE

The story of my father:

David Ronald Johnston 1924 – 1976

by The Reverend Linda Dodds



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“My father’s story is one of his determination to overcome his own perceived disability and also to challenge the perceptions held by society in respect of the abilities, needs and value of those with sight loss. His is a story of fierce independence fuelled by a deep social conscience which drove him to work tirelessly for the benefit of others, whether in his local community or in the wider world.”

As a small boy in the 1920s, David Johnston was blinded when a dental procedure went horribly wrong. That did not stop him living a remarkably full life, qualifying as top-level shorthand typist, becoming a personal secretary and then going on to take increasingly senior positions in the charity Oxfam, eventually beating 500 other candidates to win the post of Regional Organiser and become a driving force for the organisation.

His daughter Linda has written this book as a tribute to his remarkable love, courage and strength. With amusing anecdotes and brimming over with warmth and love, this book also tells us a great deal about changing attitudes to disability.

The author’s parents, David Johnston and Doreen Walton, on their wedding day in 1953 >



“My father’s funeral was held at St. Andrew’s Church the church being filled to capacity. Poignantly, Dusky followed the coffin down the aisle, her tail wagging slowly, and sat silently and faithfully beside it throughout the service.”

This book will appeal to those interested in the history of disability and the history of charitable organisations. It also contains much that will interest those who are (or have been) involved with the work of Oxfam, the RNIB and the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. It will also interest local historians in the North East of England.

< Dusky the guide dog accompanied her master’s coffin – loyal & faithful to the end



Author, The Reverend Linda Dodds is an ordained priest in the Church of England within the Diocese of Durham. She has lived and worked in Co. Durham all her life – including working for 12 years for Durham County Library Service. Rev. Linda Dodds is available for interviews and speaking engagements. ‘Blind Courage’ is her first book.

Media opportunities: Extracts/serialisation • Photos • Author is available for interviews.

Local UK interest: The author has lived and worked in **Co. Durham** all her life. She currently lives in **Bishop Auckland, County Durham** • Most of the events in the book took place in **Co. Durham**, most notably in: **Hartlepool, Bishop Auckland; St Helen’s Auckland** and **South Church** • Other places mentioned in the book include: London, Kent, Northumberland, Warwickshire, Cumbria and, of course, Oxford (UK HQ for Oxfam).



To request a review copy or photos or to be put in touch with the author, please contact
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