

# Eddie Spelman: Voice of the Press and fan of Round Tower Churches

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Switchboard operator Eddie Spelman, who has died aged 78 at the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, was the “voice” of the Press for two decades.

He manned the night switchboard for the Eastern Daily Press at Prospect House until he retired in March 1996. He had joined the former City of Norwich Police, patrolling the streets on foot before switching to two wheels when new lightweight motorcycles were introduced. After his sight was damaged in a work accident, he transferred to the control room at Bethel Street, Norwich. When Norfolk Constabulary was formed in 1968, he took on a similar role at the Martineau Lane headquarters.

Born in Sprowston, Edgar Charles Spelman, who was a middle son, went to St Mark's School, Lakenham, before winning a scholarship to the City of Norwich School. He joined Norfolk County Council as an office boy in the county surveyor's office before doing his two years' National Service in the Royal Air Force, where he was trained in communications.

He joined the police, somewhat against his mother's wishes, and completed more than 30 years until retiring in May 1983. He did return to patrol duty again in Norwich between 1973 and 1975.

A long-serving treasurer of Norwich Electronic Organ Society, he was also a skilled amateur wine maker. As a keen photographer, he specialised in taking wedding pictures and also chronicled the activities of the Norfolk Area Desert Rats Association. And members were so grateful that he was made an honorary member for his many years of photography.

Mr Spelman, who lived in Norwich Road, Norwich, was also a council member of the Round Tower Churches Society. As publicity officer, he also arranged distribution of the society's quarterly magazine.

He leaves a widow, Pauline, and daughter, Jasmine. He is survived by his elder brother, Alan, who lives in Sprowston.

A funeral service will be held at St Faith's Crematorium on Wednesday, December 15 at 2.45pm.

Michael Pollitt