

Tributes paid following death of man who helped save Bradford Synagogue from closure

First published Tuesday 2 September 2014 in [News](#) by [Kathie Griffiths](#), T&A Reporter

A MAN of faith who helped to save Bradford Synagogue from closure has died aged 76.

Ken Fabian died peacefully at [Bradford Royal Infirmary](#) on Thursday after suffering a stroke and contracting pneumonia.

On Monday, a celebration of his life will be held at the synagogue in Bowland Street where he worshipped for more than 40 years and until recently was still leading school tours.

Last year, Mr Fabian, who lived in [Idle](#) with his wife Anne, helped rally together community groups including the city's Council for Mosques in a bid to save Bradford's last remaining synagogue, keeping it as a sacred space for future generations.



Ken Fabian getting ready for an open day at Bowland Street Synagogue in 2011

At the time, the Grade II listed building, originally founded in 1880 and an example of Moorish Victorian Architecture, had just 35 members. Many Jewish people had come from Europe to settle in Bradford at the height of the city's wool and textile boom but in recent years the Jewish community in Bradford had declined and the synagogue was under threat because of a lack of funds.

During his association with the Bradford Synagogue, he was also its chairman and treasurer as well

as its liaison officer promoting interfaith.

Born in Middlesex he had been on national service in the RAF when he came to Bradford with a friend and met his future wife at a dance in the city.

Although the couple knew each other for 12 months before they were married, they had only spent about six weeks together because their romance was restricted to weekend visits only, said youngest daughter Ginny Wood.

Mr Fabian had also worked as an engineer before joining Bradford Fire Service until he retired aged 53 as Deputy Divisional Commander of West Yorkshire Fire Service.

In his retirement he devoted much of his time to charity work, raising money for the Appeal Fund set up after the Bradford City fire disaster, as well as Save The Children and Lord Mayors' causes. He was also President of the National Trust's Western Yorkshire Group.

A devoted family man, as well as daughter Ginny he leaves his wife, son Ken, elder daughter Anne, seven grand children and one great-grandchild.

Mrs Wood said: "Dad was a true gentleman. He was a lovely man, very family-orientated, very popular and well-known."

Family and friends are invited to meet at Bradford Synagogue at 1pm on Monday for a thanks giving ceremony for his life, followed by burial at Scholemoor Cemetery, Necropolis Road.

Donations in his memory will go to the BRI's Stroke Ward, Ward 9.

Ken Fabian at the Bowland Street Synagogue

