

Malcolm Harper

Human rights activist was Oxfam stalwart and director of United Nations Association of GB

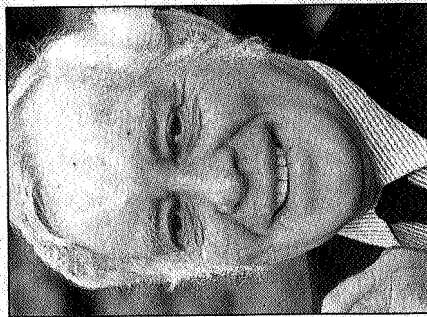
A "tireless human rights activist" has died at the age of 73. Malcolm Harper from Charlbury, died at the Churchill Hospital in Headington last week after suffering a pulmonary embolism.

He was being treated for the blood cancer lymphoma. He leaves behind his wife Ann, children Clare, Kate and Charles, and two-year-old grandson Samson. His children paid tribute to their "beloved dad who was so full of love, kindness and energy".

They added: "He was a loving and loyal father, generous with his affection and always supported all three of us in whatever we chose to do. He absolutely adored being a grandfather. His loss leaves a huge gap in all our lives."

Mr Harper was born to Leonard and Enid Harper in London on June 21, 1939. After studying history and theology at the University of Cambridge, Mr Harper considered entering the church.

But he decided he could make more of a difference working for Oxfam, then based in Banbury Road. He spent 18 years at the charity — now based in Cowley — from 1963 to 1981, including as their emergencies officer and communications director. After marrying Ann in 1966 he moved to Africa



where he monitored the work of Oxfam and smaller charities across 12 countries in East Africa. There he made sure

charity money was being spent correctly on projects. Mrs Harper said: "He loved the work — travelling and meeting people. He absolutely loved Africa. "From the big things to the small differences, he found it very rewarding."

He was also one of the first people who flew out to Cambodia in 1979 to help rebuild the country after the devastation of the Pol Pot regime, which saw the genocide of about a quarter of the Cambodian population.

He helped organise and distribute Oxfam relief supplies and reconstructed the food industry. Oxfam said: "Malcolm Harper was greatly

appreciated by those who worked with him at Oxfam for his many talents and qualities as a communicator, colleague, fellow cricketer and friend. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him."

In 1981 Mr Harper left Oxfam to take up the role of the director of the United Nations Association of Great Britain, where he stayed for 22 years.

He campaigned against arms trading and stated in 1982 at the annual UNVA meeting in Oxford: "I believe the military transfer of arms is one of the most criminal activities in the world."

In 2000, he was honoured at a Buckingham Palace ceremony with the

Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George. His efforts closer to home saw him spearhead a campaign in Oxfordshire to raise more than £30,000 to help clear minefields in Mozambique in 2002.

He was also a governor of Burford School. Mr Harper organised the fundraising of more than £100,000 for a new pavilion at Charlbury Cricket Club in 2012, after floods ruined their previous one in 2007.

He had been the president of the club since 2006. Chairman Colin Olliffe said: "He was a pillar of the community."

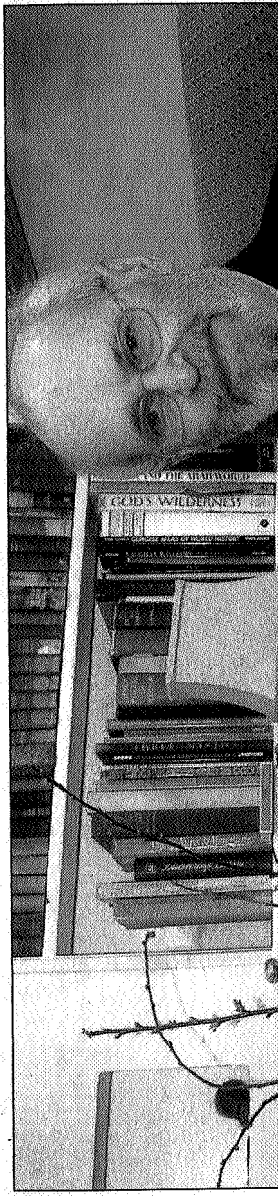
His funeral is at 2pm on May 23 at St Mary's Church in Charlbury.

Professor Geza Vermes

Translator of Dead Sea Scrolls and the world's greatest scholar of Jesus Christ

Professor Geza Vermes, who survived the Holocaust to become the world's greatest scholar of Jesus Christ, has died aged 88.

Prof. Vermes, who lived in Oxford for more than 40 years, went on to become the first professor of Jewish studies at the university.



devoted much energy to his role as editor of the *Journal of Jewish Studies*. The publication of his book *Jesus the Jew*, 38 years ago, brought further worldwide interest in his work and was to transform his life.

At the time, the very idea of a book on the historical Jesus was quite revolutionary. It was undertaken, he said, "out of a feeling for the tragedy of Jesus