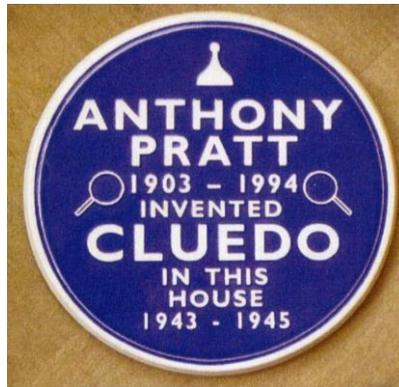


## Anthony Pratt Inventor of Cluedo



Anthony Pratt a famous Kings Heathen invented the board game Cluedo. He lived for a short while at 9, Stanley Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, where there is now a blue plaque on the outside of the house to commemorate Anthony and his invention.



Anthony was living in this house, and working as a Machine Tool Fitter for C O Ericsson Engineering Works in Kings Norton later known as Peerless and Ericsson. It was whilst working there that he invented Cluedo, which he initially named Murder. Anthony's wife Elva designed the board and the artwork, whilst Anthony invented the suspects, weapons and the game itself. They spent considerable time testing it out with friends as a way to spend the long nights indoors during wartime air raids. The game was borne out of Anthony's experience as a guest in elegant country mansions and hotels where he played piano in musical concerts as part of the evening entertainments. Years later he recreated the murder mystery parlour games he had witnessed at these evenings, in miniature as a board game.

Cluedo was patented in 1947 and was mass produced by Waddingtons Toy company of Leeds in 1949. This was Anthony's only board game success and is still hugely popular today. Anthony was persuaded to sell the foreign sales rights of the game to Waddingtons in 1953. This was based upon a short-lived decline in sales in the USA. This led to huge losses in royalties for him over the ensuing years, however he continued to receive payments from the British Patents until their eventual expiry. The game is still popular in the USA and has now entered the National Toy Hall of Fame, curated by the US museum "The Strong."

Anthony was born in Birmingham in 1903 and attended St Philip's Grammar School, Edgbaston. He was married with one daughter and he died in 1994.

*Gail Pittaway Kings Heath History Society April 2021 - (V2) updated July 2021.*