**Tony Haigh: 1950-2021**

Tony passed away on 27 February having been ill for some time.

Tony had played chess in his youth but it was not until the 1990s that he took up the game again, joining Cardigan Chess Club where he was a staunch member for more than 20 years. He played regularly for Cardigan A in the Dyfed League coupling that in some seasons with appearances on Board 1 for the club’s B team, no mean feat given the amount of travelling involved. He also played reguarly for the ‘Cardigan’ team in the Welsh Chess Premier League and participated in local weekend congresses. He was a member of that team in the European Club Cup on the three occasion we participated, in Rhodes, Skopje and Novi Sad. Tony pushed his rating up steadily to about 1900, showing a degree of improvement usually only achieved by much younger players. A few years ago he took time to study the endgame and in that element of the game he became particularly proficient. Tony did more than his fair share of chess organising in Dyfed. Until recently he was Treasurer of the Dyfed Chess Association and the chief organiser of the annual Dyfed Open Congress.

While a maths student in Cambridge Tony became committed to the principles of the Green movement, at a time when it was far from fashionable, and remained so throughout his life. He arrived in West Wales in the seventies on his bike together with all his possessions and lived in eco-communities, notably at Brithdir Mawr in North Pembrokeshire where he died, cared for by members of the communty there. He earned the little money he needed to support his way of life from plumbing.

Travelling to the European Club Cup venues mentioned above presented a particular dilemma to Tony as flying was very much against his principles, owing to the environmental damage it causes. He did compromise on one occasion, flying to Rhodes, when otherwise there was no way he could have played. But he travelled by train and boat on the five other occasions, including the trip back from Rhodes, all at considerable extra cost and time.

He was also a committed gardener and responsible for making Brithdir as nearly self-sufficient as possible, especially after he put up a polytunnel – his surplus tomatoes were turned into an astonishing number of jars of passata. He also invented a new tomato variety which he named ‘Gardeners’ Ecstasy’. He looked after the goats at Brithdir, getting up early to milk them. I remember many a journey to WCPL matches where Tony caught up on his sleep in the back of the car.

Tony regarded it as his duty to learn Welsh, the language spoked by the majority of local people, and succeeded in becoming totally fluent, for example leading walks for Welsh speakers and producing the accounts of the Dyfed Chess Association in Welsh as well as English. He never spoke English to me.

Tony is being buried on the land of the Brithdir Mawr community in accordance with his wishes, in the copse which he planted. The burial will be a private affair but it is hoped to hold a more widely attended gathering to celebrate his life when Covid restrictions permit.

I have lost a friend and we all have lost a man who combined steadfast principles with exceptional humility.

This note appears in Welsh, as well as English, as Tony would have wanted.

Howard Williams

St David’s Day 2021