

Letters to the Editor

Tony Greaves (1)

Following Michael Meadowcroft's detailed appreciation in the summer issue (*Journal of Liberal History* 111, summer 2021) correctly indicating where Tony and I were at odds during my leadership I would like it to be known that I was shocked to learn that Tony Greaves had died.

We had a tumultuous relationship at the time of the merger, but he remained an inspiration and a friend. We enjoyed chatting over meals at the long table in the peers' dining room, sometimes recalling his participation in my by-election in 1965.

He was far too young to lose.

David Steel

Tony Greaves (2)

I first knew Tony when we were at school together at Bradford Grammar in the 1950s before he went off to Queens at Wakefield.

Later, when I was Vice Chair of the NLYL and Tony was in ULS we sometimes played snooker together at the National Liberal Club in London and talked about home – especially when we once bumped into Freddie Trueman in the Snooker Hall at the National Liberal Club.

Although he ended up over't'ill in Lancashire, Tony was really a straightforward authentic Yorkie who still loved his dear old Bradford Park Avenue FC – and he loved the hills and mountains where the curlews and skylarks called.

Sometimes, despite being a Lordship, the outside world might sometimes see him as cantankerous, difficult, argumentative, and assertive, but I know he was much more than that. He was thoughtful, decent, good and kind, with a first-class mind. Any sharp edge was when his fundamental honesty detected flaws (or flannel) in an argument and a lack of liberalism. The best choice he ever made was to marry Heather.

Good lad, Tony. Well done. What you did was special. As with another old friend, David Shutt, I'm going to miss you ... and, my goodness, your party could do with a few Tony Greaves just now.

David Raw

Tony Greaves (3)

I worked on and off with Tony Greaves for about fifty years, so would like to add to the appreciation by Michael Meadowcroft in the summer issue. More times than not, we got on very well but there were occasions when it was a good job that we lived approaching 300 miles apart!

Tony felt strongly about things and from time to time would let his feelings be known in no uncertain manner. As Michael records, if you took your time and let your reactions cool he would cool too ... but there could be testing times.

His greatest attribute was his overriding commitment to radical

Liberalism, and the party owes a very great deal to his unswerving belief that it could be a rival to both socialism and conservatism, a belief that never wavered even when he entered the graveyard of the Lords, which can simply swallow up the forthright.

In fact, in my experience, he took to the upper chamber like the proverbial duck. He invited my wife and I to visit and delighted in outlining some of the more exotic features of the place. No doubt he could also be withering ... but that was Tony.

He was a fully rounded political beast. From time to time he would explode but at heart he stuck to his party.

He also had what Dennis Healy called 'a hinterland' – in his case a passion for the great outdoors, and rock climbing in particular. That, and serving on Pendle Council while also being an active working peer, would be enough for most folk, but I suspect his greatest contribution to the cause he subscribed to was the fifteen years he spent building up the Association of Liberal Councillors and, subsequently, Liberal Democrat Publications, from a converted nonconformist chapel high up a hill in the Pennines.

He was at home, a celebrated Liberal nonconformist if ever there was one – irreplaceable.

Trevor Jones (Dorchester)

Think history

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The Liberal Democrat History Group undertakes a wide range of activities – publishing this *Journal* and our Liberal history books and booklets, organising regular speaker meetings, maintaining the Liberal history website and providing assistance with research.

We'd like to do more, but our activities are limited by the number of people involved in running the Group. We would be enormously grateful for help with our publications, website, meetings, publicity and promotion.

If you'd like to be involved in any of these activities, or anything else, contact the Editor, **Duncan Brack** (journal@liberalhistory.org.uk) – we would love to hear from you.

