

O B I T U A R Y

JOHN CHARLES HARRISON

On 6th April 2019 we received a telephone call from Ann to say that John had sadly passed away very suddenly. We knew that John was ill but it still came as a great shock.

A large number of family and friends, including numerous members of the Eddis Owners Club gathered at Bedale Church to say a final goodbye.

John and Ann had been married for 55 years (having celebrated their Emerald wedding anniversary at the Cockermouth rally last year). They had one daughter, Jayne, who was married to David and they had a son, Matthew.

I, myself, have known John for over 70 years – we were at school together, served our apprenticeships at the same garage and enjoyed holidays in our teens and early twenties. Our lives and careers took us in different directions and we lost touch for a few years.

During this time John and Ann purchased an Eddis caravan and were founder members of the Eddis Owners Club. Audrey and I also bought caravans but from the “opposition” – Swift and Buccaneer. It was when we bought an Eddis caravan in the late 90’s and joined the Eddis Owners Club that our friendship was renewed. It was in these latter years that I came to look on John as the “brother” I never had, and a very good friend who I miss greatly.

Over the years John and Ann ran numerous rallies and John, with the help and support of Ann, worked tirelessly as Northern Secretary and later as General Secretary and President. He was a stalwart and loyal member of the Owners Club and it was only when his health was failing that he reluctantly resigned from his post as General Secretary after having carried it out for 31

years.

John fought his illness with such positivity and until he passed away he and Ann were arranging weekends and holidays away.

John was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather and friend and will be sorely missed.

R.I.P John Clive Langford

It has been my pleasure and great privilege to have known John, Ann and Jayne for 46 years since meeting them at the Inaugural Rally in September 1973, as even when I was not able to attend rallies due to my work, we still kept in touch. John lived for the Club and served it conscientiously and with great dignity from joining the Committee in 1980 until his death. What commitment, a commitment which is unlikely to be surpassed. He was compassionate towards all members and dealt with everyone in a most respectful way.

I will always remember John with great respect for the true gentleman he was.

Thank you John for your unstinting work for the good of the Club.

Eric Hepplewhite

We met John and Ann at our first rally at Witton Castle, which was the Elddis Owners Club's third rally. John and Ann were one of the Club's founder members. We got to know John through our daughter Gillian who became friends with John's daughter Jayne on rallies. John joined the committee at the 1980 A.G.M and a year later was asked to step in to run the 8th A.G.M at Hornby. He also ran the 10th A.G.M. and anniversary at Rudding Park in 1983 as well as many other rallies over the years. He became General Secretary in 1984 a post he held for 31 years. Over this time he judged and

presented the photographic competition together with other trophies. In the last few years John always greeted me with a hand shake and “Hello Mr. Rickels, how are you?” It was a pleasure to know him and he will be greatly missed by us all. **George Rickels**

Linda and I first met John and Ann at our first rally, the Presidents rally at Beaconsfield, Tynemouth in May 1984 when John was Northern Secretary. Together with joint rally marshals Eric Skipsey and John Whitfield, they made us feel very welcome. Up until that time John had been very much involved in the formation and initial years of the club travelling many miles to attend rallies, running his first rally at Harrogate in 1979. He was co-opted onto the Committee in early 1981 to take over as Northern Secretary, following a resignation and ran his first AGM at Hornby, Lancashire later that year. August 1984 saw John take over as General Secretary a post he was to hold until August 2015. During those years as well as his national responsibilities, John ran at least another 25 rallies including a second AGM at Rudding Park in 1983 and 5 Factory Rallies at Lanchester. No doubt he also assisted daughter Jayne run her three rallies in Bedale when she was Teenage Liaison Officer in the mid-1980s. John assumed the role of Honorary Vice President in 2004, when another founder member Eric Skipsey stood down and then became Honorary President in 2011 when Derek Jackson retired from caravanning and held that position until his death. John was immensely proud of being asked to take on these roles as well as those of General Secretary and took the responsibilities very seriously. He was devoted to the club and was always on hand at northern rallies to present commemorative and anniversary rally plaques.

Born and bred in North Yorkshire, John was an enthusiastic supporter of the

northern region attending countless rallies over the years – 200 in the first 11 years. His knowledge of the Club and its history was extensive and I can well remember listening to many tales recounted by John, whilst driving down to committee meetings in the Midlands.

John will be missed by all the membership, but non-more so than those in the north. It was both a privilege and a pleasure to have worked and rallied with him for so many years

R.I.P John

Peter Turner

I came off committee sixteen years ago having served as Committee Member, Area Secretary (twice), Vice-Chairman and Chairman over a period of fourteen years. We first met John and Ann at the AGM in Harrogate in 1989 when I joined the Midlands Committee, and while I can't remember what was discussed at my first meeting I can remember that many of the points raised were referred to John for his recollection of what action was taken the last time something similar was raised.

John had a remarkable ability to remember the names (and membership numbers) of everybody who had been in the Club for a few years, as well as all the rally venues which the Club had used. In later years when I was Chairman, I learned to rely on this encyclopedic knowledge. John was first to arrive at every Committee Meeting (even if it was 300 miles from Bedale) and always fully prepared for whatever the meeting might bring.

His contribution to the success of this Club has been immense. AGMs (and the AGM rallies) won't be the same without him.

Lyndon Wigmore

I first met John at Harrogate AGM 2001 and soon found we had a common

interest in Motorcycle Trials and Moto Cross. I got to know John better over the next ten years as a committee member for the South, then Vice Chairman and finally Chairman, when I appreciated his advice and wealth of knowledge of club rules and procedures.

I shall always remember his greeting whenever we met or spoke. "Now then Len". Sadly he will be missed by all who knew him.

R.I.P John Len Stoneman

As a past Chairman, I have many happy memories of John Harrison, from the sound advice he gave me to the constructive conversations we had. He was 30

always a fountain of knowledge when sat by my side at meetings, advising me wherever needed, but it was his dedication and work for the Club, which was out of the sight of members, I will remember him for; the telephone conversations we had; the meetings at Aldi in York, where we exchanged newsletter printouts and had a chat about forthcoming events and rallies. We also did a lot of reminiscing about happy times in his younger days caravanning. John was greatly involved in the Ruby AGM, one of the highlights of my Chairmanship, taking this memorable event back up north, to Bedale Hall in John's home town, he even prepared sausage sandwiches for breakfast for all on one of the mornings.

The most prestigious and proud moment in my term of office was to make a presentation on behalf of all the members to John for his loyal and unquestionable services as General Secretary to the Elddis Owners Club for 31 years. He was a great guy and will be sadly missed.

GOD BLESS YOU JOHN

Paul McArdle