

Former Mayor passes away

Written by Steve Glennie-Smith
Thursday, 03 February 2022 11:27 -

Geoff Knock, former Mayor of Ledbury, passed away suddenly on 26th January 2022, a few months before his 79th birthday. He leaves wife Mary and daughters Jennifer and Catherine. His funeral will take place on Tuesday 15th February, with a cremation in Hereford (family and close friends), followed by a thanksgiving service in the Catholic Church (New Street) at 2pm, to which all are invited.

Geoff was Mayor of Ledbury in 1987, 1989 and 1997. Prior to being elected to Ledbury Town Council, he was active in Ledbury Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS), being its chairman in the early 1980s.

I got to know Geoff shortly after moving to Ledbury in 1976 - having started a conversation with him in a pub and found we both had come from the 'Sarf-East' (in Geoff's case, the village of Leigh, near Tonbridge, in Kent). I can blame Geoff for having got me into LADS, and also the Brewery Inn - at that time run by the redoubtable Hilda Partridge - you wouldn't get served if you hadn't been introduced!

Geoff was a salesman for a small agricultural chemicals company based in Warrington. Some of the health and safety stories he told were horrendous, eg. transporting a 40 litre drum of a somewhat toxic fluid that had been rejected by a customer up the M6 to Warrington in his company car - a Triumph Herald estate... No proper restraint to stop it rolling about (quite apart from the requirement nowadays for such items to be transported in a separate compartment from the driver!)

On retirement, Geoff volunteered for *Ring and Ride* with CVSLD (Council for Voluntary Service Ledbury and District), and later became its Operations Manager. During his third term as Mayor, he organised a civic reception for me as I rode my bike from John O'Groats via Ledbury to Lands End, in July 1997.

Geoff was a keen radio 'ham' (amateur), the fascination of which was to be able to communicate freely with other *hams* around the world. One had to prove technical competence to operate a radio transmitter: this included, when Geoff took the exam, being able to send and understand Morse Code. He scorned citizens band radio, preferring the deprecatory term *children's band*

. Originating in the USA, these sets were legally imported and sold over the counter in the UK,

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but it was illegal to operate them! Well before mobile phones, they were very popular in the 70s and 80s. Today's kids don't know what they're missing (freedom from RSI in their thumbs?) while they're constantly texting their mates. Or perhaps they do...