

Christopher Megahey: Reflections on an excellent Bridge player – and a great friend

It was so sad to receive that dreaded phone call from Dorset to say that Chris Megahey had lost his long battle with Cancer. There was some comfort from the fact that he died peacefully, at home, with his family around him. Though it had seemed inevitable that it would happen one day, we still kept hope that it was some time off. Throughout his illness – both remissions and relapses - he had remained cheerful and positive.

I have known Chris since 1994, and we became regular partners in 1995, just over 25 years ago. Of all the partners I have had since I took up the game of Bridge more than 55 years ago I really can say that Chris had been the best - in every sense of the word! Great fun, great company, great wit, great thinker, not to mention a great player, all set off by his infectious smile. His attitude to the game was delightful: play thoughtfully, play optimistically – but also play forgivingly, laughing off mishaps, both huge and small. I have lost not only a fabulous Bridge partner, but also a great friend.

His achievements at the Bridge table are there to be seen in the public records, and he was a highly respected player. At Mountnessing, he was such a force that he was an automatic selection to represent the Club in the two annual Essex Invitational Teams events, and he was a major contributor to the Club's repeated success in those events. He also had huge success at both County level and beyond; arguably, his most noteworthy achievement was a top ten finish in the EBU Summer Championship Pairs, 2019, out of a field littered with international players.

His Bridge playing was inspired by his hero, Andrew Robson, and even during his recent months of failing health, I continued to get a steady stream of messages saying that he had been watching Andrew on BBO playing in some International event, and what he did in this situation was and didn't I think it was a good idea, and shouldn't we adopt it?

Chris had many interests outside of Bridge. He very much enjoyed the many family holidays. Karen and Chris had very much been looking forward to their retirement move to Dorset. Sadly, Covid-19 arrived just as they made the move so his opportunities to explore his new surroundings were very much curtailed, but he was still able to enjoy the company of his dogs, and taking them out for walks in the beautiful local countryside. He also enjoyed - and endured - the many ups and downs in the fortunes of his beloved Manchester United. [I wonder if anyone can tell him that they came back from 2-0 down today to win 3-2?] The EBU Summer Championships events were turned into great social occasions, centred around the restaurants of Brighton, and later Eastbourne, not to mention the occasional pint of Guinness. Oh yes, and a bit of Bridge in between.

Chris met Karen when they were both students at Cambridge University. They both became teachers and both became established in senior positions at Felsted School, where he became the Head of the Mathematics Department. One of the Buildings at Felsted was named after Chris and Karen in recognition of their contributions to the School over many years. Chris actually took up the game of Bridge whilst at Felsted, his tutor being a fellow teacher, the late Phil O'Gorman.

His infectious smile and fantastic table manners will be sadly missed by his many Bridge friends that he leaves behind in Essex. When the Mountnessing Club does eventually reopen its doors for face-to-face Bridge there will be a gaping gap – but a long-lasting memory.

Alaric Cundy 28/11/2020