



Obituary: John Wilde, ESTTA stalwart

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Tributes have been paid to John Wilde, a long-serving Schools' County Secretary and a former member of the ESTTA committee, who died earlier this week.

John was elected as the Schools' County Secretary for Nottinghamshire in 1976 and was the only secretary elected that year who was still in post this year.

He joined the ESTTA Executive in 1984 and also edited the organisation's handbook between 1991 and 2007.

But he was arguably known to most for his presence at the two major ESTTA events each year, National Schools Team and Individual championships, where he ran the shop and organised the raffle.

He continued that role after the merger of ESTTA with Table Tennis England in 2017.

John was described by former ESTTA President John Arnold MBE as "a true gentleman who worked quietly, reliably and efficiently and will be greatly missed by all of those who knew him well.

"He received tremendous support from his wife Mary in both the collating, printing and distribution of the handbook along with the management of the shop."

Mike Smith, Chairman of the Table Tennis England Schools' Committee added: "John was truly dedicated to schools table tennis – his involvement as Nottinghamshire Schools County Secretary was immense but he was also so helpful in providing information from the Schools Counties for the Handbook and of course with manning the shop and running the raffle at the Individual and Team Championships each year.

"He continued his involvement in the latter aspects after the recent merger between ESTTA and Table Tennis England. He was a real gentleman and will be much missed. Our condolences to Mary and their family."

Schools' Committee Deputy Chairman David Maddison, who worked extensively with John in Nottinghamshire table tennis, said: "I shall miss him for both his table tennis and as a friend.

"John was a quietly dedicated promoter of table tennis and the children and young people who were supported and helped to grow through it (Sam Walker and Gavin Evans, to name but two, both played in events organised by John as children).

"Nottinghamshire is now a growing centre of excellence for table tennis and that is in no small part down to the years of service given by John. Just at my former school East Bridgford St Peter's, so many children have benefited from the opportunities and encouragement John provided, as have I.

"More than this though he was a true gentleman. I was fortunate only a few weeks ago to have been able to take John out for lunch to both enjoy his company and remind him of the esteem he is held in, in Notts and beyond."

Funeral details will be advised in due course.

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