



A personal tribute to John Burtenshaw

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High standards. Low profile. That was John Burtenshaw.

From our first meeting I knew instinctively that John would be a great ally. His massive experience was a joy to tap into as a simple phone call with a problem brought me wise guidance and fresh impetus.

John was ever generous with his time and commitment over his long years in the South West Counties but before his career move to Somerset he had already proved himself a major figure in his home county of Kent.

He had distinction there as player, coach, administrator and general mentor to aspirant players. His anecdotes, numerous, included his inspiration by Jack Carrington and elevation to Level 4 coach and some humorous details of his National Service in the Royal Army Dental Corps.

John's distinctions were not confined to table tennis. He worked tirelessly on numerous charitable causes as a committed Freemason and I know that many of the disadvantaged in society have benefitted by his efforts over long years.

John told me of how much he owed to Jill for her admin support year after year – she did what he called “all the clever stuff” on the computer for him. Jill also kept him to immaculate dress standards for his Masonic Lodge or table tennis meetings. It mattered not – there he was, ever a dapper and alert figure in his smart suit. No Levi denims for John Burtenshaw!

We in Wiltshire felt that we were special to John. He was certainly special to us and we thought that his truly impressive record well merited Table Tennis England recognition by his elevation to Hon Life Member. Our second time nomination was made for the AGM next month.

That chance now is lost but across the counties the name of John Burtenshaw will certainly be long remembered with deep affection.

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