

Brian Sherwood - An influential figure in his family and the local community as well as an inspirational figure at Haden Hill Swimming Club.

Brian Sherwood died on Monday 3rd March 2008 after fighting a 3-year battle with cancer. The funeral was held at Powke Lane Crematorium on Tuesday 11th March and was followed by a get together of his family and friends at the Spring Cottage pub.

Brian and Lil headed a family who respected them and valued their interests and took a lot of joy and comfort from doing things together. Their interests ranged from football with the Baggies, to golf and of course swimming.

Brian became involved in swimming as a result of wanting to enhance the performance of his children. It was this interest that led him to Haden Hill Swimming Club where he took qualified teacher status and, eventually with the help of Lil as his administrative assistant, took responsibility for the teaching section at the Club. By the time he had to give up because of his failing health he had clocked up 25 years service and you, the reader, can calculate how many youngsters he must have helped to swim and how many he must have introduced to the competitive scene. The qualities he brought to swimming were reliability, encouragement and a striving for excellence and this was recognised by West Midland Swimming who awarded him a Long Service Award for his work at Haden Hill.

The gathering at Powke Lane Crematorium was a tribute to his pulling power his popularity, his absolute sincerity and endeavour, where there was a "full house" and every pew was occupied. There was representation from the "old originals" right up to his most recent successes. The singing was loud and enthusiastic as though he was sitting there watching the whole proceedings and performed energetically and respectfully for a man who had done so much for so many and deserved a good send off.

Brian has been missed tremendously at Haden Hill and only now is the reality of the situation biting home. Lil will obviously get tremendous support from her family and help will always be forthcoming from the swimming community. Brian was a highly respected man at Haden Hill but it was never possible to talk about Brian without realising the importance of his aide and wife Lil, together they were a mighty force. Everyone will encourage Lil to live remembering his example. The membership at Haden Hill are grateful that they came together as a force to promote swimming for us and touched the lives of so many people demonstrating dignity, determination and honest endeavour.

Brian Sherwood, lead teacher with Haden Hill Swimming Club, was born in 1939. He died on 3rd March 2008 aged 68.