

Sad loss of Nigel Todd

Colin Waugh

Our subscriber Nigel Todd died suddenly and completely unexpectedly on 26 March.

I first came to know about Nigel when we were promoting our 2009 pamphlet *'Plebs': The Lost legacy of Independent Working-Class Education*, when an Independent Working-Class Education Network (IWCE) supporter in the North East suggested that he might be interested in it. This turned out to be the case.

Later, our contributor Stephen Lambert, like Nigel a Labour councillor in Newcastle, drew *PSE* to Nigel's attention, and as a result he eventually became a subscriber. I then met Nigel for the first time two or three years ago at the Co-operative Conference in Manchester, where I attended a workshop he gave on his research into the history of discussion circles. (He agreed to write an article for *PSE* on this important topic but unfortunately we now won't be able to have that.) Nigel was a national figure in the Cooperative Movement.

I then met Nigel on at least two other occasions: a meeting held at the City Lit. in London to launch the Adult Education 100 movement which set out to mark the centenary of the 1919 Report on adult education, where he was a speaker, and an Independent Working-Class Education Network meeting that we held in York and which was focused on the history of IWCE in Yorkshire. Nigel was centrally involved in organising the Adult Education 100 initiative.

Nigel was a former student at Ruskin College who, having settled in Newcastle in his twenties, in 2005 became Regional Director of the WEA in the North East. He was a Labour councillor in Newcastle for 41 years. Local tributes to him stress his on-the-ground practical involvement in green initiatives. As well as an active supporter of access courses for women, he was prominent as an anti-racism campaigner, as well as an activist of the North East Labour History Society, and as such an acknowledged national expert on fascism in this country in the lead-up to World War 2.



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