

John Mowat 1924~2011

John will be remembered by many of the older residents of New Malden for the enthusiasm, commitment and direction that he provided to the Graham Spicer Institute during the last 7 decades.

John was born at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in 1924. As a token of their gratitude to the Hospital, John's parents gave him the additional name of Anderson. His parents soon moved to Howard Road, New Malden, where John lived for the duration of his life.

John served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War and spent most of the war years in India servicing aircraft. He was demobbed in 1946 and moved back to New Malden eventually finding employment in an administrative capacity with Mowlem, who had offices in central London.

It was not too long before John joined the Graham Spicer Institute to participate in the sport that the Organisation provided and he soon became involved in the Football, Cricket, Badminton and Table Tennis sections. Although short in stature, John was a very skilful and dedicated Footballer and when he retired from being an active player, he continued for many years to use his considerable organisational skill to manage the team. John was also a proficient Table Tennis player and although never reaching the top echelons of the sport, he impressed all he played against with the natural competence and commitment he displayed. As he grew older and his playing skills diminished slightly, he became a committee member of the [Surrey County Table Tennis Association](#), the [Thames Valley Table Tennis League](#) (as Vice President) and the [Graham Spicer Table Tennis Club](#) (as a committee member) and served with distinction for many years. John was also very much involved with the Kingston Sports Council and was well known for organising both the girls and boys Kingston Table Tennis teams that participated annually in the London Youth games. Another of John's innovations was the Kingston Junior Table Tennis Initiative. Many young aspiring Table Tennis players have benefitted from the coaching sessions that are held at the Institute, with a high percentage going on to play at County level. John also organised the Cadets, Junior and Senior British League teams and on many occasions became "chauffer", in order that the teams arrived safely at venues.

Through John's involvement in the Institutes sporting activities John became very well liked and known to all its members and it was no surprise when he was elected to be a Trustee in 1956, becoming part of the team that was responsible for the well being of the Institute and its members. In 1975 he was elected President of the Trustees, a position he held until his death in July 2011. When John accepted the office of President, the Institute was located in the old Holy Trinity Church, but in 1989 when Waitrose redeveloped the site, the Institute had to be relocated to its present position at No 15 Dukes Avenue. The Institute Trustees, with John at the helm, worked tirelessly to ensure that the new building and the facilities therein were delivered in the agreed timescale. Since the opening of the new building the Institute has grown and provides many facilities for local residents and John was very proud that he was a major contributor to that success.

Those of us who knew John well, will unquestionably remember him as a person who was unselfish, modest, quietly efficient, undaunted and one who was closely attached to the success of both the Graham Spicer Institute and the sport that he loved most of all – Table Tennis. John Mowat will be sorely missed.