Dear each,

Some of you may already have heard the following sad news, which was passed on to Debbie and me by Chris Iley on Wednesday at lunchtime.

On Tuesday Jim Reeve died suddenly, and prematurely, after suffering a heart attack.

Jim will be known to many Hetairoi, but not all reading this. He was one of the earliest members of the club, one of that group of talented New College cricketers brought into the club by Giles Brown, including Chris Iley himself, Gordon McCallum, John Ball, Stephen Matthews, Sebastian Lazell, Rob Poynton, Michael Penington, Ollie Fryer, and no doubt others who are escaping my aging memory at present.

Jim was a wonderful cricketer, certainly one of the very best to have played for the Hetairoi. He had wonderful hand-eye coordination. He had represented England U16 as a schoolboy, and was a marvellous batsman with languid timing, excellent slip-fielder, and very good coverpoint.

He was also a highly intelligent man, always interesting, charming, and entertaining in conversation, who had a successful career in film and TV production.

Like many talented people to whom their skills seem to come easily, Jim wore his cricketing talents almost lackadaisically. But obviously to achieve the standards that he attained, even with his hand-eye skills, required hard work and determination. And he could be ruthless in taking an opposing attack apart. I well remember a 93 not out against Southwold in the early days of that tour when Southwold had a strong side. (They reached the last eight of the National Village Cup in that era.) Although he did not always score as many runs as his talents might have warranted (and he still scored a lot), I don’t recall ever seeing him look as if he was in difficulties against even the best opposition bowlers.

Jim’s facial expression could sometimes be quite dark, but it was lit up by a smile that spread right across his face. Others knew him better than I, but in my experience he was unassuming, a very good team player, and always good company.

We saw all too little of him – the last time I saw him was at the Lord’s dinner just before Covid – which was a great pity. However he wrote just a few weeks back to give his apologies for the dinner on March 15th as it clashed with his year’s New College Gaudy. It is very sad that he will miss that dinner as well, and that we will not see him again.

I do hope many of you can make it to our dinner this year, and perhaps we can share memories of Jim. If possible I would like to put together a booklet of memories of Jim (and also actually one for Mike Johnson which we never quite managed to coordinate at the time of his passing). So if you have memories of either, or both, then please send them to me.

Meanwhile we send our sincere condolences to Laura, his wife, and all Jim’s wider family.

Requiescat in Pace, Jim.

CM 2Nd March 2024