

Tony Kerslake



I first met Tony, some 13 or 14 years ago. I don't remember exactly when but I do remember that when we first met I said to him that I was probably his "love child" you see, as I explained to him at the time, my middle name is a family name ... Carslake ... with a C and an A. I remember Tony, in spite of his hearing problems and quick wittedly, just laughed and said that he thought he was MY love child. His laugh was infectious. I thought ... He's got a good sense of humour.

He often talked about his experiences and his varied working life in business before coming to Spain. He was in the commercial motor industry and clearly had lots of skills. I saw much evidence of this because he was good at "fixing things". He was always willing to help and appeared to be able to turn his hand to so many practical things.



I got to know him first, through La Asociación de Gata Residencial because he was our first Vice President. In those days, the work of the association was largely trying to improve the site. He would help arrange events and often turned out for Gata Gardeners. When we organised clean-up days, he was always present.



One time, he systematically spent days spraying insecticide around the site. On another occasion, I have a strong mental image of him picking up a huge lump of polystyrene for a laugh. This was just one of the ways that he helped make a chore into fun for those around him.





He made many friends on Gata Residencial and was a frequent participant in the monthly walks, where his cheerfulness would be his default mode and it was catching.



He had a strong sense of community. This was a hallmark of his character. I remember, one year he came down to ask about the number of nationalities represented on Gata Residencial. He had had an idea to string all the flag of the countries and to get people to sign them. Having done that he flew them from the olives at the entrance to the urbanisation. People from over 20 nations joined in and celebrated the cosmopolitan nature of Gata Residencial.

It was because of his sense of community and his desire to help that he took on the role of the first president of his manzana, 12A, on Gata Residencial. He was always willing to assist people who turned up at his door with a problem and he tried his best to find solutions for them, sometimes in the face of great difficulties.

We have spent many convivial times with Tony and Hazel. He was always a good raconteur. He touched many lives and made it better for them. He and Hazel have been a very close couple and his passing will leave a hole, not just in her life, but in all our lives. However, we must remember all the happy times and the positive way he made us feel.

That's Tony – Multi-skilled, great sense of community, always willing to help or give advice, great sense of humour and kind a true "gentle man".



Sally Merrett