

Britain: The best memorial to Greg is to continue the fight for socialism

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It was with very great sadness that we heard of the death of our comrade Greg Tucker. We knew of course that he was ill and the outlook was not good but that does not attenuate the shock and sadness of the loss.

Dear Comrades,

We saw and admired the courage with which he struggled to remain active despite the effects of his illness right to the very end, meeting him at the ISG conference just a week earlier.

We know that Greg was a central and important member of the leadership of the British section bringing a contribution and experience that will not easily be replaced, but his comrades and colleagues in Britain know that far better than we do.

But Greg was also important for us in the International where he brought his experience to the discussions of the international leadership. As a leading trade-unionist among railworkers he made every effort to build links with railworkers elsewhere in Europe, notably in France which he visited several times. The railworkers of the LCR are particularly saddened to hear of his death.

He was also a key and irreplaceable member of the team producing International Viewpoint, the Fourth International's English-language magazine. The move to producing it as an online magazine only would have been impossible without Greg who, despite his many other commitments, conceived and built the site and right up to his death continued to be the central webmaster. One of his primary concerns at that last meeting was that we should find somebody able to take over that role.

To those of us who knew him personally he was also a good friend, who will be sorely missed both politically and personally.

We extend our sympathy and solidarity to all Greg's comrades, colleagues and friends, with a particular thought for Joan and Tim.

We are sure that all will agree that the best memorial to Greg is to continue the fight for socialism on all terrains and in all its aspect, as he himself did so unremittingly.

Long live the Fourth International!

Penny Duggan, on behalf of the Bureau of the Fourth International

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He was committed to the politics of the FI

I first came across Greg thirty six years ago, in 1972, when he was an 18-year-old student in Oxford. He was living in a squat threatened with eviction and I was a convenor of shop stewards in the Oxford car industry. Greg came to us for support for the squat and when we compared notes on this many years later he generous enough to say that the support we were able to give was a factor in the successful outcome of the struggle.

He clearly saw the organised working class as his first port of call even in those early days.

In more recent years of course Greg was a strongly committed member of the ISG. He attended the ISG conference a week before he died, by an act of sheer willpower.

Greg's first political reference point, however, was the Fourth International. He was a member of the ISG in the first instance because it was its British section. He was committed to the politics of the FI and in particular to the concept of internationalism which it represented.

He was a member of the International Committee of the FI and he followed the fortunes of its sections in great detail. In recent years he worked closely with the rail fraction of the LCR in France - since organising with them around the European Social Forums.

At the ISG conference I made the point, that from the point of view of the ISG, as with the wider movement, Greg was not only a huge loss but that he was an irreplaceable comrade. This is because Greg represented something which it is very hard to replace. He combined a world-view informed by Marxism with tireless campaigning, in both the political and trade union fields.

In recent years with the looming ecological crisis Greg, along with the ISG and Socialist Resistance, became increasingly involved in the battle against climate change, and to regard himself not just as a socialist but as an ecosocialist.

He was a Trotskyist train driver with a view on everything. You could go to him and I frequently did I have to say for an invaluable opinion on everything from the history of the workers movement, the application of Marxist principles on a range of issues, international politics, the situation in the unions or the tactics of the most recent election campaign. In fact he always had the most detailed views on any current election campaign.

His trade union contribution has already been the subject of moving tributes from within the RMT. But the contribution Greg made to militant, principled, political trade unionism has yet to be fully evaluated.

He always saw the problems of the trade unions today, and the crisis of working class representation, as having a political as well as an industrial solution. This is why he had been active in the Socialist Alliance and then of Respect and Respect Renewal.

It is in this area at the interface between politics and trade unionism where Greg will be most sorely missed and where he made his greatest contribution.

Alan Thornett on behalf of the Fourth International