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Obituary: Tim Schadla-Hall, 1947–2023

Mark D'Arcy, Martin Millett, Ross Willmott, Nicky Milner, Mike Parker Pearson, Maev Kennedy and Gabriel Moshenska

Tim Schadla-Hall was Reader in Public Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology until his death in January 2023 (Figure 1). Over 250 of his friends and colleagues attended a memorial at UCL on 28 April 2023. Six colleagues from the different spheres of Tim's life share their words from that day.

I really struggled trying to work out what to say on the day of Tim's memorial: 'Tim was a remarkable man…' One of those bald understatements – a bit like saying, 'I dropped the atom bomb and it went off.' Because Tim simply blazed – he had more energy than any five other people I know. Always overworked, always behind with 20 different projects, but someone who always had time for his friends and who energised them, as he drew energy from them.

I first met Tim more than 30 years ago, when I was working for the *Leicester Mercury*, and he was head of the Leicestershire Museums Service. We'd spoken a few times on various museum-related or archaeological stories, but then I was given a political column, and after a few weeks Tim took me out to lunch to explain what I was doing wrong.

The thing was, he was right … I had a bank of accumulated ideas that filled the first few columns, but by this point I was overdrawn there. Tim had spotted it, and it was the most fantastically helpful

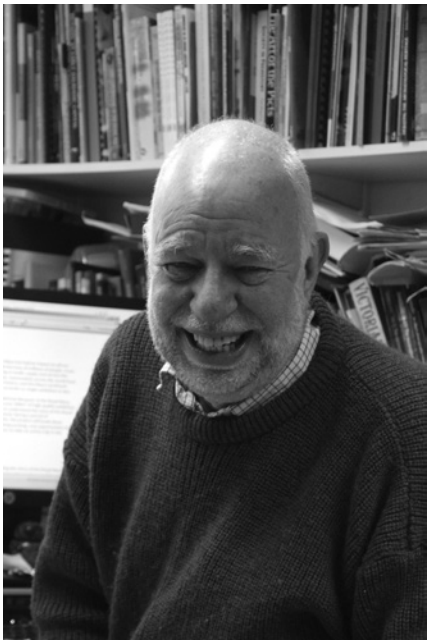

Figure 1 Tim Schadla-Hall, 1947–2023 (Source: photograph by Lisa Daniel)

conversation. I guess it must have been something close to the way in which he guided his students, and I have met very few editors in 40-odd years in journalism who could so acutely zero in on the weak spots in an article or an argument. He did it with delicacy, precision and tact … and the upshot was that we had dinner regularly for years after.

I was one of many. Even after the time he drove me to a country pub, while carrying on a lively conversation as I sat on the back seat, almost never glancing at the winding country roads as he zipped through them at 60 miles an hour…

Those dinners! There were archaeologists (of course), admirals, antiquaries, editors, diplomats, writers, students. My favourite moment was the late editor of *The Times*, Charlie Wilson, explaining why he sacked Boris Johnson, but there were plenty more.

Those dinners. Gossip, plotting and hilarity. Occasionally you might emerge better informed than you might have expected about the history of Finland, or the development of agriculture in Malta, but they were never less than fascinating and fun.

Those dinners. Even when he was ill, he drew strength from them. And you have to admire a man who can drink and smoke his way through umpteen rounds of radiotherapy with such apparent insouciance.

For Tim blazed. He did not go gently into that good night. He was alive until he was not. And I shall miss him and all those dinners as long as I live.

Mark D'Arcy

I first met Tim in 1978 when we had just started digging at Cowdery's Down in Basingstoke and he was just taking over as Senior Keeper of Archaeology at Hampshire County Museum Service and Curator of Basingstoke Museum. His support of that project was transformative… (This was the point that he moved into Museums, having previously been a Field Officer, most recently for the Wessex Archaeological Committee, forerunner of Wessex Archaeology.) We remained as friends and colleagues ever since – our lives intertwined in various ways. I worked as his assistant at HCMS in 1980–81, and with him in editing the *Archaeological Journal* during the 1980s. He has had an enormous influence on my life – as he has on many others. His advice and support have been invaluable. And he was responsible for introducing me to Yorkshire and its archaeology – a place he loved.

Tim's network was unique. He was a committed advocate of the things he believed in and worked with all kinds of people towards these ends. His networks – exemplified in recent years by the people who met at his regular London restaurant table – were extensive and remarkable (look round the room today). As Cyprian Broodbank remarked to me after Tim's death, any conventional history of British Archaeology in the twentieth to twenty-first century based on publication would entirely miss out on Tim. But a network analysis would certainly highlight him as a key node in its network. Tim cared about people and maintained friendships. If we are to honour Tim's memory, we should keep up the networks he created of like-minded people.

Tim could be infuriating, and suffered from periodic depression, but he was also great fun and had a developed sense of humour. He was also impatient with bureaucracy, unthinking attitudes, and hated what he saw

as institutional hypocrisy. Who else then – when in the mid-1980s the newly founded Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission [what became English Heritage] was looking for a public facing name – could have suggested that they called themselves 'Past Caring'?

Tim was also an original thinker, sometimes with surprising outcomes. I'm told that when he was required to do the Leicester Museums Diploma (after he started work at HCMS), he was sent to attend a short course on museum security at Leicester. At the end of a tedious group session at the Jewry Wall Museum they were given half an hour to look at security in the museum. At the session that followed, other participants questioned the case and window security, etc. When it came to Tim, he simply emptied his pockets of the things he had shoplifted in the museum shop!

Tim had an extraordinarily wide knowledge, especially of all aspects of the Yorkshire landscape. He also had a great familiarity with the back roads across the Wolds, so would drive them at – for me – hair-raising speed. I leave you with one anecdote on that. I was in Tim's car driving from Sledmere to Rudston when we approached a line of slow-moving vehicles. With a straight and open road ahead, he pulled out to overtake at high speed. As we approached the head of the line, he pulled in behind the hearse with his familiar phrase '[Expletive], I'm so sorry.'

We all miss you, Tim.

Martin Millett

Whatever I say will fall far short of the man we know as Tim the truculent, Tim the bon viveur, Tim the intellectual, Tim the digger (in the best sense of the seventeenth century), Tim the obsessed, Tim the husband and father, the friend, the grit in the oyster that makes the pearl. He was my friend, my guide, my mentor, for nearly 40 years – astonishing.

During the last couple of years, Tim stayed with us regularly for his treatment at LRI. (I know, don't ask why he was travelling to Leicester to hospital when he didn't live here anymore. I like to think, in his way combining the treatment with a visit to us, shifting the focus away from his illness and feeling safe with friends.)

We all looked forward to spending time together; I'd cook, Tim would bring Argentinian Malbec, his latest passion. He would go out while I was at work and regularly return from foraging at our nearby Lidl (which he really enjoyed) with rib-eye steaks, chips, cashew nuts and of course more Malbec! A normal time discussing politics, what he was doing next, ships, submarines, Belfast, Portsmouth, parliament, Hartlepool, Malta, Sicily, more boats, more politics.

It became clear just before Christmas that things were not going well: no more steak and barely half a glass of Malbec. Gone was the mocking of his condition, sharing with some glee that he was radioactive after his treatment and not allowed on a plane, or near pregnant women, strongly defying and facing down fate with his indomitable spirit and good humour.

Unusually for Tim, he talked to me about how bad it was. It didn't need to be said – we shared the inevitability that the end was in sight. He was due to be with us on Thursday, when I had the call from James on the Monday. I lost the best and most challenging friend I ever had.

Rarely does someone come into your life who has such an impact. I first met Tim in May 1985 and was immediately caught up in the whirlwind, the force of nature, the larger-than-life presence that Tim was. That enduring connection stayed until the last time we were together, nearly 40 years later. How so? For Tim was a complex and unique fellow always in trouble with someone … (Did he ever sort out his income tax?)

Always fighting at least a dozen battles at any one time, in the world of museums, archaeology, politics, always busy, always more to do … working to the very end.

He was a lodestone – he collected people like a magnet collects iron filings, a force that drew tides of people together and made connections … and he could be equally dismissive of idiots! We worked together, myself as a County Councillor and Tim as Director of the County Museums service.

We shared the same passion for museums and arts and worked closely for many years, along with other colleagues across the political spectrum, to create the Snibston Discovery Park. Through this work we became firm and enduring friends; it was one of life's 'unique privileges' to be Tim's friend. (I choose my words carefully, but regret not a

moment.) Nigel Holden, another former County Councillor, reminded me of this anecdote which concerns Ernie White (a County Councillor) and exemplifies the effect that Tim had on almost all who came into contact with him:

> We go back to before LGR Leicestershire County Council, pre-1996 LGR we had a committee administration structure. Ernie was a member of the Tory group but they had a problem with him, so they cast him off into what they thought was the wilderness – the Arts, Libraries and Museums Committee. He couldn't do any damage there could he? However, their plan completely backfired. Such was Tim's enthusiasm and passion for the Museums Service that it rubbed off on Ernie who became a very strong advocate for museums – much to the chagrin of the county Tories who had been trying to cut funding to the service.

That was the Tim effect! Nobody who came into contact with him could fail to be infected by his knowledge of, and passion or enthusiasm for, museums and the arts. Under Tim's stewardship, the ALM committee became a powerful cross-party force for change and all that's best about local government, and like Tim, a force to be reckoned with. Ernie, Ross, Nigel and Tim continued by meeting for dinner 3–4 times a year, even when I was Labour leader of Leicester city and Ernie the Tory leader of Blaby. Such a powerful catalyst was Tim.

Our friendship was cemented after my first invitation to dinner with his family … and whoever else among that collection of friends was there. That dinner invitation ended in my staying for two days! And repeated often over the next 30 years. I cherish the wonderful times I spent at the Firs. My heart always lifted as I got in my car for the short drive for what I knew would be a wonderful, relaxed welcome, with fabulous food washed down with copious quantities of wine. Tim would say, 'Come along. I've invited X & Y – you'll really get on', and of course the evenings were always wonderful, with many who have stayed friends.

Such times inevitably ended up with Tim, myself and perhaps Martin, Mike – whoever was staying – moving on to the single malt in front of a roaring fire. Discussion and argument obviously got better in inverse proportion to the level of whisky left in the bottle!

On one such occasion, at about 3am, Tim and I were left and, for some reason long since forgotten, he decided we should have a Cup-a-Soup. We were interrupted by his son James who had long since wondered if we would ever run out of things to talk about, who found us set on an earnest conversation about the merits of Cup-a-Soup, and in particular the benefit of croutons. James now knew we were both bonkers and never let us live that down!

I have long since thought that people flocked to the Firs as much for Caroline's culinary masterpieces as for Tim's entertaining banter (sorry, intellectual discourse). If, like me, you were one of the fortunate who visited, you will never forget the welcome and joy of being there.

A large part of Tim's success was owed to support from Caroline. The endless stream of Tim's 'people collection' that passed through the house – I don't know anyone else who could have coped with this for years, always excelling every time. Caroline was always there for Tim, really making it possible for Tim to work his magical influence on people, so he could call in favours somewhere down the line. They both looked after me when my father died. I virtually moved in and built Tim's library while consuming Caroline's wonderful cooking and enjoying conversation with James and Ben.

This was not a normal household, but a rather exceptional one. James and Ben dragged off all summer for digs; living in a tent in the middle of nowhere certainly ensured they were never going to become archaeologists. Or perhaps it was Tim's rite of passage for them, sending James to Kenya, where he lost a fight with a car, and Ben to trek across Mongolia on a pony, and then on to Australia, just as we all did of course!

Tim's legacy is significant and has a lasting impact. Tim's vision for a Joint Museums Service in Leicestershire post-1997 in the face of local government reorganisation was both visceral and intellectual. Caught between the City's battle for sovereignty and the County's pedantic and bureaucratic position, the failure to achieve a new joint City/County service wasn't for want of trying. The energy Tim invested in the campaign was extraordinary; we raced up and down the country, visiting 'influencers', journalists and people in high places. Lots of intelligence-gathering over dinners, lots of red wine was drunk and lots of lobbying.

Unfortunately this was a turning point in the battle for a Joint Service. These were difficult times, and Tim survived with the loyalty, love and support of Caroline and his many friends.

Of course Tim had been right – 25 years later, what was once one of the country's leading museums and arts services, pioneering in so many ways, has become a fragmented trio. Collections had to be disaggregated and divided, the High Court involved, capacity reduced and costs increased and many areas of expertise long gone.

Tim cared deeply about the small, independent, volunteer-run museums and established a supportive network, led by a museum professional, within which these largely community-led museums thrived. At its peak, this Forum had over 40 museums in its membership, many of whose members had started out as enthusiastic individuals with no museum knowledge and reached the highest professional (accreditation) standards under his guidance.

This Forum back in the early 1990s became the template for community museums across the country and today the Museum Development Programme is nationally recognised by major funders and the museum profession as a whole. The support Tim gave to these independent museums has been a real legacy and he was, even very recently, remembered by one of the key people in this sector as one of the outstanding influencers in local museums over the last four decades. Jim Roberts (1947–2023), former Chairman of Leicestershire County Council, said to me: 'My abiding memory is of driving around visiting colleagues from across the country agreeing on the interconnectedness of all things and the right of people to own their own history.'

Memories

Tim the maverick.
Irreverent, untamed, iconoclastic
Tim wanting everyone to love him.
Shit sorry.
I've got so much to do.
I'm so behind …
The coffee.
The milk on the window sill.

The fags.
The plastic carrier bags of work documents, which he carried in and out daily (I'd swear the contents rarely changed).
The desk! If you could see it!?
His lack of inhibitions! The swearing!
Innate distrust of men who wore slip-on shoes!
The poster of the man in uniform in his office … did anyone ever correctly identify Michael Collins?
The sign he put on Belgrave Hall Gardens: 'Adults are only allowed in if accompanied by children'.
The time he turned up at the office I was working at, and I got a phone call that said there's a tramp in reception who says you're expecting him. I had to explain that it was no tramp but the Director of Museums for the County! Of course he'd just come straight from a hole in the ground in Pickering.
Meals in Store Street's Paradiso restaurant.
That Harris tweed suit that must have been so uncomfortable!
The Ned Kelly drought-breaker wax coat!
The Charles Tyrwhitt shirts.
Growing vegetables.
Building that wall.

Thank you, Tim, for being my friend, my guide and my mentor for all these years. Thank you for fighting the great causes, for the wit, the humour, the fierce intelligence, and thank you for bringing your family and many friends into my life. Thank you, Tim, for making the world a better place and I owe you at least one last bottle of Malbec! L'Chaim!!

Ross Willmott

Tim Schadla-Hall had many talents and influenced many lives, but here I will focus on the incredible legacy he left from his fieldwork that he carried out in the Vale of Pickering.

Tim started work in the Vale of Pickering in 1976, setting up the Seamer Carr project in order to prospect for Early Mesolithic

archaeology – perhaps finding more sites like Star Carr – in advance of the construction of a large waste disposal facility and what was to become Scarborough tip. Working with Paul Lane, they conducted environmental sampling, landscape survey, test-pitting and large-scale excavation. A huge area was investigated, the former lake shoreline was sampled and a large quantity of Early Mesolithic and Late Palaeolithic archaeology was found. Although no more 'Star Carrs' were discovered, this work was critical in demonstrating the importance of a landscape focus. The research also produced many more sites that have enabled a much better understanding of both the Late Palaeolithic and Early Mesolithic periods in Europe.

The Seamer Carr project ended in 1985, but Tim continued his work in the Vale of Pickering with goals to map the full extent of the former lake and to test-pit along the edge of the lake to find more flint scatters in order to enhance the understanding of the landscape. He brought together a team of academics and businessmen to form the Vale of Pickering Research Trust, and spent the following three decades working for a month every summer in the Vale with the backing and support of the Trust.

I met Tim in 1995 in Cambridge. He had come to give a talk about the work he was doing in the Vale of Pickering. As usual, everyone went down to the pub after the talk and Tim asked me what I was doing for my PhD. I told him I was studying oyster seasonality in Danish Mesolithic shell middens. He told me he thought seasonality studies were pointless! And so we got talking/arguing about seasonality studies, Star Carr and other things Mesolithic and by the end of the evening he suggested I come and visit the Vale excavations in the summer. So I did.

It's a landscape I knew very well. I grew up a few miles away from Star Carr, and had spent the previous five years excavating with Dominic Powlesland further west in the Vale. But sitting down with Tim on a spoil heap I realised that I had a lot to learn about this landscape and what it would have looked like in the past. It appears at first glance to be very flat but Tim knew exactly where the lake had been and where all the sites were that had been found. Tim was so good at reading the landscape; he even seemed to know where the lake edge would have been without augering. I remember once the survey kit wasn't working, so we couldn't work out the contour heights, which we needed in order

to place the 2×2 trenches on the 23-metre contour. Tim said, 'It should be about here. Put a trench in here.' I was very sceptical, but of course when the survey kit started working again, it turned out he was absolutely bang on. He could also predict to the minute when it was going to rain by watching the clouds as they blew eastwards down the Vale. It seemed like magic but he had a gift for understanding a landscape and had spent so many years working in this particular place that he understood it instinctively.

That first year I only visited for a few days but was hooked, and I returned every year after that for a month in the Vale. We spent many happy summers in the Yorkshire sun, fieldwalking, augering and digging (Figure 2). Over this time many people came to volunteer on the project, particularly from UCL. Some people returned year after year, including Chantal Conneller and Barry Taylor, both of whom I went on to co-direct Star Carr with from 2004.

For those of you who have never visited the Vale of Pickering excavations, the former lake is made up of smelly, sticky, muddy peat and

Figure 2 Nicky Milner and Tim on a visit to Star Carr (Source: Star Carr research project)

Tim was quite obsessed with it. He loved nothing more than to sit in a trench and examine these dark sediments, breaking up chunks to look for twigs and moss. Mostly though he seemed to enjoy smelling it, even though degrading peat stinks of rotten eggs. He even once got me to taste it! And he initiated every new starter on site with the smell of peat. He'd often dash off to get a new volunteer from the train station and rather than dropping them (or even their luggage) at the campsite, he would bring them straight to the site. They would appear beside one of the trenches in their nice clean clothes, and Tim would start grabbing great chunks of dirty peat from the nearest spoil heap and shoving it under their noses, ordering them to smell it as they looked around them in bewilderment at what was going on!

The month of work in the Vale was both tranquil – it is a very beautiful place to work, particularly when the sun is shining – and quite frenetic. We never really knew where Tim was and when he would appear, as he was always on the move around the landscape. In the morning he would set several teams of people off in one field to auger, and get some test pitting going in another field, and then spend the rest of the day driving around the area at high speed visiting everyone to make sure they were OK, before driving off to see some farmers. He spent a lot of time talking to the farmers and engaging them in what we were doing, as well as listening to their stories. This appreciation of the local community and the time he focused on them was not only critical for the project but has also created an important local appreciation of this archaeology.

The volunteers lived in very basic conditions, camping on a farm with a brick barn for our dining room and a cook catering out of a couple of adjacent farm sheds. But then at the end of every season, we would have a party. Tim was very specific about how this would run: the Trustees and farmers were invited; the tables were set out with tablecloths, candles and flowers; there was always at least a three course menu and much wine; and there were after dinner speeches and prizes. Tim, of course, was the master of ceremonies and made everyone feel special by ensuring that everyone received a prize, usually for something embarrassing that they had done over the course of the dig.

Once you knew Tim it was easy to get embroiled in other projects that were going on as well. One year Tim got some of us to go and

fieldwalk at Thwing in advance of Martin Millett's excavation of a Roman site. I also did a bit of digging at Boyton Hall with Tim and Adrian Green, and spent a week on Lihou in Guernsey excavating a Mesolithic site with Tim. That was the one and only time I have ever been upgraded on a flight. We were heading back to London and arrived late to the airport to find that we were last on the plane and there were no seats next to each other. Tim insisted that we had to sit together because we had been on an excavation and we had a lot to discuss, and he then started to tell the flight attendants all about the dig. It didn't take long before they offered seats in first class and a glass of champagne. Just a shame that the flight only took 40 minutes.

I feel very lucky indeed to have known Tim. He taught me and so many others so much. He trained Chantal, Barry and me in how to understand, dig and appreciate peat and the importance of landscapes. It is thanks to Tim that the three of us went on to co-direct excavations at Star Carr and although he only worked with us at Star Carr for the first few years, he continued to visit every year and provided endless wisdom, support and guidance when we needed it.

Tim was always so modest about what he had achieved, but looking back it is quite an incredible legacy. Through his determination and passion for the Vale of Pickering, we now have a model of the whole of the former lake: an area of about 4 km × 2 km. Over decades his work enabled the discovery of many more sites, revealing a huge amount of activity at the start of the Holocene, which has hugely enriched Late Palaeolithic and Early Mesolithic studies. Just as importantly, he inspired many people over this period: his visits to farmers and the talks he gave to local societies means that the local community have a much better understanding of the landscape they live in; and the students and volunteers who worked with him learnt so much, not only about this landscape and the archaeology within it, but also about whatever wide-ranging ideas and thoughts Tim was having at the time! I'm sure everyone who worked with Tim in the Vale can look back on those days and smile at the memories. We had great fun. We had a lot of laughs. It is hard to think of 'the Vale' without him.

Nicky Milner

There are many facets of Tim's complex life and I think I have to start with something difficult. Eulogies are mainly about the public side and this is hard for those close to him. At his memorial service, we told stories and anecdotes that celebrate the Tim we loved and admired, but the private Tim was almost entirely absent. Tim let very few people through the firewall that protected his private world from his public persona and simply would not talk about those he loved, even to his closest friends. Because Tim chose to keep his inner world and his family so private, I don't want to breach that privacy too much but we should all remember that we – his friends and colleagues and students – weren't the most important people in Tim's life. But he made us feel that we were.

Few of us know about Tim's childhood and youth – which might explain some of the adult Tim. For the rest of us, he sprang upon us fully formed – a whirlwind of chaos and enthusiasm. Among the archaeologists who knew him in the early days are Stephen Shennan, who he dug with in Hampshire, and Martin Biddle, who he worked for in Winchester. One of the people who knew him longest is Paul Lane – I cannot begin to imagine what it was like having Tim as a schoolteacher. Perhaps his pupils either survived him or crumpled!

I was still a teenager when I first met him and he has simply always been there, a part of my world. I remember going to stay with Tim and family in Hull when I was digging at Barton-on-Humber, but it was only later when Tim was Director of Leicestershire Museums that we worked together.

I was by then the English Heritage Inspector for Leicestershire and together we dealt with various threats to archaeological sites. The biggest of these was to Roman and medieval Leicester, perversely from the local authorities. Tim was particularly concerned that Leicester City Council and the County Council had given themselves planning permission for a development that would destroy the city's buried remains without any funded excavation. He and I had few cards to play – there was no way that we could insist on any funding with permission already granted, but at the meeting Tim talked both councils into taking full responsibility for the archaeology. I couldn't have done what Tim did that day – he was simply unstoppable, and they fortunately didn't seem to know their planning law as well as we did.

During his museum career, Tim had considerable power as the big boss, and he had to give this up when he moved to the Institute. But power was replaced by 'influence', which I think probably suited him even better, although he hated having anyone in authority over him. Unlike most of us, Tim seemed to actively enjoy committees and meetings and making things happen. Leicestershire was at the core of this – Edward Garnier and Mark D'Arcy gave him insights and access that are beyond most of us, and he became an irreplaceable conduit to Tim Loughton and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Archaeology. Tim loved his lords and ladies: he was able to court the powerful without compromising his own sometimes unfathomable opinions on politics, history and the establishment (Figure 3). In the 1980s he would proclaim his admiration for Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, and I've always wondered if his politics were forged in reaction to his true-blue Tory father. Thank heavens he didn't actually go into politics himself – the mind boggles.

Figure 3 An image from Tim's office door (Source: Gai Jorayev)

I should think we all know about Tim's delight in his naval museum work – if anyone in the audience doesn't know the full history of HMS *Caroline*, you haven't been listening! I miss picking him up from the railway station, in his hat and his HMS *Caroline* coat, and then spending days listening to his stories of dinner on the *Victory* and the uselessness of the Northern Ireland government.

Tim turning up to stay was always a tricky moment, because sometimes his appearance was due not to his delight in company but to an overwhelming misery, which he could not always shake off. There've been times when Tim simply vanished – I don't think he ever knew that behind his back there would be flurries of emails and texts, of people trying to work out whether he was safe and had simply gone to ground with those he knew best. He would sometimes admit he was in trouble but there was little one could do except wait it out with him – I have an unforgettable and sad memory of seeing true bleakness in Tim's eyes one night at Olivelli's restaurant and realising then just how much he struggled.

Better memories are things like Tim in his slippers cooking kippers in my kitchen – having of course made instant friends with the fishmonger – or turning up every year to the excavation in Wales simply because he wanted to. Throughout his life, Tim thought nothing of driving huge distances, whether for work or on holiday in Sicily. When he stopped driving, his car mouldered away – who knows what the mileage was on it? That energy made him an extraordinary teacher – he used to come to Sheffield every year to give a lecture on my Public Archaeology module and every year the stunned students broke into spontaneous applause. Maybe Tim thought that was normal, that everyone got clapped and cheered by their students. He was certainly unique.

So after 45 years of Tim, what do I know about him? Tim could be consumed by guilt. That 'sorry, sorry, sorry' which we all heard so many times was sometimes truly meant. I learnt early that he was not always reliable – if you needed Tim to finish writing something, you might be waiting forever. We did manage to edit a book together – *Looking at the Land* – about field survey, but it took me seven years to wrestle his half from him and get it to the printers. I knew when the guilt had set in on an unfinished project, because he simply stopped talking about it – so

I hope that Adrian Green will one day write up Tim's investigations at Boynton Hall in Yorkshire, and that Reuben Grima can finish off Tim's work on Admiral Ball's Gardens in Malta. He loved Malta, and it's one of the few places where he let his private world and his public world intersect.

He would constantly ask, 'Have I ever let you down?' and in spite of what happened with our book, for me the answer is no, he didn't, because he was always supportive even when he was down. Again, this is Tim's public world – his private life had sadness in it, and leaves grief that will be hard to manage.

Tim had a quite extraordinary ease with people. He made you feel special. It wasn't just students and colleagues who blossomed under the searchlight of Tim's attention. He seemed to feel no embarrassment or shyness, ever. When he went to Sicily, he used to stay in the flat that belonged to the family who run Olivelli's – I don't know how he did it, forging a relationship with everyone he crossed paths with.

At the World Archaeological Congress in Cape Town, 24 years ago now, the bar staff dealing with the conference were about to walk out – in tears and exhausted by too many archaeologists drinking too much beer. Tim was the only person who reacted: he grabbed a handful of empty beer glasses and trudged round the bar, hounding everyone present to cough up a huge tip (even the Australians, and they never tip!). At the end of the conference, I think he actually went on holiday with the Afrikaner chef, who was his new best mate.

So everyone here today felt important because Tim said so. He had a boundless delight in fixing things for people, or setting people off into their careers or persuading committee members to do what he wanted. And he always sent a postcard, from wherever he went.

Tim needed us too. Those dinners in Olivelli's when you were actually his second sitting – he would do a matinee and an evening performance – were because he needed people. He got his energy from other people – we kept him going. And we should have some real honesty here – I think we were to some extent interchangeable. He was a hamster in a wheel – he could not stop because stopping was simply not an option.

To finish off, I thought I'd explore the alternative Tim, in a parallel universe – what might have been – by consulting an AI chatbot for Tim's obituary. The results are utter nonsense but strangely compelling:

- It gives Tim a PhD from Cambridge – he'd have definitely liked that.
- He was a professor at both Cambridge and Oxford – that would have stirred things up a bit.
- He was apparently director of the Institute and of the Society of Antiquaries – there's a frightening thought!

And, for some reason, it credits him with a vast collection of ancient coins as well as being an expert on Roman archaeology. He'd have loved that. The only thing that stays the same in the alternative 'chatbot world' is that Tim is described as beloved, inspiring, generous and kind. I think we should add: captivating, exasperating, exhausting and irreplaceable.

Mike Parker Pearson

A fond tribute to that rude man in the hairy suit. I first met Tim at a Thursday meeting of the Society of Antiquaries. I had been reading an email from a man who claimed to own Cromwell's head – they tend to come around every couple of years – and bounced up to the then secretary, Dai Morgan Evans, demanding, 'So, what have you done with Cromwell's head?' It wasn't an entirely mad question: I knew that a long-dead secretary of the Antiquaries had the charming habit of wearing a nubble of flesh claimed to be one of the Protector's warts, in a snuff box on his watch chain to show off at parties. Dai replied absent-mindedly, 'I think Arthur MacGregor has it in his briefcase.' Arthur, the gently mannered keeper of many extraordinary things at the Ashmolean, was explaining that he didn't actually have Cromwell with him at that moment but I was welcome to come and see him in Oxford, when his neighbour, a large man clad in many lengths of hairy tweed, stood up and towered over me and proceeded to berate me personally for my myriad failings as a journalist, and corporately my then employer

the *Guardian* for having sunk into the sub-basement of the gutter press to become a mere government lickspittle.

The lecture began and I sat down gratefully, slightly shaken, thinking even by the standards of academia this was the rudest man I had ever met. But as sherry glasses materialised afterwards, the large man shoved his way through the crowd to me and invited me to lunch in the Italian annex to his office familiar to all his friends, where they treated him as a slightly obstreperous son, enquiring after his health and refusing to allow him another glass of wine unless he ate up his dinner. The conversation will certainly have ranged from cabbages to kings and back again, and we were friends for what proved a sadly foreshortened life.

I cannot remember what his urgent campaign of the day was – it was a bit late for Stonehenge and a bit early for Caroline, so it may have been the threat to the funding of the Portable Antiquities Scheme – but it will certainly have encompassed a monstrous conspiracy of politicians, capitalists, so-called public servants and fawning journalists to do down heritage and the public's right to access it. Following up one of his invaluable and unfailingly accurate tip-offs and writing about any of his causes was a double-edged sword: he would heap praise and thanks, point out half a dozen glaring errors and then fail to understand why further articles on the subject didn't follow at least once a week. Libel also held no terrors for him: when for a time I was writing the *Guardian* diary, he once sent me a short paragraph which on my reckoning contained three minor and two major libels, one concerning a high court judge.

His entirely genuine commitment to informing the public always amused me: he was the conspiracy theorist's conspirator and an arch plotter, always with a cunning plan where sometimes a dumb straightforward one would have done the job. It was entirely thanks to Tim – in conspiracy with Geoffrey Wainwright – that I became a Fellow of the Antiquaries. I always feared this was less in tribute to my shining journalism than the fact that like Cecil, Elizabeth's spymaster, Tim would have liked to have a man on every parish council in the land reporting back to him.

I only once saw the stern teaching side, and it was startling. I was sitting in his office, wondering if the *Guardian*'s death-in-service policy

covered suffocation in a paper avalanche, when a student knocked timidly – his door at the time had, among the layers of Post-it notes, a notice reading 'GO AWAY!!!!' – and came in with a particularly baroque account of how the dog had eaten her essay. Tim was icy. That was completely understandable, he said, and entirely forgiven provided the essay was on his desk first thing the following morning. As she left, his face lit up with that grin that excused all his crimes: 'Great young woman,' he said. 'Excellent mind. She'll go far.'

He had an enormous circle of friends, and he worked very hard to keep them: many of us, I think, felt we were closer to him than perhaps was true. He was forever writing and phoning, trying to sort something for a friend, and he never saw a lame dog without wanting to help it over a stile, whether it wanted to cross the stile or not. On one truly terrifying occasion when I confided that I too had a spot of cancer – now sorted – he offered to phone my consultant and gee him up a bit, and seemed surprised, indeed indignant, when I beseeched him not to.

As autumn greyed into winter, there would inevitably come a day when the darkness closed around him. I would get an email explaining that he was feeling terribly ill and dreadfully depressed, and the only thing that could possibly help would be a jolly lunch with me: I am absolutely certain he sent them out by the hundred. Last winter I replied that I had a vile borderline-flu cold, but looked forward to it as soon as we were both better. And then the bastard went and died. I find it hard to forgive him.

Maev Kennedy

I am one among hundreds of Tim's former students, and it's my privilege to speak on their behalf. As a lecturer, supervisor, adviser, excavator and leader of wild field trips, Tim made a profound impact on a generation of UCL students. My first encounter with Tim was a first-year lecture he gave, sometime in the autumn of 2001: a debate with Henry Cleere on the merits (if any) of UNESCO World Heritage listing. I recently found my notes from this class, which include the line 'Like watching a rottweiler savage a teddy-bear'. Wrong on both counts, of course.

For me and many others, the experience of Tim's supervision began with a summons to his sixth-floor office, with its low ceiling made even lower by a cloud of cigarette smoke. Knocking on his door provoked incoherent yelling which I came to understand meant 'come in'. Inside one would find Tim invariably on the phone, bookshelves haphazardly stuffed with odd things, piles of sun-bleached paperwork, Mao medallions and other mysterious souvenirs and a chair for visitors covered in yet more detritus. Those heaps of paper famously swallowed important documents, including several passports and some irreplaceable excavation records.

Tim's to-do list on his office whiteboard was never updated. At the time he moved out of his office it included things he'd done – or not done – more than 20 years earlier. To a student the chaos of Tim's office initially seemed like evidence of eccentric academic genius. It might even appear, to the more impressionable, to have a mysterious internal order to it. This was not the case.

I had time to take in the books and the whiteboard and the piles of papers because Tim was, of course, on the phone plotting parliamentary skulduggery or acquiring warships. My already tenuous faith in democracy died in Tim's office. It turns out the conspiracy theorists were right: there really are secret smoke-filled rooms where shadowy unaccountable power brokers plot coups, revolutions and recessions, or at least the activities of the All Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group.

At the core of the masters in Public Archaeology, and Tim's teaching in general, were his extraordinary field trips. He took us – always in a hurry, always in a good hat – to South West England, Scotland, York and South Shields. These trips were epic struggles of driver versus speed-limited departmental minibus, long hours on the road fuelled by lattes and cigarettes with a merciless lack of lunches or toilet breaks. Tim once famously rushed out of a service station and drove away in the wrong van, with a terrified group of pensioners believing they had been kidnapped. He took delight in overtaking long queues of traffic, often uphill, around blind corners, or in deep snow. I witnessed a terrified student squeeze his phone screen to breaking point in white-knuckle terror during one of these manoeuvres.

On these trips the students discovered Tim the geographer and landscape archaeologist. At Maiden Castle, Kilmartin Glen, Stonehenge

and Martin Green's farm we were led on long rambles brought to life with Tim's commentary on sightlines, geology, waterways, past excavations, questionable reconstructions, soils, public access, onsite interpretation, modern agricultural practices and the failings of various heritage agencies. He was determined that his students should love these landscapes with the depth of understanding that he enjoyed.

On trips to Stonehenge Tim would rage against the trees in the landscape and how they ruined the lines of sight between the prehistoric monuments. Every year he promised to return with a drill, poison and copper nails to kill every last one. It's traditional to plant trees in memory of the dead: if instead each of us agreed to murder one tree in the Stonehenge landscape, we could fulfil his dream (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Tim on a field trip to Stonehenge (Source: photograph by Gai Jorayev)

Tim was an unconventional PhD supervisor. Most guidebooks to doctoral study recommend building a network: if you accompany your supervisor to conferences, they will provide introductions to useful and important people. Tim didn't do conferences and he had little interest in academic status-games. Instead, he would invite you to Pizza Paradiso as part of a carefully selected if eclectic-seeming party: the Salisbury city dog-catcher, a lightly disgraced Lord and some bloke who had a landing craft to sell. From such unlikely sources the baffled PhD student would emerge with some brilliant scholarly advice, a job offer and a valuable lesson in the limited horizons of academic thinking. Tim took great pleasure in bringing or putting his people together, in launching and boosting them, being useful and in-the-know. He once dispatched me to North London to help another of his ex-students who was trying to set up a community archaeology project: reader, I married her.

Tim's vast network of friendships, his club, his gang, was built on foundations of warmth, loyalty, humour and generosity of spirit. Over many years as Tim's student and many more as his colleague I have witnessed this secret society in action, drawn upon it and become a part of it. These connections, but more importantly the values that forged and secured them, are the greatest part of his legacy to his students. One of Tim's many kindnesses was his willingness to broach the topic of mental health, a rarity in men of his generation. For students and particularly PhD students dealing with stress, anxiety, depression and other ailments it was tremendously reassuring to be able to talk honestly and openly about these struggles.

Tim came late to academia, but he taught archaeology at various levels and institutions throughout his career. We who were taught by him are a fortunate bunch. Within our educations in archaeology, museums and public archaeology Tim left a strand of anarchy, a delight in old places, a deeply humane philosophy of inclusivity and fairness, as well as assorted trivia about the Battle of Jutland and an inability to say the words 'National Trust' with a straight face. On behalf of a quarter-century of UCL students: thank you, Tim. It was a joy and a privilege.

Gabriel Moshenska