

A fond memory of Martin for me will always be having the pleasure of accompanying him on his ritualistic “weekend pint”. This usually took place around 3 o’clock or so on a Saturday afternoon - regardless of what the Friday night might have looked like.

This was a great education for me as a country boy new to the city. We would sit in the Beauchamp Pub on Oxford street Darlington drink beer, smoke and watch the cricket. This was the time of the great West Indies cricket team - Clive Lloyd & Co thrashing the Aussies. It was the early 80’s. Martin could read, smoke a menthol cigarette, drink and have a conversation all at the same time. We would have a chat about any topic, but we’d always seemed to end up on things like food and restaurants – the pola pola from the original Balkan on Oxford street was a favourite dish.

We also played chess on occasions, of course he would always win either in his sleep or awake.

Martin was so generous and kind, I often thought to myself how can anyone be so friendly and open. To this day I can’t say that I have ever met anyone else quite like this man.

Oh, and if that leather bag that used to hang from his left shoulder could speak, many a tale would be told.

Chris Latham