

# **Farewell to one of Britain's longest-serving independence campaigners**

We are very sad to announce the passing of Donald Martin, one of the longest-serving British independence campaigners. He died on 22 October 2019 after a long illness. The funeral was held at St Gregory's Church, Gregory Street, Sudbury, Suffolk. Our sympathy goes out to his wife Jane who was well-known to CIB members. She accompanied Donald to committee meetings during his service as chairman in 2013/14. Donald was not well then and took on the challenge of the chairmanship at a critical time in spite of the affliction of Parkinson's disease.

Donald saw the dangers in the European project from 1956 – a year before the Treaty of Rome – and was an early member of the Anti Common Market League, one of the groups which came together to form CIB in 1969. He told our AGM in 2014, "Without this cause I would not have met my wife." Jane was helping with the arrangements, noting the names of members as they arrived.

He was one of those remarkably prescient people who saw the dangers for our country and Commonwealth inherent in the European project from its very early days. He saw this from the vantage point of Brisbane, Queensland, Australia where he had decided on a change of career and obtained his discharge as an officer of the Blue Star Line. He became secretary to a trade association and State President of the Young Liberals (equivalent to the UK's Young Conservatives). Later he was director of the Queensland branch of the non-party Australian League of Rights.

Having studied the Treaty of Rome from the early Sixties,

Donald returned to England in 1970 to help the resistance in any way he could. He set up Bloomfield Books to supply “books on national and international affairs and economics, generally in the cause of freedom and personal responsibility”.

Sadly his first marriage broke up in 1976 and his wife and family returned to Australia. He married Jane Catmur in 1980. She had been active in anti Common Market Activities since the 1960s – a true meeting of minds. Donald worked closely with the late Sir Richard Body, another member of that far-seeing band of patriots whose passing we commemorated at our 2018 Annual General Meeting.

When Donald chaired our 2014 AGM, he and I were interviewed by a French lady journalist. We received her report afterwards. It was headed: “Donald and Edward, together a hundred years of Opposition to the European Project” – something which rather shocked me until I did the sums! I was serving as his Hon. Secretary which was a very rewarding, though demanding experience. By osmosis I picked up his determination that our cause would prevail and would not be deflected by any factional infighting – a lesson in even-handed, impartial chairmanship which I have tried to follow.

When the whole of the independence movement is summed up, Donald will be remembered as one of the indispensable people who, between them, gave in total millennia of individual effort and kept the flame of freedom alive through years of scorn and derision. He did it with seriousness and commitment but not without that spark of humour which is so disconcerting to our country's foes.

*Edward Spalton, Chairman, Campaign for an Independent Britain*

**Editor's note** – Edward Spalton paid tribute to Donald's decades of service to the UK independence cause at our 2015 annual rally, the video of which can be viewed here: