

Tony Marsland: born in Scotland but moved to Kidderminster in 1939.

I remember the post-war years particularly well, because as the eldest child I had lot of freedom and independence. My time (1948-1951) at King Charles 1 Grammar School, proved to be important and formative. I learned to play chess, tennis, fives, and enjoyed the Saturday morning rides with the school cycle club. I was also active in the 3rd Kidderminster Scout troop, sang with the Holy Innocents Church Choir, and helped with broadcasts on Sunday evenings to hospital patients. In those early years I delivered newspapers in the Foley Park area, before going on to school. Although not an athlete, my love of the outdoors was fostered by proximity to the “rifle range” and the “devils spade full”, and that passion remains with me.

In 1951 our family moved to Lancashire and I continued my education at Preston Grammar School, while again delivering newspapers--thus providing cash enough to cycle tour and youth hostel extensively. My best memories were of playing for the school chess team. In 1955 I went to Nottingham University to study Mathematics. With an Honours Degree in hand, in 1958 I took a Graduate Apprenticeship with English Electric in Luton/Stevenage, completing in 1960 a HNC in Mechanical Engineering through part-time study. That same year, I married Elizabeth Fox (an undergraduate friend--though studying German Literature--but also a member of the University Scout and Guide Club). In 1962, Boeing recruited me and we moved to Seattle, USA--so joining the tail end of the “brain drain”.

Quickly recognizing the importance in North America of graduate degree qualifications, I studied Electrical Engineering at the University of Washington and in 1967 completed a doctoral degree in Artificial Intelligence. During those years our family grew by two sons, and later a daughter. After working one year as an Assistant Professor I joined the Staff of Bell Laboratories in New Jersey, designing Virtual Memory Systems to support Computer Graphics. By 1970 I had become interested in Knowledge-based Learning and had written one of the early computer chess programs. This interest in Artificial Intelligence led to a

position as Associate Professor of Computing Science at the University of Alberta (Edmonton, Canada). Despite the long, dry, cold winters and warm mosquito-plagued summers, Edmonton and the University of Alberta proved to be an excellent location to raise a family, and for both husband and wife to pursue an academic career.

I spent the 1976 academic year at Imperial College (London), but could attend only one Old Carolian function--a dinner that Autumn. From 1979 I was an ACM National Lecturer on Computer Chess, and during the 1980s a frequent visitor to a Research Institute in Moscow (Russia). Later, as President of the International Computer Chess Association (1992-99), I helped with the Kasparov - Deep Blue (human vs. computer) chess matches. In 2005 I was also honoured by IBM and recognized (along with several others) to be a "Pioneer of Computing in Canada". About that time, compulsory retirement struck and with it departure from Academe to Qualicum Beach, Vancouver Island, on Canada's West Coast--noted for its English-like (mild and damp) weather. These days I am a volunteer with the Mid-Island Senior Golf Association, Parksville Probus, and the Arrowsmith Health Care Society, but particularly enjoy spending Friday mornings with our "Pacers" walking group.