

It's a privilege to stand here today and look back at Ray's time with us as a member of Ruislip and Northwood Masters Swimming Club.

Remarkably, Ray only started swimming in his fifties, so quite a late start, but once he started, he never stopped. He'd been part of a core group of members training, competing and socialising together for over 30 years.

When I looked back through the archives, the records show Ray had competed in dozens of local galas representing the club and picking up fistfuls of medals over the years.

In 2007 he fought off stiff competition to be named the club's Top Male Swimmer of the Year.

And 10 years later in 2017 he was one of a small group who competed in the prestigious National Masters Championships at Sheffield - coming back with a couple more well-earned medals.

He was a keen traveller, and loved the overseas competitions - he went to Guernsey, Dublin, Barcelona, Cadiz .... and the Isle of Wight.

I think he would have been the first to admit it's not just about the winning, it's not always just about the swimming, but being part of a team, cheering them on and congratulating other swimmers ....and all packaged up with food, wine and good company.

When he could, Ray attended most, if not all our training sessions - slogging up and down the pool often up to four times a week and on a Saturday, would be found tucking into a full English breakfast after an early morning session.

Ray also enjoyed the swim club curry evenings - a group fittingly known as Swimdaloo with rice. I don't think any swimming took place with that activity!

In the summer months he would often don his other lycra sports-kit and cycle to swimming or ride his beloved motor bike.

He was a very practical man and busy with his own projects, but always had time to help-out members and friends with their DIY or anything else he could help with.

A quiet, kind and active member of our Club in and out of the pool.

We will miss him.

