

Stuart Christie was a month younger than myself. In the summer of 1964 an extraordinary item of news hit the media. An eighteen-year old Glasgow youth had been captured in Spain in an attempt to assassinate the fascist dictator General Franco. What a hero. It is difficult to convey the pride I felt, and wonder. For my generation and older this was one of those moments imprinted in the memory. Stuart served only 4 of the 20 year sentence. His comrade in the attempt served the full period of 23 years and was subject to torture in the process. Stuart remained committed to the cause of justice, of liberty, and was active for the rest of his life. His many writings are there to be explored and nowhere better than the first volume of his autobiography: My granny made me an Anarchist. He wrote three novels and much besides, and published very many others.

Stuart was from Partick and liked staying in touch with the place and community, as far as this was possible. When he was home for a visit earlier in the year I had a couple of beers with him along Dumbarton Road. He was a Chancellor Street boy and had memories 65 years ago, waiting outside a Hyndland Street bar to get his grandpa up the road. This is why we met in the Quarter Gill pub which is one of Partick's diehard bluenose shops as any punter will tell ye. Halfway through the night Stuart said, I'm not sure this is the right place. I said he must have been thinking of the old Hyndland Bar, one of the few non-bluenose shops in the area, which was also famed as a 'threes and fives' shop for dominos. This was transformed into the Rio Cafe and is nowadays known as the Partick Duck Club.

His death has been a terrible blow to his friends, comrades and his family. It was so sudden. Although he had been diagnosed with cancer some four months earlier a proper diagnosis had yet to be made. Four weeks before he died he was still waiting to find out details on the course of treatment, whether this might entail chemo or radiotherapy. It depended on a fuller diagnosis. He mentioned this in an email to me, only four weeks before he died. I was setting off with my own family for a week over in the East Neuk, and he ended the email with this "Anyway, compadre, enjoy Crail, the grandkids and the sea. Have you read The Silver Darlings? My dad, a whitefisher from a long line of whitefishers swore it was the best book he ever read?" I confessed I hadn't read it, and hadn't read anything at all by Neil Gunn. Now I need to.

Stuart had been involved in publishing for most of his life, right up to the end. Apart from anything else he was a generous man with his time and his energy. In recent months he had been helping me personally, trying to push my out-of-print stuff into

eBook form. He was indefatigable. He just battered on and that was that, in spite of all, including the earlier death of his wife, Brenda.

Stuart was a wonderful and committed guy and people here need to come to terms with the situation facing 'wonderful and committed guys' in this society. His life is absolutely central to radical history, and not only in Scotland and the UK.

There are fine obituaries to be read online and much there to be explored and it is crucial that people do explore. His old friend Ron McKay's obituary in the Herald is a good place to start, so too Mike's at Bella Caledonia.

This day, 4th August 2020, is Stuart's funeral. He had friends and comrades all over the world whose thoughts are of him, none more than his daughter and two wee granddaughters who will miss him so badly.