



Buchanan Sharp

At the time of the sun's passing to begin winter solstice in Scotland, Buchanan Sharp died peacefully Sunday afternoon December 20, 2020 in Santa Cruz, California.

Buchanan Sharp was born in Dumbarton, Scotland on September 25, 1942 to Elizabeth Sharp (nee McFadyen) and Francis Sharp. His early years were spent roaming the vales with cousins and friends, attending John Ford cowboy movies with his beloved grandfather McFadyen, who also taught him to recite the poems and songs he performed at Halloween to earn treats. As far as Buchanan was concerned, he lived an idyllic life. Everything changed in 1955 when his family emigrated to America to escape the postwar depression, settling in Oakland, California after a hot, muggy year in New Jersey. He attended Castlemont High School in Oakland and would often come home in the afternoon to watch 1950's era Rock n' Roll on American Bandstand with his mother.

Having excelled in school Buchanan started at UC Berkeley (UCB) at a young age, nearly failing his freshman year playing more pool than studying. Accidentally taking a history class taught by his future mentor and PhD advisor, Thomas Barnes, Buchanan was hooked forever. He graduated UCB with a BA degree in history, January 1964; earned a master's degree at the University of Illinois, June 1965; and a PhD in history from UCB, December 1971. His 40-year teaching and research career at UCSC was launched when he was hired before he even completed his dissertation. Buchanan became a naturalized citizen in August 2016; he voted in only one national election, but he had a deep knowledge of American politics and if asked, would give a thoughtful, informed opinion.

Buchanan Sharp was admired—and loved—by colleagues who knew him well. To a wider circle of acquaintances he was a blunt, plain-spoken Scot whose integrity, fairness, good judgement and clarity of mind became almost legendary at UCSC. A dedicated citizen of the university community, he was widely respected and over the years he was repeatedly asked to assume key administrative responsibilities, including chair of the history department and acting dean of humanities. He also served systemwide as one of the editors for UC Press—a position he absolutely loved.

Buchanan was as generous to the institution that he served as he was in his personal life to family and friends. His unselfish devotion to the collective enterprise enriched the entire community. Although Buchanan liked to describe himself as a “parish pump” historian, his range as a teacher was broad. He taught early modern Europe, medieval English history, Dutch and Scottish history, as well as a co-taught course in early California history and literature that included field trips to mining towns in the Sierras.

Buchanan devoted his research career to the exploration of popular unrest in late medieval and early modern England. His first work, *In Contempt of All Authority. Rural Artisans in the West of England, 1586-1660*, appeared in 1980. It was a study, based on massive archival research, of an important phase in the long history of food riots and anti-Enclosure riots in early modern England. In his final work, *Famine and Scarcity*