

Dad's Eulogy

Unsurprisingly this is not an easy thing to write, and not just for the obvious reasons, but because there is just so much about his life to talk about. It's been hard leave out so much about Dad and try to do him justice in such a short amount of time. But also I know the last thing Dad would want was anyone to make a fuss over him.

So I apologise if this all seems rather disjointed and all over the place as this is less of a script and more of a collections of memories about a man that continually discovered new interests and passions throughout his life and therefor collected the diverse group of friends that are here today, plus the many more that aren't.

Dad met Mum in December 1964 at an 18+ Christmas ball in Tunbridge Wells and they married in July 1974. He was a father to Richard and me, and became a grandfather just over 2 years ago to Richard and Kacy's daughter, Ivy.

He went to work in the London Baltic Exchange until 1989, but then returned briefly to help as consultant for his last company, where I'm sure he negotiated a very lucrative deal in his favour.

Following this period, he became an HGV driver. Probably for no other reason than to feed his desire to travel. Often heading across Europe to ski slopes and historic battle locations, along with driving aid to Romania. Given half a chance he would probably be somewhere between here and Ukraine at the moment.

Everybody that knew Julian knew that technology was his nemesis, well technology and governmental departments. As the world became more controlled he found it harder to live under the radar. Sticking to the laws and rules that suit and offering a passing nod to the ones that don't. But as time went on I'd start to receive the odd email usually referring to a classic car that he was looking for and if I should chance

across one to let him know. And then came the online auction sites and I feel a sense of mutual understanding between man and IT finally occurred.

A negotiator. He was an expert at negotiating deals. A skill no doubt developed during his time at the Baltic Exchange and continued throughout his life. Given the chance he'd attempt to strike deal at Starbucks for a coffee. We can all agree if, had he been involved in organising today, the funeral directors would more likely now be proud owners of an antique fire arm or random memorabilia rather than a healthier bank account.

He hated to pay for parking tickets, apparently this started back when he and a friend would drive through the parking barriers at Paddock Wood station bumper to bumper to avoid the fees. One of his best tricks I remember was walking into Goodwood with a jerry can half full of petrol stating he needed to get in to refill his car and of course no he didn't have his ticket to hand. Where ever he is now I like to imagine rather than pay the ferryman he's talked his way into sharing a boat that's already crossing.

An Adventurer. Julian was not what you would call your typical professional adventurer. There was no meticulous planning before a trip, no assembling a team, in fact probably no actual end goal. Most of the time the journey was the adventure, an AA road map, a sleeping bag, box of tools and turning left or right out of the drive was the extent of the plan. But he was never short of company for these trips and there are far too many stories to include here.

A friend. I'll leave the details of Dad as a friend to Kevin to describe in a bit, but we can agree no matter how much he would balk at the cost of a cup of tea or how much time it takes to get somewhere on the roads these days, he would drop what he was doing at a moment's notice to help you out wherever you were. There would be no hesitation and it didn't matter if it was financial help or a desperate need for the 'mostly working' car trailer that he had... and most importantly you would never hear him mention it again.

A description of Julian from one of his friends who, many years ago, went to pick up an old Austin Champ from somewhere near Lincolnshire and Julian went along just because it probably sounded like an adventure. They described the return trip after picking up the car and looking in the back to see Julian in an old flying jacket, wind in his hair and grinning from ear to ear.

He spent a lot of time at various car shows with friends and would repeatedly go home with an award for the most unusual entry. Often hanging back while groups of people admired whichever vehicle he'd brought to display then spring forward with grin on his face firing it up to the amazement of everyone watching.

As a father. It sounds cheesy and cliché to say your father is your hero, but who is a better hero to a boy than the man that puts you on a motorbike before you can tie your own shoelaces (although I think Mum may have made sure I could); teaches you to drive by tying blocks of wood to the peddles of a 1943 Dodge Command Car; and has the uncanny ability to get any engine running no matter what its condition was and usually not just to the amazement of me but also all my assembled friends. An example that sticks with me to this day is how he taught me that if the choke is broken on the same Dodge Command Car you can get it started by asking your son to cover the top of the carburettor with your hand and figure out how to control the mix of fuel to air all the while thinking your hand will either get sucked in to the engine or the engine will blow back and blow your hand off. Why a block of wood wouldn't have worked was beyond me at the time.

He never failed to have advice on any subject and was usually always right. It's often the simple things that stick in your memory for example, when I asked Richard, it was being able to make tin foil pop at Christmas, which he still has no clue how he did it. Also from Richard "I remembered when we were out in France on the river and everyone went up to get Crepes in the town but I didn't want to go. I changed I mind and remember feeling really sad I couldn't go. Dad was happy to drive me up there. It always reminds me of how he'd do anything to make sure we were ok and

happy. Dad never hesitated to show off pulling wheelies to all our friends when they came over...”

Other examples are the countless times I would break down in the jeep or a random car in the middle of nowhere – usually in the middle of the night. I never needed the RAC or AA as Dad was always at the end of the phone. When the same jeep caught fire in France near Abbeville and I had to abandon the motorbikes and the jeep, a week or so later he just happened to be heading south in France and just picked up the bikes on the trailer... He then abandoned them even further south making the retrieve that little bit longer.

The pandemic on the whole has pretty much been a disaster with almost nothing good to mention from it except one thing. Being stuck in the UK for 3 months in early 2020 I got to spend the time with Dad working on various cars and motorbikes in the collection and reliving a life from 30+ years ago. He still had that same passion and knowledge from all those years ago. Nothing had changed. In Dad’s mind if it started and had the vaguest possibility of stopping that was enough. I’m sure he owned a tin of car polish but if it didn’t help get the car started then it didn’t need using.

A Husband. I’ll close with a final story that mum told me a long time ago. I think it was on their honeymoon but could just as easily be any trip down through France. She described to me how Dad navigated his way south through Paris taking back streets left and right without hesitation. She described how impressed she was that he knew his way through Paris so well. When in truth Dad was just doing what he did best and was simply following the sun south.

This is how I will remember him, the way he lived his life and the lessons he taught me, and I hope many of you do too. You don’t need a map or a route guide to life and there’s certainly no GPS. If you’re happy with the direction you’re going in then just keep going. I never heard him say a bad word about anyone and nothing was ever a problem to him, and if it was you’d never know.