



A THANKSGIVING SERVICE FOR THE LIFE OF  
**GERALD JAMES DERBYSHIRE**

21st July 1927 - 9th August 2020

St Mary and St Michael's Roman Catholic Church, Garstang  
Tuesday 1st September 2020 at 11.30 am

Conducted by Father Geoffrey Steele

## MY GRANDAD - IAIN

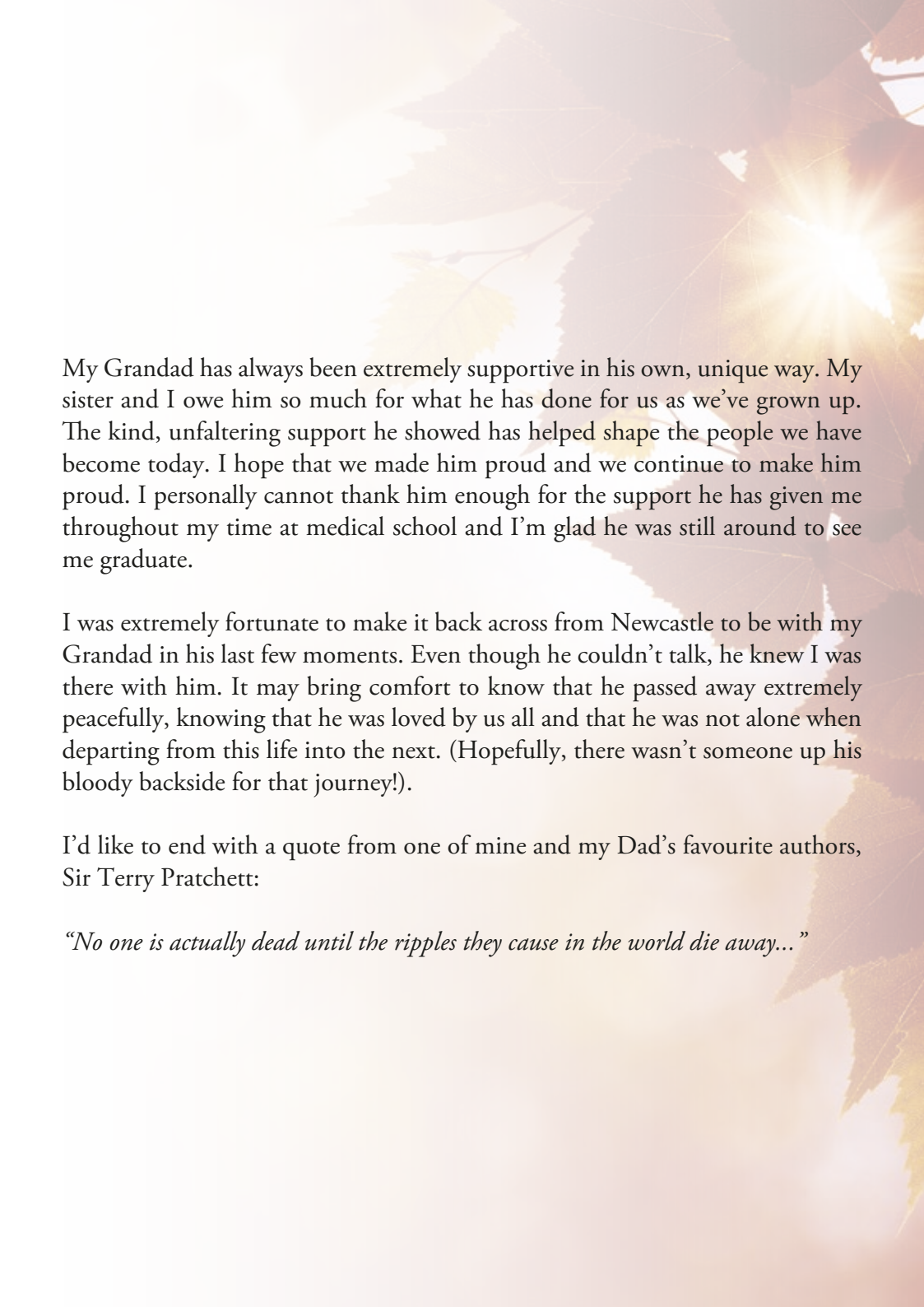
My first memories of my Grandad are of a quiet, gentle giant. He didn't say much, but then he didn't have too as my Nana did most of the talking. I remember him sat in his chair, his black rimmed glasses on, either reading the paper; watching tv; sleeping or mashing tomato ketchup into his food! Which is why my Mum and Sister hate tomato ketchup, that didn't put me off though!

When he did speak it was always educational, showing me his latest project, how he went about painstakingly planning it, drawing it to full scale, making prototypes and finally making the finished piece. He never did anything in a rush and everything was done to a thousandth of an inch!

Over the years my Grandad has taught me the importance and beauty in a job well done and even though not all of his meticulous preparation, scaling or accuracy has rubbed off his passion for creating has. He has undoubtedly expanded my knowledge and understanding of all things DIY, woodwork and engineering.

When I was a young boy, I remember fondly many day trips to Blackpool, Lytham and the surrounding area with my Nana and Grandad. Grandad always did the driving (I was too young at the time) and sometimes our journeys took us a little longer than usual and involved a few missed turns along the way. Grandad was a rather slow and steady motorist and a favourite excuse of his often came out during the detours... "I can't turn right now there's someone up my bloody backside!" We went left... a lot!

I really started to get to know my Grandad in the years after my Nana passed away. He came out of his shell somewhat and would tell stories about his childhood and the time in all the foreign, exotic countries he lived in. He talked about the marines, his time at British Aerospace and his family and friends. He obviously still talked about his projects which now included even more detail! Numbered notebooks, written methodology, all explained with enthusiasm and love. Not just for the process of creation and planning but in an attempt to pass these skills onto me. He showed love by teaching others about the things he loved.



My Grandad has always been extremely supportive in his own, unique way. My sister and I owe him so much for what he has done for us as we've grown up. The kind, unfaltering support he showed has helped shape the people we have become today. I hope that we made him proud and we continue to make him proud. I personally cannot thank him enough for the support he has given me throughout my time at medical school and I'm glad he was still around to see me graduate.

I was extremely fortunate to make it back across from Newcastle to be with my Grandad in his last few moments. Even though he couldn't talk, he knew I was there with him. It may bring comfort to know that he passed away extremely peacefully, knowing that he was loved by us all and that he was not alone when departing from this life into the next. (Hopefully, there wasn't someone up his bloody backside for that journey!).

I'd like to end with a quote from one of mine and my Dad's favourite authors, Sir Terry Pratchett:

*"No one is actually dead until the ripples they cause in the world die away..."*

## EULOGY

read by Lorraine, daughter

My dad was born on July 21st, 1927 in Marylebone London. He had a long, good life that he lived to the full, enjoying time with his family and friends.

Dad had an interesting childhood. His father was a sergeant in the East Lancashire regiment and dad spent many of his early years abroad. From 1933 to 1937, he lived in China, firstly in Shanghai, then Hong Kong and finally Kowloon.

The next regimental posting was in India, where the family lived for three years. He had many stories to tell of his childhood there. One story I particularly remember him telling the family was that his mother sent him on an errand to the local shop to collect a joint of meat that she was going to cook for Sunday lunch. The said joint never did receive the roasting. On his way back from the shop, with joint in hand, a large eagle swooped down and stole it from him. His mother was furious with him and gave him what we used to call “a pasting” for being so careless.

In 1940, the regiment was moved out of India to Scotland, but the journey was not without adventure and luck. Service families including my dad's were shipped out to Bombay by train. However, on the train journey through the Sind dessert, the restaurant car became detached and so the train had to pull into a siding and go back for it. This caused my dad and family to miss the first sailing, which should have been on the “Empress of Britain”. On this voyage, the ship was torpedoed and sunk in the English Channel on 26th October 1940. Fortunately, most passengers and crew survived, but still dad had a lucky escape. His story may have ended then. The ship he did sail back to Scotland on was the “Orcades”.

Dad, sister Freda, brother Ross and their mother went to live with the Druces in Slough, Buckinghamshire during the war. Dad learned about gardening from Jim Bruce, which he enjoyed doing most of his life, especially after he retired.

When dad was 14, he went to work at High Duty Alloys in Slough as an apprentice and there he learnt to use a lathe, which was useful for his future career, as a Turner.

At 18, he was called up for National service and joined the Marines. He sailed on the HMS Diadem until November 1947, visiting many ports mainly in South Africa. He really enjoyed his time on the ship and we have many photos of him, with crew members, larking about and even one photo of the crew catching a large Tiger shark, whilst on the ship.

Upon demob in 1945, he went to live at Fulwood Barracks in Preston, with his mum and dad. He renewed his apprenticeship training with English Electric (later to become British Aerospace), qualifying as a skilled Turner when he was 22 years old. Dad worked on the shop floor for 20 years, but then was asked to use his skills and knowledge to teach apprentices machine engineering, which he did for 22 years. He taught over 2,000 apprentices and he is fondly remembered by many to this day. He finally retired in 1989, when he was 62.

Whilst at English Electric dad met my mum as she worked on the same shop floor as dad. Mum and dad were married in August 1950 and went to live in St. Peter's Square in Preston.

My brother Paul and I were born while mum and dad lived in St. Peter's Square. Paul in 1951 and myself in 1957. I remember having many happy years there, as we could play out in the street, with no fear of traffic, as only the wealthy could afford a car.

In 1965, dad and mum moved to West Park Ave, Ashton and he lived there until he was 90. Mum passed away in 2000, so dad was on his own, but he managed very well. He had an active social life, going to the Marriott gym until he was 90 and playing bingo a few times a week. He had good neighbours, Steve and Carole who kept an eye on him. He always came every week to our house on Sunday for dinner, where he would go through what he had been up to the previous week.

Dad was a very practical person. He could make anything and enjoyed always having projects on the go, especially in relation to woodworking. He made a circular saw from scratch to help with his woodwork projects. Over the years he made me a music jewellery box ( which I thought was the best present ever), a dolls house (that Zoe also played with), Paul a fort, grandfather clocks, other furniture and ornaments such as a brass cannon with wooden undercarriage and a Haywain cart finished with a Beswick pottery horse that he made all the bridle-ware for.

If anyone wanted items repairing, he always could help. Dad was also handy with a needle and thread and had a sewing machine. He used to alter his clothes and Iain always gave him his favourite jeans to repair. When he lived at Bushell's (he moved there in December 2017), many of the residents used to take him clothes to alter- trousers to shorten, garments to repair. They rewarded him with chocolates, with which having a sweet tooth, he was grateful for.

At Bushell's there was a weekly quiz and dad really enjoyed taking part. The residents were given the questions and they had a few days to complete the quiz. Obviously, there was not to be any cheating, but everyone did! Jacqueline, Eric and myself had to help him with some of the questions. If he did not win, he would blame us for not having the right answer.

Over dad's lifetime, he had many holidays, mostly with mum and other family members. Dad and mum used to holiday with my mum's sister Veronica and her husband Jack. They used to go to Pontins Holiday Camp at Squires Gate, like so many in those days. One year there was a fancy- dress competition and Jack dressed up as Stan Laurel and my dad as Oliver Hardy and they won first prize. That was the highlight of their holiday.

As a child, I remember holidays to Blackpool and Morecambe. We did not venture very far, but then my dad learned to drive and bought a Vauxhall Viva. We then tried camping holidays, however, it took us ages to drive anywhere, as if we needed to make a turn off onto another road, my dad would say "I can't turn right now, there is someone up my backside". Dad was not a confident driver.

Eric and I, with Zoe and Iain, had many family holidays with dad and mum mainly going to Spain, Greece and Portugal. Paul also joined us on some occasions. One year when Zoe was about 3 years old, we were on a beach in Raffini, Greece where ships also docked. Dad was swimming in the sea, he was, as you will remember, quite a large man. Zoe shouted to him, “grandad come out of the water the ship wants to dock”. As the saying goes “out of the mouth of babes...” Dad was also known within our family group, as the “big white hunter” when we were on holiday, as he was always miles ahead on walks and used to wear a large hat and baggy shorts, like he was on a safari.

In later years, when mum passed away, dad joined us on cruise holidays, which he thoroughly enjoyed, the last one was in 2015 when we went to Iceland and the Norwegian Fjords. He also came with us on our yearly skiing holidays in Austria. He didn't ski, but enjoyed the hotel we stayed in, the swimming pool, the wellness area and also the Apres ski!

In June 2019, he moved to Cornmill Residential home, as he needed nursing care. Family and friends visited regularly, until the onset of Coronavirus, when we resorted to FaceTime and phone calls to keep in contact with him. This was his final resting place.

I hope you have enjoyed this snap-shot of dad's life. He was a unique, generous and remarkable man.

## POEM

### Requiem

read by Zoe, granddaughter

Under the wide and starry sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie.  
Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:  
Here he lies where he longed to be;  
Home is the sailor, home from sea,  
And the hunter home from the hill.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*



Gerald's family would like to thank you all for attending today and for your kind words of comfort at this difficult time.

Donations in memory of Gerald, if so desired are gratefully received for **Age UK**.

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