

## GUY JACOT

It is wonderful to see so many people, from the many chapters of my father's life, gathered here today. On behalf of the family, I would like to thank you for coming to this service to say a fond farewell to Guy. I know that some have travelled a great distance to be here today and that means a lot to us.

Thank you for your many messages of love and support and thank you for all the practical help that so many of you have given.

Thank you to the Tyndale Hospice at home team and to the District nurses in Humshaugh for the excellent care you gave my father and the comfort you gave to my mother. Also to our dear friend and neighbour Marjorie. You have given help, advice and comfort way beyond any expectation, helping unflinchingly in the care of our father. Thank you.

Margret asked me too, to thank Mr Macgowan, the consultant cardiologist at Newcastle, who has, for the last twelve years, guided my father through his treatment, enabling him to remain active for so long after his heart condition was diagnosed.

You are all warmly invited to the village hall after the service to share some food and any memories you have of Guy.

My father was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1937, to Paul and Claire Jacot. Though his parents at the time were living in Grasse, in the south of France, they travelled to the UK for his birth. They were later to do the same for his sister Fleur when she was born. This meant that both my father and Fleur, despite living in France, would have a British passport.

For those of you who know of my father's penchant for doing things his way, we may well see this sneaky acquisition of a UK passport at the very beginning of his life as the first of many somewhat rebellious acts for which he was directly or indirectly responsible.

I shall throw in some others that have been drawn to my attention as I tell you more about him.

He spent his childhood with his sister Fleur at Grasse, living in a villa

which still has a large tree growing in the garden planted to mark his birth. More than 60 years later, Guy and Fleur visited their childhood house with Margret, and Fleur tells me the delight Guy had in finding all those secret places in the garden that he knew as a child. Considering Grasse was the perfume capital of France my mind conjures up a feast of flowers and fragrances which will have bought back many happy memories for both Guy and Fleur during their visit.

In 1946, the family moved to England. As a family we have a bit of an obsession for family trees; *who lived where and when, what they achieved and so on -I suppose all families have their good and less good characteristics to pass onto the next generation!*

A cousin of ours discovered through her research into the family that Guy and Margret were related - they shared the same great-great-great grandparents. In the April of 1954 an opportunity was arranged for Guy to visit Margret's family, the Winglers, who lived in Germany.

My father was supposed to be visiting Margret's twin brother Frank, but (and for those of you who know my mother well) it was Margret who organised, arranged and planned everything. To cut a long story short, my father and mother fell in love and, after a ride on horseback for questioning as to his suitability from Margret's father, plans were made and my parents were married in 1961.

They had three boys - Mark was born in 1962, then Frank in 1964 - Oh, and I popped out 4 minutes later. The doctor on duty at the time was adamant that my mother was only carrying one child and not twins, but always keen for a bargain, my parents were going for the Buy One, Get One Free offer in the children's department.

In 1971, My father's work took him out to Kenya. For us this was one fantastic adventure with weekends spent exploring game reserves, going to the coast and climbing mountains. My father was an assertive driver and if the road was blocked he would go off piste, or "Bundu bashing" as we called it. VW camper vans are not really built with off-roading in mind and I do remember on one occasion hearing a strange rattling noise coming from below my seat as we were speeding down the road. We stopped and found three of the four wheel nuts loose inside the

hubcap of the rear wheel. We would drive across a dry river bed to find minutes later we could not get back as the rain storm a few miles away had caused the dry bed to fill with a raging torrent of water. None of this seemed to phase either of my parents and their relaxed attitude to danger almost landed us in hot water from time to time.

My parents gave us a love for the “out doors“. For one who suffered from vertigo, my father’s love of mountains and hills was remarkable - but then he did marry my mother, for whom the words “not possible” don’t seem to appear in my father’s German/English dictionary. Incidentally, I still have that dictionary and in it are a selection of stamps from the many love letters sent to him by my mother.

Guy was renowned for what is now referred to in the family as an *illegal purchase*. The definition of an *illegal purchase* is a bargain, or item in the sale that, to the male hunter-gatherer is a necessity, but is generally considered by the female nest builder to be a waste of money. It is usually bought on a whim, without communication, consultation with, or authority from the female.

Daddy’s purchases were quite small in the beginning, with trips to Aldi for beer and Montepulciano wine. His grandchildren always noticed with amusement how he would sneak an extra glass of wine or beer at meals, despite being restricted, because of his medication, to the amount of alcohol he could consume.

Going back to the *illegal purchases*, more gadgets followed, such as a dandelion remover for the garden. He then moved on to electrical items, including an electric saw and a bread maker. My father’s love for a bargain has rubbed off on Mark and I suspect that he had a hand in acquiring many of these items that would find their way back to the house.

If it was in the sale, this could sometimes pacify my mother, or if she could be persuaded of it’s benefit for her, such as mass storage for her fabulous photo collection, then this was tolerated. That is why there is a new computer, a slide scanner, an SD card reader and a new laptop to display the photos in PowerPoint presentations via the HDMI lead bought

to connect to the new High Definition Television.

The final and biggest illicit purchase was a new car. Margret had been trying to drive with a damaged shoulder so naturally my father was not only telling her how to drive, but was also doing the gear changing for her, So it was decided to get an automatic car and that had to be a new one. Like his father, Paul, Guy was incredibly organised and, for such a tidy person, a second hand car was out of the question.

In the last few weeks of his life, restriction on alcohol was lifted -after all he didn't have a liver problem! In fact the last time he ate and drunk was in the early hours of the morning when despite being almost in a coma earlier on in the week, he was now aware of a desire for more wine and olives. Rebellious to the end he deliberately did not wake my mother, knowing she would disapprove, took himself to the kitchen, had a glass of the finest red, which Marjorie next door had secretly acquired for him, accompanied by a bowl of marinated olives and cloves of garlic. Then he went to the bathroom to shampoo his before going back to bed!

But it wasn't only wine, garlic, olives, illicit purchases and interesting driving that defined Guy: In St Paul's letter to the Corinthians, read to us a moment ago, Paul talks about the qualities of love.

*Love is kind.* My father was a kind man - he noticed the least among a group of people and found something positive to say to them, to encourage them.

*Love does not envy:* My Dad was more than happy with his lot. He was very proud of his children and grandchildren and of their achievements. He loved to show them how to do things. We have a lovely photo of Sam, learning from his Grandpa how to saw wood - my father with an electric saw - (this would have been a secret purchase from Aldi) and Sam with a small hand saw. Guy loved to share his knowledge with his children and grandchildren, always ready to point out something interesting to see when out on a drive, even if the hands came off the steering wheel to do so!

*Love does not boast:* Guy was not one to talk about his own achievements - in fact he specifically requested that I should not catalogue his accomplishments, so I won't (too much!) But many of you

here today will know that my father put a lot into the community and so helped many people.

*Love is patient:* Mmmm... My father was not always patient - phrases such as “Sunday drivers” spring to mind when he was trying to get somewhere too fast. Fleur reminds me that only a week or so before he stopped driving, they both went to pick my mother up from the airport. Those of you here today who have done this run know you can avoid the parking charge at the airport by waiting at the garden centre nearby. Guy also made use of the free parking, but also chose to enter the garden centre via the exit road. That nearly caused an accident. On the way back home, on the A69, Fleur felt Guy was driving quite fast. She glanced at the speedometer and felt compelled to ask Guy to slow down - he was doing 90mph!

*Love is not easily angered* -Well, I have to say that he slipped up on that one from time to time - I do remember the occasional outburst and, on one occasion a mug flying through the air at Mark. The dent still remains in the wooden floor of the house in Stapleford.

One of Guy’s last conversations with Margret spoke of the 60 years they had known and been in love with each other. “We have always loved each other,” he said to Margret, “We have always been faithful to each other and of this there has never been any doubt.”

It is well worth asking of ourselves, “What will I be remembered for?” St Paul gives us a good list: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Guy loved music. Music was a bond and passion for my parents. They listened to classical music, particularly choral music and where ever they lived, they always sang in the local choir and choral society. To misquote Rogers and Hammerstein - “The house was alive with the sound of music!” My father chose all the music and readings for this service including the piece sung for us by The North Tyne and Redewater Choral Society which John will conduct for us in a moment. Thank you for being here today.

My father did have another skill that he rarely talked about - always keen on woodwork, making things for the home and keen to learn more, Guy joined an adult evening class in 1976 in Cambridge, to learn to make a violin. This hobby occupied him for the next 10 years or so. He made this violin, this cello and this viola and started on another violin to complete a string quartet. Sadly moving away from Cambridge meant that the second violin

was never finished, but there are plans to have the instrument completed.

A legacy of an exquisite item of hand crafted furniture is a joy in itself, as each of these instruments took over a hundred hours to carve, construct, and polish. But to leave behind a legacy of a collection of musical instruments, including, by the way, a harpsichord, that are played and loved, that bring joy not only to the player, but comfort, entertainment, harmony and the art of music to so many hundreds of people, is for me truly humbling.

Shortly after my father died, a friend of mine said the following words, which are a great comfort to me: “Every time you play your violin, you will hear your father speaking.”

If we want to hear Guy’s passion, his love and his kindness, it is to be found in our memories of him and in the sweet music that flows from his instruments.