

Eulogy for Jock McCall Gardner - 14th July 1941 - 30th July 2017.

14th August 2017 - 10.00am at Mintlyn Crematorium, King's Lynn.

Hazel Warken, Civil Funeral Celebrant.

On behalf of Annie and family, I thank you for your presence here for this ceremony which is to pay tribute to Jock and to say our final farewell to him in the spirit of celebration and respect.

As a poignant start to our proceedings, family members acted as Pall Bearers and escorted Jock into the chapel on the final part of his journey.

During our ceremony we will reflect on the ways that Jock touched each of your lives; a time to listen to reminiscences, and carefully selected music; putting all these together helps to portray a rounded picture of the person that he was.

A man who could talk to anyone who would listen, once Jock got going there was no stopping him, as he made it pretty difficult for anyone else to get a word in edgeways. His main topics were money, chickens, allotment and work, not necessarily in the same order. And because he still had his broad Scottish accent, some people found it hard to understand what he was saying! There were times when Jock came across as being serious but underneath there was a good heart. He was also a cleverly quiet man who would quite happily keep himself to himself, was socially at his best with people he knew well.

Generally speaking, a fairly traditional gentleman in his thoughts, ways and dress code, smartly turned out at all times. Jock either wore a suit or a jacket even in the scorching heat of summer he'd still be wearing one. Jock also believed strongly in core values, I don't think you could have found a more hardworking, dedicated husband, father or committed family man, the impact he made on their lives was immeasurable, his death has left a void that no one can fill.

But he will be forever remembered as the loving husband of Annie, much loved dad of Hayley, Ian, Paul, Neil, Marie and Martin, a dear father in law, grandad and great grandad. Jock will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

John McCall Gardner, one of 7, was born in Blackburn Scotland on 14th July 1941, the eldest brother of Maureen, Kathleen, Evelyn, Jimmy (deceased) Gerrard and Gardner. Jock was proud of his Scottish heritage, the sound of bag pipes always stirred fond sentiments, that is why they were playing as he arrived at the doors of the chapel and will be heard again in the flower court afterwards.

Jock grew up in Scotland, after leaving school he got a job on the railways in Edinburgh. Then aged 18 decided to join the RAF. During his 12 years' service he rose to the rank of Corporal, his trade was as an aircraft engineer technician.

It was whilst based at Marham that he met Annie, the rest as they say is history. They married on 3rd July 1965. This led on to 53 happy years of married life. Initially living in married quarters, but after leaving the forces in 1971, lived in North Lynn, South Lynn then bought their present home on Fairstead.

Being employable and a workaholic Jock was never out of work. He always had something lined up and as soon as he was demobbed got offered a job at the Docks, he was a crane inspector for 28 years. There are many stories to be told here, like the time Jock was overseeing the unloading of Skoda cars. As the Russian ship's crew were on piecework they wanted to get finished quickly, once they had Jock got invited to the Captain's deck where he had a drink or two, because of this Neil and Ian had to go and pick Dad up!

Jock used to cycle to work, for a joke one day his workmates turned the handlebars round, it was quite a sight watching him trying to ride and push at the same time! There were other incidences mostly after Jock had had a tippie or two, on these occasions he'd 'walk his bike home', as he did so he fell over into the hedgerows and dykes, arriving at the door scratched and bruised!

In 1999 Jock was given the opportunity to apply for severance, he subsequently left the Dock having completed 28 years' service whilst in the position of Chargehand Crane Inspector/Fitter. Jock then went to HL Foods, Methwold, from there he went on to Campbell's staying with this company until he retired at the age of 65. Wherever Jock worked he was a loyal, conscientious employee, a "workaholic" and having a family to provide for Jock never took a day off sick.

Family:

The father of Hayley, Ian, Paul, Neil, Marie and Martin he was a good provider and dad but could have a no-nonsense approach to discipline at times, he instilled in his children from a young age his principles and beliefs which were - to have sound morals and manners. Nevertheless, he did his best by his children, always there when needed he'd help them out in any way he could. A vivid memory all his children have of dad when they were younger - was his smelly socks!

Jock kept an allotment, he spent a great deal of his spare time there tending to his patch, which provided the household with a constant supply of vegetables and fruit, some of which was used to make homemade wine. When Martin was about 3 he climbed up onto the sideboard and drank the contents of the Decanter, he was one drunk toddler!

When they could afford to Jock and Annie took their children back to Scotland to visit relatives or to holiday parks. He would often take a week's holiday off work to go strawberry picking to earn extra money.

Jock's Son Neil said:

So what else about Jock – In the 70s/80s Jock's social outlet was singing. You usually heard him before you saw him. Jock and his buddy Pat, whom he met in the RAF, would go out together every other weekend for a bit of karaoke singing, often with his other mates Alan, George, and Reg.

They performed karaoke at a number of clubs and pubs all over the county and by doing so soon built up a following. Jock continued doing this right up until he suffered his first stroke. Music was a strong thread through Jock's life, he had wide-ranging tastes, whilst out in the car with Annie would have the radio blaring and would sing along to the tracks. He was the same at parties, once the music started you would hear his voice, which got louder after a brandy or a Navy Rum!

Jock enjoyed watching everything on TV from sitcoms such as Only Fools and Horses to sport,

especially Formula 1, and football. He also liked series such as Dr Who and Star Trek. Jock was pretty good with the controller and the facility teletext which enabled him to receive printed news information as well as graphics on the screen, Jock liked to know what was going on in the world, that is why he took a daily newspaper, and routinely did the lottery every week.

As a couple Jock and Annie liked going out on trips to Scotland and Scarborough until his health prevented them from travelling too far.

Dogs – his home was never without one, there was Spike (who used to take Jock for a walk); then there was Ruby, a King's Charles Spaniel, which Jock bought for Annie as a Christmas present.

After retiring Jock's personality mellowed and he laughed more, Marie often had dad in stitches. He had more time for everyone and looked forward to seeing his 14 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren at family gatherings, always interested to know how they were getting on.

Over a succession of time Jock had 3 mini-strokes ,he then broke his hip, though he recovered, progressively Jock was showing signs that all was not right, eventually dementia was diagnosed, and full time residential care was recommended.

Jock became a resident of Orchard House and seemed reasonably happy there and would tell his wife and children when they visited what was going on and how he the liked listening to Banjo man and participating in karaoke sessions. Needing to have a care re-assessment Jock was admitted into the Cavell Centre Peterborough, which is where aged 76 years Jock passed unexpectedly but peacefully away on the 30th July 2017. On that day this world lost a devoted family man and generous friend. Although Jock is no longer a visible part of your lives, he will always remain in your memories.

Summing up Hazel Warken, Civil Funeral Celebrant:

So we say to Jock - we are glad that you lived, that we saw your face, heard your voice, enjoyed your friendship and walked the way of life with you. We value the memory of your words, deeds and character. In love and appreciation, we say farewell to John McCall Gardner, wishing it were not so but remembering the good times shared.