

Uncle Tony

There were five children in our family. Molly, our half sister, then Betty, John, Joe and myself. Being the youngest I was spoilt and must have been a sore trial to the family, especially to Joe. We lived in West Ham, East London. but during the war we were evacuated three or four times, often being separated, but that's another story. It was probably not until our brother John died, aged 19, in a car accident in Dublin that Joe and I formed such a close bond.

Joe had a way of sharing his many enthusiasms with me and his long standing interest in fish could have started with our tiddler fishing in the ponds of Wanstead Park. Other great interests were music of all sorts, which led to his love of morris dancing and the bagpipes. I wasn't able to pass on to Joe my obsession with flying but he did just once, reluctantly, take a trip with me in a Tiger Moth.

He was Best Man at my wedding and I at his. He was also Godfather to our four children.

He has been a good friend to all his nephews and nieces and their families and always took an interest in their welfare and activities.

Over the years Joe has been a fount of knowledge and helped me in many ways. I shall miss him.

Helena

Dad was such a modest man that many of you may not know much about his work life: in fact, there was a lot that I didn't know until now. He was a geneticist by training and studied in Durham, Cambridge, Trinidad and North Carolina, obtaining a BSc in botany, diplomas in agriculture, a doctorate in genetics and being awarded the highest doctorate (a DSc) from Southampton University for his work on the genetics and evolution of crop plants. He wrote, edited and contributed to numerous books and articles on this subject, and later on goldfish genetics and breeding. Despite all this, one of his proudest achievements was way back during his colonial service in Zambia. He used his genetic expertise to produce a new variety of groundnut, an important high-protein tropical food crop known better to you and I as the humble peanut. This new type of peanut gave the world's highest recorded crop yield, with the potential to contribute to the fight against hunger in the tropics.

As well as his academic pursuits, Dad was a man of many other enthusiasms and was always very generous with his time. He founded Southampton University's first Morris troupe, the Red Stags, and was President of the Goldfish Society, in addition to his various contributions to parish life. He was the perfect gentleman and had a wonderful, beaming smile.

But above all, he was totally devoted to his family: he always found the time to be the best, most patient, caring and delightfully witty Dad ever.

Fran

Dad had more admirable and loveable qualities than I have time to mention, and it has been moving to hear how very fondly he will be remembered by all who knew him. The quality of his which has

provided me with the dearest memories is his phenomenal command of the English language and wonderful turn of phrase – Dad was never full, he'd had an "elegant sufficiency"! And only recently he expressed his surprise that my ponytail was my "actual, factual hair"! His love of language has impacted on me enormously throughout my life and I know that he was impressed with both my and Helena's writing styles, which I believe are in no small part down to his influence. So I want to honour him and remember him now with the beautiful words of a poem given to me by a friend who has also lost her Daddy:

Your painful days are over now,
Your restless nights have passed;
God has gently closed your eyes
And given you peace at last.

Sad are the hearts that loved you,
Silent the tears that fall;
Living our lives without you
Is the hardest part of all.

You gave us years of happiness,
Then sorrow came with tears;
You have left us lovely memories
We'll treasure through the years.

There's a beautiful path in a wonderful land
Where God and you walk hand in hand.
How lucky he is to have such a treasure!
Take care of him, Lord, forever and ever.