

Our tribute to Dad

Everyone here will have their own special memories of Dad, either as a husband, father, brother or as your grandfather, Papoune. To us all he was a family man; one of a team of two with Mum. For me and my brothers he was, above all, a gentle, caring and kind father. He was thoughtful and honest...a man of strong principles.

Dad enjoyed simple pleasures. A shared smile with Mum; a clear night sky; a kiss from a daughter-in-law. A good plate of soup, served piping hot of course, or his porridge for breakfast, which he had soaked overnight; a walk in the wind; a fresh baguette from his favourite baker in Annecy; hiding Easter eggs for us and his grandchildren, some of these to be found 6 months later. He found it easy to smile and taught us how to appreciate the good things in life.

He always seemed to have time. Not for him the hurried tearing open of a birthday present. The label would be carefully inspected. If this was hand-drawn it would often give as much pleasure as the gift itself. He would surgically remove the wrapping paper with a sharp knife, pausing along the way to wonder what was in the package. When the contents became clear there was always great satisfaction.

He taught us to share his many interests and passions. His love of nature, the planet and the cosmos opened our eyes to an exciting world. On day

trips with us his maps, camera and binoculars were never far away. He taught us to think big, spreading his desire to explore new ideas and horizons and we all inherited his love of travel. We look at the stars now like he did and search for the Northern Lights or noctilucent clouds. Like him, we all love a beautiful panorama and a quiet country road. We check the weather forecast and watch the news, sometimes several times a night and have just a slight interest in maps! To Mum's distress, he was a keen collector of information - be it books, maps, newspaper cuttings, photocopies or the mountain of carefully hand-written notes from countless lectures, talks and TV documentaries on endless subjects!

Research would inevitably be undertaken before any outing. Whenever he travelled any distance he would plan the route, noting with excitement who could be popped in on along the way! He usually planned to arrive at any destination on the dot, which of course meant often getting there by the seat of our pants!

Dad's brothers will sorely miss his consistent, sympathetic support and encouragement. He was a good listener when he needed to be and had a true gift for communicating...and he used it well! Actually, he loved talking to everyone he met and would talk to anyone. It didn't matter who they were, it made no difference to him. Everyone was treated with the same respect.

He dearly loved all of our family pets. Indeed, he loved all animals and they seemed to trust and like him. Animals are known, after all, to have a strong instinct for a good person! When visiting others, he would even often greet the cat or dog before acknowledging his hosts and I'd like to think that when he gets to where he's going, he'll give Rusty that long-awaited good walk.

We all benefited from his many words of wisdom at landmark family celebrations. Mum and Dad's Golden Wedding - indeed all our weddings - will remain particularly happy memories for us all. When he gave a speech it was always delivered with care. It was deliberate, carefully researched and rarely missed the mark.

He and Mum have always been there for us in times of crisis and his positive outlook, unending patience and ever-willingness to help meant that a solution was never far away.

His example has set a high standard for us to live up to. His values and principles will continue through us all.

For that we are all eternally thankful.

[Ivon A G Bartholomew – Funeral Tribute – Mortonhall Crematorium, Edinburgh]