

EULOGY - DAVID MAX POWELL

Firstly, on behalf of Dad and the rest of the family, thank you all for coming here today to help us celebrate Dad's life. The overwhelming attendance is testimony to how many lives he touched and how much he meant to us all.

Dad's career was varied and, as I sought information from people on what jobs he had done, I was surprised at the variety of his chosen paths. National Serviceman in the Royal Engineers, student in Swansea University, bank clerk, casino croupier, Regent Oil rep and three different posts in the Steel Company of Wales in Port Talbot. John Raymond informed me that the first of which was as a weighbridge attendant. Then Dad moved into quality control working in the metallurgy laboratory. Ken Sibbering, Dad's best man and one of his closest friends, described with some hilarity an image of Dad driving an old motorcycle and sidecar at speed around the Port Talbot steelworks with his testing kit - something I never knew about before. Later, with the help of Fred Hyatt, who is sadly too ill to join us today, Dad moved into the IT world as a programmer and later as a senior systems analyst.

This was the job he retired from in 1991 but he then took up a second career with Mum as a Tournament Director and Bridge holiday host with Mercian Travel and Saga. This took them all over the world and the family photograph albums are a veritable Cook's tour of exotic holiday locations from the Far East, Africa, the Baltic and to Scandinavia. He revelled in this role and showed that he was a suave, sophisticated man with style and gusto who enjoyed being the master of ceremonies. The photograph on the Order of Service shows just how much he enjoyed the role and he always had a winning smile and a glass at hand. He and Mum made many friends during these years.

Dad's passion in life was from playing and teaching Bridge. The vast majority of people here today first met him through playing Bridge and you will all have fond memories of those times. He taught Bridge for 25 years in the Bridgend Adult Education Centre and in Bridgend Bridge Club and many of you here today may be ex-pupils. Mum eventually relented and learned to play Bridge and he even taught his mother, Nanna Powell, to play when she was 60. As a Grand Master, Dad was an accomplished Bridge player and was extremely proud to represent Wales and captain the side on a number of occasions. Similarly, with great pride and panache, he served as President of the Welsh Bridge Union twice and was honoured as one of the very few Honorary Life Members.

We all have memories of helping Dad and Mum set up bridge tables, sort out the hands for competitions, host people in the house and at the Porthcawl Congress. Many of you will have seen us grow up as Dad was always the proud father and grandfather and he delighted in showing us off. Always generous, the drinks cabinet in the house was open to all visitors including our friends as we grew up. He was also the family banker and always made sure we had money to go out with and he generously helped us all out with setting up our first homes. DIY was not one of his strong points but he was a dab hand with a paint brush and at wallpapering. I remember one Christmas when we came downstairs on Christmas Day to find that he and Mum had redecorated overnight. They were really happy times for all of us.

Dad's legacy is both his family and the hundreds of people he helped to play Bridge. His energy, dedication, good humour and generosity were boundless and we have all benefited from his time with us. He will always be remembered as a gentleman with dignity, charm and a sense of humour. Whilst his latter years were plagued by ill health, he still managed to play bridge to the bitter end!

It was a good life and now there is no pain, only happy memories.