

## ENTRANCE

### Ariel's Song – Purcell

## OPENING WORDS

Good afternoon everyone. We're here to celebrate the life of Professor Kenneth Philip Arthur Drew who died on 11<sup>th</sup> January just a few days short of his ninety third birthday.

## INTRODUCTION

My name is Ian Willox. I'm a celebrant for Humanists UK. Philip's family have asked for a non-religious funeral. That doesn't mean anti-religious. This is a ceremony for everyone – including those with a religious faith.

## THOUGHTS ON LIFE AND DEATH

One of the important things that a funeral does is to remember – so that Philip lives on in our memories at least.

Given Philip's own abilities to remember this is doubly important.

So let's remember...

Sarah, Kate and John - please...

## TRIBUTE

### KATE SMITH:

On Sundays at church the main feature  
Is the sermon compiled by our preacher.  
It's two thirds John Wesley,  
One fourth Elvis Presley,  
And just over eight percent Nietzsche.

Like the preacher in his limerick, Philip Drew was a polymath, equally at ease writing limericks, puzzling out mathematical curiosities, discussing the history of ideas, explaining English Literature in lucid elegant prose, or being enthusiastic about the early works of Fred Astaire and Arthur Askey.

To his natural talents was added a quite phenomenal memory. When he engaged Pickfords Removals for his move to Northampton in 2010, he astounded the removal team by reciting Pickfords' advertising jingles he'd seen on a bus in 1937 and remembered verbatim 70 years later.

A thoughtful academic, an assiduous administrator, a good neighbour, a great host. And, to Sarah, John and myself, a source of love, pride, amusement, occasional intense exasperation, encouragement and challenge.

**JOHN DREW:**

Philip was born in London in January 1925. His father, Arthur Drew, had been in the fur trade, and moved, at his mother Ruby's suggestion, into millinery and then confectionery, to be closer to home. Heather was born in 1928, and from the start, Philip was a devoted brother, a constant point for her in a singularly unsettled childhood: the family moved 32 times between 1925 and Arthur Drew's untimely death from pneumonia in 1938. Ruby Drew, forced to keep the family on a single woman's earnings, took them to live over the sweet shop Arthur had opened in Asylum Road, Peckham. Thirteen-year old Philip, by now at Haberdashers' Askes School, used to run home at 4 o'clock to keep the shop till 9 o'clock, completing his homework at the till.

For him, evacuation may have come as a relief: in September he went with the school to Oxted in Kent. There, he was befriended by a local resident, Bill Thorne, whose own son had died young. Bill took Philip into his family and it was his genial liberality that informed both Philip's own tolerant political opinions, and – as importantly – his belief in the value of a really good party. Bill regularly held poetry readings, at which Philip was introduced to the works of Robert Frost. Frost's "After Apple Picking" was a particular favourite; it reminded him of his school summers which were spent harvesting and then working on local apple farms.

**KATE SMITH:**

**After Apple-Picking**  
**By Robert Frost**

My long two-pointed ladders sticking through a tree  
Toward heaven still,  
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill  
Beside it, and there may be two or three  
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.  
But I am done with apple-picking now.  
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,  
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.  
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight  
I got from looking through a pane of glass  
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough  
And held against the world of hoary grass.  
It melted, and I let it fall and break.  
But I was well  
Upon my way to sleep before it fell,  
And I could tell  
What form my dreaming was about to take.  
Magnified apples appear and disappear,  
Stem end and blossom end,  
And every fleck of russet showing clear.

My instep arch not only keeps the ache,  
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.  
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.  
And I keep hearing from the cellar bin  
The rumbling sound  
Of load on load of apples coming in.  
For I have had too much  
Of apple-picking: I am overtired  
Of the great harvest I myself desired.  
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,  
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.  
For all  
That struck the earth,  
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,  
Went surely to the cider-apple heap  
As of no worth.  
One can see what will trouble  
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.  
Were he not gone,  
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his  
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,  
Or just some human sleep.

#### **JOHN DREW:**

During the war, money remained very tight: to visit Heather in hospital in 1939, Philip had to borrow money for the journey. Leaving school in 1943, with a scholarship to Pembroke College, Oxford, Philip was instead called up to the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. He entered at 18 as a 5'9" midshipman. Over the next three years, serving on HMS Chiddingfold in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific, he grew to become Lieutenant Drew, and 6'4". His abiding memory of the war was of being hungry all the time (and struggling to find clothes to fit), but his reading continued unabated: his library included Orwells picked up in Bombay, a couple of Wodehouses from Aden. And he took with him a Treasury of English Verse, most of which he could quote years later.

By 1945, he was stationed back in the UK and able to kidnap Heather from her work to celebrate VE Day in Trafalgar Square. Once he was finally demobilised, in mid-1946, he went up to Oxford to read English, living (barely) on his scholarship of £100 a year; his lecturers included Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. He was proud of having rowed in the first college boat in Torpids and, as a lightweight lock forward, described himself as being "uncatchable over the first six or seven yards" but, in spite of his height, he was not a natural sportsman.

He graduated in 1949 with a first class degree. The procedure at that time was for candidates to sit an additional verbal interview; Philip's tutor, Leonard Rice-Oxley,

wrote to congratulate him afterwards, observing that Philip had given him some nervous moments during the interview. “ ‘Damn,’ I thought, ‘my horse is running backward!’ However, after that, my horse went along grandly gathering speed. The impression you made was of profound intellectual honesty and a genuine interest in matters literary.”

Philip sat the Civil Service entry exams during his final year, and scored the top result in the country in 1949. He chose – for reasons that even he admitted were misguided – to join the Board of Trade and spent the next excruciating year dealing with timber imports from Yugoslavia. “Very poor quality - the timber from the Balkans,” he recollected. “Full of bullets.” Fortunately, he met Rice-Oxley in the street one day and confessed how bored he was. Rice-Oxley turned to his companion, Norman Davis, a war-time hero who was then teaching English at Glasgow University. “Norman, surely you can find room for Drew in Glasgow?”

Norman could. So in 1950, at the age of 25, Philip moved, with the Orwells and the Wodehouses and a growing collection of poetry books, into digs in the West End of Glasgow, the area where he lived for the next 60 years. One of the new poets he discovered at this time was Louis MacNeice, whose poem, “The Sunlight on the Garden” Philip admired greatly.

**TOM SMITH:**

**The Sunlight On The Garden**

**Louis MacNeice**

The sunlight on the garden  
Hardens and grows cold,  
We cannot cage the minute  
Within its nets of gold,  
When all is told  
We cannot beg for pardon.

Our freedom as free lances  
Advances towards its end;  
The earth compels, upon it  
Sonnets and birds descend;  
And soon, my friend,  
We shall have no time for dances.

The sky was good for flying  
Defying the church bells  
And every evil iron  
Siren and what it tells:  
The earth compels,  
We are dying, Egypt, dying

And not expecting pardon,

Hardened in heart anew,  
But glad to have sat under  
Thunder and rain with you,  
And grateful too  
For sunlight on the garden.

**SARAH McCONNEL:**

Almost as soon as Philip started teaching, he met Lindsay McCormick, a student seven years his junior, and they married in 1953. On the face of it, they were completely different. It wasn't just that Philip towered over Lindsay's 5'0", nor that he was resolutely English, while Lindsay would happily have lived on Lismore full-time. Philip was gregarious, she reserved. He lived in the world of ideas, which Lindsay admired, but tempered her admiration with a much more practical sense of the possible. She took up plumbing, installed the electrics in the Glasgow and Lismore kitchens, launched herself into computers; Philip, for all his formidable intelligence, struggled to master emails.

But they met on the broad common ground of "a genuine interest in matters literary". Any visitor to Woodbank – the early Victorian house at 56 Partickhill Road they bought for £2,500 one lunchtime in 1958 – will remember the dining room, lined floor to ceiling with books; the study where the books flowed across the floor several deep.

They met, too, in the love of their family. He was a fond father, entertaining us with music-hall songs, and making up bedtime stories. Some of these, about the ineffective cowboys Mean Moses and Spiteful Jake, were later featured on Jackanory. Philip took full advantage of the generous academic holidays, his increased salary as Senior Lecturer and the favourable exchange rate to enjoy long summers with us. For fifteen years, a laden white Transit van, driven regally by Philip or flat-out (by Lindsay), took us camping in France and Italy for a couple of months at a time.

During this period, Philip wrote two books on the poet, Robert Browning, who specialised in dramatic monologues – poems told through the mouth of an invented character. In an early essay, Philip held that the character could only be human. "One cannot imagine," he stated firmly, "a dramatic monologue spoken by an elephant." But a few years ago, he changed his mind, and dramatised the thoughts of the elephants that Hannibal led across the Alps to march on Rome.

**JACK McCONNEL:**

**Crossing the Alps**  
*by Philip Drew*

We did not ask to come here. We were content  
In our wide level pastures nearer the sun.  
Then came the journey, the rope-burns, and the thirst,  
The bad times in the great sands, but this is worse.

The committed one drives us on, higher and still higher,  
Where there is no grass, the water is a chill white scum,  
And the air is without nourishment.

If he loses his battles, we shall be killed, no doubt:  
If he wins, he will not need us and we shall die  
Neglected. Since we cannot gain by going forward  
We ought, as rational creatures, to turn back—  
But the goads are sharp and we do not know the way.

At night, eating the mouldered hay, we tell ourselves  
That once we sight the distant village of Rome  
We shall all suddenly burst our hobbles  
And escape, trumpeting in defiance,  
Shaking the earth with our tread, lumbering  
Swiftly over the land, until we reach  
The humid jungles of the South. There we shall found  
Our own Republic, equitable, free, and eternally warm.  
We know that this will never happen,  
But if we stopped believing that it might  
How could we go on? And we must go on.  
Even now there comes again the sharp-flaked rain.  
In these bleak passages there is no resting-place.

**SARAH McCONNEL:**

In 1977, Philip became an Emeritus Professor of English at Glasgow; this was a very busy time for him. Not only was he writing and teaching, but he was also on many departmental and University committees, where his calm good sense and thoroughness were greatly valued.

At the same time, he was writing his most important book, “The Meaning of Freedom”, which looks at whether man is governed by a pre-determined Fate, or whether he has any genuine Free Will. It demonstrates the extraordinary scope of his interests and scholarship; what also makes the book special is that “profound intellectual honesty” his tutor identified. His arguments are balanced and wide-ranging, and all expressed in simple cogent language.

And from the sublime to the ridiculous – who can forget his prize-winning 1976 Mars Bar competition limerick, which - to Lindsay’s great glee - netted him a freezer: -

Said my cabby, “Who needs perestroika?  
Your average communist woiker  
Would trade it all in  
For a bottle of gin  
And a goil in the back of a troika.”

In 1984, at the age of 59 he took early retirement from the University. The next decades were spent working on articles, supervising a few PhD students, compiling another book on Browning, and labouring in Woodbank's huge walled garden. The children married (to Archie, Arthur and Coro) and when Lindsay retired from teaching at Laurel Bank in the early 90s, they were delighted to be active grandparents, to Tom, Sam, Jack, Libby, Helen, Neil and Carlos. Visiting us all, in Jamaica, Spain, Dumfriesshire and even Troon, was a source of great pleasure, as was the occasion when John got him to pose as "an elderly sailor contemplating the life hereafter" for one of John's A Level Art tasks, illustrating Tennyson's late poem, 'Crossing the Bar'.

**NEIL DREW-LOPEZ:**

**Crossing the Bar**

**By Alfred, Lord Tennyson**

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crost the bar.

**KATE SMITH:**

Lindsay's illness and death in 2008 was a very difficult time for us all. Alone in Woodbank, Philip found the year after her death gruelling. It had been a house for people, and especially for the parties they enjoyed throwing. Together, their different strengths made for terrific evenings, for both guests and hosts. Entertaining Philip's Junior Honours year, external examiners, celebrating anniversaries with neighbours, or pushing the boat out at Hogmanay – they were in their element. Lindsay would start planning way in advance, recipe books open in stacks ("do you think TC McPhee could get baby squid in time for Saturday?"); for his part, Philip instinctively knew who would get on with whom (but he'd disappear down to Woodbank's cool cellars for the bottles that would ensure he was right). On the night, Lindsay would offer the most delicious

extravagances, pleased to see people but nervously certain they'd notice not all the parsley was chopped to the same size. Philip, on the other hand, would be delightedly circulating, bottles in hand. You always knew where he was at a party, not just because he was head and shoulders above everyone else, but because there would be a shout of laughter from a group, with him at its centre looking modestly proud of being entertaining.

So leaving Woodbank, leaving Partickhill Road and Glasgow in 2010 to live near John in Northampton, he was very low. Slowly, though, with John and Coro's selfless care, cheered by seeing Neil and Carlos grow up, and close to Kate, he recovered much of his tone, although he never settled happily into the pattern of contented old age. There was too much he wanted to do, to read, to see, and frustratingly less time to do it all in, particularly if you factored in having to find your glasses first.

I'm too old for Pride, Greed or Lust,  
And Gluttony's for the robust,  
Of Envy I tire;  
I can live without Ire;  
But Sloth is an absolute must.

His final illness was mercifully short, just long enough for him to insist we brought whisky into hospital (in a bottle marked Fiery Ginger Beer). We are burying him with a small bottle of whisky, photographs of his family, a desiccated satsuma he had carefully preserved since the 1970s and – of course - a book of poetry.

We are now going to sing "Who Would True Valour See", one of Lindsay's favourites, and which was sung at her funeral. It's also Haberdashers' Askes' school song.

**HYMN:**

***Who Would True Valour See - Bunyan***

**QUIET REFLECTION**

We're coming to the end of this celebration of Philip's life. But before we do we're going to pause for a moment of reflection. A chance for you to digest all you've heard. A chance for you to recall your own memories of him. A chance, if you wish, to pray silently.

***The Long Day Closes – Sullivan***

**COMMITTAL**

Just as we welcome a child into our lives we must say goodbye to those who leave us. This celebration of Philip's life is complete. It's time to say farewell to him. This may be difficult but it is important. I hope the memories we've talked about here may give you some comfort

#### **FINAL FAREWELL**

Our atoms and molecules come from the earth;  
Are ordered by ancestry;  
Are fired into life by union;  
Are sustained by the earth and powered by the sun;  
And return to the earth when life ends.

*John Stuffin*

Philip Drew. Son of Arthur and Ruby. Brother to Heather. Husband to Lindsay. Father of Sarah, Kate and John. Grandfather to Tom, Sam, Jack, Libby, Helen, Neil and Carlos.

We commit your body to be cremated. Rest in the hearts and minds of all you love and all who love you.

**CLOSING WORDS**

We've celebrated Philips's life. We've said our goodbyes. But we have our memories. And the rest of our lives to remember.

Please take good care of yourselves and each other.

Thank you for coming.

**EXIT**

*On the Sunny Side of the Street - Layton & Johnstone*