

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF  
**NICHOLAS ERNEST PRICE**

23<sup>rd</sup> October 1939 – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2018

held at  
Banbury Crematorium  
on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018



**Humanist Celebrant**

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## **ENTRANCE**

**Drag Racer - Doug Wood Band**

## **OPENING WORDS**

Good afternoon everyone. We're here to celebrate the life of Nicholas Ernest Price who died at home on 29<sup>th</sup> July aged 78.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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

Nick's family have asked for the next piece of music to reflect his love of cricket:

**Jerusalem - BBC Symphony Orchestra**

## **THOUGHTS ON LIFE AND DEATH**

With or without religion, one of the purposes of a funeral is to remember – so that Nick lives on in our memories at least.

So let's remember...

Or as Nick would put it: "To cut a story sideways..."

## **TRIBUTE**

Nick was the youngest child of Ernest and Margaret Price. He had an elder sister called June.

Nick was born in Stanmore in Middlesex. His father was a builder. His mother was an artist. When growing up he spent sometime in Wales where he developed a love of steam engines and the Great Western Railway.

Nick's first job when he left school was with Ultra Electronics in Park Royal. From what his family have told me Nick was involved in avionics, the electronics that allows aircraft to fly. He loved the job, but the pay was not great. Nick departed along with his beloved avometer- which is in his shed to this day.

He joined the family business – a pottery making vases. Nick, his sister and his mother would sell the pottery at county shows. I get the impression that it was a good little business.

Frances lived next door to Nick's family. Her sister was courting Nick's best friend. So the two couples would often go out together.

Nick used to have a Lambretta, then a motorcycle. Which Frances refused to ride after she'd burnt her leg on the exhaust.

Nick's father bought him an MG two seater. This was the time of the Suez Crisis and petrol rationing. It didn't stop Nick cruising around in his MG – still with the L-plates on. Frances says he was in his glory.

Frances and Nick were married at St Joseph's – the local Catholic Church – Frances was Catholic – in May of 1960. They honeymooned in Nick's parent's cottage in Cocking in Sussex.

They lived in Stanmore where Andrew and Tim were born. Nick looked for a hobby and he joined the local rifle club, which involved trips to Bisley Rifle Ranges. Many happy days were spent there, shooting for his club and county.

When the gun laws were tightened up, Nick gave up. Too much hassle.

After ten years living in Stanmore with the two boys, Frances announced they needed a bigger house. So in 1970 Nick and Frances bought a place in Pinner.

It was cheap because it needed a lot of work. Initially there was an electric stove downstairs and a gas grill upstairs. The simple process of cooking some fish fingers involved a lot of running up and down stairs.

Suzie was born in 1973.

It took about ten years for the Pinner house to become properly habitable. The garden needed a digger. But the family home did boast two garages and a workshop (with a lathe in it).

The garages housed a number of old cars over time, including an Armstrong Siddeley and a Rolls Royce. Each one a project. Even the garden was used as a dry dock to repair a 30' mahogany river launch named "Javelin".

Nick even sewed the curtains for Javelin whilst recovering from chicken pox. There were a couple of hammocks in bow for the boys. Family trips would go up the Thames as far as Lechlade.

It was on such a trip that the spider happened. Nick was lugging a bag from the van when he spotted a spider sitting on it. He tried to blow it off. Which worked. But along with his breath went his false teeth – describing a perfect arc and landing dead centre in a fresh cow pat.

For some reason Nick didn't find this as funny as the rest of the family.

After some years Nick moved on from pottery and went into glass and glazing. Even Frances had to learn how to cut glass. They started a new business called Pinner Glass. For the next twenty years Nick ran the business. He loved leaded lights and stained glass, the fiddly bits of the business. Andrew - who worked with his father for twenty years - also remembers Nick's habits.

There was a calor gas heater in the shop. Nick would keep his tea warm on it – and make toast on it. In front of the customers.

But then Nick wasn't easily swayed by fashion. He insisted on selling putty by the pound rather than the kilo. The local weights and measures got involved – but gave up in the end.

His green Ford Granada boasted a bumper sticker saying "Save The Pound".

Nick made many friends in Pinner and golf and snooker were favourite pastimes. He became a Freemason, joining a lodge in London.

And he could get cross when someone – probably a son - pointed out that his beloved six inch nails were now sold as 150mm nails.

But those children are now grown up. And have their own memories. Let's start with Andrew:

**ANDREW PRICE:**

Dad,  
You taught me to,  
Ride a bike,  
Shoot a rifle and a pistol,  
Love steam engines,  
Solder electrics and,  
Take apart things that have no hope,  
Sometimes fixing them with things you just happen to have,  
Save that wood incase it comes in handy,  
Chase that air lock around the pipes,  
Fix what ever is leaking,  
Have a go,  
And make it if you can,  
Cut glass,  
And measure in feet and inches,  
Treat others with fairness and respect,  
But, above all these things and many more besides,  
You taught me how to be a Dad.

Time for Tim's turn...

**TIM PRICE:**

**Dad**

Dad – a simple three-letter word. But what does Dad mean to me?

When I was young Dad was my tutor, someone whom I looked up too, helped out and learnt from as he renovated the house in Pinner. Watching him, he taught me how to paper a ceiling, solder copper pipe together and lay paving slabs. On more than one occasion I would be left to mix the cement whilst Dad supervised and had a crafty rollup. However, the most important lesson of all that Dad taught me was how to join pieces of timber together using only 6 inch nails.

In my teenage years, Dad was my driving instructor and car-mechanic. With Dad's help I passed my driving test. Dad sat with me in my red VW Beetle as I practised. He went with me to the Test Centre in Rickmansworth and shared my relief and joy when I passed.

It was also Dad who came and towed my Beetle from Stanmore Hill to home when the engine seized up one Christmas Day morning, the one day the AA did not work.

With Dad's help I successfully rebuilt its engine and I can still remember both of us jumping up and down on a scaffolding pole in an effort to undo the flywheel nut. This was Dad in his element – stripping down and rebuilding a car engine, grinding valves and messing about with the timing. Dad loved anything mechanical especially if it involved using pulleys and levers and he took great satisfaction rigging up a system of pulleys to lift the Beetle up so we could remove and replace the engine.

With Dad's expert guidance that engine started first time.

When leaving home Dad was my surveyor and master builder, offering advice on what to look for when buying a house and helping out with the refurbishment. Like the Swiss Army knife he always carried, Dad could turn his hand to many different things. When my house needed re-wiring and a new kitchen floor, Dad was there to instruct, guide and help out. I hacked out walls, lifted floorboards and cut timber whilst Dad supervised and enjoyed a mug of cold, strong tea.

Dad was a technophobe and although Dad was practical and loved making things, when it came to modern technology Dad's knowledge stopped at valves. Anything that was 'solid state' as he called it was an anathema to him and often drove him to distraction. He hated using a computer for anything apart from playing Solitaire. I had many conversations with him that either started 'I don't know how to....' or 'I don't know what I did...'

But Dad's dislike of modern technology extended beyond computers. I discovered recently that a simple text message he sent me took Dad over an hour to send as he kept pressing the wrong button and deleting it. The phone, he told me, nearly went out the window.

Finally, in recent years Dad became my cricket companion as we shared a mutual love of the game together. In my younger years when I helped out in his glass shop, on a summer's Saturday morning the cricket would be on the radio, or wireless as Dad always called it. At the time I paid no particular interest but maybe Dad had planted a seed that took time to grow into a love for cricket.

I once asked Dad about whether he had been a batsman or bowler at school and was told he had been a slow bowler. This fitted in with Dad's general aversion to any form of strenuous physical exercise as I could not picture Dad, even as a teenager on a long run up and bowling a ball at over 90 miles per hour.

Over the last few years we enjoyed the highs and endured the many lows of following the England Cricket team, going together to watch at least one day of test match cricket every year since 2005. We would often discuss on the phone the latest match result or day's play, usually after another disastrous England batting collapse to which Dad would say 'Never mind, it's only a game.'

Dad is all these things, and more to me. He is everything a Dad should be.

Youngest child Suzie has asked me to read her tribute for her. She says:

When I was young, the only way I would have my long hair washed was if Dad promised to dry it with the hairdryer. No one else would do.

Dad was always busy making things and much to my delight one Christmas a very long time ago, he made me a stable for my dolls horses which I thought was fantastic. I still have the stable and my daughters have also played with it. He once made an electric go-kart which was a work in progress, so much so, that I passed my driving test before it was finished!

Dad then moved onto fixing my cars throughout the years and taught me how to look after them. I am now a dab hand at checking the oil, water and tyre pressure. He helped me to do this only a few weeks ago.

I have fond memories of the family holidays on the river Thames in Javelin while growing up and more recently taking trips on the Steam trains, sticking our heads out the windows and Dad being told off by the doctor for getting smut in his eye!

These are just a few of the memories I have of Dad.

Most of all he was the best Dad and Grandad that anyone could wish for.

Suzie's tribute.

With the children grown up and gone, the home in Pinner seemed rather too large. Frances suggested that it might be time to downsize a bit. She and Nick decided they wanted to be somewhere near water.

So Waterside in Hook Norton it was. They moved in 2005. Nick joined the Gardening Club, the Golf Club and the local branch of the Freemasons. And he had a shed built on the other side of the stream at the back of the house.

The sign on the shed said Grandad's Workshop. It was emphatically not a mere shed. He'd call his shed visits "going over the stream". He'd tell his grandchildren that when he was gone they shouldn't let Grandma into the shed. She'd clean it out of all his carefully accumulated "useful bits" which he had brought from Pinner.

But he took his grandparenting seriously. He'd give the grandchildren donkey rides when they were small enough to get on his back. He'd even let them style his hair.

Nick's granddaughter Stephanie has chosen a poem and asked me to read it for her:

### **Missing You My Wonderful Grandad**

It took a world of sorrow  
To realise you'd gone  
But all the love you left behind  
Has helped me carry on

The saddest day of all my life  
was when we had to part  
But my Grandad in a million  
Lives forever in my heart

And on this special day  
I will dry my tears  
And celebrate the happiness  
You brought me  
Through the years  
*Anon*

Stephanie's poem.

There's so much more to tell about Nick.

His passion for fireworks – even the insipid indoors ones.

He liked a whisky – but only when the sun was over the yardarm – which thanks to his nautical experience with Javelin he would know was anytime after about 10am.

He liked a vest – which remained on until the mercury exceeded 30C. And even then...

For example there was a family holiday in Cornwall – that long hot summer of 1976 – when he went so far as to roll his trousers up – and got sunburnt ankles.

And he had a thing for solar powered lights. Of which there are rather a lot at Waterside.

Hard to avoid. As Frances found out when she was clipping back foliage and cut straight through some of the wiring. She tied it back together again. But that wasn't good enough for Nick. He headed out over the stream, the bridge rails salvaged from the Rocking Horse he'd made Frances, to repair the damage.

The day he died.

Andrew had to finish the job.

## **QUIET REFLECTION**

We're coming to the end of this celebration of Nick'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.

### **Elgar: Enigma Variations – Nimrod**

## **COMMITTAL**

Just as we welcome a child into our lives we must say goodbye to those who leave us. This celebration of Nick'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*

Nicholas Ernest Price. Son of Ernest and Margaret,. Brother to June. Husband to Frances. Father of Andrew, Tim and Suzie. Grandfather to James, Jack, Sarah, Stephanie, Sophie, Amber and Isabel.

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

If you want to share those memories – or just some refreshment – you're warmly invited to join the family at Hook Norton Sports and Social Club. You'll find details in your order of service.

As you leave you'll see that you can make a donation in Nick's memory to the Freemasons or to Prostate Cancer UK. Again you'll find details in your order of service.

Please take good care of yourselves and each other.

Thank you for coming.

## **EXIT**

### **Soul Limbo - Booker T & The MGs**