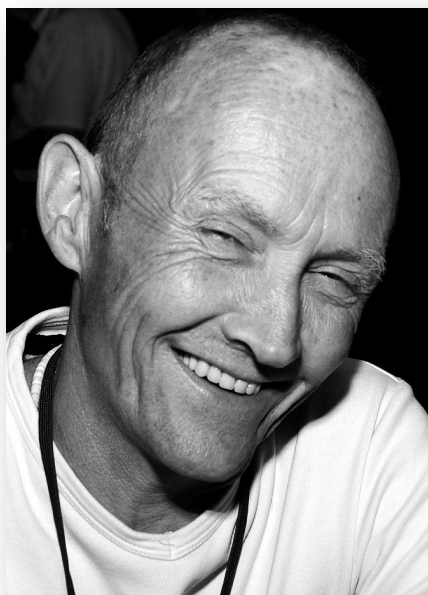


A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF
PAUL DAVID GRUNWELL
28th November 1956 – 18th January 2018

held at
South Oxfordshire Crematorium
on Friday 9th February 2018



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ENTRANCE

If You Don't Know Me By Now – Simply Red

OPENING WORDS

Good afternoon everyone. We're here to celebrate the life of Paul David Grunwell who died at Witney Community Hospital on 18th January aged only 61.

INTRODUCTION

I should introduce myself. My name is Ian Willox. I'm a celebrant for Humanists UK. Paul's daughters 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

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

To call Paul's life "memorable" is to damn it with faint praise.

So let's remember...

TRIBUTE

Paul's eldest daughter, Jen, is going to start us off...

Jennifer Grunwell:

CHILDHOOD

Dad was an unconventional man. Nan Pat always said he was far too clever and more than somewhat of a handful. Heather and I loved hearing snippets of his escapades over the years – of his sibling rivalry with Mark, of how he was chased through the streets of Worsley by an angry ice cream man because dad had just shot him with an air rifle, of how he filled the washing machine with washing up liquid causing a 4' tidal wave of bubbles to travel down the garden path, and of course, how he blew his mum up (though dad always maintained that this was entirely her own fault and that if she'd only listened when he'd said "Don't Throw Water On It, it'll burn itself out", he would never have had to phone his dad at work and say "I think you need to come home now – I think I've killed my mother"!).

FRIENDS

When he was about 15, dad wired speakers up to the outside of his house on Warwick Road. To play music? Oh no. No, dad had a BBC sound effects record and so when some poor unsuspecting person was walking down the empty road, he'd play footsteps behind them pausing it briefly whenever they turned round. He also developed a chemical concoction in his early teens that he squirted into locks, so when people put their keys in it exploded – as Nan Pat said, far too clever for his own good!

As a member of the cubs and scouts, dad did a lot of camping but as you can imagine, his packing for these adventures was a little different. I'm told that aside from the obligatory 200 cigarettes, his rucksack only ever contained what he called "mad stuff"

– a collection of junk that he'd gathered from home and jumble sales (think old records snapped in half, a pot rabbit, that kind of thing). Years later dad's friend Dave shot the pot rabbit with an air rifle because he was so sick of seeing it on these camps. I'm led to believe that he annoyed Uncle Paul during one camping trip when he was about 16 because the only thing he'd say for the whole camp was "quite fancy your kid Hector" – a few short years later, in 1980, dad married her.

MUM/US/FAMILY

After a couple of years living in Crawford Street, in the house dad had already gutted and renovated, they moved to what was to become our family home in Pine Grove. Never one to sit still, and as someone who could turn his hand to just about anything, dad always had a project on the go. Much to the disgust of a local councillor who lived nearby, he turned the driveway into a version of Scrapheap challenge, and set about making mum her dream car – a lovely red mini cooper - from things he found at the scrapyards. He also indulged his love of electronics, installing a number pad entry system for the front door (who needs keys?), and his passion for woodwork, hand turning every single spindle for the banister himself.

In 1984 I was born, and Heather a year later. Dad took to fatherhood like a duck to water, and though he wasn't perfect (he never came to school plays or remembered our birthdays) he was fun, and loving and kind. He was always happy to play games, and was the king of hide and seek (at Nan Pats once we lost him for hours, only to eventually find him sat on the roof with a bottle of red wine, a cigar and the crossword!).

When we were growing up we spent a lot of time in the Lake District. On one memorable walk with the Brunts dad was educating us about Boggarts: nasty, terrifying creatures that live in holes in the ground. He kept this story up for ages, and then with an Oscar worthy performance jammed his foot in a rabbit hole, grabbed his leg and screamed "it's got me, it's got me" making all the children run away crying – Sally was scarred for life. It was also in the Lakes that dad nearly killed us. The weather was terrible but dad thought it a good idea to climb Hellvellyn via Striding Edge and Swirral edge. If you don't know this walk, it is not for the faint hearted, and climbing it with a dog, 2 children and a wife scared of heights in strong winds, snow and fog was in hindsight not his greatest idea – when mum had stopped shaking afterwards I thought she might actually kill him!

We had lots of other good holidays growing up too. Summers in France with friends and family were great. Every summer dad bought a new pair of brightly coloured espadrilles– which once he'd paddled in the sea on the first day, dyed his feet for the rest of the holiday. Add this to his famously spacky tan and he really did look quite the picture!

Back at home, and dad and mum knew how to throw a good party – their NYEs were legendary. The house was always full, the music loud, the drink flowing, the fireworks dangerous and dad sometimes dressed as a woman?!

JENNY B – OXFORD – WORKING AWAY

Shortly before I started university dad moved away, and continued his stupidity down south. I have already mentioned that dad was the king of hide and seek, but Jenny was to learn this for herself when shortly after they'd moved in, dad disappeared. 2 hours later, she found him, hiding under the bed – but was somewhat confused as he hadn't told her they were playing! Jenny also remembers a very silly walk they did through Blenheim, where to liven things up a bit dad started a competition of "who can put the most conkers down their trousers!" – I can only imagine what they must have looked like.

Living down here, dad finally learned to cook and developed a real passion for food. He leaves behind an impressive collection of cookbooks and spent many happy hours researching and trying out new recipes. The list of animals he'd eaten was astonishing and he was never more excited than when he'd found a new one he could tick off. He dined in some of the best restaurants and ate weird and wonderful food the world over - all this from the man who used to order omelette and chips from the Chinese!

Dad loved living in Finstock; he loved the sense of community and his proximity to the local pub. Unsurprisingly some of his antics in the village have become the stuff of legend, not least the Christmas eve where he nipped outside for a fag and returned 2 minutes later dressed in my elf outfit – I'm not sure anyone could quite believe their eyes!

Dad was also enormously proud of his cottage, which over the years he filled with his many collections, and more than a few late-night eBay purchases. Last year I helped him gut and refit his kitchen and though frustrating at times, it was lovely to watch as he rekindled his love of woodwork. Dad thrived on a challenge, but bored easily, so once he'd proved to himself he could do something, he'd stop, abandon it and try something else: he spent hundreds of dollars on brew kit in Australia then brewed one 90 pint batch of beer, he spent a fortune on sausage making stuff then after 2 weeks never touched it again, and I'm not even going to mention the projects he embarked upon when working away!

It's fair to say though that dad had to deal with more than his share of illness in the last 10 years, but being the stubborn, determined old fool that he was he fought every blow with cheerful optimism. Any one of the medical problems he had in the last 6 months alone would have finished most people off, but as we all know he wasn't like most people – I mean how many people come round from a coma and ask if you'd taken a photo of them because they want to use it on their blog? (Fortunately Heather had pre-empted this request and had done just that!) His mantra of "I'm Not Dead Yet" became a running joke and even after his stroke, when he couldn't talk any more, the cheeky mischievous glint in his eye remained. But this last hurdle was too big even for him to overcome, and his fight sadly ended.

Our dad may only have been a small man, but he leaves behind in big hole in our hearts.

We're going to pause now for some music. Something that, if you're the right age, you'll recognise instantly.

Wish You Were Here – Pink Floyd

Paul's friend Dave Shepherd is going to read a Robert Burns's poem:

Dave Shepherd:

Epitaph on my own Friend

An honest man here lies at rest,
As e'er God with His image blest:
The friend of man, the friend of truth;
The friend of age, and guide of youth:
Few hearts like his, with virtue warm'd,
Few heads with knowledge so inform'd:
If there's another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.

Robert Burns

Now let's turn to Paul's professional life, starting with Norman Green:

Norman Green:

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

I first met Paul Grunwell in 1985 when he came for an interview for the post of a Development Engineer in the ITV Development Laboratory at Granada Television. The Granada Controller of Engineering, Keith Fowler and I were doing the interviewing and each person was 'grilled' for an hour. Paul walked in wearing a very modern light grey suit but the sight that I will always remember will be his light grey 'winkle - picker' shoes. Keith and I had never seen shoes like them! Paul had been selected for an interview because he had gained a Council for Engineering Institutions Part 2 examination, the equivalent of a Degree, from Bolton Institute of Technology, an exam described by Mike Yates, a colleague of Paul's, as 'The exam from hell'!

Paul arrived at ITV just as the HD standards debate between Europe and Australasia on one side and the USA and Japan on the other was beginning to gain momentum. He did a great many tests on a 60Hz television system being used under 50 Hz lighting conditions as at sports events and in large 'built' sets, such as for the Granada programme 'Medics' where there were real ceilings to the rooms lit by fluorescent tubes.

Paul always liked a good prank; he would place resistors around the circuit board you were debugging that would suddenly go up in smoke. He also enjoyed exploding crisp bags beside you when you were engrossed in a circuit!

When the European EUREKA 95 HD project started, Paul was made the lead engineer for ITV and became a member of the EUREKA 95 Fundamentals Working Party. We bought a 1250 line camera and a 54 inch rear projection display from Hitachi for, at today's prices, about £3.5M and Paul, with his typical enthusiasm, set about converting a 625 line Cintel Telecine to a digital 1250 line machine, quite a task!

In 1987, the 15 ITV programme companies decided to build a HD production unit to help them understand the production problems of HD. The companies paid some £6M for a completely equipped mobile unit, designed by the laboratory with the help of the Granada Engineering Department.

The unit was first used at IBC in 1988 when it was the central control point for the first demonstrations of 1250 line HD to European Governments and the Press. A demonstration pavilion was built on the beach at Brighton, well above the highest high water mark ever experienced there. Well, the night before the exhibition started, Brighton had the worse storms ever experienced and in the morning water was lapping at the back doors of the pavilion that faced the sea!

After a demonstration to UK Members of Parliament, Richard Dunn, Chairman of the 15 ITV Companies came to meet the HD team and asked us what we wanted to do next. We said we wanted to make a complete programme that would really explore the capabilities of HD; he replied that he would give us a production team to make such a programme. So suddenly, Paul's future work programme was decided! He would be the engineering 'master mind' behind all the equipment, demonstrations and programmes we would make for the next seven years.

One of the first demonstrations Paul masterminded was a personal demonstration to President Mitterrand of France in the Elysee Palace in Paris. It was here that we figured out a way of working in unusual places! We would all toil for long hours to get everything working as quickly as possible, and then we would split into two groups, one working and the other going off on sightseeing adventures!

One example of this was in Berlin in 1989 when giving demonstrations at a very large Consumer Radio and Television exhibition called IFA. One night Mike Yates, Mike Elgey and Paul decided to go into East Berlin.

They changed a set amount of money to East German Marks, took the U Bahn train into the East and had a look round. The contrast between East and West was surreal - the West being quite modern, the East looking like a 1940's film set. They went to a restaurant where they were presented with a menu, and then having spent some time working out the German, decided what they would like to eat. But it turned out there was actually no choice; they only had one meal available! They finished the meal, spent the rest of their money on some cakes and then they decided to walk back to the west, via the famous Checkpoint Charlie.

However, arriving at the Checkpoint, a large East German Border guard, complete with machine gun, informed them that you could only leave via Checkpoint Charlie, if you

entered via Checkpoint Charlie. Even Paul thought it best not to challenge this rule. However, to get back on the train they needed East German Marks, which they had just spent on the cakes. There were no currency exchanges, so they headed to the train station, where Paul met a very dodgy guy, who would trade West for East German Marks at a rip-off rate. They did not have much choice but to do the deal, or they would still be there today!

Two years later we visited Berlin again, twenty months after the infamous wall came down and we could not get over the difference in such a short period of time! Paul loved going up the television tower in East Berlin because it was covered in metal panels that made a horrible creaking sound as though it was going to fall down every time the wind blew!

Other places Paul visited when working on HD were The Royal Palace in Stockholm, twice to Berlin, Kiev in the Ukraine, Seville in Spain, Fontainebleau in France, the Albertville Winter Olympic's, the Barcelona Summer Olympic's, Christmas in Rome, the EBU in Montreux, the Lillehammer Winter Olympic's in Norway and the World Ice Skating Championships in Birmingham.

The first 'real' television programme we made was 'Night Music' in 1989 that was conceived by Paul Kafno of Thames Television to use HD in a range of non-studio locations and drawing on genres from drama, music and sport. Scenes involved both day and night shooting and used natural and artificial lighting. One set up was on the roof of the Kango Hammer factory in North Acton, it was a night shoot in the pouring rain and Ian Lever of the IBA recalls Paul being worried that the micro processors in the zoom lens would stop working if they got too cold so he took his fleece jacket off and wrapped it round the lens to keep it warm. That was typical of Paul, always thinking ahead! Paul Kafno describes Paul as a very clever engineer and remembers him saying 'that sometimes a good kick could solve problems the human brain could not'!

Another story is that ITV was requested by the Thatcher Government to take the HD van to Kiev in 1990, just as the USSR was collapsing, where the UK was staging a 'British Fortnight' and they wanted to demonstrate HD in a cinema. Paul, Mike Elgey and Tony Marlow went out to Kiev to set everything up and had an exhibition stand in the huge foyer of the cinema. They were visited from the various dignitaries including The Princess Royal and Mrs Thatcher. Mike and Tony described Kiev as a 'crumbling' city where balconies were falling down and killing people. We had been warned by the Government to take cigarettes and whiskey to bribe people to do things for us. I relayed this to Paul and he very sensibly stocked the van up with the necessary products and put it down to expenses!

At the exhibition venue the restaurant was called A Fine Dining Experience where they served up bits of animals you would rather not know about!

The problem in Kiev was not getting a taxi to go to the cinema in the morning but getting one back late at night. So Paul would bribe the drivers by telling them that if

they came back to collect him he would give them cigarettes. Cigarettes, at this time, were scarce and very expensive in the Ukraine!

Coupled with all the work Paul was doing at ITV, he bought a BMW M535 car from a scrap yard with serious damage to the front but managed to straighten it out using hydraulic pullers and a serious amount of welding! He also designed and did all the building work for a very large extension to his house!

In 1993, with the change of ITV Franchises, the ITV laboratory in Granada was closed down. Paul then set up Xtra Scope, a computer and networking company. He installed a great many systems for Companies and Colleges but after a few years ran into the usual problems of cash flow. He also started working for 'Shooting Partners' and during these years we used to meet up at IBC along with other ITV laboratory colleagues.

Paul was a lovely guy to work with, who had a sense of mischief to keep you on your toes. He was very hard working, a workaholic, who had great difficulty in saying "NO"! He was also an extremely inventive circuit design engineer. In fact, he was brilliant at everything he turned his mind to.

In taking soundings from his colleagues in ITV we would all like to remember Paul with two quotes from Shakespeare that describe our feelings, and hopefully, yours.

The first quotation is 'There's a great spirit that has gone'

And the second one is simply 'He was my Friend'

We're going to round up with Ed Tischler:

Ed Tischler:

As those of you who know Paul, I am sure you will appreciate the challenge that I face over the next couple of minutes. How do you try and encapsulate the last 14 years of his professional life, without reciting anecdotes that are not fit for a Family audience and using language that is inappropriate for a day like today although I am fairly sure he would be willing the expletives on.

It is often the case that the lives of friends and loved ones are embellished during their eulogy, the one thing that it is important is that today that the opposite effect doesn't happen. That we acknowledge just what a brilliant and talented engineer Paul was, and just how often he was late for work.

Paul first joined Gearhouse in August 2006, having previously working as a Freelance engineer.

He was an experienced and talented broadcast engineer. Starting at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and regularly working on the French Open, Wimbledon, the Open Golf and many other high profile events. In a department that

now has over 25 engineers, Paul would have been part of a team of only three or four. This would have meant long periods of travel and hard graft on the road, playing an important part in the growth and success of the company today. It was on his travels that Paul gained almost notoriety and endeared himself to so many people.

We canvassed the opinion of several people before today to try and compile a collection of anecdotes so we could try and paint a picture of this colourful career. Many of these you can read about on his blog, told first hand of course, which does them far better justice than if I were to retell them today. So in an attempt to jog people's memories I thought I would run through a brief description of a few of the tales or titles of mischief that could have been recounted today

- 3 days in quarantine in a Costa Rican jungle – contracting a serious illness in the Jungle and having to be quarantined away from the rest of the crew as they thought he had jungle fever. Doctors should have known it was going to take a lot more than that to see him off. He made constant requests for beer to be smuggled in.
- Home brewing on the hotel balcony – not only excelling at the noble art of beer crafting, Paul falls asleep only to leave the tap on and saturate the side of the hotel walls and the ground below him. The locals must have thought it was raining beer
- 100 beers in a 100 days – the time that Paul worked his way through the entire collection of the local bottle shop in one trip away
- Asleep at the hotel bar – This was Paul's chosen Olympic sport. Few would be able to rival him at a sport that he had truly made his own. After 12 years on the road, his ability to drop off, as if on the receiving end of a sniper's bullet, was truly magnificent.
- There was the invention of the 'something-o-matic' (quite possibly one of the most unusually crafted devices known to man. As far as most could tell it was invented to polish broomsticks)
- The feck-stick – Paul spent hours having programmed an LED wand capable of displaying coarse expletives across buildings and windows in a Technicolor display of Tourette's
- Kate Rendle was reminding me of the time that she arrived in South Africa to find Paul sulking because he had had his spud gun confiscated by security. Turns out the term spud gun didn't really do it justice. It was a five foot long piece of bathroom piping filled with hairspray, that when you ignited it, it would fire entire potatoes at high velocity out of the end. Paul had been trying to pick off security in their car as they did their rounds.

The list goes on, as we all know. He channelled his incredible technical mind into creating his own playground. Some would have used their talent for industry, Paul chose to also use his for his own amusement.

He was undoubtedly not only one of the great characters at Gearhouse, but also one of its greatest minds. He was someone who had natural engineering ability in huge swathes and attained a level of ability that is rarely seen. He was incredibly well

respected by his peers and everyone would remark on just how unusual and gifted his talent was. He was unique in many, many ways; good humoured, frank and uncompromising.

Paul will be greatly missed by all who knew him and I know that anyone that was ever lucky enough to have met and worked with him will always have very fond memories of him.

So what have we learnt? We know that Paul was unconventional. According to Nan Pat he was too clever for his own good. He was the King of hide and seek. He was a cross dressing elf. He built a spud gun that a North Korean despot would envy. He was stubborn. He was determined. He was a prankster. He was a friend. He was a father.

Above all – he was a great spirit that has gone.

QUIET REFLECTION

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

I've Been Everywhere – Johnny Cash

COMMITTAL

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

Paul David Grunwell. Son of Patricia and David. Brother to Mark. Husband to Pat. Father of Jennifer and Heather. Grandfather to Finlay and Sidney.

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 Paul'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 the village hall in Finstock. You'll find details in your order of service. Please note the instructions on raising a glass to Paul. At least one glass.

As you leave you'll see that you can make a donation in Paul's memory to Finstock Community Projects and to Oxford Hospitals Charity. Again you'll find details in your order of service.

Please take good care of yourselves and each other.

Thank you for coming.

EXIT

***Tubthumping* – Chumbawamba**