

A celebration of life

Stephen Robert Lloyd

Burton

13 September 1956 – 22 January 2020

14 February 2020 Breckland Crematorium, Watton, Norfolk

a personal goodbye

**Humanist
Ceremonies**

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We are going to remember Steve through poetry, memories shared by his wife Lavinia and his daughter Zoë, and music chosen with him in mind. The first piece of music we heard was chosen because Steve loved Gerry Rafferty, and was so inspired by him that he decided to learn to play the saxophone. Despite Steve's best efforts, it is fair to say that Gerry Rafferty had nothing to worry about!

Steve Peacock was born in Kings Lynn, and lived there for the first seven years of his life, with his Mum Crystal, her sister Jill, and his grandparents, who took on the main role of bringing him up.

When Steve was seven, Crystal married George Burton, and Steve chose to move with them to Downham Market, partly because he enjoyed the more rural surroundings. George adopted Steve, who took on his name of Burton, and the family was completed by the arrival of Steve's younger brother, Howard.

Steve was a bright boy who showed an interest in engineering and had a talent for problem solving. He embarked on a course at Nottingham Polytechnic but decided it wasn't for him so returned to his beloved Norfolk and completed an engineering apprenticeship at Downham Market. He and a friend then took their engineering skills abroad for a while, working in Belgium and France until returning to the UK.

Steve went on to work for British Sugar at its plant in Wissington. The United Kingdom's beet sugar industry is over one hundred years' old, and, during the Second World War, the Ministry of Agriculture deemed that the factory was of strategic importance and so took responsibility for it from March 1941. They drafted in Italian prisoners of war to refurbish the railway, and to construct the first roads to the factory. Steve worked for the company for thirty-eight years, and he loved the job.

However, our lives often take different paths, and Steve decided to fulfil a long-held ambition to become a driving instructor. Thanks to Steve, there are many people who were taught to drive by him, including some who are here today. Rather bravely, he also took on the challenge of teaching Zoë, who would, from time to time, telephone her Mum from the roadside, declaring she would never have another lesson from her Dad again.

But, of course, there was much more to Steve than his working life. It was in the late 1980's that Steve and Lavinia met at a Young Farmer's dinner dance in Swaffham. It's fair to say that it was not love at first sight. Steve thought Lavinia was a "stuck up bitch", and Lavinia found Steve to be an "objectionable person". It also didn't help that they were both there with their partners of that time. Nevertheless, they continued to see each other at social events from time to time, and there must have been something in the air because not only did they become a couple in 1993, they were married at Thetford Registry Office in 1994. Lavinia remembers a beautiful day, with a delicious wedding breakfast, followed by a church blessing at Necton. Their honeymoon was spent on the east side of Scotland, following the single malt whisky trail. Much fun was had.

Lavinia described her husband as her soul mate, with a wicked, dry sense of humour. He was both a gentleman and a gentle man. They welcomed their daughter Zoë into their solid family unit in 1998. There was some thought about a second child, but Steve decided he wanted a chocolate labrador instead, so Zoë remained their much-loved only child.

Steve worked long hours when Zoë was growing up, and, with similar personalities, they clashed from time to time. Steve didn't initially understand Zoë's passion for performing, but, once he saw her on stage, he changed his view. Zoë knew he was proud of her and that he was fiercely protective, just as fathers are meant to be. He and Zoë shared an interest in Harry Potter – she thinks he would be well-suited as a Hufflepuff, being intelligent, loyal, and firm in his beliefs.

The family's shared interest in history led to days out to places like Framlingham Castle, Grimes Graves, Norwich Castle, and, of course, Wells-next-the-Sea, with the obligatory fish and chips from "Frenchies". Steve was fascinated by the Second World War, and one of his favourite places was the Imperial War Museum at Duxford.

Animals were an integral part of family life, with dogs, cats, and birds sharing the home. Steve shared a strong bond with Teddy the Labrador, who followed him everywhere and was his shadow. It seems appropriate that the family's two dogs are here with us today.

Steve was a great fan of Formula One, and he and Lavinia would watch it at whatever unearthly time it was showing on the television. He was a race marshal at places like Snetterton and Donnington, and also played Rugby Union when he was younger, always supporting England when they played.

Steve's love of engineering, particularly anything connected with sustainability, endured throughout his life, and he could often be found in his shed, television on, "tinkering" with his latest project. These projects resulted in him designing and building two wind turbines to supply electricity to the family home, and he spent hours chopping wood for the burner.

Lavinia and Steve shared love of history turned into something very real for the family. When Steve became unable to answer questions about his family's health, particularly diabetes, which he was diagnosed with in 1997, Lavinia decided to research his family background. The results of her efforts led to the discovery of Steve's American family from Montgomery, Alabama. Sadly, his father had died, but Steve gained four siblings: Virginia, Valerie, Louie, and Fair. Steve, Lavinia, and Zoë travelled to Alabama in 2008 to meet them all. They are a very precious and special part of each other's lives, and, although they are unable to be here today, they have offered much love and support since Steve's death, and will undoubtedly be thinking of you all.

Steve faced medical and personal challenges in the last year or so of his life. His will was strong, but his body became too tired, and so it was that Steve died in his sleep on 22nd January 2020.

The second piece of music, by Coldplay, brings back happy memories for Lavinia and Zoë. When Steve decided to buy a Dodge Nitro car, Zoë declared she would never go in it. Needless to say, she did. It was in this car that she heard this track for the first time, and was struck by the incredible bass line. It became a family favourite, even if Zoë never did grow to love the car itself! We will then hear Zoë read a poem she has written especially for her Dad.

Father of Mine by Zoë Whitfield-Lunn

Father please I miss you now,

Your body cold to touch

Father please I need you

I'm not ready to let you go

You looked so peaceful at last once more

I felt nothing but a tidal ache.

My silence isn't by choice anymore,

My silence is my grieving state.

I hope you're at peace at last,

I hope you're wide awake.

I hope you look at us and like Hamilton said to Eliza
'My love, take your time. I'll see you on the other side'
You'll let mum stay.
So, daddy I'm angry at you for leaving before your time.
But daddy I'll care for mum, into my dying days.
So daddy please rest now, knowing she'll be safe.
I know I never said enough. I will love you always.