

Andrew Eulogy

"I first met Andrew over forty years ago when we both joined the Daily Mirror Training scheme in Plymouth. The scheme was known as the fast track into Fleet Street and many who have passed through have shaped the face of this nation. Andrew was not only the youngest on the scheme he was unusual in not having a degree. There were some very strong characters among his contemporaries. One arguably nearly brought down the House of Windsor and another managed to publicly upset both Margaret Thatcher and Her Majesty the Queen at the same time. But despite his relative youth and lack of academic credentials Andrew held his own and became a star reporter on the Plymouth Times. This stubborn and quiet determination to succeed was one of his hallmarks.

Andrew's way was not one of confrontation and when he left the scheme he did not join the tabloids of Fleet Street but instead entered the world of magazines. A brave decision for at the time his contemporaries would have sneered at magazines. But unlike newspapers which are here today and gone tomorrow magazines have a far deeper and lasting impact in shaping our society.

At IPC which became Reed International Andrew proved himself to be an excellent reporter really digging down deep into the stories that mattered. Whatever the subject, whatever the magazine Andrew with his first class brain was adept at understanding and capturing the issues of the day. And my goodness me the range of leading magazines he worked for was impressive: Nursing Mirror, Community Care, Caterer and Hotel Keeper, Motor Trader, Motor Transport, Media International and International Management to name just a few.

To me and I am sure to all of you here who knew him it was no surprise that he soon rose in the ranks and became an editor and during his career at Reed he edited no less than five of the magazines I have just mentioned.

And as an editor working for these world class magazines his reputation was second to none. He was known for his vision, his foresight and ability to spot opportunities whenever they arose. Despite his lofty position he was unfailingly kind, compassionate and very well respected by all of those who worked for him and with him.

Just to give you a snapshot of Andrew's role as an editor I have been sent these words by Glyn Hoskins-Turner one of his staff on Motor Trader.

"Andrew gave me my first journalism job as News Reporter on Motor Trader and that vote of confidence changed my life forever.

Getting the call to say the job was mine was one of the best moments of my life. I had been on the Reed journalism course and was up against two car mad guys and a super clever girl - all University graduates.

I had just a couple of O levels but a hunger to write, which I am glad to say, Andrew spotted and believed in.

My career blossomed, supported and guided by Andrew and his editing team. We worked hard and played hard. I went on to enjoy a long writing career, traveling the world and meeting amazing and famous people.

When I left Reed to go freelance Andrew again showed me his support, ringing me to handle some very high profile interviews.

I have often thought of Andrew over the years because of the break he afforded me. Everybody needs someone to believe in them - and I am honoured to say I had Andrew."

I think these words sum up Andrew so well. But of course in this day and age being an editor involves a lot more than just producing words in print and managing staff. It includes organising conferences, seminars and events to promote the magazine. Andrew was also excellent at delivering the challenges these presented including ...and it doesn't get much bigger than this....being master of ceremonies on the floor of a packed Albert Hall.

Of course work was important to him but so was his family life. He could never have achieved what he did without the loving and continuous support and advice of his wife Lu and his two wonderful children Hannah and Josh who he doted upon. They were the rock on which he built his life and they meant everything to him.

His was a home of fun, laughter and happiness and while he travelled the world on behalf of his magazines he also crossed the globe many times with his family.... He was always proud of the fact that he was one of the few people to have visited Ascension Island and even managed to be there on Ascension Day.

Just to give you a snapshot of the kind of Dad he was these words were written by Hannah:-

"Dad would travel back from exotic locations, a Toblerone under his arm and he'd attempt to convince us with a mischievous smile that it wasn't from the airport. Josh and I use to wonder if he was really working for MI5, but anyone who really knew him knew that he would never hurt a fly. I guess that was evident by all the hours he spent patiently walking around Topshop with me somehow keeping a smile on his face. Or how he would sit watching terrible television by my side to make me happy, even letting me steal his beloved ITV news spot. He was one of those truly incredible dads, whose terrible jokes could cheer up the darkest days, and who with one flash of that mischievous smile would secretly invite you to be his partner in crime. And with that we would sneak off for ice cream, for a walk or to the pub.

As time went on, we'd speak of our family holidays and his eyes would light up and he'd say yes that, that was really great. We'd speak of our Christmas in Dubai, of his insistence on eating at a German restaurant. Or his staple guest the opera t-shirt that made an appearance every holiday.

Even in the hardest times, it didn't get Dad down the way it would anyone else. As we walked down the road I would hold Dad's hand just as I did when I was a child... both of us seemingly under the illusion we were taking care of each other."

I was the best man at Andrew and Lu's wedding and what a wonderful, happy occasion it was. After all this time I can't remember the exact words that were said and whether the honour and obey bit was included in the service. But I feel sure the words "in sickness and in health" were said as part of the vows.

And no one could have done more than was humanly possible to keep that vow than Lu. Whowith the support of her family.... stood by him, supported him and cared for him as his health slowly deteriorated.

Even after the diagnosis of his illness Andrew carried on working as best he could.....I am sure many of us would have just given up. But not Andrew he even embarked on working towards a history degree....with his brilliant brain I am sure Andrew would have emerged with a first class degree had he studied for one in his teenage years. He also used his own experiences to help with the research of those who are struggling to find a cause and cure for dementia.

I once said to him I thought he was very brave in the way he was facing up to his illness and he replied...modest ever.... that he wasn't brave but he had no choice. Of course he was brave...very, very brave struggling on to keep going as long as he possibly could.

His life was cut short by a terrible illness but my goodness me while he had life Andrew lived every minute of it that he could to the full.

When Andrew was training to be a journalist it was his task to drive the final proofs of the newspaper over a long and winding Dartmoor lane to the printworks and sit with grumpy, unionised but highly skilled printers as they laboriously saddled up the copy and put the paper to bed. When he arrived exhausted back at the newspaper offices the first words of George Harris, the kindly editor with a glint in his eye would be "Well now Andrew what do you think is going to be the lead story for next week's edition."

Newspaper and print production has changed a lot since then but the human condition is timeless and never changes. And I feel sure that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ even now Andrew is somewhere I can't quite comprehend preparing the next edition. I don't know what the subject will be and I have no idea about the circulation. But I do know if Andrew is the editor it will be a masterpiece and I look forward to discussing with him in the future the stories it contains as I have done so many times in the past."