

## **NICK HAYES 1942 - 2014**

My thanks to Carol and Sara and friend Jill, for putting together this appreciation of Nick's life.

Nick was an only child, born in July 1942 in Erith in Kent. His father was a motor mechanic with the Tanks Corps, and as these were the war years, the family had to move wherever his father was stationed. So at an early stage he left the garden of England and moved to Birmingham- where he spent his early years. By the time it came to go to school, the family had returned south, and Nick began school in Brixton. From Brixton, the next move was to Woking, a new town developed post war, offering opportunities to live somewhere other than bombed out London. During this time in Brixton and Woking, a very significant friendship was to develop between Nick and Jill, who he grew up alongside one another and together they formed a close bond, akin to being brother and sister. A friendship which has lasted to this day.

Jill's mum and dad were important to Nick as well as Jill. Nick's mum was not a well woman, and Nick was cared for by Jill's parents, and various aunts and uncles. School wasn't his favourite place and the combination of a difficult home life and the opportunity to leave school at the earliest possible moment, led him to joining the Merchant Navy aged 15, and going to catering school.

He was to spend 5 years in the MN- he never knew quite where he would be going- but Australia featured- and he liked Oz- so much so that he jumped ship 3 times to avoid returning to blighty- on the last occasion he was found sunning himself on Bondi Beach- the Australian authorities banned him from returning there for at least a year.

Back home, he found work in a holiday camp on the Isle of Wight- the life immortalised by Hi-de- Hi! It didn't last long and the contrast in his next job was marked- the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, working in the Royal Box- meeting members of the Royal family- visiting royalty and numerous VIPS. It was here he met Carol, an usherette- helping her with the matinee Tea Tray in the Grand Tier. It was a whirlwind romance- he proposed to her 3 weeks later- but it took somewhat longer to organise a wedding- some 3 yrs later in 1968. Their honeymoon was in Germany and 11 months later, Sara was born.

Glamorous though the Royal Opera House might be, the hours were long, and meant not seeing much of Sara as she grew up, so after 12 yrs, he resigned and found alternative employment, which enabled him to see more of Carol and Sara as she grew up.

His next significant job was with Carlsberg- he had always enjoyed a pint- not to mention being knowledgeable about wine- he had been a Hd Wine Steward in the MN at the age of 21. Working for Carlsberg meant a lot of travelling and hours on the rd and after 11 yrs, he fancied being in one place for a bit, rather than being all over the place. With his knowledge of the world of

beer and wine, what was more natural than to run his own pub, with Carol in Cornwall. Pub life isn't easy either and with Sara now in Suffolk, the decision was made to move closer and 20 years ago Nick and Carol came and made their home in Grundisburgh. Nick was adaptable and had transferable skills, so he found employment where he could- selling wine- working in Debenhams- Suffolk County Council- always a much admired and liked colleague, as the many cards Carol has received have shown.

Living in Suffolk meant seeing his grandchildren growing up- he was "Radnic" to them- he loved his golf- and it was a proud moment when he witnessed grandson Tom get a hole in one and granddaughter Sophie swimming for Suffolk. Nick never really learnt to swim, in Carol's words "he just sunk". He loved Formula 1- you will recognise the music as we leave today. He was a Johnny Mathis, Sammy Davis , C&W and Seekers fan- an interesting mixture- not exactly opera- probably heard too much of that during his years at the Royal Opera House.

He and Carol always enjoyed travelling- highlights were their trips to friends Sandy and Heinz in Germany; visiting Australia (he was just about allowed back in- tho not without comment from Australian Immigration officials) and Canada to visit relatives. Now he has embarked on the greatest journey of all- the journey from death to a new life- the life that is lived in the fullness of God, which is love. Love which death cannot destroy, which in Christ has been defeated through his resurrection. The life beyond death, is a place of peace and of healing- where there

is no pain- no suffering- so we listen to some words from the book of Revelation

21 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth,"<sup>[a]</sup> for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup> I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death'<sup>[b]</sup> or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

<sup>5</sup> He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

<sup>6</sup> He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. <sup>7</sup> Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.