

## **Don Wharton Eulogy**

*Mary Farmer, Daughter*

Donald Ian Murray Wharton , Don to many, Dad or Grandad to us. He was born in January 1930 to William and Kate ( our only family link to royalty) the baby brother to big sister Jean.

>>> Dad had a good childhood and enjoyed home life, so much so that on his first day at Deansfield school it got to lunchtime and 5 year old dad thought that was it for his schooling so took himself back home to Maudsley Road , to say his mum was surprised to see him on the doorstep was an understatement. Needless to say she took him back and he went on to enjoy school until he left to join Barclays Bank . He did however continue to learn , going to Night school for a few years where he attained his financial and banking qualifications ,equivalent to a degree, not bad for a lad who left school at 14 and only attended the Polytechnic not a grammar school. Dad stayed with Barclays for over 40 years becoming a bank manager, he only took a break to join the service corp for his national service.

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>>> Growing up through the war dad was evacuated to Addington in Kent where he stayed with 2 spinsters along with a group of boys. I don't think they made the ladies lives very easy but dad remembered that they had a huge barrel of apples in their garden, the boys were allowed one a day , which didn't happen and the barrel went down very quickly particularly due to that little lad called Don, dad had a sweet tooth and a real love of apples which he got from his grandad, when they went to visit him he would always take joy in watch young Don eating plenty of apples from his orchard, mainly because he'd lost his teeth and couldn't eat them any more ! Despite the apples dad got homesick, he always said he must have been good at letter writing as his parents came and got him a couple of weeks later and he went to stay with his uncle in Oxford for a little while. He regularly recalled his wartime adventures with his friend Peter Butterworth, collecting shrapnel and displaying them on the fireplace at home. His most memorable story was at Oxleas woods where they were playing when they heard the eerie sound of a V2 they saw it in the distance then all of a sudden the engines cut out releasing the bomb, they watched it coming towards them and lay flat on the ground, they breathed a sigh of a relief as it sailed over their heads. Very sadly and most upsetting was that the bomb missed the woods and landed on houses behind Shooters Hill.

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>>> In his teenage years a very important part of his life was the youth club at St Lukes church in Westmount Road, where he made many lifelong friends who have all kept in touch over the years. The most important person he met there was our mum, the love of his life Marjorie Morgan whom he often referred to as his 'angel' they married when dad was the tender age of 21. Mum being 11 months older often referred to him as her 'toy boy'

>>> They started life in a rented flat in Greenvale Road, then bought their first home on Shooters Hill, where after a very long wait of several years they welcomed home their much awaited first born Sarah, followed a couple of years later by Duncan and then a couple years after that I came along and their family was complete. With a growing family and the need for Marjorie's parents to come and live with them they moved to their larger home in Court Road where dad stayed until his very last day.

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>>> Dad and mum became very involved in St Andrews Church opposite, helping out on a number of committees such as the playgroup committee. One of dad's biggest achievements was being one of the committee instrumental in the setting up of Sagassa ( St. Andrews guides and scouts association) he spent many years involved in fundraising, eventually achieving their goal of building a brand new Hall. He was treasurer for many years and as children we fondly remember helping out at the jumble sales and Donkey Derby's and then we would sit with dad at the dining room table counting up the money, no labour saving machines back then.

>>> Dad and mum formed many friendships over these years most memorable was his great friendship with Tommy Irvine and Maurice McGowan, they became the proverbial 'English man Irishman and Scotch man' with the sense of humour to match. Dad had a wicked sense of humour, it was very dry and he always managed to keep a straight face , fooling many. Sometimes though

telling a joke would trigger his narcolepsy, where he would have what we fondly called a 'turn' and needed to sit down before he fell down.

>>> Dad coped so well with his illnesses, never once complaining about them or feeling sorry for himself, he just got on with it and it was all we knew growing up. We always accepted that it took 12 hours to get to Devon, stopping many times so dad could rest, or that he would fall asleep during school plays etc. That was just our dad or our grandad.

>>> Since losing mum 8 years ago we all feel we got to know him that bit more, he was very much a family man and his family came first, he always told people he had 3 children, when asked what he had he would always say one of each, a little girl a little boy and a little .... well it reminds with Ruggie I wasn't the best behaved as a child .

>>> He would do anything for us from giving lifts to all our friends after a party "my dad will take you home" we would say and he always did. He bravely took us out when we were learning to drive , the most memorable time was with Sarah in her Opel Kadet, turning sharply into Riefield Road dad said I will take the wheel and he did as the steering wheel came off in Sarah's hands and she passed it over to him, but dad always remained calm. In the 60's as chief Teller in the bank , his bank was victim to one of the first armed robberies in the country, but even with a shotgun held to his head dad still managed to press the panic button but he never spoke about it . A brave , strong man indeed , he amazed the police recently when he was burgled 3 months ago , the burglars coming into dad's bedroom demanding to know where his valuables were, dad stayed calm and rang sarah to get the police whilst they were downstairs.

>>> It is here that we all would like to say such a huge thank you to Sarah , if it hadn't been for her nursing expertise we would have lost dad a long time ago, she has devoted the last two years to caring for dad daily, often at least twice a day , she monitored his medication, dressed his foot and kept him going on all fronts. Thank you Sarah.

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>>> Everyone here will have fond memories of dad, as children Duncan remembers him telling everyone he owned a 'Rolls Canardly " Rolls Down the Hill Canardly get up the other!

>>> Eventually he did buy his first brand new car, but dad being dad we had to look at so many cars and visit so many car showrooms before he decided on the Austin Maxi , we were all excited about the car and for some reason the feature of the seats folding down into a double bed intrigued us. That first night mum and dad couldn't find us until they looked in the garage and found the three of us sleeping in the back of the maxi.

>>> He made happy memories for us all, his grandchildren all remember the trips to St Mary's Bay and the bedtime stories grandad made up about Sydney the squirrel and Clarence the Fox. I can always remember dad's reply when I thanked him for all he did for his grandchildren he just said "thank you for letting us be a part of their lives". His grandchildren and then his great grandchildren meant so much to him , he loved nothing better than seeing them and hearing all about what they had been up to. That was dad such a wonderful much loved man.

>>> Even his favourite song, which you are about to hear reminds us ( not quite so fondly ) of school mornings when he would wake us up singing this as he pulled back the curtains.

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>>> He will be greatly missed by everyone he really was a lovely lovely gentle man.