



Celebrating the Life of

Albert Ernest Starr

24th September 1926 - 3rd November 2016

Parndon Wood Crematorium
Wednesday, 30th November at 12.15 pm

Conducted by
Steve Stacey - Civil Celebrant

Celebrating the Life of

Albert

Entrance Music

Smile – Nat King Cole

Welcome & Introduction.

Welcome here today as we meet to celebrate the life of Albert and to pay our respects to him.

Albert had dementia and for those who were closest to him it was as if the man that they knew and loved had faded away.

Our service, though, is a celebration for his life and everything that he leaves behind. It's a time to look back to when he was fit and healthy and enjoying everything life had to offer him.

I hope that you feel that our service for him reflects, respects and honours the Albert and that it gives you the opportunity to pay your respects to him in the way you would wish.

These words sum up why we're here...

And so, when we remember,
We'll think of all the rest.
We'll concentrate on earlier,
And remember all the best.

For in the real scheme of things,
Your illness wasn't long.
Compared to all the happiness,
You brought your whole life long.

Albert...

We think of you as yesterday,
When you were fit and well.
And when we're asked about you,
It's those things that we'll tell.

And so we meet in remembrance,
Of a mind so fit and true.
We're here to pay our last respects
To say that, "We love you".

Albert had many wonderful qualities.

He was an upbeat, happy and warm man who lifted the spirits of those around him.

He was easy going, smiley and well liked. He had a good sense of humour and was always cracking jokes and had a quick wit. He was very funny and enjoyed playing the clown.

That was just as well – he was well known for being clumsy!

Each of you has lost a dear friend. His family has lost an irreplaceable part of their life.

Our hearts go out to Rene - the pair were a devoted team for so many years.

We think of Barry and Debbie - they have lost a cornerstone of their family. He was a devoted grandfather to Jodie, Russell, Emma, Lee, Bradley, Glen, Matthew and Luke. I'm sure that his great grandchildren Alex, Harrison, Joshua, Amelia, Olive and Frank will grow up hearing wonderful stories about him.

They are the legacy that he leaves behind, a living and growing memorial to him. His family is a testament to the love of Albert and Rene.

We take a moment to remember Linda – she was always in his heart and never far from his thoughts.

We think of Bill and Barbara – they have lost an irreplaceable part of their family.

Rene and Albert never argued. They loved being in each other's company. They were inseparable and did everything together. That included fishing – a great hobby of them both. She often witnessed his clumsiness first hand. How else would we know about him casting a line and getting tangled up totally or the occasion when he was chased by swans?

In later years, their favourite place was going to Ireland and staying in a cabin there together.

Many people don't get fishing at all. Our first reading offers some light on the lure of fishing. It is in your Order of Service books and I hope that you can conjure an image of Albert and Rene on the bank.

To Be By A Lake

To be by a lake, with rod and line,
Any time of day, suits me just fine,
To see the silent mist, of a day just begun,
Or watch the rays of light, from the setting sun.
To relax and enjoy Mother Nature's ways,
What better way to spend your leisure days,
The lapping of the water, stirred by the breeze,
The leaves as they dance high in the trees.
When finally it's time, and you must go,
Stop and take just one last look,
It matters not that no fish took your hook,
You've enjoyed the day, the weather was fine,
You've been by a lake with rod and line.

David Spall (1941 - 2012)

Albert's Story

Albert was born in St Pancras on 24th September 1926 to Louisa and Edward. His father worked on the railway and the family lived in Camden Town.

Albert remembered that it was a very different world that he lived in then.

They lived in a typical Victorian terraced house with an outside toilet, a tin bath hanging on the wall, and windows that froze over during the cold winter months. There was a big mangle in the back yard and chores were done by hand. He came from a large family and the children all had their own jobs and looked after each other.

Once a week they would go to the local baths.

There was little in the way of entertainment. Radio was still in its infancy, and television had only just been invented. There was a piano downstairs – the focus of many family gatherings.

Albert remembered that on cold nights that there would be four children in the bed snuggling together for one for warmth and covered by scratchy horse blankets.

As a boy Albert was in the church choir. As a choirboy it meant he got free drink and biscuits.

He left school when he was 14. The war had recently started. He went to work with British Railways driving horse and carts – the whole family worked there. Later, he found a job working as a van boy for ABC bakeries. He recalled that he was able to drive the van around the yard when the driver went into the bakery.

When he was 18, he was called up. He joined the Royal Engineers and trained as a lorry driver and chauffeur. He served in Egypt and in Greece. He had memories of drinking Ouzo and getting very drunk.

He met Rene when he was 21. She was 16 at the time and it was on a blind date. Her first impressions weren't great. She wasn't keen on him.

Nonetheless, They started going out together.

He remembered walking miles up Oxford Street and Regent Street and stopping to have a coffee at Lyons Corner House. They would go dancing when they could afford it. Albert said that this was back in the days when they had 'proper music'.

They were married on 24 December 1950 – Christmas Eve.



It was a time of rationing and austerity. They had their wedding reception in the front room of his in-laws house, 17 Gaisford Street. There is a wonderful picture on the back of your order of service.

It was some years after their marriage that they had their honeymoon. They went to Italy by train. The next foreign holiday was to Spain in 1976.

Albert worked for some time as an ambulance man.

They started their married life moving further down Gaisford Street to number 71. They started the family in 1953 with Linda. Barry followed in 1955 and Deborah in 1963.

In 1965 Albert found a job in Harlow as a postman. It was that wonderful time when getting a job in Harlow meant that you got a house with it. The family moved into Hollyfield and that became a family forever home.

Despite liking Hollyfield, Albert and Rene found coming to Harlow quite a culture shock and they didn't like it at all. It was all far too green.

Albert drove lorries for most of his working life. His clumsiness stretched to his driving. Where ever he went, calamity seemed to follow. He had a habit of knocking pub signs down.

Albert enjoyed driving. He always had a car and it was kept in the garage cleaned and polished and was always immaculate.

He was always proud of his own appearance too. He wore his hair slicked back with Brylcreem, he always carried a comb and a clean handkerchief. He was a smart dresser and even when he was driving his lorries he wore a shirt and tie. He had the bluest of blue eyes and always wore blue to bring out the colour.

He didn't need a vehicle to bring disaster, though. Once on holiday he managed to knock Debbie off a ledge as he carried his Brownie camera and turned round quickly. Fortunately, she was okay.

At home Renée did the decorating herself, but she would let him paste the paper. He delighted in working in his garden growing his vegetables.

There was a pond in the garden well stocked with fish in the tank. They had a beautiful fish tank as well and of course they loved going fishing.

Rene and Albert made sure the children have had a good childhood.

They always had holidays. Those holidays were spent in holiday camps like Butlins and Pontins. They were idyllic times with a fun 'Hi-De-Hi' type atmosphere and Rene and Albert joined in the spirit of everything that was put on in the way of activities.

When grandchildren arrived, he made a wonderful grandfather. Children liked being with him; he had the knack of making them laugh, perhaps winding up as he did things like rattling his false teeth.

Years ago, he had a great love of making wine. He always had jars bubbling away as they fermented and homemade wine was always served with Sunday dinner.

The parties were a big feature of those years - the couple made a good host and hostess.

Rene worked for Cossor and had lots of friends. Social Clubs were a huge part of family life in those years. The couple enjoyed socialising and went to many shows with the post office social club. They enjoyed eating out too. Albert was perhaps unusual for his generation and really enjoyed eating foreign food.

Sadly, he had to retire after falling from the back of a lorry.

In later life he loved watching TV. He enjoyed the black-and-white comedy stars of years gone by - people like Abbott and Costello and Laurel and Hardy. He liked watching roatin', tootin', shootin' cowboy films of the forties and fifties. He would watch anything to do with the Second World War. If there were a football match on TV he be watching that too.

Albert died on the 3rd November.

I hope that each of you can get comfort from the fact that he had a good life and for the most part a life that he was able to enjoy. He leaves behind that wonderful legacy of family and of friends.

During the next few minutes, think about the things that you've heard about Albert today.

Think about your own memories too - they will be as special and unique as he was. No two of you will have the same memories.

Think about why it was good to have had Albert as part of your life - the impact that he had on you. Remember that he was very proud to have had each of you in his life too.

Albert loved easy listening music from the likes of Matt Monro and Nat King Cole. We're going to listen to a song that meant so much to Rene and Albert.

Music for Reflection
Softly As I Leave You – Matt Monro

Quiet Reflection

We're going to spend a few moments in silence - a chance to focus on a single memory of him, one that will make you smile. Perhaps you'll think of the sound of his voice, his laugh or conversations that you had with him. Perhaps you'll remember him rattling his false teeth.

If you have faith you could use the time to say your own private prayer for him.

The Committal

Sadly Albert's journey with us here has now ended. He is free of all of the cares of the world, free of all of the troubles of the world. He is at total peace.

Albert...

To everything there is a season

A time to be born and a time to die.

We have remembered your life with love and thanks.

We are glad that we shared our lives with you.

We will cherish all of the good things that you brought into our lives.

We will remember your character and your personality,

The wonderful things that you did with us

We commit the memory of you to our hearts and minds.

With love and tenderness, we leave you in peace.

Closing Words

It is sometimes said that a person dies twice. The first time is when their heart stops beating. The second is when they are finally forgotten.

Whatever your faith, it is in remembering that we live on in others.

Think about Albert fondly. Talk about him often. Speak of him kindly. Although he has gone, his memory will stay with you always and whenever you think of him, he will be there for you.

We never lose the people we love. Be thankful that Albert was and still is a part of your life. For his family, he will always be a part of them, always be with them.

Enjoy sharing your memories of him with each other.

When you go to the Quaker Meeting House afterwards - you are all invited - enjoy reminiscing about Albert. Feel free to laugh at the things he said, the things he got up to. I'm sure that there will be more laughter than tears when you get there.

I'm sure that if he were with you, he would be laughing loudest and longest.

Debbie sums it Albert up well. “He was a total family man We were so lucky to have a perfect childhood There's so much to say about our dad and so much I'm going to miss but most of all his laughter. Stories will be told about for many years The stars will be brighter now Dad's there.”

Perhaps our final words are ones that he would want to share with you today?

Feel no guilt in Laughter

Feel no guilt in laughter, I know how much you care.
Feel no sorrow in a smile that I am not here to share.
You cannot grieve forever; I would not want you to.
I'd hope that you could carry on the way you always do.
So, talk about the good times
and the way we showed we cared,
The days we spent together, all the happiness we shared.
Let memories surround you, a word someone may say
Will suddenly recapture a time, an hour, a day,
That brings me back as clearly as though I am still here,
And fills you with the feeling that I am always very near.
For if you keep those moments, we will never be apart
And I will live forever locked safely within your heart.

Thank you so much for taking the time to be here today for Albert and helping celebrate his life together. Our biggest thank you is to Albert.

Exit Music

Born Free – Matt Monro