

*To Celebrate the Life
of*



Harry McCormick

10th February 1990 - 19th April 2020

Wilford Hill Crematorium, Main Chapel

Thursday 4th June 2020
at 11.45 am





Music on Entry

'Till Stand By You' - The Pretenders

Welcome and Introduction

Poem

Our Son Harry
read by Kevin

I got a call one morning; an addition was on the way.
Excited and apprehensive, what it would mean, I couldn't say.
Eventually our son was born, after Sam and I rushed to the hospital
Early one morn.

His arrival was quite slick, with me directing the crew,
The doctors and the midwives attending
when he was due.

We slowly acclimatised to Harry, as our wonderful son is called,
But had to rename Harry the doberman,
Shadow, our other dobe, was appalled.

Harry's young years were sometimes quite eventful;
Sometimes forgotten 'til the end of the drive when, with a shriek of remembrance,
Back to the house to fetch him we'd dive ...
Several times, well before he was five.

Think of the horror one day as the car phone rang.
An eight-year-old's voice shouted and sang ...
"You've left me at the garden centre, they're about to kick me out.
I don't know where on earth you are, but you'd better turnabout."
Many tales could be told, too many to relate here,
Including one of a very young boy swigging his father's beer.
But time is fleet and all too soon our boy became a young man
Who started finding his feet.
Sam and I soon realised we could no longer have things all our own way,
He'd often get us beat.
But then this rather rebellious boy knuckled down and got his degree.



Following it up with a Masters,
We could hardly contain our glee.

The tattoos and the piercings came as quite a blow,
Not the things you want for your child,
But times were changing, it wasn't our life,
So we had to let it go.

His own way didn't always suit, but love and affection was never in dispute.
Not just a son but a friend whose company was great,
Though I did try to reign him in when he called me "Mate".

Then he gave up his high-pressure job and announced he was going away,
To our question of, where and for how long,
He answered, "Nepal, then India,
After that I can't say."
Sad to hear his plans, but determined to support,
We rallied round him without another thought.

It's no light thing to cut your ties and explore the wide, wide world,
But, accompanied by his good pal Tom,
A great adventure soon unfurled.
We were proud to wave them off at Luton Airport
And as amazed as they to find
Four friends already waiting there, giving their support.
How very, very kind.

How we revelled in the Lanky Adventures blog,
WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram,
with regular updates from Harry saying,
"Look, this is where I am!"

And whilst we wished him a fantastic 29th birthday,
we missed the lovely young man.
It was wonderful to see him having such fun,
But I would have loved to have been with him and so would Sam.



Alex's Tribute

read by Alex

Harry was one of my dearest friends. He was my neighbour throughout most of my childhood.

When I was at school, I endured the unfortunate consequences of being at the lower end of the social hierarchy, but when I came home any of those troubles would drain away; especially when Harry was waiting for me in the square.

Harry never judged me and without question, accepted me for who I was. Looking back, I can't remember a single moment where we fell out with one another. Yes we bickered and bragged which of our fathers' cars was faster but we never fought. In fact, Harry often acted as a peace maker with an unusual method. There was a time Harry and I were locked outside my house and the only person in was my younger sister, Evangelia. She was situated in the loft listening to music. We knew this, as the window in the loft was open and we were left shouting upwards but received no response. So we started to throw juggling balls up until one hit the window, scaring the daylight out of my sister and she popped her head out the window to see her disgruntled brother and Harry in the garden. I was adamant that she deliberately ignored us, so as the door was opened, battle ensued. As the shouting and screaming started, to Harry it probably seemed like two cats in an alley showdown. As the noise subsided, so we tried to catch our breath for round two, Harry started to give commentary and then laughed. He had a laugh that was so infectious he couldn't stop showing his little pearly white teeth. Harry was currently stood between my sister and I, lacked the ability to sense immediate danger. We both snapped our attention onto Harry, swapping our frustrations for one another into a punch onto each of Harry's arms. In that moment the argument stopped. We then all laughed and proceeded to do something else. I remember being so disappointed when Harry wasn't in and so excited when he was back home.



There was a time that Evangelia, Harry and I decided to play hide and seek amongst the daffodils on Clifton Green. We careful lay in between the flowers and waited there until we were found. When it was Harry's turn to seek, a car pulled up with the window down and a voice shouted out, "Harry, you bloody fool, come here."

It was Sam and as Harry endured the Spanish Inquisition, he tried to point out the fact he was not alone and that Evangelia and I lay incognito amongst the flowers.

We, believing to be camouflaged by the bright yellow flowers, stayed down and played the life long tactic, when someone's being told off by their parents; say nothing and secretly enjoy it. Sam eventually drove off, leaving Harry awkwardly standing alone looking down at his shoes. As the car went around the corner and safety was assured, we picked ourselves above the canopy of daffodils to realise that we hadn't been as careful as we thought we had been, discovering we squashed a large portion of them. Yet even in that moment of guilt, we childishly laughed it off and our minds wandered off innocently to the next adventure. Every time I drive past the pigeon house in the spring I remember my dear friend and all the magical moments we shared, even when they ended up with one of us in trouble. Harry was a ray of sunshine and could give anyone a spring in their step. I'll carry him in my heart forever. Love you Harry.

For My Brother

A long time ago, as a child at Plumtree Primary School, on a whim I went to speak to a nervous boy who had just arrived on the playground. That first exchange sparked a brotherhood that would span almost three decades and brought two families so close together.

Harry has been such a major part of my life; even going to schools in different counties didn't do much to break us apart. When I came back from boarding school he integrated me into his friendship group here in Nottingham, which sparked friendships that I still hold to this day. Most of which are stood outside this room. I don't have enough time to stand here and go through everything with you of what we did together, or what he meant to me, as I have barely a memory in my life that doesn't involve him.



He was there for me when I struggled with depression, and it will forever tug at my heart that I couldn't be there for him at his darkest moment. But I'm not going to dwell on what's happened anymore, as it's not going to bring Harry back, so instead I will tell stories. Stories of the brother that I stayed up with until the early and late hours of the morning from when we kids to full grown adults, who partied together and travelled together, who had endless debates about science, history, philosophy, politics and religion without argument, who shared a love of music, science fiction, cars and comedy. I will tell stories of a man who brought so much into my life and the lives of so many others, stories of a man who was a friend to everyone, a man who you just couldn't help but get taken in by for his most caring and beautiful spirit. These are the stories I will tell my kids one day - of the uncle they never knew, I will tell them how important such brotherhoods/sisterhoods can be, as it transcends blood, it transcends religious/scientific belief, politics and distance, it lasts from this life to the next.

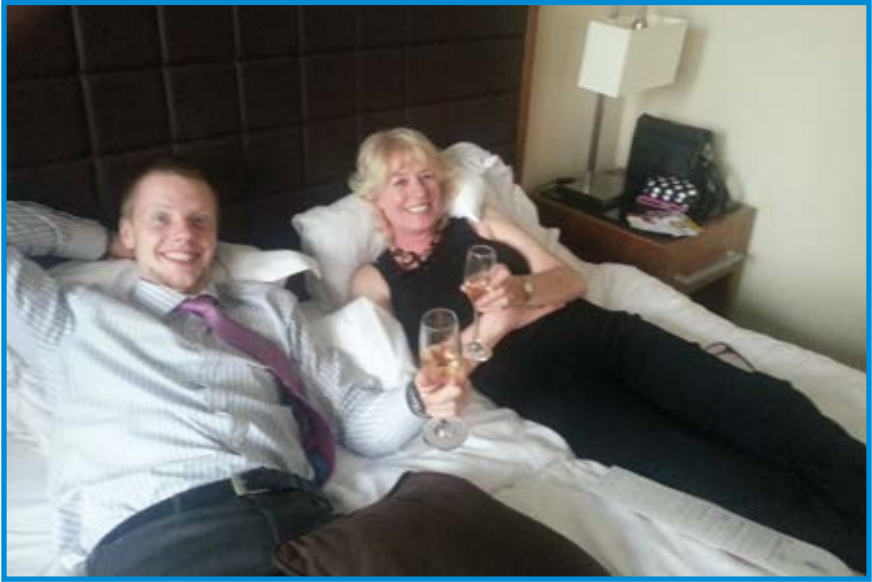
That's how I'll honour him.

Harry and I always shared different beliefs in the afterlife; I've always been of a Christian mind and he a scientific one, but we both always acknowledged that there was no true way to know. However, whatever is next after this life, I know our spirits will find each other again.

I'm going to close with a quote from one of Harry's favourite movie franchises, The Fast and The Furious.

"I used to say I live my life a quarter mile at a time and I think that's why we were brothers - because you did too. No matter where you are, whether it's a quarter mile away or half way across the world, you'll always be with me. And you'll always be my brother."





Harry's Story

read by Kevin

Hello.

Thank you to the few who are able to join us in person and welcome to the very many who I believe are joining us and will be joining us over the next few days, through the wonder of technology.

Harry was our world, Sam's and mine. We were delighted by the lovely, cheery, redhead chap who arrived at about 9:15 am on the 10th of February 1990 at the QMC, and enthralled, proud and enlightened by the myriad of Harries who developed over the forthcoming years. Because, and if you look at photos of him over the years, you will agree, Harry changed, sometimes almost unrecognisably, taking on a different form at all the major stages of his life. Starting off a little chubby, if truth be told, and that chubbiness stayed with him for many Harries, then a slimmer and undeniably more handsome version or two, culminating in this striking, tall, finely muscled, exceptionally hirsute and rather heavily tattooed, man, so loved by his wonderful colleagues and friends the world over. None less than those who he spent his final months with, in Melbourne, Australia and none more than those he left behind, on his travels, and at home.

I could spend hours telling you about the beautiful, talented, stubborn, frustrating, much loved and different boys that Harry became at various stages of his life. And I would love to, but perhaps on another day, for in spite of this restricted service, I know that hundreds of Harry's friends from over the years, are already planning massive memorial parties and celebrations for after the lockdown, and Sam and I hope to be part of these, where we can all share our stories, tales and anecdotes about the wonderful, unforgettable, person, who in so many guises, many different to us than to you, who was our so loved son,
Harry McCormick.

I suppose all of you here will know pretty much everything about Harry but indulge me while I quickly wander through his life.



Harry learned to talk at a very early age and apart from a few darker moments, was a great talker who always had opinions and something to say, throughout his life. My dad would have called it “The gift of the gab”, harking back to our Irish ancestry. As a youngster his speech blossomed, learning quickly from those around him. On one memorable and embarrassing occasion, at the age of three or four, whilst he was perched on the brick wall in front of our house, eating an ice cream as his mother stood by, sharing a glass of wine and talking to a neighbour he spilt some ice cream that he was eating and howled, “Oh, I’ve spilt my ice cream all down my blank, blank tee shirt.” Talk about embarrassing. Guess who got the blame for that little bit of education when we went back into the house.

Moving on!

Harry went to a small nursery school in West Bridgford where he made loads of friends and continued to develop his character. From there he went to a small private school in Plumtree, nearby, where he remained until he was nine. On his first day his mum was anxious and Harry was nervous, this was a big school in a very different place and could have been very lonely, but then an older boy approached them and said “Hello Harry, I’m Matt and I’ll look after you.” and he did and in time Harry looked after him. From that day forward Harry and Matt have been as brothers and indeed we refer to Matt as our second son.

From Plumtree Harry moved on, at the age of nine, to Nottingham High School. Well, what a change from the small cosseted environment of Plumtree to this fine old and renowned Academy, with hundreds of pupils and high expectations. This Harry, maybe number 3 or 4, overcame his original trepidation and flourished, often to the surprise of me and his mum, and I sense, sometimes to the greater surprise and occasional frustration, of Harry himself. We were told he was good at French, German, biology, (He could make a career out of biology) and physics (top marks at O-level), but Harry always gave the impression that the teachers were imbuing him with greater skill than he had.

O-levels passed, Harry determined that he would take his A-levels at Bilborough State College, not the high school. I was dead against this, but he proved me wrong. In many ways it was the making of him.



At the end of his time at Plumtree Harry's dyslexia was diagnosed. The high school had a great support process and suggested he could use a laptop for his schoolwork. Signal dad, with Mavis Beacon's "Teach Yourself Touch Typing in Just One Hour"

Harry took the disc off to his room and returned it about an hour and a half later saying, "Thanks Dad, that was great." When I suggested that he might be better keeping the disc for revision, he declined saying that he didn't need it. And he was right, Harry could touch type whilst looking at you and talking to you. When they tested him at Bilborough College, they said they would not allow him to use the laptop because his typing was too quick and gave him too great an advantage.

I will never understand their thinking!

A-levels done, Harry opted for business studies (heaven help us!) at Leeds University, wrote off his car before he went and had a change of heart and ended up studying biomedical science, graduating with a 2:1 in 2012. Surprisingly for Harry, he opted to continue in education, taking a Master's degree in biomedical science again but this time, in Nottingham on the Clifton campus.

This was great. We had him home again. Well, when he wasn't staying with friends, out all night, or weekends, at parties or simply tying one on and coming in in the wee small hours. But we had him home.

He got his Masters in 2014 and then started his job search. This found him working in labs at Sutton Bonington, part of Nottingham University. He then moved on to work, once again on a temporary contract, for Mars in Melton Mowbray. He loved this as it was working for Pet Foods and developing new products, trialled on lots of cats and dogs, that loved and needed, according to Harry, loads of love and fuss.

From there he went to help run a diagnostic lab for Sterigenics. After a couple of years, I needed some support in my business and he came and joined me a KHS, it was great to have him there he did a cracking job, we got on marvellously and he was wonderful in both Nottingham and York and made friends out of his colleagues.



Eventually Harry went off on his travels with a young pal of his called Tom. They started in Nepal, with the idea of climbing Everest, but climbed Annapurna instead. The pictures and stories from this part of their adventure and subsequently their time in India, are amazing and you can find them on WordPress entitled “The Lanky Adventurers”. They made loads of friends and had amazing adventures to the point that I was actually jealous. Now I’m just so glad that the last few years of Harry’s life were so full and so enriching. Travelling on through adventures in southern India, the pair made their way to Australia and stayed for some time with a friend of ours, on her farm. Then off to find other work and hopefully secure a visa to stay in Australia. The work in the main was agricultural and hard and the accommodation often pretty shabby.

Harry struck up an online friendship with a lad called Dominic, who came from our village and worked in recruitment in Melbourne. It wasn’t long before Dominic had got his friend sorted with an interview and Harry had a new permanent job with Hays recruitment in Melbourne.

Harry, as you might expect, was nervous and keen to prove himself but soon found that he had fallen into the lovely situation of being with a fabulous group of people, many of whom I have spoken to since this terrible event, and who loved him as much as we did.

Prior to moving to Melbourne, he was scheduled to come home for a month or so over Christmas with flights booked and paid for, from Brisbane.
Now he wasn’t sure he dared take the time off.

I persevered and eventually cancelled the flight from Brisbane and booked a two week return from Melbourne. I’m so glad I did. Harry being Harry, he was all over the country seeing friends, so we only got a few days with him. But those few days gave us more memories to add to the previous 29 years. Thank God! Without that the last time we would have seen him would have been that fateful day on November the 8th 2018 when he set off on his travels.



On his return, he and a girlfriend, Jenny, who had been away in the far east for some months, got back together. Jenny stayed with Harry for six blissful weeks, which she has told us were the happiest of her life, but her visa ran out and she had to return to America.

Those weeks had a marked effect on both, and they spoke on the phone practically every day, with each coming to the conclusion that they wanted to spend their lives together, get married and bring up a family. Jenny was seeking a university post in Australia to allow her to return on a student visa, when, with no warning, her world and ours, was shattered.

Oh Harry! You will never know how much you are missed and how much of your lovely mum and me died with you. I do hope now you have found the peace that you wanted. God bless you my lovely son.

Music for Reflection

'One More Light'

Linkin Park





Richard's Speech

As we have heard there were many Harrys, but also many facets and characters of each Harry, more sides of Harry than can possibly be covered here.

Harry was, at all stages, an individual who Sam said, because of his birth sign, Aquarius, he listened to different drums.

Harry was an excellent communicator, who loved people and made friends, long term friends, easily. Witness the hundreds of people signed up to and commenting on his Facebook memorial page.

Witness to the Spotify playlist, set up in his name with over 500 songs and pieces of music already added to it.

Harry loved music of all types, but latterly more modern than Kevin or Sam could really get to grips with. He was taught to play the clarinet, but he could, untutored, go to the Clavinova in the Hall at his home and instinctively pick out tunes, although Kevin and Sam, after lots of lessons, could hardly play a note.

He was a party animal and a concert goer, who travelled to Europe for major music festivals and even attended one with his dad and some friends in Tallinn, Estonia.

He loved driving and travel, so it was no surprise that he went on his great adventure.

But most of all Harry was a lovely, sensitive, and caring person who received the love and affection that Kevin and Sam have been made only too aware of lately, because everyone he met was touched by the Harry factor.



Jenny once said and she is not the only person to say this, that he couldn't walk past a cat without picking it up, or a dog without fussing it, and he picked up little old ladies helped them across the road etc. by the dozen. Harry was fun to be around, with an infectious laugh and a sense of humour that none who knew him will ever forget. Let's hope that wherever his latest journey now takes him, those qualities stand him in as good a stead as they have in the wonderful life of his that we were allowed to share for 30 years. Only 30 years but a wonderful 30 years.

Before we leave, Kevin and Sam have asked me to tell you that they are aware that the service is restricted, necessarily so, but also ideally so for them, because they need a bit of privacy at this time. However, they have told me that it is their intention, at some unspecified date in the future when big groups of people can meet, to have a memorial celebration for Harry. What form it will take is not certain, but Kevin is hoping that they may have some music and that people will stand up and relate anecdotes and tales of the Harry they knew and that this may be recorded for his benefit and that of anyone else who might want it. He has asked that if you would be interested in attending such a gathering you send just an email, to kevinmccormick7@gmail.com, headed Harry's Memorial Celebrations.

Thank you.





Poem

Away

by James Whitcomb Riley

I cannot say, and I will not say
That he is dead - he is just away!
With a cheery smile, and a wave of the hand
He has wandered into an unknown land,
And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be, since he lingers there.
And you - O you, who the wildest yearn
For the old-time step and the glad return,
Think of him faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here;
Think of him still as the same, I say:
He is not dead - he is just away!

Committal and Farewell

Closing Words

Music on Leaving

'Let's Dance'

David Bowie







The family would like to thank everyone for their kind words and support at this sad time.

Memorial donations for
The Tomorrow Project
may be left online at
www.lymn.co.uk/obituaries
following this link
<https://localgiving.org/charity/harmless/project/tomorrowproject/>
or sent care of

A.W. LYMN

*The Family Funeral Service**

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