

EULOGY

Funeral of Torbjørn Hallenstvedt

9th November 2017 at 3.30 pm

EULOGY

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Rev Torbjørn Holt

**I realise you will wish to add your thoughts/comments apart from the individual eulogies it is in your capable hands
I do not mean to be prescriptive when it come to your pastoral part**

Welcome by Pastor

Can you mention how much Torbjorn will be missed by his loving wife Eileen

He wanted to die at home and be with his beloved Eileen to the end

Eileen and Torbjorn were never blessed with children

Guests are coming from Norway Scotland and England to celebrate Torbjorn's life

Eulogy

Pastor please explain format of eulogy is a succession of short eulogies giving a life long picture in words by his relatives and friends

The following is a letter to Torbjorn from his childhood and life long friend Gunnar Gallis

To be read by Pastor

Dear Torbjørn

So lucky we were!

Both of us being born and bred by loving and kind parents in a neighbourhood so predictable and safe.

I can't remember the first time we met, that's because our mothers brought their babies, us, with them when they sometimes met in between their duties on the small farms we lived on.

Thinking back, you being one and a half years older, have always been around.

Our childhood in the fifties was very unlike what kids are experiencing today. We had time to play, and even time to get bored sometimes, which made us invent games and believe it or not; mischief a very few times. Most of our playing took place outdoors summer and winter, but if the weather became too harsh

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we just walked in to your or my home, whichever one was nearest, where the front doors were always open and there was fire in the oven and someone at home.

Some people can tell endless stories from their childhood, well, I can't remember so many details, when I think back, its more like a cloud, something warm, safe and good, comfortable, in the background which is a good foundation to build your life on.

When school started we ended up in different schools, but that did not matter much, back then we went to school every other day, so there was plenty of time for seeing each other. As we grew older our lives went in different directions, you had ambitions to become an engineer, I was more relaxed in such matters.

I think there is a difference between buddies and old childhood friends, buddies can come and go, childhood friends remain friends even if they don't see each other so often.

It was very exciting when you moved to Edinburgh to study at the university, and an even bigger sensation when you after some time brought Eileen to Andebu. Suddenly we were two married men!

Luckily Eileen soon became a friend as well, still are, and my Astrid became friends with the both of you.

I must thank you for all the times you have received us in your home, both in Scotland and in Chelmsford, and all the help and assistance you have given Astrid and me when we have been to Britain.

One thing that pleases me very much is that my children, particularly Kristian André, and you have become friends as well. We really appreciate that.

We all, my family, and all your friends in Andebu admire the brave way you fought the cancer, your spirit and thought for others.

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Torbjorn by his Norwegian University friend and Best Man – Trond Haugen

NB THIS WILL BE READ BY TROND

Dear Torbjørn

It is now slightly more than a year ago since you and Eileen took the trip up to Edinburgh to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our arrival in the UK from Norway for our engineering studies at Heriot Watt university.

You, Hans, Tharald and I spent a few happy hours, reminiscing and visiting old haunts in the city; Rose Street with its numerous pubs and also of course Bobby's Bar, the old traditional meeting place for Norwegian students in Edinburgh.

The evening was rounded off with a lovely meal when all our wives joined us. Only Knut was missing but I'm very pleased that he has been able to come across from Norway to be with us today on this last gathering with you.

We became close friends soon after we started our civil engineering studies. Student life did of course also involve life away from the books and we from Norway thought we had arrived in paradise when we could get a pint of beer for 1 shilling and 10 pence – or about 9 pence in new money.

It would however be quite right to say that you, Torbjørn, were probably the most diligent student of us all. And on more than one occasion you showed what good friends we were since you let me copy your notes when I happened to have missed a lecture.

During our university breaks back in Norway, I fondly remember my visit to your family farm Lerskall and I greatly appreciated your visit to my family home near Oslo.

After graduation in 1970 we both decided to continue our stay in Scotland. We even started work with the same employer, the Scottish Development Department – you in the Bridges Section and I in Transport Planning.

We then shared a house in the Restalrig part of Edinburgh. That was also the time when you met Eileen. In this connection I have to say that Torbjørn had always come across as a man of relatively few words. It would however be fair to say that Eileen more than compensated for that! When she visited, the TV was quickly switched off since Eileen commanded our full attention!

I was very honoured when you asked me to be your Best Man at your wedding in 1973 at the Cannongate Kirk, the Queen's own church in the

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Royal Mile in Edinburgh. It was our first experience of wearing top hat and tails and I'm sure we both thought we looked awfully smart.

You then set up home with Eileen in Penicuik and a few years after that moved here to Chelmsford. Our get togethers therefore became much less frequent but Sue and I always enjoy

I was glad to be able to visit you a couple of times over the last 6 months when you were confined to your bed in your sitting room. I was so impressed with your courage and cheerfulness despite your very disabled condition. Very few people in your position would have been able to greet visitors with a cheerful smile and the words "Oh, I'm fine". It's that memory of your caring, cheerful nature that I will take with me from the more than 50 years I was so lucky to have been your friend. ed visiting you and Eileen at your new place. I also got to know new sides of you – in particular your loving and caring side towards Eileen but also your great pride in your house and garden. You also turned out to be a brilliant author and your 170 page biography of your father shows the great love you had for your family. But you also showed great interest in other peoples' life and you never failed to enquire about our two boys.

A Tribute to Torbjorn from his friend and cousin Gunnar Hallenstvedt

To be read by Pastor

We were so sorry when we heard that Torbjørn had passed away. Torbjørn was a good man. He was always in good spirit.

He was gentle and friendly, and he never had any bad words, bad feelings or bad behaviour.

No one has anything negative to say about him. Only positive words.

After all these years Torbjørn was as much English as Norwegian. I always thought he behaved like an English or Scottish gentleman. We visited a few times Torbjørn and Eileen in their home in Chelmsford, but mostly we met at Lerskall their farm in Andebu or at our house.

It was always very nice and interesting to meet Torbjørn

It has been an honour and a great pleasure to know Torbjørn.

He faced his cancer bravely with fortitude and humour and never complained

May he rest in peace.

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In memory of Torbjørn by his cousin Åsa

To be read by Pastor

For us, the cousins, 34 in total, he became a dear relative and friend whenever we had family gatherings

He did well at school, especially in mathematics and he was a tremendous help to me as I was not that great at mathematics

We missed Torbjørn when he moved to the UK, then he came for holidays with his lovely wife Eileen. My father became really fond of her and made her a homemade basket, after traditional Norwegian patterns. We were in touch every now and then and we had some wonderful times in the UK with Torbjørn as our well informed tour guide. Our children remember Torbjørn as a man with a great spirit and good sense of humour, who lived both as an Englishman as well as being proud of his Norwegian roots

We followed with great interest the reconstruction of the summer barn at his farm, a cultural memory he enjoyed very much.

Torbjørn and our family are interested in genealogy and local history, and we received a copy of the book ‘The Story of my Father, Olav Hallenstvedt’ which he wrote about his father’s life, as well as books about the village history of Andebu.

It was a shock to us when he got his cancer diagnosis at such an early age. Himself, did not seem to worry too much, and talked as easily about his disease as well as other things, like before.

In May 2016, Torbjørn and Eileen were one final time in Norway and we saw the reconstruction of his historic summer barn finalised.

Even on our last visit to Torbjørn this summer, where he only could lay on one side, he had his familiar sense of humour and he told us that the minister from the Norwegian Seaman’s church had visited him and given him communion. He had appreciated this.

Even at this stage of his illness Torbjørn and Eileen took great interest in our daughters forthcoming wedding

On our last visit we thanked him for all the good times with him, covering topics of humorous as well as serious characters, but always presented in a forthright and positive manner. May we all strive towards something like this when it is our time.

We will see you again in a while, Torbjørn! Peace be with the good memories of you!

Other cousins also wish to send their greetings.

Eulogy by Robin Church – Torbjørn's professional colleague

to be read by Pastor

Everyone that came professionally into contact with Torbjorn soon realised that he was an exceptional bridge engineer. His skills and knowledge ranged over design, construction right through to the maintenance of bridges.

To illustrate the design and construction aspects of Torbjorn's working life attention is drawn to two bridges that are major landmarks, the first being built during the early seventies and the second during the early nineties.

The first is a viaduct over the River Tweed carrying a bypass to the town of Galashiels in the Scottish borders. The structure dominates the landscape because of a deep valley and Torbjorn often spoke how, as a consequence, strong winds were a major problem during its construction. A magnificent view of the structure can be had from the garden of Abbotsford House, the home of the famous author Sir Walter Scott.

The second is a viaduct over the River Chelmer carrying a bypass to the town of Maldon in Essex. Unlike the previous structure this is in a very flat flood plane with poor soils which with a partially demolished railway viaduct on line caused Torbjorn many a problem in the design of the structure's foundations. A good view of the structure can be had from the garden of Beeleigh Abbey, the home of the Folyes family, the owner of the famous bookshop in London.

In the last few years of his working life Torbjorn took over the responsibility for the maintenance of highway bridges in Essex. Having been brought up on a farm and used to dealing with the challenges that one faces on the day to day running of a farm, he more than adequately dealt with the problems that arose with bridge maintenance.

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In 991 men from the lands in the far North came to Essex, fought and won a battle against an Anglo Saxon army and then returned home. A magnificent memorial in the form of a statue of the earl who commanded the Anglo-Saxon army now stands in Maldon Memorial Park commemorating that battle.

In 1991, whilst Torbjorn was supervising the construction of Chelmer Viaduct, he made front page news of a local paper telling the people of Maldon that he was a descendent of those that came a thousand years before. However, unlike them he stayed leaving his mark on the landscape of Essex and on the hearts of his friends. Today Chelmer Viaduct stands as a magnificent memorial to Torbjorn, a truly outstanding individual that will be sadly missed by all.

Tributes to Torbjorn from his friends

“Stemming from his time in Scotland Torbjorn was an enthusiastic member of the Scottish Society in Chelmsford and was a regular attendee at the Burns Suppers and St Andrews Nights “

And another quote

“Torbjorn was an avid stamp collector and member of The Chelmsford Philatelic society. Given his profession it is hardly surprising that he had an avid interest in collecting stamps with bridges on them and he had a wonderful collection of these from all parts of the world. He will be sadly missed”

And again

“Torbjorn was a very loyal friend and could be relied upon when help was required”

“Torbjorn was a very practical man who was great at problem solving”

“ Torbjorn loved gadgets”

Memories of Torbjorn by his Nieces Linda and Fiona

To be read by Linda and Fiona

Our earliest memories of Uncle Torbjørn are how incredibly tall he seemed compared to our little selves and the funny way he pronounced some words.

Despite being a real life viking, he wasn't at all scary. In fact he was quite the opposite.

Whether helping construct a train set, playing badminton with us for hours on end in his Chelmsford garden, or being made to watch Top of the Pops, Uncle Torbjørn always took an enthusiastic interest in what we wanted to do.

Of all the things we did with him, there is one particularly memorable activity that Uncle Torbjørn introduced us to as youngsters - the great Maldon Mud Race. Those of you who were there that frosty New Year's Day will probably understand why we might be hesitant to mention it! It was tough, it was tiring, and we were tearful, BUT we made it to the end. We rose to the challenge and we found our resilience which, despite the fact that hadn't been Torbjørn's intention at the outset, was no bad thing and a valuable life lesson.

In his warm and understated manner, Uncle Torbjørn also entertained us with stories of Norway, of his childhood, and of Norse myths. Many of these tales have been passed on and enjoyed by our own children. They too have been lucky enough to spend time with Torbjørn and gobble up traditional marzipan pigs from Norway at Christmas.

So, we all agree that Torbjørn wasn't just a wonderful uncle to us, he will be remembered as a GREAT Great-uncle by the next generation as well.

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Finally in this Eulogy a poem read by his Brother in Law Ken Hastings

Xmas stockings

Epitaph on a friend. Robert Burns

**An honest man here lies at rest,
As e'er God with His image blest:
The friend of man, the friend of truth;
The friend of age, and guide of youth:
Few hearts like his, with virtue warm'd,
Few heads with knowledge so inform'd:
If there's another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.**

Family would like to say thank you to the staff at Broomfield Hospital, The Farleigh Hospice and all his carers in particular Sue and Natasha

I would also like to thank the Rev Torbjørn Holt from the Norwegian Church in London for coming here today and so ably leading this celebration of OUR Torbjørn's life

SUMMARY

Pastor may wish to summarise

BLESSING

Torbjørn Holt

Following the blessing and before the exit music can you reiterate that Eileen would love everyone to come to The County Hotel and share their reminiscences about Torbjørn