

Graham Jones

Tribute



You may have known him as Mr Jones, Graham, or as Jimmy to many, but I'm going to talk about Dad. A man who wasn't known for his many words.

Everything about Dad shone out with honour and integrity; I think of his gentle wisdom; his generosity of spirit; his calm contentment; his patience with the world; his steady care and attention to detail; his respect for others; and good natured general happiness. Overridingly he was a decent, kind and fair man and just such a true gentleman, universally respected by everyone who had the good fortune to know him.

Firstly

He found complete fulfilment in what he did.

Dad's life was intertwined with his work. He worked hard (very hard at times it seemed to me – especially through a variety of tricky recessions) but all in all this work never became a burden because it was also his hobby, his passion and a true labour of love. Through his skilful care, amazing resilience, dexterity of spirit, and a no small measure of determination, he nurtured and guided the family business to ongoing success.

I feel privileged to have spent 18 years working with him. He was very proud of our family business history and of all the people he worked with. Apart from every apprentice, employee and foreman in his time, he could also name most of the men who worked with his Father, and many of those with his Father's Father (but it did get a little bit sketchy when it came to his father's... father's... father! That was William Jones by the way; the founding father of A F Jones Stone Masonry in Reading.

He was passionate about his craft of Stone Masonry; he cherished being able to create beautiful objects and buildings; he knew when things were right and looked good; he knew how to make them – it was in his DNA; his sense of proportion and beauty was honed and true; his care and attention to the detail was a marvel to witness. And he was hugely proud of the projects he worked on – beautiful carvings, stunning churches with fine steeples, and mansions with cantilevered staircases, and porticos, and so on.

I'm sure that many people will know of his true integrity as an honourable man not only in his business dealings but in all things – he treated others exactly as he would like to be treated – with complete trust and fairness. I'm sure there must have been occasions when people have taken advantage, but if he was ever treated unjustly or let down, he did not recriminate, he simply rose above it continuing to bear the torch of integrity and reliability.

He has been a fantastic Dad, and I have always felt completely supported by him. He was a man of relatively few words but of great actions – leading by example. He never forced his own opinions on people, and as a Dad he allowed me the space to make decisions for A F Jones. Decisions in the future will be influenced by his values and outlook.

In the Reading area he will be remembered for all the buildings he helped to restore, for all the sense he managed to talk and for all the honesty he managed to lead his life with.

