



FRANK JACOT

24th March 1964 - 28th September 2024

Thank you all for coming here today to celebrate my brother's life. Some of you have come from the village, others from all around the country and some from abroad. Behind me we have an amazing choir, which you shall hear later, with past and present members representing over half a century of worship in this beautiful church!

We also have two organists, musicians and **three** vicars! Thank you all for coming here today. The whole family is most touched to see so many lovely people. I think, seeing you all here, even Frank might have been speechless....

...but not for long, I am sure!

Frank and I were born in Nantwich on the 24th of March 1964, two years after our older brother Mark. As his twin brother, I had nine months to get to know him, as we were "womb mates", despite my parents, Guy and Margret being insistently told our mother was carrying only **one** child right up to the time Frank was born.

Our childhood was an adventurous one. We moved to March near Ely. Then, in 1972 our Father's job took him to Africa, and we moved to Kenya for two and a half years .

We saw so much: from the vast expanses of the Serrengetti planes to lush rain forests, camping out with wild animals. We played on white sandy beaches and swam in warm seas, teaming with exotic tropical fish.

When we returned from Africa, we came back to live in March, and then moved here to Stapleford, where Frank and I attended Stapleford Primary School along with some of you here today, and, later, Sawston Village College.

Here, at St. Andrew's Church, as boys, all three of us joined the choir, which was led by Jeff's dad, Ken Dean. Frank has been part of this wonderful choir here ever since, and Jeff has remained a lifelong friend of Frank's all of these years.

The other day, a choir member retired after more than 30 years singing in the church. A long time they thought, 'till Frank reminded them all he had been in the choir for 52 years!

Frank loved Stapleford, and I think, most of the time, Stapleford loved Frank. He was always ready and willing to get involved.

I'm sure many of you will remember the first time you met my twin brother. Apparently, when I saw him for the first time I cried, ...but the midwife assured my mother that *that* was quite normal!

You may have met Frank for the first time here in this church, in a shop, on a golf course, or a tennis court, up walking at Wandlebury, at a party, or at a concert. You will have met a warm, bubbly, impulsive, sometimes slightly over-excited, enthusiastic, supportive,

gregarious Frank, who loved talking! How we shall miss his chatter. Many have told me how caring Frank was...

“He helped me move house...”

“He helped me sort my finances out...”

“He helped me with my shopping....”

For me, I might add..

“Frank once took the blame for something I had done as a child to protect me...”

“Frank looked out for me and helped me, encouraged me, ...and loved me.”

Frank loved many things, including sport (he was a founder member of the Cambridge canoe club...).But more on sport from our very own Sports correspondent, Sam, later)

He loved Monica, Chloe and Sam deeply.

He excelled at talking, chatting, conversations...

...and music.

Music was one of Frank's passions. Frank learned to play the clarinet at a young age and was an excellent musician. He learned to play the beautiful Mozart Clarinet concerto which we will hear later in the service. Frank joined many musical groups throughout his life, including The Cambridge County Wind Band, The Cambridge Holiday Orchestra and, more recently, the Cambridge Sinfonietta and a jazz quintet called Take 5! Members of both these ensembles are here today. Thank you.

My brother was always up for anything. Once, at short notice, Frank travelled down with Monica to Godalming in Surrey to support me in a concert I was conducting. I handed him a clarinet solo part for one of the choir's pieces, which he played beautifully, on one run-through.

I also pulled him out of the audience to sing a bass solo with the choir! He was happy to go along with the pretence this was all totally spontaneous and got a rapturous applause from the audience. He got to meet our oldest choir

member, Norman Bartlett, who, at 98, also shares our birthday. Norman was deeply moved at the news of Frank's sudden death, saying, very sweetly, "I have lost a twin!"

Frank had a strong faith. He believed in redemption through Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross. And because of his faith, I know exactly where he has gone - he has probably already joined the heavenly orchestra, playing on one of his clarinets.

And as we mourn Frank's death, know that, through prayer and faith, our Lord will never leave us, nor forsake us.

Our time on earth is short and we cannot tell how long we have. As Jesus's brother, James puts it, in his letter to the twelve tribes of Israel, "We are as but a vapour, here for a short while and then gone."

But he goes on to remind us, that as believers. "the word of the Lord endureth for ever." We must live each day to make it count.

Frank often lived each day as if it were his last, full of fun, laughter and love for those around him. I am sure he would want us all to do the same.

The family are hugely grateful and humbled by the kindness, compassion, support and sympathy shown during this difficult time, by so many. I would like to share with you all one of the many messages I received and found poignant and comforting:

“There is a calm and quiet place within the arms of prayer, where God comes close. His ear is low to hear our anxious care, According to His perfect will in His own way. And then he will reach and gently touch and make you whole again....”

May the Lord bless you and keep you, Frank, and hold you, until we meet again



Monica's Tribute to Frank

Monica has asked me, Imogen her sister to read her tribute to Frank today.

I first met my beloved Frank in July 1988 at the Cambridge Festival Ceilidh at St Bede's school. My friend Marie had invited me with a group of friends, the boyfriend of one was playing in the Cambridge Crofters folk band who were running the event. Frank was on the other side of the hall with his friend Jeff Dean. Frank saw me across the room and came over to ask me to dance. *We stripped the willow* and he literally whisked me off my feet whilst dancing *the basket*. As any ceilidh lovers amongst you will know, this required me to put my arms round his shoulders and let him dance in a circle whilst allowing gravity to lift me up. Frank's height and boundless enthusiasm made it easy for him to accomplish. After that, he never let go of my hand and we danced together all evening.

I recall us driving off later in his white VW Jetta with the sun roof down and his favourite Kool and the Gang cassette playing Fresh in the background - uplifting 80s corny lyrics and I was smitten.

He wooed me with a glass of Dubonnet, a favourite tippie of Queen Elizabeth and her mother. Our second date was at the Plough at Coton. He announced with a sophisticated air, at merely 24 years of age, that he always had the Rainbow Trout.

He collected antique silver (Not records or HIFIs), played classical music, sung choral works but also loved soul and disco.

He loved snow-capped mountains and skiing – the first photos he proudly showed me on his mantelpiece were of him (the one on the back of the order of service) and also with his mother and father at the foot of the snowy slopes. I found these photos alluring because my favourite childhood TV programme had been “Belle and Sebastian”, a French 1960s children’s programme dubbed in English which I watched with my mother aged 3. I had been enchanted by the white Great Pyrenees fluffy dog Belle and her owner 6-year-old Sebastian and their adventures in the French Alps. Frank took me on my first of many Skiing trips with his family in February 1989 to the Austrian Tyrol. We went on to have many more skiing adventures in Austria and in the French and Swiss Alps, including with his French cousins Olivier and Veronique who are also here today.

I knew life with Frank was always going to be an adventure; it would be one lived with spontaneity and a zest for life with so many activities and interests which made being with Frank great fun and exciting.

I enjoyed hill walking (as did he) but he took this to the next level by saying on a Friday evening “*how do to you fancy going*

to the Peak district for the day? If we leave tomorrow at 5:45am we could be climbing a peak by 8:30am.”

Frank always said one's life is not defined by your career. Yes he had a successful 30 year plus Banking career at Barclays as a qualified chartered banker and financial adviser. However, Barclays was merely a small aspect of his life.

In my early days of dating and married life he was Stapleford Tennis club Men's and mixed doubles captain arranging teams and matches. He was involved in the club's twinning exchanges with a village near Heidelberg. He played in a local hockey team and had a side-hustle teaching clarinet with pupils after his Barclays workday. He was an active member of Stapleford Villedomer twinning exchange trips, which I joined. We took part in the Stapleford Twinning casino fund raising evenings. The first casino evening for which I was croupier was at Saffron Walden golf club. The double roulette had made me anxious but he allayed my fear of the maths involved (He said, "*Don't worry darling there is a crib sheet to tell you what winnings to give out*").

I have always loved new experiences and Frank introduced me to sailing. As someone who loved reading the Arthur Ransome Swallow and Amazon books as a child, I was thrilled to be able to re-enact the whole series including the final *We didn't mean to go to sea*. I had done hill walking and camping before I met

Frank but I then got to sail in the Lake District and beyond. Frank invited me to crew with him for our retired friend Reg, sailing his 6 berth 23 foot Westerly Centaur on weekends from the Orwell yacht club along rivers and estuaries of East Anglia. One May Bank holiday in 1991 when Frank and I had both completed our respective professional exams, my mother had asked what were we going to do to celebrate expecting me to say a meal out. Not wanting to alarm my poor non swimming mum, I simply said we would be away for the weekend somewhere by the south coast. In actual fact, that evening we sailed and motored overnight from the River Orwell across the busiest shipping lane that is The English Channel, with Reg, in his small yacht arriving in Calais – just in time to moor up early in the best spot in the harbour. We could then watch others sail in as they too joined us for the Little Ship club rally, whilst we ate our fresh croissants for breakfast followed by our baguettes and French cheese and red wine for lunch on deck – it was bliss.

Later, Frank Jacot Travel Services would book our family last minute travel trips all over Europe and beyond.

We had a shared love of music in all genres and singing in choirs. I will so miss Frank's singing in the shower in the morning bursting into song blasting out a loud "LAAA" in the note of A.

Frank invited me from the very start of our relationship to Choral evensong at St Andrew's Stapleford to hear him sing in the church choir and I have continued worshipping here ever since.

He also joined my choir Collegium Laureatum that I was singing in when we first met, as did Canon Rev Chris Barber and his wife Mary Barber. Chris Barber was to later marry us and I am delighted that Chris is taking part in the service today and Mary is here too.

Frank and I loved listening to all live music, be it Classical, Opera, at the Proms or bands performing, be it at Latitude or Cambridge Folk festival, Radio 2 Live in Hyde park, or Jazz in Paris; or dancing to live DJ sets in Croatia.

He romantically proposed to me one July evening, in 1989 whilst we were walking through Stapleford allotments by a bed of dazzling blue cornflowers. He was a very loving husband full of romantic gestures, cheekiness and good humour. He was also a very hands-on dad to Chloe and Sam, and always so proud of whatever they did. He later became so dotty and smitten about our fur child our dog Bess.

He had a fondness for Rom com movies particularly from that fine purveyor of the genre; the Richard Curtis production line

That famous speech in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* from WH Auden's poem seems very apt for the shock and grief that I feel at the moment.

*"He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong."*

As I close my tribute it seems fitting to align mine with those immortal lines sung by Brian Wilson during the closing credits of *Love Actually*:

"God only knows what I will be without you but as long as there are stars above you ; you never need to doubt it, I will make you so sure about it".

Frank, after our 34 year wedded double act you helped make me the person I have become, we loved each other and you made me so sure about it.

God bless - may you rest in peace.

Thank you all so much for being here today. It means the world to my mum, Chloe, his mum Margret, his bothers Mark, Kevin, and me. Your presence would have meant everything to my dad, too.

For 26 years, I was blessed with the best dad anyone could ever ask for. His energy and positivity were contagious, and whenever I needed advice or guidance, he was always the first person I'd turn to. He had a heart that always put others first, and he was there for me up until his very last day, Saturday, 28th September.

That day, I was in Canterbury with Keira, attending a wedding. I had booked us a budget Airbnb for the night, but to be honest, it wasn't great – chickens were literally inside the house, and Keira wasn't too thrilled. I called Dad, who was on his way to lunch with Mum, to explain the situation. He simply said, "That won't do, Sam. Keira can't stay there." Within minutes, he'd sent me a new hotel option to book, and of course, I did. That's who Dad was – always there, always wanting to help. Little did I know, that would be our last conversation. But it was so fitting that it was him, once again, swooping in to make things better.

Since I was little, Dad encouraged me to push myself, especially when it came to sports. When I was about four or five, I was very shy, and Mum and Dad were a bit concerned. So, Dad took me down to NST football (now Stapleford and Shelford Strikers), and I loved it from the start. Every weekend, from when I was five until I was 16, Dad was on the sidelines, cheering me on. His passion was infectious, even if sometimes Mum had to remind him that it was just under-8s football! But that was Dad – passionate about everything, especially when it came to Chloe and me.

One of my fondest memories is watching Manchester United games with him at the pub in Sawston when I was five, and then the magic of seeing Old Trafford in person in 2007. He would occasionally sneak me up to Manchester on a school night to watch a match because he was keen to live in the moment. We'd go on to see countless Cambridge matches together, standing in the rain in places like Dartford and Dagenham with my friends, who are here today. Those were special times, even if Cambridge wasn't the best team. Talking about football was one of the things that connected us, always.

Dad also shared his love of tennis with me, a passion I now carry into my work as a reporter in the industry. We spent hours on the courts together, and we watched Andy Murray fight in Grand Slams. He'd take me to Wimbledon, camping out overnight to see the best in the game. He gave me the gift of adventure, and I'm forever grateful for those moments with him, both as a kid and in recent years, when I could take him to the tennis events I covered abroad. The memories we made will stay with me forever.

And Dad was truly one of a kind. Larger than life, full of love for those around him, and always spontaneous. Last year, when he visited me in Rome for a tennis event, he managed to turn a simple visit to the Sistine Chapel into something truly hilarious. My housemates Headon and Joey, who are here today, told me how Dad gathered a group of Chinese tourists, led them down the aisle, and had them looking up at the ceiling – because he discovered the artwork looked even better that way. That was just Dad – always finding joy in the moment and sharing it with everyone around him.

Even after retiring from Barclays, he never slowed down. Whether it was playing clarinet in music groups, singing, editing the local messenger, volunteering for Cambridge Money Advice Centre or simply taking the dog for a walk, he filled every day with purpose and life. He was an incredible skier, swimmer, and sportsman, and he even climbed Mount Everest ten years ago. He lived with so much zest, and he never missed a chance to embrace a challenge.

Dad loved talking – so much so, that I'd often joke that he could have a full conversation with a tree. When I visited him last week at the chapel of rest, I couldn't help but smile, thinking it was probably the first time we'd been in a room together for more than 30 seconds where he wasn't saying anything.

Walking through the village with him and our dog Bess could take ages because he'd stop to talk to everyone he met. This summer, we were working on knowing when to leave a conversation at the right time. I remember one day at the allotments, he stopped to chat with someone and, much to my surprise, after a couple of minutes, he said, "Well, we must be going, but lovely to see you." He turned to me with a proud smile and asked, "Am I getting better?" It made me laugh. He just loved people and made everyone feel seen and heard.

There are countless more anecdotes I could tell that showcase dad never slowing down in any area of his life and, especially not in his role as a father to Chloe and I. He was forever supporting and guiding us as children and still continued to do so well into our adulthood. But I'll finish with this, Dad had the biggest heart. Nothing was ever too much for him. I've never met anyone quite like him, and I'm so lucky to have had him as my dad. He spoke so fondly about everyone here today, and I know he would be deeply touched to see you all here. Moving forward, I'm going to try to carry a piece of his spontaneity, kindness, and love for life with me. If I can be even a fraction of the person he was, I'll be proud. So dad, the last thing to say is that Chloe and I are forever grateful to you, we will always miss you and forever love you dearly.