

*Derek Peter Englefield Kingsley*

*28th June 1936 to 29th December 2020*



Good afternoon and thank you so much for coming today to celebrate the life of Derek Peter Englefield Kingsley. Derek was a very generous and kind person who touched the lives of many people and you are here today because of this, but I would like to tell you a little of his story.

Derek was born in the small town of Burton Latimer in Northamptonshire, Great Britain, the eldest son of Albert and Marjory Kingsley. Albert was the local doctor in Burton Latimer and set up a very successful and well-respected practise. They lived in an old stone house with the original surgery in the front and the house behind in a beautiful walled garden. You entered the house through a covered passage way which was cool and quiet. It went past the surgery and under the house front then opened into a warm and sunny courtyard full of roses.

Within the courtyard, to the left of the entry, was an attic, reached by an external staircase where Derek had created an amazing Hornby rail track. It filled the entire room and you ducked under the structure and come up into the centre of the set-up, to be met by mountains, pastures and tunnels. Trees, fences, grass, buildings and figures all hand created and lovingly painted in minute detail with multiple train tracks weaving their way around the scene. It took your breath away to realise he had created all of this. Derek's sharp and curious mind blended with incredible dexterity in his hands was a hallmark throughout his life.

In the 1940's, from a very early age, as was the norm for a doctor's son, he was sent away to boarding school for his education. He was not impressed and never fully accepted this, regularly showing his disapproval by running away and working his way back home across England with very little in his pockets but a great deal of ingenuity. He always approached everything with interest and no reservations regarding hard work, to achieve his goals and as he completed his education at Charter House even spent a holiday, plucking turkeys to earn some money. In later years he would buy a fresh turkey on Christmas Eve from Smithfield Market on his way home from the hospital - head, innards and all, which he would prepare on the kitchen table giving us kids a lesson on anatomy as he did it.

He followed his father's footsteps into the medical profession and entered Barts and the London School of Medicine. Combining his ability of his mind with his hands he specialised as a surgeon. After qualifying he married his first wife Sue and revelled in the birth of two baby girls Louise and Polly, before the

family moved to South Africa. There Derek began what he described as battle medicine, working at Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto, now the third largest hospital in the world. Whilst he felt this was extraordinary training as a doctor, the marriage dissolved and he became unhappy with where he was and what he was doing.

Out of these ashes rose his phoenix and almost exactly fifty years ago, Tillie took him out to dinner to cheer him up. It is not an understatement to say this was the beginning of an extraordinary love and partnership which lasted through thick and thin - plus the addition of Tillie's four young children Fi, Mog, Mansie and Tim! Derek returned to England after a trip to South America and phoned Tillie from Brazil Airport to ask her to marry him. It was very special to be welcomed into the Kingsley family after a crazy journey from Johannesburg to meet Derek in Zurich then across Europe in Marjory's bottle green Ford escort, with Tim asking "Are we there yet?" all the way.

Thus, started a new chapter in Derek's life, not only as the father of six children but also retraining in Neuroradiology. Financially it was tough going and Derek used to cycle to the hospital rugged up to the eyeballs and wearing black fingerless mittens Tillie knitted for him. In something inconceivable today, we lived in a tiny two-bedroom hospital flat before we moved in with Derek's Aunt May and Aunt Gwen into the original Kingsley home, a large rambling Victorian house in Putney.

Derek always said "I was in the right place at the right time" but he actually seized the opportunities presented to him and worked extremely hard. He was at the forefront of CT and then MRI scanners, now used in almost every hospital across the world. At the beginning of the scanners he said we need a three-dimensional image of a healthy brain so he set about creating just that on a scholarship in Uppsala, Sweden. Derek stood in a chest freezer with a frozen healthy brain, paring off a sliver at a time and photographing each section with his SLR camera until he built up that 3D image.

Working with his colleagues at the National Hospital, better known as Queens Square and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children he became an internationally renowned doctor with over one hundred peer reviewed papers to his name. Many of these included the effects of neurological injuries in children and he was very respected for his clear and unbiased evidence as a medical witness amongst other attributes.

He travelled the world and presented at numerous conferences with his work well recognised, including events such as an invitation by the King and Queen of Jordan to oversee the installation of a scanner. He always believed in walking through the door of opportunity and saying yes to things which interested him...and most things interested him. With the advent of Gamma Ray surgery, he again seized the opportunity to join the ground breaking work at the Cromwell Hospital in London.

Outside interests included classical music and today we have listened to one of his favourite symphonies, Schubert's sixth. Derek was also fascinated by the universe and the question of the Big Bang theory. Prior to the internet Derek had a magnificent set of Encyclopedia Britannica which we all used to look things up, but if you couldn't find what you needed the catch phrase was "we will wait until Derek comes home and ask him!"

He loved eggs, reading the paper, going to the opera, looking at or buying art, playing tennis and watching cricket. Cats always found him where ever he went and he loved dogs too. He was a dab hand at glueing things back together again.

At home he would don an old boiler suit of his fathers, which was a bit short in the legs, matched with an old pair of patent leather evening shoes and fine socks and you knew action was impending. He would then, in his words, get cracking, bricklaying, painting, central heating, electrical he could turn his mind and hands to anything and did.

Seventeen grandchildren and later nine and a half great grandchildren were a constant source of pride and joy. He was always interested to know how they were and what they were up to and loved to receive photos of everyone. He was a very good photographer himself and when you were taking a photo of him or the family, he would give you a very beady look as if to say are you really going to use that setting?

Finally retiring from medicine at 70 years old, he picked up the reins of other interests and learnt to SCUBA dive, with many glorious trips to Egypt, the outer Barrier Reef, Fiji and Palau following until finally hanging up his fins at 80. Tillie and Derek continued to travel the world living between Cyprus and Australia but also wonderful trips to Burma, China and Africa to name a few. Buying houses was also a lifelong passion from the stunning Les Tourelle in France, houses in London and Cairns, units in Sydney and the Gold Coast and of course

beloved Pafos and North Arm Cove. One could never quite believe what might happen next but you knew it would be fun and exciting.

Family, colleagues, friends and patients alike speak of his care and concern for others. When Derek qualified as a doctor, he swore the Hippocratic Oath to treat the ill to the best of one's ability, to preserve a patient's privacy, to teach the secrets of medicine to the next generation. But it is the last sentences of the modern Hippocratic Oath which so epitomises Derek – If I do not violate this oath, may I enjoy life and art, respected while I live and remembered with affection thereafter. May I always act so as to preserve the finest traditions of my calling and may I long experience the joy of healing those who seek my help.

Rest in peace Derek Peter Englefield Kingsley, you fulfilled your oath and more