

**Tribute, Reading and Toast  
for**

**Dr Maurice R. Pearson  
B.Sc., M.B., B.S.**

**16/01/1941 – 22/08/2023**



Inverness Crematorium, Inverness

30th August 2023, 10am

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## Dr Maurice Robert Pearson, B.Sc., M.B., B.S. 16/01/1941 – 22/08/2023

### Welcome

### *Entrance Music and Slides: Local Hero Mark Knopfler*

### Tribute

Maurice Robert Pearson was born on 16th of January 1941 to Harold and Mary Pearson (known as Molly). He came along five years after his brother Derek, and they grew up in the small village of Greenside near Newcastle.

Home at that time to the Pearson's was a small two bedroom terraced house at 4 Rockwoodhill Road, across from Greenside Primary School, and next door to his grandparents who lived at number 5. Later in his childhood, his grandfather moved in with them which made it a tight squeeze, but there was always a strong sense of community in the village. Maurice loved tomatoes, apples and pears, and would often go and [collect orders of tomatoes](#) for the whole street from a local farmer.

Maurice's father Harold was a miner, and Maurice always said he was a very clever man with unrealised potential. He said that [in 1926 before Maurice was born, his father](#) has started work in a lawyers office in Newcastle and got the bus to work every day. But then the general strike happened and the buses stopped. This forced Harold to secure work in the local mine instead, and he remained a miner thereafter.

Maurice's mother Molly was a talented seamstress, who eventually taught sewing in night school, then applied to be a teacher and succeeded with no formal training. She wasn't a great cook though, so Maurice and his older brother Derek had to learn to cook for themselves. As a result they made a mean family trifle with raspberry jam and bananas as main ingredients.

Maurice always held his parents and older brother in high regard. [At the end of each working day](#) when Maurice saw the wheel of the mine moving, he would run to the mine as he knew his father was finishing and the men were coming up out of the pit. He would meet his father there and walk home together. Maurice often held his father's hand as they walked, and talk about their day.

Maurice was a shy little boy but got on well with the older kids in the street. From a young age he had an air of determination and adventure. He had a squint in his childhood and

had corrective glasses and surgery. But it never held him back, eventually having it fixed in his adult years.

When he was four and his older friends went into Primary One, Maurice decided he wanted to go to school too. With the school being directly across the road from their house, each morning he would go across to school and go into class. And every morning a teacher would bring him back home. Eventually she gave up and Maurice stayed at school, and his education began.

He was a conscientious and clever boy, with a flair for school. He looked up to his big brother and his mother and father, and he knew from a young age that he wanted to make a career for himself and make a difference to people. He was very close to his parents, and whilst Maurice knew that his father worked hard down the mines, Maurice always said he wanted better for his family.

As his friends, family and patients would attest, Maurice was an excellent and engaging story teller. One story Maurice recalled was when he was in the school hall and all the pupils had gathered together to find which class they would be in the following year. The head teacher was going to read the names out in order of who achieved the highest marks, and each child would move into a group which would be their assigned class. Knowing he worked hard to do his best in school, Maurice patiently waited for the names to be read out. As the names were read out, Maurice realised they were being read out in alphabetical order before a teacher went over to the head teacher and whispered something into his ear and he suddenly stopped reading the names. All of the children were asked to go back to where they had been standing. Then to Maurice's relief, it was announced there had been a mistake and the correct names would be read out. Imagine the big smile on little Maurice's face when his name was first to be read out! He knew his parents would be so proud that he was the top of his year. But he was always very humble, and never a show off.

Money was tight during the war, and beyond, but Molly and Harold provided for their two boys. They would take holidays to the coast, and other places. In 1953 when Maurice was 12, the family went up to Loch Lomond for a Summer holiday, where his sense of adventure shone through. When they arrived, he asked his parents if he could go on the Waverley steamboat. They said yes, and gave him some money for the fares to get to Glasgow and the Waverley. So at the age of 12, he got on a train to Glasgow, asked people how to get to the Waverley and was directed towards the Clyde and found his way to the Waverley. Then later that day, he also found his way back to Loch Lomond all on his own!

That being said he wasn't too great with water, and whilst he had [learned to swim in a local pool](#), he described himself as a 'lousy swimmer'. [He recalled one day](#) in the middle of winter when he was playing near some unused mine shafts as a youngster, which were filled

with water. He would put a worm on a string and try to catch small fish. At one point he lost his balance and fell into the freezing water. He managed to climb out, but because he was soaked through, he had to stay out late to dry off before he went home to his parents.

Consequently, made sure his kids all became strong swimmers, and had a solid rule that they weren't allowed to go out on small boats in the sea. Swimming became important to the family, and one of his daughters became a swimming teacher and taught hundreds of kids and adults to swim, and one of his grandsons became a lifeguard. The family later found out that the reason it was so important his family learned to swim was not just because it's an important life skill; but because Maurice's uncle Albert sadly drowned in the River Tyne when Maurice was young.

In the 1950s, Maurice's brother Derek met his future wife Joyce, who Maurice was very fond of. Joyce was a fine Geordie lass who was training to be a nurse, and Derek was training to be an anaesthetist. They married in 1958 and Maurice was honoured to be Derek's best man at the age of 17.

[He secured a scholarship](#) and was able to go to grammar school. Then after leaving school Maurice went on to study medicine at Durham University School of Medicine, taking a year out to study an BSc, He graduated with a first class honours degree in Physiology. He used to say to his friends and family - "They don't just give those away you know!" Post graduation, he worked in various departments in Gateshead and was a registrar in the renal team.

After that he saw the light and became a GP. He was definitely ahead of his time and the [main appeal was helping families](#) whilst getting an improved work-life balance and a chance to spend more time with his kids rather than being stuck working in the hospital all weekend. He still worked "on call", but it was way before mobile phones. So he had a system set up so that his five children could all be out in the garden, and if the phone went a bell would ring outside. Again, this helped to be on call but also have time with family.

Maurice was a fine Geordie man with a big heart, who many knew as a kind, humorous, clever man and good friend. He enjoyed conversation and engaging with people, as well as listening to and relaxing to music. He placed an importance on family, fun and happiness.

He had a brilliant bedside manner, and made a difference with so many people in his career. He was so caring and good at listening and explaining things, often drawing a diagram or relating to his patients with stories. Where some people might think he must be addressed as Doctor, some of his patients called him by his first name and he was more than fine with it. He treated everyone the way he would like to be treated and engaged and communicated so well with his patients.

Recently his brother Derek reminded the family that Harold and Molly were the only parents in the village who had both sons who became doctors, which was very unusual. He said they were apparently very good genes! Maurice was very pleased that these good genes can be seen in his children and grandchildren who have done so well, and made him proud.

Whilst at medical school he met good friends [Roy and Hilda](#) but he also met another important person during his time there - Trish Fletcher. Roy was best man at Maurice's first wedding to Trish in September 1965. After they were married, they spent 3 months in Nova Scotia, living on the edge, they came back with just 5 shillings left at the end of that adventure.

He qualified as a GP in the late 1960s, and thereafter Maurice and Trish moved to the West Coast of Scotland where her family was originally from. He worked as the local GP in Torridon initially, then moving to Stornoway in the early 1970s. Whilst Trish looked after the kids he worked as a GP there and also helped with coastguard. He used to talk excitedly about the times he went out in the helicopter and helped with rescues.

Sadly, in January 1972, two days before his 31st birthday, his beloved father Harold passed away, aged 68. Four months later in May, Maurice's son Neil was born, and Ross later followed in December 1973. They were all enjoying life on the islands, but it was not where they would remain.

In 1976, Maurice made his final move of his 38 year NHS career, and settled in Wick as a local GP, just before his son Ewen was born in May. They all moved into the house at 22 Port Dunbar and Maurice set up his GP practice. Maurice loved the sea views and the big garden. He loved to see the house martins fly around, and the stormy seas in Wick bay. He used to sit and watch the world go by from the front room and he loved to see the house martins and birds fly. Maurice would often talk about how amazed he was how birds migrated, and he had many birds in his garden as he was always feeding them. He just loved sitting and watching them zip around the garden and sky.

In April 1978 Beth was born, and in June 1980, Lorn arrived, then there were 5 and the Pearson family was complete. Maurice was at the births of all of his children, so when Lorn appeared blue, with the umbilical cord wrapped around her neck, he said he took her by her feet and turned her upside down and tapped on her feet until the umbilical cord unraveled. Then she cried out. Ewen still jokes that he thinks that this explains a lot.

His good friend Sheena who knew the Pearson kids well and taught some of them at school, paid tribute to Maurice by saying - he was very very clever and a good communicator in his professional life, family life and social life. He achieved a great deal and was very well thought of by many.

Even though Maurice was busy working as a doctor in his single handed practice in Wick, he played a big part in the kids lives as they were growing up.

They went on holidays to Cyprus, and he bought a caravan for touring Scotland. Maurice was always into cameras, gadgets and technology - he took photos at his graduation in 1965, and then the family remember and have photos of holidays to Cyprus in the 80s. The family remember that he had a massive Sony video camera, with the VHS recorder alongside. Can you imagine? They took 5 kids to Cyprus, plus a large video camera and VHS recorder, and the large DSL camera that took the photos! Then later in his life he was well impressed with his iPhone and how much it could do – and he was sure to share his love of technology with his kids.

Another love Maurice shared with his family was his love of was ice cream. He always said “You can have a treat as long as you don’t have it every day or overdo it”. And ice cream was his treat.

The family recalled how in Summer Maurice would take orders for ice cream from everyone and go down to Cabrelli’s and buy ice creams for everyone: his children and their visiting friends and adults, and take the ice creams home in a box. Ice cream brought a big smile to his face, and it makes the family happy too. Now the family all love ice cream, and share photos to compete with who can eat the biggest or best ice cream.

In 1976, Maurice joined Pat Niwa the Practice Manager who already worked at Wick Medical Practice, after joining the year before when she was just 17. Pat went on to become an integral part of the Pearson practice and the Pearson family in the 70s and 80s and beyond. Maurice put in the first digitalised computer system in a medical practice in Scotland and Pat was there to run it all for him. He also invested in his first Apple Mac desktop computer at home way ahead of the curve in the late 80s. And had one of the first versions of mobile phones – a big foot long mobile phone which was connected in his car!

Alongside Maurice working as the Practice Nurse for many years was his good friend Norma. Norma was a Geordie too, who he said “called a spade a spade”, and they both had made each other laugh a lot. Maurice was a wonderful GP for so many families across Wick, Caithness and beyond.

Pat remarked that one patient simply called him ‘Wonderful’ by name, and there was his patient Mrs Greene who told the story of how she named him ‘Dr Magnificent’ as he would often pop in to see her and her husband on the way home for lunch when he was at the end of his life. Not only did she think he was ‘Dr Magnificent’, so did her many children and grandchildren who were all his patients.

He was caring and conscientious, and always took the time to explain things carefully, and answer questions from patients. He would often relate stories to his own life, or draw diagrams to ensure the listener understood. And for this he always had his small Fisher space pen on hand in his back pocket. These pens were designed by NASA to write in space (and under water). Maurice was in awe of moon landings, and how amazing an achievement it had been back in 1969 when the first American astronauts set foot on the moon.

As well as music and technology, Maurice loved his cars. He was lucky to have had quite a few, and would drive quite fast a lot of the time. From a little fast black Peugeot 205 GTI, to a Citroen family estate, to the Renault 5 Turbo, and the top of the range black Ford Focus, before he bought his dream car, the red Audi Quattro. Later he bought a red Mercedes SLK, then went back to his favourite make, and drove Audi's. He was unfortunately caught for speeding more times than he'd like to admit, and his licence had 11 penalty points on it one time! However he had a state of the art 'radar detector' in the late 80s which likely helped him from being caught speeding on occasion.

Despite his fondness for cars, Maurice loved to walk and was often seen walking around town in all weathers in his Rohan gear. He used to walk across the Wick Airport runway in the days it was allowed. He took up running a little in the 80s, but then realised he preferred walking. He always instilled in his kids that it was important to be active and fit, and he set a good example for them with how active he was. He loved numbers and tracked his weight and distance, and watched what he ate.

Maurice was careful about what he ate, but his food intake was always balanced and he left room for treats. However into his adult years he always had an apple a day – cut into eighths - and he would joke it was to "keep the doctor away". Maybe it worked. He noted things down in a diary, just like his father before him. However he captured it on the computer, because that's who he was.

Maurice always had a love of music and had the most recent Walkman or CD player. No expense was spared when he bought the family a Bang and Olufsen hi-fi and sound system from Inverness in the 80s. And then he later upgraded to a top of the range Bose system and Bose headphones. He enjoyed listening to all sorts of different types of music, but some of his favourites were Dire Straits, Mark Knopfler and Neil Diamond. He enjoyed going to concerts all over the UK with his family and later around the UK and the world with his new wife.

In 1991, a day before Maurice's 50th birthday, his dear mother Molly passed away with dementia, aged 77. The family gathered around, and were there for each other.

Maurice often drove on many trips to the West Coast of Scotland to do long walks. In the early 90s he was away over on the West Coast walking, when he was taking a photo and he stepped backwards and fell down a big drop. The coastguard was called and it transpired that he'd broken his spine, and spent weeks recuperating in hospital. He took some weeks to recover and meanwhile Pat worked with Trish and kept the Pearson practice going.

After some turbulence, and his divorce from Trish in the late 1990s, things had settled down for Maurice by 1997. He was happy again and ready to start the next chapter of his life. His kids had all moved out, he supported them through their next steps in life and welcomed their partners into the family with open arms. More lovely people to share his stories with, and so he did.

As well as setting them up for life through university, Maurice paid for Ewen to go to America, helped Lorn buy a car, and bought Beth tickets to go to France to see Steve who would later become her husband. He was generous and giving, yet he still ensured they took nothing for granted.

Ewen followed in his Dad's footsteps and studied medicine and when Maurice decided to retire in the early 2000s, Ewen took over the Pearson practice. Pat continued to work with Ewen to run the practice. Pat loves her work so much that Lorn thinks Pat might never retire! 48 years on from when Pat started - she still keeps the practice running well to this day (2023), with a little bit of help from Ewen.

Maurice always said it didn't matter what his kids did for a living, they could dig roads if they wanted, as long as they were happy. He brought them up to believe they could do anything they set their minds to, and he can rest in peace knowing that they've all gone on to do so. He was so proud of his children and grandchildren.

However even though he retired over 20 years ago, his medical skills are still having repercussions! A 95 year old man was in hospital and the clever Consultant decided to change his medications which he'd been on since Maurice prescribed them as the patient knew they worked. The patient wasn't happy to change them, but went along with it. Maurice used to say "sometimes they just change things around to make it look like they are doing something".

The old man got discharged from a Nursing home and the Consultant went to see him as he wasn't doing so well. "It's ever since you changed my tablets! Old Dr Pearson started them and he obviously knows me a lot better than you bloody do!" The Consultant changed the tablets back!!

Maurice's life would take him on another path when he met Eileen in 1997 at their good friend Armored's birthday party. They had known each other professionally for several years

through Eileen's work in the Nursing Home in Wick where she was working. Later he would often joke that he got together with a geriatric nurse as good forward planning.

Together they spent a further six years in Wick whilst still working before retiring to Stonehaven in 2003. Stonehaven fulfilled Maurice's criteria of being by the sea and being near a city and an Airport. He intended that they do lots of travelling and that they certainly did, enjoying many trips worldwide, and returning to favourite European destinations over the years. Their favourite places to visit included Lochinver on the West Coast of Scotland, and Cape Town in South Africa. And his favourite mountains were Suilven and Table Mountain.

Whilst at home Maurice was happiest in his study working on his beloved iMac. Hours were spent at his screen and he was always amazed at what he could do and learn from it. He was often heard to say his computer made him smile today. Maurice loved birds and often talked about how he was so impressed with how birds migrate and fly all over. He loved trees, kept his garden nice and fed his birds in their garden and had hundreds of regulars.

He liked to watch the world go by, and be with friends and family too. He took time to relax, but also had many good times, conversations and told many many stories. He enjoyed hosting many friends and family from home over the years, and everyone loved Maurice's company, generosity and stories. He would often start a sentence with 'stop me if I have told you this one before!', which he quite often had. Not that it mattered as everyone enjoyed hearing his tales told in his own way again.

As time went on, Maurice's first grandchild Maja was born, then Kian, Tomas and Sean. Ella and Niamh, Lloyd and Liam. Lucy and Seren. Maurice enjoyed entertaining his children and their partners, and his 10 grandchildren, though not all at once thankfully! Maurice loved Winnie the Pooh, Piglet and Eeyore. A favourite game for him and his grandchildren was playing Pooh sticks down at the river. He enjoyed teaching them everything they wanted to know, and was always happy taking them to the park or to the cinema, on beach walks, building sandcastles, playing games or doing puzzles. He also loved the stars and planets and universe, and shared this with his grandchildren too. Maurice as you know loved his ice-cream and now he got to treat his grandchildren just as he had his own children.

There were more holidays and fun, but disaster struck when he fell in late 2015 and fractured his spine again. Then less than a year later in 2016, he had a triple bypass in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and some of the family rallied around him - looking after him and making sure he recovered. Maja remembered when they visited that he was sitting in the recovery room not long after the operation, and Granddad was showing Maja and Sean the ECG monitors and how they worked to. Always informing, communicating and engaging - even after such a major op. He never made a fuss when he was ill and just got on with it.

Maurice was an optimistic, fun and lucky man. When the family went on holiday in Tenerife in 2019 there were some early signs that Maurice's memory was starting to go, and he was needing a bit more help. Ewen's family always play cards after dinner on holiday (even if the grumpy teenagers don't want to!). The family were playing the card game 'Whist' and they weren't sure if Granddad would remember how, or if he'd able to follow the game. Of course he won at least one game every night, and all three games on the last night!

You wouldn't think that the Pearson's are very competitive, would you? But you can certainly imagine how that went down! Fun was had and life long memories were created.

Maurice and his family and friends often enjoyed steaks, sticky toffee pudding, fine wines, walks and ice cream together. Maurice and Eileen continued to have fun, laughter and good times with family, friends and neighbours. Then 2020 and lockdown happened, and in June this year, they moved back to Wick to be closer to family and friends. They settled in their nice new house and garden, with more birds and family visiting.

Latterly, Maurice's health had declined, first with dementia, then lymphoma and anaemia and latterly heart failure. However with dementia came some interesting or funny things - like he only wanted to wear blue, he was fascinated with stones, trees, life as we know it, the universe and how it all began, and his beloved birds. He was always so good and there for others. He would often say to his kids as a regular reminder when they left, "You know where we are". And he was always there when he was needed most.

Lorn had accepted that he hadn't seemed to recognise her in the last year or so, and was happy to call him as "Maurice", to ensure they engaged as best they could. And from 2017 [she took a number of recordings of his storytelling](#) to capture them to be heard in the future.

However in his last few days, Lorn was sitting with him holding his hand in hers as he was sleeping. He woke up briefly, looked her in the eyes, and said "Ice cream". Lorn asked him "Do you want ice cream?" And he said, "No. You need to have ice cream". He gave Lorn a big smile, then drifted back to sleep.

He was still here right to the end, and Eileen and Ewen were there with him as he passed away peacefully, when he was ready. At just over 82 and a half years old, or 30,168 days old (remember he liked his numbers).... it was his time to go and fly high.

So how will Maurice be remembered by those who knew him and what will his legacy be?

For Maurice, being happy and healthy was important to him, and he effortlessly made a real difference to others. He was a man who loved the simple things that life can offer too -

sunrises and sunsets, ice cream, spending time with family. He loved technology, music, driving, going on holidays, enjoying life and having fun.

He believed in fairness and that everyone should get the opportunity to achieve their dreams, no matter their background. He achieved a great deal professionally and was very well thought of by many. He strongly believed that you live on through your kids, and through those you meet and love, and championed that you should treat everyone the way you would like to be treated. That's who he was. He certainly has made his mark on this world and lived his life well. That's who he was. He certainly has made his mark on this world, and lived his life well.

### **Reflection**

We will shortly have a moment for private reflection. During this we are going to hear one of Maurice's favourite Mark Knopfler songs, *Sailing to Philadelphia*. You may wish to remember Maurice in accordance with your own personal beliefs.

### ***MUSIC Sailing to Philadelphia, by Mark Knopfler***

### **Committal**

#### **Announcement**

Our relationship with someone doesn't end with their death, as through your memories of them they will always be a part of our lives. People who have died continue to live on in the memories of those who loved them, and they are not forgotten by any of those who knew them. I know you feel privileged for having known Maurice, and you will continue to talk about him, and carry him in your minds and hearts going forward.

Before we leave however, can I thank you on behalf of the family for your presence here today and your many kindnesses to them. They are so grateful for all the messages of condolence, the cards and the flowers that they have received. There will also be a collection for Dementia UK as you leave and the family would be so grateful for any contribution.

You are all warmly invited to the Kingsmills Hotel for refreshments and where I have no doubt you will continue to remember Maurice and share your stories and talk about the many good times you spent with him.

## **Reading and Closing**

Before we leave however I would like to invite Lorn up to share something she's written for Maurice and you all.

Lorn will make her way to the lectern to introduce the recording which will be played.

Lorn will sit down after the recording has played.

### ***Fly fly brilliant one***

*Fly, fly brilliant one.*

*Fly beyond this world.*

*The softest cloud, the whitest dove.*

*Upon the wind of everyone's love.*

*Past the planets and the stars.*

*Leave this wondrous world of ours.*

*Just think of the lives you've touched, the stories you've told.*

*And the good memories that we'll forever hold.*

*Leave your legacy behind.*

*We've always had you by our side.*

*But you must go on and escape the confusion and the pain,*

*And fly again.*

*Fly, fly, up high.*

*Fly like your swallows in the sky.*

*We remember one of your patients called you 'Dr Magnificent',*

*And that's what you were - magnificent.*

*So down to earth, caring and a brilliant storyteller.*

*The brightest star, yet so humble and clever.*

*You were there for us and so many others.*

*We're all so proud of you, and so is your brother.*

*Fly, fly precious one.*

*From humble beginnings, as a miner's son.*

*You told it like it was,*

*And you related to so many.*

*You were so talented, happy and friendly.*

*You became you and you made a difference.*

*Take your big smile, happiness and magnificence,*

*And fly far far away.*

*Fly like a bird over to the other shore.*

*Where there is peace forevermore.*

*We'll hold our memories tight,*

*Remembering you warmly with a smile.*

*The sun will rise, the sun will set,  
But you definitely won't forget.  
Fly, fly brilliant one.  
Fly where angels sing.  
Fly far away, now the time is right.  
Go now, and find the everlasting light.*

Thank you Lorn. All that remains for me to do is thank you again for your attendance here today, and as you leave you do so the sounds of another of Maurice's favourites, Something Blue by Neil Diamond.

### ***MUSIC Something Blue, Neil Diamond and slides***

#### **Toast after the service**

Friends and family gathered after the service at the Kingsmills Hotel in Inverness. And the following tribute / toast was said by his daughter Lorn, to remember him by:

*'I'd just like to say a few words. Thanks everyone for coming and remembering my Dad / Maurice / Dr Pearson. The middle song of the service was called 'Sailing to Philadelphia', by Mark Knopfler. It was one of his favourite songs. It was a song about a Geordie boy, making his mark on the world, after leaving the coaly Tyne.*

*You might remember from time you spent with him, he treated everyone the same, whether it was a waiter, owner of a restaurant, child or adult. And he loved children, and fun and laughter. That came from where he came from as a miner's son – he treated everyone the same – no matter their background – a lesson for us all.*

*I was at Pat Niwa's the other night and she pulled out a Groat newspaper, from 2003 when my Dad retired – he wrote a notice of thanks in the Groat newspaper. In it, he thanked everyone from the porters to the staff, to the nurses and doctors and his patients.*

*And at the end of it he said...*

*'It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work in Wick.*

*I hope and I think I have made some difference to people's lives.'*

*He was right.*

*We all know that he made his mark.*

*Let's raise a glass to him.*

*To Maurice.'*