

It is important on this day to not only say goodbye to Jozef the husband, the father, the friend, but also to take some time to reflect on the qualities that Jozef not only held in high esteem but also practised for much of his adult life, and certainly during the times when we were three young children growing up with our mother and father. He was a serious and disciplined man. He had a high regard for respect and tradition.

He saw a lot during his lifetime, a world ravaged by war and uncertainty. As a young child everything that was stable and secure about his childhood and daily life was then thrown into utter chaos by the war. It must have felt like his world was turned upside down - it was. He told many stories of the family foraging for mushrooms in the forest, times were really hard. Dad forged his age for the Polish army, one less mouth for his family to feed in Siberia. After the war he eventually met up with his parents again in Egypt in 1947 and there the family had a simple choice to make, whether to travel to US or UK – because they thought it would be easier to get back to Poland they chose the UK. Trying to find order in life where it doesn't exist is perhaps the biggest test of all. It changes people, but it also fosters values which you keep close and live your life by.

After some time in the UK, Dad met mum and they both fell hopelessly in love. He really loved mum to bits and life started to settle. He joined PMT buses in the fifties and this became a massive part of his life. He was a supremely hard worker, ninety hours a week was not unusual for him. He was *generous* with PMT property, our back door was PMT bus red!

Dad was always a great story teller, there were so many stories. Some of them described the tragedy of his early life; some describe his early days when he joined the army. There was hilarious story about taking his driving test in the desert! My own personal memory is the story of the man who had three daughters - I never imagined I would end up married to him! I remember the stories Dad used to tell us from his days as a bus conductor - people trying to get on the bus with a double mattress, others who had had too much to drink. When Dad got really offended by peoples' behaviour on his bus, there would be a report to be written. Both mum and myself endured the writing of those reports - usually about ten pages long, no details were left out! Dad was a great talker, he could argue the back legs off a donkey. Despite limited education, he loved to read. He was an intelligent man, he was rarely wrong about anything, but when he was he'd never admit it!

Dad always kept his links with friends from the Polish community. He was a leader in the Polish club in Longton. Every Saturday night he and mum would be dancing at the Polish club. Mum assured me he was a great dancer, dancing the Polka. Dad would be the person that many of his friends came to to help sort things out. He was a massive help to all Poles moving into the area; he would always do his best to help his friends understand the systems and processes of living in England. Much later he established links with Keele University, again helping those who needed assistance.

Dad was extremely proud of mum's achievement passing her driving test when aged fifty-four. He helped others to develop their skills – skills such as David carrying a torch in his mouth when working in an unlit cellar in his home. When dad's mind was made up nothing would stop him. When Dad worked on a gas cooker fault, he insisted that mum took the kids to the top of the street, fearing that possibly things might not go according to plan. He once trimmed a neighbour's privet hedge. What was previously eight feet high was now a ridiculous twelve inches. When he cut the lawn it reassembled a ploughed field, more soil than grass to see.

Dad valued education, knowledge was power. Dad valued hard work – this was at the heart of Jozef Wozny. He held on to these values throughout most of his life. These are the values that he instilled in his children and we pass them on to our children. Like most people, knowing someone is a multi-faceted experience that changes with the dynamics of time. Today is about remembering the timeless qualities of our Dad. The man who truly loved his dear wife – Verush AKA Nicki. There are two gifts that our parents gave us – one is roots and the other is wings. Thank you for both.