

Gary Atkinson

Weston Super Mare, Crematorium

Friday 12th March 2021

12:30 hrs



Bristol Celebrant Services

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Association of Independent Celebrants

1:

Music on Entry: Footprints in the Sand, Leona Lewis.

Good Afternoon and welcome..... my name is Steve Wood, it is an honour to be with you here today to celebrate the life of Gary Atkinson, or **Gaz** as he was known to all.

Gaz! Husband, to Konnie, Father, to Aaron, Ashley, Cara, Ryan, Annaliza, & Archie, Grand-father to Brandon, Alfie, Harvey, Mia, Carter, Tyler and of course Aria. Brother to John, Tony, David, Martin, Chrissy, Bertie and Wendy, who passed away 13 years ago.

There are so many happy stories and memories of Gaz, it is not going to be possible to mention each and every-one of them here today. So, if we miss one of your stories, it is only because time restricts us. I would encourage you to remember these stories, ensuring that they stay part of the family..... for when they are spoken of, that person is always there with you, not only in your memory but in your heart.

Gaz was born at home in Redditch on 22nd May 1967. We are told that those early years were filled with fun, laughter and love, this helped make the man that Gaz was to become, a well-loved, & respected man. A friend to many, an enemy to none. And of course, **an absolute legend in his own right.**

2:

We are told that in first 3 years of Gary's life, his hair was so blonde and curly, that his mother would dress him all in pink. Around his ninth year, Gary's father took him to the barbers, where they chopped off all his blonde locks. I understand that Gary's mother was not best please.

I would like to invite Beverley to give a reading.

Weep Not for Me.

By Constance Jenkins.

Since leaving school, Gaz had a number of jobs.... one of which was working on a farm where he met his life-long friend *Steve Adams*. Later they both ended up working at Metis Aerospace.....I am sure *Steve* can tell you some stories of their times together..... most of which are probably not appropriate to be read out today.

This was of course before setting up his own business as a Removal, Landscaping & Fencing business, in the Redditch area. Where he built up a strong & loyal following, which is not surprising when you consider his fun approach to life.

It was during all these times in Redditch that Gaz met with Aaron's mother, then a few years later Ashley, Cara, and Ryan's Mother. But we know at times things are not meant to be.

3:

Then one fateful evening in March 2008, **Gaz** was invited to a night out in Bristol, this is where his life was about to change. When he met Konnie.....Konnie tells me that at this first meeting, they just clicked, **Gaz** had an aura that made her feel comfortable, he made her laugh, and made her smile, and Gaz loved to make people laugh.

Within a short space of time Gaz & Konnie realised that they were destined to spend their lives together. **Gaz** gave up his business in Redditch moving it and himself to Portishead to be with Konnie, & Annaliza.....*Ashley, Cara and Ryan* without fail, would come down every other weekend for many years.....Marrying on 13th June 2009, even though Konnie's Dad wanted to marry them off in a little white chapel in Floridathey were however, married in Clevedon, being joined by Archie in 2010.....Family is especially important to Gaz, so much so, that he adopted Annaliza, she loved him and he in turn loved her as would any father.

4:

We are told that Gaz said many times that his greatest achievements, were his children, he was incredibly proud of all of them. They would phone him for his sage advice, & he was always honest in his replies with them..... All the children have mentioned of how proud there are of him and how much all his Grandchildren looked up to him and how they looked forward to every time they saw him, as they knew they would be going away with a smile on their face and a memory that would last a lifetime.

Konnie's mum also told me that Gaz told me of how proud **Gaz** was of Konnie, and the way in which she dealt with the extra pressures of the illness.....**Gaz** treated all his children with the same love, care & devotion that many fathers do. I am told that he was especially proud when Annaliza, raised nearly £6,000.00, by shaving her hair off for a wish list for him, **Gaz, Ryan, Archie, and Ashley** also shaved their hair off to help Annaliza, and Gaz managed to achieve some of these things on his wish list before he passed.

Archie will miss his bedtime cuddles with Dad as he always snook in when he should have been in bed asleep, but both Gaz and Archie would find an excuse for a night time cuddle.

5:

Earlier I used the quip, Legend, you see if you looked for someone who is a genuine Legend it is Gary Atkinson, He got along with everyone, and everyone was treated equally, he had no edge to him at all, what you saw was what you got, loud funny, and a wind-up merchant, who never knew when to shut up, but that didn't stop him.

People liked him and he in turn liked people. Gaz seemed to have a special mission in life to make people happy, and to make them smile.

As we said Gaz loved his wind-ups, and as you all know he never knew when to shut up. When it came to work, **Gaz** sub-contracted to Elm Tree in last few years and he had a lot of respect for Marcus and Paul the Directors.....Marcus it would appear does not like mornings and has a tendency to be a tad grumpy on the mornings.....**Gaz** made it his mission to make Marcus smile during the mornings, I believe he succeeded on some and not others..... Marcus came to see Gaz when he was poorly. Gaz, being Gaz didn't dwell on his issues, instead he made Marcus promise to make sure he would find a reason to smile every day.

Marcus, do you promise to find a reason to smile every day?

6:

When speaking with the family, one thing stands out above all else. **Gaz** loved life to the full, everyone who was spoken too came out with the same comment, “**he was loud & funny**”. As Konnie says, he was such a fun person to be around, he lit up a room. We know that he loved Konnie, and the family. But next in line to his family, was his golf, he loved playing courses all over the country, he would slope off as often as he could on to a course, he would plan day trips out with his golfing buddy **Warren**, as many times as they could get away with it, seeming to be as happy as he could be on the golf course as well as at home.

I am told that he played off handicap of 13. I am also told that **Gaz** may have been a tad economical with the truth when it came to the cost of his golf clubs. But this did not matter, he was happy on the course.

As well as the golf **Gaz** had many other interests in life from Boxing matches to collecting trainers to cars. These would come and go regularly.

We are reminded of an evening when **Gaz** and one of his brothers went to a boxing match, with each supposed to be fighting another opponent, when they turned up at the venue, they found out that the opponents had pulled out, and they had to fight each other. Dare I ask who won, (no don't answer that)

7:

Gaz didn't like painting & decorating or DIY, yet when Konnie and the children would go camping, they would come home to find that **Gaz** had done the decorating. He bought a special paint spray gun for the house. However, he would not just paint the walls, it would include the furniture..... the sideboard..... and the floor..... all unintentionally. That was up until the time the family eventually convinced **Gaz** to go camping with them and his last trip last year in St Ives with friends was a memorable one.

Annaliza told me; that when her Dad fixed the TV to the wall in her bedroom, it was on the skew, and still is to this day. Considering **Gaz** was an odd job man, landscaper & fencer; his DIY skills were not what one could considered the best, especially when he built a shed upside down in the garden

As well as **not** being the best DIYer in the world, I am told that he could be a tad clumsy, we are reminded of when he had a bottle of champagne, he came running across the garden dropping the champagne smashing it into pieces. He went with Aaron, Ashley and Chris to buy another bottle, but ended up going to the pub on the way back, we understand that Aaron also bought a bottle of spirits, that also got smashed before all ended up happily trotting back to the house, to

8:

the displeasure of all the partners who was left looking after the kids after the supposedly five-minute walk to the shop.

People who know **Gaz**, know he loved to sing, Ryan and Cara follow this trait and would always join him in a song or dance when together, **Gaz** was a diva when it came to the karaoke, he was glued to the machine, & he just loved it, but this was **Gaz** entertaining people as always. Elvis being one of his favourite singers, Konnie tells me he had an excellent singing voice.

On moving to Portishead, **Gaz** especially loved walking on the local beaches with Konnie and all the children, it seems that it was on the beaches he could find peace, & tranquillity. Every time the grandchildren came down, if it was sunny, he always suggested the beach. It is something we as locals take for granted, but **Gaz** didn't, he knew what was special in life, and he lived it, loving it as he went along.

His star will shine bright for as long as we remember him for the fun, loud and loving man he was.

9:

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Into the freedom of the wind & the sunshine
We let you go..... into the music of the stars, and the planets.

We let you go.....
into the wind's breath, and the hands of the star maker.

We let you go.....

We will forever love you; we will forever miss you.
Go safely on the next part of your journey, dancing and singing into
the new world.

LOVE IS A COMPASS by Giff

We would like to invite Aaron & Ashley and Ryan
for a reading.

Dad By J. Allen Shaw.

10:

LEAVE CURTAINS OPEN

"Would you please stand for **"The Committal"**.

Gaz, we honour your life, and we are blessed to have heard your laughter....watched you smile and felt your reassuring hand in ours. Our lives are richer for having known you, and having shared in the love you gave us, and the love we feel for you.....

You are no longer bound by this world, but still part of it.....No longer tied to one place or one time, but free..... And so, we ask that you go now..... with all our love, as tenderly and reverently.....

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, at the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring, we will remember you. At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer, at the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn, we will always remember you.

11:

Closing words –

*Oh dear, if you are reading this right now,
I must have given up the ghost.
I hope you can forgive me for being
Such a stiff and unwelcoming host.*

*Just talk amongst yourself my friends,
And share a toast or two.
For I am sure you will remember well
How I loved to drink & laugh with you.*

*Don't worry about mourning me,
I was never easy to offend.
Feel free to share a story at my expense
And we'll have a good laugh at the end.*

Anon

Quoting Gaz

“Look for one thing to Smile about every day”.

NEVER TO MUCH by Luther Van Dross