

Welcome everyone.

We are here to celebrate Perry Davies' life; he was many things to many people. He was fun, warm, cheeky and friendly but he was also brave, compassionate and determined. He cared about his community, and devoted his life to the wellbeing of his fellow villagers. He originally served as a Special Constable with the Thames Valley Police and started learning business through his family firm in Burnham High Street. Helping and understanding the local community had always been a passion of his. He succeeded in heading his own business until he retired a few years ago.

Perry was elected to Burnham Parish Council in May 1999 and had served continuously for over two decades until his passing in February last year. Perry was always involved in committees and his first passion was Planning; he first served as Vice Chairman and then as Chairman of the Planning Committee for many years, indeed that is where I first met him when I became a councillor in 2005. He was always very knowledgeable and informative, he taught me a great deal about planning laws and the importance of the preservation of Burnham village and the protection of its semi-rural and healthy quality of life. The council's finance was also important to him; he was a long term member of the Policy and Resources Committee and also stood as Vice Chairman for a period of time, he managed to balance his business acumen with his extensive knowledge of council procedures. He was a true asset throughout the council.

His true love and passion however was through being a long term member of the Burnham Park Management Committee of which he had been Chairman since 2011.

Around thirteen years ago I did not know how privileged I was in sitting with two of the finest councillors that Burnham Parish Council have ever had, Cllr John Capel and Cllr Perry Davies. It was during the time that Burnham Park Hall was being demolished and the new one was being built and we were in temporary offices in Burnham High Street. We were in the old 'Halls' Committee, and there was a great buzz of excitement, it was humming, almost tangible, and we were looking forward with anticipation to the new Burnham Park Hall. They were thinking of lots of new ideas and functions. I was sent home with homework to come up with a list of ideas for our next meeting, I tried, but I wasn't very good at it. I couldn't think of anything new. I came back with a few ideas but was sent back to do more homework and to come up with more ideas 'or don't bother to come back at all!' they said smiling from ear to ear. It didn't matter though as they had plenty of ideas of their own; many new innovative functions and gigs, using Burnham Park Hall for the very first time. They spanned from outdoor and indoor cinema, music and beer festivals, amateur dramatics and shows, murder nights and the list goes on. Very sadly John Capel did not survive to see Burnham Park Hall built, but bravely Perry took the challenge on, he took on the baton and became the driving force for the new Burnham Park Hall facility with his single mindedness and courage.

It was very difficult to begin with, there was no business model to follow that encapsulated both a council and a large events venue. Perry was driving through uncharted waters. It seemed like an uphill struggle with lots of bumps on the way; but in the end Perry and the council had the good fortune of employing the new Burnham Park Hall Manager, Louise Hayday (our current clerk), and together they formed a brilliant team that eventually, with the Burnham Park Hall staff, created the highly successful venue we have today, so much so, that other councils contacted Burnham for our advice on this unique business model.

Not many people have a dream that they then realise as Perry did; he gave hours of work and support to the team as Chair of Burnham Park Management Committee, and consequently gave a platform for new musicians and groups in which they could perform their talent, to such a success that all the pubs in Burnham High Street started to become music venues. Perry influenced and benefitted the Burnham community far and wide.

Perry was thrilled when the first live music event took place at Burnham Park Hall in January 2014, since that time Burnham Park Hall have hosted 102 band nights, not including 3 St Georges Day Beer Festivals and 4 Burnham Festivals, which in turn saw a combined 83 more acts perform. It was not all about the live music though, Perry was a people person who was seen by the Burnham Park Hall staff as a member of the team rather than a councillor, his opinions were valued and respected and he was always present at large events to help set up and muck in where needed. He is greatly missed by the Burnham Park Hall staff who worked along side him.

I remember once I said to Perry, 'you are so good and give so much of your time to Burnham, I think you should be given all the community awards that are distributed within the local area' and he said ' I was given the award for Live Music in Burnham from the local music community, that is the only award that I need, it means everything to me'. Perry and Louise were given these awards for Outstanding Contribution to Live Music in Burnham in 2017; Perry was also given a Centennial Certificate of Appreciation by the Lions Club of Burnham in 2019 in recognition of outstanding service to the community, he was absolutely delighted and proud of this later award also.

Perry was a man of vision. He was a man of courage. He was a man of integrity and humility, but most of all he was a loving and devoted family man and a very dear friend.

Now I will pass you to his beloved wife Joy of whom he spoke so often with love and pride, as he did his entire family. Joy would like to say a few words.

Thank you.