

Interment of

Harry Kitchener

18th September 1940 – 11th January 2024

Barton Glebe, Cambridge
4th April 2024

Ceremony Conducted by
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Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen

We meet here today to lay the remains of Harry Kitchener to their final rest. You have kindly invited me to say a few words and I am proud and honoured to do so.

When we met together last month for Harry's funeral we reflected upon the mostly very happy life of a good man who had dedicated his life to working as a Horticultural Advisor.

Since Harry's death and his funeral, I am sure you will have had memories flooding back. Memories of him as a colleague and friend and the strong, and supportive role he played in your lives.

In a society increasingly obsessed by 'celebrities' it is easy to over look the simple lives full of everyday virtue; duty, personal responsibility, friendship and happiness which add so much to the lives of others. Harry's life was characterised by such everyday laudable qualities and he was a popular character, loved and admired by many.

At the funeral we recalled together how Harry had dedicated his life to his career as a Horticultural Advisor. He had a lifetime interest in pot plants

and for many years was the secretary of the Pot Plant Association and indeed was still a member of the Bedding & Pot Plant Association at the time of his death. I think Neil you described his contributions there as often 'challenging but inspiring'.

Harry particularly enjoyed the travelling that went with his job and over the years visited much of Europe including Poland and Sweden and other long haul trips to the USA and Canada. He was always keen to learn from others and kept up a remarkable network of international contacts.

In later years Harry worked as a consultant right up until his death and was much in demand. He focused on pest and disease control and was always interested in new initiatives and looking towards the future.

At home Harry was a quiet and private man who kept himself to himself and was content in his own company. He didn't suffer fools gladly and any visitors to his home were never likely to outstay their welcome, because Harry would helpfully suggest when it was time to go. His straight-talking was part of his charm, but he loved to share his knowledge and expertise with those who he liked and respected. He was good company, had a ready wit and good sense of humour and was fun to be around.

I've chosen the following short poem for today, written by Pam Ayres for today and I hope Harry would appreciate it images of growth and rebirth.

Woodland Burial by Pam Ayres

Don't lay me in some gloomy churchyard shaded by a wall
Where the dust of ancient bones has spread a dryness over all,
Lay me in some leafy loam where, sheltered from the cold
Little seeds investigate and tender leaves unfold.
There kindly and affectionately, plant a native tree
To grow resplendent before you all and hold some part of me.
The roots will not disturb me as they went their peaceful way
To build the fine and bountiful, from closure and decay.
To seek their small requirements so that when their work is done
I'll be tall and standing strongly in the beauty of the sun.

This is the sort of time when any words that I choose say so little compared to your feelings and emotions but together we must return to the natural cycle of life and death that part of Harry that cannot remain with us. But we remember with gladness that there is part of him that will forever live on in you – and others – the people who had so much love and affection

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for him. I am sure you will cherish each memory with love and gratitude.

All of your memories are committed safe and warm to your hearts and it is now time to commit Harry's remains back to the safe bosom of the Earth, which sustains and regenerates all life. Here under the wide open skies, Harry will rest in peace.

Harry is now safe beyond fear, beyond harm, beyond any further pain. He will be part of this place for all time; through the warmth of summer and the cold of winter, through the freshness of spring and the mists of autumn he will be here at peace.

As we now return to our usual lives and continue to adjust to living without Harry, I hope you will continue to be sustained by the love, the companionship and the encouragement of those who walk beside you – family members, friends and colleagues. We appreciate more than ever the presence of those who are still with us and feel the enduring memory of those who have gone before.

Harry left his mark on all who knew him through his unique and special role in your lives and we dedicate this simple plot to every good and precious memory associated with him. I hope that peace, strength and love

will all grow from this present and sorrow, and may memories of Harry continue to enrich your lives.

As the formalities here are now ended I invite you to spend a few moments saying your own private farewells to Harry if you would like to do so.

Barton North Glebe

