

18 September 2023

Dad's Eulogy by Jack

David Ferguson Turner

7 May 1943 to 7 September 2023

(1 Title) Dear family and friends, thank you for joining us today as we gather to remember and celebrate the life of a remarkable man, David Ferguson Turner, my beloved Dad. He was a man whose passion for architecture has left an enduring legacy the world over. And Dad wasn't just an architect; he was a loving son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandpa, ship's captain, colleague, teacher, and friend, who has impacted the lives of so many.

I am grateful to Dad for so many things. One of which is photography, which he inspired in me from an early age, taking me on photo expeditions in the golden-hours with his Olympus OM-1 – taking film and slide images for his work. I loved playing with his cameras, and dived into digital photography as soon as I could – in around 2004. I've kept up that passion since then, and had great pleasure in sharing this with Dad over the years. So with that in mind, and given Dad's exploits in tertiary institutions, I thought it only appropriate to have some slides and photos to support this eulogy. I hope you enjoy them.

(2 Dunedin) Dad's journey in life and in the world of architecture began in the beautiful city of Otepoti Dunedin, in Aotearoa New Zealand. Dad was Maude and Harold Turner's second child, with Alison leading the way, and followed by Helen and Caroline. It was there in Dunedin that Dad discovered his love for design, architecture and nature – nurtured by Harold and his practical engineering skills, and setting Dad on a path that would take him across the globe and allow him to make a profound impact on the profession.

His academic journey led him to Manchester University, where he earned a Bachelor of Architecture (with Honours) and later a Master's degree in Urban Design. Dad played guitar in a band at that time, and from those formative counterculture days in the 1960s, Dad was driven by an incredible capacity and drive for knowledge, and was inspired to innovate and create a better place for us all.

(3 60s-70s) Dad met his first wife, Julie, during their time together at University, and they married and had Dad's first daughter, Rachel, in the mid-60s, followed by his second daughter, Eve, in the early 70s. After completing his studies, Dad ventured into professional practice in the United Kingdom. He worked with renowned firms including Building Design Partnership (BDP), gaining valuable experience as a professional architect. During this time, Dad's artistic capacity and technical knowledge evolved and enabled his progression in turning inspiration into place making.

(4 Tektus) In 1976, Dad and a small team had a breakthrough by winning a competition for a town centre redevelopment project in Trowbridge in southern England. This milestone success marked the beginning of his practice in the beautiful city of Bath. Under his leadership, the practice earned a reputation for excellence in urban planning and architecture. Notably, they won a second competition in 1983 for a mixed commercial and 'hi-tech' industries business scheme in the regeneration of London Docklands.

Dad's work included urban workplace designs, housing projects, and conservation efforts, often set in historic British cities. His practice, later renamed Tektus in 1985, led together with his partner Phil Fawkner-Corbett, demonstrated his commitment to creating spaces that honoured their heritage while meeting the needs of modern society.

(5 Mum and us) Through this time, Dad met my Mum, his beloved wife Elizabeth, and to whom he was married for 41 years. Mum and Dad had Toby and I in the early to mid 1980s, and at the same time, together, they designed our home in Bath at 21a Sion Hill. **(6 Bath)** It was a truly beautiful place to call home, and it has left an indelible mark on us, and on Sion Hill – with development history dating back several hundred years. Not many people have and take the opportunity to make their stamp in this way, and we're very proud of the long-term legacy Dad has left with that home – among the many many other buildings of his in the UK.

(7 Unitec) In 1994 – together with Maude and Harold, Ali, Helen and Carrie and her boys, and Mum, Toby and I – Dad returned to New Zealand to join and help set up the faculty of the new School of Architecture at Unitec – here in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. His academic journey continued as he developed courses that emphasised environmentally sustainable construction, innovative approaches to design economics, and urban planning and design. He has taught 1000s of students over the past three decades, and who now form the backbone of New Zealand's built form industry. With Toby and I now working in the development industry ourselves, albeit horizontally rather than vertically, it brings us great joy in playing who-knows-who when working alongside architects throughout the country. Particularly those in the OG mid-90s cohort – I'll always remember hearing glowing stories of his students over the dinner table; including their various sporting and professional achievements. He knew so many at a genuinely personal level; and always, always remembered their names and faces. I would come home regularly with stories of *"hey Dad do you remember so and so"* – someone he'd taught 25 years ago – and he would immediately recount their time with him at Unitec.

In part thanks to moving back to New Zealand, we were fortunate to celebrate Dad's Mum's 100th Birthday back in 2010. It was a huge milestone for our whānau, and for those who were able to be there in person, we had a fantastic time reconnecting with family and commemorating the achievements of the Turner/Yeoman-clan across the 20th Century.

(8 critique) Throughout his tenure at Unitec, Dad was a passionate advocate for sustainable urban housing in New Zealand. His doctoral studies explored the theory and practice of this subject within the unique context of Auckland's social habits and environmental conditions. His research led to commissioned reports on higher density housing design for Housing New Zealand (now known as Kāinga Ora) and invitations to advise Auckland Council on intensification planning.

Dad developed two specialised urban housing design electives at Unitec, which are ongoing. One in the Bachelor degree Programme, and one in the Masters Programme, that, to quote David's own words: *"address and critique the intersection of architecture and the socio-economic policies that impact on higher density housing typologies."*

Dad's contributions extended widely, as he remained dedicated to bridging the gap between academia and professional practice. He regularly shared his knowledge by organising Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes for architectural consultancies in Auckland, fostering positive relationships within the profession and linking his tertiary institute with the industry.

(9 Pacific Tower) Dad also served as a member of Auckland Council's Urban Design Panel for the past 10 years, where he provided valuable insights on design quality for proposed new buildings. His dedication to improving urban planning processes and outcomes was evident in every meeting – alongside other top urban design experts in Auckland. A nearby example is the multi-storey apartment building towards the northern end of Lincoln Road here in Henderson – the Pacific Tower. Dad advised through the panel to modify the design (and held firm on this) – by reducing the number of units per floor, providing a larger footprint to improve ventilation, light, and overall design on each floor; and then to compensate for the loss of units with three additional, smaller footprint storeys with higher-value units at the top of the building. It's a neat and highly visible example of Dad's commitment to positive outcomes; and I will admire what that building represents to me, every single time I play frisbee golf at the course just next door.

Dad's life was a testament to the power of architecture to shape our surroundings and improve ours and people's lives. He understood that architecture wasn't just about buildings; it was about creating spaces that fostered connection, innovation, and sustainability.

Dad was a stylish man. From those early days in the 60s, he kept in good shape (to the extent that his body would allow), and knew how to dress to impress. But the impression he left was never one of power, authority, self-importance, or self-worth; it was one of approachability, warmth, endurance, and practicality. To me, this can be symbolised through the cars he drove **(10 Cars)**. These included a beautiful Saab 900 back in Bath, together with some of the first and cutting-edge Japanese cars to be imported to the UK – a racy Honda Accord Aerodeck, and a highly-practical Toyota Camry station wagon. And then more recently, and in-line with his environmental-leanings, came his passion for Hybrid vehicles. This was his second Toyota Prius, and he was proud as Punch when he took ownership of it; and then over-the-moon when Toby and I had the Japanese stereo replaced with an English-speaking one. I'm glad he had that car to enjoy for the past 12 months or so; he truly deserved it.

Beyond cars, Dad loved his boats. **(11 Boats)** From Guenole and Partizan sailing from Poole in England, to Katinka more recently here in Auckland – he was probably at his happiest pootling along with the sails up, the sun out, and nothing but the wind to make progress. In most recent years, he enjoyed trips to Rakino Island in the Hauraki Gulf, and in particular, a very memorable trip he and Cesar took to Great Barrier Island, after which Dad fondly recounted encounters with whales and dolphins. That brought him great happiness.

In 2005, Tektus in Bath was acquired by one of the UK's largest consultancies; a testament to the lasting impact of Dad's work, together with Phil. The company kept trading as Tektus

until 2014 when the name was withdrawn. The stars aligned for me at that time, when I was making plans to start my own practice here in New Zealand – focussing on the link between civil engineering and planning; much like the roots of Tektus in planning and architecture. I asked Dad if he would be Ok with me restarting Tektus in New Zealand. He was. And so was Phil. **(12 Tektus)** And so in 2015, Dana and I rebooted Tektus here in Auckland, and together with my great friend Emily Afoa and her husband James in 2018, with much support along the way – including from our wonderful boys Toby and George, we've now grown to a team of 20 professionals based from an office in Wynyard Quarter, delivering some great outcomes, and continuing Dad's legacy for sustainable design. I'm proud to be able to do that.

(13 Kids) Dad was proud of all four of us, his kids. Firstly, Rachel in London, together with her husband Keith and their two children – Bela and Max; Dad's first grandchildren. He was so chuffed to share Rachel's progression in the art and textiles world; from Star Wars movies, working with the late Jan Pienkowski, and more recently to Rachel's incredible artworks. And to connecting with Bela and Max as they have worked through school. And recently with Bela on a trip to Gallipoli; those recent communications I know meant a great deal to Dad.

Secondly, Eve, and her partner Kristian, and their daughter Sophia; based in Somerset in the UK; he was hugely proud of them all; their life in that beautiful and sustainable home they have; and Eve's teaching. Dad had wonderful memories of their time together in Rochefort-en-Terre in France a few years ago.

And thirdly, Toby; together with his wife Eunice, and their children Emilia and Matteo. They sadly couldn't be here today, but we know they're tuned in, together with amazing support from our cousin Alex and his fiancé Melody. Dad had the most incredible mind, with an indelible capacity for knowledge from all parts of humanity – religion, science, politics, maths, sport, economics, geography, music... you name it; Dad had read it; he remembered it; he had an opinion on it; and he would love to talk about it – particularly over a beer. Dad passed that capacity on to Toby. That's all I need to say really; other than he was terribly proud of you Toby, and beyond Mum, you were his other intellectual equal.

(14 Family) Beyond his immediate whānau, Dad loved and was loyal to his whole family. This photo isn't everyone – unfortunately we've never managed that – but it symbolises his warmth and kindness to everyone in the wider unit; particularly his sisters Ali, Helen and Carrie. Our cousin Ed described Dad as a wonderful man; and always liked being around him, and has many, many good memories of chatting with Dad at his dining table – often drinking a decent bottle of Kiwi beer that had been convivially thrust into Ed's hand. And I'm sure that's a commonly held position amongst the family. The move back to New Zealand in the early 90s was massive; and I can't imagine trying to achieve something of that scale and complexity in current times; but New Zealand is wonderful place to be; and I know Dad was content here.

(15 Husband) Mum. We all, have a great deal to thank you for. Dad's body has tried and tried and tried to get in his way throughout his life – often succeeding, but usually in a temporary capacity. Sadly, for all of us, not this time. I've lost count of the number of surgeries and hospital visits he'd experienced – ankles, and ankles, and ankles; knees; hips;

shoulders; skin... the list goes on. His last trip was in early May when Auckland flooded for the fifth time this year; with the City grinding to a halt and Mum being unable to visit Dad. This was the first time Mum wasn't at his side; and it was hard for you both. I'm grateful to have been able to wade through the flood waters and make it to Dad's side that day, in your place; and will cherish those memories of him – bullish and positive to the end; and aching to get out of hospital – he hated it so much. But that wasn't the norm. The constant in Dad's life since the early 1980s, and the loving force that kept him going through all of these surgeries, was you Mum. He loved you, fiercely, and your companionship was and will continue to be enviable to all of us. Your whole relationship and rock-solid marriage of 41 years has been, and will always be, an inspiration to us. On behalf of us all Mum; thank you, and know that we're all here with you.

(16 David) I've only ever known this guy as Dad. But one of the wonderful things of this difficult process over the past 10 days has been the outpouring of words and memories from people the world-over who knew my Dad. Only four of us had the opportunity to call him our Dad; everyone else knew him as David. Son David; brother David; husband David; uncle, grandpa, captain David; David the colleague, teacher, and friend. It's been quite a realisation for me on what seems obvious, but Dad, was David, to so many people. But he was the same person. The kindest, most humble, warmest, most intelligent, humorous; and above all, most loving man. Our memories of you Dad, and David, will live on long beyond today; and your architectural legacy will endure for 100s of years to come.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating the life of Dad, and David Ferguson Turner.