

## Nicholas Moy – Memorial Address

We are gathered here today to honour the memory and celebrate the life of Cecil Harold Nicholas Moy - more familiarly known to us all variously as Nicholas, Nick, Nicky or even Uncle Nick.

Now I first met Nick Moy when we arrived together to study for an MBA at the Wharton School in Philadelphia in the autumn of 1967 – a staggering 46 years ago – where have all those years gone?

Nick was instantaneously recognisable; first because even 46 years ago the famous comb-over was already in place – a comb-over which despite advice and protestations from his friends and family, remained a permanent feature.

But he also stood out because he was wearing a surgical collar. This turned out to be result of a collision in a supermarket car park. As to how this happened Nick claimed that his manly testosterone fuelled appearance caused the woman driver in question to lose control of her vehicle and ram his.

The car itself, which came as part of his scholarship, was the object of some envy amongst the rest of us impoverished students. Nick's scholarship could only be awarded to a person who had served in the armed forces of a member of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation – a organisation Nick informed me crisply in his best Foreign Office manner had as it's objective "to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down".

While the car was a plus in the ledger, a minus was the need to train with the American National Guard – the equivalent of our Territorial Army – in Nick's case the First Troop City of Philadelphia Cavalry – allegedly the oldest unit in the US Army. Nick approached his first Saturday morning training session with some trepidation – the agenda included "training films" which seemed extremely high powered and keen. But when I saw Nick after that first Saturday he told me that he didn't need to have worried because "training films" were, in the event, a euphemism for pornographic movies.

So that was how Nick and I met but perhaps I should now begin at the beginning.

Nicholas Moy was born in London in December 1938 and was christened in a very distinguished venue – Westminster Abbey.

He was educated at Aldro – a prep school near Guildford – and then at King's School Canterbury.

He could have escaped National Service but his father, a career soldier himself, thought, somewhat to Nick's dismay, that a spell in the army would do his son good.

So Nick found himself in the Greenjackets, a regiment of which he was extremely proud, and posted to the EL Adam Air Force Base in Libya – in those imperial days a major refuelling stop on the way to the British colonies and possession in the the Far East. According to Nick it was the heat under the beret that led to his being follicly challenged.

After leaving the Army Nick joined the Foreign Office. Many of you will have heard his stories of Djakarta in Indonesia where the Dutch had just been evicted and Britain as the protecting power had to safeguard Dutch assets and in consequence Nick had to sleep in a different house every night, of Bangkok, of Singapore, of Baghdad where the British Embassy was located in the smartest building in that city because the British Army having driven the Turks out in 1917 chose the Turkish Governor's

Palace as their headquarters it subsequently became the British Embassy and finally at The Middle East Centre for Arabic Studies – more famously known at MECAS- the spy school set in the hills above the Beirut home to Philby et al – where Nick learned his Arabic.

However it was clear to him that progress in the Foreign Office would be very limited without a University degree.

Cambridge followed and then, as his interests drifted away from returning to the foreign service, he decided to do an MBA.

After Wharton he spent a short time in a management consultancy but in April 1972 he and I joined forces in what was to become Granville & Co – what today would be called an investment banking boutique.

In our less sober moments we thought we might survive and in our more sober ones that we might not. Indeed on several occasions – especially in the early years – it was, to quote the Duke of Wellington “a damned close run thing”.

But 30 years later, almost to the day, in April 2002 with the firm, by then employing 250 or so people, our period of non competition following the sale to Robert W Baird ended, we left the firm for the last time.

Nick of course did not leave the financial service fray and spent several happy years at Gryphon where his very particular skill set could be deployed to great effect in emerging markets.

Throughout all this time he remained close to his family – continued to live in the family house here in Rye. He took a keen interest in the life of his sister Mary Ann and was very proud of her three children – his nephews – Tom, Henry and James.

So much for the life – what about the man. He is not easy to describe because he was a very private person with a complex personality full of contradictions. What were these?

First he was generous but he was tight. I don't think Nick bought me a drink in all the years we worked together (maybe some of you were luckier). Yet to my son, Hugo, to whom he agreed to act as godfather, he was exceptionally caring, thoughtful and generous – the arrival of Uncle Nick's Christmas present was an eagerly awaited event. And I know of similar experiences with his nephews and other young people.

Second in his business life, his intellect was strikingly clear but his personal organisation extremely messy. He would produce a beautifully crafted position paper but his office always looked as though a bomb had hit it. I lost count of the number of times finance directors asked me to get Nick to pay in his dividend cheques so that they could simplify their administration. So it came as no surprise to me that the family have so far found un-cashed cheques in excess of £50,000.

Third his thinking could be very flexible but he could be exceptionally stubborn and set in his ways. He liked turning over a problem like a Rubik Cube to find the right pattern. Yet a few weeks ago when I suggested that he ought to let members of the family help him with his affairs I was very firmly told where to go.

Finally while he was a very private person he liked the company of others. Many of us felt that it was a shame he never married. Yet he got on well with people of all ages and was intuiting his

advice and time. One of our colleagues at Granville – not one that I would have counted as a particular fan of Nick's – wrote to me last week "Nick was a unique and talented corporate financier and I learned a huge amount from watching and listening to him in action. The firm would not have been the same without him".

Thinking about what I would say today, I came across the following which I think draws together the threads of the life of this engaging but complex character.

He went through the company like a lamplighter  
See the dull minds, one after another  
Begin to glow, to shed a beneficent light  
He went through the company like a knifegrinder  
See the dull minds scattering sparks of themselves  
Becoming razory, becoming useful  
Above all he went through the company as himself  
And while the beneficent lights dim they don't vanish  
While the razory edges dull they still cut  
He's gone but you can see his tracks still  
In the snows of the world.

**Cecil Harold Nicholas Moy**

**Born London 9 December 1938**

**Died Hastings 5 October 2013**

**Rest in Peace**