

Mark Evans

9th November 1959 – 9th July 2026



All Saints Church, Gwynfe
Monday 20th July 2026 at 11am
Service conducted by: Reverend Jeff Thomas
Organist: Leighton Sault-Jones

THE GATHERING

ENTRY MUSIC

Going Home performed by Mary Fahl

They say there's a place,
where dreams have all gone
They never said where, but I think I
know

It's miles through the night
just over the dawn
On the road that will take me home

I know in my bones, I've
been here before
The ground feels the same,
though the land's been torn

I've a long way to go, the
stars tell me so
on this road that will take me home

Love waits for me 'round the bend
Leads me endlessly on
Surely sorrows shall find their end
And all our troubles will be gone

And I'll know what I've lost,
and all that I've won
When the road finally takes
me home

And when I pass by, don't
lead me astray
Don't try to stop me, don't stand
in my way

I'm bound for the hills where cool
waters flow
On this road that will take
me home

Love waits for me 'round
the bend
Leads me endlessly on
Surely sorrows shall find
their end
And all our troubles will be gone

And we'll know what we've lost
and all that we've won
When the road finally takes me
home

I'm going home
I'm going home
I'm going home

WELCOME AND OPENING ADDRESS

HYMN

Crimond

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
in pastures green; he leadeth me
the quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again,
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
e'en for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear no ill,
for thou art with me and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.

Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God's house forever more
My dwelling place shall be.

A background image showing two men in a classroom or office. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a light-colored shirt with a tie, pointing at a map on a table. The man on the right is wearing a dark sweater over a collared shirt and tie, also looking at the map. The table is covered with a large map, and there are red pushpins and a small electronic device on it. In the background, there are whiteboards and a chalkboard.

READINGS

“... all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated. God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another.”

*(John Donne, Devotions upon Emergent Occasions
(1624), XVII)*

THE COLLECT

PSALM

(130: verses 1-6)

Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.

Lord, hear my voice:

let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

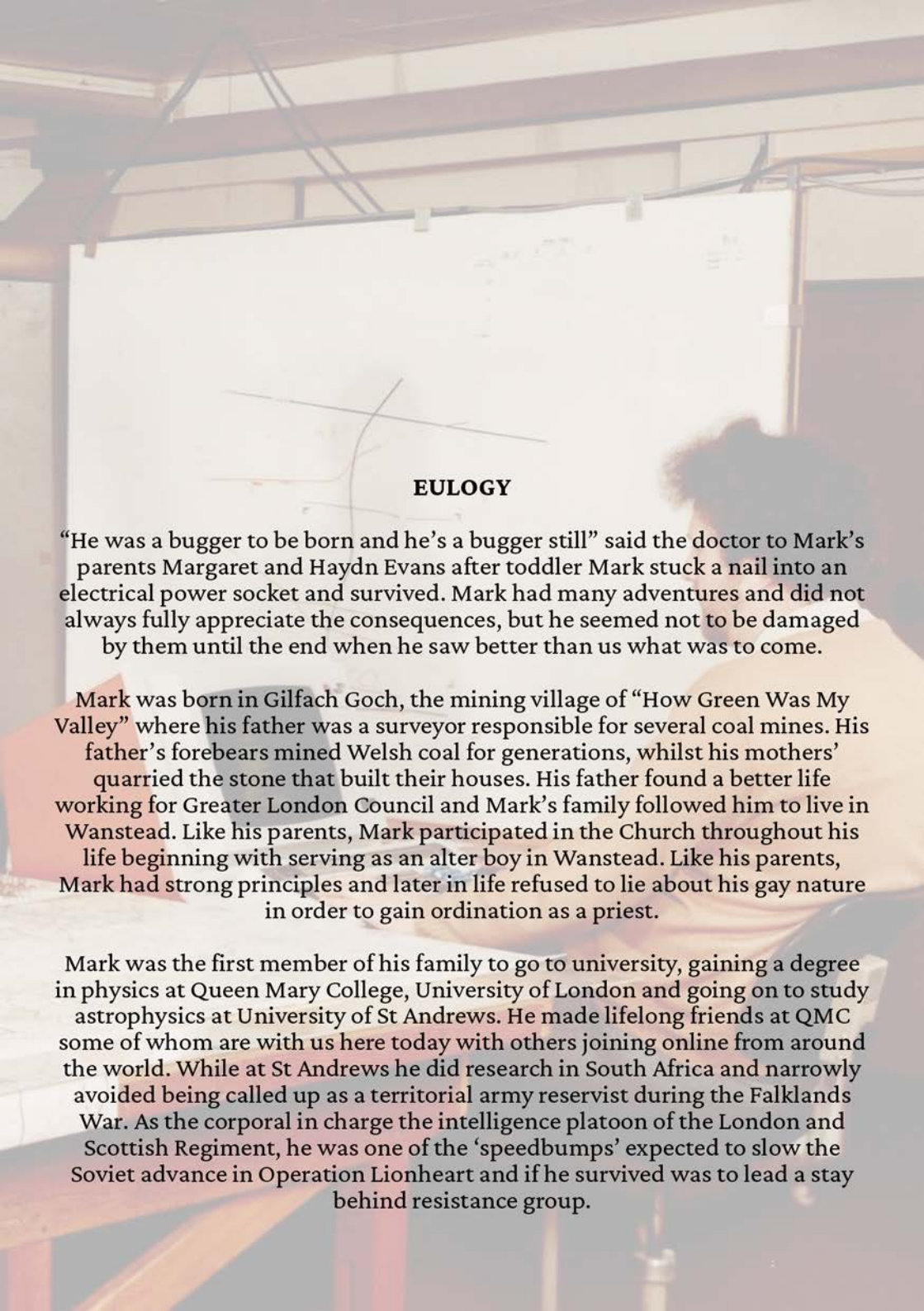
If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities,

O Lord, who shall stand?

But there is forgiveness with thee,
that thou mayest be feared.

I wait for the Lord,
my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord
more than they that watch for the morning:
I say, more than they that watch for the morning.

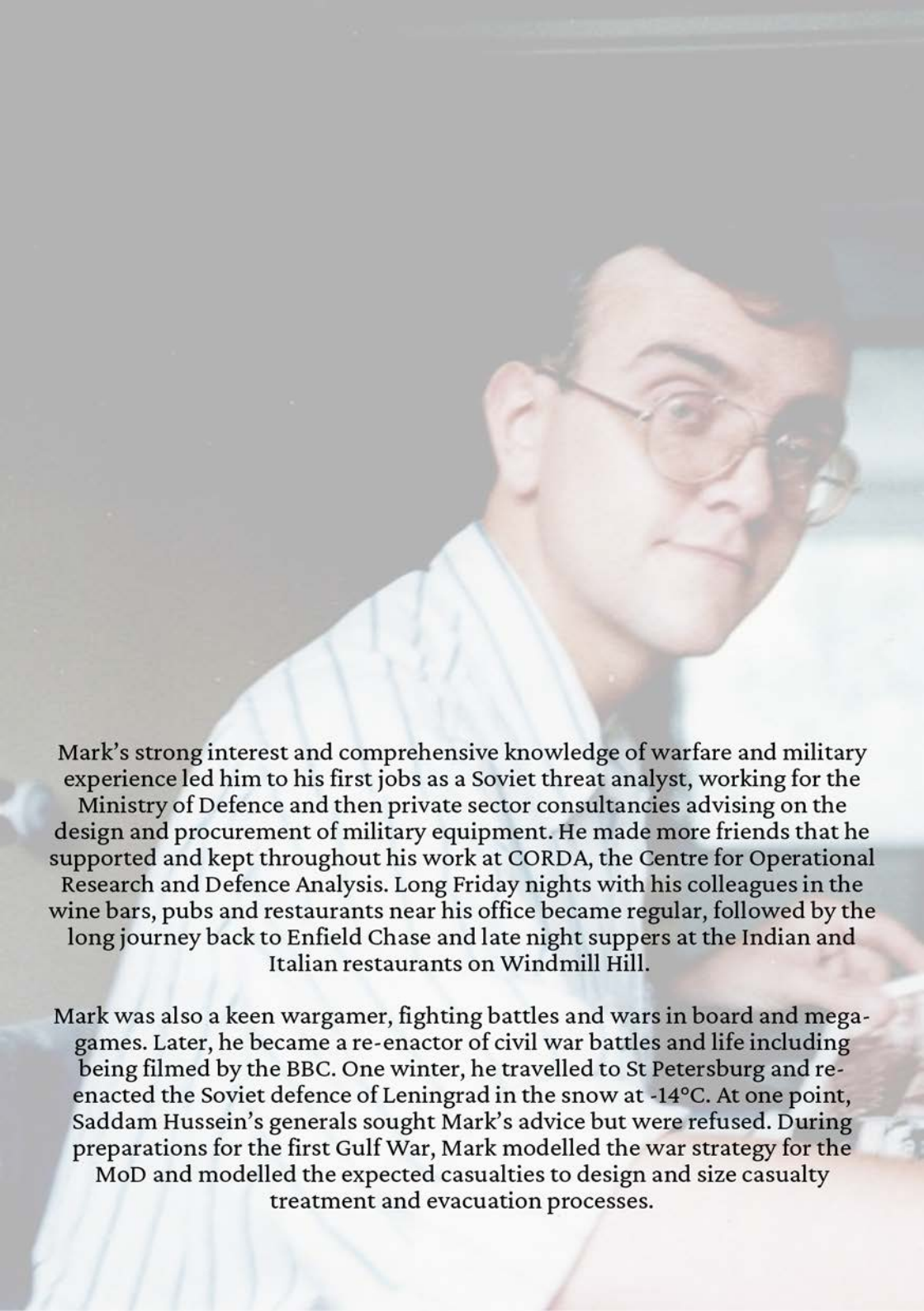


EULOGY

“He was a bugger to be born and he’s a bugger still” said the doctor to Mark’s parents Margaret and Haydn Evans after toddler Mark stuck a nail into an electrical power socket and survived. Mark had many adventures and did not always fully appreciate the consequences, but he seemed not to be damaged by them until the end when he saw better than us what was to come.

Mark was born in Gilfach Goch, the mining village of “How Green Was My Valley” where his father was a surveyor responsible for several coal mines. His father’s forebears mined Welsh coal for generations, whilst his mothers’ quarried the stone that built their houses. His father found a better life working for Greater London Council and Mark’s family followed him to live in Wanstead. Like his parents, Mark participated in the Church throughout his life beginning with serving as an altar boy in Wanstead. Like his parents, Mark had strong principles and later in life refused to lie about his gay nature in order to gain ordination as a priest.

Mark was the first member of his family to go to university, gaining a degree in physics at Queen Mary College, University of London and going on to study astrophysics at University of St Andrews. He made lifelong friends at QMC some of whom are with us here today with others joining online from around the world. While at St Andrews he did research in South Africa and narrowly avoided being called up as a territorial army reservist during the Falklands War. As the corporal in charge the intelligence platoon of the London and Scottish Regiment, he was one of the ‘speedbumps’ expected to slow the Soviet advance in Operation Lionheart and if he survived was to lead a stay behind resistance group.



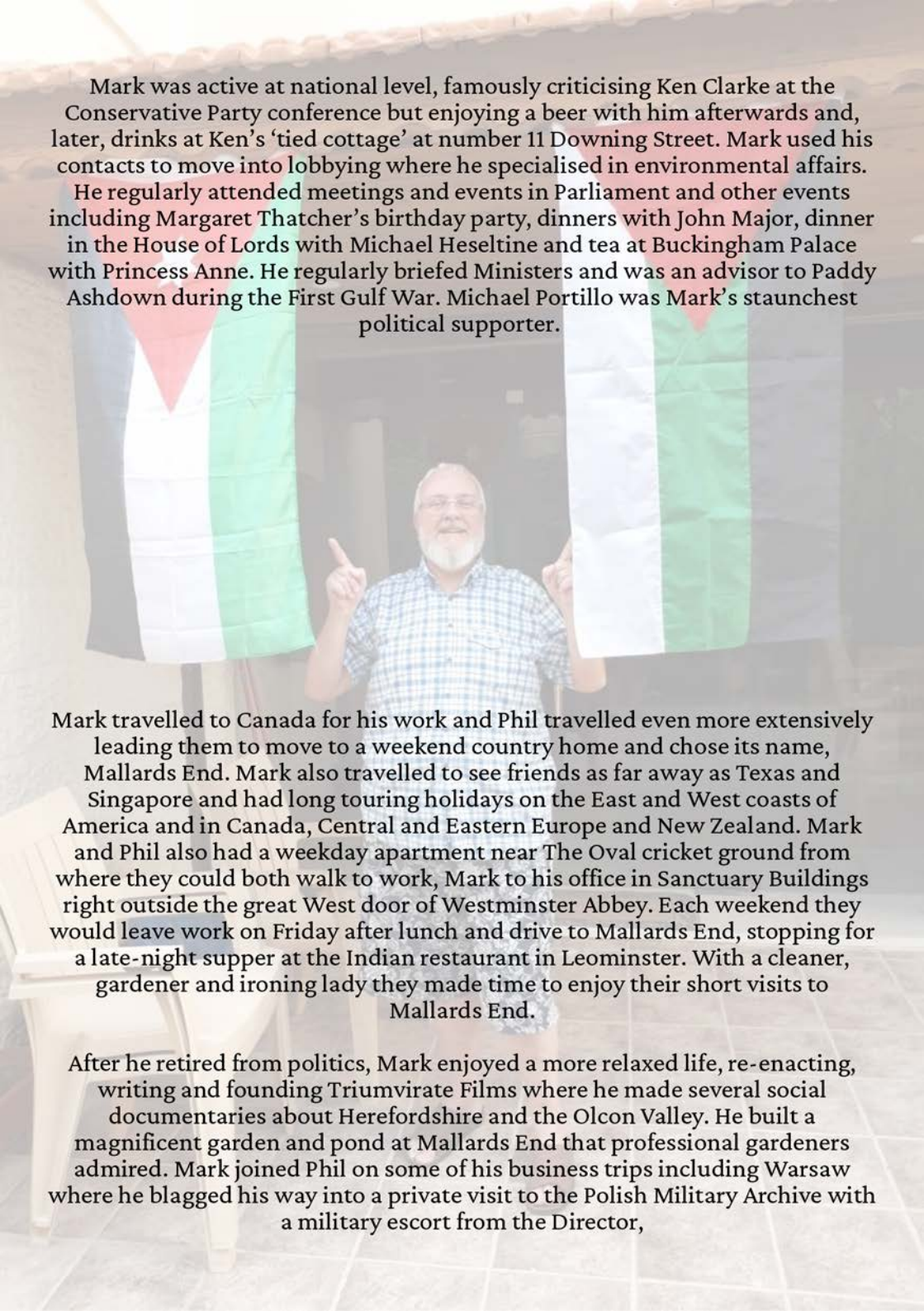
Mark's strong interest and comprehensive knowledge of warfare and military experience led him to his first jobs as a Soviet threat analyst, working for the Ministry of Defence and then private sector consultancies advising on the design and procurement of military equipment. He made more friends that he supported and kept throughout his work at CODA, the Centre for Operational Research and Defence Analysis. Long Friday nights with his colleagues in the wine bars, pubs and restaurants near his office became regular, followed by the long journey back to Enfield Chase and late night suppers at the Indian and Italian restaurants on Windmill Hill.

Mark was also a keen wargamer, fighting battles and wars in board and megagames. Later, he became a re-enactor of civil war battles and life including being filmed by the BBC. One winter, he travelled to St Petersburg and re-enacted the Soviet defence of Leningrad in the snow at -14°C . At one point, Saddam Hussein's generals sought Mark's advice but were refused. During preparations for the first Gulf War, Mark modelled the war strategy for the MoD and modelled the expected casualties to design and size casualty treatment and evacuation processes.



It was during this period that Mark met Phil, his partner for 39 years. They made their first home together in Enfield in North London and focused their jobs in the heart of the capital as well as enjoying it's theatres, concerts, restaurants, bars and clubs. Weekend dinner parties were frequent and Mark became an accomplished cook. With his re-enactment and historical knowledge mark specialised in historical cooking, including Roman, medieval and civil war banquets. He missed an opportunity to cook on television with Clarissa Dickson-Wright when he went to be with his father as he died.

Mark's interests brought many contacts with senior military and political figures. He was the only private sector participant at the Defence Intelligence Services Christmas parties and London defence attachés meetings and became Chairman of the Bow Group Defence Committee. Our thoughts today are also for Anne Widdecombe who campaigned for Mark when he was first elected to Enfield Council. She had dinner with Mark the evening before he won his marginal seat on the day after the UK crashed out of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. Mark went on to be Chief Whip and Member of the Cabinet of Enfield Council. He worked incredibly hard to keep his marginal Council seat for many years against the trend and turned down nomination for an unwinnable Parliamentary constituency.



Mark was active at national level, famously criticising Ken Clarke at the Conservative Party conference but enjoying a beer with him afterwards and, later, drinks at Ken's 'tied cottage' at number 11 Downing Street. Mark used his contacts to move into lobbying where he specialised in environmental affairs.

He regularly attended meetings and events in Parliament and other events including Margaret Thatcher's birthday party, dinners with John Major, dinner in the House of Lords with Michael Heseltine and tea at Buckingham Palace with Princess Anne. He regularly briefed Ministers and was an advisor to Paddy Ashdown during the First Gulf War. Michael Portillo was Mark's staunchest political supporter.

Mark travelled to Canada for his work and Phil travelled even more extensively leading them to move to a weekend country home and chose its name, Mallards End. Mark also travelled to see friends as far away as Texas and Singapore and had long touring holidays on the East and West coasts of America and in Canada, Central and Eastern Europe and New Zealand. Mark and Phil also had a weekday apartment near The Oval cricket ground from where they could both walk to work, Mark to his office in Sanctuary Buildings right outside the great West door of Westminster Abbey. Each weekend they would leave work on Friday after lunch and drive to Mallards End, stopping for a late-night supper at the Indian restaurant in Leominster. With a cleaner, gardener and ironing lady they made time to enjoy their short visits to Mallards End.

After he retired from politics, Mark enjoyed a more relaxed life, re-enacting, writing and founding Triumvirate Films where he made several social documentaries about Herefordshire and the Olcon Valley. He built a magnificent garden and pond at Mallards End that professional gardeners admired. Mark joined Phil on some of his business trips including Warsaw where he blagged his way into a private visit to the Polish Military Archive with a military escort from the Director,



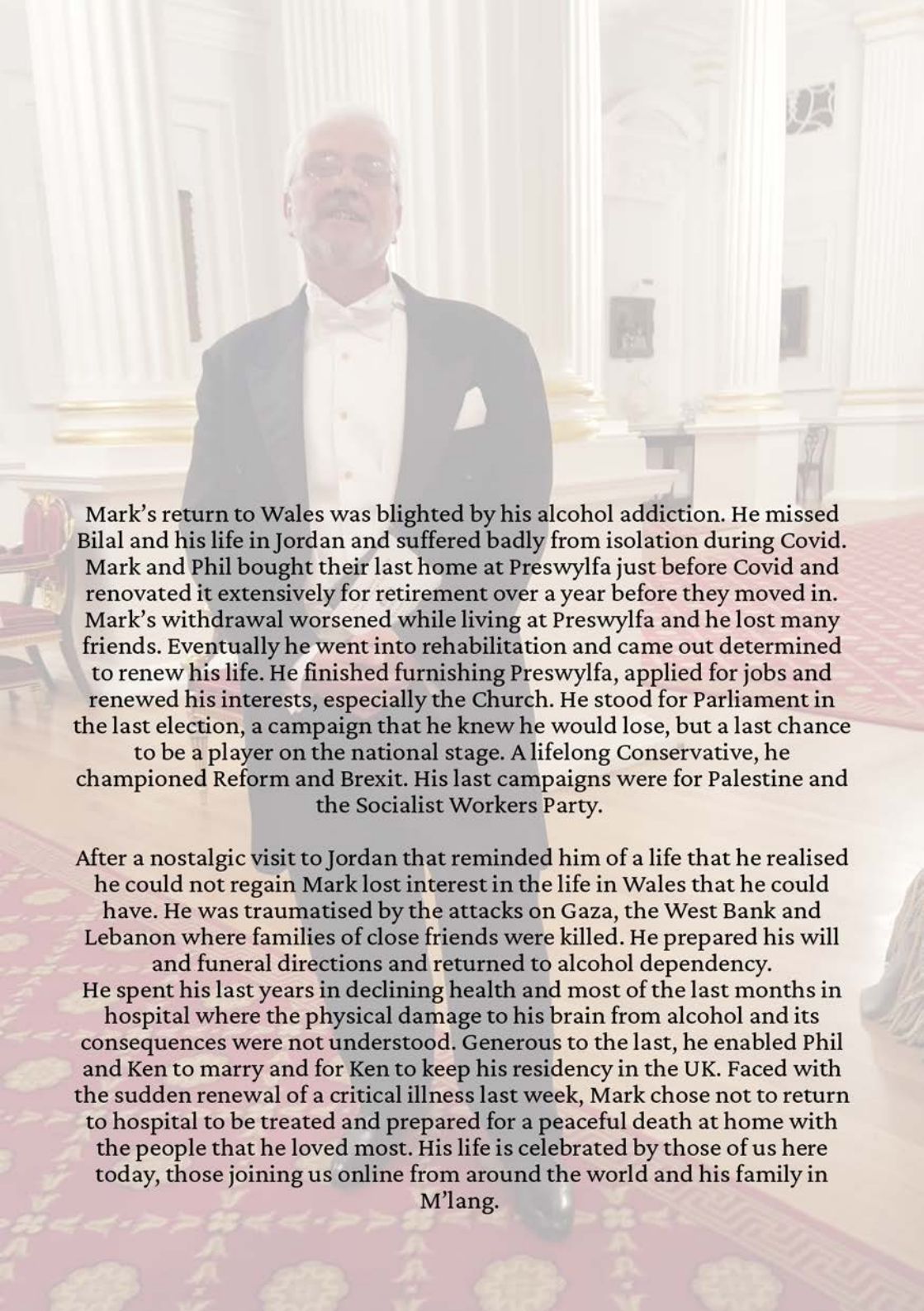
visited Phil's offices in the former office of Solidarność and the bullet damaged Bialy Dom, the former headquarters of the Communist Party. Another trip included a tour of Washington DC, Pennsylvania and Virginia including civil war battlefields and the second English colony at Jamestown.

When Phil's international work ended, Mark and Phil moved to Carmarthenshire, firstly to Penhill, a 56-acre farm that they rehabilitated. Mark worked for a while on entrepreneurship for the Welsh Government and then bought Tŷ Brynteilo that he ran as a guesthouse while Phil built a local business consultancy. Later they moved to Gilfach yr Allt, a cottage and 9-acre smallholding that they renovated.

When Phil's work took him abroad again, Mark joined him in Jordan where they made their home in Amman for several years. This was the great adventure of Mark's life where he made many new friends and met the other great love of his life, Bilal. Mark fell in love with Jordan and Palestine and visited Petra, Jerash, Irbid, Wadi Rum, The Dead Sea and Aqaba many times.

Crossing into Israel at King Hussein Bridge was the most traumatic and unpleasant of all his travel experiences but meeting friends in the old city of Jerusalem and visiting Bethlehem, Jericho and the Baptism site more than made up for it. Christmas in Beirut with friends and visits to Byblos, Tripoli,

Sidon, Tyre and the Bekka valley was another adventure, as were visits to Istanbul. In Georgia, he visited friends in Tbilisi and Stalin's birthplace in Gori. While in Jordan he finally finished his second novel, 'The Scent of Lilacs' that he published as Haydn Corper.

A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark tuxedo jacket over a white shirt and a light-colored bow tie, stands in a grand, ornate hall. The hall features large white columns and a patterned carpet. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the hall's architecture.

Mark's return to Wales was blighted by his alcohol addiction. He missed Bilal and his life in Jordan and suffered badly from isolation during Covid. Mark and Phil bought their last home at Preswylfa just before Covid and renovated it extensively for retirement over a year before they moved in. Mark's withdrawal worsened while living at Preswylfa and he lost many friends. Eventually he went into rehabilitation and came out determined to renew his life. He finished furnishing Preswylfa, applied for jobs and renewed his interests, especially the Church. He stood for Parliament in the last election, a campaign that he knew he would lose, but a last chance to be a player on the national stage. A lifelong Conservative, he championed Reform and Brexit. His last campaigns were for Palestine and the Socialist Workers Party.

After a nostalgic visit to Jordan that reminded him of a life that he realised he could not regain Mark lost interest in the life in Wales that he could have. He was traumatised by the attacks on Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon where families of close friends were killed. He prepared his will and funeral directions and returned to alcohol dependency. He spent his last years in declining health and most of the last months in hospital where the physical damage to his brain from alcohol and its consequences were not understood. Generous to the last, he enabled Phil and Ken to marry and for Ken to keep his residency in the UK. Faced with the sudden renewal of a critical illness last week, Mark chose not to return to hospital to be treated and prepared for a peaceful death at home with the people that he loved most. His life is celebrated by those of us here today, those joining us online from around the world and his family in M'lang.

PRAYERS

Lord, have mercy upon us.

All: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

TIME OF REFLECTION

Purcell, Dido & Aeneas, Act 3: "When I am laid in earth"
performed by Véronique Gens.

When I am laid, am laid in earth,
May my wrongs create
No trouble, no trouble in thy breast;
Remember me, remember me, but ah! forget my fate.
Remember me, but ah! forget my fate.

COMMENDATION AND FAREWELL

THE DISMISSAL

EXIT MUSIC

Smile performed by Nat King Cole

Smile though your heart is aching
Smile even though it's breaking
When there are clouds in the sky, you'll get by
If you smile through your fear and sorrow
Smile and maybe tomorrow
You'll see the sun come shining through for you.

Light up your face with gladness
Hide every trace of sadness
Although a tear may be ever so near

That's the time you must keep on trying
Smile, what's the use of crying?
You'll find that life is still worthwhile
If you just smile

That's the time you must keep on trying
Smile, what's the use of crying?
You'll find that life is still worthwhile
If you just smile

COMMITTAL AND BURIAL IN THE CHURCHYARD

*May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And the rain fall softly upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.*

Thank You

We wish to express our sincere thanks
for all the kindness and sympathy
extended to us in our bereavement
and for your attendance at today's service.

Please Join Us

All are welcome to share memories of Mark
at the **Plough Rhosmaen**,
Llandeilo, SA19 6NP from 12.30pm.

Donations

In memory of **Mark** towards
All Saint's Church, Gwynfe
will be kindly received by
IC & SM Davies Funeral Directors,
Britannia House, Llandovery, SA20 ODD.
Tel. 01550 720636.



THE
SCENT
OF LILACS
HAYDN CORPER



From *The Scent of Lilacs* ©2016, a novel by Haydn Corper, died 9th July 2026 in the Towy valley.

What future can they have when the final battle is over? *The Scent of Lilacs* is a story of suffering, despair, determination and hope as the end draws near.

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple blossoms fill the air.
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me unto his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath.
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse night to pulse and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear...
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true.
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger

Died 4th July 1916, Belloy-en-Santerre, the Somme

Mark Evans, writing as Haydn Corper, was passionate about writing and loved history. He wrote his first novel when he was 15 years old and wrote throughout his life: novels, scripts and articles for journals, magazines and for his website www.haydncorper.com. He was an astronomer, a defence analyst, a public affairs and marketing consultant, a business advisor, a politician and a guest house owner; and always a writer.

