

MAJOR KENNETH GEORGE MAYHEW RMWO (R29-34)

The following is the eulogy given by James Hood at his memorial service in the College Chapel on Saturday 5 March 2022, followed by a few photos :

It is of the greatest honour to have been asked to say a few words today. Back in June' 2020 sitting in the lovely garden at Hill Farm enjoying a cup of coffee with Ken and Trish, Ken asked if I would say a few words at his memorial. I duly said yes, and here I am. Ken it's a privilege, thank you for asking me!

Many of you here today have travelled great distances. To those of you from the Netherlands:

"Welkom aan iedereen uit Nederlands"

And those travelling from France: "Bienvenue également à tous ceux qui sont venus de France aussi"

I hope all of you from Norfolk and Suffolk won't need a welcome in your own local dialect! That would be a step too far.

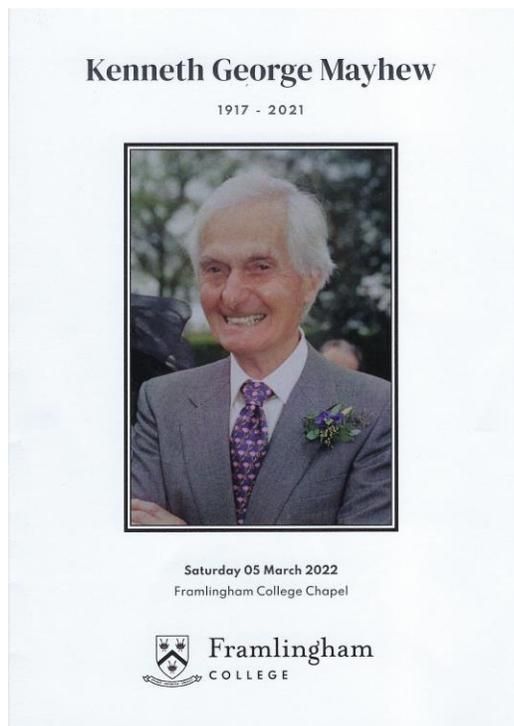
Lastly, a welcome to all Friends, Family and Old Framlinghamians, celebrating Ken's life and enjoying this wonderful setting.

Everyone here today has their own special memory of Ken and we all know a great deal about Ken's life because of so much press and media coverage over the last few years.

Ken was born on 18th January 1917 in Helmingham, Suffolk. He was the second of 4 boys and born into a farming family and lifestyle. These early years were enjoyed growing up on the farm. Ken talked of no heating or electricity and no running water either. A thirst was often quenched by a visit to the farm pond! Even with such hardship, he recalled how happy those days were. It was early on in Ken's life that his fondness for the Suffolk Punches began. His father had been breeding them for many years. Several of these horses worked on the farm and it was his interest in the breed both then and throughout his life, as to why today's collection after the service is in aid of the Suffolk Punch Trust.

Whilst on the subject of horses, I am reminded of a story regarding Ken's christening. On that day he was meant to have travelled to the church in the family horse and cart. However, the horse for the day was young and new to its task. As a result, his Nanny looking after him refused to let him go in the cart for fear of an accident. So, she carried him through the snow, to make sure he was safe on arrival for his baptism. After the service he was also carried home, a round journey of at least two miles!

In 1922, Ken's older brother Jack, went off to board at St Felix School at Felixstowe. Ken aged just 5 asked if he could go too. So the two of them went off at this early age. The



first signs of how tough and resilient Ken was from such an early age.

As we all know he then boarded at Framlingham College.

He made many friends whilst at the College. The academic part of school life was somewhat of a distraction to his main love, which was of course, sport. This was so important to him. He excelled at all the sports he played. Cricket, hockey, squash, rugby and football to name a few, all were played to very high standards.

After finishing at Framlingham, he worked for Fisons, a large Agricultural firm in Ipswich. This was part of the grounding which enabled him to return to this industry after the end of the War.

It was in April 1939 that Ken and a couple of friends decided to volunteer for the Territorial Army in Norwich.

This is where his army life started and soon he was a Private with the 6th Battalion Royal Norfolk Regiment.

War was declared and Ken was promoted to Sergeant in January 1940. He then went to Sandhurst and after 4 months of intense training, joined the Suffolk Regiment as a 2nd Lieutenant.

The next few years were spent preparing for the D day landings, mainly in Scotland and Somerset.

So much of this part of Ken's life has been well documented, and already mentioned. So I will be relatively brief.

He landed on Sword Beach in June 1944 and was involved in the capture of the Hillman Bunker. A few days later there was the attack on Chateau de La Londe. From there to Caen, followed by the battle of Flers. For which later he was awarded the freedom of the City.

After the liberation of Fleys, he advanced with his men through Belgium and into Holland. Weert was liberated and this was followed by the battle for Overloon and Venray. As we know, it was here that his more than meritorious role did not go unnoticed and after the War Ken, by Royal Decree, was appointed a Knight of the Dutch Military William Order. Subsequently he was also awarded the Legion d Honneur.

After the war had ended, he returned to Fisons before setting up his own Grain and Agricultural Merchandising Business in 1953. A fellow member of the Grain Trade recently wrote to Trish, after reading Ken's obituary last year in the Telegraph. And I quote from his letter:

" Ken was an individual who stood out from others. He was always immaculately dressed, had impeccable manners, and the impression he made on me, has continued to inspire me since that time so many years ago"

The Business was successfully run for years, until Ken sold it to Dalgety in the 1990's. He

also had a successful haulage company, Mayhew Freight. This too was sold at the same time. With both businesses sold, Ken could then focus on spending more time with Trish and the family.

They had many lovely holidays abroad. The family also spent a lot of time boating on the Broads and this was especially enjoyed by the Grandchildren, who loved these trips out. The tender to the big boat was called " The Waiter" and great fun was had, going to and fro, in true Swallow and Amazon style!

For many years Ken and Trish attended commemoration visits to both Normandy and the Netherlands. Many friends were made and several are here today.

And we all remember Ken spending hours looking after his kitchen garden, keeping it so immaculate. He also loved nothing better than walking for miles with the dogs.

Of course, apart from family time, this also freed up time to play more sport. Remember he had captained both the hockey and cricket 1st X1 at Framlingham. He also played for his county in both of these sports. Many great friends were made on and off the sports field. I know that his cricket statistics were very impressive throughout his career. One that stands out , at the age of 49 playing for the OF's against the OI's, his bowling statistics of 8/35 comfortably won the game for the College.

Onto Golf: Many people in their mid-70's might think about retiring from playing the game. Not Ken, this was the age when he bought a second hand set of clubs and decided to start playing and enter a Trade Golf Day. With just two lessons under his belt ,he entered the competition and apparently faired very well! He loved the game so much that he played until he was 98. Always carrying his clubs.

As a result, there were many golf holidays enjoyed in both Spain and Portugal.

Trish tells me she still has his clubs, so if anyone could make use of them, she would be delighted.

Ken's love of life, his interest in everyone he met, helped him pack so much into every day, week and year.

Norwich City Football Club. Another of Ken's great passions. However, I have to say it was not always Norwich City!

For much of the late 1970's and early 1980's he regularly travelled, many times with my Father, south to Portman Road to watch Ipswich. This was undergone often at great speed in the Daimler Jaguar! Eventually, after a few years, sense prevailed and a realisation that the standard of football was more entertaining at Carrow Road.

As ever, Ken got to know many at Carrow Road, including Delia Smith, who wanted him to celebrate his 100th birthday out on the pitch in front of a packed stadium. His modesty led him to decline the offer, enjoying a more subdued celebration in the privacy of the Ambassador Club.

However, he did accept the invitation from a Dutch friend to go to the new Tottenham

Hotspur Ground at White Hart Lane in January 2020. After the game, Tim Krul, the Norwich City Goalkeeper, was formally introduced to Ken.

Recently, Tim told Trish what an honour it was to have met Ken, and how sad he was, not to have had the opportunity subsequently to spend more time with him.

This afternoon Norwich play Brentford, some of you may be rushing off later to watch the game. Let's hope for a home win!

When Ken was 70yrs old he received a letter from Norwich City inviting him to join as a Junior member! Most of us would have discarded the letter. Not Ken. He grabbed the opportunity to have some fun. Off to the club he went to attend the Under 16 gathering. Apparently he and all there had a great laugh over the mistake the club had made!

We all can hear Ken's infectious laugh. He loved nothing more than a story and a joke. This was aided by his amazing ability to recall events to an accuracy hard for many to believe. Because he never forgot anything, he always managed to put people at ease, often remembering things about them that they themselves had forgotten!

4 years ago, for the first time he agreed to give a talk at the Strangers Club in Norwich, discussing and taking questions on his wartime involvement. This demonstrated his fantastic ability to recall the events. Those of us lucky enough to have attended will never forget it.

Every question asked by the audience was answered with meticulous accuracy and detail.

Cricket. Cricket was in his blood, with the ritual every year to Lord's. Many of us have witnessed the pleasure this annual pilgrimage gave Ken. He made a lasting impression on all those at the club. He became a member of the MCC at a relatively late age of 56, in 1973. He enjoyed some great Test matches over the years at the home of cricket. The MCC toasted his 100th birthday with a lunch in the Pavilion. That same day Sky Sports gave time on air to also celebrate his birthday.

Being so modest, Ken would take things like this in his stride and would simply bat away the attention. We can hear him saying, "It's just all part of life."

Over the years, he supported Test matches in Australia, New Zealand and the West Indies. In 2010, aged 94, with just two weeks' notice, he travelled on his own, with full support from Trish, to the Brisbane and Adelaide Tests.

Ken had the most amazing life, trying to imagine everything he achieved is hard for most of us to comprehend. Aside from his family, friends and work life, it was all about other people and enjoying their company. This was crucial to him. Both the College and the Regiment were at the heart of this and made him the man he was.

For you Trish he was just the finest man, greatly loved, missed and never to be forgotten.

I think that says it all.....

The following are a few of the photos taken at the memorial service :



