

Patrick Meadows – Memorial

You know, we're really not supposed to be here. I'm John Patrick, el hijo de Patrick and I'm here today to represent my family and Stephanie's family too.

We're not supposed to be here.

Patrick did not want any kind of service or memorial. He was quite insistent, and you all know how insistent he can be! Let's be honest: he could be downright stubborn!

When we talked about it a month ago, I reminded him that "Hey, dude, it's not for you! It's for everyone else." Nor was I the first to say so, right Carol? Eventually he begrudgingly agreed.

And so here we are, even though we really aren't supposed to be here.

Could anyone ever believe this day would arrive, that a man of such vitality, intellect, and passion, a man who could be equal parts curmudgeon, lover, fast friend, and dotting grandfather, an accomplished author, musician, publisher and promoter, would be diminished into the past tense?

Could anyone ever believe that the flow of his stories would cease, the building of our memories of him would collapse under their own weight and leave us gathered here in sadness, even shock?

And yet, here we are, even though we feel like we really shouldn't be here.

Oh man, if he were alive he'd be annoyed as hell about now! Hey, this is a memorial party for US, in his honor, so we've got to do a little bit of honoring, and remembering, and storytelling.

Like most of you, my relationship with Patrick was a complicated one, just as it was with my sisters. He was there, and then he wasn't. He reappeared, and receded, and surfaced again. He always loved us, but he lived his own life, on his own terms, and that was hard.

When people asked me to describe him, I'd say that he wasn't so much a parent as one of those interesting people you meet while traveling abroad, such that when you came home he's all you talked about.

In his later years he softened -- just a little, mind you -- but he never stopped loving or caring. Most of you know he was in agony these last weeks and months. Even near the end, he cared about others.

I can still hear his voice as he told me more than once "If I do 'this thing,' please tell everyone that I don't want to hurt anybody, I just don't want to hurt any more."

Now, let's listen for a moment to what my sister Jennifer had to say about our dad in her poem "My Father's Voice." Carol will read it for you in English, and Suzy will read it in Spanish.

[Carol and Suzy]

Thank you Carol and Suzy, and thank you Hannah and family for that beautiful and mellifluous translation.

Patrick enjoyed many deep and loving relationships, beginning with my mom Donna and ending with Ivonne.

Ivonne is the woman who taught him that love is NOT constrained to younger men, the woman with whom he shared joy and passion and tenderness again, the woman who enriched his life up to his very last day.

Ivonne, thanks for making Patrick's last days bearable, comfortable, and happy despite his physical pain.

Patrick wrote Soisolas Numero Dos for Ivonne and sent it to all his friends. In typical fashion, he didn't say "Por Ivonne," but everyone knew. You'll find this poem in your program along with Jennifer's and another one of Patrick's.

There was one love in his life that affected him more than any other, that changed him, improved him, and devastated him with her passing, and that woman was Stephanie.

The reason we are here at THIS place, in this beautiful village, with this beautiful view, is because of her.

It was here in this village, in the house below the rock, that the two of them made music and love in equal measure, made a home, made a haven for musicians, made a life and grew a vast circle of friends.

His voice could resonate down at the Cala while her sweet tones filled the valleys with enchanting song. Together they established the music festival, brought fresh music to life, and revived lost pieces.

When my wife Donna and I visited it was clear that it was Stephanie that made their house not just a home but a magical and welcoming place. Even at our wedding it was Stephanie who dragged Patrick onto the dance floor, shoving his musical elitism aside to shake his booty alongside hers, in happy abandon.

Jennifer and Gretchen and I all agreed that there could be no other place for Patrick's ashes than here, next to Stephanie again.

And so here we are, yet we feel like the time isn't right. It's too soon. He had more books inside him, more love to give to Ivonne, more music to discover, more stories to recite. We really shouldn't be here.

In an unexpected coincidence, two days after Patrick's passing I received a note from Professor Janise White in California, who told him that a recorded performance of Coleridge Taylor's Symphony in A Minor received a standing ovation. (She then offered corrections for the next edition.)

When I responded with the sad news, she wrote back, saying "He will be missed but his legacy and work will live on into the centuries."

Say, here's a little secret about Patrick: Did any of you know that he enjoyed a glass of wine every now and then? [pause] Well, he did, and Jameson's Scotch too.

One night at my house in California, he sat at my dinner table with my friend Christine and showered us with tales from West Virginia and Florida, Greece and Germany and Spain and Oregon.

We killed most of a bottle of Scotch in those hours, the three of us talking, laughing, questioning, and sometimes recording. He described being lost at sea and presumed dead, of being a lumberjack for a day or two before the others went on strike, and traveling the U.S. with a shady salesman.

He explained that one reason he loved Deia was because the mountains reminded him of his birthplace in West By God Virginia but "without the bibles and rifles."

What a character he was! We all have stories like these to tell, and tell them we shall, but first –Jack will read something Patrick wrote about six months ago.

[Jack reads]

Thanks, Jack.

It's time to wrap things up here and say goodbye, then we can all go down the street to La Residencia and say hello all over again. They have graciously allowed us to get together for wine and music, two other things that Patrick loved.

Thank you all - for being part of his life and, by extension, part of ours - for all your love, and compassion, and tenderness - for your help during this difficult time, and for attending this party today. Special thanks to "Patrick's Ladies": Carol, Suzy, Ivonne and Adriana (who's a bit busy at the moment having a baby).

Patrick lived his life on his own terms, he ended it the same way, and he touched all of us profoundly in the course of his journey.

We really shouldn't be here, but we must, in order to say

“Adios, Patrick. Adios.”