

Order of Thomas' farewell ceremony

9 August 2019, 15:30

- 15:30-15:35 Songs of Travel (4:01 min.) – *guests enter the auditorium*
- 15:35-15:40 Welcome + introduction speakers (Laurien)
- 15:40-15:45 First half of the video (6:18 min.)
- 15:45-15:55 Speech by Maarten (son)
- 15:55-16:00 Speech by Luuk (eldest brother-in-law)
- 16:00-16:05 Second half of the video (5:13 min.)
- 16:05-16:15 Speech by Laurien (daughter)
- 16:15-16:20 Speech by Hans (youngest brother-in-law)
- 16:20-16:30 Beethoven string quartet number 13 (8:32 min.) – *guests leave the auditorium*

Dear family, friends and colleagues, it means a lot to us that you are here to join us in bidding farewell to Thomas. A special welcome also to our relatives and friends from the UK, for whom we have translated all the speeches. We start this farewell ceremony with a short film about Thomas' life, made by my brother Maarten. Afterwards Maarten will address our father.

Maarten's speech

Dear Thomas,

When I was a child you always told me bed-time stories. About the adventures in your life. Stories from a world that coloured a distant past for me.

About how the Hindenburg flew over London in 1937, when you were 7 or eight at the time. About walking through London without seeing across the street due to the large amount of smog.

About the time you were in Virginia and Canada during the Second World War with Peter and Camilla (your parents had taken you to a sweet foster mother because they were afraid that Hitler would bomb London). How you scared the teacher there in such a way that she jumped out of the window out of blind panic in the middle of winter. And not from the ground floor. In a thick layer of snow.

About your boarding school life and service time. In Vienna, which then had four allied zones. How to avoid sport by going to the hairdresser. Apparently a good haircut was more important for the British army than a good condition.

Or - and of course I found that very exciting - about the Domestic Security Service that rang our doorbell, because it wanted to know what you were doing on the deck of a Black Sea ferry during the Cold War. A deck, known as a meeting-point for KGB-spies. You undoubtedly simply "socialised", while enjoying some vodka. I hoped to find state secrets in your administration. That was of course a disappointment. Apparently, you were such a good spy that you erased all traces.

Together we always went to the newest James Bond. The Sunday before your death I enjoyed watching Dr No with Tijn. He thought it was very modern for "that time." We are going to watch all of them together one by one.

And of course your travel as a bachelor with as highlight your trip from the postcolonial North to South Africa with three friends in land-rovers. The tribal wars that you barely missed. Sleeping in an ice-cold desert. Sometime in the coming days I will receive the film of your trip from Jim.

For years you had been planning to put these bed-time stories on paper.

And then you were dead. I heard about it from Laurien. We had just arrived at an abandoned lama farm in Liechtenstein in the mountains. The children grasped it sooner than I did.

And now we are reversing the roles. I am standing here. You are lying there. I now tell you my story.

Dear Thomas, your loss is huge. It feels like a combination of the hectic pace and emotions of maternity time and a tsunami that presents itself, the sea receding and washing over you. It is overwhelming. Not only sadness, but also organising everything, the memories, the last photo I find on your iPhone from just before your death.

Every moment of the day new things occur to me. I have taken all your slides with me and I am digitizing them. For me, scanning is painfully slow. Every time it is exciting to await what I come across. I see new images. Sometimes I can post them. Sometimes I come across you. And then my heart jumps.

From the moment that Mama, later me and Laurien, came into your life, you see a clear change. Landscapes and architecture are increasingly making way for people. Our family appears. And our travels to Switzerland come into the picture. The many walks. The Matchbox cars or the Lego boxes that I received afterwards.

And I followed in your footsteps early. I was 7 and Michiel and I went by train to his uncle and aunt in Hilversum. Alone. No iPhone. Just a call upon arrival. I was 12 and Michiel and I went to the Efteling adventure park. Camping in Kaatsheuvel. Not exactly our cup-of-tea, but you had to do something for an adventure. The campsite called you to know if it was true that two boys from Amsterdam were allowed to camp independently. They could not send us back. The circle of tents and their residents around us who were concerned about us. Michiel and I thought it was the biggest nonsense.

It was undoubtedly an irresponsible risk, but it was huge fun. Just like our first winter sport holiday together in Evolène. Together immediately on the black slope. I remember how I watched you slide down hundreds of meters. Last week I heard from mama that she was mad at you because we later lost each other in a thick fog. I could laugh about it.

What binds us is childlike curiosity, a dislike of dogmas and institutions. I am - although nobody will believe this today - just a little shorter in substance. Because of that curiosity you became known as a "walking encyclopedia," "uomo universalis," or "Renaissance Man." Your knowledge was phenomenal. You also knew how to reconstruct our family history - sometimes almost accurately to the day. And of course that didn't stay with my grandfather and grandmother, but went right down to the Neolithic era.

But - man, man, man - you just had to press a button and there came the stories. And anecdotes. And expansions about the brother of the sister of the milkman's neighbour who once moved to New Zealand and his integration with the Maori's. It was undoubtedly right.

It was also extremely tiring at times. And there were the annual Christmas Letters that you spread throughout the world as your urbi-et-orbi. Pages of photos with reflections. A kind of strange English combination of the Enkhuizer Almanac and G.B.J. Hilterman. You relished it. You lived on stories.

You found it difficult to put your feelings into words. At the same time, I have noticed them often enough. It does not always take words.

We were also gadget nerds. Something we definitely do not share with mom. In 1980 we had the first PC in the neighbourhood: a BBC Acorn. A little later I proudly showed Michiel the associated printer - you were on vacation and I vowed not to touch it. At the time, that thing cost a fortune. I dropped it from my hands.

You later had a lot of fun with your iPhone, iPad and MacBook Air. You particularly enjoyed taking photographs and listening to a wide repertoire of classical music.

What I cherish is your zest for life, your adventurous approach, your unlimited curiosity and your unwavering positive attitude. You were a butterfly that went from flower to flower. But then again, why not sample the entire field? Why not visit the observatory in the desert in Chile on your own and live as a semi-back-packer?

This week an e-mail from booking.com arrived in your mailbox with the striking title "We've got the deals, you pick the destination". Unfortunately, this does not apply to our personal Brexit. And for me it's also a no-deal.

An image that summarizes everything well for me: you with your slippers on at work (Het Spinhuis, faculty of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam) and a beer there for lunch. Maybe awkward and quirky. So 100% Thomas. That is inspiring. We must do so now.

Dear Thomas, you often said, "We'll cross that bridge when we come to it." Well, today we have come across one again. This time it's you who went across the river. It hurts. It is also good this way. Thank you, dear Thomas.

I now give the floor to our uncle Luuk, my father's eldest brother-in-law.

Summary of Luuk's speech

- When Thomas arrived in Holland, he had already half of his life behind him.
- We had heard about Thomas before we met him. Carolien had told us about her lover. She was smitten: there was no other man like Thomas.
- Thomas quickly familiarized himself with his new surroundings and his Dutch in-laws who in turn welcomed this true-born Englishman into the family.
- A few stories about many-sided 'Sunday child' Thomas Crump: mathematician, physicist, tax lawyer, theologian, anthropologist.
- His amazing capacity for work and power of concentration.
- His innumerable books on the most diverse topics: he would write you a book on any subject under the sun (provided you could give him an advance).
- We will miss him and remember him!

Second half of Maarten's film.

Laurien's speech

My dear, dear Thomas,

There you are, full of zest for life, joy and energy. Exactly two weeks before you die. We had a wonderful holiday with you in Switzerland and on the last day I suggested to do the "Cliffwalk" at First. I knew how much you loved literal summits and you jumped at the idea. What a pleasure you had when after braving a half hour queue, you could wave to me from the peak! And we had such a great time with you. Tommy, your namesake, also enjoyed your company to the full. When we returned home, he kept asking "do you want to fetch grandpa?"

And here you are lying. It is hard to imagine that someone as lively as you is no longer here. Next month we would be celebrating your 90th birthday in our new house in the Achterhoek. I had just started with the invitations. Nobody doubted that you would make it. It hurts so much to think that you will never walk into our house again with your big smile, your jokes and your radiant presence. That your hat, your jacket and your walking stick have to exist without you.

It is therefore particularly comforting that you spent the last two days of your life in our new home. The morning after the move, I had a premonition and I asked Kenneth if I could immediately invite mommy and you. I knew how much you were looking forward to seeing the house and told Kenneth that we shouldn't wait any longer since you were already getting older. And how you loved it! I see you sitting in the conservatory, in the garden, in the library! As a child so happy you inspected the stables and the field. You wanted to stay every two weeks and you would have been so welcome!

At your request, you stayed another night longer and we celebrated Kenneth's fiftieth birthday together. You were in great shape and loved sitting together in the garden. You joked about our field, that we could use it as a heliport, so that I would arrive at work in Utrecht quickly. About the Achterhoek clouds that reminded you of the mountains in Chile, where you had recently been, and about Global Warming, which you welcomed, because it was such a wonderfully warm evening. Until well into the night you drank the whiskey with Kenneth that you had given him for his birthday. The next morning you entered our room in your pyjamas to chat. The last photos you took were taken from our rooftop terrace.

When you left the next morning, your last words were: "We'll see each other on 9 August". Mama and you would come and stay again to celebrate my 41st birthday the day after tomorrow. Instead, we are here on 9 August to bid goodbye to you forever. According to the doctor you probably already had a small heart attack in the car on the way from the Achterhoek to Amsterdam. With the stamina that characterizes you, you delivered mama safely to your home. That is true love! You died in the porch of your own house, not far from here. You took your bags from the car and those of mama and you hung your coat, your cap and your walking stick on the coat rack. Ever the English Gentleman. Then you collapsed and died. Although you travelled a lot, the Twentestraat was always your safe haven. It is almost epic that you blew your last breath in that porch.

Although you travelled around the world and visited China, Australia and Chile in recent years, you were also the father with whom I played with Lego in the study as a small child, and who later helped me with the layout of the school newspaper (Vulpes), of which I was the editor-in-chief. The father with whom we went skiing so often – such fun! - and who was disappointed when I returned after your skiing accident with a stretcher instead of a helicopter! The father who dedicated a book about the solar eclipse to me that took place on my 21st birthday and invited all my friends to celebrate it together in southern England. The father who fetched me from England with a big bus at the age of seventy-five to assist my move back to the Netherlands. The father with whom I then drove through Central London over Christmas in the bus - that seemed like fun to us - and went to the fire brigade in a small village in northern France in the middle of the night because the exhaust pipe had caught fire on the motorway.

Loving, full of life and unique. You were also versatile, phenomenal and brilliant. You were the father whose intellectual hunger I inherited and who taught me that anything is possible. At the age of twenty you travelled through the desert and rescued your friends and yourself from tricky situations in any possible language. You learnt a new language in the drive from Cambridge to Italy. You taught yourself Japanese well into the fifties. Long after your retirement you went to a publisher in London to sell your umpteenth book. When the publisher asked you for a synopsis, you asked for a computer and a chair. You then wrote the synopsis on the spot and your book was published a year later. You wrote as someone else breathed. I have always admired the relaxed and structured way in which you did that and I hope to make it my own in so far as I can. I will dedicate my next book to you. It will undoubtedly fall short, but that way you will still be with us.

We will miss you terribly! When I returned to the Achterhoek two days after your death, your coffee was still there. The newspaper was still where you put it. Grapefruit, lager and paté in the fridge - three essentials for you. And - thankfully - memories of you everywhere. How loving that you lived for so long that we had such a good time in our new house and such a great holiday in Switzerland! What a wonderful fiftieth birthday you gave Kenneth, the day before your death - Kenneth, who is so fond of you! And how much did Tommy enjoy his cheerful grandfather. Tommy, who hopefully asked if Grandpa was perhaps "a little bit dead" when he saw you lying on the floor in Twentestraat, and who has been inconsolable ever since.

Nonetheless, we want to honour you in particular by letting your zest for life and resilience live on within us. "Chi vuol esser lieto sia, di doman non c'è certezza". Who wants to be cheerful, must be so now, because tomorrow is not certain. You forged your long and happy life through your vitality and optimism. The night before your death, on Kenneth's fiftieth birthday, we happily stuck to that, and you and Kenneth - who stayed in the garden until well into the night with a good glass of whiskey - even more so. That's why we are going to raise a glass to you in the Boathouse, although this, dear, dear Thomas, is a very difficult moment to be cheerful.

This is followed by a speech by my father's youngest brother-in-law, Hans. Then we can leave the auditorium during the music and follow my father towards the crematorium. After that we walk or drive along the river Amstel towards the Boathouse, where we will celebrate my father's long and happy life.

Hans' speech

Amsterdam, seventies of the last century.

A man is ringing the bell at a basement at the Jan Luykenstraat, where a student is living.

The door opens and there he is:

Stephen Thomas Crump. "Hello, I am your sister Carolien's boyfriend and I am coming to collect the car." I was that student and I owned a car with my sister, a Citroën Deux Chevaux. Thomas was wearing a hat and looked at me with a smile!

An indelible impression: a lively man with a hat on that Carolien never allowed him to wear afterwards. I handed him the car keys, guided him to the car and he drove back to his beloved Carolien. They went for a ride together!

Both his appearance and his pronunciation of Dutch had something comical: a slightly vocal tone and then that hat and that glance: liveliness everywhere. The knack for languages was apparent straightaway.

The metamorphosis came a few months later.

At a garage in Amsterdam, a man turned up and asked in idiosyncratic, but impeccable Dutch: "Would you like to service my car?"

In London, a real full-swing Englishman appeared in Thomas behind that wonderful man: his language did not sound vocal, but self-conscious. He was someone here. This was his country. An Englishman visiting the Netherlands that is what Thomas remained until his death. There were his roots, he always returned to those. He was here, but he was anchored there.

Thomas Crump was the son of Norman Crump, journalist of the English newspaper "Sunday Times." Norman Crump was the chief editor for the City for 20 years. He was also active in the Liberal Party.

Thomas undoubtedly inherited the unbridled curiosity from his father. And that curiosity was also something that connected Thomas with me.

I can still hear him say:

"Listen Hans, do you know what's very interesting? I have found that at least 300 British nationals are buried here at Zorgvlied. I'm still going to investigate who they are and maybe I'll write a book about it!"

The Dutch singer-songwriter Bram Vermeulen made a beautiful song:

And if I die, don't cry
I'm not really dead
You need to know
It's just a corpse
That I left behind
I'm only dead
If you forget me
And if I die, don't mourn
I'm not really gone
You need to know
It's the nostalgia
Which I left behind
I'm only dead
If you forget it
And if I die, don't cry
I'm not really dead
You need to know
It's the longing
That I left behind
I'm only dead
If you forget that
I'm only dead
If you forget me ...

(Bram Vermeulen, Testament)

Dear Thomas, all of us here, with Carolien, Laurien and Maarten, will Never forget you!

After this speech the audience will leave the auditorium accompanied by music. We will follow my father's coffin to the crematorium and after that we will walk to the Boathouse for drinks.