**EULOGY**

**WRITTEN FOR**

**COLIN WEST**

Hello everyone. I want to thank all of you for being here as we mourn the loss, but more importantly celebrate the life and legacy of my brother Barry. Whether you volleyed with him on the tennis court or in business, shared common ground as a neighbor, negotiated with him, bantered with him, or were blessed to be his family, you are here because Barry West made an indelible, lasting impression. Clearly his greatest gift was his devotion to his wonderful wife Hazel and their children and their families...Greg and Ashley and their spouses Emily and Jim, and their children, Anese and Caryss. He was a caring and loving uncle to our children Tyler and Mark, Tyler's husband Tom, and their children Oliver and Emma. ... and all of their collected affection and devotion to him shows us all what it means to find strength and purpose in the bond of family. (**Note from Helene: you did not mention your spouse. Is this something you want to add? Since nothing was said, I haven't included anything. Please advise how you want to handle this. Thanks**)

For my entire life, he was the constant.... he was a beacon who guided our childhood and directed our course... sometimes we wound up in dark places... like the coal bin out back, but he was always there for both of us... with a mischievous wink and a foolproof scheme... or so he thought and believed. He was a visionary who, at the tender age of eighteen hatched a plan to move to California... the details might have been a little muddy, but... hey... what's a detail? He taught me to question reality... and Santa... he was my best friend and business partner.... and he really was the other half of me.

I once read that Wilbur Wright said of his brother, Orville, "I confess that in 1901 I said to my brother that man would not fly for fifty years." It turns out that Wilbur was off by about forty eight years and I have to admit that growing up with Barry, I too, had my doubts about where we went and what we did, but I never doubted that we were a team. We were better, stronger, more connected and effective together, and that's how we got through life.... in brotherhood, affection, and deep respect and admiration for one another. Our adventures may not have had the same impact as the first flight at Kitty Hawk, but Barry's imagination allowed us to soar.

So many memories come back to me as I think of our childhood years growing up in post-war London. I was proud to have a big brother like Barry, and I always felt protected by the love, support and guidance he tirelessly provided from the time we were young boys, and through every situation we faced both individually and as a team. We were partners.

Some of the facts of life I learned from my older brother have stayed with me for a lifetime and I would like to share Barry's inimitable wisdom and unique perspective with you. I would imagine that each one of you have your own memorable tales and recollections of Barry's sage impact on your lives... and the telling of these legends keep him real and present within us. Who can ever forget one of the earliest true declarations taught to this young, trusting, impressionable London lad? "There **IS NO** Father Christmas. I can prove it to you. Let's tie a string from my toe to the bedroom door handle so we'll wake up and see who fills up the pillow case..." (**Say this in an exaggerated stage whisper and wait for the laugh**). Who **THINKS** of these things??? My big brother Barry... **that's who**!! Once we solved the holiday mystery, his schemes grew bigger and more complex...somehow he got the idea... he was \_\_\_\_\_\_ years old, mind you, to settle someplace else.... "Emigrating to Australia will only cost five pounds...their government will pay the rest..." okaaaayyyyy.... and then there was the one that ultimately planted the seed that took..."Let's emigrate to California...Gloria's (**Do you want to explain who Gloria is? Let me know and we can add**) boyfriend is from Bakersfield and we have a distant cousin in Newport Beach...". It wasn't so much his keen sense of adventure as it was his utter disdain for London logistics. He would let me know in no uncertain terms, "This daily train and bus ride to the City is awful so let's emigrate to a warmer place... when you leave school you should join me... Mum and Dad are thinking of moving too..." Famous words indeed...

But before we abandoned the underground and rode our last double decker, there were rich and colorful childhood events to be experienced... and we made those memories as an inseparable team. With our sophisticated equipment... that would be simple nets and jam jars, we enthusiastically fished the River Stort. Our prey was the elusive stickleback, and as we were finished with each session, we would import our bounty from the river to our grandparents' home, placing the catch of the day in the rain water barrel. To demonstrate our versatility, when we weren't fishing we made our attempts at scrimping apples... our booty was found in the farmer's orchard... even that became a multi-dimensional experience... you see we were easily recognized by our distinctive, darker complexions. It was Brian Wood (**Do you want to explain who Brian Wood was? Let me know and we can add**) who tapped into his keen interest in history and genealogy and suggested we were not actually Anglo Saxons but descended from the Normans whose ancestors came with William the Conqueror. Looking back on those episodes, all I can say is... we came for the apples. We left with a lineage!!

Our family lived in a two bedroom prefab on Springwell Road in Heston... outside of London in Middlesex. The coal shed out back served a dual purpose.... it doubled as our clubhouse when the inventory got low enough... and back then no one ever gave a second thought to all of the dust in that shed, nor of the asbestos in the construction materials used in the prefab. I suppose we were to busy rigging our "Father Christmas Experiment." Those concerns and considerations came much later...

And then there was Sylvia (**Please explain who Sylvia is and I will adjust**)... her outgoing personality earned her a "career" change... she went from cooking meals at the girls' Green School to managing a confectionary and tobacco shop on Vicarage Farm Road and part of the "compensation package" was a two bedroom flat behind and above the store... **THAT** had its advantages... and I also must add that our childhoods would not have been complete without our beloved ritual... every Saturday morning we would go to the picture show at the Odeon across from the Hounslow West station on the Piccadilly Line. It was the highlight of our week and I will never forget that for a penny bus ride on the 111 and sixpence pocket money which covered the ticket AND sweets, we had the pleasure of seeing Hopalong Cassidy and a Pathé newsreel... showing Arsenal losing.... **again**. Back then Barry and I were just eight and ten years old but there was no need for adult supervision... kids were safe on public transportation... and we had each other...

We eventually DID emigrate to Southern California... and here we are. He came to the US as an eighteen year old and I followed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years later. Barry and I were brothers and partners in every sense of the word. From those trips to the movies on Saturday mornings to top secret meetings in our coal shed clubhouse, we navigated the twists and turns of life **together**... and it continued through adulthood. We were business partners for fifty-three years and while we may have frequently disagreed on business strategy, there was never any doubt that we were better together. Our diverse viewpoints made us that much stronger and I always admired the way he conducted himself while expressing his point of view. It is because of Barry's incredible dedication to his family that I am who I am. Growing up in London, our family was close and we were given a strong foundation based on that closeness. The importance of celebrating all of the different personalities that make up a strong family unit was essential in our family. It didn't matter if we were Anglo Saxon or descendants of William the Conqueror... our bond was, is, and always will be unbreakable.... that is his legacy.

The English poet W. H. Auden said, "Among those whom I like or admire, I can find no common denominator, but among those whom I love, I can; all of them make me laugh." My brother had a unique sense of humor. It was.... let's say... elusive... at times it was a bit frank, to others it might have been misunderstood, but to his family and those he loved, there was no ambiguity or doubt of his love and admiration.

As I said earlier, I know that each one of you have your own memories of your relationship with my brother, and each memory tells a story and colors in the image of what remains of his life and time here. He will live on in those recollections and musings and I know that his spirit and heart... and even bits of his weird sense of humor... will guide us and remind us of his legacy.... and if there were to be one aspect I think he would want to share, it would be one of appreciation for others. As it turns out, and I didn't notice this when we were younger and riding that Piccadilly bus or poaching the farmer's apples, but I **DO** know now that time passes by frighteningly fast. Before we know it, years have evaporated and thoughts fade, so in Barry's memory, I invite you to take a moment and really notice and appreciate those in your life that mean so much to you. Be liberal with your demonstration of affection towards the people that mean something to you. Barry's family meant the **WORLD** to him and vice versa. To Hazel, Greg, Ashley, Emily, Jim, Anese, and Caryss, and to Tyler and Mark, Tom, Oliver and Emma..... boy, we were and are blessed to have known and loved Barry West. A wise man once said, "I am part of all that I have met." I am proud and humbled to have the honor of being blessed with such a fine person as my brother. Although I will miss him terribly, I take comfort in knowing that we all have each other and he lives on in all of us.

Thank you all.