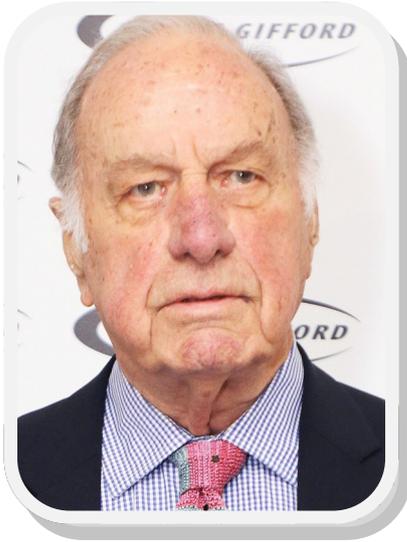


On Thursday night we lost a foundation stone of our charity



Geoffrey Palmer

I am not ashamed to say I shed a tear this morning when the family broke the news that Geoffrey Palmer had passed away last night. Such was the standing of the man not only in my estimation but also my heart.

There will be much said and shown I am sure about his illustrious career as a famous and well respected actor of stage, screen and television. Appearances in Butterflies, As Time Goes By, not to mention James Bond will spring to mind. I can remember as a small boy having an asthma attack laughing so much at The Army Game, but I shall not dwell on those things of fame because I knew more of the man himself and the humble gentleman he was.

Geoffrey had a passion for fishing and for fly fishing in particular. This brought us together in the early days of the charity back in 1984. Geoffrey fully understood the effect that taking an inner city child, often from a dysfunctional family, into the countryside and teaching them to

fish had on them.

Always a great fisherman and understanding the importance of family and mentoring in a child's life he lent his support to the charity and to me in particular. He quickly became a patron and was until yesterday one of two of the longest serving. Intent on not just being a 'name' on our headed paper he became involved in a wonderful way. He took it upon himself to encourage me and my efforts personally but to also make a difference to the charity in general. It wasn't just bankside appearances with the young people, he worked tirelessly to promote the charity whenever he could, he was truly an ambassador for us. At our annual dinner at either The House of Commons or the House of Lords he would fill several tables and organise a sizable proportion of the auction items. Always bringing new people to the table and creating more supporters of the charity.

He would often ring me to find out how the charity was and what was the latest news. he would comment on emails sent and news letters received but he would always take the trouble to seek out how I was and leave a word of encouragement. Geoffrey was very down to earth and never the celebrity. When our Neil Freeman (an avid Tottenham supporter) would conduct an auction Geoffrey (an avid Arsenal season ticket holder) would suffer much abuse for the unfortunate state of their opposing views... always taken with great amusement and great grace, joining in with gusto and merriment.

He may have been famous for his dour serious face but he was the exact opposite in real life. A real gentleman with a huge heart for the less fortunate. He has been without doubt one of the most influential people in the establishment and development of this charity. Words cannot describe how much we will miss him. He will be irreplaceable, which I think is a good thing because if someone is irreplaceable it tells you how unique and how vital their life has been. So much so that you wouldn't want to replace them. Geoffrey's influence and hard work will live on for a lifetime of young people yet and for those who will look after this charity (after I've gone to see Geoffrey) they will feel his legacy even if they don't know about it.

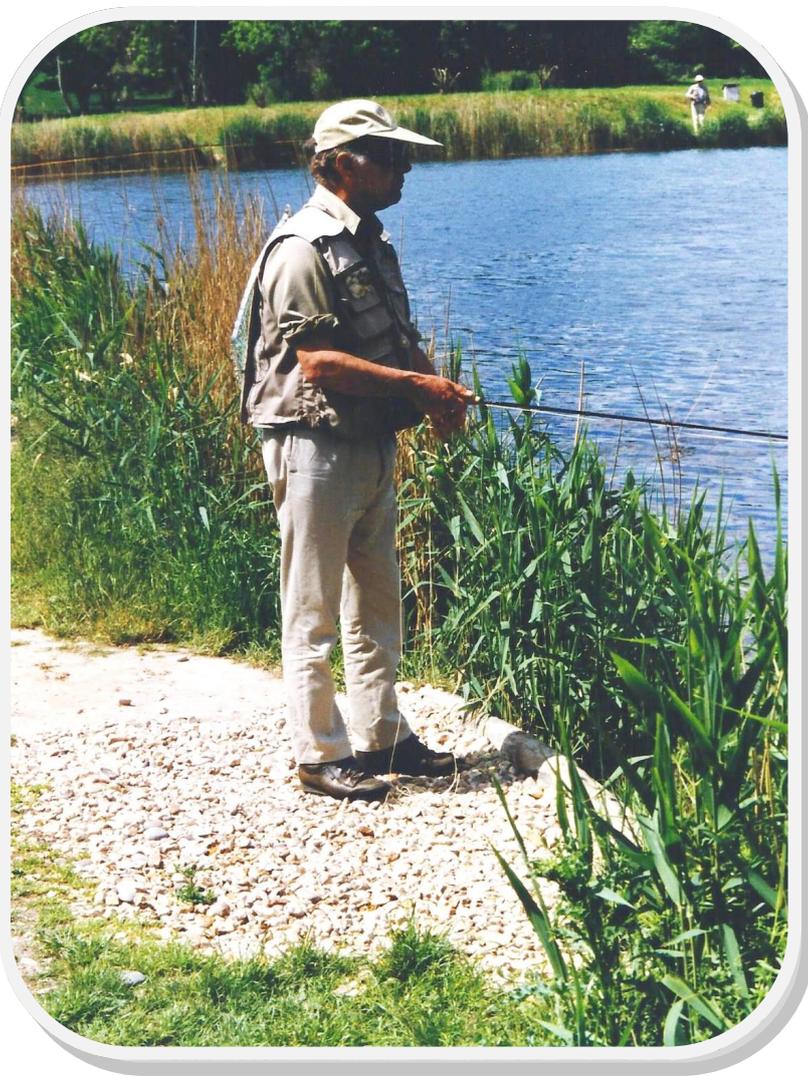
Geoffrey passed away peacefully surrounded by his family to the sound of fireworks going off outside in the neighbourhood. He was surrounded by love and family. He knew how important those things were, which was why he tried to help us supply those things to the young lives in our charge.

We send our deepest sympathy to Sally Charlie and Harriet and all those that loved Geoffrey. Truly a unique gentleman.

Geoffrey I thank you, you helped us all so much here, we will miss you' I was proud to call you my friend

Doug Hulme
Chief Executive

www.second-chance.org.uk



Geoffrey where he loved to be. On the bankside with a rod in his hand .It was always a bonus if it helped Second Chance

Geoffrey with Tim Rouse and Rory Bremner at a Second Chance fishing day

