

## **Tribute to Ian read by the Reverend Mark Nicholls**

Ian Morton Hannay was born in Edinburgh in 1935, the third of four siblings. His father, Erskine Hannay, was a naval commander, while his mother, Helen, came from the Morton family of Edinburgh weavers. Both sides of the family bestowed talents and interests that he pursued throughout his life.

Ian was a husband, father, pilot, sportsman, sailor, engineer and designer. But above all he was an adventurer – in thought and deed.

He is perhaps best known to his friends as a precocious sailor. His older brother Alastair recalls Ian experimenting with sail configurations on his dinghy in Granton harbour, Edinburgh when he was just 11 years old. By the time they were teenagers, Ian, Alastair and their crewmates were racing against and beating all but the very best adult sailors. In 1960, at the age of 24, Ian competed in his first Olympics. His second came in 1972.

Ever inquisitive and creative, Ian was never content just to sail other people's boats, he wanted to design and build his own, and had very clear ideas about how to make them fast and seaworthy. His best-known design is a popular small cruising boat called the Galion 22. In 1968, he entered a prototype Galion in the famous Round the Island Race. With over a thousand competitors, this is one of the world's largest one-day yacht races. Needless to say, Ian and his crew won.

If Ian's passion was sailing, his profession was flying. He earned his pilot's licence during a two-year national service stint in – where else? – the Royal Navy. On leaving, he moved to London, joined British Airways and in due course rose to the rank of captain. To many who flew or sailed with him, Ian was the most knowledgeable and instinctive skipper they had

ever met. But perhaps his greatest personal asset was unflappability. This invariably instilled confidence in his crew and passengers, even in the foulest weather or direst circumstances.

His interest in boats and planes, combined with a deep intellectual curiosity, led Ian to become a recognised expert in aero- and hydrodynamics. He befriended some of the greatest academic minds in the field and, although Ian himself hadn't attended university, he comfortably held his own. Indeed, he offered the professors something they often lacked: a profound knowledge of the ways in which boats and aircraft behave in the real world outside wind tunnels, wave tanks and computer simulations.

This rare combination of skills also led him to solve a problem for one of the world's largest corporations. As a captain on Boeing 737 jets, he became aware of a puzzling flaw in which these aircraft were becoming unstable as they rotated for take-off. No one could understand why until Ian pointed out that it was caused by jet blast from the engines bouncing off the runway and interfering with the tail plane. This phenomenon became known as 'the Hannay effect'. Ian went on to suggest a solution in the form of a notch cut out of the tail. While Boeing never formally acknowledged this contribution, the next version of the 737 included his prescribed design change.

Ian was a devoted and much-loved family man. In 1965 he met Magda, an electronic engineer and Polish émigré, at a neighbour's party in London. They were in many ways very different people and came from starkly contrasting backgrounds. But she admired his athleticism and sense of adventure while he – an introvert who adored people – relished her gregariousness. They also shared an affection for the unorthodox and a certain wanderlust. She came to love sailing, he came to love Poland, and together they raised a family: a son, Timo, and daughter, Lara. All three of them feel blessed to have been on this wonderful voyage with him.