

José Cressy Eulogy

- Born in Thornton Heath on 6th March 1935
- Only daughter of May & Jack Davis
- At the outbreak of the war they initially stayed in South London but a near miss from a bombing raid which resulted in José's beloved koala bear toy "Wonk" getting singed and losing all his fur resulted in both a knitted outfit from May for Wonk & a move to stay with family at Hillview Drive in Redhill
- A later home was made in Brambletye Park Road
- Attended the Reigate County School for Girls from 1945 - 1951, her son Andrew would later go to the same school when it became Reigate 6th Form College (not just for girls!) and find José's name on several of the old sporting honours boards.
- Gifted at both sporting and academic sides of school life, particularly languages and tennis, netball and hockey
- After school attended Pitman's college and graduated with the highest level shorthand speed resulting in a job offer from Hansard to cover the Houses of Parliament
- Work took José to the Bridge House on Reigate Hill in the early 1950's where she met Jimmy the new owner of the then small restaurant and after a long courtship they were married in May 1959.
- Life was good with their rapidly expanding business at the Bridge House and the many other restaurants and hotels that followed. José & Jim divided their time between Reigate and houses in Dulwich, and later Cheyne Walk in Chelsea.
- During this time José met her lifelong friend Colin Day when he took up residency as the headline act at the Bridge House.
- International business trips doubled as holidays with Jim & Colin, always driving to the far ends of Europe as Jim wouldn't fly.
- José didn't always appreciate the perceived finest places. One memorable occasion being when she demanded they leave the famous Hotel Danieli in Venice because the floorboards creaked
- In 1967 despite deciding that they were perfectly happy with their 2 Golden Retrievers Andy & Alec, along came their only child, Andrew, who José assured wasn't named after the dog.
- Sadly José & Jim split in the early 1970's but remained good friends right through to their eventual divorce in the mid 1980's.
- Sports featured large in her life from school days onward, with tennis a particular favourite. From childhood she was a member of Redhill Lawn Tennis Club. She eventually became ladies club captain and another lifelong friendship was formed with the men's club captain Ralph.
- She won her first title & cup in the 1950's for mixed doubles. Coincidentally her final title would be that same cup over 20 years later. When she brought the cup home her mother May knew before she saw it that José had won it again as she heard & recognised the rattling lid.
- As tennis playing wound down, she became more and more of a keen Bridge player, joining several clubs and playing for many years with regular playing partners, first Maurice & then Gina. Her style of play & sometimes wild bidding owing more perhaps to her earlier love of poker & gambling inherited from May.
- Other sporting loves included horse racing (with the occasional flutter), golf, which she played for a while after having to stop playing tennis, inspired by her partner in later life, Brian, and football, with a love of Arsenal and Arsene Wenger also inspired by Brian, taking over from her earlier devotion to any team connected to Brian Clough.

- A dog lover throughout her life, especially Golden Retrievers, she shared her home over the years with Andy, Alec, Alec No.2, Tarby and finally Sam, an older rescue dog and possibly her favourite.
- Once less involved with the businesses, along with the tennis she spent much time working for Save The Children Fund and the League of Friends at the old East Surrey Hospital, through Redhill General and finally at the current East Surrey Hospital
- After many years living on Reigate Hill at the Bridge House & then her much loved High Hurst, José moved with Brian to Burnham Drive at the bottom of the hill, where she met many wonderful new friends in the very close community she found there and lived happily for the rest of her life even convincing Gina to move in next door after a couple of years.
- José and Andrew were very close throughout his childhood and this continued into his adult life with Andrew being fortunate to spend much time every week with José up to and including her final illness.
- José loved and cherished her many friends, and coming from a small family often said she thought of them as an extended family, just as long as they didn't phone her in the morning.
- In the final months she talked fondly of being reunited with her parents, and Jean Wright & Annette Moore amongst many much missed old friends.