

Celebration of the Life

of

Douglas John Smith

‘Doug’

**-MUSIC TO START-**

(as guests are seated)

Also Sprach Zarathustra

As featured in the film 2001: A Space Odyssey

**-WELCOME-**

Welcome to beautiful Cedars Village as we come together in love, friendship and memory to celebrate and pay tribute the life of Douglas John Smith, known to all as Doug.

Today our heartfelt sympathies go all who are missing him so very much at this time. Especially his wife Jean, sons Nigel, and Paul and his wife Sam, also Doug’s adored Granddaughter Isabella.

The family are truly grateful to everyone attending today by way of support at this time.

So let us now pay tribute to Doug, with a smile that reflected his own, as we remember all he bought to your life, the love, the laughter and the privilege and comfort of just knowing him, along with the memories he has now given you each to keep.

**-TRIBUTE-**

**‘LIFE OF DOUG’**

***Early Years & Work Life***

Douglas John Smith, known by most people as Doug, was born on St Georges Day, on Saturday 23rd of April 1938, at St Mary’s Hospital in Paddington, West London. His proud parents were George Stanley Smith, usually known as Stan and Annie Smith née Wilkinson, usually known as Nance or Nancy. Doug’s formative years were quite challenging as his father was absent from an early age doing his duty for King and country after the outbreak of the Second World War. When his father returned at the end of the war, he was somewhat a stranger to Doug and quite literally somebody of whom Doug was afraid. Doug was brought up primarily by his mother, with some help from other relatives. His early life was tough due to the war but he made the most of it with his education.

As a single child, Doug had his beloved pet dog Rex as company for a number of years. Despite the disadvantage of an absent father in those early years, Doug did well at school and in 1949, after passing his Eleven Plus exam, gained a place at the prestigious Haberdashers’ Aske’s Boys’ School, at the time located in Westbere Road in Hampstead, North London. Like most children, Doug soon discovered which subjects he enjoyed and which subjects he did not enjoy. French was never a favourite subject as he did not like the teacher. Likewise, physics was another subject he did not enjoy because his text books at the time were saying that you could not split the atom, some years after the first atomic bombs had been used against Japan at the end of the Second World War! The subject he did take an immediate liking to was Spanish because the teacher was passionate and encouraging.

Outside the academic sphere, Doug was an excellent Fives player and represented the school in matches. I was unaware, until enlightened by the family that Fives is a hand ball- style game that involves two or four players hitting a hard ball with the hand, usually protected by a glove, in a court with three or four sides. The game in fact originated during the reign of Henry the Eighth I am told.

 After passing his “O” Levels and “A” Levels, Doug secured a place at Manchester University, eventually being awarded a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Modern Languages, specifically Spanish and Italian.

Doug was a huge fan of Pink Floyd and their music played a huge part in his life. He introduced their music to his sister-in-law Maggie describing them to her as the ‘thinking man’s rock band.’ Maggie told me Doug’s thinking was ‘out of this world’ when it came to things that pleased him. Describing Doug as erudite, well read and learned but he in fact came across as very modest in that respect.

Maggie very much wanted to read today and has chosen the words of the song Eclipse, written by Roger waters and performed by Pink Floyd .

**-Eclipse-**

*All that you touch*

*And all that you see*

*All that you taste*

*All you feel*

*And all that you love*

*And all that you hate*

*All you distrust*

*All you save*

*And all that you give*

*And all that you deal*

*And all that you buy*

*Beg, borrow or steal*

*And all you create*

*And all you destroy*

*And all that you do*

*And all that you say*

*And all that you eat*

*And everyone you meet (everyone you meet)*

*And all that you slight*

*And everyone you fight*

*And all that is now*

*And all that is gone*

*And all that's to come*

*And everything under the sun is in tune*

*But the sun is eclipsed by the moon*

***‘LIFE OF DOUG’***

***Family, Friends & Sporting Life***

In 1958, during his time at Manchester University, Doug met Jean Mary Evans who was also studying in Manchester. After a first date in the city centre - a Saturday night hop costing half a crown! - romance blossomed over the years. Jean said she wondered if he'd ever pop the question, finally he did. They were driving to a pub one evening and he just said....

'I think it's about time we got married' Jean of course agreed, wondering why it had taken him so long!

Jean’s younger sister Maggie was just 11 when she first met Jean’s new beau and was somewhat smitten from the very first time she saw him. It was Summer and Maggie had just passed her 11+ and was excited about going to Grammar School. Jean who was older, arrived home from university with as Maggie described this incredible, actor, film star type who was so gorgeous and so handsome it made her knees wobble! He was just beautiful she declared!

Having led, as she said a very sheltered life, Maggie and her younger brother took to sneaking and peeking round corners to see their big sister, snogging the gorgeous Doug. Doug’s response to this was to suggest he teach the siblings Canasta to keep them occupied whilst he and Jean continued their courtship uninterrupted.

Doug and Jean married on the 28th of December 1963 at Melton Mowbray, Welby Lane Mission Church. The reception followed at the nearby Anne of Cleves restaurant and they spent their Wedding night in the Grand Hotel in Torquay. It was a marriage that would last over sixty years. As it was a December wedding, they Honeymooned the following Summer in Torremolinos, which in 1964 was essentially just an aircraft hangar Maggie said, but was one of the first European package tour holiday destinations of the time. Doug was fluent in Spanish, so of course they had a wonderful and quite magical time. Thus began their love affair with Spain and all things Spanish, the food, the people, …..and the football. In years to come Italy would also become a much-loved destination for their holidays together and as a family.

Doug and Jean’s first flat was in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, a flat that came with Jean’s teaching job. Doug would cycle to Stevenage station wearing his suit and tie and carrying his briefcase, before catching the train to Finsbury Park in north London for his clerical/administration job. In 1965, Doug and Jean moved to a house in Formby, Lancashire (53 Alt Road) where Doug got his first teaching job at Alsop Boys High School in nearby Liverpool.

On the 9th of August 1966, Doug and Jean’s first son Nigel was born. Nigel was followed by a second son Paul, born on the 6th of January 1969 completing their family. In 1971, the young family moved down South from Formby, Lancashire to North-West London, and after a few months living with Doug’s parents in Dollis Hill, the family moved into their own home in North Harrow. Jean and Doug would continue living there until 2007.

On moving to London, Doug had acquired a job at the Cardinal Hinsley High School in Harlesden in the modern languages department, teaching Spanish and, ironically, a little bit of French! Over the years, Doug went on to become the head of modern languages and eventually the acting deputy headmaster. Doug acquired many lifelong friends during his long career at Cardinal Hinsley. When they socialised, a pint was never too far away and possibly a Gin & Bitter Lemon, but you may need to ask Gary about that apparently? Jean commented that it was these ‘work friends’ that had led Doug astray, not that he minded it seems.

The family are much comforted by, and appreciative of the friends (and fellow boozers) from Cardinal Hinsley attending today.

In 1951, whilst at school, Doug developed a lifelong passion for Hendon Football Club. At that time, Hendon’s ground was at Claremont Road, almost literally a stone’s throw from the school at Westbere Road. Doug and a friend would often walk or run to the ground from the school, kicking a ball along the way. Hendon enjoyed great success between 1954 and 1974, winning the FA Amateur Cup three times and the Isthmian League twice. In 1973, they were crowned European Amateur Champions. Doug was a committed, lifelong fan and apart from times when geographic location made it difficult and during the 1980s when he was caring for his ailing parents, he regularly attended matches for many years, right up until 2024 and helped out with the running of the club by manning the turnstiles for several years. The highlights over such a long period of time were many, but maybe the most fondly remembered ones were winning the FA Amateur Cup for the first time in 1960, drawing with First Division Newcastle United in the FA Cup in 1974 and beating Oldham Athletic away from home in the FA Trophy as recently as January 2024. Come on you Greens!

In the late 1980s, Doug retired from teaching. The story goes that Doug had said some time before that he did not want to teach young “scrotes” after the age of fifty!

For the next few years, he had a variety jobs. These included a spell at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as a clerk as well as local government administration and IT support roles in the London Boroughs of Hounslow and Harrow. Doug finally retired in or about 2008, but ended up doing some part time IT work with Paul around that era with Harrow Council. In April 2007, Doug and Jean had moved to the picturesque Buckinghamshire town of Chesham.

**-REFLECTION-**

(with photo montage)

Brandenburg Concerto No 3 – First Movement Allegro

Johann Sebastian Bach

Doug as I mentioned, attended the Haberdashers’ Aske’s Boys’ School, the school which elder son Nigel had also attended following its move to Elstree. The school hymn that they were both fond of has been to chosen to be sung today.

Please stand now if you are able and join me as we sing ‘He Who Would Valiant be.

**-HYMN-**

*He who would valiant be*

*‘Gainst all disaster*

*Let him in constancy*

*Follow the Master*

*There’s no discouragement*

*Shall make him once relent*

*His first avowed intent*

*To be a pilgrim.*

*Who so beset him round*

*With dismal stories,*

*Do but themselves confound —*

*His strength the more is.*

*No foes shall stay his might,*

*Though he with giants fight:*

*He will make good his right*

*To be a pilgrim.*

*Since, Lord, Thou doest defend*

*Us with Thy Spirit,*

*We know we at the end*

*Shall life inherit.*

*Then fancies flee away!*

*I’ll fear not what men say,*

*I’ll labor night and day*

*To be a pilgrim.*

**-REFLECTION- 2**

(with photo montage)

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Allegro Con Brio

Ludwig Van Beethoven

**‘LIFE OF DOUG’**

***The Golden Years***

After leaving teaching in the late 80's, Doug had some clerical and IT jobs before retiring in 2008. Doug & Jean as mentioned had moved to Chesham in 2007 and now had more time to relax and holiday together

During his retirement, Doug rekindled another passion and travelled frequently on holiday to Spain and some of the Spanish Islands. Usually this was with Jean, and several times they were accompanied to the Canary Islands & Cyprus by son Paul, daughter-in-law Sam and Doug’s adored granddaughter Isabella who had arrived in July 2012.

Doug always enjoyed listening to music, including classical, jazz and rock. His favourite composers were Beethoven and Johann Sebastian Bach, whilst his favourite rock music was from the halcyon days of the 1970s and beyond. His love of bands and artists such as Mike Oldfield, 10cc, Supertramp and especially Pink Floyd was infectious, especially to Nigel and Paul, who went on to love these same acts themselves. An unconfirmed story is that Doug once played the tuba, whilst Paul has admitted throwing Doug’s harmonica down the toilet!

Doug also enjoyed a wide range of comedy. This started when listening to radio shows such as Round the Horne, The Goon Show, Hancock’s Half Hour and comedy quiz shows such as Just a Minute. During the 1970s and 1980s, he was a big fan of such television shows as Monty Python’s Flying Circus, Fawlty Towers, Porridge, Blackadder and Only Fools and Horses.

Doug was always keen to embrace new technology and this started in 1981 with the purchase of a Sinclair ZX81 home computer. Various other computers followed over the years, including a Sinclair Spectrum, Amstrad 1640 and a Research Machine 380Z – borrowed from school – to organise the school timetables. This technology triggered Nigel’s and Paul’s lifelong interest in computers, which lead to their future careers.

What will Doug be remembered for; I asked the family who smiled and chuckled a little before responding. He was it seems a man of many parts he was first and foremost a teacher, an educator said Maggie. He was dedicated to teaching children anyway he could, taking them on trips to ignite and encourage their enthusiasm, to inspire and empower them. I believe his work colleagues here today would go along with that. Doug just wanted everyone to be as enthusiastic as he was about education, about learning of the things in life that are joyous. Then there was his love of and devotion to his family - wife Jean, his boys Nigel and Paul. He adored the power of music of different genres – from rock music to classical music particularly organ music. Nigel remembers Doug and a teacher from Cardinal Hinsley called Brian Martin, who played keyboards and the organ and believes they actually played and broadcast on Radio Three back in the day.

For Paul it was football and music he said, especially Pink Floyd. Also, the comedy as has been mentioned, listening to the old radio shows and tapes. Then later introducing the boys to the first computers which inspired and set them both on their chosen career paths.

Another story to emerge is that of the’ Lansdowne Award’. It was started when Doug and Jean were dropping Paul off at Manchester University in 1987. Having driven up ready to move Paul into the Halls of Residence, they decided to go for a Sunday meal at the Lansdowne Hotel in Fallowfield, a Manchester suburb where most of the students lived. Essentially, the story goes that the service at the hotel was the worst you could ever have experienced. Having sat for some two hours, a very sub-standard meal was eventually served. Thereafter Doug adopted the Hotel name as an Award. He even designed the award as a sheet of paper and would bestow it by leaving it on a table at any establishment where his good expectations hadn’t been met. A legacy now the boys could continue maybe?

I believe there is copy that can be viewed here today, and hopefully it won’t be awarded to this establishment and this service today! Although I believe Nigel is considering sending it to a well-known supermarket chain, starting with T and ending in O!!!

He loved Hendon Football Club with a passion as we have heard, and equally disliked Wealdstone FC apparently. Something akin to that of the feelings between supporters of Tottenham and Arsenal I believe.

I asked the family to describe Doug – they said opinionated, stubborn, clever, interesting, charismatic, imposing but an ultimately kind man – a ‘proper’ bloke they said. The boys both added that determination was another of his traits, the never giving up until something was resolved. They gave the example of the game solitaire which they remember their dad playing over and over until he had cracked the way to complete it in record time! This in turn led to inspiring the boys to follow his lead with solving the Rubik’s cube, and a trait the carry right through to their working lives today – what an incredible legacy Doug has bestowed.

Jean and Doug moved here to Cedars Village in April last year, somewhere they were made very welcome and settled well. They were happy and made more friends and acquaintances

On the 8th of November 2024 after a short illness, Doug passed away peacefully here at home as was his wish

A poem chosen by Jean for today, read on her behalf by her sister Maggie.

**-POEM-**

*One at rest*

*Think of me as one at rest,*

*for me you should not weep*

*I have no pain no troubled thoughts*

*for I am just asleep*

*The living thinking me that was,*

*is now forever still*

*And life goes on without me now,*

*as time forever will.*

*If your heart is heavy now*

*because I've gone away*

*Dwell not long upon it friend*

*For none of us can stay*

*Those of you who liked me,*

*I sincerely thank you all*

*And those of you who loved me,*

*I thank you most of all.*

*And in my fleeting lifespan,*

*as time went rushing by*

*I found some time to hesitate,*

*to laugh, to love, to cry*

*Matters it now if time began*

*If time will ever cease?*

*I was here, I used it all,*

*and now I am at peace.*

*- Unknown -*

**-CLOSING WORDS-**

Special thanks to a wonderful band of helpers including Nicky and Claire, especially in his last weeks at home here in Cedars Village. It also means so much to the family that there is a representation from the Hendon Football Club here today. Come on you Greens!

Paul would now like to say a few words as this part of the Celebration of Doug’s life draws to its close.

**-END MUSIC-**

Comfortably Numb

By

Pink Floyd

