

## **James George Miller died on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015 aged 93.**

He was known as “Dusty” or “Jim” throughout his career. Jim was extremely fit all his life and was pleased that he was on no medication right up to the end. He had a nasty fall at home, and was taken to hospital where he became weaker and contracted pneumonia which contributed to his death.

He was devoted to his wife Judy who predeceased him by eighteen months. He leaves behind him daughters Mandy, her husband Martin, Elaine, son Duncan his wife Violet, seven grand-children William, Nicki, Nicola, Pippa, Dave, Daisy and Oscar and seven great grand-children.

Jim was born on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1922 in Rawalpindi in British India. He was the first of two sons of Alex and Muriel. His father worked at a British Army encampment of the Seathforth Highlanders. His father was secretary to the British delegation. Muriel had grown up in India and she had a charming Indian accent that she never subsequently lost.

Alex was involved deeply in his job and his dedication eventually cost him his marriage to Muriel. When the political situation became unstable Jim left India aged two or three and Muriel went to live in Glasgow with her in-laws, which Muriel found quite a cultural shock after her Indian upbringing. Muriel then moved to London where she lived with some Indian friends and despite Peter being born four years later, the couple separated and then divorced.

Jim attended a very snobbish pre-prep school, Old Court that he remembers not fitting in very well. It was an old fashioned school with lots of Latin. Jim was miserable.

Jim then moved to Emmanuel School near Clapham Junction. At this point Jim started to find his place in London travelling to school from Putney. Jim did not enjoy team or organised games, and detested rugby, but was good at mathematics and languages. At this point Jim became a member of the school cross-country team, eventually winning the school cup, at which his brother Peter would subsequently also win.

Jim started working for Shell in 1938 and when war broke out he tried to enlist but was too young. However eventually Jim joined up and did his army training in Kent and York and he sailed to India on the *Queen Mary*. Having been in the public school army cadet core he was offered a commission but he refused. Eventually there was a chance to become a wireless operator and driver and he joined his team in a tank. Jim felt up to that point he had lead a sheltered life and served with every type of man during WW2. On the whole Jim felt his war time endurance was a great education and a positive experience. Jim also served in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Romania and Italy and various countries on the way. Jim would often reminisce about his days in the army

Jim had grown up estranged from his father but eventually they were reunited in Cairo. Alex had an influential position and got privileges for Jim. Jim felt that this attention compensated for previous neglect. Jim also then spent time in Romania with his father. His father met his second wife Millie who had been running the Shell country club. Jim learned Romanian and he would subsequently try out on the carers for his wife at the Worplesdon View nursing room many decades later. It was during the long winter evenings at Jim learnt Marjon, which he would play with the family later.

After the war Jim lived with his mother in a block of flats in Brixton. It was the same block of flats where also Judy Lewin lived. She invited him to tea one day and the relationship blossomed. They got married in Richmond in 1949 and they initially lived in a house in Twickenham.

In 1950 Mandy was born, and in 1953 Elaine and 1958 Duncan. In 1959 the family moved to Purley. Eventually the girls left to go to university and Duncan moved to Australia. In 1984 the family moved to Jacobs Well to be nearer Mandy.

Jim worked for Shell 1938-1975 when he retired. He then worked partime for Honeywell. He was involved in a leading role in the early development of computers and in training personnel. The "Scot" in him gave him great delight in that he was claiming a pension for over forty years. At times he used to run to work when it was quite unusual, then when the journey involved a commute he would always wear a red tie on 1<sup>st</sup> May and a rose in the summer time which he would then park in a specimen jar on his desk.

Jim had a love of running. He ran a marathon in 1948, but gave up running when the children were born, and then took it up again aged 50. He ran in the second London Marathon aged 60. He ran in several Hogs Back races in this 70s and was still running well into his 80s. In his 60s he took part in a relay marathon organised by the Running Sixties group from John O'Groats to Lands End. In 2014 Jim watched proudly as his grandson Dave ran in the London Marathon.

Jim organised monthly handicap races. Firstly at Hammersmith near his work and then the Kingfield Canter (aka Woking Three). Jim was involved with the organisation right up to this 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and continued compiling and publishing the results until very recently.

Though the family were not well off they enjoyed camping and caravanning holidays over Europe, starting with Italy. In retirement Jim and Judy enjoyed more exotic holidays in Morocco, Greece, Egypt and Australia.

Jim continued his interest in Computers and set up an early web-site. Jim loved Jazz and would listen on the radio – he had an extensive vinyl collection. He took his children to Ronnie Scotts to see Oscar Peterson. He loved local history and published a book in 1994 *"Jacobs Well: How the Name Got Its Village"*

Judy's health had been declining over a number of years, and she eventually died on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014. She had been moved into the Worplesdon View Care Home.

Saturday afternoons would be taken up with watching athletics enthusiastically and the children remember that over Sunday lunch he would recount his war stories. He enjoyed visiting the tank museum where he would recognise the tanks that he had served in. Sunday evenings would be spent cleaning shoes "army style".

He loved reference and general knowledge books. At Christmas he enjoyed the King William Quiz, and enjoyed Quiz shows, and would always record "Pointless" if he knew he was going to be out.

He liked to keep abreast of modern technology with his mobile telephone and Apple Mac.