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Eulogy – March 2021

Welcome everybody to occasion and thanks – names for special mention?

I want to start by saying that whilst I know we are here to say a fond farewell to mum, I know that she would not have wanted anybody to be unhappy on her account and so I want to keep things as much on the bright side as I can and hopefully we will all remember her as the happy and caring person that we all knew. We no doubt will all have our own moments of quiet reflection but I want to treat today as a celebration and a continuance of those memories rather than the end of anything.

Can I also say that I may use the word ‘I’ a lot but everything I say is very much on behalf of my brother David and myself.

Mum was a caring and loving person, but she was also tough. I often forget that she was a true Cockney, born within the sound of Bow Bells. She and dear George survived the Blitz, famously once escaping the evacuation line and running home to stay with their family, come what may. Such was the strength of the family she, and us in turn were born in to. She lost her own mum when she was just 15 and it is a testament to the strength of family, to her own wonderful dad and the values that were instilled in them as children that both she and George went on to have successful careers, George as a skilled draughtsman and mum as a secretary, and they raised families who have then gone on to raise beautiful families of their own.

Some would say that mum wasn’t dealt the best hand in life, but she got on with it and, as good working people did in those days, she made the best of what she had. I know that she felt that her ace card was meeting and falling in love with our dad, and I know that the real icing on the cake for her was when David and myself came along and made her little family complete.

Mum was there for us, she gave everything a mother could give and was fiercely protective of her “boys”. She would have gone to the ends of the earth for us and often made it known, earning a stern but light-hearted warning from dad of the possible consequences of placing us above all else.

Best man speech – August 2016

Welcomes, names for special mention – mother and father of the bride and groom

I have known Jack since 1993, when he and his wife at the time (God, he does go through them, doesn’t he?) walked into the pub where I was serving and sat at the bar. It wasn’t busy that night, funnily enough it never was when I was working, and we eventually got to chatting. I found out a lot about Jack that first night, what a witty, charming and intelligent

chap he was, and how difficult it was to get him to put his hand in his pocket and buy a round. On that subject, did you see it's not a free bar? (shakes head) Not changed in all those years.

No, but seriously, I think we can all agree that Jack and Julie make an absolutely perfect couple and I know you will join me in raising a glass to them (the champers is free- get it while you can) and wishing them both, especially Julie, all the very best of luck in what will undoubtedly be many difficult years to come. We all know Jack is a great guy and would help anybody out, but it hasn't always been like that, he does have his hard side you know.

I remember when he told me what happened to his first wife. I don't know if you all know this or not, (pause, look at Jack with raised eyebrows), but you will in a minute. Apparently she came home one day and said she had been diagnosed with a terminal illness, and was only given 12 hours to live. Naturally she was in a terrible state. Jack didn't know what to say, I mean who would in those circumstances? Eventually he said – "Look, it's your last night love. What would you really like to do? How do you want to spend your last hours on earth?"

So she thought for a minute and said – "Do you know what? Let's get a crate of champagne (I bet she paid for it!!), put a blanket out on the top of the hill and drink and make love under the stars all night long".

So Jack said – "Well, that's alright for you, you haven't got to get up in the morning!"