

COMMEMORATIVE ACCOUNT OF CRAIG SCOTT
REGARDING, IRIS SCOTT (DOD 1.3.2014)

Iris Scott.

Was born on December 5th 1940 in Stepney, East London.

Iris was born into a working class family & was the second child to Jack & Hannah Yems. Iris, had an older brother John.

Like so many Londoner's at the time, Iris's early life was difficult and fraught with danger spending large periods of her early life sheltering in London underground stations from the bombs of World War II.

During her school years, Iris was a popular, intelligent pupil with a thirst for knowledge, and a keen sports person. All of which would continue into adulthood. During this period she forged some life-long friendships.

On finishing school Iris took secretarial and book keeping courses and attained qualifications in both which she would later put to good use working for local businesses.

Now in her late teens, Iris met what would be the love of her life; John Scott; who she married on 27th February 1960 at St Dunstan's church Stepney, East London. They would spend their honeymoon in Porthleven, Cornwall ...a location with close family connections, that still continue today...this would ultimately be the final resting place for them both.

On June 4th 1961, Iris & John were blessed with her first child, a daughter – Dawn.

In early 1966, the family would move from London to Essex; Kenilworth Ave, Harold Park, Romford; only 5 houses from Iris's brother and his family. This would turn out to be the family home for over 40 years and they would go on to make many friends that lasted the test of time.

John & Iris were always willing to help their neighbours and be key participants in community events such as fund raisers & events such as the Queen's silver jubilee celebrations - Iris was one of the event organisers for the local street party and complimenting events of the day.

Although both Iris & John were keen to add to their family this would prove to be more difficult than they both had hoped and it wasn't for another 6 years they would welcome me (Craig) into the family, on 28th September 1967.

The joy of welcoming a new child into the family was unfortunately marred by the death of Iris's brother John, from a brain tumour, in the October of '67.

Living in such close proximity to Iris's brother's family, Iris's strong sense of family commitment would be demonstrated, whereby over the subsequent years, Iris would often

care for her brothers' daughters after school or during the school holidays, when her sister-in-law would be a work – this extended family dynamic would forge strong family ties that still exist today between the two families.

On May 3rd 1969, the family unit would be complete, with the birth of Glenn.

In the years that followed, Iris & John would welcome 6 grandchildren into the family – if Iris was a great mother, she excelled as a grandmother. Ever present, supportive and involved in all they did...welcoming any opportunity to spend time with the grandchildren; always offering to baby-sit, attending school sports days, a variety of school performances, dance shows & presentation events....she was so proud of them & they loved her dearly.

My earliest memories of Mum are how proud she was; as a home maker, mother & wife.

Although, we were far from a wealthy family, dad often working 2 or 3 jobs and mum also working as a secretary & book keeper to help fulfil their ambitions for the family. We had a great up-bringing and childhood...I don't think any of us would have changed a thing.

Yes, there were some difficult times ...but the fun, laughter and love projected by both of them towards us was unmistakable - we all knew how much we were loved.

Iris was incredibly house-proud, where everything had its place but, Iris knew this would have to be balanced. With two young football mad sons & a daughter about to enter her early teens, as you can possibly imagine the house and garden would not always be looking it's best... Mum understood this; encouraging our interests & passions but when the time came to clear up, we all cleared up...instilling some early life lessons, many more would follow.

Iris, encouraged Dawn, Glenn & I to pursue our dreams and ambitions and supported us in all our interests making many sacrifices along the way...even when she didn't quite approve of some of our early career choices – if that's what we wanted to do she would support it & be there with encouraging words wherever required.

Iris loved Christmas – she was Mrs Christmas.

Mum loved every aspect of the festive season but most of all having the family together was the most important to her.

I have wonderful memories of Christmas growing up. Although we did not always get what was on our Christmas lists – Christmas felt magical, and Mum made sure of that.

This would be magnified in later years with the introduction of grandchildren.

Growing up, Mum & dad often hosted Christmas & New Years Eve parties, where their 'open house' approach would welcome family & friends across the community. Iris looked forward to these events; she was a great hostess, where nothing was too much trouble. She was often the first on the dance floor...partying into the early hours.

Family holidays were always great fun; in my pre-teen years, Cornwall & Devon were typically the most visited locations. As foreign travel became more accessible, Mum would be keen for us to experience other destinations - Malta, France & Spain were some of our first destinations.

These family holidays abroad, sparked Mum's desire to travel and experience more of the world – Mum & Dad would later go on to travel far and wide...Africa, Asia, USA, Caribbean & many other European destinations.

How would I describe Iris Scott:

She was, the most Devoted, caring, supportive & loving mother & grandmother.

A strong, independent, modern thinking woman, who knew her own mind and had her own opinions and never shied away from a debate.

I would suggest, subconsciously this is one of the biggest things Mum installed in Dawn, Glenn & I - stand up & fight for what you believe...part of the reason why I am here today.

Her personality was infectious, with a great sense of humour.

She had many friends, most of which were those she had known for many years – even as far back as her childhood.

Mum had style; she was a good looking lady, she enjoyed being able to dress up for an evening out at the theatre, a party or meal with friends.

Mum liked to experience some of the finer things life had to offer – she was never out of place or intimidated by her surroundings.

She loved & lived life to the full; she loved to travel, see the world & experience other cultures.

She was loved by so many, testament to that was at her funeral when so many travelled the length & breadth of the country to pay their respect.

But most of all, to Dawn, Glenn & I, she was simply the best mother & grandmother to our children we could of hoped and wished for...she gave her time and love unconditionally to the whole family and without exaggeration, we miss her every single day.

The impact of Mum's death was immense for the whole family.

Losing such a loving wife, parent, grandmother & auntie will always be hard, but the manner in which we lost her magnified the experience ten-fold.

We were all truly heart-broken with the emptiness that only comes with the grief of losing someone so loved...unfortunately I am not eloquent enough to do that justice.

Since that day, many members of the family have had to face their own struggles, coming to terms with the events of 1st March 2014...

For me it started with a phone call in the early hours of the morning (I immediately knew something had happened); with an obviously very confused father on the other end of the line, having himself just been woken by two police officers, informing him of the news, that his wife had taken her own life...his and our world would never be the same again.

We would later find out that Mum had [hung herself in her room] whilst an inpatient in Ruby ward, Crystal centre (which is part of Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust).

From the experience my family & I endured during the inquest, I fear we will never truly know what happen in the events leading up to Mum's death ...which makes it harder.

Explaining to my then 17 & 15 year old daughters what had happened and trying to console them, remains the hardest thing I have had to do as a parent...I had gone through my whole life never having any direct experience of suicide, how could we know how this was going to impact them.

I cannot speak accurately to how each individual outside my immediate family managed their grief, I can only speak today of how it has affected me.

On the 1st March 2014, I changed forever – the person I was, was gone ...he died with mum.

My own mental health has suffered; I have changed beyond belief... these changes impacted my personality, which in turn affected my marriage and relationships with my daughters.

It was only when I changed my job and moved to a new firm in 2018, my then manager recognised the signs, as he had gone through a similar experience and encouraged me to seek help - thankful for the sake of my family and my own wellbeing - I agreed.

With the help of a mental health councillor, I am now able to understand what happened to me & what is still happening to me, how to manage it but possibly most importantly accept it – the healing is far from over.

Unfortunately, the same could not be said for my Dad.

We all knew that the loss would be unbearable for him. Iris was everything to him; the love of his life, his wife of over 50 years, his very being.

Despite our own personal grief and struggles we all rallied round to help Dad through this difficult time but following the inquest, Dad's health began to deteriorate – he had just given up...he didn't want to be here anymore, not without his Iris.

Dad passed away on 13th January 2017.

I appreciate your time today and for the opportunity to provide you with a brief in-sight to whom my mum, Iris Scott, was.

I hope I have been able to convey in some small way the positive impact she had on so many people's lives and how dearly she is still missed by all those who knew & loved her.

What I do know is, she went through her life putting others before herself and she deserved far more from those who were responsible for her care in her final days.

Thank-you.