

## Terry Dicks

17 August 1971 – 16 April 2018

### Commemorative and Impact Statement of June and Roy Dicks, in respect of their late son, Terry Dicks

Our son, Terry was born in Saint Thomas' Hospital on the 17th August 1971. We lived in Clapham until Terry was 9 years old and then moved to Benfleet. Terry has an older sister, [personal/sensitive] Terry went to Thundersley Primary and Deanes Secondary School, making many friends along the way. He did really well at school, achieving 7 O levels and then went on to work in London, gaining further qualifications in the finance world. For the 16 years he worked in the City, he spent lots of time travelling to and working in Tokyo, Hong Kong and New York, until he was made redundant from his job in 2003. At that time, his beloved son [personal/sens] was born, and so Terry decided to work locally as a taxi driver so that he could be near and spend time with [his son].

When Terry was around 5 years old, he was diagnosed with Coeliac's disease, an allergy to gluten. In recent years Terry laughed that his condition had now become "*trendy*" and he could actually find nice things on supermarket shelves that he could eat! But as a teenager, he didn't want to stick to his special diet – we found this out when he came home from a school trip with the stench of rotten food coming from his suitcase. That was Terry – always having to clear up after him. He managed to keep himself very clean and tidy but let's say no more about his surroundings!

As Terry grew up he had many interests, but his real passion was always for football. His love for Chelsea was influenced by his dad and then he shared this passion with [his son]. All three of them regularly attended England and Chelsea games over the years and had lots of stories to tell us all - many of which include language that can't be repeated! This love of football led to him coaching [his son's] team when he was younger for a few seasons. Terry and [his son] also went to watch Southend games together and always stood behind the goal in the hope that they would be on TV if Southend ever scored.

Terry however did manage to claim 5 minutes of fame on a few other occasions, which used to make us all laugh. His first TV appearance was when he was interviewed by Ben Brown at the Champions League final in 2012. Unfortunately you would have only seen it if you were up in the early hours of the morning!

Terry had a natural thirst for general knowledge and was very passionate about the world around him, always wanting to know more. He never held back on sharing his thoughts and views with us, loving a family debate over a few sangrias on holiday and often made us all laugh unintentionally. It was this love for general knowledge that led to his more recent TV appearances, where he starred in 2 quiz shows – Perfection and The Chase. He won the main prize of £6000 on Perfection and told Nick Nolte that he was going to treat us all to a family holiday with his winnings – we are still waiting Terry!

Holidays have always played a big part in family life with Terry over the years and he always kept everyone amused, even from a young age. We recall a particular holiday to Cornwall when Terry was about 4. The holiday started with Terry finding a marble in the suitcase, which disappeared soon after, yep - he had swallowed the marble. The next few days were then spent inspecting his poo waiting for the marble to return! What a way to spend a holiday!

For over 20 years, we have had annual holidays as a family to Lanzarote where we have made the happiest of memories. The stories we could share are endless, but here are just few that sum up Terry and our times together on holiday.

A few years ago, Terry stayed in an apartment at the side of the main villa with [his son and his niece] – we called them The 3 Musketeers because Terry was always encouraging them to get up to mischief. Every night they would watch a late night movie and Terry would get [them] to sneak into the main villa to secretly get crisps, chocolate and lemonade to snack on. [His son and his niece] both have such fond memories of this time; causing trouble, staying up very late and being so tired that Terry carried them both to bed.

Every day on holiday Terry would keep us amused in some way or another, whether he meant to or not:

- He would try to climb up trees to collect pineapples that definitely didn't grow there.
- He never quite mastered sun cream application, despite all the holidays we went on, and always looked like he'd put a whole bottle on.
- On one holiday he jumped over what looked like a small wall, not knowing that there was a 6 foot drop the other side. Terry disappeared from sight and now this wall has become a famous Lanzarote landmark in our family, making us laugh every time we walk past.

One of our most memorable nights from our holidays is when we were out for [his niece's] 18th birthday [personal/sensitive] Our evening started with a nice sophisticated cocktail on the seafront,

but after a couple more and couple more after that, we thought it would be a great idea to recreate the film “The Hangover”. We all woke up the next day and looked through the photos from the evening, just as they do in the film, and it’s safe to say that we did the film proud. <sup>(personal/sens</sup> (Terry’s brother in law) has never forgiven Terry for posting some of these half-naked photos on Facebook!

It was silly things like this that really made Terry laugh and his sense of humour was something that he and [his son] shared. . They would always have lots of private jokes (probably sometimes at our expense!) and this is when Terry’s contagious laugh would come out. He would laugh so hard that he’d go red in the face and cry uncontrollable happy tears. Even when we had no idea what he and [his son] were laughing at, Terry’s proper laugh would make us all join in laughing with them.

In recent years, another interest of Terry was spiritual healing and he gained a certification in this. Despite some dubiousness, [his nanny and uncle] had Terry perform some healing on them. [She] was impressed with the results as her wrist always felt much better after these sessions and also sent her into a deep sleep. As [his uncle] was never a believer in this type of therapy, he was shocked by how much his knee improved after. Unfortunately, the times Terry tried to make us levitate off the sun loungers on holiday didn’t see the same success – although it did cause lots of laughs!

This interest allowed Terry to express a different side to him that perhaps not everybody saw. He was always been a sensitive soul and showed much compassion for others. He volunteered at One Love Soup Kitchen, helping the homeless people in Southend. Staff have told us what a kind-hearted man he was and how he worked so hard to help the homeless find shelter and have food during the bad, snowy weather in the winter. Even in the days before he passed away when he was shopping with his sister, he went looking for a homeless man he’d met at the Soup Kitchen. He wanted to make sure he was okay so that he could let his brother know. These acts of kindness are a true demonstration of Terry’s sensitive and caring character.

Terry was also extremely intelligent, sometimes we think he was maybe too intelligent for his own good. Nevertheless, his intelligence was something that came across to anyone that met him. He enjoyed writing poetry and had two poems published, and he wrote a prayer.

The main thing that stands out is the fact that Terry really was the best dad. He and [his son] were truly mates and they adored each other. We know that Terry would have been so so proud of

[his son] when he received the Jack Petchey Award for being the best student of the year at school.

We appreciate that this is not the forum to talk about the care and treatment that Terry had in respect of his mental health, and therefore all we will say at this point is that Terry became unwell and was first sectioned in April 2015 for 28 days. His second section was December 2016 and last section October 2017.

Terry sadly ended up taking his own life on 16 April 2018.

The emotional impact and devastation on our family is profound and overwhelming.

Terry's sudden and unexpected death left us all in shock. We all still struggle to comprehend the reality of what has happened. We often say that we feel emotionally numb and know that this is a coping mechanism to temporarily shield us from the unbearable grief.

Daily battles with feelings of guilt consume us. We all still question what we could have done differently despite knowing that we did all we could, as a family, to help Terry. This overwhelming sense of responsibility has led to severe emotional distress for all of us.

The nature of Terry's death and the circumstances surrounding it, has meant a lack of closure for all of us as a family as we were unable to properly say goodbye.

We now know that the journey of grief we are all in is unique and complex. It often leads to prolonged sadness, difficulty functioning, and severe emotional pain. [His son], who was only sixteen years old when he lost his dad, is still trying to process what happened and is struggling to come to terms with it, often feeling in a surreal situation. Now at 21 years old, he should not be having to navigate these unimaginable feelings and emotional distress. He is starting to realise that these feelings will stay with him for the rest of his life and won't get any easier to deal with.

We also feel so very sad for [his son]. [He] has countless happy memories with his dad. But he has lost future years of love and support from his dad, and feel that the wonderful life they could have had together has been cruelly taken from them.

Thankfully, we take solace in the fact that we are a very close family and try our best to support each other through this tragic and totally avoidable devastation. This close family

relationship and all the memories we have made since Terry's passing, should include him. This is something we will never get over.

[personal/sensitive]

[personal/sensitive - image redacted]