

**LT COLONEL JOHNNY MOSS, MBE**  
**5th April 1943 – 4th January 2013**

On 8th March 2013 a Service of Thanksgiving was held in the Guards Chapel, London for the life of Johnny Moss, who had very unexpectedly died on 4th January 2013 aged 69, after a short but tenacious battle with cancer. His death was a terrible shock to his family and many friends as up to the very last he was still working and full of his usual amazing energy. Over a thousand people attended the service, so many that it was standing room only. It was a wonderful tribute to a charismatic individual whose life had intersected with such effect with so many others.

This was because Johnny Moss had worn so many hats during an energetic and eventful life. He had two military and several business careers. He was a wonderful husband and father of two most loving daughters and, latterly, grandfather to 8 adoring grandchildren (to whom he was known as Jampots). In his spare time Johnny ran a shoot, drove fast cars fast, flew helicopters and fixed-wing light aircraft, was a proud member of the Air Squadron and a member of the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeoman of the Guard. Most importantly (to all of us) he was Secretary of the SMTC from 2002 to 2007. About the only thing Johnny could not do was sing in tune. Once, at a Cresta End of Term party, his contribution was a song which received rapturous applause and demands for an encore, on the basis that nobody could believe he really was that awful. Mercifully, he declined the encore, but it was typically sporting of him to expose this one chink in his armour so publicly.

Johnny had a most successful army career. He was commissioned into the Welsh



*Johnny Moss on last day*



*Johnny & Annabel Moss*

Guards in 1961, and became the Adjutant in 1970. In 1972 he was appointed Extra Equerry to HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. In 1973 he completed his helicopter –pilot licence with the Army Air Corps at Middle Wallop. Between 1979 – 1981 he was Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quarter Master General (DAA & QMG) Headquarters 3 Infantry Brigade Northern Ireland before Commanding 3 Regiment Army Air Corps between 1982 – 1985. He transferred his vast experience to the Staff College Camberley as an instructor between 1985 – 1986 before retiring from the Army in 1987.

He took all the skills he had learnt in the army to civilian life. He joined JP Morgan, a powerful American bank and became a superb quartermaster for them, organising everything from office moves to all travel and corporate entertainment. Once, horrified by a quotation from a crane company of £100,000 for installing generators on the roof of a new office building, he persuaded the police to clear the surrounding streets on a Saturday afternoon and chartered a helicopter to bring in the equipment instead, costing a mere £16,000. After retiring from JP Morgan he was head hunted by Merrill Lynch and later UBS. Friends persuaded him to take a further job at Lord North Street where he was still working when he was suddenly taken into hospital at the end of last year.

Johnny twice competed at the famed Nurburgring in Germany. He blew up after 54 laps the first time, driving a Mini Cooper, but another year finished top of his class, driving a Ford Capri.

He was a devoted family man. His family was everything. His father, also in the Welsh Guards, was killed in the war, so his mother was a single parent until 9 years later she married Seymour Deardon, a much-loved stepfather. He was very close to his sister, Lally.



*Johnny with his Army companions of yore: Jonny Woodall, Hamish Macrae and Geoffrey Widdows.*

He married Annabel and they were an inseparable couple, sharing everything together. He once confessed that the reason he was able to get through so much paperwork was that he would work in the car while Annabel drove – a small example of their impeccable teamwork. His daughter, Micmac, also a qualified pilot, accompanied him on many an expedition around the world with the Air Squadron. Micmac and her older sister, Frankie (who many will remember as a Cresta Shop Girl in the 1980s) and the 8 grandchildren completed a close knit and loving family.

Johnny had ridden the Cresta for the Army in the 1970s and when he became Secretary proudly wore his Army team red sweater when he rode from Junction - an old neck injury prevented him from Top riding. When he took over from Digby in 2002, it was a very hard act to follow, but Johnny brought a completely different style to the Run. He transformed the annual staff accommodation problems by persuading the Committee to purchase flats for the Tower Team. Through his many business contacts, a seemingly endless supply of Krug champagne started to appear at all Prizegivings, a smart BMW appeared as the Club Car, as did a splendid new camion. These and many other improvements for the Club were a combination of great generosity from many Members and Johnny's apparently irresistible powers of persuasion.

Under his gentle but firm leadership he increased the number of annual rides and introduced the riding display boards. These were the obvious improvements. Some were less so – when Johnny asked the rest of the Tower Team why it was 'three rings to Tower' from the analogue telephones in the Clubhouse and along the Run, nobody really knew –



*Johnny receiving the keys of the new Camion from Alexander Knapp Voith in 2006.*



*Johnny in the Sunny Bar.*

it had just always been that way. “One ring is much more efficient,” and it was one ring after that.

Members, SL riders, Beginners, the arbeiter and Tower Boys all benefited from his distinctive and quiet leadership. He was unfailingly polite, always decently dressed and never ever lost it even under extreme pressure. Running the Cresta is not easy but Johnny relished every challenge. On a busy practice day when Natalino was asked, “Could we keep the Run open longer?” buns, prepared by the Kulm bar staff, would be ordered and distributed down the Run to keep the hungry arbeiter going. Victoria was one of his greatest fans. He was a great mentor for the Tower Boys under his watch, and presented the Johnny Moss Tower Boy Trophy for the fastest Tower Assistant from Top in any season.

Johnny had an extraordinary life. He was an exceptional person. His very many friends knew to go to him when they wanted the best advice. If you were in trouble he would drop everything to help. He had electric energy, enormous powers of persuasion and was a remarkable human being. His family, social, army, business and Cresta friends will miss him hugely. We were not expecting his sudden departure from this life.