



## Clive Whittall

April 3, 1938 - March 8, 2015

Clive Whittall died in Jackson South hospital in Miami, on Sunday morning the 8th of March. 2015.

This was totally unexpected. A week before he underwent an 11 hour operation with 4 world class surgeons, extracting and repairing his radio OSTEO necrosis jaw.

He spent 8 days in the ICU, monitored by respiratory doctors, around the clock.

They moved him out on Saturday afternoon the 7th. He was writing, he could not talk due to the tracheotomy tube, but wrote reams to me. He was eager to get out of hospital.

We were planning a cruise in October from Athens to Singapore, and spending next Christmas in Australia. We parted, and he was smiling...

The clocks changed on Sunday morning in Florida. I was an hour late and was worried he would scold me..

I go to the 3rd floor and was received by gloomy faces, doctors I did not know, who ushered me into a room and started to spout medical jargon at me.

Totally foxed by all this, I said, is he "dead" the terrible answer was, yes.

The official reason, a pulmonary embolism, they were unable to save him, in spite of all the high tech equipment..

Henry Clive Whittall, would have been 77 on the 3rd of April.

His life story reads a bit like a history book, full of adventures, failures and

success stories on 3 continents.

Born into the then mighty Whittall family of Turkey, in 1938, in Izmir, now part of the new Turkish Republic. The family had been established Levantines, originally coming from Liverpool, since before French Revolution in 1789. The original business was selling British goods to the Ottomans, but that changed, and they later became known for their exports of dried sultanas to Europe. Clive was baptised Henry Clive, as it was expected he would take over the family business.

The eldest son of Susan and Douglas Whittall, he was sent away to boarding school in England at the age of 8.

Travelling in those days was very expensive between England and Turkey, so he only came home once a year.

Little Clive became a chorister at King's college Canterbury. He played rugby and took up rowing, later joining the famous Thames rowing club in Putney. His adventures abound on his annual trips back to Turkey, on the original Orient Express Train (Not the fancy VSOP Sea containers train) he frequently had to leave the train to get visas for the communist countries he was crossing. Later he drove British sports cars, once taking an opera singer along with him...

Holiday life was wonderful, family members had various yachts and all had summer houses, in the then adorable Licia those days, 3 hours from Izmir., In the late fifties, the British were fighting in Cyprus. Clive was one of the last of conscripted soldiers. He rode around the wilds of Greece, on a donkey, disguised as a peasant, hiding a machine gun. He was really a spy, speaking Greek, Turkish, English and French.

The legend makes out he slept for 18 months in a tent, with water flowing through.

Hence his great love for luxury...

His parents realised that there was no future in staying in Turkey, and so he managed to get a job via London, for the Ottoman bank, as a trainee, in East Africa . He was very fortunate to experience the last days of Empire, before

independence. First in the Sudan, where he lived in an apartment above the bank. Then there was Uganda, before Idi Amin. I think this is where he nearly had his goolies cut off with a machete...there could have been no sons. He raced around town in a sports car, courting the daughter of the Coca-Cola agent. We caught up with Helen, 2 years ago in South Africa.

In Kenya he was based in Nairobi, shared a private house with 3 air hostesses, and had a chauffeur driven car..Took private planes to the beach and landed on the highway to fill up with petrol...those were the days...!

On returning to London, he worked a while in the City, with bowler hat and umbrella and met on the tube, his later, best friend Anthony Witham. They realised they both worked in the same Ottoman Bank office..

Boredom took him to accept his first job in the fruit trade for Cyprus fruits. He knew nothing about it. He later joined Fyffs in Mayfair, then joined a Dutch company in the new Covent Garden, this is where I met him, wanting to photograph the true Fruit and Veg Market.

The new Covent Garden was a bit drab, next to the railways, but slowly business was looking good for Clive. He was respected by all the traders and always gave the best prices to the growers. He worked, all hours of the day and was soon head hunted to join a very small firm dealing principally with South Africa, specialising in avos, mangos, melons, litchis. His old boss saw his potential and wanted to retire earl leaving Clive in charge. Scared stiff of suddenly having to pay staff, he learned very quickly and ran a very good little business with 7 employees. He took on a Spanish partner, and cornered the avo market, supplying Supermarkets and whole - salers, all year round. He later specialised in Asparagus from Australia, ready for the Christmas onslaught...

Perhaps his most colourful supplier, was the bigger than life, Dussan Vasilevic

, a Serb living in South Africa with a lovely wife and 12 children. Through them we met Clive's cousins, the Calothis, ex Turkey, living in Cape Town.

There is a lovely picture of Clive in Cape Town, surrounded by women..as usual...

Clive retired about 20 years ago from the fruit trade.

Since then, we sold everything in England and became Permanent Travellers. I kept my parents villa in the South of France and this was the house he loved the most.

Travelling extensively, living for 6 years on 3 continents.

Australia, in the once lovely Noosa, was a treat, everything worked...

Pioneering living in the jungle of Costa-Rica, when hardly any roads, telephones, electricity, TV, water and people. Communication was often via CB radio, far more fun, now we are spoilt and complain all the time.

Buying real estate and sailing in deserted Croatia, back in 2000, was a huge challenge.

South Africa was another of his favourites, this is where he made money, hence the amazing trip on Rovos rail, the most luxurious train the world. See the picture.

Clive lived life to the full, but tragically the Osteo Necrosis took over in May 2014 and he no longer was himself. Dr MARX and his team at the University of Miami, were the last resort. The operation was a success, Titanium Jaw, bone graft, flap, all beautifully performed. He lost consciousness for 4 days and woke up telling me a the number of a new Debit card...

My darling father who died of cancer in CANNES at age 70 in 1965, had a saying -

" The operation was a success, but the patient died" and this was the case with Clive

Clive was married before, to Christine, they had 2 boys and lived in North London.

Clive is survived by Mark and Damian Whittall, both in their forties.

A grand daughter, Holly and a grand son, Liam. Damian fathered them both and is not married to either of their mothers.

Flora will continue, health permitting, her Globe Trotting life style..

There are SO many stories to tell about life with Clive !

THIS POEM WAS READ BY CRISPY SELIG, AT CLIVE'S CEREMONY IN FLORIDA, A FEW DAYS AFTER HE LEFT US.

CRISPY, DAVE AND GREG, WERE OUR ROCKS IN THE US, COULD NOT HAVE COPEDED WITHOUT THEM

And because I love this life  
I know I shall love death as well.  
The child cries out when  
From the right breast the mother  
Takes it away, in the very next moment  
To find in the left one  
Its consolation.

Rabindranath Tagore,  
from Gitanjali

"Seashells remind us that every passing life leaves something beautiful  
behind."

# Tribute Wall



“ *Clive Whittall*

January 25, 2023 at 07:44 PM



“ *Our sincerest condolences to you, Flora, on hearing of Clives passing. He was indeed a remarkable man and will be greatly missed.*

**Jim and Judy Fair** - April 19, 2015 at 07:34 PM



“ *Thinking of you Clive. Adam Wake*

**Adam Wake** - April 19, 2015 at 05:24 PM



“ *Dear Flora,*

*I am so sorry to hear of the sudden and unexpected loss of dear Clive. I was so thankful to you and Clive on your last visit to Toronto to have had dinner and met mutual friends. Clive was very brave to see Dick and I'm sure it made him very sad. But, at 77 who would have expected this, especially after his successful surgery. I'm in Toronto most of the time. You are always welcome to come and stay. My thoughts are with you as you grieve a big loss. Dick and I were married in 1983 the year you met. much love, suzan*

**suzan wookey** - April 18, 2015 at 10:58 PM

DG

“ *Dear Flora*

*I don't know if you will remember us. We had a very pleasant dinner at Rony and Danielle's house in Valbonne. We knew each other from the golf club in Kapellenbos. We have been kept informed of Clive's terrible last adventure by Danielle. This is just to say how sorry we are and to send you our warmest sympathies.*

*Dicky and Laura Gregory*

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**Dicky Gregory** - April 18, 2015 at 01:33 PM