

Obituary - Harvey Clements 1948 - 2012



Harvey was born in Hackney on 29 August 1948. He had one brother, Ivan, who was also deaf, but died 10 years ago. His parents were both deaf too. His father, Frank, died when Harvey was only two years old so his mother, Polly, brought up the boys independently. She died in 2000.

Harvey went to the Jewish School for the Deaf in Balham, where he was then transferred to Frank Barnes School and later to Oak Lodge School. He was a very popular boy and had many friends, with whom he kept in touch throughout his life.

After leaving school, Harvey went into making leather goods in a factory for several years. Harvey had many skills which included being a leather machinist. To go with his hobby and skills, he had a workshop with two big industrial machines that made a lot of noise! Harvey would make and repair handbags, belts, wallets, purses and many other items.

In his younger days, he used to sell his leather goods at a market stall in the East End. He also made handbags for his family and friends; the quality of his work was of a very high standard. Later on, he worked as an Electronics Inspector for a company first known as ITT which later became STC. When he was made redundant, he went back to making leather goods and was self-employed for a few years. This led to opening a shop in Spitalfields. Unfortunately, due to financial difficulties, the shop was closed within a year.

Harvey and Ann met each other at the Jewish Deaf Association in 1987. Upon eye contact, they immediately knew they were the perfect couple to be and fell in love. They soon got engaged and married within a year in 1988 at Beehive Lane Synagogue.

In 1989, Rebecca was born and later Daniel was born in 1991. Harvey and Ann spent 23 years being devoted to each other before he passed away.

Harvey was a wonderful husband to Ann and also a wonderful father to both Rebecca and Daniel. He was always there for the family and was fully hands-on. This included feeding the children at night, being a taxi driver, a chef and a repairer of clothes for the family. As he was very good with his hands, with needle and cotton and with a sewing machine, he did all the mending in the household, not just the DIY. So poor Harvey always ended up with piles of clothes to repair!

Harvey grew up with his brother, Ivan, and their mum at the Jewish Deaf Association, where he later became one of the greatest volunteers and also became a hands-on communicator/guide for Deafblind people.

Harvey loved to explore and travel. He went on many holidays and enjoyed seeing the sights and spending time with the family. His last family holiday was the trip to Australia back in 2008. And in May last year, he went away with Ann to Rhodes in Greece where he had a lovely time enjoying the sun.

As well as his love of travelling, Harvey loved his gadgets and would demand the latest bits of technology for his birthday every year. He would succeed nearly every time in getting them, with his charms. He was a young man at heart and had a great sense of humour!

About 15 years ago, Harvey beat lymphoma cancer and had been in remission. Harvey had suffered from cirrhosis of the liver for many years even though he never drank alcohol. As the years went by, his health deteriorated. Sadly in 2011, Harvey's health got worse and in December, he was diagnosed with liver cancer. He was given 6 to 12 months to live.

Sadly, Harvey deteriorated very quickly over the next four weeks. On Sunday 22 January 2012, he died peacefully in his sleep, with his close ones by his side.

Harvey will be greatly missed by all who knew him - his friends, family and especially his loved ones. Harvey was the world's greatest dad to both Rebecca and Daniel, and the most devoted husband to Ann. He is now in a better place, where he no longer has to suffer. But he will continue to look down and be proud of his family. May he forever rest in peace.

Ann, Rebecca and Daniel Clements

£714 was donated to the JDA by family and friends in memory of Harvey. His family is deciding how they would like this money to be used for the benefit of the members.