

Speech for Fred Moss' Memorial Service

Jan and the family asked me to share a few words and ideas with you about Fred Moss.

As you all know, perhaps better than I do, Fred was highly intelligent and remarkably witty. What I may have liked the most about Fred was his enlivening irreverence. His companionship was sparkling and his friendship was an inspiration to me. I say that because I played my personal best round of golf with him, a par front nine at Northeast Harbor. That was a milestone since I play infrequently and shoot double bogey golf. But for some reason, that morning, Fred recognized my efforts and score - and he kept me playing well by not making me look too long for any of his golf balls shot into the woods. And I know you all remember the dialogue that went along with his errant shots.

Fred's passion for games was contagious and unbridled. He employed every strategy and angle whether the event was tennis, croquet or golf. Years ago we played against each other in a Wimbleberry men's singles semi-final match. For those of you unfamiliar with our tennis club here on Great Cranberry Island, it is based more on hubris than skill. As for my match with Fred, I asked him before we began if he was going to play the lines. He glared at me wryly and put the ball into play. Fred hit high lob after high lob until I was overwhelmed by frustration. Of course, he won the match and I realize now that his signature clamdigger shorts also distracted me.

Fred, Jan and all the Moss family have an awful lot to do with why Susan and I live on this island. I fell in love with all of them - and croquet. Of course, Fred was at the heart of croquet matches on John McDonald's court and on his own, downwardly sloping affair upon which I could never beat him. I suspect he mowed it himself in a certain way to confound and further challenge his opponents.

One of the croquet club stanzas written by my wife's sister, Mimi, begins, "Freddie is ready, and so is Dot, for the middle wicket and another scotch."

We all miss you very much, Fred Moss. And some of us will keep singing the refrain to that croquet club song: "We're glad to say we're on our way, to John and Dot's to play croquet. Our drinks are down; our balls are round; and the R.A.G.C.I.C.C. is back in town."

Douglas Alan Frank
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