

Esme Jelbert, Hayle's Female Citizen of the Year, Passes Away

Esme Jelbert, 65, a stalwart Cornishwoman who for the past five years championed the renovation of Hayle's Passmore Edwards Institute, lost her battle with cancer on 27 February. She passed away peacefully and free from pain in St. Julia's Hospice while holding daughter Amanda's hand. A service celebrating her life was held 7 March at Treswithian Crematorium, which overflowed with family and friends.

Born Elizabeth Esme Hollow on July 14, 1946, to Denis and Betty Hollow of Hayle Terrace, she was the eldest of five children. She attended Penpol School and what is now Hayle Community School.

Esme began her working career at Martins in Foundry Square, later in St Ives, and eventually became a logistics manager in the docks and wharf operations at Humphrey Holdings, in Southampton, after her husband, Paul, moved the family to "foreign parts" in Hampshire. Still later she worked for a financial services company until her (reluctant) retirement at age 60, when, having separated from Paul, she persuaded her partner, Richard, to return to Hayle.

A devoted mother of two, Mark and Amanda, Esme was also proud of her three grandsons, Jay, Jack and James. She held great love for her family and delighted in spending time with both immediate and extended members.

Esme was cherished by all for her warmth, generosity, care, loyalty, boundless energy and vivacious personality. Old schoolmates commented that even as a young girl, Esme displayed a strong character and determination in completing tasks. She spoke her mind, but not with wilful intent. If a job is worth doing, she believed, it's worth doing *very* well.

During her five years living back in Hayle with Richard, Esme threw herself into community life with total commitment. She dedicated countless waking hours to the renovation of the Passmore Edwards Institute, including fundraising, nearly completing a 10-year plan in five years. Indeed, she attended a trustees meeting just a few days before entering the hospice.

In Esme Jelbert, the townspeople of Hayle have lost a tireless worker, a loyal supporter and a generous friend. She will be missed.