

# THE TIMES

## ‘Dad’s passing was a shock, but our brother’s death changed our lives’

**Sir David Frost died three years ago, but the sudden passing of his eldest son stunned the family**

[Damian Whitworth](#)

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Wilfred and George Frost

CHRIS MCANDREW FOR THE TIMES

Sir David Frost's summer party was a fixture in the diaries of London's schmoozocracy, a gathering of political heavyweights, media movers and showbusiness shakers who packed into a Chelsea garden every year up until the grand inquisitor's death in 2013.

This week the Frost family decided to throw the party again, one final time. You may have seen the pictures of guests, including newly engaged Pippa Middleton, Sarah Ferguson, Princess Eugenie, Robert Peston, David Walliams and Felicity Kendal.

The party was held on the eve of the first anniversary of the sudden death of Sir David's eldest son, Miles, while out jogging. The family decided that, although it would be an emotional evening, they wanted to host the event to raise awareness of the genetic heart condition that killed Miles and raise money to help to prevent other deaths.

"It was quite an institution, the summer party, and we thought for one last time it was worth doing it again in aid of the Miles Frost Fund," says Wilf Frost, 30, the second of Sir David and Lady Carina's three sons. "Good way to have fun, raise a glass to both Dad and Miles and raise some money. We're all glad that we did it. Once the speeches were out of the way, it was a lot of fun. Dad and Miles arranged for a beautiful evening; it was great to see so many close friends, all of whom have been a fantastic support."

Sir David, who pioneered political satire on TV and went on to become a fearless interviewer, most famously of Richard Nixon, died of a heart attack while on a Mediterranean cruise. By last July the family were beginning to come to terms with his death. "It was the end of the second year without Dad and we'd just started to get a bit more positive," recalls Wilf.

Miles, 31, and George, 29, were staying with their mother at the family's country home in Oxfordshire. Miles, who was extremely fit, had done some boxing training and then gone for a run. When he didn't return for lunch George went to look for him and found his brother lying, peaceful and motionless, on the drive, a few hundred yards from the house. George and then ambulance staff were unable to resuscitate him.

It was later discovered that Miles had hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, a genetic condition in which the muscular wall of the heart becomes thickened, making the muscle stiff. This can cause sudden cardiac arrest in some who have the condition, even if they have displayed no symptoms. The condition affects 1 in 500 of the UK population (about 120,000 people).

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## You have a big sob and the next day you have purged it

Miles, like his brothers, went to Eton then studied politics at Newcastle University before going into the City. He had been a founding partner of a private equity firm, Frost Brooks, and appeared to be on the verge of success.

Although he partied enthusiastically as a student, he had become devoted to fitness, running a half-marathon in Kenya and giving up drinking during the last two years of his life. “Every day he would do some form of exercise and he was super, super-fit,” says Wilf. “There is no good way anyone can go, but it seems extra unfair if it was pushed by being healthy.”

According to George, the irony that he lived a very healthy life “is one of the most painful aspects. It was from a wholeness-of-life perspective that he was really trying to get fit. It wasn’t a vanity thing. It wasn’t an obsession. It was just trying to get the most out of life, which is the most brutal paradox in terms of what happened. But what I find equally painful is that, were it to have been detected, it could have been completely managed.”



Sir David Frost and Miles Frost, both had hypertrophic cardiomyopathy

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The Frosts were presented with further distress when they discovered that the post-mortem report on Sir David had found he had hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. Yet the condition was not the cause of his death and was not on the first page of the report. It went unnoticed by the family.

We are talking in the kitchen of the townhouse in Chelsea that overlooks Burton Court, the private grounds owned by the Royal Hospital Chelsea, where the party was held. On the table there is a scribbled note of the kind that must have been familiar in Sir David's heyday — a reminder for Wilf, a TV journalist in America, to pursue an interview with Theresa May.

Wilf and George are composed, honest, often funny when discussing their grief. “The dark moments aren't so much the worst thing,” says Wilf. “You are on your own and you have a big sob and it's done and the next day you have kind of purged it. The most annoying thing is the really great moments, because immediately you think, ‘It's such a shame I am not sharing this with Miles.’ Our family has frankly been decimated in the last three years. We were five and now we are three.” They describe a tight-knit family, the boys so close in age their mother saw them almost as triplets.



Wilfred, George and Miles in 2014