



Franica Janka Kukulić Bonda,

Zagreb, 8 December 1931

Volosko, 29 August 2012

Among her many virtues, Franica Janka Kukulić Bonda was graced by love and devotion to bridge, a game in which she achieved great successes at a world level. As an inventive player, Janka was a frequent winner and these victories opened the doors for her to participate in large international tournaments, such as one in India where she played against Omar Sharif and in the early sixties she frequently socialised with the Galbraith family. For many years, in her home city of Zagreb, Janka encouraged and developed the life dynamic and creativity in bridge clubs, thereby contributing to the affirmation of the value system which led to bridge being included in the optional study programme of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the University of Zagreb. As a member of the Croatian Communication Association, Janka participated in various debates and with special inspiration, she vividly spoke about various aspects of the value of Bridge as a game which stimulates mental capacity, develops personality, promotes power of perception and intellect and logical thinking. Originating from the highly respected family of Dr. Dražić, she was a beloved granddaughter of the first qualified doctor on the island of Rab, who introduced up-to-date health care to the islanders by creating programmes of prevention and effective treatment. Her father Franjo Kukulić, business entrepreneur and visionary, who improved the living standards of the island of Rab which was visited by the British king Edward VIII in 1936 with his partner and later his wife, Wallis Simpson. Janka studied South Slavic Literature and Languages at the Faculty of

Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb and in the early fifties, she left for the United States of America. Knowledge of languages, English, French, Italian, German, breadth of general education, sharp wit, intuitive with powers of expression, appropriate for every situation and social gathering, made Janka a respected and popular person. She took naturally to activity in diplomatic circles where her creative and mental ability was much appreciated. From the family home of the Kukulić family, which was located in the immediate vicinity of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, Janka grew to love the performing arts; from an early age she was a devotee of the stage, opera, ballet and drama. She visited plays and attended nearly every performance during the season, from the repertoire of each of the artistic ensembles of the Croatian National Theatre. She became a “trademark” of the house, immediately noticed by the audience from the moment she entered the theatre. She was also an enthusiastic hostess to many artistes. Exceptionally hospitable, she lent a specific charm to artistic evenings in her home, decorated in art-deco style. Meeting an English gentleman, John Claude Bonda, was a crucial moment for her, leading to marriage and parenthood, the birth of a son Frank and the younger son Serge. They attended school and were educated in their native Brussels and later in other European cities where both received their master’s degree in economics. For decades Mr. John Claude Bonda was a well-respected expert for development and application of new energies, especially

solar energy, which he wanted to systematically develop with a programme intended for Croatia, with an envisaged seat in Split. He was a leading adviser to the Committee for New Energies of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Always, he wanted to support the home country of his beloved wife Janka, at a time when it was creating its independ-

ence and developing as a modern European country. Janka's boundless spirit, her love of meeting people added to our enjoyment of life and always, with a new wave of freshness we are reminded of her. Above all, Janka gave her whole being, her magnetism and vigour to bridge, the great game of life. We shall never forget her.