RIP Elizabeth Taylor

March 23, 2011 By Sean Strub

In the mid 1990s POZ had been trying to get an interview with Elizabeth Taylor for several years. We had been both patient and persistent and, in the process, had become friendly with one of her PR representatives. At one point the PR person told us that Elizabeth had agreed to the interview, but it wasn't scheduled. We were told to be ready as we may not get much notice when she is prepared to do it. Not long after her surgery, we got the call and sent Kevin Sessums to Los Angeles to interview her; it was one of her very first interviews after she had brain surgery. There was only one condition, which was that we work out an arrangement with Roddy McDowall to use photographs he had just taken of her. Roddy McDowall was a pleasure, he wanted $2000 and to be listed on the POZ masthead as a contributing photographer.

Kevin's interview with her was terrific and addresses a lot of AIDS-related issues in detail. It ran as the cover story in a special UK-focused edition of POZ, guest-edited by writer/performer Aiden Shaw:

Several years later, I was opening a restaurant in Milford, Pennsylvania. We were trying to get a liquor license, but the state wasn't issuing any more in our county. However, there was a provision under the state liquor code that if we could demonstrate we would attract new visitors to the area, they would consider issuing a special license. So we applied for that special consideration and Elizabeth Taylor wrote a beautiful letter of recommendation for us, indicating that the restaurant would attract artists and film and stage performers to Milford. Her letter, on lavender-colored, scented stationery, caused quite a stir at the the Pennsylvania State Liquor Control Board. We got the license.

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