

Obituaries

Friends give thanks for engineer

More than 250 people attended a thanksgiving service for **George Molyneux**



Hundreds of people have said a fond farewell to inventive engineer and family man George Molyneux.

More than 250 mourners were at Amberley Parish Church in Gloucestershire for the service of thanksgiving for the life of successful businessman and father Mr Molyneux.

The 72-year-old had lived in the village for about 30 years.

A jazz band cheered saddened spirits as the congregation then paraded to the committal in the nearby Amberley Churchyard, conducted by associate minister the Rev Ann Morris.

Mr Molyneux, chairman of Gloucester-based Gantry Railing Ltd, was a good friend to everyone who knew him, his neighbour and retired barrister Brendan Shiner said.

"George is going to be a great loss. George was the kindest person you will ever know," Mr Shiner said.

Born in Dublin in November 1937, Mr Molyneux died in Stroud General Hospital on August 11 following a sudden illness.

An engineer like his father before him, Mr Molyneux was apprenticed and studied at Gwent College in Newport after his family moved back to England.

Gantry Railing, which employs about 30 people at Hempsted, Gloucester, is one of the world's leading companies in crane rail systems. Its staff

have worked on projects such as Heathrow's Terminal Five and the retractable roof over Wimbledon's Centre Court.

Mr Molyneux's widow Jennifer said: "He and his father between them invented the Molyneux rail clip. It keeps cranes on track in dockside situations. For a lot of years they were the only people producing it."

She added: "He had a very dry sense of humour but most importantly was always very loyal to his friends."

"Most of the people there at the thanksgiving had friendships going back 30 even 40 years."

Formerly of historic Melksham Court in Stinchcombe, Mr Molyneux stayed first at the Amberley Inn and later with friends in the village before buying part of listed Amberley Court. He later bought his most recent home in the village where his family remain.

Mr Molyneux, whose passions included Rolls-Royce and similar quality cars, was also 2007 Amberley Spoofing cup holder.

He married Jennifer in 1993. The couple have two sons George, 16, and William, 10.

Mr Molyneux was also father "not in name but in compassion" to his wife's children from a previous marriage - Jessica Buckley, 26, her sister Julia, 24, and brother Jonathan, 19.

Julia told the thanksgiving: "George provided us with a sense of security and calm reassurance, in a sense he was like a rudder to us all. He was not my father in name but in deed, with his kindness, compassion and patience."

Mr Molyneux is survived by his brother Godfrey and sisters Georgina and Grace.

Tributes pour in for 'fair and generous' man

Melville Watts OBE

Melville Watts OBE has died in the very hospital he helped save for his community.

The tireless fundraiser was known affectionately as "Mr Lydney".

He had been in Lydney hospital in the Forest of Dean - which he helped raise more than £1 million to support - for several weeks. His death last week came shortly after he celebrated his 87th birthday by cutting a cake.

His family had been holding a bedside vigil for the prominent member of the Watts family, which can trace its business roots in the town back more than 150 years and was once one of the Forest's biggest employers.

As news of his death started to spread, people lined up to say his death would be a huge loss to Lydney.

Forest of Dean MP Mark Harper said: "When I think of Melville Watts, I think of Lydney Hospital and the Friends."

"Our community was truly a better place for his presence and his loss will be keenly felt."

"At what will be a difficult time for them, my thoughts and prayers are with his family and close friends."

Earlier this summer, supporters gave Melville, who was president of the Friends of Lydney and District Hospital, a round of applause after learning he was too ill to attend the annual fundraising fete.

Tributes have been pouring in for the healthcare champion, who received an OBE from Prince Charles for his community work in 1993.

On July 30 he was last seen in public when he attended a ceremony in his wheelchair to rename a ward the Melville Watts OBE Outpatients' Department.

Mr Watts was former managing director and an honorary president of the Watts Group.

The family, which pioneered the Red and White buses just before World War II, recently sold Watts Tyres but still has extensive business interests in the Forest and beyond.

Mr Watts was well known for attending practically every funeral of employees past and present.

Watts Group chairman John Thurston said: "Melville was an extremely fair and generous person who had a huge feeling of ongoing responsibility

towards his staff and employees.

"If ever there was a setback in trade or we had to change the business by closing factories or making people redundant, Melville would find that very, very difficult."

"He visited ex-employees if they were ill and kept in contact with many of them until their dying day. I've lost count of the number of eulogies he has given at funerals."

"I think one of the characteristics of a family business is that employees become part of your extended family and Melville was one of the most caring bosses anybody could have."

He was the most Senior Verderer in the Forest and patron of the Lydney branch of the British Legion.

He served in Burma during the war but also served 27 years as a local magistrate.

But he is best known for his charity work and often dressed up to perform at com-

'One of the most caring bosses anybody could have'

Watts Group chairman John Thurston

munity events and would sometimes bring a fairground organ or fire engine.

He leaves second wife Jane, children Sarah-Jane, Andrew and Simon, twin brother Cecil, sister Joyce and seven grandchildren.

Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire Sir Henry Elwes said: "Melville was a Forester through and through and his contribution to the welfare of Forest people was outstanding. He not only gave years of service to Lydney Hospital and as a magistrate and Forest Verderer but he also faithfully recorded the history of the Forest for future generations."

"We will all miss Melville's genuine interest in and care for other people and his enormous humour and zest for life."

Councillor Marilyn Smart OBE, chairwoman of Forest of Dean District Council, said: "Melville Watts will be very sadly missed. He was a pillar of the community and a very successful businessman. I was delighted to be able to present him with the Ambassador of the Year award in the 2008 Pride of the Forest Awards."



Melville Watts OBE died in the very hospital he helped save for the community - Lydney and District Hospital, in the Forest of Dean

"He has put so much wonderful work in during his long involvement of over 50 years with Lydney Hospital for the benefit of the people of the Forest of Dean."

"I feel very privileged to have known Melville. He was a true gentleman. My thoughts and prayers are with Jane and his family at such a sad time."

The Rev Patricia Pinkerton said: "A part of Lydney history has passed on into the future. Melville was truly the Man of the People. He was not only a gentle man, he was a gentleman. Always he tried to make

people feel a part of something good, and he worked towards making that good."

"He was a humanitarian, being born into class, but never did he make someone feel less than another. All men were equal unless they did the dirty on one another, and then Melville would be there to see what was right and just."

"Tirelessly he visited the sick and lonely, made each Lydney organisation feel they were the one he belonged to, and most of all never forgot what it had cost to keep Britain free."

Postman was fixture of community

Postman **Peter Nelson** delivered the same round for 45 years



Peter Nelson the postman delivered the same round for 45 years in Bishopston, Bristol, and was a fixture of the community.

Mr Nelson was well known on the Gloucester Road and made many friends through his work for the Post Office.

He was born and brought up in the area and never left it except for prized family holidays elsewhere in the UK and two dream trips to the US which were a lifetime goal.

Mr Nelson smoked heavily from an early age and liked watching football although made the controversial decision to switch his allegiance from Bristol City to Rovers.

With his first wife Wendie he had two children, Ian, 42, and

Angela, 41, before the couple divorced. He then had another son, David, with partner Helen whom he later separated from but remained firm friends with until his passing.

His family fondly recall his habit of counting his pennies every night and lining them up on the sideboard for safekeeping as well as his passion for buying cars and selling them on when he changed his mind.

He was also a devoted son to his parents and particularly his 87-year-old mother Adrine who survived him.

He regularly went out with best friends from work Andy and Shaun, and Shaun was by his bedside along with his family and Helen when he passed away after a battle against lung cancer.

Mr Nelson's funeral is at Canford Crematorium at 4.30pm on September 1 followed by refreshments at the Post Office Tavern in Westbury-on-Trym. All welcome.

Donations to Cancer Research requested.