

Roy Edward Marshall

16th June 1933 - 21st November 2022



A Celebration of Life

Friday 13th January 2023 at 10.40

**West Herts Crematorium
North Chapel**

Opening Music

Acker Bilk - "Stranger on the Shore".

Opening Words

Welcome to a celebration of the life of Roy Edward Marshall.

You all have your own connection to Roy. He was something different and special to each of you. Those connections are important, but perhaps what matters more is that you are here, with Roy, at this significant time. And this chapel would like to welcome everyone joining us remotely using the webcast facility. We trust that you can hear and see us and that you will feel connected and involved with everything that happens. Everything you will hear has been put together from conversations with his boys Doug, Jeff and Alan. We will celebrate Roy's life. We will pay our respects. And, only when the time comes, will we say farewell. Our ceremony today is inclusive. It welcomes people of all faiths, and those with none. If you hold a religious faith, time will be set aside for reflection and prayer. My name is Mike. I am from Humanists UK. This is the story of Roy.

Remembering Roy

Roy was born at the family home, on Bushey Hall Road, on 16th June 1933 to Gladys and William Edward Albert Marshall. A man better known as Bill. Roy had an older sister Rita.

Other than his time serving in the Royal Army Service Corps, Roy would remain a Watford boy and man his whole life.

Roy would have been just six years old when the Second World War began. He had vivid memories and loved to tell tales of hiding in the Anderson shelter at home, waiting for the air raids to end.

He also remembered the V1 bomb landing in Sandringham Road in 1944 which destroyed fifty houses and took out all the shop windows along St Alban's Road. Even hiding in the shelter over in Bushey, Roy described the attack as, a "huge rush of air".

He also remembered being out on a school walk with his classmates and telling the teachers that they could hear a doodle bug approaching. The teacher was not impressed. The kids were right. The explosion caused panic.

Roy also remembered taking great delight in picking up and collecting bits of shrapnel, shell cases and other bits of unexploded ordinance. Health and Safety had not yet been invented.

Like many of his generation, Roy had little interest in school and left as soon as he could. He started an apprenticeship with S.G Brown's but this did not last long.

Fortunately, it was around this time that Roy discovered he had real musical talent. At one time there was a music teacher lodging upstairs and Roy was encouraged to play the clarinet. He was a natural. He put himself forward for auditions and was accepted on the intensive training programme at Kneller Hall near Aldershot.

From there he was enlisted into the Royal Army Service Corps where he played clarinet, saxophone, accordion and side drum. He served for five years and got to play at many top venues like the Royal Albert Hall, the Royal Tournaments at Wembley and he travelled extensively.

Roy was promoted to No 1 Clarinet. A post that recognised just what an outstanding musician he had become. He served between 1950 and 1955.



He would go on to work for Smiths Industries at Otterspool and finally for Dupont as a lab technician working on induction moulding. It was at Dupont that he met his good mate Robin. And it was at Smiths where he met many of his angling buddies. More on that in a moment.

Because we get ahead of ourselves. In 1954 Roy was on leave and wandering around the recreation ground at Watford Fields when he met Shirley Hicks. It was completely a chance encounter, but something happened between them. Roy went back into the military to finish his service, but they stayed in touch.

Roy and Shirley married in 1955 at the St Michael's Church in Watford. They lived for a short while with his mum and dad before moving to Valley Rise on Woodside.

In 1956 Roy became a father for the first time when Doug was born. Jeff arrived in 1961 and the family was completed in 1964 when Alan arrived. By 1967 the family were living in The Crescent in the new house that would come to be regarded by all as the family home.

His boys describe Roy as a happy soul, a man who was sociable and very chatty. They have happy memories of learning to play chess with him, card games and monopoly.

Roy loved aircraft and he liked to sometimes spend the day with his boys at Heathrow or Luton, on the observation deck, watching the planes take off and land.

The boys remember how much Roy loved Christmas, especially the parties with the extended family up on Watford Fields. They recall happy family holidays at Butlins, Warners and Hayling Island, and eventually, joining those more adventurous families in the 1970's who experimented with going abroad to Spain and Majorca.

With his service days behind him Roy remained a smartly dressed man. He might have given up his uniform but he was the sort of chap who never wore jeans and even on the beach, on the family holiday, he would be smartly dressed.

In his free time Roy would wander up Vicarage Road to watch Watford Football Club and in later years supported Saracens Rugby. But his main sporting passion was angling.

He was one of the founding members of the Sceptre Angling Club, a club that had emerged from his time, and with his mates, at Smiths Industries. He was not just an excellent angler, as the photo on the Order of Service shows, but he was involved at all levels and served as chairman for thirty nine years.

Reflection Music

The time feels about right to take a short break from words to listen (or sing?) to a hymn that the family have chosen for us.

While we listen, you might like to draw on your own personal memories of Roy, perhaps reflect on the part he played in your life.

If you hold a religious faith you might like to use these few minutes for prayer.

This is better known as the cup final hymn. This is “Abide with me”.

Memories from Connie.

Roy would go on to be a doting grandfather to Connie, Charlotte and Robert and great grandfather to Jacob, Patience, Faith, Jobe, Alex and Nial, as well as step grandfather to Alice and Grace.

Next in our ceremony we have a few lovely memories from his granddaughter Connie.

- When I lived with him he tried to make me dinner and burnt the meat pie.
- He would always have porridge with prunes and peaches for breakfast.
- He used to watch me play football and I could hear him shouting from the sidelines.
- He would write me letters “the young students award” if I did well, with £10 enclosed. The letter was always SWALK.
- He came to my primary school to talk and discuss with my year group with two other guest speakers. He talked about growing up in the Second World War. At the end of the three talks the kids got to choose who to write a letter to and almost every kid wrote a letter to granddad. He ended up with at least fifty letters.
- We would dance around to the songs from Jungle Book.
- He used to watch me go swimming and afterwards we would go to the Harvester and share a Rocky Horror!
- Granddad had to stop at the shop, and I said I would wait in the car, so he put the radio on. I was thinking it would be Kiss FM but he put on Classic FM really loud and I could not turn it off. He was gone for 25 minutes!
- And he would drive so fast for an old man!

Remembering Roy.

Roy was amazingly fit and active right into his winter years. He was still out and about town and catching the bus up to the Post Office to cash in his pension every week.

He had taken up bowls, both indoor and outdoor, (or, lawn and carpet, if you place the game) so he played up at Woodside regularly, although if truth be told, Shirley was the better player. He became something of an unsung hero at the club, always helping out.

But time catches up with all of us eventually. Roy had been diagnosed with both cancer and dementia but nevertheless he remained independent almost to the end.

Roy Edward Marshall eventually passed away, quite suddenly, on 11th November 2022. He was eighty nine.

We come here today, not to dwell on the winter years in a man's life, and a sudden end.

Instead, we come to celebrate Roy who remained a Watford boy and man his whole life.

We come to admire Roy the talented musician. No 1 clarinet in the army band. The man who could play saxophone, accordion and side drum.

We come to respect Roy who created a successful career in engineering and who provided so well for his family.

We celebrate Roy the excellent fisherman, the founding member of the Sceptre Angling Club, the man who loved bowls, taught chess and who supported Watford Football Club and the Saracens. The man who was fascinated by aircraft and loved to watch them take off and land.

We celebrate Roy who met Shirley, the love of his life, by chance in the park. Roy the family man who loved his boys Doug, Jeff and Alan, the doting grandfather and great grandfather who told amazing tales and drove too fast.

Everyone has come to this place at this time for Roy, the man who loved you all. The man you love still.

We have told the story of the life of Roy Edward Marshall. But now the time has come to prepare ourselves. The time has come to say our formal and final farewell.

As our ceremony draws slowly and gently towards its close, Doug has suggested that The Lord's Prayer might bring comfort to some of you. The words are in the order of service booklet for you.

If you hold the faith please. Join me while I lead. Please stand for The Lord's Prayer and the words of committal.

Committal

Farewell. Farewell Roy. On behalf of your family, friends and everyone who has come here today to bear witness, thank you.

Farewell much loved and loving son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, colleague and friend.

Everyone here will remember what they learned from you and what your story tells us about ourselves.

You will be missed. But you will be remembered. You will live on in the stories and memories of everyone here today.

Thank you Roy.

Safe travels.

Farewell.

Closing Words Our official ceremony has all but ended and soon we will leave this place and return to the many places where our lives continue.

We take a deep breath, we look for the right words and for the best ways to support and comfort each other.

Exit Music

Saying goodbye is never easy but to help us on our way, we have a positive, optimistic song to close.

This is Louis Armstrong.

This is "What a wonderful world".

- Celebrant - Mike Phipps Humanist's UK