

# Roy Wren

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**Royston Alfred Wren died on the 29th July aged 76, just one day shy of his 77th birthday, he was one of the last of the old school of crane salesman, selling his products on personality and specification, but never on price. He led a rich and for the most part happy life.**



Roy Wren

**Born in 1932 in Walthamstow, London, most of his early life was taken up by the Second World War when he was evacuated to Basingstoke. Not liking it he returned home to his parents Ellen and Albert the very next week, remaining at home in Walthamstow with the bombing and all.**

Roy left school just before his 14th birthday, as he could not understand the need to stay, although later in life this was one of his regrets. He wanted to be an actor, but unfortunately failed a key audition, he then thought he could be a jockey, but that too did not work out. As he was too young to be a professional boxer he began delivering Tizer pop throughout Essex, moving on to work at a printers in the West End of London, where he was sacked for fighting. Next stop was a sign-writing job, but once again he was sacked for fighting!

He was for many years very active with Billericay Football Club both as a very useful midfielder and later during the 1970's as a trainer/physio, during which time the club won three F.A. Vase's and eight league titles.

Being of that age group for the

call-up Roy served his National Service in the Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers (R.E.M.E), spending most of his time in Germany. He attended evening classes, taking and passing his RSA exams, leading him to join Coles Cranes as a draughtsman and kicking off his career in cranes. Standing before a drawing board for the next 40 years did not appeal to the young Wren and so at the earliest opportunity he joined the Coles sales team, a decision he never regretted. In the early days there were some lean times, with



Wren during his days as a physio with Billericay FC.

crane sales few and far between, so he would take a market stall at Wickford and Tilbury to help make ends meet.

Roy's career selling cranes was legendary, building up a loyal customer base, who always gave him every chance of getting the deal, which more often than not he did, enabling him to win many sales trophies and prizes over the years. He was selected by Bill de Vigier chairman of Acrow, which owned Coles, to travel to Australia to head the Spring Sales Offensive of 1980. The campaign was a great success, but not without incident, one being when he was told to beware of the Red Backed Spider lurking underneath



Visiting Manitowoc France (Coles France) in 2008 (L-R) Roy Wren with ex colleagues John Massey, John Atkinson and Simon Pedrazzini.

toilet seats. Not a seat went unchecked throughout his travels, with colleagues in adjacent hotel rooms hearing the sound of his loo seat going up and down in the wee small hours! Needless to say the Aussies loved him and Roy enjoyed his time there.

All who knew him will have their special stories, which will certainly include a Bruce Forsyth talent show, where he truly stole the stage and won a trip to Las Vegas to appear on a show there, causing Bruce Forsyth to ask "whose show is this?"

His love of cranes meant he always kept in touch with his friends and colleagues after his retirement from the crane industry. He also ventured into a retirement career as an Official Host and Master of Ceremonies, officiating at many weddings and other venues including the Cranes & Access Crane Dinners during the late 1990's and early 00's. Never wishing to turn an event down he even gave a speech on the "History of the Brassiere" to the Woman's Institute which they will never forget!

Roy's passing leaves us all the poorer as he was uplifting, inspirational and always encouraging. He was also a man with a deeply committed and great faith and would be happy to "share a prayer" over the telephone, giving support to whoever needed it, no matter how far away they were from one another.

Roy married Shirley in 1957 raising three daughters and a son. Sadly Shirley died of cancer in 1984. He married his second wife Sue in 1986 bringing a "new" and very welcome son to the Wren's nest. Sue also succumbed to cancer in 2006. As well as his children he leaves 11 grandchildren.

Roy died from Pulmonary Fibrosis on the 29th July 2009. He was a Diamond.

Bill Green  
August 2009.

Wren as toastmaster at the 2002 Cranes Dinner with a friend.

