

Obituary



Michael Howard Johnson KSG
1941–2016

Michael was Honorary Treasurer of this Society between 1998 and 2015, passed away suddenly, but peacefully, at his home in Stoneygate, on 30th December 2016.

Michael was born in Leicester in 1941, educated at Wyggeston School, and lived in the city all his life, except for a period in Egypt as a child, where his father was serving in the RAF. He was immensely proud of the city of his birth and will long be remembered for his sense of civic pride and duty, his commitment to his charity work, and the promotion of Leicester both at home and abroad.

Michael worshipped at Holy Cross Priory Church, New Walk. In 2001 he became Leicester's first Papal Knight, receiving the Knighthood of St Gregory honour by Pope John Paul II, after being selected for the for services to the church and the city.

He was passionately interested in the history of the city of his birth and was an enthusiastic supporter of Philippa Langley in her search for the burial place of King Richard III. In his signed copy of her book she wrote 'You were the first on my journey in Leicester: he was overjoyed when she was proved right.

A list of his interests and public commitments must be second to none.

He was:

- * An active member of the Scouting movement between 1948 and 1976; he was awarded Queens Scout in 1957, and the Long Service medal in 1974.
- * A keen rugby player, he played for the Old Wyggestonians RFC from 1958 to 1983.
- * He served on Leicester City Council for 35 years, first representing Humberstone, and subsequently Evington.
- * He had a keen interest in education, serving as Chairman of the Education Committee in 2000/2003, and Cabinet Link for Education 2003/2005.
- * Lord Mayor 1995/1996 – successfully raising more than £80,000 for the new Oncology Unit at Leicester Royal Infirmary, and High Bailiff 1999/2000.
- * Member of City of Leicester Twinning Association 1980 to date, and Chairman from 1998.
- * Awarded honorary citizenship of the City of Haskavo (Bulgaria) in 2005.
- * Governor of Wyggeston Hospital from 1995 to date.
- * Chairman and then President of Air Training Corps (1F Squadron) from 1998.

See the message below from Masaya Link Group which shows the high regard in which he was held.

Below are some heart-warming words, written to Marion, his wife of 53 years, which sum up his role in town-twinning:

Dear Marion and family,

We were shocked and deeply saddened to hear the very unexpected news about Michael's sudden passing on 30th December.

Michael was a stalwart of the twinning movement and his contribution to the success and longevity of the European links was remarkable. He was highly thought of by his colleagues and counterparts in all the twin towns, and his commitment to the causes and purpose of twinning, was exemplary. Michael was a true internationalist and a dedicated advocate for the civic, social, cultural and educational benefits of twinning, and his enthusiasm was inspirational. His passing will be a huge loss to CLETA and those of us who had the pleasure and privilege of working alongside him.

On behalf of everyone in the Leicester Masaya Link Group, we send our sincere condolences to you and your family and I hope that in due course we are able to pay tribute to the important role Michael played within the International Development Working Party.

In sympathy,

Claire and members of the Leicester Masaya Link Group.

Michael is survived by his wife Marion, his son Paul, daughter Clare, daughter in law Nikki, and his grandson Oliver. He will be much missed by all whose lives he touched. The city of his birth will be a lesser place without him.

Jill Bourne