



### **Bryan 'Nipper' Clarke, 1942–2024**

Bryan Clarke, or Nipper as he was more affectionately known, was born in Deddington on 17 December 1942 to parents Henry and Irene Clarke. He was one of four children with siblings Iris, Terry and Pat. Nipper attend Deddington Infants School and then went on to the Windmill School at the age of 11. He was also an Air Cadet in his youth and in actual fact piloted a glider.

Nipper liked a day out, so he and his mates thought it a good idea one year to join the local Sunday School as he'd heard they were arranging a day's coach trip. He and his mates enjoyed the day trip and then soon after left Sunday School! Nipper enjoyed school where he became a prefect and excelled in all sports, especially football! He left school at 15, as so many did in those days, and started work at Hinkins and Frewin as a quantity surveyor. He then went on to work for Parker Knoll in quality control where he spent the rest of his working life.

Nipper started playing for Deddington Football Club whilst still at secondary school and he had to obtain the headmaster's permission to do so. He went on to win many trophies including the 1967 Coronation Cup. He also represented the Banbury & District League select 11 in 1967 and 1968.

Six-a-side competitions were played during the summer months and these resulted in various victories at Middle Barton, Upper Heyford, Piddington, Middleton Cheney and Hook Norton. He was also part of the team that won the final competition held at the Castle Grounds in 1976. When most players were looking to end their playing days, Nipper continued with the next generation of Deddington footballers and at an age where most people chose to slow down and take it easy, Nipper became part of the Deddington team that enjoyed victories winning the Benevolent Cup, the Banbury Guardian Cup, the Coronation Cup and the Oxfordshire Charity Cup many times over a five-year period and was part of the team that in 1977–78 won the league title and three other trophies.

A truly great servant to Deddington Football Club for over 25 years and a man, whilst little in stature, had the heart of a lion.

Apart from supporting Deddington Football Club, over the years, Nipper also supported Nottingham Forest, whom he followed for many years and would, I'm sure, have been pleased to see the success the club are enjoying currently.

He loved to play golf locally with friends and over the years was a very well-known character in the local hostelrys of Deddington where he was heavily involved with Aunt Sally and was also master of many a quiz.

He was partial to a magic trick or two and loved nothing more than entertaining friends and visitors to whichever pub he happened to be in with his conjuring skills. Nipper was incredibly social and was always a friendly face to newcomers to the village.

Each year Nipper led the New Year's Eve Celebrations in the Market Place with the singing and organisation of 'Auld Lang Syne' which was always so well appreciated by many.

Thank you to all those of you who passed on memories, there will be many more stories that can be shared after this service as you continue to remember Nipper in more familiar surroundings (the Unicorn).

Today we remember the man, the carpenter, the craftsmen, the sportsman and the friend who loved a laugh and a joke, who once carpeted a very young and testing Harriet O'Donnell to the floor whilst carpeting a room at the house, to the sheer delight of her parents, Dr Hugh and Viv O'Donnell.

Above all, we remember his loyalty to his friends and his community. I'm pretty certain, if cut in two, his heart would read 'Deddington'.

Nipper passed away on 20 December 2024, just after his 82nd birthday. Sleep well, your work is now done as another character from Deddington departs, but leaves a huge legacy of very happy memories behind him.

***Edd Frost, Edd Frost & Daughters, Family Funeral Directors***