



In Loving Memory
of
Ralph Nathaniel Bird

Born 18th September 1897

Died 20th December 1987

Funeral Service in
Pendoylan Church
on
Thursday, 24th December, 1987
at 11.30 a.m.

President of old family firm dies

A SAD loss will be felt in Welsh and English business circles after the death of the president of a long established Cowbridge firm, Mr Ralph Bird.

Mr Bird, aged 91, was president of family firm R S Bird Limited. He was born in Cowbridge and educated at the Grammar school, before seeing active service in the Great War as a despatch rider.

In 1918 he returned home to join the family business in Cowbridge High Street. He was keenly interested in turf culture and grass care equipment and sold his first lawnmower in 1922.

One of the pioneers of his industry, he was not content to remain within the confines of the Vale of Glamorgan, so expanded his firm to Bancycelin near Carmarthen, Hereford and Bristol. He developed the Cowbridge business into a modern garden centre.

Mr Bird was never one to miss a game of cricket for Cowbridge in his younger days and then in later years became an accomplished golfer. He played for many years at the Barry Golf Club at the Leys and was the club's last captain.

After the building of the power station there he joined Southerndown and then Royal Porthcawl Golf Clubs. At Southerndown he

had one of his more famous victories, when he won the Red Cross Golf Cup, over 36 holes, at the age of 70.

Mr Bird's keen interest in sport and turf culture led him to help found the South Wales branch of the Institute of Groundmanship and he served for many years as President of the South Wales branch of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association.

He was also President of the South Wales Veterans Golf Society, the Leys Golfing Society and the Cowbridge Grammar School Old Boys Association.

Mr Bird, who lived at Heathcote, Broadway, Cowbridge, was one of the few remaining Great War veteran members of the Three Services Golf Society. He was also a member of the South Wales Coast Captains Golfing Society.

He was actively connected with the Cowbridge Rotary Club, was a life member of the Cowbridge Athletic Club and an honorary member of the Cardiff Athletic Club Golf Society.

An immensely sociable man and a renowned raconteur, Mr Bird loved nothing better than the company of his family and friends. He was married for over 60 years to wife, Betty, who died in July 1986. He leaves two sons, Roger and Rodney, and four grandchildren.

Heathcote
Broadway
Cowbridge

I would like you to know how grateful I am for your kind message of sympathy at this sad time. It gives me much comfort.

July, 1986

MR. R. BIRD COWBRIDGE

A well known figure in South Wales and the West of England business circles, Mr. Ralph Bird, President of the long established Cowbridge based family firm of R. S. Bird Limited died on December 20th in his ninety first year. Born in Cowbridge Mr. Bird was educated at Cowbridge Grammar School and saw active service in the Great War as a despatch rider in France. On returning to South Wales in 1918 Mr. Bird joined his family business located in Cowbridge High Street. From this period to his death he was keenly interested in turf culture and grass-care equipment. He sold his first motor mower in 1922 and soon Birds of Cowbridge became synonymous with grass machinery. Raph Bird was one of the pioneers of his chosen industry being among the first in Britain to establish a business for the sale and service of mowers. Not content to remain within the confines of the Vale of Glamorgan, he expanded his firm to Bancyfelin near Carmarthen, Hereford and Bristol. Quick to adapt to modern retailing Mr. Bird developed the Cowbridge business into a modern garden centre.

In his younger days Ralph Bird was never one to miss a game of cricket for Cowbridge and in later years became an accomplished golfer. He played for many years at the Barry Golf Club at the Leys and was the Club's last Captain. After the building of the power station there he joined Southerndown and then Royal Porthcawl Golf Clubs. One of his more famous victories came at the age of 70 when winning the Red Cross Golf Cup over thirty six holes at Southerndown. Mr. Bird's interest in sport and turf culture led him to help found the South Wales branch of the Institute of Groundsmanship and he served for many years as President of the South Wales branch of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association. Mr. Bird was also President of the South Wales Veterans Golf Society, the Leys Golfing Society and the Cowbridge Grammar School Old Boys Association. He was an honorary member of the Cardiff Athletic Club Golf Society and one of the few remaining Great War veteran members of the Three Services Golf Society. He was also a member of the South Wales Coast Captains Golfing Society. Mr. Bird was a Life Member of the Cowbridge Athletic Club and for many years was actively connected with the Cowbridge Rotary Club.

An immensely sociable man and a renowned raconteur Ralph Bird loved nothing better than the company of his family and friends. Mr. Bird was married for over 60 years to his wife and sweetheart, Betty Mason who died in July 1986. He is survived by his two sons Roger and Rodney and four grandchildren.