

Cliff, the most loyal Sherwood Forester



Cliff Housley and, inset, during his service in the Sherwood Foresters.

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GLOWING tributes have been paid to a veteran who dedicated his life to the Sherwood Foresters – as regimental historian for decades after serving as a sergeant.

Friends said Cliff Housley, who died on March 5, aged 76, was “perhaps the most well-known Sherwood Forester”.

That is a testament to the respect of the man who won a Certificate of Merit from the Regimental Association in 2010 for his outstanding contribution.

Close friend John Cotterill said: “His gruff and irascible demeanour concealed a man who would go to any time and trouble that he could to help any member of the regimental family and to promote the good name of the Foresters. Right up to the end he was working for the regiment. The Foresters were lucky to have had Cliff Housley and will not see his like again.”

Mr Housley was born in Church Avenue, Daybrook. He joined the Foresters as a boy soldier in 1956 and served in Plymouth until old enough to deploy to Malaya in 1958. He served in Cyprus and trained in Borneo, Libya, Germany, Canada and the UK.

He was promoted sergeant in 1965 and was the mortar sergeant in A Company. The next year he was posted to 13

Army Youth Team at Bestwood Lodge, where he remained until taking voluntary redundancy in 1969 when the Foresters merged with the Worcestershire Regiment.

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John Cotterill

After leaving the Army he joined the police and later became a director of Carter’s Soft Drinks. In 1996 he was made regimental archivist for the Foresters.

He was the author of 17 regimental history books and built and maintained a Foresters database of more than 136,000 officers and soldiers. His work uncovered information for hundreds of stories in the Nottingham Post, Derby Telegraph and other media. He raised over £20,000 for a memorial to the Foresters on the Western Front in Belgium and to the 14th Foresters at San Savino in Italy. He spent eight years redesigning and modernising

the museum at Nottingham Castle. Retiring in 2004, he stayed on as a museum volunteer and became trustee.

Jennifer Brookman, assistant curator and archivist from the Museum of the Mercian Regiment (into which the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment merged in 2007), said: “Cliff’s work ethic was second to none and with his hard work has made the museum what it is today.”

Lt Col Mark Holden, acting chairman of the trustees, said: “His death marks the passing of one of the most loyal members of the Foresters.”

“Cliff dedicated his life to promoting and preserving the history and ethos of the county regiment. His dedication to his regiment, its history and old comrades is unmatched and he was a loyal friend who placed duty to his regiment above almost everything else.”

Cliff married Barbara Wildgust in 1961 and they had two daughters, Andrea and Karen. He was divorced and married Erica Lockett in 1984 and they lived in Draycott Road, Sawley.

The funeral takes place on Wednesday, March 30, at Longmoor Lane Cemetery, Breaston, Derbyshire at 10.30am.



Want to pay tribute to someone special? Email
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