

## James More-Molyneux 1920 - 2013

James's father, General Longbourne, saw service in World War I and was mentioned in dispatches 13 times, believed to be a record, as well as being awarded the DSO and later appointed CMG. He married Gwendoline More-Molyneux of Loseley and later took the name More-Molyneux-Longbourne.

James was their only son, born in 1920, in time to serve in World War II with the 4/7 Dragoon Guards and the 14th PWO the Scinde Horse, and he inherited Loseley from his mother after her death in 1946. In his book *The Loseley Challenge*, James describes how he came back from the war to find the devastation which had overtaken the house, the farm buildings and the estate generally – a situation into which he put all his energy to save and to restore. It was no mean struggle. Electricity was only installed in the house in 1948 and James said he well remembered the thrill of pressing the light switch for the first time and the bulb lighting up!



James founded Guildcrete Ltd in 1947, making concrete blocks, which later became Guildway, introducing the first timber-framed, brick-clad buildings in the UK. In 1951, he founded the Loseley Co-Partnership and was chairman of Loseley Park Farms. He opened the house to the public in the same year and in 1968, he started Loseley Dairy Products. (His father had built up the Loseley Jersey herd in the 1920s and had started production of cream, as well as farm-bottled milk.) Later James found time to be a Director of Seeboard.

James met Sue, his wife, and her sister Donny, in Oxford early in the war, when James's regiment was stationed in the area. When their father died soon after the war, they came with their mother to live at Loseley. They entered into life at Loseley with energy and enthusiasm, ready to turn their hand to anything from pulling weeds to driving heavy lorries and tractors and helping to get the house straight. Sue would sing at the top of her voice while working, an outdoor person who loved Loseley and its natural beauty, even in its run-down state. James and Sue were married in Compton Church in October 1948, with the sun shining from a clear blue sky. The Farm and Estate staff formed an archway of raised hoes and pitchforks as they came down the church path! Their son Michael was born three years later.

James had a deep Christian faith, which was supremely important to him. He founded the Loseley Christian Trust in 1983, which was devoted to the Christian Healing Ministry and which has given solace over the years to many sufferers from cancer, Parkinsons and other serious conditions. He had an infinite generosity of spirit and was well known for his unbounded kindness and interest in others, in particular those less fortunate than himself. James became a Lay Pastoral Assistant in 1986 and a member of the Lambeth Support Group in 1992. He was Patron of St Nicholas church, Compton, where he had served as Churchwarden, and was elected to Artington Parish Council on which he served for over 50 years.

A supporter of many organisations in the County, he served as High Sheriff of Surrey in 1976 and became Vice Lord Lieutenant in 1983. He was awarded the OBE in the same year. A man of many parts, he loved the countryside and enjoyed riding, cycling, photography and writing. Loseley will never forget the huge contribution James made in saving not only the estate from bankruptcy but putting it on a path to ensure its future for generations to come. The great house, which he inherited and saved by his exertions, is now restored and regenerated. It is host to every conceivable event and flourishes under the devoted care of Michael and Sarah and their family. Its survival is a living tribute to James, enjoyed by thousands in the County and outside it. James is survived by his wife of 65 years, Sue, their son Michael and his wife Sarah, and their children Alexander, Katrina and Tristram, and his Great Granddaughter, Cressida.

Even with his passing, James's legacy lives on, for the benefit of all. May he rest in peace.