

MR HOUGHTON FEAST

Councillor John Mawston was elected to Houghton-le-Spring Urban District Council in May 1955 and became Chairman twelve years later. It was in this capacity that he carved the first slice of roasted ox at the 'Great Houghton Feast Revival' of 1967, as well as being the guest referee in a push ball competition at the Rugby Club (shown below).

John was very passionate about the Feast and in 1976 he became permanent Chair of the Houghton Feast Steering Committee and continued in that role until 2012 when he was made Life President. In 2010, he was crowned King of Eventide and led the Round Table's Carnival Parade procession in a very dignified vintage car with the Queen, Annie Thompson. A year later he was back in the Parade but with Billy Purvis the clown - such was John's sharp sense of humour!

Councillor Mawston, as he will be forever known (along with 'Mr Houghton Feast' of course), became Mayor of the Borough of Sunderland in May 1987 and undertook a demanding year of attending hundreds of community events and civic engagements, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, where he was proud to represent Sunderland along with his Mayoress, Mrs Selina Parr.

John will be remembered by many for his more than 50 years public service, not just to the Shiney Row Ward or town of Houghton-le-Spring, but to the whole of the City of Sunderland and his many community associations, which included Beamish Museum, the Sunderland Empire Theatre Trust, Age Concern, Houghton & District Piping Society, Shiney Row Male Voice Choir, and Shiney Row Community Association to name but a few. This impressive achievement was recognised when John was made an honorary Freeman of the City at a ceremony alongside Sir Bob Murray CBE and Sir Peter Vardy in October 2011.

John passed away on March 4th 2020, aged 92 years.

We give thanks for John and his contributions to our historic Houghton Feast.



Remembering
John Mawston
1928 - 2020



HOUGHTON HERITAGE SOCIETY

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