



“Uphill and into the wind”

Big Roy

His life in cricket

**Written and compiled
by his friends**

**Published by
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Robert George 'Roy' Torrens OBE

Born 14 May 1948 • Died 23 January 2021

Roy Torrens was a great supporter of the efforts of those who write and commentate on cricket in Ireland. His untimely death was well covered near and far, but coming in the middle of the pandemic meant few were able to pay suitable tribute to a well-loved man. His friends in the Cricket Writers of Ireland decided to publish this book of memories and testimonials as our way of saying thanks to Roy – and to Joan and his family for sharing so much of him with us. Thanks to all those former team-mates and those who played under his management, and others, who wrote such excellent tributes.

We are very grateful to those who have contributed towards the costs to enable us to offer this to you with our compliments. Thank you to Cricket Ireland, Cricket Leinster, Robinson Services, O'Neills, Robin Walsh, North West Cricket Union, Bertie Faulkner, Paul Davey, Bryan Milford, Kevin Woods and some past and present Irish cricketers

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A rich and full life in Irish cricket

ROBIN WALSH

CRICKET IRELAND PRESIDENT
2013-2014

It was the day of the funeral that brought home to me the real depth of the respect, admiration and love in which my closest friend was held.

The dreadful virus that tragically took his life may have confined the service to 25 heartbroken family members and friends. Yet it somehow added to the poignancy of daughter Judith's beautiful eulogy highlighting what mattered most to Robert "Roy" Torrens: the devoted husband, father, grandfather.

Outside the church ex internationals donned blazers and ties - what their former manager had called their "Number Ones" - to bid final farewell to the man they would never forget; his coffin draped with the Cricket Ireland flag courtesy of officialdom.

And throughout the country and beyond, technology revealed that thousands watched the service streamed to their homes, most of them cricket lovers whose enjoyment of the game had been enhanced by the irresistible company of The Big Man.

And a big man he was in every sense.



There was his physique: as he himself would often say, he was no stranger to a fish supper.

There was his big heart: his generosity was boundless and imaginative whether it be hospitality or a helping hand to friends whatever the problem.

And there was his huge character: highly principled laced with an infectious sense of fun, always game for a laugh.

It was inevitable that he was no stranger to awards, highlighted by the OBE conferred on him by Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace in 2009.

Most recently, a matter of weeks after his death, came the prestigious John Wright Award for outstanding contribution to Irish cricket.



And what a contribution. He was a senior cricketer with his beloved Brigade at the age of 15, first cap as Ireland's opening bowler at 18, selector/chairman, board member of the North West and Irish Cricket Unions, President of the ICU to bring in the new millennium and 11 years as the outstanding manager of the men's national side.

The pages that follow will reflect just how outstanding he was through the eyes of coaches and players with whom Roy experienced historic victories in the final stages of three ODI and three T20 World Cups. What memories they have as do others who enrich this thoughtful publication.

Roy's retirement as manager was not the end of the story.

It allowed him to take the chair of

Brigade and delight in the league and cup titles of 2019. The last time the double had come to Beechgrove was back in 1973: Roy was the opening bowler; his elder brother Ross the captain.

And then there were "Torrens Tours" when as chief cheerleader he marched supporters north and south through airports across the world to give the national side a greater will to win. Always the best rates in town with many a "happy hour" (or two!) for good measure.

I once asked Roy for his most cherished memory of his life in cricket. Without hesitation he said it was the bond he'd enjoyed with the players he had managed.

"When we meet we don't shake hands", he said. "We hug."

The players weren't the only ones.....





On February 26, 2021, at the ITW Irish Cricket Awards, Roy was posthumously presented with the John Wright Trophy for Gibney's Outstanding Contribution and Service to Irish Cricket Award.

During the online ceremony, his great friend Robin Walsh said: "Roy was an icon, there was no doubt he was one of the greatest figures in Irish cricket – in fact, I could give you an argument why he was the greatest all-round figure in Irish cricket."

Pictured above with his award are Roy's wife Joan and their daughters Joanne, Judith and Andrea

SHAHID AFRIDI

PAKISTAN 1996-2018, IRELAND 2006



Roy was so very kind to me during my time with Ireland in 2006. He was such a gentleman and nothing was any trouble as he went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure I had everything I needed to be happy.

It was clear to me just how important he was to

Irish cricket and how much he was valued by the team who clearly loved and respected him.

There was such laughter and humour in that squad and much of it was generated by and at Roy, who was always at the centre of things helping the players relax and perform.

Everyone I met told

me just how important he was to the progress that Irish cricket had made over the years.

I have very fond memories of my time with the Ireland team, and it was a pleasure to play for them with Roy around.

He will be sadly missed and my heartfelt sympathies to all his family.

ANDREW BALBIRNIE

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2010

In the summer of 2010 I got a late call-up to the Ireland squad for the ICC World Cricket League in The Netherlands. I remember being overcome with excitement and realising that my dream of playing for Ireland was a bit closer to becoming reality.

I arrived and settled in with 'roomie' Andrew Poynter. There was a knock on the door from team manager Roy Torrens, or Big Roy as I soon had the balls to call him. He had an envelope of cash for me (our per diems, or daily expenses) and told me not to spend it all in the one shop, followed by a sly wink. He then sat down and two hours later he was still talking - but that was fine because I was always happy to hear tales of 'Back in my day'.

After the first couple of games it was clear that I wasn't going to play unless there was an injury, so I did the duties that all Ireland 12th men had to do: fill the drinks bottles, wear the bib, and listen to Roy.

On the morning of the game against Scotland, I was feeding throw downs to Stirlo when there was an almighty screech from coach Phil Simmons on the other side of the ground: 'BALLLLY, YOU'RE IN'.

Ok Simmo cool, I thought. Right, this was the moment; all my dreams of

playing for Ireland came down to this. I'm 20 minutes from my first Irish cap. My parents weren't there, not a spectator in sight, and we're going to be fielding.

Who would present my cap? The



five-minute bell went. I looked around the dressing room and no one seemed aware that it's my big day. We strolled out of the pavilion and Roy caught my attention: "Balbo where's your hat?"

"Eh, well I don't have one Roy."

Smiling, he then gave me the presentation I had been waiting for all my life: "Oh right, well here, take mine son."



COLIN BARKLEY

LORD'S TAVERNERS

As a cricket mad 12-year-old, I saw Roy win his first cap against Middlesex in 1966 and while I never played against him - he would have been far too good for me, or so he said - we got to know each other at Irish matches, dinners and golf events.

From the mid 1990's, I organised an annual Lords Taverners Golf Day at Stranraer Golf Club and Roy was a regular there, introducing numerous friends and family to the event, including his big pals Trent Johnston and Phil Simmons.

It was after a Stranraer trip, that he invited my wife and I to join Torrens Tours, to watch Ireland play Afghanistan, in India. Although he was no longer team manager, the huge affection with which Roy and Joan were held by the players was clearly apparent.

Every night, the Torrens Tour group would assemble for drinks and on one of



Roy and his great pal Alfie Linehan

these occasions our leader demanded silence. He was looking at his phone and could not believe the football scores he was seeing on the BBC.

"Incredible! You've got to hear these," he said. "Azerbaijan 17 Moldova 00, Nigeria 18 Ivory Coast 15." At which point Robin Walsh explained: "Those are the kick off times, Roy!"

I was delighted to join Torrens Tours again in 2020, to watch three ODIs and a T20 in the

West Indies. Of the four games, two went to the final ball, and as a spectator, even after hundreds of Irish matches as a player, selector and manager, Roy lived every ball as passionately and animatedly as ever. He was the ultimate Irish cricket fan.

One night, during the usual jibes and banter, he said: "The difference between me and you, Barkley, is that when I die people will be sad!"

Regrettably, we found that out much too soon.

ALEX BIRNIE

INSTITUTE FC & BRIGADE CC

While best known for his exploits on the cricket field, Roy was an excellent footballer too. I played with him for Institute and one game in particular stands out: a quarter-final of the Intermediate Cup at Ballymoney in 1981.

We scored through Peter Love in the first five minutes, and after that they laid siege to our goal. It was like the Alamo, and Roy was colossal as he repelled everything thrown at us. It was a case of 'Thou shall not pass'. I've never seen a better individual display.

We played them again the following week, and as we arrived one of their team asked: "Is that big fella that played last week with you again?" He was and they were beaten before the start - we won again 2-0.

Roy's humour and one-liners in the changing room were great for morale. He once scored against Dungiven and the rumour was that their



goalkeeper, who always wore tracksuit bottoms, had a wooden leg. Roy had hit a trundler from about 35 yards which, he claimed, bobbled into the net through the goalie's leg. As the evening wore on the goal just got better and better, and from further away.

Remarkably, back then Roy was playing twice a day. He would turn out for Gransha in the Saturday Morning League and for Institute in the

afternoon, despite being in his 30s. He had great stamina to go with his ability.

We went to a Ballymena game a few years ago, where everyone knew him and we were invited into the boardroom at half-time. Roy was soon in conversation with former players, including Jackie Fullerton. It was clear from the stories just how much he was still admired up there.

STEVE BERNARD

AUSTRALIA MANAGER 1998-2011

Roy had what we Australians would term an Irishman's love of a good yarn, plus a very dry sense of humour, which he used adeptly when taking the mickey out of his mates.

We first bumped into each other walking around the Cape Town waterfront in 2002, when I was managing the touring Australian team, and he was watching the Test series with our mutual friends Robin Walsh and Alfie Linehan. We immediately hit it off and became good friends; he was engaging, and very interesting company.

When Roy became manager of the Ireland cricket team our paths crossed more regularly. We were both in Barbados doing a pre-tournament visit prior to the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies when we were interviewed together on local TV to discuss the tournament.

Before going on air, Robin challenged us to



include a certain phrase in our answers. Roy's was "40 shades of green".

When asked by about Ireland's match against Pakistan, Roy replied that both teams played in a green kit, and it would be like 40 shades of green when they walked onto Sabina Park.

As he said this, he turned to me sitting on the other side of the host and, with a big grin on his face, gave me a subtle wink.

In 2015, my wife and I spent some time in Ireland, with a view to driving around the island and seeing what I had missed on my cricket visits. We met Robin, Alfie and John Caldwell at the Portrush Hotel overlooking the fairways of the famous golf course, and had a long and very enjoyable evening together.

Next day, Roy and Robin gave my wife and I a wonderful guided tour of the many sights of



Northern Ireland, including The Giant's Causeway, Derry, and the Bushmills Distillery. Roy ensured that I got to sample a very fine glass of their finest 50-year-old whisky.

The last time I saw my friend was during the World Cup qualifiers in Northern Ireland in 2015, when I was working as a referee. What stood out to me was the regard and great affection all the players still had for Roy, a couple of

years after he had retired.

It was his humour, enthusiasm and straight speaking that made him so very popular. He was both respected and loved, which is not an easy balance for any manager to achieve. The players would confide in him, and they trusted him implicitly. That he could handle the problems as well as joys that come with the role in such a professional and empathetic way for 12 years

spoke much about his character.

On the last day we were together in the tournament, he again took me on a guided tour of his favourite haunts. We visited many small and character-filled local cricket grounds, including his own, and Roy was on a first-name terms with every person at each ground.

He also gave me a fantastic tour of Derry where he told me some interesting stories about living there and how he used to make daily deliveries to certain areas controlled by the IRA. He was a skilled storyteller, and the stories he told me that day remain with me, as very funny, interesting and occasionally scary.

He was a truly great bloke as we Australians like to say about very good human beings. Those of us in Australia who knew him were devastated by his passing, and have all spoken glowingly about what a wonderful man he was.

ADI BIRRELL

IRELAND COACH 2002-2007

‘Uphill and into the wind!” I’m not sure how many times I heard that phrase, but it was a lot. Whether or not it was true of his playing days, it symbolised Roy’s contribution to cricket in Ireland over many decades of service.

He was always happy to do the hard yards and I would love to know how many meetings he attended, how many miles he clocked up and how many tours he went on to keep the game thriving.

Roy was team manager during my five years as Ireland coach, and his unwavering support and incredible knowledge of the Irish players, history and system was priceless.

I took his counsel and wisdom to heart and learned a great deal, but while his management of people was also outstanding, anything requiring technology like having to change a flight we would call on John Wright or Iain Knox.



We travelled together many times and he loved the social aspect of a tour more than anyone I have known.

When we visited my home in Eastern Province, at the start of our World Cup preparations, I tipped him off that my Uncle Bill did not have a great capacity for alcohol. The following morning Roy reported that he had put Uncle Bill to bed and that he certainly was not a good sight.

Roy on the other hand

was never in that boat, his capacity to handle alcohol was legendary. I never saw him drunk!

There are just so many stories; on that tour during a ‘fines meeting’ we learned his real name was Robert, to our amazement and hilarity. You would have had to have been there to understand.

Roy holds a special place in the memory of everyone who knew him, and a very special place in mine.

ANDRE BOTHA

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2001-2011

Where do I begin? Coming over from South Africa to play club cricket in Dublin as an 18-year-old, with the occasional trip to the North and North West, the name Roy Torrens always seemed to come up somewhere during conversations.

May I add, always in a good or funny way. So I probably met Roy in my younger days without knowing what a influence he would have on my international career.

As Ireland team manager, he made me feel welcome from my debut in 2001 all the way through to coming to get me from the Indian clinic where I was recovering from injury at the end of the World Cup, 10 years later.

I'd played my last game for Ireland and, typically, Roy told everyone in the squad he had collected me from "an old folks' home".

He just had that gift to know what to say and when to say it. For me



Roy was much more than a manager, he was like a father figure away from home. I am 100 per cent sure every single player that played under him will say the same.

Roy also became a good friend. One weekend he invited Yvonne and myself to Portrush and looked after us like royalty, till very late into the night. Playing golf with him at Portrush was

also a great experience. For the record, you always tried to play with Roy and not against him!

Sadly he died a few weeks before Yvonne and I re-settled in Ireland. I would have loved to meet up with him again but I'm sure he will be remembered in a lot of conversations for a long time to come. RIP Roy and thank you for everything you did for me.

Roy and IRELAND

Ireland cap No 507



AS PLAYER

First cap: v Middlesex (Ormeau)
20-21 July 1966 Game no.240

Final cap: v Wales (Ormeau)
2-4 June 1984 Game no.333



AS PRESIDENT

Predecessor: Dermott Monteith

First game: v Scotland (Harare)
6 April 2000 Game no.523

Final game: v Scotland (Ayr)
19-21 August 2000 Game no.537

Successor: Derek Scott



AS MANAGER

First game: v Loughborough Colleges
(Loughborough) 23 April 2005
Game no.592

Final game: v Pakistan (Adelaide
Oval) 15 March 2015 Game no.863

World Cups 2007, 2011, 2015

World T20s 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014

Roy played 30 times for Ireland

Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts	Best bowling	Avg	5for	RPO
643.3	138	1976	77	7-40 v Scotland 1974	25.66	2	3.07

Innings	NO	Runs	Highest score	Avg	4s	6s	Ducks
33	5	294	44 v MCC 1974	10.50	33	1	8

SEASON BY SEASON bowling record

	Mat	Overs	Maid	Runs	Wkts	Ave	Best	5WI	Cts
1966	2	38.3	10	122	6	20.33	4-77	-	1
1967	2	54	9	195	5	39.00	2-43	-	-
1968	2	16.4	3	59	4	14.75	3-25	-	2
1971	1	35	11	68	4	17.00	3-36	-	-
1973	1	31	8	53	3	17.67	3-25	-	2
1974	4	116	23	283	18	15.72	7-40	1	2
1975	3	62.2	11	189	11	17.18	4-44	-	-
1976	2	23	-	144	2	72.00	1-29	-	1
1981	6	136.1	36	415	14	29.64	6-42	1	1
1982	6	105.5	20	392	6	65.33	2-21	-	3
1984	1	25	7	56	4	14.00	3-40	-	-

SEASON BY SEASON batting record

	Mat	Inn	NO	Runs	HS	Ave	SR	100	50
1966	2	4	2	16	12*	8.00	-	-	-
1967	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1968	2	2	-	18	10	9.00	-	-	-
1971	1	1	-	1	1	1.00	-	-	-
1973	1	2	-	33	24	16.50	-	-	-
1974	4	6	1	65	26	13.00	46.51	-	-
1975	3	4	1	57	44	19.00	64.04	-	-
1976	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1981	6	5	-	24	12	4.80	160.00	-	-
1982	6	5	-	68	39	13.60	64.84	-	-
1984	1	1	1	12	12*	-	-	-	-



JEREMY BRAY

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2002-2009

What endeared me to Roy was that he never ever seemed to be in a bad mood. When we lost it hurt him probably more than the players but he never moped around. He used those losses as an opportunity to be really positive around the group and would often have a word in my ear if I'd had a bad game, and that would reset my thinking in the best way.

There were times when I stepped out of line with comments and as team manager he would in his own way let me know that my behaviour wasn't good and the reason why. I loved that about him – the ability to give out positive criticism that you never questioned and always took on board.

My best moments with Roy were undoubtedly over a drink – or several. He was awesome to chat to about cricket and his knowledge about players was excellent – especially his



eye for talent. When Paul Stirling first came on the radar, he told me that he thought Stirlo was going to be an unbelievable player. Lo and behold no truer words were said.

On a few occasions Roy tried to get me up to play for his club Brigade and to this day I am sad it didn't happen for whatever reason. I can only imagine the awesome times I would have had

with Roy if that move had materialised.

To sum up Roy in a few words: a hugely infectious personality that drew people of all characters towards him.

He was an absolute legend of a human being and I have no doubt he is looking down from above, with a cheeky Famous Grouse in hand, cheering on all things Irish cricket.

ANDREW BRITTON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2009-2012



I first got to know Roy Torrens in 2009 when I was selected for the Ireland team. Roy was managing the team and acted as a father figure for many of us young lads doing what we always wanted to do.

He was a pillar of support to me, a real gentleman, the craic was always good and most of all he was a man of talent and knowledge in the

cricketing world.

Shortly after Roy retired from being Ireland team manager, he came back to his home cricket club Brigade where I was captain. He had played many games at Beechgrove himself and now as club chairman he supported me in my captaincy.

Attending all the Brigade games, he showed me and the team ded-

ication and determination. Win or lose, Roy had positivity and always a clear head on how to move forward. His main goal was to improve the club, make it his home from home and that was most certainly achieved.

The club is what it is today because of him. Roy will be sorely missed by myself and everyone else at Brigade Cricket Club.



ALISTAIR BUSHE

THE NEWS LETTER

I don't pretend to have known 'big Roy' to anywhere near the same extent as some of our other cricket writers. But for me it was his sheer character and ability to dominate a room that I will most remember. I recall a North West cricket dinner at The White Horse Hotel when Roy was guest speaker. Prior to the event, I was invited for a drink in an adjoining room with other guests, and before I got anywhere near the door I could hear Roy's voice,

booming out above any other. It was a prelude to an hilarious after-dinner speech. It being the North West, the proceedings usually move (very) slowly and by the time Roy got to his feet to speak, it was probably well after 10pm. Many of the audience would probably have preferred to be in the bar by that stage, but soon he had them in the palm of his hand.

Needless to say, when we were talking that night he used the opportunity to ask if my dad

could get him Manchester United match tickets. And you can be sure his request was never for a United game against Crystal Palace or Norwich City.

For me and many others, Roy will be synonymous with this golden period of Irish cricket. All of the finest moments of Irish cricket from the 2007 World Cup onwards you can identify with Big Roy, sporting that huge grin on the sidelines as a famous Irish victory got ever closer.





IAN CALLENDER

WRITING ON IRISH CRICKET SINCE 1982



Anyone who met Roy Torrens invariably had a friend for life. That was certainly my lucky fate, when I said “Hello” to the new Ireland cricket selector at Eglinton in 1992.

By then his playing days were behind him and although I reported on four of his 30 Ireland internationals I have almost no recollection of them.

My early memories of Roy were of long, late nights in hotel bars in Ireland and around the world, invariably in the company of fellow selectors Dermott Monteith

and Ronnie Lawlor.

When he became Ireland team manager, Roy was always on hand to give me the nod or wink that a certain player would be in the XI and, as all of the squad would testify, he was always there when a helping hand was needed.

My most told story was during Ireland’s tour of the Caribbean in 2010 – Trelawny in Jamaica, to be precise. I was unable to find accommodation after we had moved north from Kingston so Roy offered to put me up in his room.

There appeared to be a problem though: there

was only one bed.

Never mind, Roy was brilliant at sorting out these things and he departed to the local supermarket and returned with an inflatable crocodile, of the type often seen in swimming pools. It was my bed for the night on the floor of his room!

Four years later when I arrived in Mt Maunganui on a pre-World Cup tour to New Zealand, it was Roy again to the rescue when I turned up late at night, ahead of an early departure for Hamilton. He let me bed down in his room; this time there was a spare bed.

KENNY CARROLL

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2006-2007



Roy was so positive and would always look at opportunities and the good in everything. This kept spirits up in the squad and meant there was a big enjoyment factor at all times, which is key for players and teams to perform to their maximum.

No job was too small for Roy and his lack of ego in carrying out the bits and pieces helped build the team into what it was. No matter what happened on or off the

pitch every player and every staff member knew that Roy had their back, and had the utmost confidence in them.

Nothing fazed him. He knew how to deal with every situation and every person, and there were plenty of 'quiet words in the ear' to players before taking the field. This helped everyone to concentrate and perform at their best - including the coaches and backroom team.

Although his role of team manager didn't in-

clude coaching, the environment Roy helped to build was a big part of the success Ireland enjoyed.

As someone who didn't play for Ireland for too long, and was soon out of 'the bubble', I have looked back and asked 'What did that team have?' What was its X factor?

Roy Torrens helped create and develop the X factor that made the team so special in terms of cricket and in terms of Irish sport and the joy it gave people.

MICHAEL CAULFIELD

IRELAND TEAM PSYCHOLOGIST SINCE 2010

There are very few people you meet in your 50s who change the way you look at life, but that is what Roy Torrens did to me. I will always consider it a huge slice of luck to have been able to get to know Roy, see him work and above all, embrace life, sport, and of course, Irish cricket. I am often asked what is the best experience I have had in sport, and the answer is easy, it was travelling with the Ireland cricket team, and much of that was down to Roy.

One can get very blasé about working in international cricket, almost too used to the travel, the smart hotels, the incredible locations, having so many things done for you, but with Roy at your side, you were never allowed to forget how privileged you were to be part of the Irish set-up.

Yes, he was the finest storyteller of all, there is no doubt about that, but his stories had meaning to them, reminding you that it wasn't always



about business class travel and five-star hotels.

His playing days were very different, taking time off, combining work commitments, family and travel, and all for the love of playing and representing Ireland.

It meant everything to him.

Time with Roy was an education, and you

simply can't put a value on the time spent with Roy on the boundary, in a hotel, and yes, in a bar, where he held court.

Above all, he cared; he cared for the players, staff, their families and I hope he knew how much we loved him too.

Anyone who played under him as team manager owes him so much, and I am no different.

BARRY CHAMBERS

CRICKET EUROPE

Cricketers were locked down long before it became fashionable, with nights spent in hotel rooms across the globe in the build up to crucial games, abstaining and preparing. That was the plan anyway, but it didn't appeal to Roy who saw alcohol bans and 'dry states' as a challenge. He could divine Famous Grouse and a few beers in the driest of deserts.

I got to know him on tours, especially World Cups, although I confess to stitching him up in the West Indies. I was disgruntled at not being included in the 2007 squad, and having to pay my own way to Jamaica. It was therefore a holiday for me, and I proceeded to forward Roy's contact details to my extensive media lists, with all requests to go through him.

Well, when a tie with Zimbabwe was followed by the win over Pakistan mayhem ensued and I was quickly drafted into the squad as a beleaguered Roy gladly relin-



quished his media portfolio. He grudgingly admired me for my stance.

A few days later, my idea to generate some publicity by taking a photo of Eoin Morgan with a machine gun resulted in one of our commando security unit getting fired. Roy came to the rescue, leading a delegation to the Guyana Police chief, and got the officer reinstated. Nobody could say no to Roy.

He was at his best

when we visited orphanages and hospitals. The kids loved him and he made them laugh doing his Fred Flintstone impression.

The players kept him young and you could see how much he loved them all, no matter what their indiscretions. His death has hit everyone hard but I can only smile and laugh when I think of Roy.

There won't be another like him.



PETER CHASE

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2014

I didn't become involved with the Ireland senior team until 2014, the year before Roy retired as team manager.

Although my time with him was short, like many others I was struck by the remarkable presence about him that encompassed humour, wit and just the odd piece wisdom from his playing days!

To a new player in the squad, he presented a welcome presence and an approachable person in the management set-up.

I'd joined a squad that contained a lot of players who were household names and had World Cup victories and medals from tournaments.

As a youngster I was in awe of these guys and their achievements, but Roy made sure I never felt out of place within the squad.

The awarding of a player's first cap is a momentous occasion, and Roy was a significant figure when I received mine



from coach Phil Simmons before the match against Sri Lanka A. The manager's words of encouragement that day are remembered and greatly appreciated by me.

Even after his retirement as manager, Roy's love, passion and commitment to Irish Cricket was clear for all to see.

Regardless of location, you could count on spot-

ting Big Roy watching on and supporting his team. I will never forget looking up to see Roy and his trusty companion Robin Walsh patrolling the boundary in Greater Noida of all places. It was always comforting to see a familiar face, especially away from home.

Roy Torrens is an iconic figure within Irish Cricket and his presence will be sorely missed.



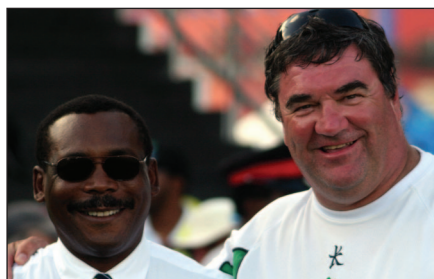
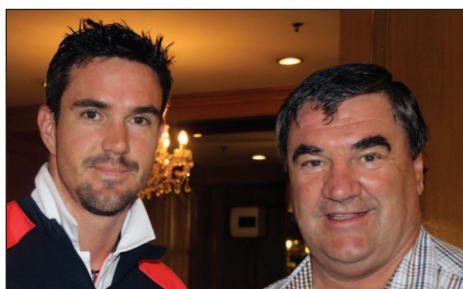
Roy's FAMOUS FRIENDS

The legends of cricket and many other sports have queued to have their photograph taken with the great Roy Torrens





OPPOSITE PAGE: Roy with Test legends Ian Botham, William Porterfield and Sunil Gavaskar; Mike Atherton; boxing world champion Barry McGuigan. **THIS PAGE,** from top: Roy with Robin, Sir Everton Weekes and Alfie; (left) President Mary McAleese; Kevin Pietersen; Olympic gold medalist Mary Peters; Mike Gatting and Gordon Greenidge



ELAINE COBURN

IRELAND SUPPORTER

I first met Roy Torrens back in 2001, after the ICU and IWCU amalgamation and I was put on finance and fund-raising committee who met the first Sunday of every month in the Ballymascanlan Hotel.

Roy came straight over, welcomed me warmly and sat me down between himself and Robin Walsh. That is where our wonderful friendship began.

Following the Irish team with Roy at the helm was always good fun. He was a great leader, a shoulder if needed and a true friend to all the players. He was also known for including the supporters and always did a lap to say hello to everyone there.

One trip stands out: St Patrick's Day, 2007 in Jamaica, what a result for the team and fans.

Roy certainly had his job cut out for him, with a lot to do after that game, but he was in his element.

Another memorable trip was to Bangalore in



2011. In Roy's world, there was no such thing as 'can't'... the team were staying in a very strict hotel indeed, but Roy came to the rescue to persuade the management to open the bar so the celebrations could continue into the night.

When it came to the away trips, Roy organised the best of them and they became known as 'Torrens Tours'. He always knew a man, who knew a man, and if he didn't then he made sure he befriended all the right people wherever

we went. We were never short of anything.

My lasting memory will always be Bridgetown, Barbados, January 2020.

Each evening we'd all meet up in the gardens of the Coconut Court Hotel, when everything was closed, and all other guests and staff had long gone to bed.

We'd all sit with a 'wee' tippie, listening to Roy regaling us with many a story until the 'wee' small hours! Super memories we'll cherish.

Sleep well Roy.

OSSIE COLHOUN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1959-1979



Before Roy came into the Ireland side in 1966, it wasn't really a team, more a collection of individuals who played for themselves. His introduction helped change that ethos along with players such as Ivan Anderson and Michael Reith.

Roy was so pleased for his team mates when they did well – getting wickets or scoring runs; there was certainly no jealousy from him, just genuine pride and joy.

We quickly became best friends both on and off the field.

He was a smashing fellow, so easy to get on

with and we had some great times together.

Roy was a whole-hearted cricketer who always gave 100 per cent. There was one Inter-pro I remember at Sion Mills, with Irish selector Kevin O'Riordan in attendance, with a watching brief on Roy. The big man had a swollen ankle, and was barely able to get his boot on, but he defied the pain and went on to wreak havoc with the ball.

That performance secured his place back in the Ireland team where he belonged. He was great for team morale always with a smile and a joke. Boy did we laugh.

Roy really looked after me and I was always made so welcome when I visited the family home, with Joan and his daughters. He came, of course, from a great sporting family. The Torrens name was synonymous with Brigade and Beechgrove over such a long period of time through him, his father Bobby, and brothers Ross, Norman and Ian. It's been great to see his sister Audrey too having a pivotal role at St Johnston.

Roy's death has hit me hard. It's such a sad loss for all his family and friends and I'm proud to say I was one of them.

BRENDAN CONNOR

IRELAND S&C COACH SINCE 2011

There are so many stories and memories of touring with Big Roy. One of the funniest, and the one that reminds me of Roy's ability to make everyone laugh, happened during our training camp in 2014, in Australia and New Zealand.

The day started as usual, the boys weighed in, made a note of how they had slept, how they felt, what their mood was like, and the next thing was hydration testing.

We were staying in apartments so this information and data collection took place in Roy's block. Andrew White provided me with his urine sample, with a straight face. I immediately noticed it was very



warm and dark, and the readings were very high for Whitey.

I started into a rage about his poor prep and the standards expected of an international cricketer, when out of the corner of my eye I caught Big Roy spitting out his coffee and crying with laughter. Little did I know that it was Roy's pee sample.

The whole group were in fits of laughter, which was a much needed tonic during a hectic tour.

I hope that gives just a small insight into what touring life was like with Roy. He was a person who cared so much about the players and staff on a professional and personal level, and there was never a dull moment.

Roy's first game for IRELAND

Ormeau, Belfast, July 20-21, 1966,

Both Middlesex openers, Smith and Russell went soon after tea to the 18-year-old fast bowler, Roy Torrens but it was Hewitt, a glutton for work, who made the bigger impact, taking the wickets of Murray and Clark and then running out Bennett with a magnificent throw after Parfitt had taken a quick single off his bowling.

Middlesex made a solid opening, and the first wicket, that of M. Smith, did not go down until 58. He had previously been dropped twice off the new fast-bowler, R. Torrens, and was finally caught by Anderson in the covers to give Torrens his first wicket for his country, a success which he promptly marked by having the other opener, and England player, E. Russell, caught by O'Riordan, at 61.

All things considered, this was a fixture that did little to enhance the image of Irish cricket. And what is more, support for the match, in perfect conditions, was such that the organisers must anticipate a loss of about £140.

Yesterday morning the Irish fast bowlers, A. O'Riordan, who finished with 3 for 69, and R. Torrens, who had the most satisfactory debut figures of 4 for 77, did well to take the remaining five Middlesex wickets in the first hour.

Then Ireland's troubles began afresh, and once again it was left to I. Anderson, a newcomer of the highest calibre, and A. O'Riordan, to feature in a face-saving partnership.

The Irish captain, Donald Pratt, retired after the game, but the four debutants went on to serve Ireland magnificently over the years: Ivan Anderson (86 caps), Brendan O'Brien (52), David Pigot junior (44) and Roy Torrens (30).

Ireland no match for Middlesex

THE traffic at Ormeau yesterday was of a one-way variety with Ireland outclassed by Middlesex, the margin between the teams being an innings and 21 runs.

Middlesex, all out for 248 after an hour's play yesterday morning, left Ireland with ample time to make amends for their first innings' failures. They required 153 runs to make Middlesex bat again, but, as in the first innings, Ireland had no answer to accurate bowling and were all out for 112, having scored 118 previously.

Donald Bick, the Middlesex off-spinner, was the man to do all the damage, taking six for 19. Five of his wickets fell to catches close in on the leg side by Freddie Titmus.

For the second time, new cap Ivan Anderson was the most successful Irish bat, making 57, while Alec O'Riordan was once more second best with 21. Both openers went at four and then Anderson and O'Riordan put on 45 for the third wicket in the only Irish stand of any consequence.

The rest of the recognised batsmen were never at ease, but the 18-year-old fast bowler, Roy Torrens, completed a highly satisfactory match by coming in at No. 11 to make 12 not out, the third-highest score in the Irish second innings.

Yesterday morning, he and A. O'Riordan accounted for the last five wickets, with left-hander Peter Parfitt the outstanding Middlesex bat with 93.



SCOREBOARD

IRELAND—1st Innings	
Total	112
MIDDLESEX—1st Innings	
M. J. Smith c Anderson	27
b Torrens	
W. E. Russell c O'Riordan	53
b Torrens	
P. H. Parfitt c Colhoun b	93
O'Riordan	
E. A. Clark b Hewitt	2
J. T. Murray lbw b	50
Hewitt	
D. Bennett run out	4
D. A. Bick c Colhoun b	8
O'Riordan	
F. Titmus c Anderson b	14
Torrens	
H. Lochman c and b	8
Torrens	
B. Stewart b O'Riordan	5
J Price not out	0
Extras	4

Total 248
Fall of Wickets: 1/58; 2/61;
3/68; 4/162; 5/173; 6/195;
7/218; 8/236; 9/241.

BOWLING	
	O M R W
O'Riordan	24 5 69 3
Torrens	22.3 4 77 4
Hewitt	17 2 69 2
Monteith	4 0 27 0

IRELAND—2nd Inns.	
H. C. McCall b Price	2
D. R. Pigot c Smith b	2
Stewart	
I. Anderson c Bick b	37
Titmus	
A. S. O'Riordan c Titmus	21
b Bick	
J. D. Monteith c Smith b	7
Price	
D. M. Pratt c Smith b	11
Bick	
B. R. O'Brien c Titmus b	6
Bick	
C. Corry c Titmus b Bick	4
F. S. A. Hewitt c Titmus	0
b Bick	
O. D. Colhoun c Titmus b	2
Bick	
R. Torrens not out	12
Extras (b3, lb 5)	8

Total 112
Fall of wickets: 1/4, 2/4, 3/49;
4/80, 5/80, 6/87, 7/85, 8/93;
9/97.

BOWLING	
	O M R W
Price	11 5 13 2
Stewart	4 0 8 1
Titmus	18 9 18 1
Latchman	13 4 34 0
Bick	12.5 5 19 6
Parfitt	3 1 12 0

SIMON CORLETT

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1974-1987

I was always glad to be on the same Ireland side as Roy, and it was a pleasure to have him bowling at the other end. He was an awkward customer on a pitch that was doing a little, as we saw at Ayr in 1974, when his 7-40 won us the match against Scotland. In those early days, Roy was one of the quiet types, who just got on with things along with his north-west buddies, Ossie Colhoun and Tommy Harpur.

We soon christened him 'Fred Flintstone', and with Ginger O'Brien looking like Barney Rubble we had our cartoon characters to go along with some fun times on and off the field.

Odd things that stick in the memory include Roy catching Collis King one-handed on the boundary after the West Indian had hit Michael Halliday for 26 runs from the previous five balls of the over.

Then there was a two-day match against Surrey at the Oval, in sweltering



Simon with ex-Dutch international Ruud Onstein at the Cricket Writers Dinner in Strabane

heat on a belter of a wicket. Alan Butcher was smashing it everywhere, and the ball just wasn't going past the bat, so Roy stopped halfway through his run and told Paul Jackson to take off his wicketkeeping gloves and go field at cover.

When he went out to bat in that game, unable

to stem the sweat, he played one of his customary swings to leg, and his bat flew towards the square leg umpire. As he made his way over to pick it up, Roy announced that, to be fair, the skipper had told him to throw the bat.

When our playing days were over, we found



Simon presents his
Irish debut cap
to Eoin Morgan

ourselves on the national selection panel. This involved watching cricket by day, and discussing the implications in the bar by night, while consuming numerous 'Low Fliers' - Famous Grouse to the uninitiated - usually after an ample meal.

Roy was obviously well brought up as there was never anything left on his plate. On one occasion when staying at the Grand in Malahide, we sat down to eat, and Roy asked the waitress if

she could check with the chef and see if he might have a nice thick steak? On her return, she apologised; there were no thick steaks, but would he like two instead? His smile told her all she needed to know, and while we just about managed to finish our single steaks, there wasn't a scrap left on the big man's plate.

The night porter at the Grand would groan at the sight of us coming back late to the hotel, as he knew he would be on

duty until the early hours.

It was during these marathon sessions that I realised what a wonderful raconteur and entertainer Roy was and I spent a couple of years trying to persuade him to speak at our club dinner. He always said he wasn't up to it, and didn't want to embarrass us. However, he finally relented and was the star of the show.

So my claim to fame is that I was responsible for his new career, and he never looked back.

If I was present at one of his engagements, Roy never missed the opportunity to tell everyone that when playing for Ireland, he always seemed to have to bowl up the hill and into the wind while I had the other end. I just used to shrug and point out that he was bigger and stronger than me.

We shall miss him. If there is a mould for making another Roy Torrens, it is a mighty big mould to fill.



SEÁN COYLE

RADIO FOYLE

My first meeting with Roy came when I was invited to play in a charity match at Brigade. I'd never played the game but that didn't stop me telling my listeners in the build-up to the game just what I was going to do with Roy's bowling. "Bring plenty of balls, they're going out of the park, Roy."

On the day of the game I strode out to the middle and Roy came up the pitch and showed me the ball, and said: "Here Sean, take a look at this

because you're not going to see it as it whizzes past your ears. You might smell the leather but you won't see it."

He then disappeared on a long, long run-up and I experienced a little bit of trepidation. I needn't have worried as he gave me a few gentle lobbs to allow me to try and hit them, not too successfully as it turned out.

Over the years, Roy would call from time-to-time if he was running a charity event, or there was a big night being

planned. You just couldn't say no to him, he had such a great way about him that you just didn't refuse.

Not that it was a one-way street. He was incredibly generous as a host, and on many occasions I was superbly looked after.

The 'Wednesday Night Club' at Beechgrove gave us all such great times, with stories and humour aplenty and Roy invariably in the middle of it all holding court. He will be missed by all who had the privilege to meet him.



Roy presents his debut cap to Chris Dougherty

GAVIN CRAIG

ICU PRESIDENT 1990-1991

In 1966 Roy Torrens bowled me with one that swung away and then cut back. I have very few memories of balls that bowled me but Roy's is still crystal clear almost 55 years ago.

I knew then he was a special bowler but came to know he was also a special person. He had the wonderful ability to befriend and entertain.

We often travelled together to meetings on a Sunday morning. Those journeys were always lively, sometimes hilarious, especially if Roy decided to select his worst ever Ireland team.

There was no malice, just humour about the efforts of former teammates.

One Sunday In the middle of this hilarity we were stopped by traffic police and he was about to be booked for speeding but when the constable heard the name 'Roy Torrens' a booking became a warning and we were sent on our way.

When I stood in for him on a few occasions



as manager of the Ireland team, I heard humorous stories such as when Roy got around a daily breathalyser test introduced by coach Phil Simmons for the squad and backroom staff. The rascal would palm the

machine in those big mits, blow into his mobile phone and then hand the real breathalyser back.

Roy often said he was a poacher turned gamekeeper. What a gamekeeper!

ALEX CUSACK

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2007-2015

Roy was manager when I made my debut after the 2007 World Cup, and once you were part of that team, he took you in as one of his own, and made you feel like you really belonged.

Over the nine years that I played for Ireland, Roy became a great friend as he did to many. He was one of the funniest people I'd ever come across and always had a great story

to tell. I have a fond memory of one particular dinner with Roy and Whitey, enjoying a great time and a laugh.

Roy was always so quick-witted and it wouldn't take much to have you in stitches. On a tour in the Netherlands, a few of us along with him jumped on a tram without a ticket. Sure enough the conductor came up looking for all our tickets. Roy stepped forward to spin the biggest yarn you've ever heard to get us off the hook.

Another time at a World Cup, Roy was given the task of getting bats



signed by the Australian team. Unfortunately we discovered we were one bat short and the Australian manager couldn't be tracked down, so rather than disappoint one of the fans, Roy, myself and Whitey forged the signatures from one of the signed bats. He had us in hysterics as he copied each one – we were on the ground rolling about in howls of laughter.

Thankfully, the recipient was none the wiser. These are just two of many moments spent in his company that I will cherish forever.



PAUL DAVEY

DIRECTOR 'BREAKING BOUNDARIES'

I was stopped in my tracks when I heard of Roy's passing. I haven't crossed paths with him in over a decade but somehow it doesn't seem that long ago. Roy left an impression with me that is as fresh today as it was back then.

I had the honour of traveling with Roy and the Irish team through the West Indies at the 2007 Cricket World cup while directing the documentary 'Breaking Boundaries'.

Upon my arrival in Jamaica I was worried as I needed to identify characters who would carry the narrative of the film. Looking back now, I couldn't ask for better than Roy Torrens.

As I got to know him, I witnessed him in action. He was prolific in getting things done, making sure the players had everything they needed, solving problems, he was quick with a joke and he had no problem putting someone to right if they needed to be, while



keeping mutual respect.

I felt that Roy was looking out for me. He gave me the nod when there was something that he thought would be good to film. Roy was in a lot of the "stand out" scenes. Fishing the ball out of a river, explaining to camera that he was calling players employers asking if they could stay on for the

"super 8's" and not forgetting the heartfelt trip to the orphanage in Guyana when he had a surprise donation from the squad ready in his pocket.

He was a wonderful, hardworking, empathetic man with his family at the centre. At this sad time, I think of Roy's family and friends, I wish them strength.

WARREN DEUTROM

CRICKET IRELAND



From the first time I met him, it was obvious that Roy was Irish cricket's secret weapon.

In 2004 I was working as the ICC's event manager, and was over in Ireland on a tour of the 25 venues hosting the ICC Trophy the following year.

There were 19 venues in the north, it was the longest leg of the tour, and John Wright arranged for myself and a colleague to stay in the Europa and to be 'looked after' in the evening by Robin Walsh, Richard

Johnson and Roy. And we were.

My recollection of the evening was an invitation for 'just one more' back at the Europa – after a very long dinner – at which point the real questions started about whether any budget savings on the event might be used to benefit to Irish cricket.

Roy ensured I enjoyed his company and his stories all the way to a messy 3am, at which point my release for an early flight was contingent upon agreeing to raise the matter directly

with Malcolm Speed, the CEO of the ICC.

A few months later, I'd had little luck in getting the matter resolved but Malcolm agreed to discuss it when he arrived in Belfast for the event itself.

Roy suggested that Malcolm might enjoy a round of golf at Royal Portrush and to be 'looked after' that evening. And he was.

And so, not for the first time or last, Irish cricket benefited and gave everlasting thanks for its most astute salesman and one of its finest human beings.

The Ireland squad at the 2007 World Cup



Back row: Matt Dwyer (asst coach), Iain Knox (physio), Kenny Carroll, John Mooney, Jeremy Bray, Boyd Rankin, Andre Botha, Kevin O'Brien, Paul Mooney, Peter Johnston (analyst), Roy Torrens (manager); **Front row:** Niall O'Brien, William Porterfield, Andrew White, Eoin Morgan, Trent Johnston (captain), Adrian Birrell (coach), Kyle McCallan, Peter Gillespie, David Langford-Smith

GEORGE DOCKRELL

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2010



Roy was incredibly welcoming and really looked out for me when I first joined the Irish team. I remember my first trip with the senior squad when I flew from New Zealand to Sri Lanka to meet the team who had already been there a week, or so. I was 17, and travelling across the world by myself was a nervy experience. I arrived to Colombo airport at 3am and Roy was there waiting for me. He'd stayed up to make

sure I was greeted with a familiar face.

On the same trip I needed to submit a piece of schoolwork and wasn't sure how to do it so I thought I'd ask Roy.

I told him I needed help with scanning something back to Dublin and he looked at me and said one of his favourite lines: "I think you're confusing me with someone who gives a damn." Or words to that effect.

The colour must have drained out of my face because he broke into a

big laugh and said: "Follow me son, we'll get that sorted now." And we did.

He had such an amazing way with words and always knew when to crack a joke to lighten the mood. I loved his incredible story telling and turn of phrase. His humour, care, and kindness went a long way and everywhere we went he made an impression. From hotel staff, to liaison officers and even while beating umpire Aleem Dar at table tennis, he was always making friends!

JOE DOHERTY

CRICKET IRELAND PRESIDENT 2014-2015

My early encounters with Roy Torrens were in Strabane v Brigade matches in the mid-1970s. I played against him three times, twice in the League and once in a Senior Cup semi-final, winning one and losing two.

I didn't really come across him again until 1999 by which time he was a selector and President-elect of the Irish Cricket Union, which held its meetings in Dundalk. I attended as a delegate from the North West. We immediately 'hit it off' and always seemed to know where each was coming from, especially in the context of issues affecting North West cricket.

Roy wasn't always orthodox in his methods and his problem-solving strategies were often creative. When Ireland qualified for that first World Cup in the West Indies, as Team Manager, he was keen to get a deal organised that would secure good gear for the



players and to have an understanding for the financial incentives that might lie ahead. The problem was getting the various parties together because we all had day jobs and I was working in England during the week and returning home via Glasgow. Which was a problem...

So on a frosty evening in late January 2006, he picked me up at the Cairnryan-Belfast Ferry Terminal and whisked me off to a Chinese res-

taurant where at 6:30pm we had a meeting with Kyle McCallan, the Ireland team players' representative, and Ian Gourley, at that time Treasurer of the ICU. By eight o'clock we had the business done, four hungry mouths had been fed and the Chairman of the Union – me – was safely deposited at the Europa Bus Station, just in time to catch the bus home to Derry.

Roy didn't do problems, he did solutions.

RICHARD DONE

WORKED AT ICC 2004-2020



My enduring memory of Roy, and there are many of the great man, takes me back to 2005.

It was my first visit to Ireland in my development role with the ICC, and I'd been collected at the airport by another legend of Irish cricket, John Wright, the Honorary Secretary of the ICU.

He put me up at the Grand Hotel at Malahide and, as was appropriate at the time, booked dinner at Vinny Vanucchi's, letting me know that we would

be joined by the Ireland team manager.

As expected, one Guinness led to another, and one bottle of red wine to another two (or more)! We were then joined by John's brother who'd been at the horse racing with a number of his people. They invaded our quiet threesome and the night really swung into gear.

Little more can be said about that but it was returning to the hotel that topped off the night. As we walked back to the Grand at around 2am, Roy

and I started to relive our glory days as fast bowlers - he was the quickest ever to bowl for Ireland, apparently, and I'd played a few games for New South Wales.

This led to the frightening sight for any passersby of two very old and quite possibly mad pacemen running in, side by side, attempting to recreate their full run-ups and delivery (and no doubt a quick sledge) on the flattest of tracks - the Malahide Road - before doing it all again!!



STELLA DOWNES

IRELAND SCORER SINCE 1996

Roy Torrens was a one-off, a giant of a man in so many ways. Genial and ebullient, he loved people and people loved him. At any cricket gathering he was the first man you saw... and heard! I was lucky to spend a lot of time in his company over the years, both in Ireland and on trips abroad. He was in his element in groups and loved to regale audiences with wildly exaggerated, self-deprecating stories.

While most will remember Roy's larger than life persona and his tall tales, it was his kindness that struck a chord with me.

Beneath that jokey exterior beat a heart of gold. He was quick to spot people on the fringes of the group and to include them, and took me under his wing as a fledgling international scorer. I will be forever grateful for that.

Roy acknowledged people travelling to support his boys and made sure that all were well looked after. He also appreciated the people who volunteered in host clubs and would go out of his way to praise their efforts. The tea ladies adored him! He spent time clearing up changing rooms after games to ensure the volunteers weren't left with a mess to sort out.

Trips to South Africa showed Roy's kindness and compassion. In 2008, Ireland had just qualified for the InterContinental Cup Final after a long tour to Namibia and Kenya.

Supporters hadn't travelled and it was unlikely anyone would join the team in

Port Elizabeth for the final which would also mark 100 caps for Andre Botha.

It seemed wrong that it would happen in an empty stadium so I made a last-minute decision to go. I was a little apprehensive as I'd never travelled such a distance alone. A four-hour delay in London meant that I missed my connection in Johannesburg.

When I finally arrived, exhausted, in Port Elizabeth, I heard my name being called ... and there was Big Roy! He had heard a whisper that I was travelling out alone and he had come by taxi to the airport to collect me.

We went to a lovely restaurant on one of the nights, where Roy proceeded to plough through a kilo of steak! The following day we were talking about it being so cheap when we heard that locals couldn't afford to eat there as it was so expensive compared to their wages. Roy was embarrassed to have been talking about the great value, so on our last night in town he invited all the locals who had worked at the game to that restaurant and treated them to dinner.

On another trip to Johannesburg, Roy and Joan arrived with an extra case filled with children's clothes to give away on the streets of Soweto. The delight of the children was obvious ... and Roy got the chance to spread the gospel of his beloved football team by handing out Manchester United shirts! Roy's passing has left a huge void that will never be filled.

Ní bheidh a leithéad ann arís (we will not see his like again).

MATT DWYER

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1998-2001



I had the privilege to play cricket, sit on committees, and help run cricket teams with Roy Torrens.

In all of those roles he carried out his duties with great professionalism and integrity, along with his own special charm.

Roy gave most of his life to cricket both on and off the field, and there are just so many stories which will be shared over and over by

far better story tellers than me.

Not just the normal cricket manager tales of flight changes and excess baggage, hotel rooms, laundry and many similar issues, but with Roy there were episodes including ladders, flags, suitcases full of money and players posing for photos with firearms. He always seemed to be in the middle of it.

Oh, and did I mention the one about Sir Alex

Ferguson and the treble?

My memories of Roy are simple, a man who made you feel welcome every time you met him, a man who made you feel special when you were in his company and a man you always wanted to meet again.

He was 'The Special One' – although he wouldn't thank me for saying that – and I'd like to thank Joan and her family for sharing this gentleman with us.

ALLAN EASTWOOD

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2010

After one of the training days prior to an Inter-Continental Cup match against Zimbabwe in Harare, I was having lunch with Roy when he let slip that he had arranged for a fridge in his room to house his 'medication' – a euphemism for his favourite tippie, The Famous Grouse.

Fast forward to the match and I came out at No 11 and hit one the best shots of my life off their opening bowler, a cover drive all along the deck for four.

In the dressing room later, Roy said: "That cover drive was something, I didn't know you had it in you. I hope you know I played plenty of those in my days for Ireland."

It was said with a little nod and a wink, and I replied: "Ah well Roy, it was just in my area."

After the match had petered out to a draw, we had a 'fines' session where they go around the room in turn asking for examples of 'ques-



tionable behaviour'. It finally got to me and Roy stands up to embellish our exchange, making me out to be the biggest egomaniac out there for saying the ball was 'in my area'.

Cue laughter all around and a fine for me.

Fines continued until it was Roy's turn so now was my chance to bring up our team manager

having a commandeered a fridge for his Famous Grouse and not, as it should have been, for looking after the team drinks. Again laughter all around and a huge fine for Roy.

A short time later in the bar, Roy walked past me with a smile and a wink. "Well played big man," he said. "Well played."

Roy and BRIGADE C.C.



Roy played for Brigade for more than a quarter of a century, starring on the famous double-winning side in 1973. He also won league medals in 1971 and 1983 and cup winners' medals in 1972 and 1977. He was on the losing side in the finals of 1964, 1979, 1984 and 1985.

Roy's best score with the bat came in 1973 in a midweek match at Myroe, when he made 177 in an hour. When he was out, the score was 190-5!

Roy made three centuries in the League for Brigade

- * in 1977 he made 154 in 90 minutes v Limavady
- * in 1980 he made 109 v Eglinton
- * in 1983 he made 100 v St Johnston



Roy's best bowling for the club was 9-40 versus St Johnston

Roy's most spectacular hat-trick

came against the University of Ulster in the Faughan Valley Cup. He took wickets off the first three balls of the match!

Roy captained the club to its first Irish Senior Cup final, in 1984 v Lurgan. Indian pro Rahul Mankad (130) proved too strong that day.

The Brigade side that won the senior league and cup double in 1973



Back row: Norman Torrens, Ian Rankin, Clark Nicholl, Roy Torrens, Norman Cheshire, John Watson;
front: David Todd, Freddie Glenn, Ross Torrens (capt), Ron Collins, Marshall Williamson.

BERTIE FAULKNER

BRIGADE CRICKET CLUB

Brigade Cricket Club has its centenary at Beechgrove this year. We are hoping to celebrate both 100 years of cricket at the ground and the life of Roy Torrens.

His family has an indelible link with Brigade - the brothers all played and Roy's father Bobby was club President.

I was one of the older lads in the Brigade mid-week team when Roy came into the side along with Ron Collins, Clarke Nicholl and Ross Torrens, and in their first year we won the Mid-week Cup.

Roy quickly went from there into the senior side, and then on to an international career with Ireland as a player, selector and, of course, team manager.

But he always retained his ties with Beechgrove and in 2016, when the very future of the club was at stake, I asked him if he would accept the role of club chairman and, after a unanimous vote at the



AGM, Roy set about improving the facilities at Beechgrove.

He was a 'working' chairman; great at getting help to do things around the ground, and he expected things to be done on time.

He set targets for himself as well as everyone else.

Sometimes it was just the little things. The year we were asked to host the senior cup final for example, he and Joan came with fresh scones and morning newspapers for the players

when they arrived at the ground.

Roy increased club membership and initiated some fantastic changes at Beechgrove both around the ground and in the clubhouse. He was an excellent fundraiser, and introduced events like the weekly Bingo and the 'Wednesday night club'.

There isn't one person at Beechgrove who hasn't a story to tell about the man we simply called 'Big Roy'. We can never replace such a wonderful ambassador.



JAMES FITZGERALD

FORMER IRISH TIMES CRICKET WRITER

ONE evening in Bristol I learned that you can lose a game without realising you were playing. Like a young gazelle wandering into a lion's den, I decided to check out the hotel bar and clocked the friendly frame of Roy Torrens, holding court. The Ireland team manager beckoned me over and asked what I'd like to drink?

"Um, whatever you're having yourself, Roy," I said casually, before realising that would be a double Famous Grouse.

"Oh, I see what's going on," he announced to the room, "the young journo thinks he can match me drink for drink."

"Wait, what? No, I didn't mean..."

He winked at me and said theatrically: "Oh, we know exactly what you meant. Well, you'd better sit down – you have some catching up to do!"

Time always passed quickly in Roy's affable, larger-than-life company. His stories of cricketing and footballing derring-do revealed his bravado, his humanity and his indiscriminate good humour, while he somehow seemed to be both the butt and the hero of every yarn.

All too soon, I staggered off to bed, full of the now Infamous Grouse, knowing that a Torrens-sized hangover was headed my way.

In the morning, I shuffled gingerly through the lobby as the team was get-



Roy organised an informal Twelfth parade when Ireland played the Dutch in Toronto on July 12th 2001

ting ready to leave.

As I did so, there were a couple of nudges and sniggers as word had spread that the Irish Times reporter might be feeling the effects.

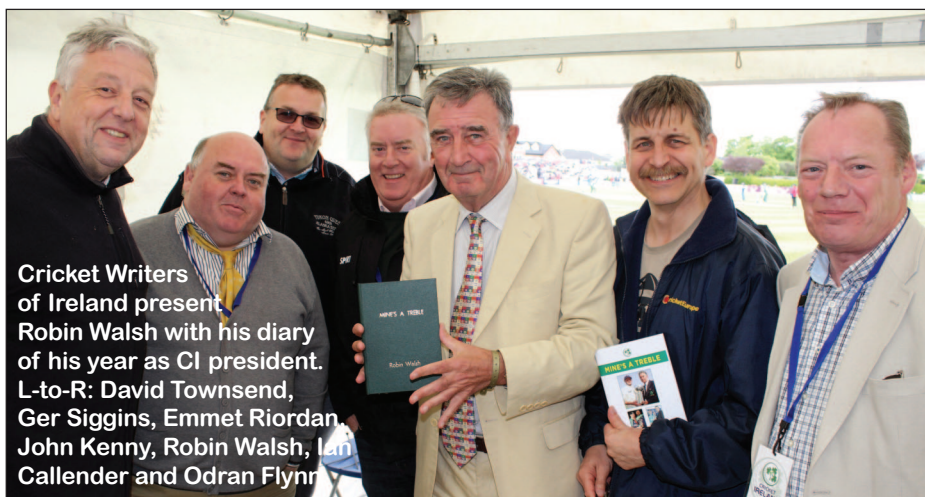
Then the big man appeared, his eyes bright and his tail bushy.

"There he is, lads," he bellowed with delight, as he slapped me on the back. "The young pretender laid down a gauntlet last night but was no match for the old timer. Stick to the writing, son, leave the rest to me."

Sometimes, you just have to know when you're beaten.

ODRAN FLYNN

WRITING ON IRISH CRICKET SINCE 2012



Cricket Writers of Ireland present Robin Walsh with his diary of his year as CI president. L-to-R: David Townsend, Ger Siggins, Emmet Riordan, John Kenny, Robin Walsh, Ian Callender and Odran Flynn

My first meeting with Roy Torrens was after the heroics of the 2011 World Cup, in the media tent at Castle Avenue. I was there talking to Ger Siggins when in he came and made a beeline for the seat beside his great friend Robin Walsh.

He included me in the conversation that ensued for the next hour, with brief interruptions, as Roy spotted something that he needed to deal with and “I will be back in a minute” was tossed over his retreating shoulder. The conversation ranged through cricket, Irish League football, interest rates and anything else that came to mind.

Next year, on my first official assignment as a cricket writer, Roy leant over the picket fence at the Clontarf ground and wished me all the best for the day, and with a big wink added: “James Shannon is making his debut today”. It was information that a few minutes

later greatly impressed Ian Callender.

Roy loved being among the cricket fraternity although at times he would slowly shake his head at the antics of some of the younger players. There was a craze for eating jellybeans in his last full year as manager, and we were chatting on the boundary at Stormont when a recently-capped player raced across between overs and asked if the manager could get some.

Roy contemplated his answer before replying: “Do I look like a sweet shop?” Yet he arrived for the second match a couple of days later with bags of the confectionary for all the team.

The reigns of Adi Birrell and Phil Simmons would have been less enjoyable and undoubtedly less successful without Roy’s guiding hand. Legend is an overused word but in this case it is fully merited. Ireland cricket will not see his like again.

JACKIE FULLERTON

BBC NORTHERN IRELAND

Roy and I always shared a laugh, which is why I looked forward to his company so much. He was one of the most amusing men I've known.

We met at the start of our football careers wearing the candy stripes of Derry City at the Brandywell. I was No 11 and the Big Man wore 5 and 6!

I will admit I was never one for a 50/50 ball and was always thankful we were on the same side. To describe Roy's style: he was not the most nimble of foot, it was more a case of "thou shall not pass!"

Interviews with Roy were always rewarding, so insightful and full of humour. I used to do a programme annually on BBC Radio Ulster called Christmas Cracker and one year my guests were Roy and his mate Liam Beckett. They brought the house down, a laugh a minute and as Frank Carson used to say it really was a cracker.

And, of course, it was



the same watching cricket with Roy. I once asked him if he had played in that memorable match at Sion Mills against the West Indies in 1969. Quick as one his bouncers came the reply: "Wasn't available – why do you think they got as many as 25?"

On a more serious

note it was typical of Roy that he should have ended his illustrious cricket career where it had begun. It was so in character that he would return to his roots and I was delighted his Brigade club won the North West double under his chairmanship.

Great man.

Roy and NORTH WEST



AS A PLAYER

First cap: v South Leinster (Sydney Parade) 21 May 1966

Final cap: v South Leinster (Kimmage) 20 May 1984

Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts	Best bowling	Avg	5for
277.5	70	1682	102	7-36 v South Leinster 1966	16.49	4

INTERPRO DEBUT

SOUTH LEINSTER v. NORTH WEST

At Sydney Parade—North West beat South Leinster by 6 runs.

NORTH WEST

C. Ward b Bernstein	38
W. McSparran lbw Bernstein	1
P. Gillespie c Hill b Harris	6
A. Finlay st Hill b Harris	0
D. Loughrey b Bernstein	4
T. Harpur b Bernstein	0
J. Curry b Harris	27
R. Torrens b Harris	1
C. Colhoun st Hill b Hade	2
S. Huey c Duffy b Bernstein	1
M. Williamson not out	21
Extras	19

Total 120

Bowling—R. Bernstein 5 for 37; P. Hade 1 for 14; R. Harris 4 for 12; J. O'Meara 0 for 22; G. Duffy 0 for 16.

SOUTH LEINSTER

B. O'Brien b Torrens	30
J. Byrne c Colhoun b Torrens	1
J. O'Meara c Curry b Torrens	1
G. Duffy c Curry b Torrens	30
W. Lewis b Torrens	2
K. Hope c Ward b Huey	3
B. Curley b Williamson	6
R. Harris c Huey b Torrens	29
F. Hade c McSparran b Huey	9
W. Hill not out	0
R. Bernstein b Torrens	0
Extras	3

Total 114

Bowling—M. Williamson 1 for 33; R. Torrens 7 for 36; S. Huey 2 for 33; J. Curry 0 for 9.

Roy won two winners' medals in the Guinness Cup, in the inaugural season of 1966, and again in 1977.

His best performance with the ball came on his debut against South Leinster (scorecard printed left).

He was leading wicket taker that 1966 season with 15, level with team-mate Scott Huey.

That inaugural season finished with the champions playing The Rest in September and Roy took 5-30 in that game at Sion Mills.

He took two other 5-fors:

5-32 v Ulster Town (Beechgrove, 1971)
6-49 v Ulster Town (The Holm, 1973)

Roy captained the side in the 1982 and 1983 seasons.

As a batsman his highest score was 48, against North Leinster in Cabra in 1983. He came in No6 that day, his highest ever in the order.

In all he made 369 runs at an average of 10.54.

PETER GILLESPIE

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1995-2007

Roy was there for all the major milestones in my career – my first cap in 1995, my 100th in 2006, and the last in 2007.

He always went the extra mile to make sure not only the players were happy, but their families and the supporters too.

When I won my second cap at Lord's, the day after my debut at Arundel, my father and three brothers caught a last-minute flight to the game.

Roy spotted them in the stand and arranged for them to get a tour of the ground. The problem was they didn't have any ties or blazers with them, but he managed to procure one set that they took in turns to wear to get access to the pavilion.

That meant my family were able to visit the dressing room and stand watching the game from its famous balcony. It meant so much; my father Paddy in particular was just so proud.

All this was way bey-



ond the call of duty for Roy who was a selector at the time. It went under the radar and was a mark of the man that he knew the value of keeping everyone happy.

I remember the joy and indeed pride he had as a fellow North Wester when making the call to inform me I had been se-

lected for Ireland, and then years later standing shaking my hand at Sophia Gardens on my 100th appearance.

Roy couldn't do enough for people; he was a true legend of the game and from all the Gillespie family and Strabane, our deepest condolences to the family.



MICHAEL HALLIDAY

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1970-1989

There are few Irish players who won their first caps aged 18. In that game at Ormeau versus a full-strength Middlesex XI in 1966 Roy took four wickets in their only innings.

Strong and quick by Irish standards he ended his Irish career in 1984 and should have played far more often than he did.

Apart from his value as a bowler he also had great value as a team entertainer who managed to help bind a side together even on bad days. I think it took a few years for this side of his character to emerge as I seem to remember him being on the quiet side on the three week tour of the USA and Canada in 1973. But I could be wrong!

I have some great memories of playing with him, many involve his humour. He didn't play Irish matches for five years after 1976 but in 1981 I was captain while Dermot Monteith was away playing for Middlesex and we were short of bowlers for the biennial tour in England.

I remember convincing him he should revamp his Irish career and he opened the bowling with Simon Corlett in the three tour matches. Looking back at that squad, they were the only two quick bowlers.

At the Oval on that tour we met up with Kiwi Geoff Howarth who had just been released by Surrey and made it clear he resented being expected to

play a two-day match against Ireland.

When Roy went in to bat facing opening bowler Hugh Wilson he took a wild swing at the first ball. The bat left his hands and travelled a long way towards square leg, over the head of Howarth, landing somewhere near the square leg umpire.

The Surrey players appeared to be amused by this Irish player's approach to batting but not as much as his team mates back in the pavilion.

When Roy returned to the pavilion he announced that "Skipper told me to throw the bat."

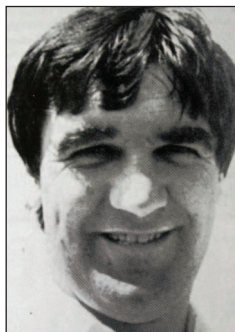
When bowling he was being dispatched all over the Oval by Alan Butcher. At the beginning of the next

over he said to me, "He won't hit me for five fours this over, five sixes maybe".

He also suggested, in a loud voice and from the end of his run up that wicket keeper Paul Jackson should go and field at deep extra cover.

During another game he suggested that one Irish cricket alickadoo was so mean that when visiting someone in hospital he would peel some gooseberries rather than buy a bunch of grapes.

I first met Roy during my first Guinness Cup match in Malahide in 1967 and sadly for the last time, in Barbados in January 2020, during a great 50-over match against the West Indies. A big man, in more ways than one.





BRENDA HAND

CRICKET IRELAND SINCE 2013

There is one fabulous scene in the 2007 documentary 'Breaking Boundaries' about the World Cup in the Caribbean.

Just over three minutes into the documentary we see a man in Ireland training gear fixing an extension rod onto a large rake, standing on the bank of a small canal.

"They never told me I'd have to do this in the interview...", he said, before attempting to haul a cricket ball in from the water. The comic scene

saw him lose the rake, and lob several other items into the water before a local youth saves the day.

Delighted, the man produces the ball for the camera and grins, "That's what it's all about. That's Irish cricket for ye."

I was immediately drawn to the character of Roy Torrens.

His joviality and fun oozed from his giant frame and massive smile, and later in the film his tears with the children and the First Lady of Guyana. But all through

the film shone his love and affection on a tour with a lot of ups and downs off the pitch.

Four years later I had the privilege of working in Cricket Ireland and working with Roy.

His presence in the office was overwhelming, the smile, the character – straight from everything we had seen in 'Breaking Boundaries'. He just had to ask for anything and 'his wish was my command'.

They say: "Never meet your heroes". I agreed, until I met Roy Torrens.



DERYCK HARRISON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1978-1980

I only faced Roy Torrens' bowling in a few games but I was responsible for one of the very few times that he and his good friend Ossie Colhoun were lost for words.

It an interprovincial game for Ulster Country versus North West and I found myself at the

wicket right in the middle of a hostile Roy spell.

The third ball of an over was a very quick delivery pitching outside off stump, I tried to defend it as the ball went through to wicketkeeper Ossie, and everyone on the North West team appealed for caught behind.

The umpire stared

hard and adjudicated "Not Out".

At the end of the over Ossie walked past me and asked Roy: "Did he hit it?"

Roy's reply was "Yes, middle of the bat," with a big smile in my direction.

My reply was: "Boys, you might never know!" And they never did.



GARFIELD HARRISON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1983-1997

The first time I saw Roy Torrens playing was as a 15-year-old spectator, against the great West Indies side that included Viv Richards and Gordon Greenidge at Rathmines in 1976.

He had such a long run-up and was an impressive figure, with a strong physique and athletic. He bowled really quickly in that game and I was surprised by just how far back the keeper Ossie Colhoun was standing.

Roy took a bit of clobber, as did everyone that day, but that didn't stop him charging in.

He was the fastest Irish bowler I'd ever seen.

The next day he got the wicket of Viv Richards which was some feather in his cap as the Master Blaster had destroyed England that summer — I can only imagine Roy talking about it later. I'm sure he didn't play it down!

When Roy was injured the Ireland selectors



Two great all-rounders, Roy and Ian Botham

tried about six different replacements before I got my chance as an opening bowler in 1983, with Simon Corlett against Worcestershire.

Roy retired soon after and became a very passionate and knowledgeable selector for the north-west region, and many a happy evening was spent in his company where he invariably

held court telling his many stories.

I have nothing but fond memories for Roy who was such a tremendous ambassador for the north-west and Ireland. Cricket was in his blood and he was a remarkable servant to the game here who will be sorely missed by all who had the good fortune to come across him.

JIM HARRISON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1969-1977

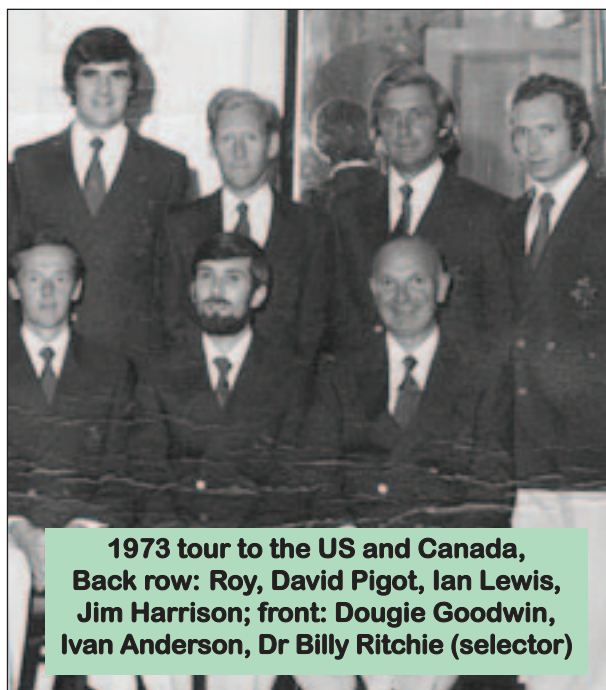
Laughter was never far away with Roy. On the Ireland tour to the USA and Canada in 1973 our first stop was Louisville, Kentucky, where Roy and myself were billeted with a Baptist minister and his wife.

We were taken on a tour of the town, including Cassius Clay's home plus a hotel where the Royals were to stay a few weeks later. We were shown the rooms and Roy promptly sat down on the toilet and declared: "Not many people would have sat on the Queen's throne."

That night at dinner there was a yellow thing on the plate, like a big sausage. We looked at each other. I whispered: "What is it, what do we do?"

He told me to wait and watch what the pastor did, and copy it. Sure enough we saw how they were eating this strange object and copied them. We later found out it was called corn on the cob.

When we were leaving, we presented the



**1973 tour to the US and Canada,
Back row: Roy, David Pigot, Ian Lewis,
Jim Harrison; front: Dougie Goodwin,
Ivan Anderson, Dr Billy Ritchie (selector)**

pastor with a bottle of Irish whiskey by way of thanks but his wife insisted NO! Roy assured them both that it was for medicinal purposes but alas for the pastor, the wife stood firm.

In Canada, we found ourselves in another private home, this time with Ossie Colhoun and Ivan Anderson. We were being driven around by a man called James who was in a jovial mood and

singing – pretty badly. Roy was with him in the front. Ossie kept encouraging James. "You've a lovely voice. Great tone. You must be a professional singer?"

Roy was in the firing line of this medley of hits, and he eventually turned around and said to Ossie: "It's like being beside Frank Sinatra."

I don't think I've ever laughed as much in my life.

ROY HARRISON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1967-1968

We had many great tussles and wonderful times together – Big Roy and Wee Roy as we were known affectionately in Irish cricket. Fun was never too far away, and that went on even when opponents in Interprovincial cricket.

There was one game between Ulster Country and the North West at Muckamore, on what was a very difficult pitch. Roy was in the middle of a fearsome spell in the admittedly helpful conditions and had us quickly in trouble, four or five down.

As I greeted the new batsman coming in, I spoke loudly enough so Roy could hear: “I’ll handle the big fella, you stay down the other end.”

Roy stared at me in amazement, his face red from all his exertions, and he was incredulous that I would face being peppered by him rather than seeking the safety of the non-striker’s end.

He probably tried too hard after that and



didn’t get another wicket.

We spent a lot of time together during my year as President of the Irish Cricket Union in 2006, and I saw first hand the great rapport he had with everyone.

You could see the respect the players had for their manager, and the

way Roy ensured everyone was taken care of.

No job was too large or small, and he was the same with people, making everyone happy.

He couldn’t have done enough for you and we really appreciated that.

Roy deserved all the praise and adulation that came his way.



CHRIS HARTE

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1972-1982

Roy Torrens was one of those characters you'd heard a lot about long before meeting them. We played Guinness Cup against each other in 1972 and 1973 and went on the Ireland tour to the USA and Canada.

He was a very busy player on that trip but what became apparent was his enjoyment of the situations we found ourselves in, and we did visit some very interesting 'grounds' and 'neighbourhoods'. Even more obvious was his ability to remember, and just occasionally embellish the details of where we had been and what had come to pass.

Many of the 'Big Roy' stories are widely known and I was lucky enough to be there to hear both "the skipper told me to throw the bat" and "I had Willey in two minds".

There was another great moment when at the start of a day's play Roy had one ball left to bowl from an over he had started the previous



evening. Great care was taken with field setting in consultation with skipper Mike Halliday, the ball was delivered, left alone and Halliday called out: "Thanks Roy".

He replied: "That's great skipper - I could get used to these one-ball spells." As so often with Roy, his ability to time the one-liners was unequalled.

My very favourite tale, which I heard him reprise several times, was

the North Fermanagh v Brigade Seconds epic. Shall we say the match did not end with both parties in accord and the story that Roy delivered owed much to the ancient legend of Horatius at The Bridge.

As Ireland team manager we met him in many exotic and far-flung locations but essentially he was always Big Roy: serious fun, a magician and the very best of company.

Roy's FINEST HOUR

Roy took 7-40, his best bowling for Ireland, against Scotland in 1974. Here is the scorecard and Seán Pender's report for The Irish Times

Cricket: International match

SOUND BOWLING BY TORRENS

From SEÁN PENDER, in AYR

MAGNIFICENT PACE bowling by 26-year-old Roy Torrens gave Ireland a first innings lead of 16 after they themselves had been shot out for only 107, but the initiative swung back to Scotland when in Ireland's second innings, three wickets fell for six runs. Yet, by the end of the second day's play in the three-day international at Ayr yesterday, the scales were so delicately poised that even one rash stroke when play resumes this morning could mean the winning or the losing of the match.

With neither side so far on a rain damaged wicket able to hold an advantage for any length of time, today's play should again be packed with drama. That Ireland resume reasonably placed 61 runs on with seven wickets intact, much credit is due to Jack Short and Stan Mitchell who courageously weathered the turbulent pace bowling storm after Eric Thompson, working up to a tremendous speed, had grabbed three wickets inside three overs, two in successive deliveries.

At the close, Mitchell was 24 not out, with Short on 13. The pair of them having already put on 39 valuable runs for the fourth wicket.

Though the pitch became steadily less viscous as it dried out, it at no stage favoured the batsmen, and in the quest for runs Scotland yesterday struggled as Ireland had done the day before.

That the home side were out for 64—had all catches been held in the early stage, their position would have been even more precarious—and when the last wicket fell, Torrens wrecking Thompson's stumps, Ireland had a first innings lead of 16.

AGGRESSIVE SPELL

Torrens, in 20.2 overs of hostile pace, took seven wickets for 40 runs, his best performance yet for Ireland. Forcing the batsmen to play him on the front door, he was, after 14 runs had come off a loose opening two overs, really at their throats all the time. For someone who had not been an original choice for the match, Torrens' contribution was phenomenal, for as well as his superb bowling he proved the third top scorer in the Irish first innings with 16, and all also took a catch.

While the catching and ground work in the slips, in particular, was way below standard, the Irish field over all earned much praise. There were fine catches by Ivan Anderson and two by Dermot Monteith, the second off his own bowling, which put him in line for a hat-trick that he failed to accomplish.

Ossie Colhoun once again kept a splendid wicket, taking many difficult deliveries with ease and confidence. The problems the wicket was presenting can be gauged from the fact that, after one delivery from Thompson in the second innings had reared off a good length over Short's head, the umpires asked the batsmen if they wanted to go in because, in deteriorating light, conditions were dangerous.

Ireland had scored 86 for 7 on Saturday and when they were all out yesterday for 107, Monteith was top scorer with 30. If, on a blotchy wicket, the ball jumped disconcertingly at times, the Irish batting on Saturday was to say the least of it disappointingly irresolute. Rain not only held up the start of the match for three-and-a-half hours, but even when it had cleared, was still to dominate proceedings.

Moisture had seeped through the covers creating at each end soft patches, of which certainly the height, and sometimes the pace of the ball was difficult to interpret quickly enough for composed action. There was in fairness no defending off or getting out of the way of some deliveries, but more than one of the Irish batsmen, nevertheless, committed cricket suicide in the strokes they so optimistically attempted on so unreliable a pitch.

Had, in fact, Thompson and Frank Robertson made realistic use of the helpful conditions, and had the Scottish captain, George Goddard, not switched over completely to spin towards the close of the day, Ireland in all probability would have been utterly demolished.

In that opening period, David Pigot and Short put on 21 without being parted. In virtually no over did they have to play even half of the deliveries, and many of those that they did strike were of an extremely short-pitched nature. That is not to take from the grittiness of their display, and in particular that of Short, who made 24.

As the Scottish seamers before the break had not made the most of their opportunities, the Irish batsmen on resumption were every bit as blameworthy for some poor play. Inside an hour, six wickets toppled for the addition of 24 runs.

SCOREBOARD

IRELAND—First innings	
D. R. Pigott c Brown b Robertson	7
J. F. Short c J. R. Laing b Clark	24
J. Harrison c J. G. Laing b Robertson	1
I. J. Anderson c Ellis b Thompson	3
S. Mitchell c Porteous b Clark	2
A. Linahan c More b Clark	0
J. D. Monteith c More b Thompson	30
S. Corlett c Goddard b Hardie	10
R. Torrens c More b Clark	16
O. D. Colhoun not out	0
J. Elder b Thompson	0
Extras (14)	
Total	107

Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-23, 3-33, 4-39, 5-39, 6-45, 7-85, 8-86, 9-105.
Bowling—Thompson, 20.2, 12, 20, 3; Robertson, 22, 8, 37, 2; Clark, 17, 7, 26, 4; Hardie, 5, 4, 11, 1; Goddard, 3, 0, 9, 0.

SCOTLAND—First innings	
H. K. More b. Torrens	8
D. B. S. Brown c. Elder b. Torrens	9
J. R. Laing c. and b. Monteith	34
J. G. Laing c. Anderson b. Elder	18
T. W. Porteous c. Corlett b. Torrens	0
R. Ellis c. Monteith b. Torrens	3
K. W. Hardie c. Pigott b. Torrens	0
C. F. Goddard c. Elder b. Torrens	2
D. R. Thompson b. Torrens	6
F. Robertson c. Torrens b. Monteith	0
J. Clark not out	0
Extras	8

Total 91
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-21, 3-54, 4-59, 5-64, 6-80, 7-84, 8-93, 9-91.
Bowling—Torrens, 20.2, 2, 4, 40, 7; Corlett, 9, 2, 26, 0; Elder, 7, 3, 13, 1; Monteith, 4, 1, 4, 2.

IRELAND—Second innings	
D. R. Pigot b. Thompson	6
J. F. Short not out	13
J. Harrison c. Porteous b. Thompson	0
I. J. Anderson c. Clark b. Thompson	0
K. Mitchell not out	24
Extras	2

Total (for three wickets) 45
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-6, 3-6.

Ireland made 129, setting Scotland 145 to win. They were bowled out for 93.

CLARENCE HILES

THE ULSTER CRICKETER MAGAZINE

I have a host of stories about big Roy, mostly from himself! He was a gregarious conversationalist who loved the camaraderie and fellowship of cricketers.

I invited him to be a guest speaker at North Down's Sesquicentennial Dinner in October 2007.

When he started to speak it was 11pm. As MC, I wanted it to be brief and witty, and gave him 20 minutes as the main Celebrity Speaker, Paul Allott, was waiting in the wings. As usual, Big Roy was awesome for 30 minutes, but then took another 30 to relate the Caribbean World Cup several months ago.

When he finally finished I said to everyone... "At least Roy has shortened the winter!"

Paul was not a happy bunny!

Roy created a niche when he became Ireland Team Manager. He was the face of Cricket Ireland on TV, and known throughout the world. He loved the buzz.

Ireland's exploits in



the Caribbean were a fairytale trip for everyone. I shared several matches with him, and Roy was the Mother Hen for everyone.

I had the pleasure of welcoming him in Barbados, and when it came to golf it was a battle of wits between Roy, Robin Walsh and Alfie Linehan.

All three wanted me as a partner with my local knowledge, but Roy's 24 handicap was an embarrassment to everyone, but not for him.

We whittled him to 21, but it still cost me money on home terri-

tory! He hit the ball a mile, and was canny when it came to golf!

Thankfully, after copious Banks Beer, the bragging rights evaporated with three wonderful guys. We also met Sir Everton Weekes, several times, and he loved big Roy's stories. He never laughed as much.

Laughter was a big part of Roy's personality, and he loved the craic, and the more outrageous stories he told, we laughed even more.

He was an exceptional character, the like of which we'll never see again.



PAUL JACKSON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1981-1994

One favourite Roy story which comes to mind from a two-day match against Surrey at The Oval (with an 18-year-old Alec Stewart playing for the home team).

We were in the field and the wicket was like a road. Roy opened the bowling at one end and we had three slips and a gully; a few balls later we had no slips and no gully. Nothing was missing the middle of Alan Butcher's bat, let alone passing it.

Big Roy steamed in

again, shirt open, black hair (Freddie Trueman-esq) and stopped on his delivery stride and ran down the wicket next to the left-hander and shouted "Jacko, would you take your pads off and go field in the covers", he then raised an eyebrow to the batsman, and went back to his mark.

Butcher was out soon after claiming he still had tears of laughter in his eyes.

That to me was Roy at his best: a wonderful competitor, a larger than

life team-mate and a person you just enjoyed being with, on and off the field.

When we think of the big man, people involved in cricket and all the other dimensions in his life will smile with a warm feeling in their hearts, and have wonderful memories of him - not only in Ireland but around the world.

He was a legend in every sense, an overused word these days but, in this instance, almost an understatement.



BRENDAN O'BRIEN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1966-1981

Roy and I made our debut together in 1966. Ivan Anderson and David Pigot were capped for the first time on that same day.

We were playing Middlesex at Ormeau and there's a legend - maybe started by Roy himself - that the big man from Derry turned up without a kit bag, just his bowling boots wrapped in brown paper. I'm not sure how true that was, but it's just one of the many stories that brightened up his long career with Ireland.

I remember him as a whole-hearted

bowler, who would keep steaming in all day for his captain.

I got to know him better when he took over as manager and I had two lads in the team. They were full of praise, he never left them wanting for anything and was great fun to be around after play was over for the day.

When we started travelling to watch the team again in all parts, a night out with Roy was always full of great stories and happy memories.

Irish cricket was lucky to have Roy Torrens.



ALAN JEFFREY

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1984-1989

One of my favourite memories of The Big Man was when I was selected for my first Ireland cap, to play the MCC at North of Ireland in 1984. Roy was my club captain at Brigade and also my roommate for that three-day game.

Well, we arrived in Belfast only to find out that we would be staying in the Europa, the holder of the record for being the most bombed hotel in the world, which was a worrying statistic.

Roy unpacked and out came four handmade shirts, locally produced in the Maiden City, which had the reputation of making the finest quality anywhere in the world.

It transpired that Roy would take orders from some of his Irish teammates as they would gladly see themselves in the very best of shirts at a fraction of the normal price.

On the field, Roy was a great leader and he would take the game to the opposition like the



A winning docket at Royal Calcutta racecourse

time Brigade travelled to Eglinton in the Irish Cup in 1984.

The match was played on a Friday afternoon and this was the year that Billy Henderson first brought Hendy Wallace over from Caribbean - a few of our top order had a sleepless night on Thursday worrying about the Barbados pace ace.

Eglinton elected to bat, and it wasn't too long before our own

pace ace decided to show what he could, even on a superb batting pitch.

Roy must have hit poor Billy Henderson on every rib he had but the gritty batsman refused to rub his wounds.

I was fielding down at third man and heard Clarke Nicholl and Roy discussing how Billy's bat would last him five years but he'd need a new pair of pads every three weeks.

RICHARD JOHNSON

CRICKET IRELAND PRESIDENT 2011-2012

I was official scorer when Roy made his Ireland debut against Middlesex and claimed England internationals Eric Russell, Mike Smith and Fred Titmus among his four wickets, but I was in awe of the players back then and didn't speak to any of them during the two days.

Almost four years later I watched from the pavilion at Solitude when Linfield played Ballymena United in the final of the Irish Cup. The match was memorable for two things – Roy's performance at centre-half that ensured Linfield's ace striker Sammy Pavis did not score, and a riot outside the ground after the match. Yet again I didn't speak to Roy.

For the next 25 years I was only too well aware that Roy played cricket for Brigade, the North West Cricket Union and Ireland, as well as playing football for Institute in the winter months, but still we didn't speak.

It didn't matter, though, because over the



past 25 years I got to know him really well around the boundaries of cricket grounds and committee rooms, and Roy really looked after me in 2011 when I was elected Cricket Ireland President, a role he had filled some years earlier.

Over the years I attended many functions with Roy, including the North-West Annual Dinner in November 2019. We enjoyed a few

lemonades with friends after and the following morning had coffee and a scone in a café inside Derry's Walls. Then it was on to the Brandywell where we watched Institute play Linfield and had a half time cup of tea together.

I never met Roy again but will never ever forget him for his laugh, his welcoming smile and his enduring kindness and humour – a true friend.

IAN JOHNSTON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1979-1983

I was in awe of Big Roy from our very first Guinness Cup encounter – was it really in 1968? Me fresh out of school and Roy, although just over a month older, seemingly an ‘old hand’ at the game.

He was certainly that when it came to the by-play he and Ossie Colhoun engaged in at every opportunity.

“Nae walkers on this team Roy,” the wicketkeeper would shout as he urged fearful revenge even when there was clearly no edge.

Fast forward nearly 40 years and we both became ‘walkers’ when I joined up with the Ireland World Cup 2007 squad at their training camp at Port Elizabeth, and Roy was on a fitness drive that involved multiple laps of the ground.

He needed someone to talk to ease the boredom and I became his audience of choice!

Now any touring team manager will tell you that players invariably ignore their baggage weight limit. If the out-

ward leg of a journey is bad, the home-ward leg will be worse as presents and souvenirs are added to the load.

No-one better than Roy at handling



this and I got a master-class from the big man at the start of that trip to South Africa.

At Heathrow we were a challenging 1750 kgs overweight but he charmed the South African Airways station manager and she waived 1000kg of it – a saving of £3200!

On the return trip he kept the check-in girl entertained while I manhandled our 45 bags on and off the scales as quickly as I could, and when he asked how we were doing she told him that all was good: “NO charge!”

The flick of the head, the smile and a wink to me said it all – he really was proud of that one.

PETE JOHNSTON

IRELAND ANALYST

Roy was a mentor and great friend, and I always felt comfortable, happy and safe in his presence. In the winning moments of a game he was never far away for a massive hug and celebration. As manager, he always showed gratitude and support for my efforts, which gave me a huge amount of confidence.

His part in the team's success over the years was greater than anyone could begin to imagine.

Both Adi Birrell and Phil Simmons were sticklers for detail and discipline but also knew when to have fun, and they relied on Roy to keep all of those things on track. One of his best qualities was the ability to make light of pressure situations, sometimes just bursting into song or cracking a one-liner.

In Roy's last match at the 2015 World Cup, in Adelaide, a dispute arose with Pakistan as to where I set up my analysis equipment, despite the area being clearly labelled by the ICC for Ireland.

I didn't know what to do. There was no way I could have moved all my



equipment and still made it on to the pitch to do warm ups. I dug my heels in and this didn't go down well.

Roy arrived and spoke to the Pakistan manager, and somehow managed to solve what in his words was a near "diplomatic crisis". He later told me that he had said: "Now, we don't want this to become a major incident, do we?"

The Pakistan manager replied: "Of course not, sir."

Roy then gave him a big pat on the back: "Thank you for being so understanding." The guy went away not knowing quite what had transpired - but I got my room.

Roy was a brilliant operator and his people management skills were second to none.

TRENT JOHNSTON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2004-2013

Where do I start about a man who I spent so much time with during some of the biggest moments of my life? A more larger than life larrikin I have never met, with an absolute heart of gold, and a do-what-he-can-for-anyone attitude.

We saw the real Roy Torrens at a children's orphanage in Guyana in 2007, when he arranged for the Ireland squad to go visit and play cricket with the kids there. Roy organised a donation from each player which was matched by himself personally. When he went to present the money to the First Lady of Guyana who ran the orphanage the tears started to roll down his face and there wasn't a dry eye in the place.

He lived a full life did Robert, Roy, Royston, Fred, Ger or whatever we



called him on any particular day. He often said to me during our trips away: "I've lived more than one life son, I'm happy with it."

I still can't believe my good mate, mentor, manager, father-like figure is no longer with us. Gone but certainly not forgotten.



NIGEL JONES

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2009-2012

Fred Flintstone was how I affectionately referred to Roy during my time in the Ireland side. My first cap was ‘awarded’ about a week after my actual debut in 2009 against New Zealand.

He rustled around in the manager’s bag, and said. “Jonesy, here’s your cap son. You were to get it last week but it was at the embroider’s getting finished.”

There was no chance of that being true, it was just Roy’s way of adding a bit of humour and levity to a situation where he had let something slip past him. There were no dramas from me, but we had a good chuckle about it afterwards.

Roy was at his best on tour. He had a great manner and way about him, which was seen at its best with his ability in dealing with logistics at airports

and hotels. His knack of being able to diffuse a stressful situation was his greatest asset. It was a very natural gift.

When things weren’t going your way or you were a bit down, he could always lift the spirits, reminding you that the sun would rise again tomorrow, keep smiling and get back out there.

Enjoy every moment you have the shamrock on your chest. It doesn’t last forever. He would often tell you that this advice was coming from the greatest cricketer that ever played for Ireland!

It was a source of great amusement in the team room as he regaled us with his feats in an Ireland jersey – he was on a par with Garry Sobers, if you believed him. He left nothing out, embellishing it all with a huge grin on his face.

I’m very grateful that I got to know Roy, and appreciated every moment in his company.



A visit to Stormont in 2007, from left: Roy, William Porterfield, Joe Doherty, Peter Gillespie, First Minister Ian Paisley, Boyd Rankin, Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, and Alan Montgomery

ED JOYCE

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1997-2018

The news about Roy Torrens' passing was devastating for anyone that knew him, made doubly sad by the suddenness, and the fact that so few people could get together and mourn such a brilliant person. When we're finally allowed to congregate again, there will be some stories told and Famous Grouse consumed!

Roy was an ever present during my career. Whether as an administrator or manager, he was always there and more importantly was someone you were delighted was there. Funny, warm, passionate about many things - Roy was the perfect cricketing tourist. Everything was "four hours" away and nothing was too much trouble "for you son".

He knew his cricket inside out and was a huge supporter of the team and the players. He cared about people and took a lot of the squad under his wing. A skilful manager helps gel teams by welcoming in the new blood and being a consistent presence. Roy was brilliant at making new players feel like they



belonged, and making sure no one was left out.

The only time it paid not to be around the big man was in a tense run chase. He tended to be someone who assumed the worst would happen and if you were next in, this isn't a helpful mindset. But it came from a desperate desire that Ireland would win. And we did win plenty while Roy was involved. And of course there was no better man to celebrate with after a victory.

Irish cricket is so much stronger for Roy's contribution, and it won't be the same without him. I hope his family find solace in the love that so many people hold for him.

ROB KEMMING

NETHERLANDS MANAGER 2006-2009

It was back in 2005 when I first met Roy in Glasgow at a tri-nations tournament, involving our respective teams. We clicked from the moment we met at an Italian restaurant down the road from the Thistle hotel, and remained good friends.

Both of us were large men, almost equal in posture, and we would travel the world wherever there was a tournament involving our nations.

Ireland and the Netherlands were fierce rivals in those days – and still are – and we had so much fun in various hotel bars as rival managers, each backing our teams, while pointing out their strengths and the opponents' weaknesses.

There was one amusing incident when Roy came rushing over to me at the Clontarf cricket club ground before a one-day international in 2008, saying he had “stuffed up” as he still had Eoin

Morgan on the team sheet after the toss had taken place.

Eoin had been expected to fly into Dublin that morning, but had stayed in England to play for his county, and



while we all knew that, the team sheet hadn't been changed.

Jeroen Smits, the Netherlands captain, and I turned a blind eye and allowed Roy to change the sheet.

I seem to remember it cost him a few pints at the end of the day.

Roy was such a wonderful and charming person that it was an honour to have known him.

He will be missed in the Netherlands, as he will be everywhere.

SUZANNE KENEALY

CRICKET IRELAND 2008-2013



When I met Roy in 2008 I knew I'd met someone special. I had just started my position with Cricket Ireland and he called to introduce himself. I understood very little of what he had said on that call but when we met face to face I was greeted with a big smile and a hug and the stories and our friendship began. He was fantastic company.

I was overwhelmed by his kindness to help and share his knowledge. He

knew everyone in Irish Cricket and was known around all the grounds so became a fantastic sounding board for me and he was only too willing to help me out.

Roy did everything he could to better Irish Cricket both home and abroad. Fantastically humoured and always up for a laugh, the greatest ambassador we could have hoped for.

I loved our catch ups at Dublin airport ahead of the senior men's departures. Sitting around

having a coffee with him as the players arrived and seeing the genuine love and appreciation they all had for him. Roy was one of the boys around the team and gave as good as he got.

I would receive texts and emails from Roy while they were on their travels and a picture of the pool from every hotel saying 'you'd love it here'

I will miss Roy dearly. I even miss him calling me at 4am from abroad to say the laundry hasn't returned.

KIERAN KENNEDY

O'NEILLS

Roy was a great character and was it was a pleasure and a privilege to know him.

We met each other through an introduction by Ossie Colhoun, a team-mate of Roy's who won 87 caps for Ireland as a wicketkeeper.

Ossie lives next door to my twin brother Brendan, and while Roy was visiting one day, he informed Ossie that Ireland were having difficulty with a manufacturer and that they were under pressure to get kit delivered for a tour in January.

Ossie told told him to speak to me, and we met in early January, accompanied by Ireland coach Phil Simmons.

We hit it off straight away and I told him I would have all their order made and ready within two weeks.

Roy was always up for the craic and used to make me change the sizing labels on the kit he and Phil wore.

They were both XXXL



but Roy always asked me to change the labels to 'prove' that Phil was much larger than him.

Whenever we were together, there was always good craic but there was a serious side too and Roy was instrumental in helping us launch the O'Neills brand in Australia.

We held a reception in Adelaide during the 2015 World Cup and Roy brought the entire Ireland squad to the function, and made a

wonderful speech.

We now have 25 people employed in Australia and our sales are growing at a rapid pace.

He was very well respected by players and management alike and left no stone unturned to ensure that the players received what they needed.

The world is a sadder place without Roy in our lives; he touched each and every one of us and left us with memories we will cherish forever.

JOHN KENNY

RTÉ

‘I s that what your view is John. I must say I would have an entirely different one” and a cheeky grin would spread across the face of Roy Torrens, as we sat on the patio of our hotel with his best mate Robin Walsh, “discussing” Irelands win over the West Indies in a stunning T20 win in Grenada 2019.

Rather he was discussing, I was interjecting.

I liked Roy from the first time I met him, and that was the six weeks of brilliant madness at the 2007 Cricket World Cup in the Caribbean.

He even told me to go to bed as we were making too much noise in the courtyard of the Cara Lodge Hotel the day before an Ireland game. I started to argue with him as I wasn't part of the squad , It was pointless off I went, tail between my legs.

I brought it up a few years later with the big guy, he said that we were all part of the team and the journey, I had huge respect for him.

Barry Chambers rang me one time to ask could I bring a bottle of something Irish and strong to Sri Lanka as he had trouble sourcing it for Roy. Off I trotted, brought it half way around the world and handed it to Roy in his hotel room, only to see that he had asked dozens to do the same thing.

There were bottles of the stuff everywhere. A deep respect for the man from those who knew him.

My proudest encounter with Roy



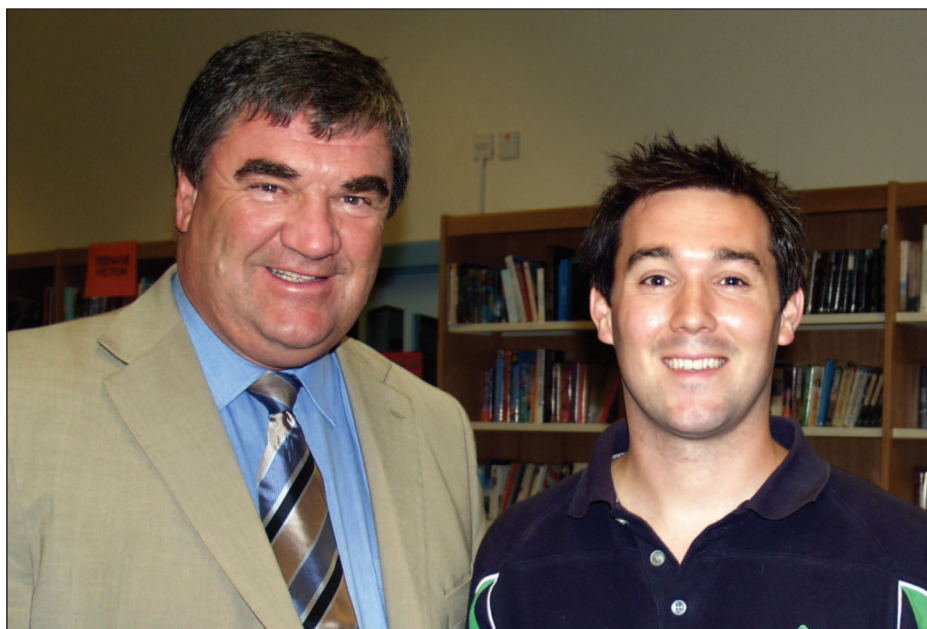
was when Ireland played South Africa in Guyana in 2007 at the World Cup and he and I sat side by side in the commentary box of BBC's Test Match Special, the first two Irishmen to commentate as a team on the world famous radio programme.

He was brilliant, easy going but could be as hard as nails when he wanted to be. A real leader.

I'm glad I met, drank with and bantered with Roy Torrens

IAIN KNOX

IRELAND PHYSIO 2004-2008



To me, he was always the Prince of Portrush.

Roy began playing for Ireland very much in the amateur era but he was involved all the way through to it being a professional set-up, on the way to becoming a Test-playing nation. There was no better man to have overseen and managed the transition than Roy.

I was lucky enough to have been involved as the team's physio during

the early years of that rise, and some of my best memories of that time came from when we had the players tucked up in bed, allowing management to relax in the bar. I only made the mistake once of trying to go toe-to-toe with him, though. It did not end well for me!

We were flying to South Africa on an overnight flight. Everyone was asleep except Roy and I. He sat down beside me and we had a

'wee Famous Grouse', which in Roy-speak was a double. Then another. And another.

I will never forget when he went to order yet another round only to then change his drink as he thought 13 would be unlucky.

Roy may have had biological daughters but has also had dozens of sons who have looked at him as a father figure throughout their cricket careers. He will never be forgotten.

DAVE LANGFORD-SMITH

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2006-2008

Another Friends Provident game goes by and it's another one-sided event. We're a bunch of blokes who work normal day jobs Monday to Friday, flying over to the UK to play against professionals like Pietersen, Warne and Ramprakash.

Our best players, Morgan and O'Brien, play for the county sides and after copping yet another drubbing, it's hard to not be disappointed. I remember being at the airport waiting to fly home, angry, tired and frustrated. Roy comes over, a glass of Famous Grouse in hand, puts his arm around me and calls me his 'old mucker' (I still have no idea what that means!).

We discuss what it was like in his day; the lack of professionalism, no physios or extra help like we had. They celebrated wins and losses equally, with their heads held high in pride because they were playing for their country.



He also reminded me he was a quicker bowler and a better batsman than me, and more handsome back then! My mood lifted instantly and as we flew home I was already looking forward to the next game.

He just had the knack of knowing what to say and more importantly when to say it.

I can't believe I won't have the pleasure of hugging the big man again. It was something we always did. He was such a huggable, lovable man.



FINTAN McALLISTER

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2008-2009

I've always thought that Fingal folk share the same sense of humour with those from the north west and this was certainly the case with Big Roy who could make you laugh at any time under any circumstances.

Of all the many games I played with Roy as manager, one sticks out. Myself and Paul Stirling were both very young, probably 20 and 17, and we had to fly back to Ireland for exams in between Friends Provident Trophy matches.

I was flying from Dublin and Stirlo from Belfast and Roy had

everything organised: passports, tickets, flight details etc. The only thing he left to us was getting a taxi from Heathrow to the hotel, which was a long drive.

Cricket then was still very amateur and funds were much tighter. Roy was in charge of the expenses float. One thing he repeatedly stressed to us was that it would cost about £60 max.

So at Heathrow we jumped in a cab and we were on our way. We arrived at the hotel where Roy was waiting for us in the lobby. He gave me £70 to pay the fare and I

told him the taxi driver was looking for £220.

Roy nearly fell off his chair. We had taken one of London's 'black cabs' and the driver must have thought it was Christmas. After a few choice words, Roy goes out and somehow manages to get the fare down to £60. How I don't know, but that was Roy – the gift of the gab. He came back, gave us a telling off and went straight to the bar.

We would have a laugh every time our paths crossed from then on. "Did you get the limo or a private jet to the ground this time?"



Handing out sweets in a school in Howrah municipal dump, Calcutta, March 2011

Roy's TOP VICTIMS

Roy's skill as a fast bowler meant he got to take on some of the greatest batsmen to play the game. And he came on top more often than not – two of his victims included South African great Graeme Pollock and Caribbean master-blaster Viv Richards.

The full list of his 16 victims who played Test or ODI for major nations.

ENGLAND (6)

Eric Russell, Mike Smith, Fred Titmus (Ireland v Middlesex, 1966)
Ian Thomson (Ireland XI v International Cavaliers, 1969)
Graham Barlow (Ireland v Middlesex, 1981)
David Smith (Ireland v Surrey, 1981)

INDIA (3)

Nawab of Pataudi jr (Ireland v India, 1967)
Bharath Reddy (North West v Munster, 1974)
Ghulam Parkar (Ireland v India, 1982)

AUSTRALIA (3)

Bob Cowper TWICE, Brian Taber, John Gleeson (Ireland v Australia, 1968)

WEST INDIES (2)

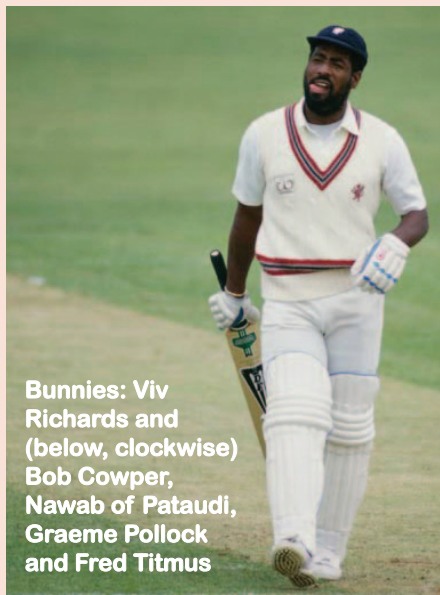
Roy Marshall (Ireland v MCC, 1974)
Viv Richards (Ireland v West Indies, 1976)

SOUTH AFRICA (1)

Graeme Pollock (Ireland XI v International Cavaliers, 1969)

PAKISTAN (1)

Shafqat Rana (North West v Pakistan International Airlines, 1969)



Bunnies: Viv Richards and (below, clockwise) Bob Cowper, Nawab of Pataudi, Graeme Pollock and Fred Titmus



ANDREW McBRINE

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2013

Roy presented me with my first cap on my Ireland debut against Scotland in 2013. But my favourite story of Roy – and one he never let me forget – was just over a year later on a pre-World Cup tour to Australia and New Zealand.

We were on a flight to Canberra from Brisbane, where we had played four or five games, and I was sitting between Graeme McCarter and John Mooney. I took my backpack out of the overhead locker to put my passport away as I wouldn't be needing it for a few days.

After a couple of games in Canberra we were travelling to Sydney the next day by coach and I couldn't find my passport. It wasn't in my backpack where I knew I had put it. We were flying to New Zealand the next day and were all looking forward to doing a bit of sightseeing on our only day in Sydney.

But with no passport, Roy had to take me to the



British Embassy in Sydney to get a temporary one so I could get on the plane to New Zealand the next day.

So instead of Roy being able to see the sights of Sydney – it was his first visit – he spent six hours with me in the British Embassy making sure I got a 90-day passport so I could fly to New Zealand.

Next morning I was having breakfast with McCarter at the airport – it was an early morning flight – and he goes into

his backpack and pulls out two passports, his and mine. I can't tell you Roy's reaction that morning.

Over the next couple of years and, I think, even the last day I was talking to him, he always brought up the passport story and asked me 'what have you lost this time?'

But spending six hours in a British Embassy on his first day in Sydney just summed up Roy. He would do anything for the players and always go the extra mile.

KYLE MCCALLAN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1996-2009

Everyone knows Roy's remarkable contribution to Irish cricket in his formal roles – player, President, team manager, selector and beyond – but let's reflect on the 'informal' side too, his humour and sense of fun, where I have so many memories. When I write this, they bring a huge smile to my face; those countless times when we laughed until our sides were sore.

Once travelling from the Europa Hotel to Stormont for a game, Roy was in the front passenger seat.

In the back we decided to 'wind him up' to see how many times we could make him curse, and in those few miles he may have hit the ton! Be-jaysus! We struggled to keep count as the tears tripped us.

Roy loved to be in the middle of practical jokes – especially involving Whitey and myself.

In 2007, we knew he was involved in the trashing of our room in Port Elizabeth, but he de-



nied it vehemently. ALWAYS. It was Ian Johnston, on Whitey's wedding day, who said his present was that "Big Roy held the ladder for Johnboy Mooney to climb through the window."

When confronted about it, he laughed, but never admitted his role.

That twinkle in his eye, that 'Big Roy' smile and giggle. That's what I'll always remember.

In Roy's time as man-

ager, we achieved some amazing things together as a squad. We won InterContinental Cups, ICC Trophies, World Cup matches, but I'll treasure those countless 'moments' more than anything. Special times shared with special people – and 'Big Roy' was at the heart of them all.

Thank you big man, for everything – I'll miss you more than words.

ROSS MCCOLLUM

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1988



When anyone mentions Roy Torrens to me, or his name comes up in conversation, it brings a smile to my face. Why? Because that was the effect the man had not just on me, but on the many friends he made around the world, and quite possibly everyone who ever knew him.

My first and only match against Roy was the Irish Cup final of 1984 when Lurgan beat Brigade by 80-odd runs. If the game was unspectacular the evening certainly wasn't as the Brigade team joined us at

our hotel. For two or three hours, Roy, Clarke Nicholl and Dickie Maxwell held centre stage, culminating in a certain diminutive north-west cricket reporter sitting on Roy's knee, as a ventriloquist dummy, to give an in-depth synopsis of why Brigade lost. It was hilarious.

It was as chair of selectors and then Chairman of Cricket Ireland that I got to know the man, and saw not only how much he cared for Irish cricket, but how much he cared about the players, the support staff and the supporters. Indeed, he made

time for everyone.

I would often get a tap on the shoulder, followed by: "A wee word, Chairman." Roy would then explain some issue he might be having, something he wanted to do for a supporter or a player, or someone I should meet. The man never stopped.

There are many, many, more entertaining stories I could tell and no doubt others have in this book. I look upon myself as being privileged to have known Roy, to have been able to spend so much time with him and his beloved Joan, and enjoyed so many great times.



BRYAN MILFORD

NORTHERN CRICKET UNION

When, as a 13-year-old, I watched Roy making his Ireland debut against Middlesex in 1966, I had no idea that my future involvement in cricket would mean that Roy, another Irish debutant Ivan Anderson and the scorer Richard Johnson would become such good friends.

A couple of years later, I watched Roy again - not in cricket whites but in sky blue - as he inspired Ballymena United to a nervy 2-2 draw against Irish League champions Glentoran.

It was me who was nervous the next time our paths crossed with Roy coming in to bowl at me off his long run. He had brought a Portrush XI (most of whom appeared to be called Torrens) to play Cooke at their Newforge Lane ground at the invitation of his old friend George Childs.

Aware of my cricketing ability, he bowled a fairly gentle ball outside off which I missed with the bat but managed to



Debut cap for
Nick Larkin

divert to the boundary off my glove. Roy saw the funny side of it and the craic in the clubhouse afterwards was immense.

My involvement with NCU and Irish cricket over the years meant I got to know Roy well, and when I followed Ireland's fortunes in county competitions in England he would always supply tickets. This was just one mark of his great generosity.

Roy's humour was leg-

endary and I hope Joan will forgive me for telling this story. Visitors to Clontarf know that a shot along the ground will often jump up off the boundary rope, and one day this caused Roy's wife to be accidentally struck in the mouth. He quickly made his way around to the clubhouse where Joan was being treated. Looking at her swollen lip he said: "I suppose a snog would be out of the question?"

JASON MOLINS

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1995-2005

Roy was an ever-present throughout my playing days with Ireland.

When I made my debut in Arundel he was there as a national selector. I opened with Angus Dunlop (he was out first ball to Vasbert Drakes), and Roy spent most of the time relaying the score to my Mum.

Mum was at the ground but was too nervous to watch me bat and instead went behind the clubhouse and no doubt worked her way through a packet of cigarettes.

In 2000, I remember sitting in the Harare Sports Club enjoying a team dinner until John Davy decided to throw the carcass of his half-eaten chicken across the length of the table.

It ended up right in the middle of Roy's lap. John was known for having one of the worst arms in the team, and Roy did see the funny side to it.

Fast forward several years when I had become Ireland captain. Adi Birrell approached me



about the need to appoint a new Team manager

I had no hesitation in agreeing that Roy was perfect. He was more than perfect.

He was known to pretty much everyone within the dressing-room, but he was more than just a friendly face and someone to enjoy time with. He had the utmost respect from all the squad, and we knew that despite his jovial manner he had the ability to "get things done".

He had our backs and

we knew we could rely on him 100%.

One of my most cherished memories of Roy came at probably the lowest point of my career with Ireland.

I had just been dropped and the dream of playing in the 2007 World Cup was disappearing. He sent me the warmest and most supportive of text messages and I can still visualise the words on my phone.

When I had heard that he had died I checked that it was still there....



JOHN MOONEY

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2001-2015

In 2013 we had two of the three major ICC trophies in the bag – the World Cricket League and the T20 Qualifiers – and we were in Dubai for the final of the InterContinental Cup.

Over the next few days we beat Afghanistan and history was made – we had won the treble. The mood in the squad was incredible and Roy quipped: “I’m just like Sir Alex! I’m a treble-winning manager.” We all laughed, it was classic Roy.

The celebrations continued long into the night with our Manchester United-supporting manager reminding everyone that he was now Irish cricket’s Alex Ferguson.

A couple of years later, when it was time for Roy to retire, I knew there was only one present we could get the man who had done so much for Irish cricket: a United jersey signed by the man himself.

Alex Ferguson wrote on it ‘From one long-



serving manager to another’.

My hopes were that he would write, ‘from one treble-winning manager to another’ but the message got lost along the way somewhere.

Still it was a lovely message from his hero.

We presented it to him out the back of Malahide Cricket Club, on a typically rubbish, overcast and drizzly Irish cricket day. One that Roy

had seen hundreds if not thousands of times, it didn’t matter though, all the great memories and our thank yous were shared in giving him that jersey.

Robert (ROY) Torrens was a giant of a man. He can never be replaced and I’m so proud to have even known someone like Roy and to have had the chance to try and make Irish cricket better with him.

EOIN MORGAN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2003-2009

When Roy became manager he was quite intimidating at the start, and I was just a teenager then.

But once you got to know him, he quickly proved to be quite a personality. A passionate, jovial guy – as a team we got to see the best years of him, probably one of the most successful times in Irish cricket and he managed to come on that journey, probably from 2004 until I left in 2009 and beyond that.

He was certainly a very proud man from the North West and a very proud Irishman.

There was a small group of us who played all around the same age. Myself, Kevin, William, Gary, Boyd all came through at the same time into the senior ranks.

Roy was always there to reassure us. We were still immature, and he was there to guide us and give advice on whatever situation. Whether that be over a couple of drinks at the bar, you



knew he always had your best interests at heart, and that of Irish cricket.

It makes me smile thinking about the World Cup of 2007 in the Caribbean and the size of the party he organized after qualifying for the Super Eights, in a place a couple of hours from Kingston in Jamaica called Ocho Rios.

There were fans, friends, and family all there in one place and it was amazing, a special place to be after an exemplary win. I just remember him being happy all night, so we all had the time of our lives.

He had his own style as manager. He was very authentic. Given that he



was a very good player, he accepted that every individual player is on their own journey.

He let us make our own mistakes, especially that young talented group at the time, then choosing the right time to give that little bit of advice, imparting his knowledge was the way

that he managed everybody.

Roy was unbelievably supportive to the big decision I'd always committed to. He would always say, 'just keep thinking of that bigger picture.' Because he knew it was a motivation for me and knew exactly how I worked.

And after I left he did keep in touch. It wouldn't be constant. Every few months, there would be a message here and there.

Being involved in a cricketing bubble there are certain places you travel that bring back memories and remind you of certain things. It would be that triggered a few messages after I left.

I was injured for the start of that World Cup in 2011. I remember being in my flat in Finchley and I slept through and missed the first half of the Ireland v England game.

I remember popping out to get some groceries and then getting a bunch of messages saying 'what's going on?'

I remember looking at my phone, then turning on the TV and watching an enthralling game of cricket. Ireland played

really well, of course. Kevin O'Brien. Another huge moment for Irish cricket.

Historically in every World Cup there is normally at least one upset, no matter who the team is or how good they are, and certainly with my Cricket Ireland background, I always recognized that there are threats left, right and centre, and Ireland had their day back then in Bangalore.

It is just so hard to believe that he's left us.

I'd heard how ill he was and I sent through a video message about two weeks before he passed, and I know a lot of ex-players did as well to try and lift his spirits.

One of the things about Roy was in Irish cricket he was such a huge character, and so integral to much that has happened there.

Everywhere he travelled he always made friends. He was engaging with the opposition, locals, just being himself, being normal, being gracious, hospitable, and I think that's how everybody saw Roy and knew him, and that's how they should.

TIM MURTAGH

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2012-2019

Roy was the first person to meet me at Belfast City Airport when I flew into the country for my debut in 2012.

I was a tad nervous about my first game with a new team but the short car journey from the airport to La Mon Hotel with the big man put my mind at ease.

That was one of Roy's great qualities: he made you feel like you had known him a lifetime and you were instantly comfortable in his company.

The role of team manager seemed to be one that was written perfectly for Roy. I have so many fond memories of touring with him in both glamorous and obscure parts of the world.

The only consistencies of those very different trips were his ability to have a far superior room to everyone else in the party (a fact he loved to mention at every opportunity) and a bottle or 12 of The Famous Grouse in his possession.



He was equally generous with his time as he was with his whisky, and many hours were spent chewing over a victory or loss in his luxurious suites.

Roy was always there for us as players and I'll never forget his compassion and haste when I

had to fly home early from Dubai because of a family issue.

Irish cricket has a huge hole missing without his larger than life presence. We will miss you Roy but we will always treasure the many happy memories we had together.

SAQLAIN MUSHTAQ

PAKISTAN 1995-2004, IRELAND 2006



We all called him Uncle Roy. He was such a kind-hearted man with a great knowledge of cricket.

I have played under a lot of managers but Roy was by far the most knowledgeable when it came to the game and he was so good at understanding cricketers, their requirements and how to get the best out of us.

It was Roy who came up with an Irish name for me, which was Séamus

Mushtaq and this caught on and all the players started to call me Séamus in the dressing room.

Shahid Afridi had also signed to play for Ireland in 2006 but joined the squad a little later than me and I suggested to the manager that he should choose an Irish name for my Pakistani colleague too.

Roy had a think and came up with Shahid O'fridi.

Whenever I went over to Ireland, Roy would

come and pick me up from the airport.

It didn't matter which part of Ireland I was flying into he would always be there whatever the time, whatever the weather.

He was such a great professional, and such a lovely and kind-hearted man who would pay out of his own pocket if it helped Cricket Ireland and the players.

He's no longer with us, but Roy will be in my heart forever.

KEVIN O'BRIEN

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2006

Roy presented me with my first cap against Sussex in 2006, which was a proud moment for me and family, made extra special by the fact that he had made his own debut along with my father Ginger against Middlesex 40 years earlier.

He was a great believer in my ability and enjoyed my style of play. Any time I was going through a lean spell and needed his wisdom, we would

have a beer and he'd say: "Son, you need to keep it simple and don't over-think it. Just see ball, hit ball." That has stood me in good stead over the years.

Roy got to know not just the players but our families too and made certain we were always taken care of. You always felt he was on your side. It was great that he was there for the majority of my career until he retired in 2015.

It's an absolute shame he has gone too early and he will be sadly missed by all involved with Irish cricket. He



was a great bloke and a colossus of the game here.

Roy was always upbeat with a smile on his face and I'm sure that positivity rubbed off on the squad. It's no coincidence that many of our successes came with him as team manager.

He was like a father figure to me and indeed the rest of the team. A man who was just so passionate about Irish cricket and a magnificent ambassador for the sport everywhere we went, making friends all across the globe.

NIAL O'BRIEN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2002-2018

Roy's managerial skills were excellent. When I needed help or guidance with on-field performances, thought processes, reflecting on things, he was always there to have a chat. He was a great sounding board because he had no agenda.

I was very comfortable in his presence which was important to me. He offered reassurance and was always so positive which was infectious. His feedback was open and honest and you can't ask for more than that.

While people would always see a jovial, positive character, they might not have known his incredible knowledge of the game which was invaluable for me especially in the early years as I was establishing myself in the side.

Roy knew my father, Ginger, and he was like a father figure himself, especially away on tours. He was great fun to be around, a great story-



teller, who was first in the bar and last to leave, which suited me as I was usually second to arrive and second last to leave.

I wasn't always the easiest person to manage. I could get myself in a bit of strife on and off the field and Roy was a big person to be up against. As team manager, he had to discipline me a few times but he dug me out of a few holes too. You always felt

he had your back, even when I probably didn't deserve it.

I'm sure he knew the type of passionate character I was and made allowances for it. When I was banned for a four-day game in Abu Dhabi, and wasn't even allowed inside the pavilion, he strode across every session with food as I sat watching on the grass banks. He always made sure I was looked after.

KIERAN O'REILLY

IRELAND TEAM PHYSIO 2008-2015

My introduction to Roy was in the Grand Hotel in Malahide, the night before Ireland's opening match against Norway in the European Championships in 2008.

"We'll be on deck at 9.30 son, that's what we call it, you're not in Croke Park now," he said, with that mischievous grin.

Although I'd met Simmo a few weeks previously, it was Roy who ran me through the logistics that night at the start

of a journey that led from the Grand to Nairobi and Windhoek, Toronto and Bangalore, Port Elizabeth and Amstelveen, to name but a few.

Every tour started and ended with Roy sweating at the airport, making sure everyone was checked in, and trying to wangle a few bob off the excess baggage. The image of our manager with his first pint after he had successfully negotiated airport chaos is one that always makes

me smile.

On a personal level, Roy always looked after myself and my family whenever they came on tour, and would always go out of his way to make things easier for everyone.

He had a remarkable way of dealing with people. I always enjoyed his banter with Whitey and Kyle, his arm around the shoulder for Stirlo, his abuse to Johnboy about Liverpool.

He was more than a manager, he welcomed me into the Cricket Ireland family, showed me the ropes, and was the one constant throughout my 10 years involved even after he retired.

Roy was unique and came into his own the more challenging the circumstances. Towards the end of his managerial career at the 2015 World Cup, he did let the liaison officer take up a bit more of the slack, though.

"What time is the bus leaving in the morning Roy?"

"How the 'heck' should I know son?!"





PETER O'REILLY

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1982-1991

I consider it an honour to have opened the bowling with Roy, if only on a couple of occasions. I remember the first of those well because it was my Ireland debut, against Wales at Rathmines, in 1982. We were an unlikely pair. I had just passed my 18th birthday. Roy was 34, and he was already carrying a few pounds. I remember the buttons on his cricket shirt straining slightly.

I was in awe of him. Not only him, to be honest. There were a few legends in that dressing room – Dermott Monteith, Jack Short, Ivan Anderson. As a boy, I had asked these guys for autographs whenever touring teams came to play in Dublin.

Six years earlier, I had seen Big Roy get Viv Richards out when the West Indies had played at Rathmines. The Irish bowlers used to get some tap on those occasions but what I recall was that Roy was always aggressive. He never stopped running in.

By the early 80s, he was still aggressive, even if he'd lost a yard of pace. When Gloucestershire played a Nat West Trophy game in Clontarf, I'd overheard one of their players remark that Roy resembled Fred (Trueman) run-

ning in. "Yes," said another Gloucester player. "He looks like Fred now." Roy would have found that funny.

I didn't know it on that day in 1982 but Roy had been 18 on his Ireland



debut, back in 1966. Maybe that's why he kindly asked me which end I would prefer, to ease me into the game. I made the old man run up the hill and into the wind. He still roared in. That's how I remember him.

Roaring in.



ALEC O'RIORDAN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1958-1977

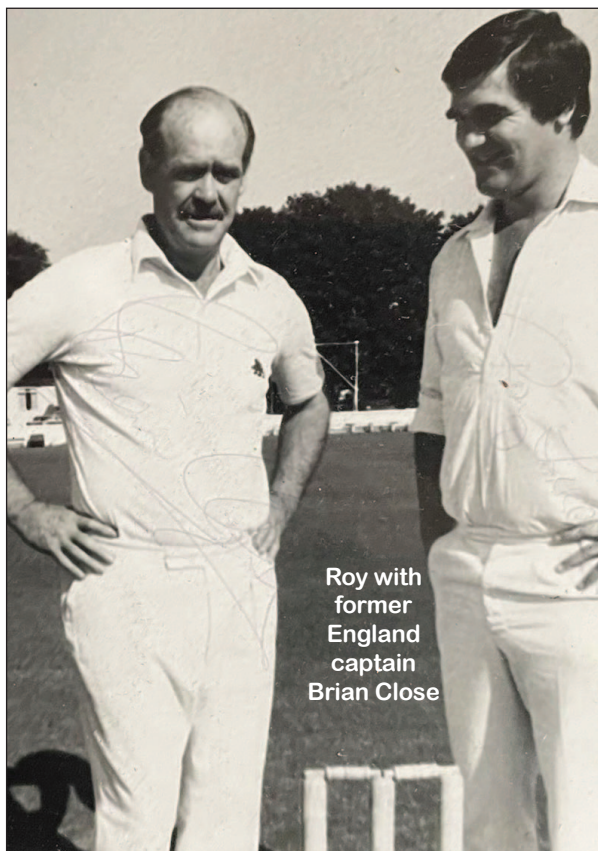
Playing on the same side as Roy was always an enriching experience. His energy, enthusiasm and total honesty, allied to very considerable ability, were very obvious.

When I initially heard of his selection, I assumed selectorial politics and diplomacy were at hand. The North-West wickets could not possibly develop a top class bowler?. How absolutely wrong I was. Roy developed into a top class fast bowler, with his energetic, bustling, approach, high delivery arm and considerable pace, allied to enthusiasm, optimism and willing cheerfulness - a great team man.

I recall a three day game against Denmark. in 1975, played on unfamiliar matting in Hans Christian Anderson country in mid Denmark. Having been seriously outplayed and embarrassed by the Danes over the first two days, Roy took over and bowled five or six of the quickest overs I had seen from any Irish bowler. He demoralised the Danes, totally scared the four of us slip catchers with his pace and hostility, and saved the match and our reputations, all with his cheerful smile!

As Team Manager in recent years,

Roy oversaw, in his encompassing, friendly and sociable manner, the development of Cricket Ireland from minnows to serious and competent competitors on the International stage.



Roy with
former
England
captain
Brian Close

He was, in every sense, the public face and recognisable, physical, presence of Irish cricket. Meeting him at Irish matches was always a joyful memory, with his humour and friendly and ready smile.

WILLIAM PORTERFIELD

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2006

It's impossible to sum up Roy's immense contribution to both Irish cricket and myself in a few words; his longevity and the impact he had at so many levels. Looking back at him presenting me with my first cap was such a proud moment – one that I didn't probably appreciate at the time.



He really looked after us all over the years and myself especially. Maybe he had a soft spot for his fellow men from the north west but he always made sure nobody wanted for anything. You could tell just how much he cared about Irish cricket and the players.

As his daughter Judith said at his funeral he described us as 'the sons he never had' and that was how he cared for us. He was a real father figure, giving extra care to the young guys making their

way into the side.

His mood and personality was infectious, always laughing, always joking, and I shudder to think just how much he was out of pocket looking after us. He was incredibly thoughtful and generous. The door to his room was always open if you wanted a cheeky nightcap, and to chew the fat. You invariably left feeling better.

During my whole time Roy was the face of Irish cricket and what an ambassador he was.

Wherever we went he left a lasting impression and when we returned people always asked about him. He had a great way of bringing everyone together, and could just stand up and give an impromptu speech that made everyone laugh.

He invariably found the right tone for the occasion.

That was one of his great assets, knowing which of the hundreds of stories he had in locker to bring out.

Roy the FOOTBALLER

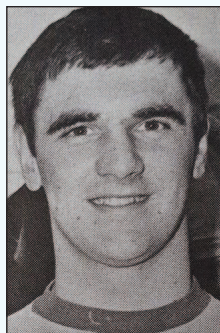
ROY started his career with junior side Churchill United before three seasons with Derry City — then an Irish League side — but found few opportunities to make a breakthrough. While there he played two years on the NI Youths team, winning seven caps, and in December 1967 he signed for Ballymena United, then managed by Dave Hickson.



Roy was a tough tackling centre half and went on to make 124 appearances for the Sky Blues over the next four seasons,

scoring one goal. He won his three amateur caps during his spell at the Showgrounds, and played in the Irish Cup final which Ballymena lost 2-1 to Linfield at Solitude.

The hugely popular defender won the Player of the Year title in 1970-71 — his final season at Warden Street — before returning to Derry City in September 1971. He was player-manager of Institute up to the end of the 1975-76 season.



Roy won three caps for Northern Ireland in amateur 'home internationals'

16 March 1968

SCOTLAND (0) 0 NORTHERN IRELAND (1) 2 Pavis 2

Greenock, Glasgow

NORTHERN IRELAND: Eric McManus (Coleraine); Paddy Maguire (Derry City), Robert Fulton (Cliftonville); Walter McFarland (Crusaders), **Roy Torrens (Ballymena United)**, Richard Sands (Ards); William McAvoy (Ards), Tommy Morrow (Glentoran), Sam Pavis (Linfield), Ray Mowat (Ards), Ken Coulter (Glenavon)



Roy clears his lines for Ballymena United in September 1969 as keeper Jim Platt looks on

11 May 1968

NORTHERN IRELAND 0 WALES 1

Portadown

NORTHERN IRELAND: Eric McManus (Coleraine); Paddy Maguire (Derry City), Robert Fulton (Cliftonville); Walter McFarland (Crusaders), **Roy Torrens (Ballymena United)**, Richard Sands (Ards); William McAvoy (Ards), Tommy Morrow (Glentoran), Sam Pavis (Linfield), Ray Mowat (Ards), Ken Coulter (Glenavon)

19 February 1971

NORTHERN IRELAND 1 Morrison

SCOTLAND 1 Campbell

The Oval, Belfast

NORTHERN IRELAND: William Irwin (Bangor); Jack Bell (Crusaders), David Gordon (Coleraine); David McCoy (Ards) [sub Trevor Anderson (Portadown) 69], **Roy Torrens (Ballymena United capt)**, Martin Donnelly (Distillery); Jim Smith (Derry City), Tom Craig (Bangor), Jim Savage (Distillery), Martin O'Neill (Distillery), George Lennox (Distillery) [sub: Brian Morrison (Bangor) 69]



ANDREW POYNTER

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2008-2016



Roy was one of the best people I have known - a legend. I first met him at Eglinton CC for my senior debut where he threw me my Irish cap as we were walking on to the field. No big speech or presentation, just a "good luck and enjoy it son".

My favourite memory of the great man was on a tour of Australia and New Zealand in 2014.

Our second daughter was expected while I was away but my wife and I decided that chasing a place in the 2015 World Cup squad was more important than me being at the birth.

As you can imagine, my head was all over the place.

When the news broke that Molly had safely arrived, Roy told me: "you're dining with me tonight son". I jumped at the chance.

Little did I know that he had arranged for the whole squad to come to wet the baby's head after our dinner date, in an Irish bar in Brisbane. It made me feel so loved and part of a family away from home.

Roy was the most generous of men. He always greeted you with a smile and a story, and he will be hugely missed.

BOYD RANKIN

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2003

Roy was one of the best people I have known - a legend. I first met him at Eglinton CC for my senior debut where he threw me my Irish cap as we were walking on to the field. No big speech or presentation, just a "good luck and enjoy it son".

It's hard to put into words how much of an influence Roy was on me during our time with Ireland. He enjoyed the craic and was great company, but at the same time he was always there to have a serious chat and give advice.

He lived life to the full, with a smile on his face, and was never slow to remind me that he was the fastest bowler ever to come out of the North West, and that was into the wind!

Roy would call us all 'son' and he really was a father figure to the squad; always there to support us.

As manager, one of his jobs was to organise extra leg room seats on flights, if he could, and he used to have a list of

those who he thought should get them. I'm 6ft 8 so I was always interested in what he could do.

"Don't you worry son, I'll get you sorted. But not before I sort myself first as I'm No 1 on the list!"

Roy wore his heart on his sleeve and lived every ball in matches. Sometimes you would have to get him to calm down a little but all he wanted was us to play well and win games of cricket for Ireland.

There are so many fond memories during our time travelling the world and him telling great stories with a Famous Grouse in hand! He never failed to drop me a text when his beloved Brigade beat Bready, or when Man Utd beat my Liverpool.

He was just such a top bloke who would do anything for you, and it's hard to believe we won't meet again to have some craic and a chat about the good times.

Roy was the lifeblood of Irish cricket!





EMMET RIORDAN

THE IRISH TIMES

I've no idea to this day what the load-bearing capabilities of your average Sri Lankan Tuk-Tuk is but on a steamy afternoon in the jungle city of Dambulla in the first month of 2010 it was about to get tested – to the max.

"Come on with me big man, I'm heading into the bank and I need a bit of muscle just in case," may have been what Big Roy said, but anyhow I was glad of the bit of diversion with Ireland under the pump against Afghanistan in an I-Cup game that they would go on to lose, a first defeat in the competition in six years.

Wedge together in the back of the Tuk-Tuk, the ride into town was fine until we made it to the main road. Sri Lankan driving etiquette is simply the bigger you are the faster you go and everything else makes way accordingly.

As our driver tried to edge out into the traffic on a slight incline in the road, his two-stroke engine working overtime, Roy and I weren't helping matters as we descended into laughter at his plight, the three-wheel vehicle shaking vigorously as he tried to get the right gear for the task in hand.

He stuck to the hard shoulder for the short journey into downtown Dambulla, where my security brief went as



far as holding the door. In fact I failed miserably in completing my duties, the sight of a pub drawing me in from the oppressive jungle heat for a few cold beers as Roy headed back to the ground with his stash of rupees and a relieved Tuk-Tuk driver.

I'm writing these few words on St Patrick's night, 14 years on from the greatest of days and nights for Irish cricket at Sabina Park against Pakistan.

I'll pour myself a drop of whiskey when I'm done and raise a toast to Big Roy, someone who beat the best of craic out of every situation he ever encountered.

And as he'd say himself: "If you're buying, I'll have a Grouse. I'll leave the measure up to yourself."

Cheers Roy, you were one of a kind, I'll make it a large one.

GER SIGGINS

WRITING ON IRISH CRICKET SINCE 1984

There are few more revered sides in cricket history than the West Indies of the mid-1970s. So when word came that they were to play Ireland in that glorious year of 1976, my friends and I got to Rathmines an hour before play started.

We found excellent seats on the temporary stand erected at the Mountpleasant End and settled in.

As was typical of such games, the tourists rested their stars, so happily for the Irish batsmen no Mike Holding, Andy Roberts or Wayne Daniel. Clive Lloyd was also missing, allowing a young Barbadian called Collis King to come in at 5.

King had just made his test debut at Old Trafford and came in against Ireland with the score on 174-3. He didn't hang around, taking 4, 4, 6, 4 and 6 off the first five balls he faced, off the bowling of Mike Halliday.

Several of the hits had come into the crowd close to where we sat at long-on. There had been plenty of what's now called banter between the crowd and the Irish fielder stationed there, a large chap with an accent we found hard to decipher.

Halliday and his captain, Dermott Monteith, agonised over the field placing and the long-on was shifted marginally to his left – right into our

sight-line. He was “encouraged” to move but as Halliday bowled he took a step back to his left. King launched the ball high and hard, sailing towards the wall, but its journey was halted by a large, outstretched hand which closed around it to a mixture of cheers and groans.

And that was my first introduction to Big Roy Torrens.

I got to know him well much later, and always found him incredibly helpful and supportive of what the tiny Irish press corps needed, especially on our trips abroad.



One long night was spent discussing which was the best Ireland shirt of the several that were worn in the one-day era. There was a lot of support for the neon 2015 World Cup shirt but I voted for the muted 2010 World T20

kit. Back home, a week or so later I opened a package and there was Roy's own shirt from that tournament.

You'll find plenty more about Roy's kindness and fun throughout this book but I'll always remember him playing with the kids we visited in Calcutta dump back in 2011. His humanity was evident that day, and he and Joan continued to quietly support that community for years afterwards.

They were four firm friends who followed the Ireland team to the corners of the earth. All four served the sport for many years and all four were presidents of the union. **Robin Walsh** remembers the great days and nights

The FOUR musketeers

When I see Ireland play again some long awaited day it won't be the same as times gone by.

None of my three great friends can be there to share laughter, their discerning views on the game and a jolly jar or three. But what will be with me are delightful memories of worldwide travels with Big Roy, John Caldwell and Alfie Linehan – and, of course, the ladies.

One of the most memorable of what we dubbed “Torrens Tours” was to the World Cup in Jamaica in 2007. There were no happier people than Roy and John when Ireland defeated Pakistan at Sabina Park, Kingston: Roy the manager, John the former ICU chairman who had fought to have Adrian Birrell appointed coach.

It was St Patrick's Day and after the game Roy ensured the team celebrated in the supporters' hotel at a resort 80

kilometres away. Just as well it was over a week before the next game.

Roy, of course, liked his food. Lots of it. The four of us invited Mark Waugh to dinner when we travelled to Cape Town in 2002 to see Australia take on South Africa at Newlands. Roy had a problem: the ribs or the T-bone? Simple solution – ribs as a starter, the steak to follow with room for pudding. Waugh was suitably impressed.

Alfie enjoyed his wine. We once popped into a bar/restaurant from the cable car at the foot of the Himalayas. Alfie ordered a glass of merlot and was somewhat taken aback when asked for £40. It was the only time I can remember our dear friend not having a second.

And John liked a cigarette. I was always willing to join him for a puff and so it was during Ireland's epic run chase of 328 against England in India in 2011. John decided to stay for a second while I returned in time to see



Stellenbosch winery: Roy, John, Alfie and Robin

Kevin O'Brien smash a Jimmy Anderson over for 17.

"Did I miss much?", asked John on his return. He didn't have another puff for the rest of the game.

Roy's arrangements left nothing to chance as you might expect from a well organised hotelier. He knew how to haggle for the best deals – including in one first class hotel in India drinks on the house between 6pm and 8pm.

Word soon reached supporters in other hotels and on the second night the name Mr Torrens was never more

widely invoked. Thereafter, room keys were demanded.

Every trip was a joy whether Barbados, Australia or the emirates of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and the dry Sharjah where we were able to find the only oasis in the desert. It was the same fun at Stormont and Malahide.

Alas, all good things

John was to pass away in 2016 while on holiday in Grenada with his devoted wife Nan. Alfie fell victim to dementia three years later. And now Roy.

Such sadness.

JACK SHORT

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1974-1984

My first memory of Roy is as a teenager playing for Munster against the North West when Roy was an intimidating and feared fast bowler.

Later, when we played together for Ireland I appreciated how good it was to have him on your side.

One of my first Irish games was the 1974 Scotland game at Ayr when Roy had his best Irish bowling figures of 7 for 40. I remember Roy bowled throughout the first innings and was completely spent at the end. He put everything into his bowling and had enormous heart and stamina.

Though always in good humour, Roy was a doughty competitor who thought carefully about the game.

Roy is fondly remembered for his quick wit-
tedness and his numerous stories, especially about the oddities of the characters in the North West. The area seemed to be full of ex-



IRELAND, Ayr 1974: Back row: Jack Short, John Elder, Roy Torrens; front: Ivan Anderson, Dermott Monteith, Alfie Linehan

otic and eccentric personalities. These included the cricket fans who were an impatient lot; Roy often repeated their cry of "Gie her a drink" which had to be explained to me as an instruction to the batsman to hit the ball into the stream at the end of the ground.

One evening Roy spent 20 minutes in intense conversation in a phone box in the lobby of the hotel we were staying in. We were all wondering about this

animated discussion. "Wrong number," he said smoothly to us when he eventually emerged.

I saw Roy much less during his incredibly long managerial career with Ireland but he always had time to speak to former players and to share insights on how the game had changed and developed. It is clear that Roy's unstinting work and dedication has played a crucial role in the impressive and inspiring progression of Irish cricket.

PHIL SIMMONS

IRELAND COACH 2007-2015

First and foremost, Roy was a special friend. In our eight years working together laughter and smiles were never too far away, and he was an essential ingredient of our success in what was a golden period for Irish cricket.

He knew the game, especially in Ireland where he had worn most of the hats; player, manager, President, selector – the only job he didn't do was coach, although he would claim he taught me everything I know!

The manager was a vital sounding board throughout my time as Head Coach. It's no coincidence we won 11 trophies in that era, when we had the magic chemistry of not only a very talented squad, but one that laughed together.

The players kept him on his toes and vice-versa but you could see just how much love and respect there was for him.

One thing that stood out about Roy was his generosity. He would



give the shirt off his back for those that needed it, and another thing was his love for people. Those are two of the reasons we got so close.

He was definitely at his best on our team visits to orphanages and hospitals, where his compassion and generosity shone through.

A real competitor in everything he did, we enjoyed some great battles on the golf course. No quarter asked or given, even when he scored

PAR off a 24 handicap, and those rounds were always followed by a large steak and a glass of red. Happy times.

He was such a great ambassador; never forgotten wherever we went all over the world, even the late, great Sir Everton Weekes would enquire about him.

While writing what should be a sad few lines I can't help remembering things that make me smile and laugh. Until we meet again, old friend.

DEAN SIMPSON

BRIGADE CC & NORTH WEST

My first encounter with Big Roy was playing for Eglinton against his much-vaunted Brigade team of the early 1970s. He was in his pomp and I was young and foolish. When he dropped one short, I made the ill-judged decision to step inside and hook. I missed – he hit! Straight on the forehead in those pre-helmet days.

It was an inauspicious start to a friendship of almost 50 years.

We became teammates for Brigade and the North West. He was an inspirational cricketer: a fearsome fast bowler, a destructive batsman and a brilliant slip fielder. As captain he led from the front, never took a backward step and expected nothing less from his troops.

He also had the unfortunate trait of never knowing when to go to bed. I had many sleepless nights in his company on away trips, and how we played on some of those Sundays in Du-



blin is still a mystery to me!

Our wives are good friends and we socialised together. Roy was always the life and soul of the party. He attracted people into his company and of course he was great craic. We shared some wonderful trips, in particular to Jamaica in 2007 and Barbados last year, following his beloved Ireland team.

Aside from his outstanding cricketing, leadership and management skills he was also a hugely proud, loving and generous family man.

I am thankful to have had Roy as a friend. In future, each time I get a sinus-induced headache (the legacy of that first encounter) I'll remember our good times, and no doubt any discomfort will soon dissipate.



PHILIP SMITH

CRICKET LEINSTER GENERAL MANAGER

As sponsor of Irish cricket for six years from 2007 to 2013, I had the opportunity and privilege to spend time in Roy's company, either before or after International matches and then also during Inter-pros when they were reinstated.

Roy had an infectious charm and always greeted me and my colleagues with the welcome you would normally reserve for old friends. He was a great raconteur and would regale us with brilliant anecdotes about the team, the players and well known cricket personal-

ities – you always felt that you were being given some special insight beyond what you might ever hear officially!

Nothing was too much trouble for Roy who was always a brilliant ambassador for Cricket Ireland – on many occasions and at short notice, he would arrive to an important event or reception to greet my client guests with a broad smile, a firm handshake, an engaging chat and inevitably some signed memorabilia (playing shirts, bats, caps etc) – this was always so well received and I feel that Roy embodied the spirit of the International

Men's team at that time which was one of professionalism, humility, ambition and fun – a brilliant combination which created such a feel-good factor for all around them including the boring sponsors!

Whilst those days are long past, I was honoured to meet Roy on many cricketing occasions since then and am proud to say that his warmth and friendship sustained over all the years – Roy Torrens was a giant of Irish cricket, an enduring friend to so many of us and I feel very privileged to have known him.



MAX SORENSEN

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2012-2016

What can I say about Roy Torrens? He was a very special man who was very welcoming to me when I first came into the Ireland team — a courtesy he extended to everyone else at such a stressful time.

Roy was a great ambassador for Cricket Ireland.

When we were away

he would always make sure we all well looked after and he always wanted what was best for the team.

Wherever we went everyone always enjoyed Roy's company. We would always try to make sure you were in a seat next to the big fella when the drink was flowing.

He would make sure

everyone around was looked after before himself — always putting the lads first!

Roy always saw the funny side of life and I really enjoyed having laugh with him with a beer in hand pondering about life and cricket!

He will be sorely missed and he will always remain in my thoughts.



REINHARDT STRYDOM

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2008-2009

The word 'legend' gets used loosely a lot of the time but I can honestly say that, for myself, Roy was a true 'Legend'.

I must admit I shed a few tears at the news of Roy's passing. When it came to Irish cricket, Roy's passion was there for all to see.

One of my most memorable moments was after that incredible match against Bermuda in the World T20 qual-

ifier in 2008 at Stormont and I was standing next to Roy in the changing room huddle singing 'Ireland's Call' with this huge voice next to me blaring out the words ... it still gives me goosebumps to this day!

Roy was also one of the kindest people I ever met. He invited the whole squad to stay the night in his hotel in Portrush and next day got Andre Botha, Thinus Fourie and myself into

the golf club — every golfer's dream is to play Royal Portrush.

Another memory was when myself and Andre presented Roy with a bottle of Famous Grouse in the Grand Hotel.

In return we got the widest smile from the great man. Unfortunately I never got the chance to sit down with Roy and share a glass with him.

But I will always remember him.

Forever the Legend.

PAUL STIRLING

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2008

There is a special bond between a group who regularly tour the world together, none more so than the Irish cricket team. It is a second family and Roy was very much the head of it. 'Uncle Roy' as I affectionately knew him, for my whole adult life.

Roy had a great eye for what a player and a person required, whether it was an arm around the shoulder or a kick up the backside. I greatly admired the balance he struck between knowing when to have fun and knowing when to switch on – and when it was time to celebrate, my word there was no better man.

In an era where cricket has become so professional, Roy was a breath of fresh air. He was a constant reminder of the 'old school' ways in which we should be playing our cricket. To have fun, play with a smile on our face and realise just how lucky we all were to be doing what



we loved to do for a living. I'm very fortunate to have shared blood, sweat and tears with Roy, and many laughs.

The last time I saw him was with Robin for a businessman's lunch in the Europa Hotel. Roy ordered four Guinness and before I could ask who the fourth was for, there were only three remaining. Roy's first pint of the day was something to behold!

Guinness continued to flow, steak was devoured and Famous Grouse capped off a great afternoon full of stories and laughter.

Roy paid the bill, of course, exclaiming for the umpteenth time: "Ah jeez fellas, I'm only a pensioner you know?"

It was that sort of meet-up that is all too commonly put off for another time. I'm so glad this one wasn't.

STUART THOMPSON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2012-2019

Losing Roy was a very sad day for the cricketing family in the north west and Ireland. Self-proclaimed as the fastest bowler Ireland has ever produced, it will be for his managerial prowess that I'll remember fondly. Only Sir Alex Ferguson had a better record (his words not mine).

For a naïve kid travelling around with the national side he made it very easy to settle in, taking me, and a number of other young lads under his wing and making sure everything ran smoothly for us.

He had an answer for everything and it was usually smart or humorous, often both.

"How long to the ground, Roy?" "Four



hours!" It was always four hours.

With this he got the nickname Uncle Roy.

Before listening to him, I didn't know much of his cricket playing career nor did I know he was the Bobby Moore of Derry City FC back in the day (again, his words).

But his legend travelled far and wide and on the footbridge to the sta-

dium in Adelaide, crossing the River Torrens, he stopped, turned around and pointed to the sign. "They even named the river after me." Never a dull moment.

He was a very funny and kind man, and the memories will live for a long time.

I hope there was a Famous Grouse and Diet Sprite waiting for him...



ADRIAN TORRENS

ROY'S COUSIN

Roy was slightly older than me as grew up. Our families went on holiday together in Portrush and from an early age our parents would have taken us to Beechgrove to watch Brigade.

We would play football or cricket and there was always a competitive edge, Roy didn't like being on the losing side, which did happen on occasion. If he lost the first match he would make it 'best of three', if he lost the second it was 'best of five' and so on.

Roy was talented and always destined to be a success at whatever he put his mind to. He was never a great one for practice or training, though, otherwise he may have been even better. It was always determination and natural talent that got him through.

While he excelled at cricket and football, Roy played other sports to a good standard too, like table tennis and snooker, and he was a fine golfer



aided by a handicap that was always on the generous side.

I played in a cricket match when Roy and Ross, his older brother who captained the team, had a disagreement over field placings. At that moment 'Archie' the family dog ran onto the field. Roy turned to Ross and told him 'Archie' had more brains than him. The skipper didn't take too kindly to the remark

and sent him off. We had to win the game with 10 men.

That was an exception, though, as Roy usually seemed to be one move ahead of everyone else, seldom did anybody get the upper hand on him. He always led from the front with enthusiasm, a strong personality and yet underneath he had a kind heart and would have done anything for anybody.



DAVID TOWNSEND

WRITING ON IRISH CRICKET SINCE 1994

Well, what can you say about Roy Torrens that the great man never said himself, in that uniquely boastful yet self-deprecating way of his?

Who were you most like as a player, Roy?

"Well, you see young Ed Joyce - he reminds me a lot of myself at a similar age. [PAUSE FOR EFFECT] Although I could bowl as well, of course!"

There was something wonderfully loveable about someone who could come out with lines like that, and also go to great lengths for a moment of mischief.

When the squad were measured and fitted with their kit for the 2015 World Cup, Roy had the manufacturers sew a XXL tag into his shirts, but a XXXXXL into those of his equally well-padded friend Phil Simmons.

"Bejaysus, coach, you need to be doing something about all that weight you're carrying around!"

Several tributes men-



tion Roy's ability to embellish a story, but I'm sure he invented a good few too. No way, for example, did a young Paul Stirling once ask him if Gordon Greenidge was one of the famous Three Ws, but we all roared with laughter every time the line was given another airing.

Roy was rarely lost for words but he was rendered momentarily speechless when Martin McGuinness got up to speak at an official reception for the team after

the 2007 World Cup.

In his capacity as Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, the former IRA commander told the gathering that he was a big cricket fan and that they might be surprised how many other Republicans followed the game too.

If that wasn't enough of a showstopper, McGuinness finished by saying how much he was looking forward to meeting Roy Torrens - "a legend of the north-west".

A legend indeed...

ALBERT VAN DER MERWE

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2010-2012

‘Put a bit of top spin on and leave the cue ball over there for your next shot,’ were probably the first words Roy spoke to me.

My brother and I were two South Africans fresh off the boat playing cricket for Derriaghy and Dunmurry respectively, and we had gone to watch a close friend who was overseas pro for Bready, when they hosted Roy’s beloved Brigade in 2004 or 2005.

Post-game we made a beeline for the pool table where Roy was happy to offer some friendly advice.

Then U2’s “Sunday, Bloody Sunday” came on the jukebox.

Roy asked us if we knew about the event that inspired the song (we didn’t have an inkling of Irish history) and gave us a quick summation.

The next week I bought a book on The Troubles and have been fascinated by the subject ever since.

Our paths didn’t cross again until I was selected for Ireland in 2010 yet a year later when the World Cup squad



Roy and captain Kevin O'Brien present debut caps to Rory McCann and Albert

were waiting to catch our plane to India he pulled me aside and handed me two books about The Troubles, saying it was a long trip and I might enjoy them. I am shocked to this day how he remembered.

Roy had a great sense of humour, loved winding the players up and at one stage reverted to answering all queries by simply saying “four hours”.

At a World Cup Anti-Corruption session, he nodded off during the presentation.

When the lights came back on, the official asked Roy if we had any support measures in place, to which he replied: “We have backpacks!”

Anyone who spent even “four hours” in his company is sure to have had a richer life for it.

Roy in his OWN WORDS

"(John Wright got me into this job in 2004. I asked him what the commitment would be and he said 'half a dozen games a year, the odd trip to Scotland or to Holland. No problem Roy, you can manage that'.

"In those 10 years we've had 280 games. But they've been wonderful years and I wouldn't change it for anything."

ROY ON WILLIAM PORTERFIELD — William is a marvellous captain. He's generally recognised to be one of the best captains in Associate Cricket. William doesn't forget where he comes from, and he keeps talking to me about Donemana and North West Cricket in general. He's a great role model for the Young Cricketers in the North West, to look at William and gone are the days when people from the North West didn't get picked for Ireland, and William is a perfect example of that.

"I was lucky enough to play at Lord's twice. It's something that stays with you forever... I thought to myself - Bradman, Sobers, Hutton, Compton, Richards, and now Roy Torrens." (Irish Cricket Annual 2006).

"It's a great thrill and honour for not only me personally, but also Irish cricket. I'd like to thank them for putting up with me all these years! I can honestly say I've enjoyed every minute of it. It's been a quite

remarkable journey." (2009, on being awarded the OBE)

"I know all the tricks of the trade ... I suppose that makes me ideally qualified to look after them." (In 2004, when he became Manager of Ireland and described himself as "Poacher turned Gamekeeper.")

"As a player I suppose I was like a young Ed Joyce – of course, I could bowl as well."

ROY ON GEORGE BEST — Bestie was a genius ever since he had set foot on a football field. He was frail but had great balance. He would always skip past the first challenge, nutmeg the second and swivel past the third before putting the ball into the net. At that time he was very shy. He was the reason why I have supported Manchester United all my life. It's very sad that he is no longer with us, but to us he will always remain a lovable young kid who could do anything with a football."

"Nowadays, going through airports, with a party of 20... the logistics, excess baggage, trying to make sure they all make the flight. I haven't lost anyone up to now but I've had guys mislay passports. I had one guy who put all his daily allowance money for the tour into a bin at the airport."



STEPHEN WARKE

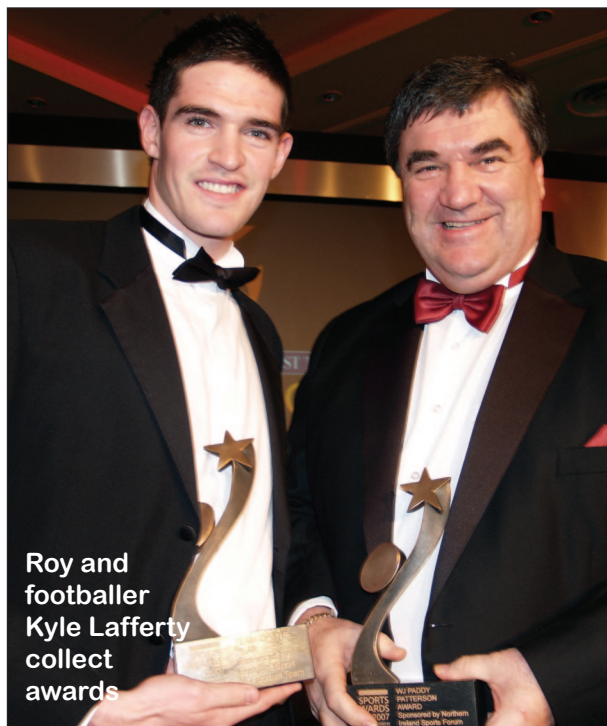
PLAYED FOR IRELAND 1981-1996

What a character – he lit up every room he entered. My proper introduction to ‘Big Roy’ was on a tour to England in 1981. It was my first season in the Ireland squad and one of his last.

We were playing Surrey. I was twelfth man, sitting next to Roy in the old visitors’ dressing room, watching the procession of late-order Irish batsmen being skittled on a fast Oval pitch. Roy was padded up and next in, being careful not to stretch too much in case he pulled a fetlock before his big moment.

When a wicket fell, he was up, chest out and swinging arms. On leaving the dressing room he turned to me and, in that Derry brogue, said: “Warkey, I’m just away to throw the bat.”

The first ball he faced was short. He rocked back, evidently closed his eyes, and swung as hard as he could. Missing it entirely, he lost his grip, and ended up on his backside as his bat flew through



Roy and footballer Kyle Lafferty collect awards

the air and missed the square leg umpire by a whisker! From then on I took everything Roy ever told me literally.

Little did I know the influence this burly man would have on Irish cricket in the years following, as a selector and then as team manager – the face of Cricket Ireland.

“Come ’ere Warkey till I tell ye” still sounds in

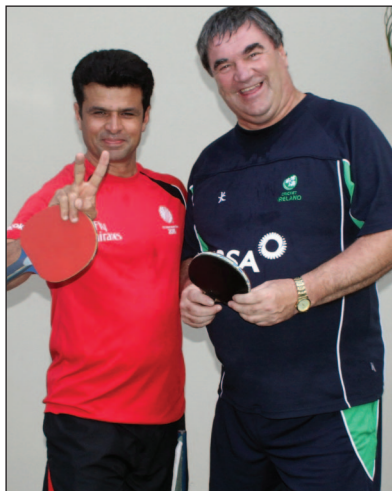
my ear. It was Roy’s summons to join him, usually along with other notables like Monty, Alfie and Cecil, very late in a hotel lobby bar during a three-day game, to dissect that day’s play.

“Just another wee night cap before bed.” The banter and craic was mighty. I still don’t know how I managed to score the odd run the following day!



Roy's WORLD CUPS

Roy's time as Ireland manager took him to seven ICC global events – in West Indies, Australia, New Zealand, India, Bangladesh, England and Sri Lanka





OPPOSITE PAGE: Roy at the 2010 T20 in Guyana; below with Michael Caulfield and Stumpy; table tennis match with umpire Aleem Dar; **THIS PAGE:** talking to the Irish president in 2011 with Kevin O'Brien and Andrew White; high security in India; floral tribute to the NW boys; congrats cake for Kevin O'Brien



ANDREW WHITE

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2000-2014

It has often been said, that from a sporting career the most valuable thing you can take away are not the trophies or the medals but rather the friendships made. Cricket has given me so much and I have treasured the times spent representing my club teams, my Union and most memorably, Ireland on the world stage. The success that we achieved as an international team over many years was brought about by hard work, a determination to be better and a desire to win that knew no bounds.

Roy Torrens or 'Big Roy' as we affectionately called him, was an integral part of everything Ireland achieved and from the moment he took over in 2004 until I retired in 2014 he was an ever present friend for me during those years.

Of course, he was the team manager and an excellent one at that, but Roy's influence went far beyond any job description. He made sure the



players were ready to perform on the field and that often came simply by making us happy. Any little issue a player had was sorted and most of all he took the greatest care of the players families.

He was highly respected by the players, they knew his love for

the North West and for Cricket Ireland, after all, there was hardly a role that Roy hadn't fulfilled during his life. The coaches lent on him for advice on a daily basis because they knew that he was wise counsel. I loved winding Roy up about his playing career and the last time i asked



him how good he actually was....'well you have heard of Ben Stokes and Andrew Flintoff....I was nothing like that...I could bat and I could bowl'!

Roy was only ever stressed in two circumstances...at airport check-ins when baggage weight was way beyond

its limits and when the team bus failed to turn up. Both circumstances allowed the vultures to circle and add five times the volume of stress to the situation. Asking Roy irrelevant questions at check-in such as, 'what is the wifi password at the hotel Roy?' or 'are there any spare tickets for the last game of the tour?' allowed everyone to stand back and listen to the choice responses. When boarding the plane, Roy had the last laugh as he was usually already sat in his seat with leg room, giving a smile and a wink as you passed by.

Adi and Simmo both hated the team bus being late and it was always outside Roy's control but naturally we made it out to be Roy's fault and this forced a fascinating conversation with Roy and his north west accent and a Bangladeshi or Indian bus driver with poor English...comedy gold.

On the 2015 pre World Cup tour to Australia and New Zealand, as with every morning on tour, players were required to register their weight and hydration levels, among other

things but in relation to hydration it required producing a urine sample which was then examined by Brendan Connor. One morning, Roy came to my room and requested that he use my sample pot and that I then hand it to Brendo. Given that Roy's water intake would not have been very high for several weeks previous, this was going to be a reaction worth seeing from our highly esteemed S&C coach at 6.45am.

The outburst that came from Brendo's bathroom that morning, directed at me was incredible. How could an international athlete be clinically dehydrated but Roy burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter for the next ten minutes and Brendo left to just smile and carry on with the next sample.

Moments like this got everyones day off to a good start.

Roy's passing has left my family and I with a huge void but nothing compared to the loss felt by Joan, Andrea, Judith, Joanne and the family circle.

The memories we will cherish.

GARY WILSON

PLAYED FOR IRELAND 2005-2020

Roy liked to tell the story that he got me my first cap. In 2005, Jeremy Bray was going to be the wicket-keeper for the ICC Trophy but he was injured for Ireland's two warm-up games directly beforehand.

I was playing a club game at Stormont and Roy happened to be walking past the ground and saw me keeping. He claims - I'm sure the truth was exaggerated slightly - that he went back to the team hotel to tell Adi Birrell that he had just seen Ireland's next wicketkeeper playing across the road.

Sure enough, I was picked for the two warm-up games and perhaps I do owe Roy more than I will ever know.

For the next 16 years I was lucky enough to call him my friend as well as my Ireland team manager. He said that when we met up, we didn't shake hands, we hugged.

I will be forever thankful that I knew Roy; my life is better for the fact



that he was in it. He had the amazing knack of being able to make you feel good in almost any situation.

On tour, he was happiest when he was just sitting around having the craic with lads, usually holding court. And we were only too happy to listen.

Myself and William Porterfield did a charity

bike ride in 2012 in memory of my mum, for Cancer Research UK. I told Roy about the idea and he immediately he wanted to help. He proceeded to drive a camper van around Ireland for 4 days at 10 miles an hour to make sure we were well looked after.

There is nothing that man wouldn't do for you. A true one in a million.



KEVIN WOODS

IRELAND SUPPORTER

My first meeting with Roy was in Ocho Rios, Jamaica after that iconic victory over Pakistan.

I was 24 and didn't know anybody else at the tournament but someone tipped Roy about my story. He sought me out, thanked me for making the effort to travel and told me how it was appreciated.

The bear hug that followed was the start of the bromance.

One of the funniest days started out as a very unfortunate trip to hospital with a dear friend in Dharamsala.

While waiting, Roy decided we'd go for a stroll and check out some of the "alternative" accommodation choices.

He had been a bit disappointed with his choice of stay for the touring party so we checked out three of the other options close by.

The first was terrible, so I could see Roy perk up a little, the second was average at best, so he now had a smile on



his face. In the last he asked to see the the best room and we both had a fit of giggles. The young man showing said "this sir is our best room for our best customers. Do you like it sir?"

Roy replied: "Very nice, I'll be back to you."

We left and Roy broke into a skip and a whistle – he couldn't wait to get back to tell the rest of the touring party.

Our hotel bar, The Pint O'Fun, was in full flow that night.

My last trip with Roy was to Barbados and Grenada in 2020, a last minute decision to go

but I am so happy I did. Pure fun and craic.

Sitting having a drink in a lobby, I was fascinated by the stories from Derry and Robin asked me to get the song "The Town I Love So Well" on YouTube.

As it played they told me about each landmark – it was very moving.

We had planned during the games in Bready to take that walk around Derry, as per the song.

Unfortunately life changes quickly. If I could change the words to that song slightly, he was "The Big Man we Loved so Well".

CRAIG YOUNG

PLAYING FOR IRELAND SINCE 2013



Before my first trip away with the senior team, to the Netherlands, I hadn't heard about travel plans but I knew Roy would be at the Senior Cup final at Eglinton the day before we left.

Sure enough, there he was. As the day went on, I thought right I'm going to have to introduce myself. So I wandered over with a big smile, expecting a nice warm greeting, and to be told what the travel arrangements were to the airport. I assumed there would be an Ireland team bus or a mini bus or something.

"Hi Roy, my name's Craig Young, I'm heading off with you boys tomorrow. I can't wait, but I'm just wondering where are we meeting as I've not actually got a way down?"

Roy turned to me, looked over his glasses like a scary headmaster, and said: 'Son, you come to me the night before we are due to go away and tell me you have no way to the airport?'

He looked away, took a long pause and turned back. "What the 'heck' do you expect me to do about it?"

Apparently it was my

responsibility to get there. I quickly got up, gave a nervous laugh and said goodbye, realising I needed to get looking at bus timetables. Anyway, I managed to get to 'Check In' on time and Big Roy was there, smiling. "Ah son, you made it! Good." And he gave me a pat on the back.

We always laughed about him scaring the hell out of me that first time we met. When I got to know him, he was the complete opposite of frightening: someone who had time for everyone, a real people person and a top man to boot!