

Barry Dodd

Businessman, philanthropist and lord-lieutenant of North Yorkshire whose collection of vintage vehicles included a 1950s bus

Barry Dodd's appointment as lord-lieutenant of North Yorkshire in 2014 was a rare instance of the post going to a self-made businessperson rather than landed gentry. "When I was offered the position I didn't have the time to give, and indicated I'd have to do it differently," he told the *York Press* when his unpaid appointment was announced. "Luckily the Palace seemed receptive to the idea of a modern lieutenancy... I'm a businessman, business is all I know, so there's no surprise really I'm going to be doing it this way."

Demand for royal services in North Yorkshire is high, and most months at least one member of the royal family visited Dodd's patch. He represented the Queen at local events, organised invitations to Buckingham Palace garden parties and presented decorations and honours. "I get cards and letters from people who have been to the Palace or who have received an award," he said. "They love it."

He spoke about his meetings with the Queen, including the occasion when he and other lords lieutenant posed with her for a photograph on her 90th birthday. "When you are in the presence of Her Majesty it is really clear to me that she is the boss," he told the *Darlington & Stockton Times*. "Even the most ardent republican behaves when meeting the Queen — it's a matter of manners. The reaction of people to the royal family is wonderful."

Dodd was an energetic ambassador for North Yorkshire. He believed that the "A64 corridor", the road from Leeds to Scarborough via York that is crossed by the A1(M) and the East Coast railway line, had great potential for business and tourism. "Improving the connectivity of the transport network east-west across our area is vital for our growth," he declared.

He knew that past lords lieutenant enjoyed more privileges than today, including, until 1871, control of the local militia. Asked if he hankered after any of his predecessors' powers, he replied: "To be able to park anywhere, especially in York, would be quite useful."

Barry John Dodd was born in Salford

in 1947, but knew little about what became of his father. He was taken to Canada by his mother, Neta Verhine, a court reporter who went on to work in real estate. Later they settled in Chicago, where his stepfather was an executive with the telecommunications company AT&T, and Barry acquired an adopted sister, Sandra.

Returning to Britain to take his O and A levels, he lived in Hertfordshire with his maternal grandparents. He was then sponsored by ICI, the chemical company, to read engineering at Hatfield Polytechnic, later saying that the

'Even the most ardent republican behaves when meeting the Queen'

institution "shaped my life and inspired me to become a manufacturer and champion the cause of British industry". He returned last September, when Hatfield, now the University of Hertfordshire, awarded him an honorary doctorate.

There followed five years with ICI in London, New York and Wilton on Teesside, but Dodd became disillusioned, not least after sharing an office with a well-qualified engineer who rarely took any meaningful decisions through fear of losing his job. A brief spell as technical director with a small company was "an absolute disaster", but Dodd had a chance meeting with Geoff Collier, a former ICI colleague who had left to run a printed circuit company. In 1974 they pooled £8,000 savings to start Global Service & Manufacturing Group (GSM), creating metal nameplates. The pair began in a room above a shop in Guisborough near Middlesbrough, but when their machinery sent plaster falling from the ceiling below they moved to an ex-army compound in



Dodd with his wife, Frances, and, below, with sea cadet Phoebe Donbavand in 2017

Thirsk. They later built GSM's first factory on the former parade ground. When Collier retired in 1988, Dodd bought his equity to stop the company being sold to a third party. He expanded, buying underperforming businesses in the same or related fields. He made a point of never borrowing to fund acquisitions.



Today GSM creates metal nameplates, labels, control panels and car logos for companies across Europe. Its headquarters remain in Thirsk, where Dodd, who had a passion for helping to create employment in rural areas, also provided job opportunities for ex-offenders and the young unemployed.

In 1978 Dodd, tall and with a military bearing later emphasised by his lord-lieutenant's uniform, married Frances McTigue, a dental nurse. They had met when Frances and her sister turned up late to a party they had not particularly wished to attend, having stopped at a pub on the way. They asked each other which of the men they fancied. Frances pointed to Dodd, although it took him eight years and some prompting before he proposed. She and his mother, who lives in Florida, survive him; there were no children.

Fourteen years ago, having made a

substantial fortune, Dodd decided to dedicate a day a week to philanthropic work. Over the next decade or so he served as chairman of Hull York Medical School and as pro-chancellor of the University of Hull, and chaired the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership, through which he attracted and distributed about £240 million of funding. The culmination was his appointment as lord-lieutenant four years ago, in succession to Lord Crathorne. Dodd was also chairman of Varlink, a distributor of mobile computing solutions, and led the board of Add Power Technologies.

Some years ago Dodd learnt to fly a helicopter, piloting himself over the fields and moors, avoiding tractors and other slow-moving traffic on country lanes. The Bell 206B, which he and a neighbour shared, was a familiar sight across North Yorkshire, the largest lieutenancy area in England. He was taking the helicopter for its annual check-up when it crashed and caught fire in a field near Boroughbridge.

On most days he was only too happy to get home. In 1999 the landlord of the Black Bull, Dodd's local pub, sought permission to convert it into a house. Although villagers were upset, the landlord came to the planning hearing armed with a register of how little local people used the pub. He accused Dodd, a rather sober chairman of the parish council, of only visiting twice a year, "and even then [he] drinks only two halves of bitter".

After a hectic day accompanying royal visitors, Dodd enjoyed working on his collection of Bentleys, Aston Martins and other vintage vehicles, including a 1950s bus, which he called "a swine to drive". Just like anyone else, he said, he would always have a list of jobs to do. "I do some work with animals and it brings me down to earth; physical activity is a great leveller."

Barry Dodd, CBE, businessman and lord-lieutenant for North Yorkshire, was born on October 2, 1947. He died in a helicopter crash on May 30, 2018, aged 70

Jerry Maren

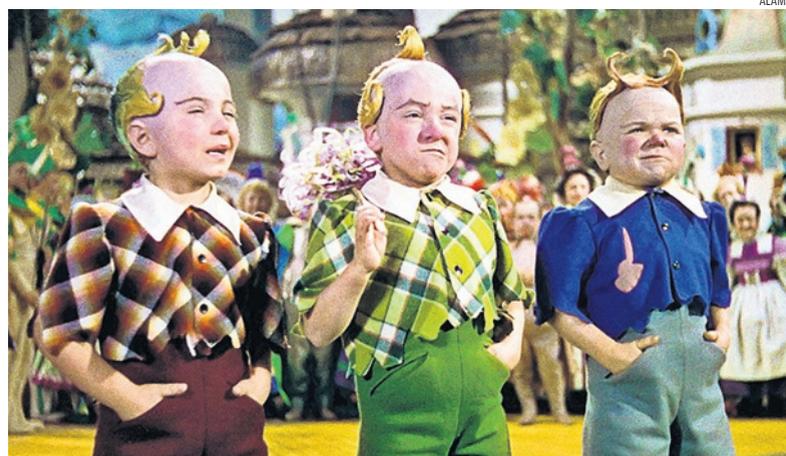
Last of the Munchkins who appeared as a member of the Lollipop Guild in *The Wizard of Oz* alongside a teenage Judy Garland

Jerry Maren may not have been a star himself, but he lived to be the last of the Munchkins who appeared with Judy Garland in *The Wizard of Oz*. Well into his eighties he was appearing all over America, singing about being one of the Lollipop Guild from Munchkinland and carrying a lollipop, just as he had before presenting it to Dorothy in the 1939 film.

Maren was 19 when his sister Rae spotted a newspaper advert for "pituitary dwarfs", people who were small but of regular proportions. He took a train from his home in Boston, Massachusetts, to New York. From there he and 123 others travelled to Los Angeles by bus. "It was the first time I had seen other little people," he recalled.

There they were accommodated in a run-down hotel, four in a bed. For their troubles they were paid \$50 a week for five weeks. Maren's pay was increased to \$75 a week when he was given lines to say. By comparison, the dog that played Toto earned \$125 a week for its owner.

As one of the Munchkins who sang *Follow The Yellow Brick Road* and *Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead*, he believed that the recording had been speeded up to make their voices sound higher, in line with what the studio thought audiences would expect from a dwarf. The studio always denied it.



Jerry Maren, centre, with fellow Munchkins in a scene from *The Wizard of Oz*

Maren recalled that Garland, then aged 17, was always generous to the little people. "At Christmas she had a giant box of chocolates — and gave all 124 of us a candy," he said. When the film was released the studio employed him to entertain crowds at openings.

Many legends grew up around the Oz dwarfs. One was that some of them hanged themselves from the trees on the set. "I never saw any bodies," Maren said. Garland, despite singing the praises of

the *Wizard of Oz* and "the wonderful things he does", found some of the Munchkins' behaviour less impressive. She told of being propositioned by actors more than twice her age. "They were drunks," she said in 1967. "They got smashed every night and they'd pick them up in butterfly nets."

Bert Lahr, who played the Cowardly Lion, said: "Many Munchkins made their living by panhandling, pimping and whoring." Mervyn LeRoy, the film's

producer, said in 1939: "They had sex orgies in the hotel and we had to have police on just about every floor." Maren insisted that he "never had that luck", adding: "But I had normal appetites, if you see what I mean."

He was born Gerard Marengi in Boston in 1920, the youngest of ten siblings whose Italian-American father worked in a shoe factory. He was 11 when his parents noticed his lack of growth and his dwarfism was diagnosed. He hated the frequent injections that he was given and persuaded his doctor to say there was little chance of improvement. The treatment stopped.

Although he stood at only 3ft 6in tall and weighed 50lb, Maren served as a major's adjutant with the US army in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. He dreamt of going into business, but occasional acting jobs began dropping into his lap.

Even before *The Wizard of Oz* had achieved widespread fame, Maren was discussing his diminutive size. "We're just as normal as any other normal human beings, although we are only vest pocket size," he told *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in 1939. "We have many advantages over the six-footers. Our clothing bills are infinitesimal compared to theirs and... when our funds

run low we can pass into theatres and ride on the trains for half-fare."

He went on to appear in *Tiny Troubles*, a comedy featuring "Our Gang", a popular young people's group of the 1930s, and with the Marx Brothers in *At the Circus* (1939), playing one of four villains while smoking a big black cigar. In it he was seen in a miniature room with miniature furniture, but later complained: "They promised I could take the furniture home, but they never kept that promise."

Maren claimed that his happiest time was when he met his wife, Elizabeth (née Barrington), who was just a little shorter than him. They married in 1975. "I saw a photograph of her that was shown to me by a friend," he said in 2008. "I said I would like to meet her and she came to see me. We have been head over heels in love ever since." Elizabeth died in 2011; there were no children.

Despite appearing in more than 100 films and in some of the earliest American television shows, Maren was forever associated with *The Wizard of Oz* and lollipops. "I like lollipops," he would insist. "But I prefer cigars."

Jerry Maren, actor, was born on January 24, 1920. He died of cardiopulmonary failure on May 24, 2018, aged 98