

TRIBUTE | IVOR THOMAS

Ivor Thomas Amusements pay tribute to company's founder and father figure

Well-respected industry stalwart and company

founder Ivor Thomas has passed away at his home in Kent following a short illness, just three weeks before his 85th birthday, having dedicated his life to establishing one of the most recognisable names in the South East amusement business.

Born in London, Thomas began working in arcades after his family relocated to Ramsgate, and by 1965 was

Ivor Thomas, founder of Ivor Thomas Amusements, passed away at home following a short illness, just three weeks before his 85th birthday, with son Paul Thomas and GM Nicky Lines paying tribute to the "successful businessman, devoted family man, community benefactor, and passionate advocate for the industry he helped shape."

running his father's seaside bingo hall as well as managing arcades in Camden Town for Phonographic Equipment, before spending several years overseeing the company's entire UK estate.

"Seeking a return to his roots and weary of constant travel, Ivor settled into the general manager role at Dreamland in Margate while simultaneously starting his



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own single-site operation," said Nicky Lines, GM at Ivor Thomas Amusements. "This marked the beginning of Ivor Thomas Amusements in 1974, which soon expanded to include an arcade on Margate Pier. Unfortunately, this was lost in the devastating storms of 1978."

"Undeterred, Ivor acquired the lease to a café

in Ramsgate, transforming it into a hub for his growing network of AWP and amusement machines across Kent. Over time, his operation flourished, supplying machines to a wide range of pubs and independent venues throughout the South East."

In the mid-1980s, Thomas was joined in the business by his son Paul Thomas,

who went on to become MD in 1992, and eventually CEO after Thomas' retirement.

"Ivor enjoyed a long retirement with his beloved wife Ann and lived life to the full," said Paul Thomas. "He will be remembered for his sense of humour, jokes and determination to succeed in whatever he did, and his love of his family, of which he was so proud."



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