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CHAIRMAN

Nick Holman



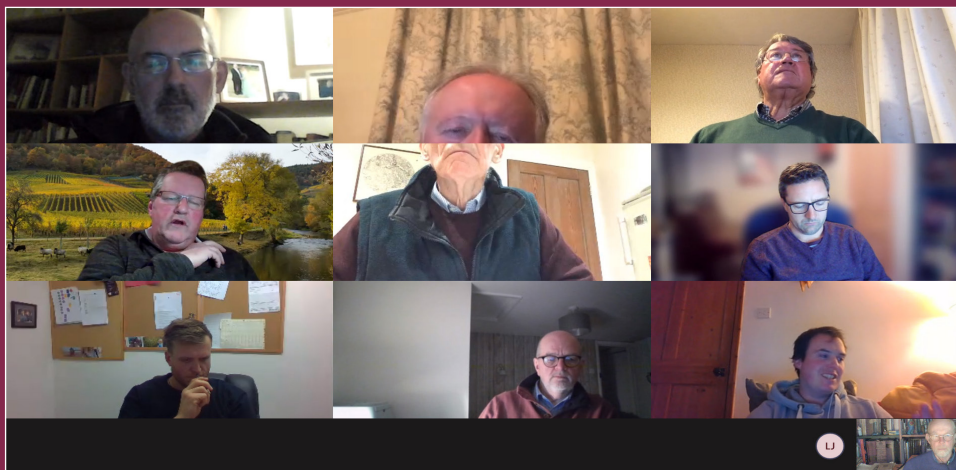
When I stepped into the Chair in November 2019 I knew there were some challenges ahead for the Club, but none of the magnitude of the COVID pandemic. Sadly, that has dominated the past year for all of us. To OPMs and their families who have suffered from COVID to the ultimate degree I offer sympathy and to those who are still recovering my best wishes for a full return to good health.

Let us also remember the stress and strain it has caused the School in a year which saw a change of leadership. We welcome Jo Hayward as the new Head and look forward to a resumption of the close cooperation between the School and the Club. A major task for Jo and her team is the relocation of the Prep School from the Millfields to the Ford Park campus in readiness for September 2021.

One immediate impact on the Club has been the closure of the clubhouse at Ford Park since the first lockdown. Understandably the Government imposed restrictions on how licenced premises could operate between lockdowns. These made it unrealistic for us to open the Club even for short periods. As a consequence of this closure and the uncertainty on when we could re-open, we had to take the difficult decision to say goodbye to Ash Brown. Ash has run the bar for ten years and become very much part of the furniture. He did an excellent job for us for which we thank him and wish him well away from the OPM Club.

At the time of preparing this report it is still unclear when the Club will reopen or indeed in what format. The club-house however, is not sitting idle with the School continuing to use it during the day, particularly over recent months as a COVID testing room. The Committee is reviewing the future operation to identify a format on which we can reopen on a viable basis. In recent years, the club bar has been running at a loss and this needs to change. Members will be notified in the summer on the new arrangements.

Despite COVID, we had good news on the investment property in Saltash. The former tenants left after accruing a significant amount of rent arrears and the property having been empty for a couple of years. But I am pleased to say, early in 2020, we found a new tenant who is now running a craft beer bar and paying rent! He has weathered the storm of COVID with some rent concession support from the Club and looks forward to resuming normal business from May 2021. In the meantime, we continue with action against the former tenants for payment of the arrears.



The all too familiar sight of 2020. One of the many OPM Committee meeting held via Zoom

With what 2020 has thrown at us, the publication of this year's Magazine is perhaps more significant than normal. We recognise the need to keep members informed, not just about OPM news but also progress at the School. Jo Hayward's article in this magazine brings you up to date with School matters. We are currently working to update the database with a view to that being used in conjunction with the School as the main means for future contact with OPMs and parents. If you think your contact details may not be up to date please email them to jazmin.buxton.88@gmail.com

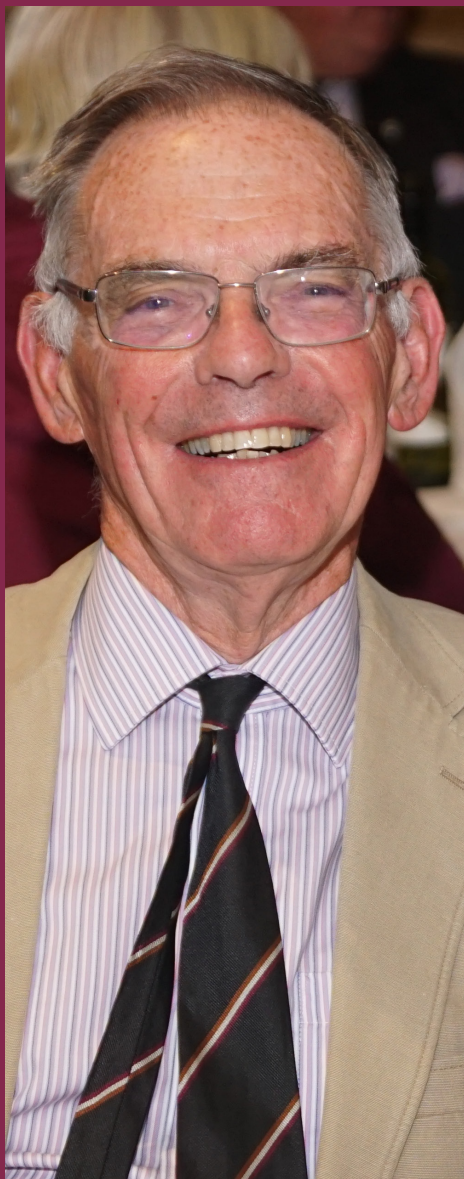
Let us remember we are OPMs spread across the world. Our common link is the School that gave us such a great start in life and the friendships forged at School which are lasting a lifetime. As we look forward to the new era of the Prep-school and Main School joined on one site, I hope we do all we can to keep the fellowship of OPMs strong and purposeful.

'We welcome Jo Hayward as the new Head and look forward to a resumption of the close cooperation between the School and the Club.'

Finally I offer my thanks to my fellow directors and the Committee members for their dedication during this strange period when we were faced with unprecedented decisions. Slowly the average age of the Committee is reducing, a trend I see as so important for the future of the Club. The Club needs to be relevant for all age-groups and the involvement of younger members is critical. If you feel you have something to offer and are interested in joining the Committee do get in touch with me via email on nholman56@gmail.com

PRESIDENT

Bob Foulkes



This has been a year like no other! I am writing this just about a year after the start of the first lockdown. Who thought at that time that our social activities as a Club would have ground to a complete halt for more than a year?

Naturally, our first thoughts must be with those of us who have lost loved ones. Some OPMs will have also been ill with the virus: others will have faced other difficulties in terms of their employment or their work prospects. Yet others, working in our hospitals and our other public services have every reason to be proud in what they have achieved in the past year for the rest of us.

The past year has also proved to be a real challenge for the School. It has had to adapt its operations to on-line teaching in addition to coping with in person teaching in difficult circumstances. There has also been change in the School's senior leadership team. This gives me the chance on behalf of the Club to welcome Jo Hayward as the new Head and to say how much we are looking forward to working with her and her team in the coming months and years.

The pandemic has necessarily resulted in radical change in the way the Club will operate the OPM Suite.

~~~~~



*A socially distanced OPM Committee meeting at the Terraces courtesy of Lloyd Inwood*

We have said goodbye to Ashleigh and I must thank him for his years of loyal and dedicated service to the Club at the Suite.

At the time of writing, your Committee is actively planning how best to operate the Suite and to serve you as members as the current restrictions are gradually eased, but in the changed circumstances which confront us all. As soon as the future becomes clearer, you will be informed.

I am optimistic that the coming year will see our sporting sections back, and that

we will be able to resume some of our social events.

I must finish by expressing my personal thanks to the Committee for all their work on our behalf, and also to you, our members, for your forbearance and understanding over the past year. As the restrictions gradually ease and we begin to resume our activities, I personally am looking forward to seeing as many OPMs as possible in the coming months.

*March 2021*





**2020-21** has been an interesting and testing time for everyone and it is surely to be hoped that we never see another year or so like it.

The Government apparently claimed in the past that we were one of the countries best prepared for a pandemic, as it transpired, we clearly weren't, especially not for a pandemic like Covid-19.

Mistakes there were many, road maps designed to avoid the worst of it all involved more u-turns than a poorly followed sat-nav. The death rate in the UK was clearly aggravated by the country's status as a global travel hub and significantly one with an alarmingly high proportion of overweight men, women and children.

In attempt to win the so-called war against our near invisible viral enemy comparisons were drawn with the effort required by the nation during the last major war that threatened the homeland, World War Two. However apart from the almost indiscriminate bombing raids of the Blitz it was essentially the young and fit who fought on the frontline and who died in the cause.

By contrast it has been the older, less fit members of society who have fallen victim to the virus. The young have been in little danger but have been forced to pay the price of losing a precious year of their formative youth.

Such is not to say that the lockdown experience has been all bad: for many it has been as one OPM, Wayne Whittingham, described it to me, a chance to reboot, re-evaluate what is really important in life.

Whether people have been forced out of work, furloughed (who had heard of that word before?) or made to work from home, the net result has been that we all now see the world in a slightly different light.

For those who have lost loved ones, it has been truly tragic, for everyone however it has been, in some way or other, life changing, perhaps even life-affirming.

This year's *OPM Magazine* inevitably reflects the impact of Covid on our common experience. In the reports of what happened in the world of Plymouth College and its Alumni, we find a snapshot of the bigger picture.

From the NHS perspective the story of Hugh Montgomery's journey through the pandemic not only gives us OPMs an insight into what happened but through national newspaper articles, radio and television programmes, has enlightened the country as a whole. It is harrowing, and it is heart warming.

Clearly our Clubhouse had to close, but the situation has induced the Committee to rethink the role of the Suite, a process that is still ongoing.

The School itself all but closed, remaining open to children of key workers and operating in the virtual world as far as all other pupils were concerned. With travel being a major issue, brief periods of lockdown easing did not and could not return the learning environment to 'normal'.

Indeed the whole concept of normal has been severely challenged in the last twelve months or so, such that many commentators speculate that we may never see the old 'normal' again.

Certainly the possibility of another pandemic seems eminently likely, possible and, referencing Aids, Sars, Bird Flu and whatever else, not too far into the future.

For those of OPMs within an easy commute of Plymouth or indeed in the city itself, the prospect of property prices going up as, increasingly, the rest of the country wakes up to the lifestyle benefits of having Dartmoor National Park, Devon and Cornwall beaches, Saltram, Mount Edgcumbe and now Britain's first National Marine Park all on our doorstep or waterfront, provide their own benefits and drawbacks.

Perhaps central government will now channel serious effort, endeavour and cash into improving the rail link with

London and the rest of the country – sooner rather than later.

Whatever happens, it is likely that working from home may soon mean working in the Westcountry for a growing number of people as priorities are reappraised and commuters count the cost of commuting, particularly in and around London.

And so to the magazine, here we see how some of our high profile past pupils have had their lives affected one way or another.

Read about Henry Slade's remarkable run of three consecutive Saturdays where he scored each time and his team won a major title on each occasion, none of the games being watched by a live crowd. Read too about how another OPM secured a No.1 single and a No.1 album in the same year and how he came to duet with one of great heroes of Covid crisis, Captain Tom.

Or enjoy the story of how the lack of actual cricket led Wisden to look back over the years to identify the greatest schoolboy cricketers of each year between 1900 and 2007 – the year they instituted their Schools Cricketer of the Year award, a process that led them to fix their focus on the School 1st XI captain from 1981.

Discover details our famous diver's lockdown experience and his thoughts on another Olympics, his fourth. Enjoy too the story of Walter Stoneman who almost certainly encountered more of the most famous figures of his day, than any other OPM may have met before or since.

Also you can compare your lockdown thoughts with those of a cross section of other OPMs and wonder at the positive contribution that life without FOMO had in store for us all.



# HONORARY TREASURER

*Pete Webb*



## HONORARY TREASURERS REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

When I reported last year, I made the point that if we were a business, we would close the doors immediately as the operation of the clubhouse was not a viable commercial operation. The Coronavirus pandemic rather forced our hand and the club closed its doors in March 2020 and, alas, has not reopened since.

We were able to take advantage of the Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) to continue to retain Ash as our steward and the committee took the view that, in recognition of his former service, we should continue to fund the difference between his full salary and the reduced furlough amount.

However, by the late Autumn of 2020 and the second lockdown, it was apparent that the clubhouse would not reopen and the reluctant decision was taken to make Ash redundant. This was accomplished early in 2021 and the committee are now looking at ways in which we might utilise the clubhouse in the future.

We have also experienced ongoing difficulties with regard our property

at Saltash. Our former tenant left with arrears of rent owing. We have instructed solicitors and have suggested a compromise settlement although are yet to receive further communication from the debtor. We have not provided for the arrears of rent in the accounts.

Our current tenant was successful in negotiating the change of use outlined in last year's report but, as a result of the pandemic, was not able to trade effectively. In a bid to support the business, the committee agreed to a rent free followed by a reduced rent period. At the same time, we have been faced with external repairs which remain ongoing.

The accounts therefore reflect another poor year.

Total income fell from £11,621 to £5,511 with subscription income reducing and net rental income falling to just over breakeven as described above.

The OPM suite again showed a deficit, albeit less than the previous year with the furlough scheme helping to cushion the impact.

Total costs were £14,914 (including the OPM suite deficit) with the result that there was an overall deficit on the year of £9,403 before tax. There will be a small liability to tax of £267 arising on our interest and net rental income.

The balance sheet shows the net financial position at 31 August and it can be seen that we have had to continue to support the activities of the Club by reducing our liquid reserves at the bank.

However, although the 2021 accounts are also likely to be poor, given that the clubhouse is currently closed and lockdown is easing, I am hopeful that we will see a return to a more profitable position in the foreseeable future.

*Peter Webb*

24 May 2021

# OPM CLUB

## *Income & Expenditure*

### THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

#### 1 ACCOUNTING POLICY

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

#### 2 VAT

All figures are stated net of VAT where relevant.

#### 3 OPM SUITE

The OPM Suite is shown in the accounts at cost as follows:

|                         | £     | £              |
|-------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Share of building costs |       | 474,145        |
| Equipment b/fwd         | 4,303 |                |
| Additions in year       | -     |                |
| Less depreciation       | (430) |                |
|                         |       | 3,873          |
|                         |       | <u>478,018</u> |

#### 4 INVESTMENT PROPERTY

The Club's freehold investment property in Saltash was revalued in 2004 by Viner Fulfords at £185,000.

#### 5 LOANS

The loan to Plymouth College is unsecured, interest free and was reviewed in September 2005. No date has been fixed for its further review or repayment.

#### 6 DEFICIT FROM OPM SUITE

|                                        | 2020   |                | 2019   |                 |
|----------------------------------------|--------|----------------|--------|-----------------|
|                                        | £      | £              | £      | £               |
| Bar sales                              |        | 6,199          |        | 22,667          |
| Suite hire and rents                   |        | 6,715          |        | 7,280           |
|                                        |        | <u>12,914</u>  |        | <u>29,947</u>   |
| Purchases (stock adjusted)             |        |                |        |                 |
| Wet stocks                             | 5,758  |                | 12,161 |                 |
| Food, catering & bar sundries          | 625    |                | 2,867  |                 |
| Wages costs (net of furlough receipts) | 13,213 |                | 25,311 |                 |
| Licencing and legal fees               | 350    |                | 350    |                 |
| Repairs and renewals                   | -      |                | 1,002  |                 |
| TV rental & licence                    | 154    |                | 376    |                 |
| Sundry Clubhouse costs                 | 82     |                | -      |                 |
| Depreciation                           | 430    |                | 478    |                 |
|                                        |        | <u>20,612</u>  |        | <u>42,545</u>   |
| Deficit for year                       |        | <u>(7,698)</u> |        | <u>(12,598)</u> |

# OPM CLUB

## *Balance Sheet*

### THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 AUGUST 2020

|                              | 2020<br>£      | 2019<br>£      |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                |                |                |
| Freehold investment property | 185,000        | 185,000        |
| OPM Suite                    | 478,018        | 478,448        |
| Loan to Plymouth College     | 50,000         | 50,000         |
| Stock (at cost)              | 2,585          | 4,294          |
| Debtors and prepayments      | 13,447         | 9,325          |
| <b>Cash at Bank</b>          |                |                |
| Current account              | 24,806         | 11,571         |
| Deposit account              | 56,972         | 80,960         |
| Cash in hand                 | -              | 1,216          |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>          | <u>810,828</u> | <u>820,814</u> |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>           |                |                |
| Corporation tax provision    | 1,277          | 1,010          |
| Creditors and accruals       | 4,286          | 4,869          |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>     | <u>5,563</u>   | <u>5,879</u>   |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>            | <u>805,265</u> | <u>814,935</u> |
| <b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>     |                |                |
| At 1 September 2019          | 814,935        | 825,589        |
| (Deficit) for year           | (9,670)        | (10,654)       |
| At 31 August 2020            | <u>805,265</u> | <u>814,935</u> |

The accounts were approved by the committee on 20 May 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

N Holman  
(Chairman)

P M Webb  
(Treasurer)

# OPM CLUB

## Notes to the Accounts

### THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

|                                                          | 2020          |                       | 2019          |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|
|                                                          | £             | £                     | £             | £                      |
| <b>Income</b>                                            |               |                       |               |                        |
| Subscriptions receivable                                 |               | 3,779                 |               | 6,053                  |
| Donations and sundry income                              |               | 325                   |               | 254                    |
| <b>Investment Income</b>                                 |               |                       |               |                        |
| Interest                                                 |               | 1,051                 |               | 964                    |
| Rent (net of expenses)                                   |               | 356                   |               | 4,350                  |
|                                                          |               | <u>5,511</u>          |               | <u>11,621</u>          |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                       |               |                       |               |                        |
| Deficit from OPM suite                                   | 7,698         |                       | 12,598        |                        |
| Printing, postage and stationery<br>(including magazine) | 3,394         |                       | 4,259         |                        |
| Legal and professional fees                              | 815           |                       | 1,500         |                        |
| Insurance                                                | 2,981         |                       | 2,908         |                        |
| Sundry expenses                                          | 26            |                       | -             |                        |
|                                                          | <u>14,914</u> |                       | <u>21,265</u> |                        |
|                                                          |               | <u>(9,403)</u>        |               | <u>(9,644)</u>         |
| <b>CORPORATION TAX</b>                                   |               |                       |               |                        |
| Provided for year                                        | 267           |                       | 1,010         |                        |
|                                                          | <u>267</u>    |                       | <u>1,010</u>  |                        |
| <b>(DEFICIT) FOR YEAR</b>                                |               | <u><u>(9,670)</u></u> |               | <u><u>(10,654)</u></u> |



# PLYMOUTH COLLEGE

Jo Hayward



*There are no words that I can say that will properly express my thanks to our staff this year. In an unusual year, the way that they care for our pupils and carry out their duties is exceptional.*

Jo Hayward made history last year by becoming the first female head of Plymouth College in the 143 years that the school has been at Ford Park.

Covid conditions have inevitably made it a tricky first year for Jo, but the school has prospered and risen to face all the challenges that the pandemic has thrown at it.

Understandably there was no Senior School Speech Day last year, but in the gaps between the lockdowns there was such an occasion for the Prep and with the Prep moving back to Ford Park this September it seems appropriate to highlight Jo's address to the junior school audience in place of our usual Head's feature.

## **Prep School Speech Day July 2020**

For those who have been asked to give speeches at Speech Days in schools across the country, this is probably the most difficult one they have ever done. The usual format to talk to you about would usually start with a summary of the school year – what had been achieved and what had been done. I am not sure about you, but, when I came to write this speech, I genuinely could not remember what had happened before lock down. I asked some Year 5 key worker pupils – they were no help at all and could not really remember anything either! It took the kind and combined effort of Mrs Newnham, Mr Carr and Mr Mutlow to help me go

## WINTER NEWSLETTER 2020



[www.plymouthcollege.com](http://www.plymouthcollege.com)

Prep School ages 3 to 11 | Senior School ages 11 to 18

through the school calendar and then it hit me, how sad I was. We achieved so much before lock down but yet these strange days have dominated our work and thoughts so much that I simply could not remember what amazing events I had attended with such fantastic young people. And there were some amazing events and opportunities. We started the school year with the introduction of several new initiatives and clubs. Class assemblies and teacher-led assemblies gave pupils and staff the opportunity to share something that they wanted to with the rest of the community. Topics ranging from the Year 1 trip to the beach, National Science Day, the polluting of our seas and kindness were warmly received by the children's peers whilst the introduction of Magazine Club, STEM Club and Business Enterprise Club have all been met with great enthusiasm.

October saw our annual Harvest Festival with beautiful art work displayed in the

chapel, accompanied by lovely singing and poetry. Trips for Year 4 to Cotehele and Year 1 to Burrator and Drake's Leat were enjoyed by pupils and the whole school community were pink to support research into Breast Cancer. In November, Year 6, senior school pupils and many staff experienced a day that I hope, will live with them for the rest of their lives. Marching with other school children in Plymouth to the unveiling of the statue, celebrating Nancy Astor, the first female MP to take their seat in UK Parliament as well as meeting former Prime Minister Teresa May was, for some, not only an incredibly inspirational experience, but one that allowed our pupils to interact with the politics of their country and to not take their present freedoms for granted. I was incredibly proud of all of our pupils at the Prep School Remembrance Service in the middle of November. Our pupils, including our youngest children, sat respectfully throughout the service, fully comprehending its meaning and the accompanying music was simply stunning. Carrying on with the Plymouth College Principle of respect, Anti-Bullying week was used to bring the school together with the message of 'united against bullying' and the joining in of Odd Socks Day. Our Year 5 & 6 Spoken English competition, showed off the real skills of all of our pupils to be able to stand up in public and speak. In the new year, the school's book club joined with Year 7 to meet with author Philip Reeve and talk through his work, whilst pupils experienced Kents Cavern and learnt a lot about how theatres work during a tour of TR2. The whole school, along with pupils from other primary schools in Plymouth, experienced the wonders of the Big Bang event in March with plenty of scientific experiments enjoyed by all. Year 3 and 4 teachers bravely took both year groups

for a sleepover at the National Aquarium, the only residential trip to not be affected by Covid-19. And who will ever forget the Easter Bunny delivering eggs early the day the school closed for lock down!

It has been a fantastic year in the performing arts. From youngest pupils in our Early Years shows, Christmas nativity and First Steps concerts to our Juniors with their Year 3 & 4, and 5 & 6 Christmas shows as well as Performing Arts evenings, the array of talent that our pupils demonstrate is simply breath-taking. Musical opportunities even carried on during lockdown with some very lucky Year 6 pupils experiencing a masterclass with OPM opera singer David Webb.

We were incredibly grateful to the Parents' Association for the buying of the rights to allow Year 6 pupils to perform the Lion King this year. Despite so many pupils conscientiously learning their lines before and throughout lockdown, the actual performance has been another casualty of Covid-19. The pupils will be performing a piece from the school later on just to give you a snapshot of their hard work.

Our regular cake sales throughout the year, organised by the pupils themselves some as young as six, demonstrate a real sense of responsibility to the world around them with money raised for several charities including the WWF and Australian Wildfire charities.

I have thoroughly enjoyed watching all of our pupils take part in their PE lessons and sporting events this term. From as young as three years old, all pupils participate confidently and enjoyably in sport. Particular highlights this year were the U11 girls' hockey team who proceeded to the semi-finals of the regional IAPs tournament at Bryanston and progressed through to the West of England finals, along with Blundells School, after a highly competitive, and very wet, Devon tournament at Exeter

School. As the West of England finals were cancelled due to the dreaded Covid-19, in both Mr Irish's and my eyes, you won the whole tournament girls. The boys' football and rugby teams and girls' netball teams achieved some excellent results and it was fantastic to watch our pupils play with such excellent team spirit in often unpleasant conditions. The boys won the St Petroc's cross country event and the girls won the Plymouth School's swimming relay with the boys in a very close second place. At all times, I have been incredibly proud of all of our pupils from our Year 4s, starting in their first competitive matches, to our more experienced Year 6s, who are committed and take pride in representing their school. And to what we did not get to do – from the Year 5 and 6 residentials to the Welsh Borders and Isle of Wight, to the performances of the Lion King, to the Year 2 experience at White Works, the entire cricket season and copious other trips and events, so many things fell foul of Covid-19 and, although pupils have been incredibly sad and disappointed about this, they have dealt with the situations in their usual resilient way.

And this year would not be complete without talking more about lockdown and especially to thank our community for how they rose to its challenges. Firstly our pupils. I have always been incredibly proud of all of our pupils, but the way that they rose to the challenge of working from home demonstrated their resourcefulness and resilience that was in excess of what we had ever seen before. Our younger pupils watched videos from their class teachers and produced some exceptional work. Our older pupils managed the complexities of GoogleCalendar and GoogleMeet, submitting their work online and managed their time to a level that not many adults could rival. Our key worker pupils, some of whom have been in school

every week day since the end of March, have shown such amazing kindness and compassion to each other as well as true Plymouth College resilience and have approached each challenge they face with a smile – usually!

For our pupils who have returned to school, I couldn't have asked for more. From the Pre-School children with their 'bubble arms' to Reception and Year 1 who have been very proud of their individual trays and tables to our Year 6 pupils who learned to cope with having nothing to play with at break times and going back to basics, perfecting their cartwheels and handstands, playing Wink Wink Murder and other games. For Year 2, 3 and 4 who learned very quickly just how quickly they had to eat for everyone to get through lunch and who adapted so well in such a short time to which lines they had to stand on and for Year 5, unable to come back to school, for your continued Google Meet enthusiasm to the end (I have just witnessed very competitive virtual games of Battle Maths!), the staff cannot thank you enough.

To our parents for their understanding throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, their outstanding home schooling and for their unrivalled support at all times. A special thank you to our Parents and Friends Association for all that they do, and especially Kirsti Turner-Moore as Chair, Caroline Sweby and Ben Pennington as Vice Chair, Melissa Burnett as Secretary and Rosauro Aala as Treasurer. Our Year 6 parents involved have been on the Committee doing great things for the school for a long time and I couldn't thank them enough.

There are no words that I can say that will properly express my thanks to our staff this year. In an unusual year, the way

that they care for our pupils and carry out their duties is exceptional. However, their adaptability, willingness to learn and own personal resilience has been astounding. Teachers have worked tirelessly, both at home and at school, providing an outstanding programme of learning to our pupils, working throughout the holidays, not only planning the complexities of online learning, but also supporting key worker children. They have adapted to the new way of life with humour and determination and I cannot thank them enough. And we could not have managed the current situation without our support staff. Schools do not run, especially in a pandemic, without a whole raft of activities going on behind the scenes.

Nicki Shaw has been instrumental in our planning, whilst her cleaning team have been constantly running around after us, making sure we are all safe whilst no request has been too much for our Porters. Our catering team has looked after us from day one: from Rob Burford's solo efforts for key worker children in the Sixth Form centre to the breakfast just experienced by Year 6, nothing is too much trouble and every request is met with a smile.

Nicola Lane, our School Nurse, has turned into some version of superwoman – looking after the reception desk, a bit of nursing and managing to get everyone through lunch in just under two hours! In addition, our graduates have worked tirelessly with our key worker children over the past few weeks – thank you to all. I would also personally like to thank Mrs Newnham and Mrs Raymond-Jones for their support and leadership of their key stages and also to Mr Carr, Mr Irish and Mr Mutlow who have become regular additions to the staff at the Prep, looking



*From September 2021 Plymouth College Prep School will be back at Ford Park for the first time since the Second World War, it will be housed in what many will remember as the CDT block*

after our key worker pupils, keeping us on track and entertained. Thank you all very much.

And finally, to address our Year 6 pupils who are leaving the Prep School today. If you remember back to my first assembly of the year, I talked about the message in the Disney film, Cinderella – have courage and be kind. You have all been so incredibly brave over the last few months, and have missed out on many of the usual Year 6 activities at the end of your time here.

However, you have come together as a group, embraced the situation and become stronger because of it, looking out for each other and those around you. The change in you since I arrived in the school in Year 3 is astounding – you are leaving the Prep today as young people ready for the next

stage of your lives with the confidence and skills to do whatever it is you want to achieve. So what is it you want to achieve in life? Whatever it is, you cannot go far wrong by following Cinderella's mother's advice – be brave and be nice – as Maya Angelou, the American civil rights activist and poet once said 'try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud' – make a positive difference wherever you go. You are not really leaving the school today – for those going on to the Senior School, this is just a junction in your journey. For those going elsewhere, you will always be part of the OPM network and welcome back whenever you can.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our community a well-deserved holiday and I look forward to seeing everyone again in September.



# THE MOVING STORY OF THE PREP



This year the Prep School will move back to Ford Park, some 73 years after it left that site. Doubtless there are a few OPMs who can still remember it being there. It was in 1947 that the Prep moved to Hartley Road. Before the war that complex had served as Mount House School (now Mount Kelly). During the war, after the fall of France, when Plymouth became the target of enemy planes, the governors of Mount House decided that it wasn't safe staying in the city and, like a lot of schools, they moved out, only they never came back. Plymouth College didn't move during the war. There were various reasons: one, the governors were worried that without regular fee income the school might struggle; and two, they didn't think the luftwaffe would bomb that area. They figured that the enemy were mostly

interested in the dockyard and the city centre.

However Hyde Park School, across the road, was hit and after the war had to have a new roof. Meanwhile, in order to try and avoid that happening at Plymouth College some of the teachers and a few others there took it in turns to do firewatch duties.

The fact that Plymouth College didn't move during the war meant that lots of people used to go and watch the school teams playing cricket, rugby and hockey, because all the other local clubs had more or less stopped playing, including Argyle and Albion.

So it was that at the end of the war Plymouth College was stronger than ever and when Mount House decided to stay at Tavistock where they had evacuated to, the governors decided that the Hartley

Road site would make a great place for the expanding Prep.

By that stage the Prep had been established for just over 50 years. It had been started in 1890 when the headmaster thought it would be a good idea to provide a class – under a lady – for ‘little’ boys.

The rival school in Seymour Road – Mannamead School – had started a similar initiative the year before (a few years later of course Plymouth College took over Mannamead School and officially it became PMC – Plymouth and Mannamead College – thereafter).

The man at Plymouth College who decided to start a preparatory department was Francis Colson, the Headmaster, and it wasn't long before Mr Colson (his name was for many years remembered in one of the boarding houses, Colson House), reported that:

‘The experiment has been thoroughly successful. Little boys up to a certain age thrive best under a lady of tact and firmness, and the class, while isolated from the bigger boys, is generally supervised and occasionally examined by ourselves, and has the use of the school



*Margaret Grantham (nee Sykes) with a class of boys at the Prep, Hartley Road c1960*

playground and gymnasium, with other advantages...'

The Prep had started life in a room in the headmaster's house, then a large house, south of the south gate, on the northern corner at the top of Pentille Road.

In 1891, when he was six years old, Charles Brown (a future Chairman of Governors) was a new boy there. He later recalled that: 'the Prep was kept by three sisters called Stoneman ... (it) was only in one room; there were eight of us boys.'

There were a number of boarders living in the house too and 'soon after the Headmaster moved to Ford Park, where, of course, the Head's house still is.'

The Prep expanded rapidly and soon afterwards relocated to No. 1 Shaftesbury Villas, which had been arranged to provide four classrooms on the first and second floors with a fifth class accommodated in the 'new' hut some fifty yards away.

The staff were still all ladies (there were still no ladies on the staff at the main school!) and there were no competitive team games, although there was an annual egg and spoon race for the Prep boys at Sports Day.

At the dawn of the 1920s there were nearly 100 boys in the Prep (and about 270 in the main school) where the School fees were £21 per year. The Prep fees then were just £15 (having only recently been increased from £10). And if that has a few parents smiling or crying, spare a thought for the staff, whose salaries, according to the team of school inspectors in 1921, were so low (two of them were paid around £200 a year) that 'the Governors can only expect to secure the services of women living at home in the town and their choice is thus restricted.'

There were five mistresses in the Prep at that time, one for each class, the numbers in which ranged from 17-26. The head, Miss Footner, described by one past pupil as 'a gorgon,' had arrived that year to replace Miss Lethbridge who had sadly died in post the previous year.

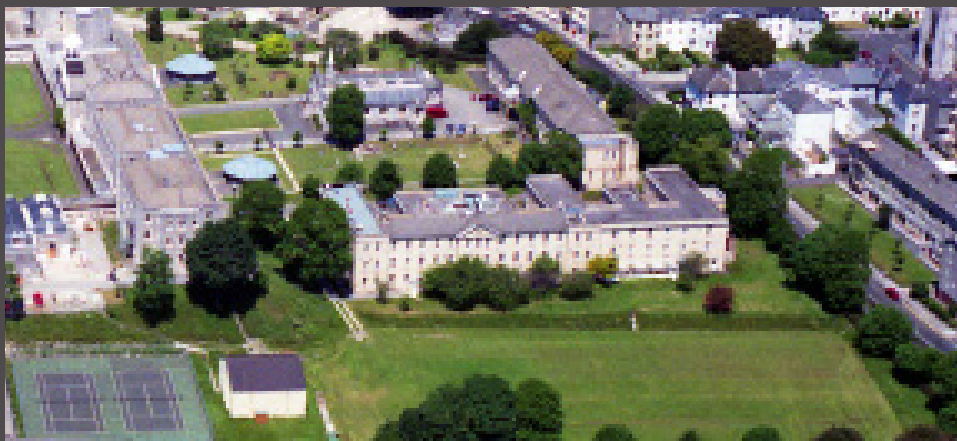
Somewhat unusually the fearsome Miss Footner was also to die while still in office as head of the Prep ... in 1932.

The Prep then had recently moved into the other half of Valletort Villa, on the other side of the building that the Head lives in, and while this seemed to be a good thing from the Prep's point of view, the visiting inspectors that year decided that the staff there were a bit out of touch with what was happening in other similar schools. They also suggested that 'one or two wall-maps, and some additional pictures for French teaching would be a good idea along with some new blackboards and maybe a gramophone for the teaching Music, and a few suitable illustrated reference books for History and Geography.'

Mr Ralph, who was then Head of the Main School decided it was time for a change and for the first time ever appointed a man as head of the Prep. More than that even, Mr Firman was the first-ever full-time male member of staff at the Prep. Freshly graduated from Keble College, Oxford, he was also better qualified than previous Prep appointments and when Miss Lawrey left soon afterwards her replacement was another well-qualified young man – 25-year-old Cambridge graduate James Westhead.

The Prep was rapidly becoming a scaled-down version of the Main School – with the boys working in a way that prepared





*The Prep at the Millfields 2005-2021*

them for the syllabus of the secondary school. They were also now part of a house system that mirrored that of the Main School and there was a newly-instigated Prefectorial distinction whereby the new Prep prefects, appointed in the autumn term of 1936, became the first to wear the Prep School Prefect's Cap. It was also around this time – 1935 – that competitive games and standards were introduced into the Prep. Among the Standards in question was any time under 17 seconds for the U-10s 100 yards and 20 seconds U-8s. The Long Jump Standard was around the ten-foot (3 metre) mark and the High Jump around three-feet (one metre). Twenty-five boys gained Standard Points.

It was Rugby though that made the biggest impact in terms of providing a scaled-down version of the Main School for the younger boys; "The whole school is now playing Rugby Football (December 1936), and it has been fortunate that the weather has been good, so that there could be plenty of practice. Maximus play quite a good game and are now tackling well and

learning to run straight and pass out to the wings. Major and Minor are very keen and although there are many newcomers in these games, they seem to be picking up the fundamentals very well. Minimus like nothing better than to have to run after the ball and then to fall on it in a heap. Boys will be boys!' And of course it was all boys for a good few years after that. However with the introduction of girls, it became more like the prep of today, only in 2003 a decision was taken to rename it Plymouth College Junior School. Two years later following the Main School's merger with St Dunstons in 2004 the decision was taken to move the Junior School to the Millfields site. A 16-year sojourn there has seen re-introduction of the title Preparatory School and as of September 2021 it will occupy the former and greatly revamped CDT block. An extremely logical move given that the school occupies so much more of the Ford Park site than it did back in the 1940s when the Prep first moved out.

# GOLF AT PLYMOUTH COLLEGE 2002-2018



Indirectly it was my love of golf that led to me teaching at PMC from 2002 till I retired in 2018. It was one of those 'sliding door' moments, a chance meeting with Phil Stephenson at a dinner party in around 1997. Phil invited me to play golf with him at St Mellion. I later joined St Mellion and we became great golfing buddies. At this time the Prep was at Hartley Lane and through Phil I met the then Head Teacher,

Penny Roberts. I was teaching Design and Technology at Saltash Community School and was able to offer help and advice with regard to suitable project work for Years 5 and 6 at the Prep.

In 2002 PMC advertised for a Design and Technology teacher, with the ability to teach Years 5 and 6 at the Prep!

I was delighted to have been appointed and in my first term began offering Golf tuition as an after school activity. To begin with I took the keen young golfers to the China Fleet driving range. Later we used the Elburton Range, in fact we were the very first school group to use the facility. Later still we used the driving range at Borringdon. Those of you who came along to these coaching sessions will, I'm sure, have fond memories of PGA coaches Ian Marshall, Scotty, and of course Jez! Every week the coaching session would end with some sort of golf skills competition and I took great pleasure in announcing 'Shot of the week' in school assembly!

I've entered PMC Golf teams annually to play in the HMC Foursomes. Six players play as partners, three teams of two, using one golf ball and alternating shots. This competition is played off 'scratch', meaning no shots to a players golfing handicap are either given or received. In our region we would often draw the very shortest straw, Millfield! It was daunting enough to see their players taking their 'England Elite Golf Squad' bags out of the mini bus, let alone play golf against them! Needless to say we never beat them, although Frazer Reed and Tommy





**Joe Yorke** has been playing golf since he was a proper young 'un.

Golf captain at school when he was still in Year 10, he and his partner won the South West Foursomes in 2008.

They'd also won it the previous year. By that stage Joe was already playing off a handicap of 5. He'd also won the 12-14 age group 'Get into Golf' National Skills Challenge, so it comes as no surprise to

find that his post school career has been dominated by the sport.

In 2013 he completed an impressive double becoming the Cornwall Golf Union County Amateur Champion in May, then winning the Ocean BMW sponsored 36-hole Cornish Closed Championship, played over the demanding Jack Nicholas course at St Mellion International.

He's currently a pro at China Fleet.

Watkins once took their opponents to the 17th hole at Woodbury before conceding. Remarkably, Frazer had an infected hand which was the size of a boxing glove, goodness knows how he managed to hold a golf club. One year we faced Truro School at Perranporth. Truro had beaten us twice previously and so we were thrilled to finally beat them and proceed to the next round.... where we once again met Millfield! Throughout my time at PMC I've met some very competent young golfers. Joe Yorke joined the school when he

was in Year 9, already playing off single figures. Joe and I played quite a bit of golf together, entering various competitions. In fact, the first time I played at St Enodoc (my home club now) was with Joe. I've met and golfed with Frazer and Tom recently, and both are playing off low single figures. I remember taking Ben and Richard Spear, Ollie Kent and Craig Wrigglesworth to Bristol Golf Club to play in the Duke of Edinburgh 'Golden Putter' competition. Richard and Craig won through to the final which was



*Matt Kidd and George Stephenson*



*Michael Haley and Ben Jackson*

played at Wentworth. Richard Spear missed getting his name on the winners board by a single shot!

Other names that spring to mind are George Stephenson, (who could hit the ball miles!) Ben Jackson, Matt Kidd and, in my last couple of years at PMC, Harry Smith.

Since retiring from PMC in 2018 my wife Jane and I have moved to Wadebridge, Cornwall. I've been fortunate enough to join St Enodoc Golf Club and am currently Vice Captain of the Seniors Section. My handicap has come down, currently 10, and incredibly I've managed to achieve a hole in one three times!

It'd be fantastic to meet up again with any of the PMC golfers I've met during

my time at school. A golf day (Millfield not invited!) A round of golf and a catch up would be great fun. If interested please get in touch and I'll arrange a golf day for us.

[richardpalmer6@icloud.com](mailto:richardpalmer6@icloud.com)



*2003: Sam Virgo-Brown, Ryan Fricker, Richard Palmer, Craig Wrigglesworth, Oliver Kent, Ben Spear, Richard Spear.*





*Harry Smith, Finn Brooker and Sam Agnew*



*Walter Stoneman by Walter Stoneman*



# WALTER ERNEST STONEMAN

**I**t is unlikely that any OPM has ever met as many distinguished people as Walter Ernest Stoneman MBE FRGS FRPS. He was a portrait photographer who, while WWI was still raging, launched a project to build a photographic record of all the most prominent members of British society for the National Portrait Gallery in London.

It was known as the National Photographic Record and, over a period of 41 years, it involved Walter photographing five monarchs, nine prime ministers, twelve lord chancellors, eighty admirals and one hundred generals.

In 1948 Walter was made a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to photography.

Born in Plymouth on 6 April 1876, Walter was the second youngest of fourteen children. His father Edwin ran a wholesale grocer's business.

After leaving Plymouth College to become a photographer at the age of fifteen, he set up his own business, Heath & Stoneman Ltd, in Plymouth.

When he was 21 he joined the firm of J Russell & Sons, based in Baker St, London, as a junior photographer in 1897 and must have been an impressive employee. He was the only one of 14 photographers working for the company who managed to take four photographs of Queen Victoria in her golden state landau on the occasion of her golden jubilee that same year.



*Queen Victoria and Royal Group with Wilhelm II and Prince of Wales, attributed to Walter Stoneman*



*King George V*

He worked his way up by taking photographs of royalty and members of high society while in the employ of J Russell & Sons and was so highly regarded that he became managing director of the firm in 1913. After the death of John Lemmon Russell in 1915, he took over the running of the company.

A couple of years later, Walter approached the director of the National Portrait Gallery, James Milner, with an ambitious idea for a National Photographic Record. During the next four decades, he was to take pictures of every eminent British person, and a post-card sized photograph of each was kept as a permanent record in the gallery's reference section. Adding between one and two hundred portraits each year, he went on to accumulate around 7,000 images. Walter did not charge his sitters for taking their portraits, so did not make money directly from them, but parts of the collection were sometimes exhibited to the public – notably at the Royal Photographic Society in

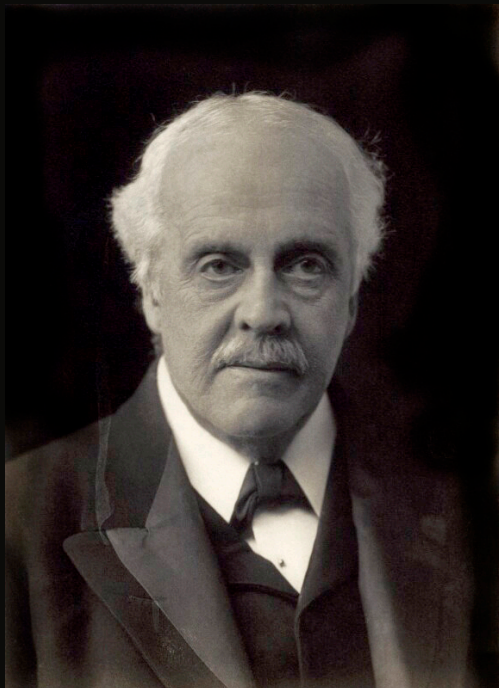


*King George VI*

1922 and 1924, at the studios of J Russell & Sons in Baker Street in 1931 and at Foyles Art Gallery in 1943.

Exhibitions like these not only helped boost his reputation but fees collected from them, along with monies charged for reproductions of the photographs, were divided between his studio and the National Portrait Gallery. A fellow of both the Royal Photographic Society and the Royal Geographical Society, as well as vice-president of the London Devonian Association, Walter also found time to be a lay preacher in the Congregational Church.

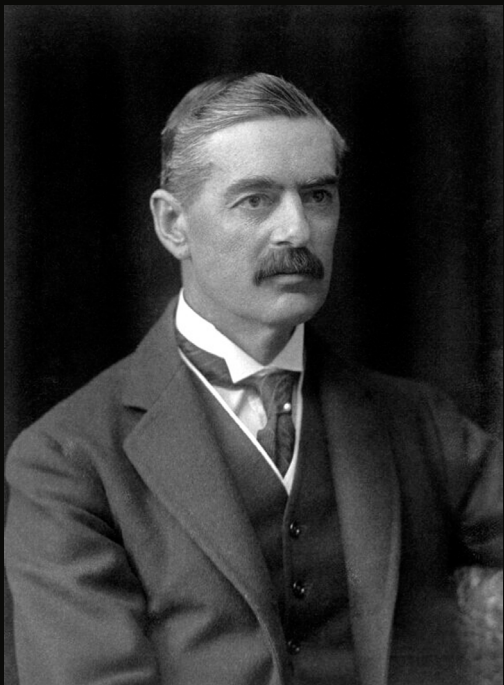
He had just one son, by his wife Kathleen. After being made MBE for services to photography he continued working until his death, ten years later in 1958. The National Portrait Gallery project was then taken on by Walter Bird who continued until 1967, after which Godfrey Argent undertook the task. When the project was concluded in 1970 the collection amounted to over 10,000 photographs.



Arthur Balfour PM 1902-05



David Lloyd George PM 1916-22



Neville Chamberlain PM 1937-40



Winston Churchill PM 1940-45, 1951-55



# COLLEGE REMINISCENCES

**Stuart Goodman (1947-1956)**



*Stuart Goodman 1951*

When Plymouth was blitzed my parents, my sister Carmel, and I sought refuge in a cottage in Elburton. My father was a veteran of the Great War and Cantor of the synagogue (est. 1762) which nestles close to St Andrew's.

During the day, in addition to pastoral duties, he was a Forces' Chaplain. At night, he travelled back to the city as an Air Raid Warden, Mother-Church and historic synagogue on his patch. Near the end of the war, we migrated back to Mannamead, where I entered Hyde Park Primary School. My time there was an excellent grounding in the 'Three Rs'. The teachers were women, almost all spinsters, and victims of the First World War and its carnage of men of their generation. I recall their names: Miss Hannaford, Miss Luscomb, Miss Millman and the Welsh Headmistress, Miss Henry, who chose me as her Stationery Prefect.

I sat the Scholarship examination at which, aged 10, my educational future was determined. I passed category 'A' which qualified me for a Grammar School place, and I also passed the Plymouth College entrance exam. Only Hyde Park Road separated my Primary school and the College, but the distance was infinite. At that age, I did not appreciate that the College had the finest scholastic reputation of any school within a large radius and the respect in which the College was held, in Plymouth and its surrounds.

What I did perceive was a handsome building looking onto extensive grounds, being addressed even by your contemporaries by surname, the gowned masters – there were no mistresses. Above all, there was the Demi-God who presided over morning assemblies in 'Big School' into which Jews and Catholics filed in a short intermission between religious and secular.





*Stuart Goodman leads his platoon past the saluting base in Devon Terrace.*

In those days, there was handful of Jewish pupils: Roy Susman, the Erlich brothers, Brian Pearl and Henry Goodman, unrelated, a brilliant mathematician and Andrade. Additionally, there was a master who taught German, Dr Ellinger, a pre-War refugee from the Nazis. I never envisaged that in the future, because of the decline of the local Jewish community, there would be, no Jewish pupils but a Jewish headmaster (the piece was written when Jonathan Cohen was head).

I hope that even our small band was educative to our gentile fellows who, in the West Country, might not have met a Jewish person outside of the Old Testament. Inevitably, in those monocultural times, there were pinpricks of prejudice. I recite this without rancour but for the record.

There was one master by whom I would be taught every other year up until the fifth form. Not a word was

said but he knew that I sensed his animosity. Ironically, his best friend was a member of the Jewish community who would often say with, with a smile, 'my best friend is an antisemite.' This statement turned the cliché on its head and emphasised the irrationality of racism.

The form master of 1B was the somewhat irascible Nigel Radford, who possessed the finest voice in the school choir. One day, my mind wandered during a lesson, but it was brought sharply back by a piece of board chalk forcefully flung, which landed on the bridge of my nose, exactly between my eyes. For a moment I saw the master's consternation. It was a fortunate day for him and me, both.

Capt. Hill known as 'Bubbler', was a classics master and relic of the First World War. On his right hand there were two joints missing on one of his fingers, a memento of that war.

The boys' version was that, as he

raised his hand to lead his men in a charge out of the trenches, his digit was sliced off by a stray bullet. I doubt that the incident was quite so dramatic, but it probably was his salvation, as junior officers' lives at the front were measured in months and weeks.

Bubbler was a fair man and, after an accrual of misdemeanours, he issued the dreaded command, 'Go Goodman, fetch the weapon of chastisement.'

Translated, this meant that I had to go to the porter's lodge and retrieve the cane. Upon returning with the rod, I would suffer the dilemma that if I were to meet a master or boy in the corridor, should I have stuffed it out of sight down a trouser leg, or displayed it nonchalantly as if ordered to fetch it on behalf of some other miscreant.

Justice was done, which bought me a clean page until the misdemeanours mounted again.

The application of the cane was not uniform. Most feared were the masters who took several paces back and ran forward for delivery of the stroke. Such delivery increased momentum but, for theatre alone, it was an enhancement, unless your own was the exposed posterior.

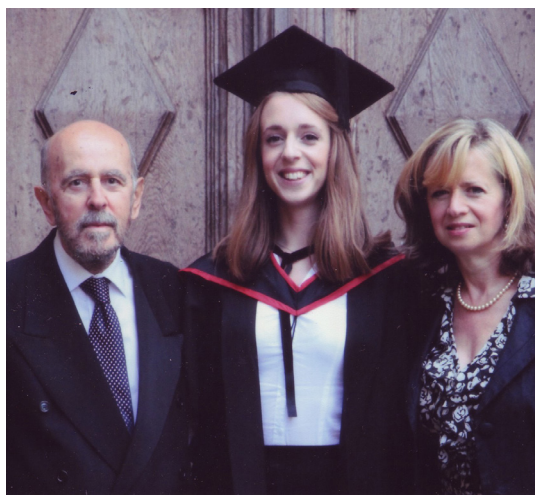
There were more ad hoc forms of punishment. During a lesson conducted by John Spear, a veteran of D-Day and prodigious chronicler of the doings and comings and goings of Old Boys, the master asked the class for the chief export of a certain country. I believe that this would have been some serious commodity like steel or oil, but I impulsively called out "beetroot"! After the merriment subdued, without raising

his head from the desk Spear declared 'Goodman, write out beetroot 2000 times by next Wednesday.'

Long before I had reached the half of that behest, I dearly wished that the penalty had been a few strokes to the rump.

Up until the 5<sup>th</sup> form I was a classicist and, thereafter, an historian. I was schooled for Oxbridge but I was not a diligent pupil and I read law at LSE. Because I married late, I had to wait 52 years until my daughter, Jessica, academically redeemed me by obtaining a place at Oxford.

After admission as a solicitor, I



*Stuart, Jessica and Sonia Goodman at Jess' graduation day*

acquired a small practice in Stratford, East London with six members of staff. Stratford was not the mini-Manhattan that it has become since the Olympics. It consisted of terraces of two-ups and two-downs and local authority high-rise housing.

There was unmet need for social law



*Speech Day, 1955, Stuart Goodman, Geoffrey Williams, John Barnes, the Bishop of Plymouth, the guest speaker, CP Brown and, far right, Headmaster, Martin Meade-King.*

which, within a decade and a half, had propelled me to be the largest Legal Aid practitioner in the country and the largest sole-practitioner, with a staff of 60.

It was an exhilarating but not very comfortable ride. I now employ a staff of one, my wife Sonia, but I sleep at night.

I experienced the governance of three headmasters:

Basil Garnons-Williams had the whiff of the upper-class and seemed not to be approachable.

Francis Lockwood who succeeded him, was the very opposite of approachability but died tragically early.

Martin Meade-King fell between

the other two, on the score of approachability. His tenure would be as long as his predecessor's was short. How fortunate an entry to the school was my own of 1947. Ray Pashley who was a few years ahead of me, told me that at morning assembly during the war, there would be announcements of the death of boys on military service, who had been his senior at school.

Some years ago I joined a band of my contemporaries who lunch twice a year at the Victory Services Club in Marble Arch, London. We are all in our 80s, which emphasises our good fortune. Many retired 20 years ago. As the only member still working, the standing question is whether I have yet retired.

I remind my fellows that someone has to work and pay tax to afford their retirement!

We reminisce and I wonder whether old pupils of other schools display the same affection for their alma mater. Possibly they do, but I believe that for OPMs, there is an additional layer of sentiment. Long may John Brenton continue, impeccably, to organise our conviviality.

I have held 58 annual practising certificates as a solicitor and the 60<sup>th</sup> is tantalisingly close. I know that the President of the Law Society will then send me a letter recording my 'remarkable achievement'. In truth, simply staying alive must be the greater part.

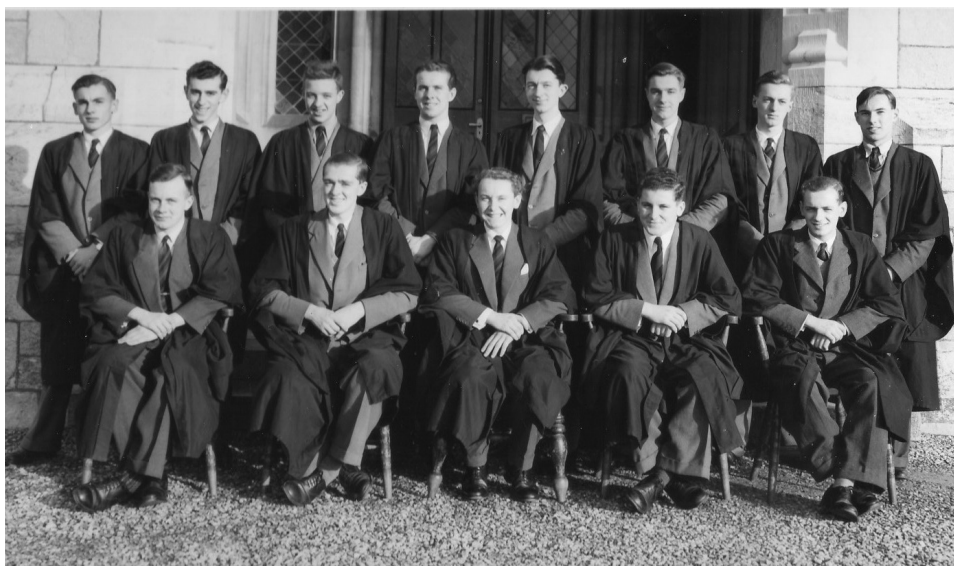
Seven years after my status of Prefect at Hyde Park, I achieved it at the College and with it came my insignia of gown and black school cap.

At last, I was permitted to pass over the

hallowed ground at the front entrance to the Main Building. Part of our duties were the trials of boys who had misbehaved in town, by eating in the street or not wearing their cap. Such 'Capital'(!) offences were exonerated by the short, sharp method executed by the Head Boy or his deputies.

I was appalling at sport, lacking physical co-ordination and mental aptitude. What I enjoyed was cadet force Summer camps, choir, the debating society, form magazines, Palmer's House annual suppers at Goodbody's on Mutley Plain and, above all else, amateur dramatics, particularly the Christmas concert when we entertained parents, pupils, and friends on the stage of the Old Gym.

Together with Clive Jenkins, later the school's Director of Music, we co-authored a piece about a mythical school, Mudd College, not a hundred miles from Plymouth College, where the



*Back row: Unknown, Stuart Goodman, unknown, unknown, Clive Jenkins, unknown, ? Hannaford, John Barnes Front row: Geoffrey Williams, Graham Searle, Robin Davis, unknown, unknown.*





*Christmas 1950: Maxwell Barratt, Ian Richie, Stuart Goodman centre back*



*Stuart is the man in the bowler hat*



*Stage production: Clive Jenkins left, Stuart Goodman on his right*



*Stage production: SG left.*

senior pupils had gained control from the masters.

On stage, I sensed that our farcical goings-on were being well received by the audience. I glanced along the front row but the headmaster Meade-King, was not amused.

The next morning I was due to meet him for the customary farewell before leaving the school.

The meeting was amicable and Mr

Meade-King graciously thanked me for my contribution to the school. He said not a word about the amateur antics of the previous evening.

Even as I left his study, I sensed that I had received an admonition by omission. Although extra-curricular, it was the last lesson I learned at the College. It was a valuable lesson and I employed it well.

S Goodman [claremont99@gmail.com]



Professor Hugh Montgomery, who runs an intensive care unit (ICU) at the University of London's Whittington Hospital, has been at the forefront of the battle against Covid since the pandemic hit in March 2020. He likens it to 'being a soldier at war'.

He'd chosen intensive care medicine after training as a doctor at Middlesex Hospital because, as he was quoted as saying in a recent magazine article, he liked managing sick people: 'I don't want anybody to have this disease,' he said, 'but if it was going to happen I wanted it on my watch'.

In March 2021, Hugh gave a full and frank five page interview for the Sunday Times Magazine, appeared in an ITV documentary series, 2020: The Story of Us and on Radio 4's The Reunion, to mark the anniversary of Lockdown and to raise awareness of the Intensive Care Society's campaign to 'help provide care for those who care for us'. Hugh is the face of the fundraising appeal launched by the ICS, a multidisciplinary charity with more than 3,000 members including doctors, nurses, pharmacists and physiotherapists.

With the outbreak of Covid, and in order to cope with the huge demand for intensive care treatment, the number of staff were tripled overnight: the likes of dental nurses were recruited, witnessing the devastating loss of life first hand.

Hugh explains: 'At first we didn't realise this virus attacks your airways, lungs, liver, kidneys, skeletal muscle, your pancreas. It was a complicated disease that wasn't behaving as expected...

'It has been really difficult, particularly for the nursing staff, because unlike us doctors who move between patients, the nurses have been with that patient who dies, for days, doing everything, combing hair, cleaning teeth, monitoring drugs, adjusting the fluid, the kidney machine, the ventilator. 'They very much take death personally. And that is not amenable to logic. With Covid-19, many felt they just couldn't deliver the standard of care they should because of the patient/nurse ratios. Because the nurses were so stretched and doing so much there was this feeling of "I'm not able to give my best". So when a patient didn't survive

they would feel it was them and not the disease.'

Hugh explains that in the early months, many of the A&E staff weren't fully protected with the correct PPE and some died on intensive care wards, looked after by their colleagues.

Thankfully now the vaccination programme is providing some light at the end of the tunnel and numbers of serious cases are falling, but Hugh reminds us about the rising levels of post-traumatic stress disorder and burnout experienced by many intensive care staff who have witnessed so much trauma and death in the past year.

'PTSD is when you experience stress and horrible things happen to you that you can't resolve immediately, but it makes you sensitive to triggers,' he explains. 'So we are hearing stories of staff hearing the alarms and sounds of the machines and not being able to sleep at night because they are seeing the faces of the patients they have lost.

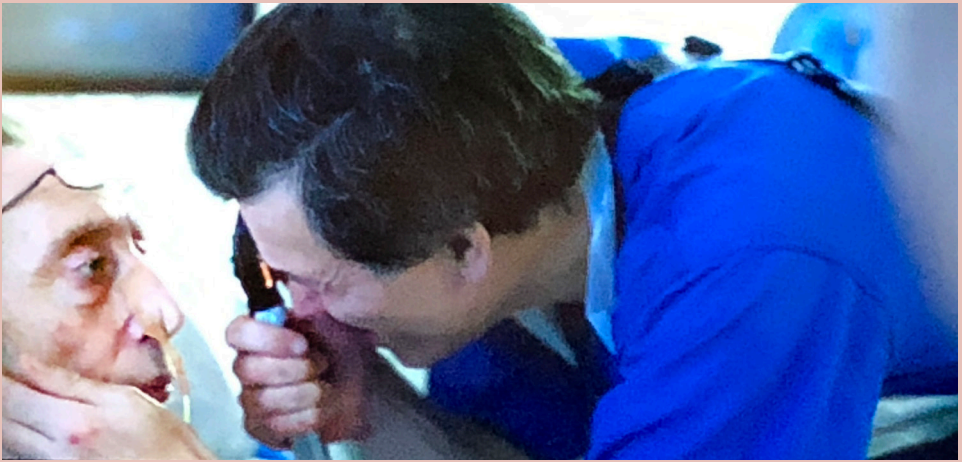
We are seeing high levels of guilt and anxiety.'

Although Hugh has spent the past year often working 20-hour days, running the ICU, in the 'red zone' where the most serious cases are, he is an academic as well as a clinician, who usually spends two thirds of his time conducting research. In fact he has some 500 academic publications to his name.

Some years ago he wrote a globally successful children's book *The Arctic Tern* as and more recently found time to write a thriller novel *Control*. Besides all that he is director of the Centre for Human Health and Performance; he discovered and angiotensin-converting enzyme gene that influences fitness and endurance; he's founder member of the UK Climate and Health Council plus he has run three ultramarathons, is world record holder for underwater piano playing and has skydived naked for charity.



Hugh Montgomery and Michael Rosen share a post-traumatic lighter moment



*'He had a blown pupil, he was responding to light or movement or noise.'*

For somebody who has given so much of his life to caring for others it seems particularly unjust that Hugh should have to go through his own devastating personal tragedy during this time.

On May 27 last year Hugh took a phone call to say that his 18-year-old son Oscar was missing. A very experienced deep water snorkeller, he had taken advantage of the lifting of lockdown to go down to Church Ope Cove in Portland, Dorset, on a perfect calm clear day. He'd been missing for nine hours. Hugh got on his motorbike and went to join in the search but says he knew by that time that Oscar was dead. He was eventually found three weeks later.

Hugh says his loss is no different than that of other families experiencing bereavement in the time of Covid: 'I have lost my son,' he said. 'I know what it must be like now to lose a relative to Covid'.

'When he died I ducked out of clinical and academic work but at that point patient numbers had disappeared and that wave was over.

I came back into the fray in late August, just in time for Covid to pick up again two months later. And then it was this tsunami again, vastly bigger than the first one. It has been brutal and this time it was compounded by the fact I didn't have the ability to de-stress with anybody...'

A glimmer of help did come from an unexpected quarter. One of the patients Hugh and his team treated was Michael Rosen, children's writer and former Children's Laureate, who was admitted to the hospital two months before Oscar died. Michael had lost his son, Eddie, aged 18, in 1999 to meningitis. The loss of experienced by both men was to connect them beyond Hugh saving Michael's life.

Hugh had saved Michael in the nick of time from dying of happy hypoxia (where blood clots form in the lungs and block off oxygen supplies while patients appear relatively well).

'He had a blown pupil, he wasn't responding to light or movement or noise. We were worried something catastrophic had happened to his



brain.' It was only after they brought in his wife, Emma-Louise, and played messages from their children that Michael turned a corner.

Hugh says that the fact Michael didn't let the death of his son stop him, that he carried on living and working, has helped him see a way through.

'He was able to give me some more direct advice about what he'd done to try to cope. But it's difficult because there aren't many people to talk to – there are not many people who have had the same experience.'

Meanwhile, the Intensive Care Society campaign was launched in mid-March 2021, with a video featuring Hugh and other ICU staff. The message of the campaign is very clear. 'We care for you. But now we need you to help us so that we can care for you.'

To donate to the Intensive Care Society's campaign please visit [ics.ac.uk](https://www.ics.ac.uk)

Taken from *Sunday Times Magazine* article by Louise Carpenter



*Michael Rosen and Hugh Montgomery catch up post-Covid*

# DAVE WEBB



## THE TENOR WHO WENT PUBLIC ABOUT HIS MENTAL HEALTH

David Webb has enjoyed a glittering career as an operatic tenor but despite outward appearances he has been suffering with mental health issues that the Covid crisis has fuelled even more. As he explained to Neil Fisher in a double page article for the Times, he likens his situation to the protagonist in Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise*, when he pauses to consider his loneliness. The song describes a fog that has settled on him and how he drifts through 'bright joyful life' like a 'dark cloud'.

'That's what I was like, under this cloud, while pretending everything was fine', David explains. 'Deep down it was truly awful and I didn't know who to talk to.' Unlike many young men struggling with mental health problems, however, David opened up. In August 2018 he put a candid post on social media revealing that a year previously he had tried to take his own life. He wrote: 'I feared letting anyone know that I wasn't always the happy-go-lucky person that I had tried to portray.' When he described his experiences, David was performing at the Salzburg Festival and, with his (now ex) girlfriend the Strictly dancer

Karen Hauer, was half of a glamorous couple who were regularly snapped in the tabloids and profiled in *Hello! Magazine*.

Yet that was part of his message: outward success doesn't have much to do with your mental state: 'When I was honest about what I tried to do to myself everyone was shocked. They said: "You're the guy who gets everyone else going!" But that's the point, you become a master of painting over the surface.' David says that performing *Winterreise* was not only professionally fulfilling, but therapeutic too. 'Vulnerability is a strength', he says. 'To be able to look into yourself – that's what this piece really means to me.'

For musicians in particular, the pandemic has made mental health issues more relevant. 'I've spoken to so many top artists who are struggling,' continues David. 'It's not just a financial thing, it's a purpose – that feeling you get when you go out on stage.'

Another saving grace for David has been his training regime and he currently looks in incredible shape. He credits Karen with recent motivation: 'she's got the best abs I know', he says. He had been a fitness fanatic for years. In the summer of 2012, when he was in the Glyndebourne chorus, he ran training sessions for other singers during the opera intervals. 'It got to the stage where they were all losing weight and the people from wardrobe were getting upset because they had to keep taking in the costumes.'

However his fitness slumped massively during the first lockdown. 'I could

# ON SAVING A TENOR

make up every excuse in the world to you about why I got fat, but I got fat... because I got fat. I didn't respect myself. Every time a piece of work got cancelled [due to Covid] I would drink something else.'

Back in January 2021, with live musical activity still close to none existent, David came up with a unique *Winterreise* idea that combined his musical prowess with a gruelling physical workout.

Covid regulations prevented him from singing his first solo cycle (which he had planned to do in Truro where he was once a choral scholar) then cycling from Cornwall to Wigmore Hall in London for another performance. However, in aid of two mental health charities, Mind and Music Minds Matter, he changed his plans and went on to cycle 500 miles (not in one go, and in line with government guidance) on routes around London.

'Apparently, that's more than the first five stages of the Tour de France – and they don't have to sing at the Wigmore after they've finished,' laughs David. The last chunk, on Monday January 29, was 24 miles long to mark each of the 24 *Winterreise* songs. He started at 7am and got to the West End concert hall at about 9.45am, where he joined his fellow tenors Rupert Charlesworth and Alessandro Fisher and the baritone Benedict Nelson for a final rehearsal with the pianist Iain Burnside. Then at 1pm the team sang *Winterreise*, the songs shared out between them. It was unorthodox, but the united front was undoubtedly heart-warming at a time when so few musicians were able to

share a platform. And the message they got across was incredibly important. 'Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45 in this country. So to stand with those lads onstage and make a statement... It was a collective thing which made it even more special.'

It might be considered morbid to talk about the 21st song in *Winterreise*, das Wirtshaus (The Tavern), which is not about a friendly inn, but depicts a graveyard where the hero arrives 'weary to the point of collapse, fatally wounded'. Yet it finishes with a resolution to press onwards and David takes that as a positive message.

'That song let me put some demons to bed; allowed me to accept that the sun will shine, that good things are coming. Believe in yourself. Trust in your own strength'.

Adapted from David's interview with Neil Fisher of the Sunday Times, Jan 2021





# THERE'S ONLY ONE . . .

The 2020-21 season hasn't been the greatest for football teams in general or Plymouth Argyle in particular.

A dizzying run of results mid-season got many fans daring to dream of a play-off place and with Luke Jephcott heading the top-scoring lists in League One, then spirits were soaring sky-high.

Then Luke stopped scoring and Argyle stopped winning and although they managed to secure safety before the season started to draw to a close, they final league position left them perilously close to the drop zone.

Nevertheless survival in League One when they were competing in League Two in the truncated 2019-20 campaign was an undoubtedly an achievement.

One man who played a significant part in that survival story was the former Argyle Academy star Michael Cooper.

Michael joined the Academy as an 11-year-old back in 2009 and, after attending St Peter's School in Lymington, the Exeter-born boy joined Plymouth College.

Just a few years later he was part of the exciting Argyle youth side that finished third in the Northern Ireland Milk Cup, a quirky competition that saw the Pilgrims reach the semi-final against Brazilian side Corinthians after a fine run of four wins.

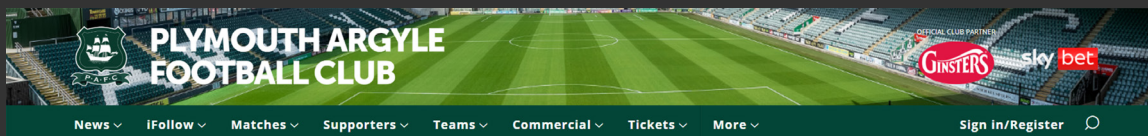
Unfortunately they lost out on that occasion, but were back to their winning ways to beat Chilean side O'Higgins in the third place play off.

Such was the young keeper's form that while still only 15 he secured several appearances in the U-18 Argyle side and then in 2015-16 season made 10 appearances for the Pilgrims as they won the South West Youth Alliance for the second season in a row.






# MICHAEL COOPER



1

Michael  
Cooper  
Goalkeeper

 [mike\\_cooper](#)



In February 2016 Michael signed Argyle apprenticeship papers, along with Luke Jephcott, and later that season, with first choice keeper Luke McCormick already ruled out through injury and second choice Kyle Letheren suffering a freak injury on the field of play, Michael came off the subs bench to make his first team debut.

It was Tuesday 17 October 2017 and Argyle were at Ewood Park playing against Blackburn Rovers. They had already conceded two goals when Michael came on at half time.

'It was pretty surreal making my debut. Being on the bench you have got to be prepared that you may come on.'

Relieved to have kept a clean sheet in the second 45 Michael told the press at the end of the game: 'It's about being in the zone, and the main thing was the team got the draw because it was a tough game.'

He added: 'At the end of the game, I was looking around and thinking "I can't believe that I'm here, on the pitch playing".'

Now Michael is the manager's main man between the posts and in this bizarre season, played almost entirely in stadia devoid of supporters, he has been the only ever present name in the starting line-up.

This means that although just 21 he's already made in excess of 50 appearances for the club. Furthermore, back in February after keeping an impressive clean sheet at Rochdale to earn Argyle a valuable away point, he was named in the Sky Bet League One Team of the Week.

Currently under contract until the summer of 2022, Michael's future looks very rosy indeed. Club manager Ryan Lowe is delighted with the young keeper's progress and has gone on record as saying that 'he's coming towards the end of what could be a number of very good years at Argyle – that's for sure!'

We wish him luck. As noted in last year's OPM Magazine, he's by no means the first OPM to play for Plymouth Argyle but he's certainly the first in a great many years!

# HENRY SLADE

## A MOST REMARKABLE HAT TRICK

How many Plymouth College schoolboys have dreamt of playing professional rugby? How many have dreamt of scoring a try in a major final? How many have dreamt of scoring a try in three consecutive finals, played on three consecutive Saturdays and being on the winning side every time? It's not just the stuff of dreams, it's more in the realms of fantasy, but, that's precisely what destiny had in store for Henry Slade last year.

Sadly there were no live crowds to witness this remarkably hat trick of successes, however millions enjoyed the games live courtesy of technology's magical window on the world – television.

While Covid served up more than it's fair share of misery and mayhem to the nation last year, one of the few truly bright spots was to watch the success of Exeter Chiefs as they beat French club Racing 92 in the final of the European Champions Cup.

The game was played in Bristol, at Ashton Gate, on Saturday 17 October.

For Racing 92 it was their third appearance in the final in five years, however they had yet to win the competition. For Chiefs it was their first time in the final, but what was even more remarkable for the Devon side was that they were relative newcomers to top flight rugby, having been in the fourth tier of the sport in England back in 1996 and still only in the second tier a decade ago.

In more recent years however they had won the Premiership title in 2017 and the following weekend they had a chance to win back that title with a game against Wasps. Exeter raced to a 14 points to nil lead and were still nine points ahead at half time.

As the second half unfolded however the French team gradually pulled closer, despite Chiefs adding to their tally with a splendid interception that led to Henry scoring Chiefs' only second half try.





In the 65th minute of the game Racing were awarded their only penalty of the game and that brought the Paris side to within one point of Exeter's total of 28 points. The last fifteen minutes were thrilling especially after Tomas Francis was sin binned

for a deliberate knock on leaving Chiefs a man down with nine minutes to go. An 80th minute penalty gave the English side a 31-27 victory and after a moment of confusion the referee blew his whistle before Racing had a chance to restart.





It was a remarkable achievement for the Chiefs but there was little time for prolonged celebrations as there was so much at stake for the side the following Saturday. The English rugby Premiership competition, like so many sporting events, was suspended, initially for a five week period back in March 2020 and resumption was planned for later in April. However an indefinite postponement was later announced and it wasn't until mid August that the season was once more underway.

Covid restrictions dictated that all games would be played behind closed doors but the good news was that all games were to be broadcast live on BT Sport – with a few on Channel 5.

After the league season was completed Chiefs were in pole position and consequently were seeded first in the semi-final play offs.

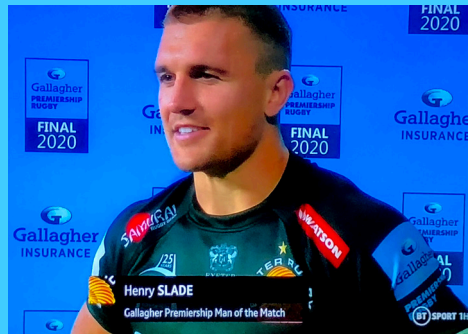
There they thumped Bath 35-6 and earned themselves the final slot against Wasps who'd beaten third placed Bristol Bears. Henry Slade opened the scoring in the 18th minute in the Grand Final, played at rain soaked Twickenham. Henry's 35-metre run in proved to be the only time one of the Chiefs managed to cross the try line with the ball, but with some fine kicking by team captain Joe Simmonds, including another



*Another final another try*

stoppage time penalty, the Devon side managed to retake the Premiership title with a 19-13 victory.

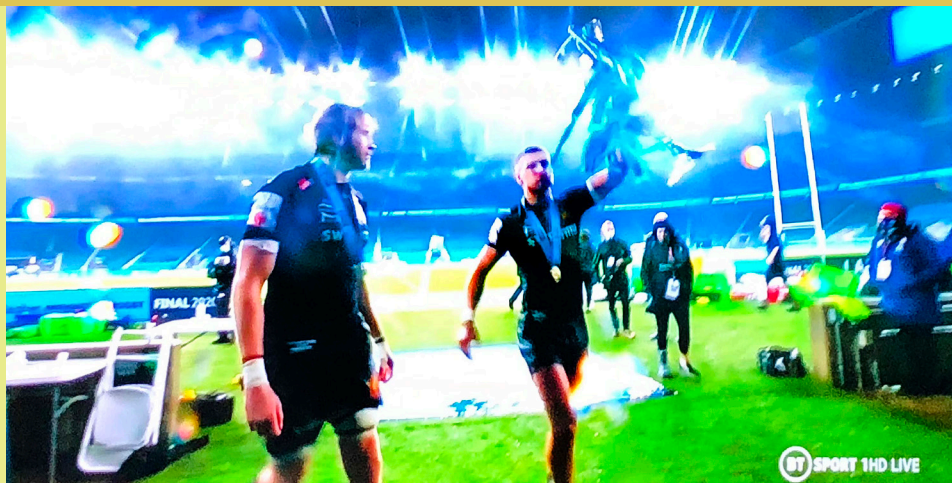
Henry's magical moment helped earn him the man of the match award and round off a perfect eight day spell.



*Henry Slade Gallagher Premiership Man of the Match*







*Henry holds the trophy aloft*

Could life get any better for the young OPM? Well yes it could as the following Saturday, 31 October 2020, Henry was in the starting line up for his country as they took the field against Italy on the final day of the Six Nations Championship.

This too had been scheduled to conclude in March, but Covid-19 intervened and in July the dates for the last few matches of the competition were announced as being in October.

And so it was that Henry and his team mates strode out into a virtually empty Stadio Olimpico for a game that they were expected to win, but not a win that necessarily

guaranteed them the Six Nations title. France and Ireland held the key, if Ireland could beat France (by six or seven points) they would take the title, whatever happened in Italy, but if France beat Ireland by a big enough margin (28 pts), they too could take the title.

However as it transpired the Irish were beaten, but only by eight points, which meant that when Henry scored England's fifth and final try in the 71st minute of their clash in Rome their 34-5 victory gave them the necessary bonus points to ensure overall victory in the competition and complete a stunning trio of successes for our Mr Slade.



# TOM DALEY



*Tom wears wet look Fiorucci suit and feather boa borrowed from his friend Harry Styles.*

Abridged from: *Sunday Times Magazine* 10 April 2021  
Charlotte Edwardes

Thirteen years after he first stood on an Olympic diving board, Tom Daley is setting his sights on a gold medal in Tokyo later this year. A lot has happened in that time: he has come out as gay, got married to husband Lance, become a parent to Robbie and lost his own father, Rob.

He says he had to grow up very quickly, having experienced a lot during his diving career, and the detail he offers in the *Sunday Times Magazine* interview gives us something of an insight into what is involved in getting to the very top in his sport. Remarkably, he admits that he still has

a fear of the actual act of diving:

'I am still terrified every time I go out there,' he confesses, 'I mean, it's not human to throw yourself off a 10 metre platform and by this close...'

He talks about conquering his fear of the sport. From the age of eight he would stand on the edge of the diving platform in the Plymouth Life Centre and would cry because he was so scared.

His dad would tell him he didn't have to do it, that it was supposed to be fun – but Tom would insist. He wanted to do it, despite the fact that he didn't like swimming or being cold and wet and later despite the fact that he twice misjudged that tiny gap between head and board and split his head open, turning the pool red.

It's because of that unswerving determination and dedication that he won the FINA World Championships in the 10-metre platform event in 2009, aged just 15, and then regained it in 2017.

He won bronze in the London 2012 Olympics and was tipped to get gold in Rio in 2016 but failed to qualify although he did win a bronze in the synchro.

He talks about the immense hammering his body has taken over the years, which is why, now aged 26, he hasn't quite decided whether this Olympics will be his last or not: 'I'll keep going as long as my body will allow,' he says. 'I'm like the granddad of the sport – I'm old now for diving.'

He is currently doing dry training, which

# DIVING FOR GOLD

involves falling into sponges because to hit water at 35 mph on a regular basis is like surviving multiple car crashes.

His growth has been stunted by diving – his brothers are 6ft 5in and 6ft 3in, while he is 5ft 9in. He has endured multiple injuries including broken ribs, a broken hand, ‘bruises, split skin: I’ve coughed up blood, hit my hands, my feet. I’ve got a high pain threshold, especially when training through injuries. I want to keep pushing. I’m able to tolerate a lot when exercise gets really challenging. There’s that weird feeling like it’s going to be impossible, but you’re doing it anyway.’

He says now that his perspective has completely shifted from that time in Rio 2016 when he felt he was at peak physical and mental fitness, putting extreme pressure and expectation on himself:

‘Being a parent, a year in a global pandemic, you realise the things that matter most. You realise things can change at any moment, spanners can be thrown into works. And I’ve almost enjoyed diving more because I just feel grateful. I realise that actually, it’s just a game – it’s the Olympic Games, right? And if you have that perspective it takes so much pressure off.’

Lockdown has also given him the time and space to find new ways to relax, having always found it hard. He has learnt to knit, crochet and macramé and keeps his followers updated with his prolific output on Instagram.

‘I’ve also become plant obsessed,’

he confesses, ‘I’ve gone from having five houseplants to about 120. Every morning is an hour looking after plants. I have loads of different types, some in hanging baskets, big tall plants outside, planter boxes, a palm tree on our roof. I also propagate them so I’ve been making my own plants...’

Let’s hope these new hobbies help take his mind of the stresses of diving so that he’s able to really enjoy partaking in the Olympics 2021.

Good luck Tom!



*Tom Daley and Matthew Lee with their gold medals at the Fina World Cup in Tokyo.*

Late news! In the first week of May 2021, in a warm up for the delayed Japanese Olympics, Tom and his diving partner Matt Lee won gold in the Men’s Synchronised 10m Platform final in the Fina World Cup in Tokyo and then took gold again in the Men’s 10m Platform dive competition in his own right, three days later.



# A RISE: LLOYD INWOOD



**A** Plymouth bakery was such a hit on its opening weekend that it had to close temporarily when it ran out of stock.

The new Rise Bakery, in the city centre's Frankfort Gate, was inundated with hungry customers when it launched on the last weekend of February. It meant it sold out of all its bread, pasties, cookies and cakes and had to close for four days until it could bake enough new stock. 'We had queues of 35 to 40 people,' said business boss and baker Lloyd Inwood. 'We sold hundreds of pasties in the first weekend. We could not have asked for a better opening but got caught out by the demand.'

The bakery is to trade seven days a week, 8am to 3pm, and is ramping up production at its baking unit on an industrial site in Saltash, to keep pace with demand.

Six people are employed across the

river and another three at the shop, but Mr Inwood said more people could earn a crust with him as he is looking to eventually set up a chain of Rise Bakery sites in the South Hams and Cornwall and the firm will be launching a nationwide delivery service which will see its products sent across England and Wales.

'It's going to grow,' Mr Inwood said.

'We're trying to extend production and we haven't even touched wholesale yet. We're aiming to produce 300 to 500 pasties a day and 100 sourdough loaves a day as we want to supply restaurants.' The bakery also produces cakes and cookies and its speciality fried 'half-croissant, half-doughnut' creation, in addition to a range of vegan pasties, sausage rolls and cakes, and sees itself chiefly as a high-end producer of patisserie goods.



Mr Inwood has been involved in the Plymouth hospitality scene for some years and is a director of the Terrace eatery on the Hoe. He started his culinary career as a trainee for Rick Stein at his famous seafood restaurant in Padstow. He then worked as a private chef for luxury ski chalet company Vebier Exclusive, cooking for celebrities and the super-wealthy.

For two years, he then worked as a private chef on the super yacht Lionheart, producing meals for the workers of the TomTom technology company.

'But I had a young family and wanted to come back to Plymouth,' Mr Inwood said.

In Covid-hit 2020, he found he had time on his hands and began working on the Rise concept in November last year, spending a 'fair bit of wedge' on launching the business. He chose Frankfort Gate as a location because

he sees the area, in the city's West End, as having potential, especially since Plymouth City Council spent cash on upgrading it and demolished the ugly footbridge over Western Approach. It also has a cluster of food outlets which he says are complementary, and he added: 'There is strength in being next to each other'.

Mr Inwood is already eyeing expansion and aims to launch another business in the area soon.

'This is a concept-prover', he said. 'We'll then look at more sites, village locations in the South Hams and Cornwall, different options.'

Mr Inwood has not forgotten to give something back to the local community. He explained: 'We're going to give away our day products [unsold items] to Shekinah Mission and the soup run every afternoon. I was amazed at the number of people they are feeding.'

*William Telford (Plymouth Herald)*



# DAWN FRENCH

Life

A Life in the Day

**WORDS OF WISDOM**

**BEST ADVICE**  
 I WAS GIVEN  
 It was what my mum told me: "The only way out is through".

**ADVICE I'D GIVE**  
 Every day is a clean slate. Whatever happened yesterday, you can get past it.

**WHAT I WISH I'D KNOWN**  
 Large houses are a playground, rather than just a place to live.

**Dawn French**  
 The comedian on trashy TV, adoption and working with Jennifer Saunders again

French, 63, was born in Holyhead, Wales, and raised in the West Country. She studied acting at London's Central School of Speech and Drama, where she met Jennifer Saunders. They formed the comedy duo French and Saunders, and their BBC sketch show ran for 20 years. French has an adopted daughter, Bille, 29, with her first husband, the comedian and actor Lenny Henry, and lives in Cornwall with her second husband, Mark Bignell, a charity executive, their dog, Goodie, and cat, Mouser.

I wake up at 6.30am. The husband and I have breakfast together. I walk the dog down on the beach. I live in a very lovely big house by the sea, but I'm definitely not lady of the manor. I'm a bit of a hermit, so this has been a wonderful place to spend lockdown. I'm happiest in my home with my animals and family.

After the dog walk, I'll sit down with a big cup of coffee and crack on with writing. My latest book is probably my most personal. It's very centred on motherhood and belonging. I adopted a kid and I'm interested in everything to do with who we belong to. Is it your blood? Is it who raised you? When you adopt you think about motherhood more. My daughter and stepdaughter were living with us during the first few months of lockdown. To have all of us sharing the cooking, the laughs and the telly was unusual and brilliant.

In the middle of the day I will begin snacking. It starts small and healthy with corn cakes. But then I'll father a toothy butter, then add peanut butter, then maybe just a big dollop of lard, why not? I'll take a break and watch my guilty pleasure, which is clips of the *Real Housewives* shown on YouTube. I can't watch whole episodes, but I love the fighting. Then I'll have a bit of a nap at the beginning of lockdown where

about 18 months of my work plans just disappeared. Only one project happened and it was a surreal experience during Covid. For the four weeks I filmed, I only ever see the crew from the eyes upwards. When I can my make-up artist a month for the first time, it's like he had taken his trousers down.

So many people who work in the theatre have been left at the bottom of the pile. Theatre is such a part of our cultural landscape, and I really respect people thinking it's this frothy, leucic industry. It's bigger than films and football.

For Jennifer and me, it was a sort of happy accident. I wasn't trying to become a game-changer for female comics. I was just enjoying myself. But what I am delighted about is I can't even name every young female comedian out there right now, because there are so many. When we were on the BBC, we were the female quota. "Oh, we've got enough women now, we've got those two".

As soon as Jennifer and I were able to meet up after lockdown, we did. We started working together recording a little thing called *French & Saunders Telling About*. And that's exactly what we do. Jennifer to hog her I did fashion myself a coat, which I wear because during the hood up, I never felt a pressure after we adopted during the lockdown. That's the thing. The *French & Saunders Telling About*. And that's exactly what we do. Jennifer to hog her I did fashion myself a coat, which I wear because during the hood up, I never felt a pressure after we adopted during the lockdown. That's the thing. The *French & Saunders Telling About*.

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**Interview by Marie-Claire Chappet**  
*Because of You: A Life in the Day by Dawn French is out now (Michael Joseph £20)*

Sunday Times Magazine 8 October 2020 Interview by Marie-Claire Chappet

After leaving St Dunstan's, Dawn studied acting at London's Central School of Speech and Drama where she met Jennifer Saunders. They formed comedy duo French and Saunders and their BBC sketch show ran for 20 years. Dawn has an adopted daughter, Bille, 29, with her first husband, comedian and actor Lenny Henry and lives in Cornwall with her second husband Mark Bignell, a charity executive, their dog Goodie and cat Mouser.

Dawn's latest book, *Because of You*, published by Michael Joseph, is out now.

"I wake up at 6.30am. The husband and I have breakfast together then I walk the dog down on the beach. I live in a very lovely big house by the sea, but I'm definitely not lady of the manor. I'm a bit of a hermit, so this has been a wonderful place to spend lockdown. I'm happiest in my home with my animals and family.

After the dog walk I'll sit down with a big cup of coffee and crack on with writing. My latest book is probably my most personal. It's very centred on motherhood and belonging. I adopted a kid and I am interested in everything to do with who we belong to. Is it your blood? Is it who raised you? When you adopt you think about motherhood more. My daughter and stepdaughter were living with us during the first few months of lockdown. To have all of us sharing the cooking, the laughs and the telly was unusual and brilliant.

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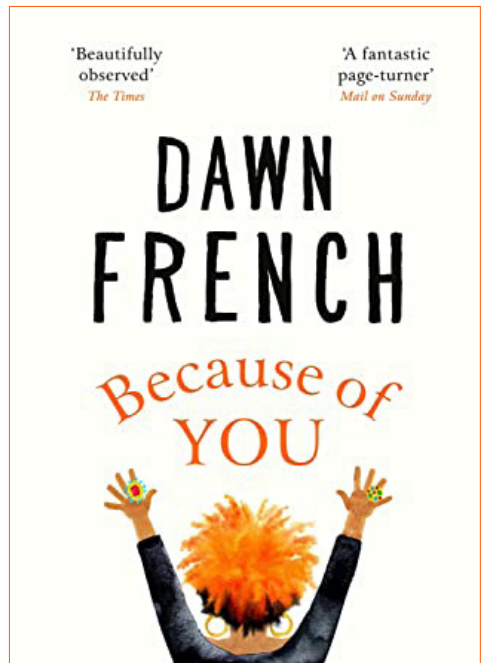
# A Life in the Day

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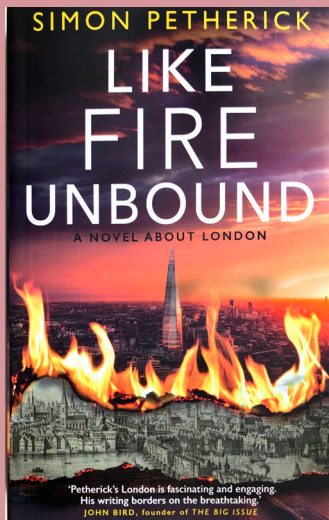
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I never felt a pressure after we stopped doing the sketch show or The Vicar of Dibley, to match that success. I like having a go at different things. The desire to keep doing different things is what allows us to make mistakes, it's part of your learning. Sadly, I think we live in a time where mistakes are not forgiven. Everything is the culture of



perfection; from body shapes on social media to what's happening with the arts. I will be really sad if the future of comedy is 'safe'. That's not the comedy we love. It should be a bit naughty, a bit mischievous.

I will normally eat dinner with my husband and be in bed by 10pm. He stays up later as he's a night owl, which is a point of contention. But what's truly unbelievable to me is that my dear boyfriend, Idris Elba, has not come to visit me in Cornwall. He still hasn't. It's terribly, terribly rude!"



Like Fire Unbound is the fourth novel from the pen, or rather keyboard, of Simon Petherick.

Simon's online profile notes that he is a publisher and writer who was originally trained at the Central Office of Information where he wrote government information material. A novelist, screenwriter and non-fiction writer, he has published a number of books including The Power Of The Mind, which he wrote with hypnotist Joe Keeton; travel guides and business titles; novels including The Last Good Man and English Arcadia. For seven years he ran an independent book publishing company which published 110 books, including a Costa Award winner for fiction and the winner of the Mojo Magazine Book of Year. He writes occasional pieces for the Idler magazine and has an old sailing boat moored in Cornwall.

Simon's latest book, published in March 2021, interweaves a narrative from contemporary London with a story that takes us back to the Great Fire of 1666. It's a keen, mean and unflattering look at modern society and the situations it forces people into not always willingly or wittingly.

John Bird, who founded the Big Issue and who knows a thing or two about the big city says Simon's London 'is fascinating and engaging. His style of writing borders on the breathtaking. As a professional Londoner I recognise the geography as much as I recognise the abuses this town hands out to some of us. Petherick does a brilliant job of allowing us to suspend our moralising. In fact he insists on it.'

Like Fire Unbound is available from the new indie bookshop supporter Bookshop [bit.ly/3ql0cur](https://bit.ly/3ql0cur) or from Waterstones [tidd.ly/3pchz01](https://tidd.ly/3pchz01).



# DAVID QUANTICK



Good to hear David Quantick on Saturday Live on Radio 4 back in November. Amused to hear him describe NME (that sadly defunct organ that was called the New Musical Express) as Cambridge for losers. Before becoming a writer he studied Law at UCL (in the same year as the singer Lloyd Cole) and then wrote about popular music for many years interviewing and writing about all sorts of 'stars' from Jason Donovan to Freddie Mercury and The Clash, he even wrote a book about the punk heroes.

Freddie Mercury he met in Hungary. 'He said to me "You've said that I don't do interviews" ... and then he took me for a nice drink, then out for dinner, then we had a barbecue in his hotel room.'

Then there was the Johnny Thunders interview in which the subject

answered everything with either a yes or a no.

Things came to a head evidently when David took stock of his situation on his 30th birthday, in Paris. 'I found myself interviewing some pop star, writing down whatever drivel they spouted and thought to myself, why am I doing this?'

Why indeed? The talented novelist, humourist and critic has since forged an eminently successful Emmy winning writing career that includes numerous novels, play and books on how to write.

He's just published a new work, a sci-fi mystery horror vehicle called Night Train and at the time of the broadcast he was working on a Radio 4 comedy Whatever Happened to Baby Jane Austen, with Jennifer Saunders and Dawn French – it was broadcast on New Year's Eve.

# MICHAEL BALL

Michael Ball achieved a first in his career in 2020 by topping both the UK Official Album and Singles charts.

In the run up to Christmas 2020 his album *Together Again* at Christmas with Alfie Boe became the third chart topper for the popular duo and the fifth in total for Michael. But he'd never reached the No 1 spot in the singles charts, the closest being back in 1989 when he got to No 2 with *Love Changes Everything*.

This time it was his collaboration with Captain Sir Tom Moore, fundraiser extraordinaire (who raised over £30million for NHS charities during the Covid-19 pandemic by walking lengths of his garden), that eventually took him to the top.



Michael Ball with Alfie Boe on the Graham Norton show



# TOP WITH *THE* GRANDPOPS



*Michael meets Captain Tom for the first time*

Back in April 2020, to mark the first phase of the 99-year-old captain's walk, Michael sang *You'll Never Walk Alone* for him live on BBC Breakfast.

The performance was recorded and made into a digital single that featured the NHS Voices of Care Choir together with the good captain's spoken words. The heroic WW2 war veteran, introduced the track, by saying: 'Hold your head up high and don't be afraid of the dark'.

It went on to sell nearly 36,000 copies in the first two days of release and on 24 April became No 1 on the UK singles chart, in time for Captain Tom's 100th birthday. Michael said: 'This is the most extraordinary thing, one of the proudest moments of my career, but it's not about me, it's about Captain Tom. Thank you for giving him a No 1 on his 100th birthday.'

Captain Tom, who was 100 on 30 April 2020 thus became the oldest artist ever to claim the No 1 spot with the song which went on to clock up combined chart sales of 82,000, becoming the fastest selling single of 2020.

Proceeds from the sales were added to the millions of pounds Captain Tom had already raised for the NHS, after walking 100 lengths of his garden, initially hoping to raise £1,000.





## CALLING THE CLASS OF 65-72



**B**ack in 1982 there was a modest reunion of the intake of 1965 on the grounds that most, but by no means all, left in 1972, that is, ten years earlier. That event was staged at the old OPM Clubhouse at Efford. Next year, of course, it will be 50 years since that cohort left Ford Park and a somewhat larger event is in the early stages of planning. Over the course of seven years, 1965-1972, at least 110 boys were part of that group. Some arrived part way through, some left early, some arrived late and left early. Overall however it was a substantial group and although many of those are life members of the club, the club data base is not as up to date as it might be after half a century of inevitable changes occupation, address and circumstances generally. Furthermore, and again, inevitably, not everyone of that group has survived through to 2021.

Already at least seven of the 110 have been taken early from this world: **Johnny Jones** was a student at Leeds University when he was killed in a road accident in 1975; **Rob McFarlane** was a graphic artist designing album covers for EMI when he left us in the late-80s; **Mike Overs** was doing a parachute jump in New Zealand when his parachute failed to open; **Bruce Harder** I believe suffered a fatal heart attack; **Ian Hay** was shot 'lawfully' it was later said, by Devon and Cornwall Constabulary marksmen in 1993, after Ian had suffered something of a meltdown and had fired off a number of shots in a local pub and subsequently fired at and killed a police dog; **Mark Tavener**, a successful author who'd scripted numerous comedy shows for Radio 4 and BBC television, died of cancer, as did **Bill Quayle**, a former Army man who became an antique dealer.



Sadly there are probably others that we have yet to hear of, but of course, the vast majority are alive and hopefully well, and certainly scattered around all four corners of the world.

Not surprising perhaps as a significant number were boarders and not local lads in the first place.

**Tony Naraysingh** seems to have gone back over to the other side of the Atlantic, **Paul Hattin** back to South Africa, meanwhile our last contacts for **Andy Jones-Cox (below)** and **Simon Scanes** suggest that they're both in Canada. Simon was last heard of working there as an artist while Andy, after doing his first degree at Birmingham, had a spell in South Africa, before moving to Canada. In the late 1990s he did an MBA at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, and after years working successfully with computers and software solutions, is currently operating as an educational consultant as the Tutor Doctor.



**Paul Trenchard** (above) is an entrenched Europhile, currently living in Autun, in France, while France is also the last known location that we heard of for **Charlie Ellis**, although there is a suggestion he's now closer to 'home'.

Meanwhile **Chris (Kit) Pease** (below) has been for most of the last 40 years working as a senior pathologist at Wellington Hospital. He also likes to sculpt in his spare time.





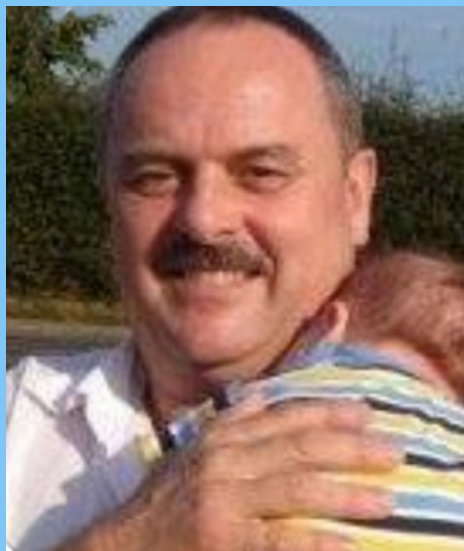
Kit was one of a handful of that year group that went into medicine. **Jim Leggate** and **Richard Laishley** (above) were others. Dick retired from the NHS four or five years ago and although now living in London still has Westcountry connections and was in Exeter a year or two ago to witness his youngest son's graduation. Meanwhile more concerned with how machines work rather than bodies, **Nick Easby** (below) has had a busy career as a project engineer for a number of high profile clients.



Another engineer from that year was **Robert Delnon** (above) 'automotive professional' who studied at Imperial College and appears to have stayed there for a while.

A fellow Imperial undergraduate was **Bill Joice** (below), who spent a number of years as a civil engineer before returning to Plymouth to run the family plumbing business which he sold a couple of years ago. Happily retired he sails the Mediterranean for as much of the summer as he can, which wasn't much at all last year!





**Hilton Ingram** (above) is another of the year group currently living in London and not a lot more is currently known other than he worked at the Micro Clinic, Orpington.

**Tony Collins** (below) on the other hand has, like many of the cohort, retired which gives him more time to indulge his passions of photography and motorcycling, a pursuit that often sees him in the company of contemporary **Ian Penrose** (above right). Ian sold his architectural practice, one of the biggest in the

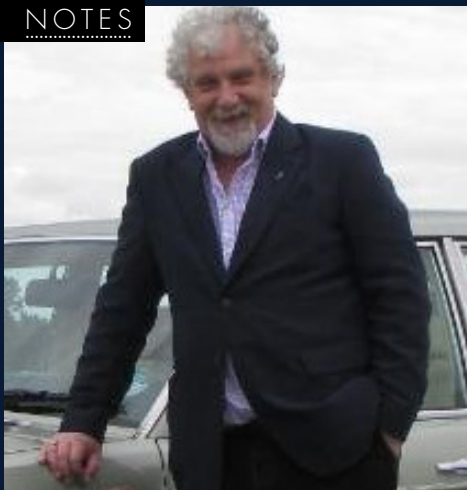


county, a few years ago. A keen sailor he recently sold his boat and now divides his leisure time between home improvements to his place in Tavistock, his motorbike(s), painting and creating an impressive scale version of Tavistock South railway stations.

Another who enjoys motorbiking is **Nick Bone** (below), pictured in 2019 with his new Heritage Softail 114ci Harley-Davidson. Nick's was in retail and he worked variously for Timothy Whites, Styles & Wood and Boots UK.







Linkedin proved to be a good place to find some of the year, including **Greg Stark** who writes: ‘I started in the marine seismic industry in 1978, and worked for a number of seismic contractors until 1987. I then spent four years at university studying Computing and Information Engineering (Informatics), before returning to the seismic industry. I became a freelance consultant for marine seismic surveys in 1993, and have spent the last twenty years working as a freelance consultant for various consultancies, and have been sourcing work through EPI (Exploration Partners International) since 2004. Since 2006 I have been involved in a number of OBS (Ocean-Bottom Surveys) for a variety of oil companies and seismic contractors. With over 30 years' experience in seismic exploration I am able to provide clients with a comprehensive service to monitor and control their offshore exploration projects.’

Of all of the year group possibly the only one to have been invited back a guest speaker at Speech Day is **Ralph Tabberer** (below) and when you read his CV it's not difficult to see why. Former Director-General of Schools in the UK, appointed by PM Tony Blair to run the country's 22,000 state schools and to oversee all schools policy and operations. Former Chief Education Officer and COO for GEMS Education. Ex-CEO of UK's Teacher Training Agency. Lifelong teacher and educator and leading international expert on School Start-ups, Licensing and Regulation, Teaching and Learning Quality, Governance and the emergence of School Groups globally. Now, Chairman of BBD Education and INK Education Worldwide.







**Nigel Atkey** (above) was one of a number of the cohort to be involved in the early days of computers and computer software, while **Ian Smith** (below) after a varied career in sales that began with Farleys Rusks, where memorably he came up with the unised strapline, 'You breed 'em, We'll feed 'em,' is now semi retired and making jewellery.



**Neil McCheyne** (above) ended up General Manager at the Sandbanks Ferry in Poole but took early retirement to look after his first wife who sadly passed away in 2015. Now helps his new wife with her florist business. Since school Neil lost touch with most but saw **John Kennar** (below) a few years ago. John is a retired solicitor and chair of Brixham Museum and trustee of Bournemouth War Memorial Homes charity.



Another of the year drawn to the law was **Digby Jess** (right), who 'retired from the bar' in 2019. A tribute from the Exchange Chambers noted that 'Digby was called to the Bar in 1978 and has specialised for most of his career within the areas of insurance law, professional negligence, and construction law. He was involved with arbitration for over 35 years, particularly since qualifying as a Chartered Arbitrator in 1999. He is also a past Chairman of the North West Branch of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

'Digby authored several successful practitioner textbooks on insurance law throughout the course of his practice, the first, on professional negligence insurance, was published by Butterworths in 1982, and his last, the 4th edition of his *The Insurance of Commercial Risks: Law and Practice*, was published by Sweet & Maxwell in 2011. Digby also pursued his interest in insurance law by completing a Master of Laws and then a Ph.D. at Manchester University, both by part-time research.'

Meanwhile, still practising, as a Criminal Lawyer, is **John Haythorn** (right). John studied law at Nottingham and has spent his working career in Plymouth where he is today a senior partner with Woolcombe and Yonge.





Another Criminal Lawyer whose career has been based in his home town is **Alan Harris** (above) who, like Digby, retired a couple of years ago. Curiously enough John Kennar, Digby Jess, John Haythorn, Alan Harris and **Michael Moore** (above right) were not only in the same year but the same class for much of that time. Michael qualified as a solicitor in 1980, with a degree from Warwick University and, as his profile on linkedin reveals has ‘a demonstrated history of working in the legal services industry at Partner level since 1982. Skilled in Business Contracts, Negotiation, Legal Assistance, Dispute Resolution, Trusts, and Property Law.’ His most recent role is as In-House Counsel at Microlink PC (UK) Ltd.

Meanwhile another keen sailor from the year, is **Nigel Baxter** (below) last spotted on his boat in Sutton Harbour.







Others no longer living in the area include, left to right above, **Steve Muncer**, in Cleveland, near Middlesborough, **Chris Wood**, in Totnes and **John Martin**, in Surbiton, all three of whom were in Plymouth relatively recently for an Argyle game.

Of those below, l-r, **Chris Robinson** is a Plymouth fixture but some way off retiring, **Mike Scott**, has long since been exiled in Exeter but comes back for social functions. **Patrick Eddey**, is a retired transport manager, now living in Orpington.







**Jim Griffin** (above) is another who has opted for a career in Plymouth, while **Steve Adair** (below) has at least stayed in the county. Having recently sold his interests in his Brixham Seafoods business, Steve is now enjoying retirement in Brixham.



Two former art students, are **John Rubery** (above) who studied at Scarborough and Ulster, and has enjoyed a number of high profile jobs in Northern Ireland, and the recently retired **Rob Warren** (below) who's a happy grandfather!





**Adrian Stephens** was involved in Social Work for 15 years in Sussex before moving up to Birmingham. Converted to Law in 1990. Criminal Defence-Magistrates and Crown Court Advocate. Still doing a bit freelance work.

Ade has 'three grown up kids and three gorgeous little granddaughters.' Still very into music. Coaching Youth Cricket. Travelling a fair bit, mostly the Indian Sub Continent



**Paul West** currently relaxing in the Midlands after a varied techy career that included being part of the team at ICL that developed the worlds first internet enabled fridge - the Screenfridge. 'We developed a project called Interactive Retailing to show retailers around the globe what was going to happen. The fridge was the centrepiece as in those days the kitchen was the centre of the household. We got it onto BBC News, Oprah Winfrey and into Epcot.



**Clive Ostler** had a spell as an area director with Hilton Hotel in the late-80s early 90s, and travelled all around Europe the Middle East and Africa. Moved to London and worked as a commercial and marketing director before going on to the Royal College of Physicians, from where he retired earlier this year.

It's interesting to reflect on the fact that just eight different boys names made up almost half (54) of the total number in that cohort.

Even more fascinating is the fact that only the most popular boy's name of that group, Michael, is in the top 100 boys names of boys born in 2020, although it wasn't there in 2019 and isn't in the top 50.

The eight most commonly occurring names in the class of '65 were Michael, John, Nicholas, Ian, Steven, David,

Anthony and Nigel. Oddly enough although there were five Nigels in that year and the name was quite popular throughout the fifties and sixties (it peaked at No.23 in 1964 in the popularity stakes) however in 2016 there was not a single baby born in England and Wales to have been christened Nigel, not one out of several hundred thousand baby boys! Perhaps it was something to do with its association with the former UKIP leader.



**Nigel Blight** went to Cambridge and soon afterwards appears to have found himself in Merchant Taylors School where he stayed and taught Physics.



**Tony Crawford** is thought to have gone into hotel management. He now lives in London.



**Martin Sercombe** is another of the year who was only around for the sixth form and who is now living - and working - in New Zealand. He's in Tairāngi where he's a director at Media Projects.

Among those who we're still looking for from the year group are the following:

Pete Bartlett, Simon Beadell, Ricky Bennett, Anthony Biddle, Nick Bowen, Nigel Browning, Mike Burt, Tich Cartwright, Roger Cutts, Mike Daniel, Ian Darke, Anthony Dart, Ian Deeming, CC 'Cricket' Denton, Ned Dewey, Richard Fairbanks, Clive Fosse, Howard Garner, Dave Gilmore, Paul Hattin, Greg Howell, Graham Jenner, Steve Lonsdale, John Loudon, Tony Naraysingh, Nick Nelson, Mike Opie, Steve Phillips, Andy Pick, Neil Pitcher, Keith Porchmouth, Dave Rendall, Brian Richman, Simon Scanes, Rob Sellick, Martin Turner, Steve Vosper,

Mike Waddington, John Warne, Mike Warren, Nigel Watson, Chris Watkins, Mike Welsh, Nick Wilkes, Dave Yates and John Zarvou ... any updates or forwarding info gratefully

***Incidentally, it rather looks as if the ideal date for the reunion would be Saturday 9 July 2022 (school's out on the Friday) with a plan to include events either side on the Friday evening and Sunday lunchtime, so for those interested please pencil in those dates!***

**Contact Chris Robinson**  
[chris.robinson@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:chris.robinson@blueyonder.co.uk)  
 01752 705337  
 for more details.



## COLIN SQUANCE

*Extracts from The Squance Family History, a book by Colin Squance (1943-53) covering his years at the College.*

The greatest change in my life and one with a lasting effect came with my entry into the world of Plymouth College. Those eight years laid down the foundations of my future life. The school's environment with its traditions, formality, discipline and general ethos has been a constant exemplar throughout my life.

At the age of eleven it was time for me to start my secondary education. For some time it was clear to my parents that I was not at the standard required to pass the scholarship, a forerunner of the 11+. In this they were not deluded. My education had been disrupted and my application to academic study had certainly been lacking.

The first term of my secondary education was spent at Stuart Road Senior School. During this period preparations were being made to gain me entrance into 'The College'. I am forever grateful to my mother and father for the foresight they had in providing me with the pathway by which I could fulfil the potential they were confident I possessed.

My mother arranged an interview with the headmaster of the college during January 1943. It was a daunting experience to walk, for the first time, along those dark wood panelled corridors lined with former pupils looking down at me from sepia tinted sporting photographs. The porter led us up the wide stone staircase and

showed us into the headmaster's study. There I met Dr Herbert Ralph for the first time. He was, to me, an imposing figure.

He was gracious in meeting Mother and the two conversed for a while. Dr Ralph then asked me to complete a test paper, laid before me, on his desk. I can't remember the questions I had to answer, or how I answered them. I am sure he could not have been impressed with what was before him when he arrived back. He said nothing, then, looking up, asked me to stand in front of his desk. As far as I remember he did not ask me any questions, we just talked. I felt at ease with him. Continuing to look at me he said: 'Squance, I think we can find a place for you at this school. Work hard and enjoy your life here.' Words I have never forgotten.

Thanking him, and after a further conversation between Dr Ralph and Mother, we left. I was proud and elated, the future seemed much brighter. How I had achieved this goal I have no idea. Perhaps he saw in me something beyond academic competency, or was it Mother's charisma? She did have a way with her.

Looking back, I feel I repaid his confidence in me. Did I work hard for the school? Academically, perhaps not, but in the sporting life of the school and in many other activities I more than played my part.



I remember during the afternoon of my interview Mother saying to me that I should return to Stuart Road School. This I did, but in my mind I had already started my new found life. I was determined not to stay there for a moment longer than was necessary. I went to the headmaster's office. His name was Sloggett, a wonderful Dickensian name for a school master. I informed him of my morning's activities. He listened and said I should return to my classroom. I was quick to inform him I was now a pupil of Plymouth College. I thanked him and left. Mr Sloggett made no objection and I heard no more. From that moment a new life opened for me. In 1943 the war was still in full flow. The playing field in front of the main school played host to a large static water tank in the corner of the rugby pitch, used by the AFS to quench fires

caused by incendiary attacks. There was a barrage balloon site in the north field, manned by the RAF. The top of the cricket pavilion housed some of the first American GIs to arrive in Plymouth: they manned two light anti-aircraft guns to the south of the main field. Around these obstacles our sporting activities managed to continue.

Many of the school staff had been called to the colours and were taught by those who were too old to serve and retired staff members. The school thus remained a place of Victorian values. The ethos of the school was true to the old public school system. Discipline was strict. Corporal punishment was the order of the day. Rules of behaviour were clear to us all, if we were caught we knew what to expect. We took our punishment with as much composure as we could muster, as was expected. More

daunting than the actual beating was the journey to the porter's room to fetch the cane. The long walk, along those picture-lined corridors, gave time to ponder on what was to come, but one got used to it. Not only did the masters dispense this punishment, prefects were required to discipline wayward pupils with the same punishment. I like to think it was character building, though it did not curb me in erring in obeying the rules. We were encouraged to show no sign of fear in times of adversity, it was a leadership quality.

When I was 12 years of age I joined the OTC. We were kitted out in World War I uniforms and equipment. They were very well worn and had a distinctive smell. We wore flat caps and putties wrapped around our calves. We were issued with modern battle dress at the end of World War II, then, on parade, we made a much smarter spectacle. Later it became the Combined Cadet Force with naval and RAF sections. At the age of 19, I will explain later, I was the corps' senior sergeant. With the new uniforms came the return of the pre-war staff. Some of these men had lasting influence upon my school life. A new head master, Mr Basil Garons-Williams, had been appointed on the retirement of Dr Ralph. Others included Hugh Dent (English), MacDonald-Porter (Geography), and Ted Mercer. The latter, being my maths master, was also the games master. He was a fine all round sportsman, having played rugby for the Barbarians and first class cricket for Yorkshire. Through the next

six years we were in constant contact within the classroom and on the sports field. We worked together to improve my games skills and in later years to improve the standard of performance of our sports teams. We became firm friends and were in contact to the end of his life in 1973.

I have stated the school had become my life. Every spare moment I had was spent at Ford Park. Much activity was spent with the school professional, William Hayward, known to everyone as 'Pro', he was also the staff instructor of the OTC. I would spend hours oiling cricket bats, painting rugby posts and maintaining the Lee Enfield rifles and Bren guns. If I was missing from home, for any length of time, the family would always know where to find me. I loved the atmosphere of the buildings. The old school photographs and the honour boards in the big school assembly hall, where we gathered for a daily service, was living history to me. At this school I made friends for life. When we meet at gatherings of the OPM Club those of us who are still around are quickly transported back 70 years to when we sat at those long, much carved benched Victorian desks. There have been few days in my life, except the days in army uniform, when I did not wear the school, or old boy's, tie. I was a member of Palmer's House and for the last two years of my school life, was head of house. When my son Simon entered the Prep, he was placed into Palmer's House, as was the custom. I represented all age groups from Under 14s through to the First



# PLYMOUTH COLLEGE COLTS 'U 16' XI. 1948.



R. K. Parbley      \* R. Fouldinghaime, (1948)      S. F. Pearce      M. C. Bowden      R. J. Williams      K. B. P. Wall  
 \* H. J. H. Porter, (1918)      \* D. R. Ellis, (1947-8)      \* C. Squance, (1947-8)      \* M. W. G. Burt, (1948)      \* J. R. Quick, (1918)  
 \* Full Colonel      (Hon. Sec.)      (Captain)

P. K. HODGETTS  
PLYMOUTH

Team in cricket, rugby and hockey. I also swam for the School in water polo. I captained the rugby XV and cricket XI and was vice captain of the hockey XI from the position of goalkeeper. I boxed in the inter-house boxing team in the middle weight section. The following year I won the heavy weight section, beating Tom Savery, who later in life became Lord Mayor of Plymouth. I represented Devon in the under 18s County Championships for both rugby and hockey, during the 1950 and 1951 seasons. I attended two England rugby trails at the under 18 level but got no further at this level. There were a number of future internationals playing whose abilities were far greater than mine. Later in life I represented Devon in the full County Championship.

Believe it or not, there was more to my education than sports. I managed to pass my School Certificate and, later, geography in the Higher School Certificate. Entering the Sixth Form brought the proudest moment of my school life. One morning, at the end of morning assembly, the headmaster called me to the front of big school and presented me with my prefect's cap. This came as a complete surprise. The acclaim of my fellow pupils and staff remains with me to this day. It may amaze one, today, to be informed that pupils at public schools were expected to wear their caps in public, with pride, right up to the age of 18. Any pupil, other than prefects, could be punished for not wearing one. In my sixth form years I took part in a



*Colin Squance and Michael Burt open the batting at Ford Park, Summer 1951*

number of in-house operettas which led me to joining the school choir. Another bonus for being in the sixth form was being given permission, on Friday evenings, to attend ballroom dancing classes at Plymouth High School for Girls. It was an enjoyable way to attain a social accomplishment, but there was verbal retribution from Ted Mercer if we lost the Saturday rugby match.

In 1950, having reached the age of 18, I should have left school to start my National Service. At this time the school was part way through the process of rebuilding the school's sports teams. Ted Mercer asked me if he was able to arrange deferment from army service, would I be prepared to stay on at school for an extra year to help him finish this re-organisation. I was delighted to do so. Father gave his permission. It was good of my parents to do so as they were paying the fees, but Father loved sport and enjoyed watching me play and so deferment was arranged.

By this time, being a prefect and the senior pupil, I more or less had the run of the school. I was expected to partake in some academic study but I found little inspiration in this direction. I already had my School Certificate and part of my Higher. I concentrated on geography. Mr Merrick-Jones, my form master, once said to me: 'Squance, I should take you to task for the lack of work you have produced this term, but how can I, for you seem to be as much a member of staff as I am!'

You can image most of my time was spent assisting Ted Mercer and Pro Hayward in the organisation and training of the various sports teams.

This period confirmed my intention to enter the teaching profession as a sports master, but lurking was the idea of a future life in the army.

At the age of 19 I left school. On my final day, Mr Garons-Williams called me into his study. I stood on the same spot as I did when I had faced Dr Ralph and the head master's words are as clear to me as those of Dr Ralph, nine years previously: 'You are leaving this school today and I thank you for all you have done for the school but remember all this school has given you.'

How right he was. The words of both head masters, I remember with gratitude. The school certainly helped form my codes of behaviour, appreciations and I am sorry to say prejudices. I am aware I am repeating myself, but it has to be done. I appreciate formality, discipline, good manners, punctuality, keeping one's word and loyalty. I like ceremonial, uniform and timeless traditions. I dislike change. I will accept development, if it builds upon the experiences gained from the older and wiser minds of the past, not modern, PC talentless experts who are convinced in their own infallibility. I believe in taking responsibility for one's actions and, finally, being dignified in all one's actions within society. If what I have written seems self-indulgent, it comes from looking back from a distance of many years and reliving those times. I have enjoyed the process. Did I take advantage of the opportunities open to me by my education? I very much doubt it, but those years have given me memories that delight me now, in my solitary hours.





## ORESTON TURNS OUT

‘Sixty-five years ago,’ writes Mike Turpitt, ‘following the end of hostilities in Europe, on 8 May 1945, the village of Oreston turned out in force to welcome back Fred Tucker, who had been a prisoner of war. ‘Mrs Madge Axworthy organised the local children to carry Union Jacks and spread flowers on the road as Fred walked to his home with his wife and his son Brian.

‘This picture was taken and reprinted in the Picture Post and there has been a copy in the British War Museum ever since.

‘The children, from front left, are June Tapper, Roger Axworthy, Derek Dymond and **Mike Turpitt**, and on the right, Margaret Elford, **Colin White**, **Bill Hill**, Brian Axworthy and Ann Tapper. **Don Turpitt** is standing on the wall behind.’ (All the names in bold are OPMs)

Mike adds, ‘Fred Tucker hadn’t seen his son before, so maybe three or four years on. People who were watching remarked on how thin he was. The painting shows an RAF greatcoat but in fact Fred was in the Army and he’d been taken prisoner.





## **WEDDING OF JOSH WEBB (08) TO MELANIE MOURARET**

*1 AUGUST 2020*

**A**lthough the planned celebrations were restricted by the Coronavirus pandemic with the majority of his English family being unable to attend, Josh Webb married his French fiancé, Melanie at the Mairie in Montreal (Ardeche, France) on 1 August 2020.

The wedding was attended by his parents, Peter (1977) and Helen, his sister Rosie and groomsmen, Hedley Putnam (2008) and Aaron Summons (staff).

It is hoped that a larger celebration to include more friends and family, can be held in 2021.

Josh and Melanie currently live in France, Josh working as an accountant in a large pharmaceutical company in Geneva and. Melanie as a primary school teacher.



*The first official photograph of a School Hockey team - 1914. Back row; PA Harris, Douglas Vittle, Henry Jago, Samuel Williams. Middle row; JA Drake, Eric Corkery, Sidney Beare (also below left), John Hussey, Edward Jago. Front row; John Reed, Alan Hambly.*

These two hockey pictures are separated by 75 years and the principal reason for this is that until the 1970s there were no girls at Plymouth College and until the late 1980s there were not enough girls to allow for the formation of a regular hockey team. But there is another story here, as after leaving school all the girls went on to Further Education, while all of these boys joined the Armed Services and took part in the Great War. Sadly not all of them came out the other side. In 2014 looking at the centenary of what would become restyled the First World War, I attempted to investigate the service records of the team of 1914 and found that four members of the team were killed in action, however I have since discovered that a fifth died of injuries sustained. It is a tragic testimony

to the sacrifice borne by that generation and bears no comparison with the impact of Covid, which rather than target the young and fit, has tended to afflict the old and infirm.

DH Vittle, Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex) Regiment; Captain HH Jago, mentioned in despatches, killed in action 24 April 1918; 2nd Lieut SM Williams, Sherwood Foresters, killed on 25 October; Captain JA Drake 84 Punjabis; Lieut EC Corkery, Devonshire Regiment; Flight Lieut SG Beare, RNAS, PoW, 1916 wounded; J Hussey, Naval Clerk; 2nd Lieut EA Jago, Devon Regiment, died of wounds 1 July 1916; JC Reed, Officer Cadet Battalion died soon after the war; 2nd Lieut AG Hambly, died of wounds 22 May 1917.

# FIRST REGULAR GIRLS 1ST XI 1989



*First regular girls' school hockey team: 1989 Zoe Challenor, Vicky Mohan, Kate Statton, Katherine Willis, Rachel Taylor, V Camp. Front: Penny Anstis, Kate Trenary, Linda Crocker, Sarah Powell, J Carhart*

'It all started when someone asked John Stevens why there wasn't a girl's hockey team at the school,' recalls Dr Penny Atkinson (nee Anstis). John's response was prompt:

'I suppose my wife Ann could do that.' And so it was that Plymouth College fielded it's first female hockey team that was able to sustain a season of fixtures. There had been a handful of girls in the sixth form up to that point but seemingly not enough to field a regular XI.

As it happened all of the girls went on to further education and all played hockey at University and Kathy Van Beveren (nee Wills) is still playing ... for Mannamead Ladies.

'Kate Statton,' adds Penny, 'is still living in the area. Kate Trenary went on to study nursing in Cardiff, Sarah Powell

(now Yorke ) is living in Gloucestershire and sadly Linda Crocker is no longer with us. Rachel Attack (nee Taylor) went on to become head of HR at Giggleswick School.'

Curious to learn more about the 1989 XI, we unearthed a write up in the Plymothian of the girls' first full season and it seems that they had a very successful run, crowned by winning an indoor mini-tournament against St Dunstons and Plymouth High.

Apart from narrowly losing their first encounter (of eight) which was against Plym Valley 2nds the team were unbeaten.

In their round up at the time Penny and Vicky thanked Mrs Stevens, especially for persuading Mr Stevens to get them some new kit!



# LODGE

## Report 2021



*Richard Statton's celebratory dinner*

Our January 2020 Lodge meeting would normally have included the popular social evening with partners and invited guests. Fortunately, as it turned out, uncertainties due to catering caused a postponement of the social element, which with hindsight was probably a blessing, as coronavirus was very likely already in circulation.

At our February Lodge meeting we received a fascinating presentation from W Bros Chris and Tony Banbury, both OPMs, entitled 'King Solomon's Temple : Why? When? and How?' The main purpose of this meeting was the celebration of W Bro Richard Statton's 50th year in Freemasonry and this proved to be a great evening, as the photos show. On Wednesday 26th February 2020, six OPM Brethren travelled to Bath for an overnight stay to visit the Royal Albert Edward Lodge No. 906 at the behest of W Bro

Bernard Veale who has membership of both lodges. It was an extremely interesting and convivial evening, and we hope this becomes a regular fraternal visit in the years ahead. Due to the virus, our lodge meetings in March, April and May were officially suspended, but in order to remain in touch, a number of members met regularly on Zoom, under the chairmanship of our WM, W Bro Colin Gale.

Our Lodge meetings which would normally have occurred in September and October were 'abandoned' and from November 5th, all masonic meetings were again officially suspended nationally by the Grand Master. However, our Zoom meetings continued on a regular monthly basis and the Lodge donated a total of £2,100 to charity during this uncertain period. W Bro Colin Gale remains Master of the Lodge until October 2021.



Colin Gale's team

The Lodge will be 75 years old In September 2021 and we hope to celebrate and at the same time recommence our regular Lodge meetings. Other notable anniversaries include W Bro Bill Daw who clocked up 50 years membership of Freemasonry, joining on 2nd February 1971, and Bro Geoff Martin who will amazingly celebrate his 70th year, having joined on 6th June 1951. Hearty congratulations to both and celebrations to follow.

The OPM Lodge meets at Manadon

Masonic Hall, Smallack Drive, Crownhill, Plymouth at 6.45pm on the third Wednesday in each month, except June, July, August and December. Our monthly meetings are followed by a formal dinner (Festive Board), and this is always a very sociable part of the evening, despite any virus restrictions which may have to be observed in future. Membership requirements for our Lodge are no longer restricted solely to former pupils and masters. If you have a connection with Plymouth College, St Dunstan's and/or the OPM Club we would be pleased to hear from you.

If you are interested in the work of the Lodge, further information without obligation can be obtained from the Secretary, Steve Welsh ([secretary@opmlodge6279.co.uk](mailto:secretary@opmlodge6279.co.uk)), the Membership Officer, Brendan Brookshaw ([cadebrook@gmail.com](mailto:cadebrook@gmail.com)) or any of the members.



**Tom WALDOCK**

15 January 1934 - May 2020

**Master 1958-1995**

In 1995 Chris Compton wrote the following tribute to Tom on his retirement: For many years Tom Waldock and Plymouth College formed one of those seemingly permanent and well formed partnerships – and with Tom's retirement at the end of the summer term 1995 Plymouth College will never be quite the same.

Tom joined the college in 1958 and during his time took on a number of roles. For example he was housemaster in charge of Colson boarding house for 12 years in the 70s and 80s. However, I am sure that many will remember him as an absolutely first rate teacher of mathematics and as a tutor. He had the reputation of being very careful, caring and thorough.

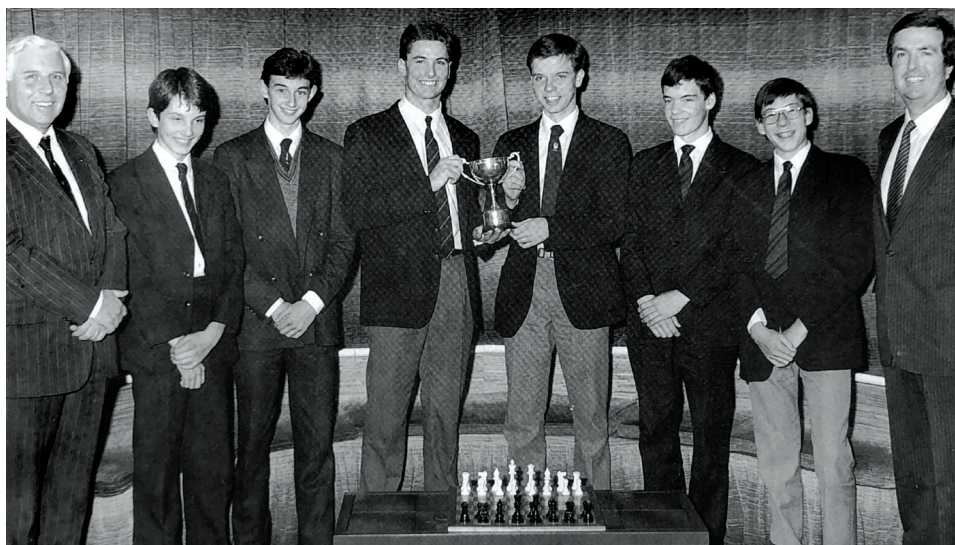
His contribution on the games field was exemplary. Many will know of his passion for cricket and in recent years he continued to find the time and of course the enthusiasm to continue to run the second XI cricket and the under 13 rugby teams. And then there is the chess team.

In the mathematics department we enjoyed the company of a friendly, generous and most supportive colleague and one who was rather an expert on statistics – who always seemed most in his element when confronted with facts and figures.

So during Tom's 37 years here, many spent in room eight, we estimate that he will have taught some 2,300 pupils, that the under 13s will have scored around 17,000 points, the chess team made 46,000 moves and the second XI scored some 49,000 runs.

I am not sure which of Tom's recollections of life at Plymouth College he holds most dear. It could well be in 1986 when after many years of getting so near, the chess team won the *Sunday Times* National School's Chess championship. I am sure that many will recall the excellent photograph of Tom with winning team which for a number of years hung in the old school office. I know that all colleagues and former pupils will certainly join me in wishing Monica and Tom a very happy and thoroughly well deserved retirement. In fact for one year Tom is just semi-retired as he has very kindly agreed to return to see one upper sixth set through to their A levels – a response which is typical





of his generosity. I am sure that now he will be able to spend a bit more time listening to or even watching the odd test match, or spend more time in France, or gently continuing his research into win – or rather all three of these and more!

Over the next 25 years Tom enjoyed a lasting relationship with the school, cricket, the OPMs and St Andrew's

Church. A familiar figure in an umpire's coat in later years he attended many dinners and most cricket week lunches.

Following news of Tom's death last May the reaction of Facebook saw an outpouring of respect and affection from dozens of OPMs, few more moving than that from Julius Attwood:

'How very sad. When I joined Mr Waldock's



class, my maths was really poor. I had stopped engaging with the subject and drifted so much that it felt impossible to 'come back', even if I wanted to. This man changed all of that, and I ended up with a 1st in Biochemistry which required a lot of Maths. This lovely, smart, engaging and gentle man was the turning point for me.' Meanwhile Ash Strelling posted: 'He got me through my maths which was a considerable achievement. Great teacher.'

David Waudby West posted: 'Always spoke so intelligently, thoughtfully and kindly to me throughout my time at school. A super teacher.'

Bryn Williams added.

Great guy. No, let's go further, inspirational..It was supposed to be Maths but he was much more and kept you on your toes, and thinking, all the time. My introduction to high energy, high clock speed approach to life and rugby too. Thoughts to Monica.'

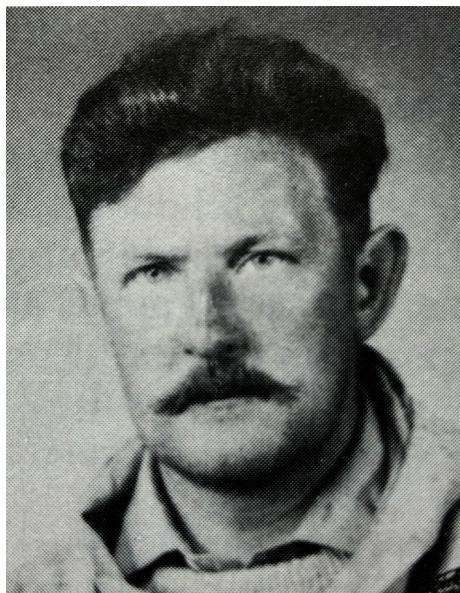
NB A memorial service is planned for this year.



## Eric FELL

10 July 1928 - 30 April 2020

**Master 1961-1989**



Following Eric's retirement in 1989, the late Frank Jeffery produced this tribute for the *Plymothian*.

During the war years Eric was at King Edward's VI School in Aston. Upon leaving he read German at Birmingham University, extending his studies by spending a year each at the universities of Berne and Cologne. After graduation and obtaining his diploma he entered the RAF for his national service, becoming a flying officer in the education branch.

In 1952 he began his teaching career at Five Ways School in Birmingham, moving to Plymouth College in September 1961. He was appointed to teach German through the school upon the retirement of Dr Ellinger. In joining the modern languages department,

headed by Mr Trevana, he became part of a group holding high ideals not only in subject teaching, but for intellect and humanity. He felt at home.

Being a dedicated teacher Eric saw his task as much more than the classroom work and he immediately immersed himself in a wide range of activities. In the 60s the school had a scout troop and he was more than happy to give them the benefit of his years of experience of outdoor youth organisations. Later he translated the necessary qualities into his work with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. When he came to Ford Park it was taken for granted that a member of staff would spend at least one afternoon each week looking after a game. Eric's energetic participation, strengthened by the joys of turning out for common room sides, stood him in good stead when he became housemaster of Palmers – his record of support for house teams has been second to none.

As a housemaster he revelled in being able to bring into play his natural sympathy and concern for those in his charge, these same qualities being manifest in his time in the classroom. Eric was also active in less public ways, for he was not one to seek the limelight (though I shall always cherish his musical Indian clubs routine at a Christmas concert in the days long ago when the old gym was their venue). Few will have realised the importance of his contribution across all departments in controlling the purchase and distribution of stationery requisites ranging from books and paper, through projection needs, to string and razor blades. The smooth functioning of the school from

period to period has owed much to his efficiency in looking after the major budget area. Additionally, over recent years he has been an examiner for Cambridge.

When a schoolmaster sends his children to his own school it is a great compliment to the place, for it is not always easy for parent and offspring to function together – and despite comments about a blinkered profession, teachers do have a most realistic appraisal of the organisation in which they function. Both of Eric's sons came to the college, were achievers and have moved on into responsible careers. Outside school Eric Fell has played a major behind-the-scenes role in encouraging and guiding the funding of youth organisations throughout the city. He finds some of his relaxation in wood carving and, typical of the man, his animals and figures have a natural repose that conveys a more acceptable message for many of us than the contorted and tortured images that often seem to be the vogue.

Personal responsibility and compassion for others are important principles in his philosophy and his pupils will be grateful over the years for the way he has opened their minds to the world about them.

In all that Eric Fell has done for the school and its pupils, as well as in his general activities inside and outside the campus, he has been strongly supported by his wife, Helen. We are grateful for all they have contributed. May they have a contented and happy retirement – we can be certain that their activities and travel will continue to be leavened by service to others.



# Alan Charles Tregay SCOTT

30 March 1926 - 9 November 2020

**1933-43**



*Extracts from a tribute by Alan's daughter Lindsey:*

Alan leaves behind his wife, Vivienne and his two children Michael (1965-73) and Lindsey. Alan also leaves four grandchildren: Christopher,

David, Emma and Sophie and three great grand children; Dexter, Blake and Jagger. He also leaves behind two neices, Frances (married to Club Chairman, Bob Foulkes) and Judith. We have had many condolence cards and kind messages from many people and they share one common theme: what a good friend Alan was; his happy face always smiling and a twinkle in his eye. What fun he was. What a lovely man, what a wonderful man.

Alan survived being born a premature baby in 1926. He attended both Plymouth College prep and the main school. He was keen on sport and that continued throughout his life: playing rugby at Plymouth College for the first fifteen and golf throughout much of his adult life at Yelverton and stepping up to be the co-captain of the Rising Sun golf team where he socialised.

He shared his passion for sport with others and took Michael's entire class at the prep school to organised swimming once a week.

Alan was also a fire watcher at Plymouth College, as the Blitz hit the city of Plymouth, his job was to spot fires burning in the city so help could be directed to the unfortunates who had been struck by the bombing.

Alan volunteered to serve in the second world war and trained with the Royal Signal Corps at Skapa Flow in Scotland. He was posted to Italy in 1944 as part of the Allied Invasion towards the end of WW2 as



1943 School 1st XV: Back: R Brazier, D McDonald, JDW Kellaway, CCA Quick, RK Warne, IM Clarke, R Pratt. Seated: AH Lawrence, RL Turner, JE Easton, JF Spear, ACT Scott. Front: BAL Johnson, JD Berryman

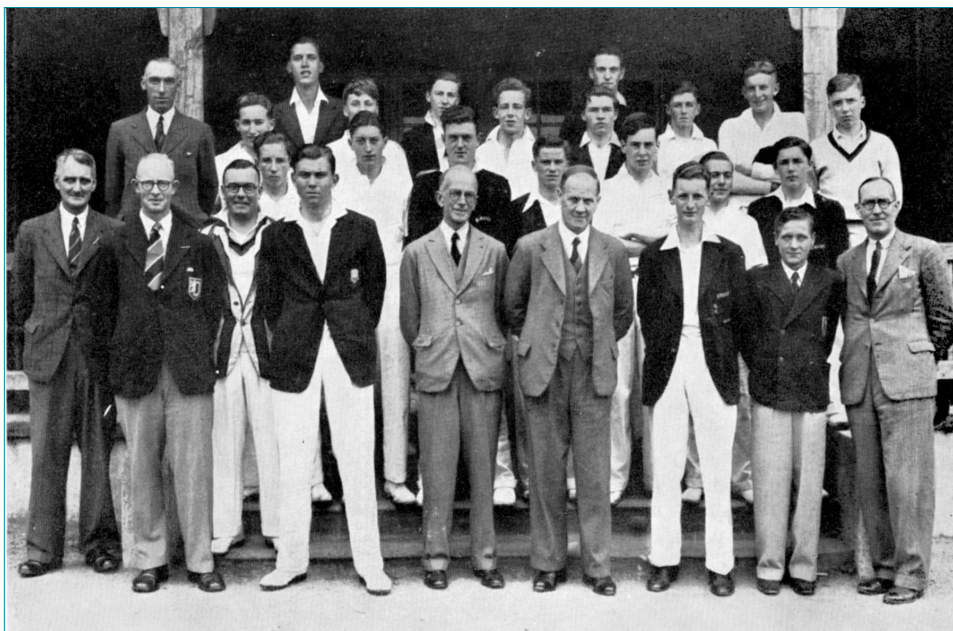
a signalman in the First Skinners Horse regiment and crossed into Austria as the war ended and celebrated VE Day there.

After the war, Alan was then posted to India where he served until the Indian Partition in August 1947. He was mainly stationed at Rawlpindi and genuinely seemed to enjoy it. As partition day loomed, Alan travelled to Dehli where he witnessed the chaos from the breakdown of order, as the nation separated.

During his life, he was part of some very crucial twentieth century events. Upon returning to England, he worked in his father's tailoring business and married Vivienne in 1951 who he had

known from his school days. They were married at a time when England was recovering from the war and took a trip to London to the Royal Festival Hall South Bank exhibition, where they purchased some things for their new home in Reddington Road.

Family life with Michael and Lindsey was built around doing things together: walks with the family dog; going to the beach on Sundays with friends, taking a picnic that he would carry over the sand dunes; the day involving swimming or body board surfing. Alan taught both Michael and Lindsey to swim and to really enjoy the local waters. He enjoyed settling down to the Sunday tea trolley and watching



*The Past V Present teams line up (below right) for their game on 24 July 1943. Back row; Pro Heywood, George Wolfe, Ken Wilcox, Nobby Clarke, Alan Scott, Basil Andrew, Brian Williams, Ken Clarke, Ron Turner, Geoff Johnson, John Kellaway, John Reid, John Wynton, Eric Gould, John Hamley and Godfrey Heywood. Front row, John Duffton, Wilf Savage, George Wakeham, PT Kevern, RR Brown (Governor), Herbert Ralph (Headmaster), Cyril Lyon, Stafford Jackson and Eric Holman.- all players and staff apart from the Head, Eric Holman and Pro. Heywood were OPMs).*

'Thunderbirds' with the family. Alan also enjoyed watching the news and sport and listening to classical music. He was a very supportive family man and helped in every way as much as he could: from gardening to helping with homework and even helping with mechanical car problems. He was as generous as he could possibly be and he was truly empathetic and understanding.

Alan had a career change and worked for the Civil Service until he retired in 1992. He lived a very full retirement with great relationships with his four grandchildren. While Lindsey worked in London after Sophie was born, Alan

made it clear to her that he would help unconditionally at anytime, when he was needed. He was always there to help in any way he could and he was committed to looking after Sophie and she has some very happy memories of her time spent with him. He was a very loving and caring person. He made the most of these trips and regularly visited the Army museum in Royal Hospital Road and would return with memories of his service years.

As he grew in age, he also grew in wisdom. He told me that 'life is for living' and on certain days I reflect on this.



# Robert A Burchell

1941 - May 2020

1952-1960



*RA Burchell, awarded an Open Major Scholarship of £100 in Hlstory at Exeter College, Oxford 1960*

My friend and former colleague Robert Burchell, who has died aged 79, was a historian of the US whose career saw a huge growth in the subject's popularity in the UK. He was professor of American history at the University of Manchester and the first director of the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library. Born in Plymouth, Bob was the son of Lucy (nee Symons) and Arthur Burchell, an electrician at the Devonport submarine base. His earliest memories were of South Africa, where the family moved for a few years after being bombed out during the second world war. Returning home, he attended Plymouth College and won a place at Oxford to study modern history, graduating in 1963. He then spent a year at the University of California, Berkeley. After two years as a senior scholar at Queen's College, Oxford, in 1965 he became a lecturer at the University of Manchester, where he was eventually appointed professor in American history. For a decade from 1981 he supported the British Association for American Studies in

efforts to expand the study of US history in the UK, becoming its chair in 1987. In 1991 he became the first director of the Eccles Centre, retiring in 2001. Eventually Bob would visit all save two of the US states but California had a special allure: his most important book, *The San Francisco Irish, 1848-1880* (1979), combined statistical data with personal accounts to reveal how Irish immigrants adapted surprisingly well to life on the Pacific coast. A master of statistical methods, he published a number of closely researched articles challenging standard interpretations of American elections and immigration patterns. He also worked with the US embassy and the Fulbright Commission to fund visiting academic fellowships in the UK and US and to improve resources for libraries. A serious scholar and challenging, occasionally sardonic, teacher, Bob also excelled in administration. He was a tall man, and used his height, wit and political nous to commanding effect. Bob collected china, glass and Penguin books, and was very private: layers of irony, affected detachment and gloriously ribald stories were a shield. He could appear forbidding, but his wide circle of friends appreciated his kindness and loyalty. His cultivated eccentricity left a vivid impression – as when, his car once having broken down on the open road, he left it there for good, to the relief of his passengers.

In 2006 Bob entered into a civil partnership with Stephen Torr.

He is survived by Stephen, his nephew, Matthew, niece, Becky, great-niece, Davey, and great-nephew, Jarrah. His brother, David, predeceased him.

Tribute by Richard Cawardine from *the Guardian*

# Michael Humphrey Connal CATHER

1923 – 18 November 2020

1937-41



Connal Cather passed away aged 97 in November; our thoughts are with his wife Rosemary and large family at this time. He will be sadly missed. He joined the MGCC in 1949 and was the last living Founder member of the Devon and Cornwall Centre, formed in 1952, being an active committee member or official for many years. He was very competitive, entering all

kinds of Centre events, particularly Rallies. Connal will probably be remembered by older members for his immaculate MG 1300, entering the Riviera Run well into his 90's. He, unsurprisingly, to those who knew him, arranged his own funeral before his death. He wanted the MGCC to be present at his funeral and I was invited by his widow Rosemary to be one of the 30 guests allowed at his funeral held in Emmanuel Church and also streamed live.

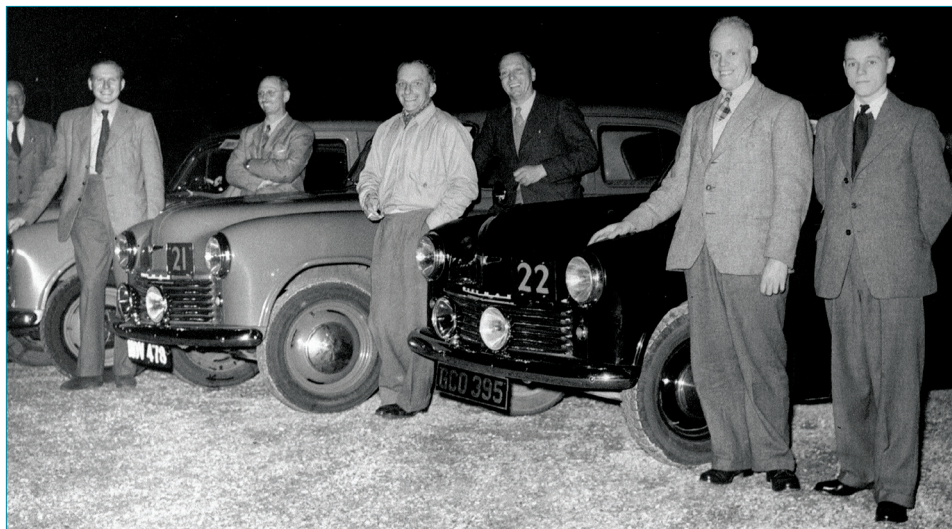
The typical officer and a gentlemen, he was always polite, well organised and had a reputation for the cleanest car in the street.

After attending Plymouth College he joined the RASC and saw action in Europe and Singapore, leaving with the rank of Captain. After the war he joined the motor trade and while working for AC Turners met his wife, who was a customer, and they were married for 66 years.

Later in life, disenchanted with the motor trade, he set up his own private detective agency which he ran until he retired.

For 40 years he was the voice of Hospital Radio with a show of dance band music from the 20s, 30s and 40s until he retired in 2015. He was also a dedicated fund raiser for the British Legion.

*Tribute by Peter Heath, MG Car Club*



1954 Connal Cather, Service Manager, Turners (2nd from left) on the Hoe with PMC (Plymouth Motor Club!)

In another tribute that appeared in the *Plymouth Chronicle*, Hospital Radio Station manager, Keith Jolley noted that Connal had been a part of the station since the 1970s and, over the years, had worked with many volunteers on his show 'Nostalgia Time.'

'Connal was a true legend. Over the years, many new members started out as a production assistant on his show. 'Although dealing with music made way before they were born and which they were unfamiliar with, they came to enjoy the music and the warm style of Connal's presentation.'

Hospital Radio Plymouth president Andrew Hill delivered the eulogy at Connal's funeral, and said: 'Connal's dedication to hospital radio and his enthusiasm for his programmes was remarkable. He was an inspiration to us all.

'We shall be forever grateful for the chance meeting he had in a pub on the Barbican with station founder Jimmie Constable in 1970, which was

the catalyst for him taking up such an enduring involvement with hospital radio and presenting programmes enjoyed by so many over the decades.' Josh Andrews, who now presents a show for Capital FM South Wales, said: 'Connal was the very first presenter to trust me to produce his programme and what an honour it was.

'He was a really lovely man, full of warmth, patience and encouragement. My earliest radio memories are of working for him and learning from a true radio great!'

Connal was awarded Honorary Membership of Hospital Radio Plymouth in recognition of his ongoing dedication to the charity, and in 2008 was the recipient of the Hospital Broadcasting Association's John Whitney Award, given to an individual who has demonstrated an outstanding contribution to hospital radio over a period of years.



## Greg SERPELL

16 January 1947 - 20 May 2020

**1952-1966**

Andrew Gregory Serpell's grandfather, Charles, was one of the early cohort of pupils at Ford Park, joining the school in 1880. His father, Roger, and uncle, David, also passed through the school and both grandfather and father served the school in a senior administrative capacity long after leaving. When Greg joined the Prep in 1952 there began a third generational connection and one that would be followed some years later by the admission of Greg's son James in 1990.

Such is not to assume that Greg had a particularly deep affection for the college, but he did acknowledge that it served him well.

Although not an especially keen rugby player or indeed cricketer, he did enjoy running and college cross country conferred an enduring contentment that saw him run a couple of Plymouth marathons in later years.

A classicist at school he read law at Southampton with a eye to joining the family firm of Serpell, Son & Davey on qualification. Examinations, despite some success at school, were not a strong point and further studies in London and Guildford were necessary before, after five attempts, he achieved success across the board in his legal studies.

Having done his time as an articled clerk in Winchester, he eventually ended up back in Plymouth with SS&D (later absorbed into Foot Anstey). Never overly comfortably in court, Greg, found himself a role as client



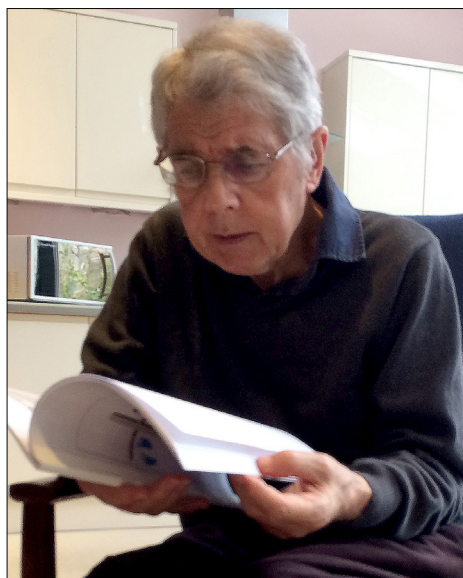
friendly solicitor. Very much a people person, it had been while he was at Southampton that Greg had become a committed Christian and, back in Plymouth, he soon found himself involved in a variety of local initiatives.

Through his involvement in setting up soup runs he became involved with the Bath Street Mission – later the Shekinah Mission. At Emmanuel Church, where he'd been a happy boy scout, he became an inspiring youth leader and it was there, in the mid-1970s, that he met, Ginny Drake.

Ginny was a local lass and in 1977 the two were married – at Emmanuel. Children James and Anna arrived soon



after and later still three grandchildren – Naomi, Joshua and Theo. A happy family man and working man, Greg was forced into early retirement at the age of 62 when he fell foul of that insidious illness that is Parkinsons. He died last year after a slowly debilitating decade that took its toll on his health, but not his sense of humour. Death coming during the first lockdown of 2020 meant that Greg's funeral was inevitably a most modest affair, just eight people, including the rector. His brothers Nicholas and Stephen were stuck in Australia and Suffolk respectively, however Ginny still hopes to host celebration of his life when this third lockdown ends.



**Malcolm HAGGART**

1956 - 29 November 2020

**1965-75**

Malcolm went into the family firm of Fox & Haggart, Marine Engineers soon after leaving school and having qualified as a Mechanical Engineer. The firm then was based at 12 Vauxhall Street where it had been since its establishment in 1932. On the deaths of the two founders, Andrew Tait Haggart and Arthur Hole Fox in the mid-1950s, Malcolm's uncle, Andrew, and father, David, took over the business. Malcolm took on his father's role when his father collapsed and died at work in 1984. Then when his uncle retired in 1991 Malcolm became the sole owner. The business moved from Vauxhall Street a few years later. Around 2008-2012 Malcolm generated a certain amount of unwanted press coverage over non-business related allegations that saw him in court answering charges that were ultimately thrown out by the court. However comments made by Malcolm regarding the story in the local press saw the paper win a key case defending freedom of speech and the right to protect its sources of information.

Malcolm died peacefully on 29 November 2020, he was just 64. He leaves behind two children, two grandchildren, a sister, a niece and a nephew.



# Owen WALTERS

1942 - February 2021

**1952-58**

Owen Walters went to the Prep and the Main School leaving the latter in 1958. On leaving he got a civilian job with the Armed Forces which saw him working for a number of years in Mönchengladbach, West of the Rhine, in Germany, near the Dutch border. When he eventually returned he secured a job in Devonport Dockyard and worked there, in IT, until retirement. An immovable prop forward Owen was a stalwart of the OPM rugby fraternity and helped found the OPM 2<sup>nd</sup> XV in his youth. He continued playing the game long past the normal cut-off point and enjoyed playing veterans rugby for many years. He would travel far and wide, including back to Germany, to play. His golden shorts were a signal to all that here was someone you couldn't tackle! A keen attendee of the Munich Beer Festival, Owen was also a regular on the list of those who appeared at OPM functions and he seldom missed a dinner, a dine-in or a lunch. He was also, beyond his playing days, an ardent supporter of OPM rugby generally and he and his dog Oscar were touchline fixtures. After a game Owen would invariably be there to help Ash out behind the bar. 'He was the true clubman, the one you could always rely on to do the things no one else wanted to do,' observed fellow OPM veteran Ed Keast.



Two years ago Owen suffered a stroke and was in a coma for a couple of weeks. Although a little confused at first he bounced back remarkably and few would have known the ordeal he had been through. Owen lost his wife a few years ago, and then, a few months ago, he lost his much-loved, four-legged faithful friend, Oscar. He died this year and leaves a daughter who lives locally.

**Howell PHILLIPS**

1951-2020



It is with great sadness that OPM RFC would like to add a tribute to the recent passing of Howell Phillips. The rugby community has paused in respect to a man who provided so much to both the local school and club rugby community and dedicated his life to improving players of all levels and standards. Many will know Howell's no nonsense approach to coaching, meticulous in his style and with the fantastic Welsh tones that ensured you knew if he was happy (or not!) with what you had done on the training or playing pitch. With that

though, there was always a terrific drive to improve individuals and the team as a whole and there will certainly be not one player who wouldn't have undertaken a place and face drill, his signature for all grades of rugby. The Plabanec tour lives long in the memory with 40 tourists donning bald caps and doing 'place and face' drills to the bewildered Frenchmen whilst allowing the Team to work down the pitch and allow Rhys to score an epic try!!!

Howell coached OPMs in the mid-2000s ensuring that the players and

club developed and improved so he has a close link with the club and many of the more senior players, past and present. His son, Rhys, was one of the original 'Young Bucks' of the South Africa Tour and is still a regular player today and is his granddaughter who is now in the OPM Junior U6s. Rhys has been involved since the initial news that Howell had become unwell, with a huge array of charity events and fundraising activities including the huge success of the charity rugby match in Howell's honour and his recent Triple H challenge which in itself was a fantastic achievement and ode to a great man. Howell's love for rugby; be it national, regional or local was second to none and inspiring to watch. Even in the last year and before the COVID pandemic,

Howell would be brought down in his wheelchair come rain or shine, to watch Rhys and the boys play and enjoy a well-earned pint (especially after having to watch some of our games!) in the bar afterwards.

To a terrific man who loved the game, his family and all things Welsh. We would like to extend the OPM family condolences to Rhys, Gillian, Bethan and all of the Phillips family and as always offer to provide any support we can at this difficult time. As we are unable to play matches currently, a minutes silence will be held for Howell at our next training session to pay our respects from the OPM Family.

A fantastic man and sure we will see you at the bar one day again.

*Matt Glastonbury*

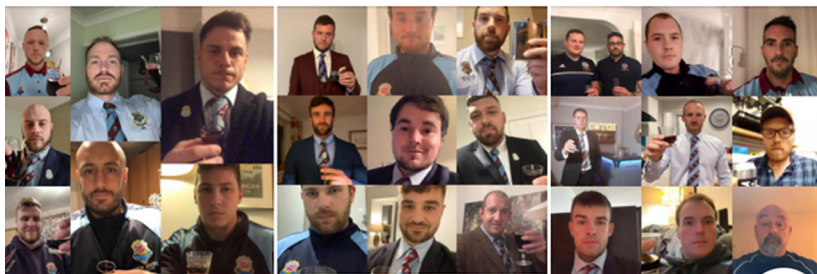
This evening at 1926 OPMRFC raised a glass to the legend that was Howell Phillips. A man known by many and an absolute legend to the rugby community.

Thoughts go out to Howell's family and friends at this sad time. Although he may be gone he will never be forgotten.

Hwyl fawr Howell.

There are good ships there are wood ships,  
Ships that sail the sea,  
But the best ships are friendships,  
And may the always be.

To Howell 🍷

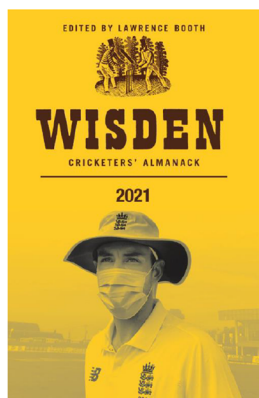




# A CURIOUS CONSEQUENCE OF COVID

## Wisden Cricketers' Almanack 2021

158<sup>th</sup> Edition, Published 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021



## WISDEN NAMES ITS BEST SCHOOLS CRICKETER FOR EVERY YEAR BACK TO 1900

Retrospective winners include:

- Nine England Test captains, including Peter May, Colin Cowdrey, Mike Atherton and Alastair Cook
- Liam Botham, son of Ian
- 28 Test cricketers, including John Cameron (West Indies), the Nawab of Pataudi (India) and Bazid Khan (Pakistan)
- Two pairs of father and son: Colin and Chris Cowdrey, and Jack and Rob Leiper
- One pair of brothers: Mark and John Crawley

Attached to this release is an alphabetical list of all the schools who have winners, plus the full list of Wisden Schools Cricketers of the Year from 1900 to 2019.

Here's a story to warm the hearts of all those with a love of the English game. Late last year I was forwarded an email via the school, from Steven Lynch who was looking to track down 'an old boy of Plymouth College for a feature in next year's Wisden Cricketers' Almanack.

'The man in question took 70 wickets for the school in 1980 – and then seems to fall off the cricket radar completely. There's no record of him playing county cricket, or for any senior club.'

As it happened, like the school, I didn't have any up to date contact details for the man in question, but happily our then club data base guru, Jazmin (Buxton), did and so I managed to find an email address for him.

So it was that one lockdown evening in November I pinged off an email and, much to my delight, had a reply within the hour.

'Yes I would certainly be interested in being connected by Wisden as cricket is still very much a passion of mine and I have almost 50 Wisden annuals on my bookshelf. I have very fond memories of my cricketing schooldays and played at a fairly high level then alongside people like Jack Russell!

'Unfortunately I stopped playing cricket seriously and regularly soon after I qualified as a junior doctor due to the pressures of work but have plans to take it up again when I retire in a few years time! You mention the Covid impact and it certainly has had a professional one on me as I work as a GP one day a week and for the other four days I chair the local CCG (clinical commissioning group) in Gloucestershire; right now numbers are right up once again.'

Now the reason Wisden were interested in this particular OPM was that they

were struggling to fill the pages of their esteemed annual on account of there being so little cricket to write about last year.

As Robert Winder explains in what has become a major feature in the 2021 edition:

'In 2007, Wisden introduced a new award: the Schools Cricketer of the Year.

'The selectors had clear eyes: the first winner was Jonny Bairstow, the second James Taylor, the third Jos Buttler. It had long been known that serious cricket talent tended to reveal itself at a young age. Here was proof.

'In the Covid-hit season of 2020, the Almanack decided to delve into its archives and compile a list of those who might have been earlier winners, from 1900 on. There followed much sifting, weighing, debating and selecting.

'Clearly, future glories were irrelevant. But how to cope with so many variables – the weather, the strength of a fixture list, the quality of the square, changes in format, the shifting nature of the game itself? What was the balance between runs and wickets? A century ago, 80 wickets might equate to 1,000 runs; today, with bowling restrictions, especially for seamers, a 50-wicket season is a rare beast. And what should be made of eye-witness testimony? In the end, the judges relied chiefly on numbers, given the impracticality of juggling those considerations.'

And so it was that for the summer of 1980 their focus had fallen on a young man who had topped the school batting averages with a relatively modest tally of 342 runs (highest score 87 ave 28.5) but had rather more spectacularly topped

the bowling averages with a haul of 70 wickets at an average of 8.4 per wicket. The tally included three hat-tricks five fivefers, and 6-21.

That young man was Andrew Seymour and he still had another year to spend at Ford Park. Across the summer of 1981 Andrew captained the 1st XI and took another 59 wickets for less than ten runs apiece. Small wonder that the year end TJS RVF cricket report noted that 'he would be difficult to replace.'

It is a shame that no post school team was able to tear him away from his professional responsibilities, but it's interesting to hear that he plans to resume playing upon retirement.

Furthermore if he's blessed with the sort of genes that one of his patients possessed who knows what sort of contribution he may still be able to make.

In a later email Andrew, who lives in Gloucestershire, wrote: 'Knowing your interest in OPM 'things' and that you are aware of my medical background, you might be amused to know that one of the OPMs who lived to a grand old age, Ralph Hoare, who unfortunately recently died aged 110, was a patient of mine! 'Whenever I used to see Ralph he would greet me with the first line of the school song!' What are the chances!

Meanwhile spare a thought for a young man who loved his schoolboy cricket, who had the best part of 50 Wisden Almanacks and who now, over 40 years later, has his own special place in that ultimate record of records, as the Best Schools Cricketer of 1980. How wonderful is that?! And how great is it to see Plymouth College represented in that way.

# OPM CRICKET



**OPM CRICKET LUNCH**  
**Friday 29 July**  
**12.30 for 1pm**

Tickets Contact  
[alumni@plymouthcollege.com](mailto:alumni@plymouthcollege.com)  
or Sharon Lambie on 01752 505104



# WEEK 2021



**CRICKET WEEK 2021**  
**Mon 22 - Fri 29 July**  
**5 GAMES 5 DAYS**

To play: Contact Chris Vinson  
07866 616956

**Bar open daily 2pm**

OPM BEER FESTIVAL  
& CRICKET WEEK





# HOCKEY

*Liam Jonas*

As with every other section of the OPM club and indeed every other sporting side up and down the country the hockey season took a huge hit last year. The official notice from the league read as follows:

Following a meeting of the league committee on Wednesday 3rd February it has been determined that,

with the exception of the Premier division, the league 20/21 season be abandoned. This follows clear feedback via a survey which the league conducted with clubs that this was the preferred option. The league administrator will be in contact with clubs to arrange a full refund of subscriptions paid for the season.





Separate communications will follow to club league liaison officers about the potential to take part in a separate 'one off' competition (subject to restrictions allowing). There will also be separate communications with those teams in the premier division to explain how the season will be concluded. This will build on the majority view of the separate premier division survey conducted.

League subscription refunds will also be issued to premier division teams. The five teams have played a handful of competitive games as restrictions allow, with all teams doing well in the respective leagues until the organisers took the difficult but inevitable decision to abandon the season. This has not stopped the teams from playing some outstanding and enjoyable hockey,



*Drinking*



## SPORT

producing excellent results and cementing our reputation as a club of high quality hockey played in a friendly and inclusive environment. We continue to grow as a club and are welcoming new and returning hockey players at a series of recent sessions delivered by the club to encourage those of all abilities and experience to pickup a stick.

With the easing of restrictions we have organised a series of club nights with friendly and competitive intra-club games being played as well a handful of friendlies against other clubs in Plymouth. We are hopeful this is a sign of things to come as we return to the sport we love and look forward to a summer of hockey as the mixed hockey





season begins in mid-May. I would like to take the opportunity to recognise the outstanding efforts of the OPM Hockey Committee who have responded to very difficult and frequently changing circumstances with incredible effort, resilience and ingenuity, meaning that our members have been able to play as much hockey as possible, as restrictions have allowed. We are hoping for a full return to the regular season in 2021-22.



OPM HOCKEY

## GETTING FIT CAN BE FUN!!



ANY ABILITY  
WELCOME  
MINIMUM AGE 13  
YRS  
NO MAXIMUM!

### EVER TRIED HOCKEY?

3 Mens Teams & 2 Ladies Teams

MEN - 20:00-21:30 LIPSON WEDNESDAYS  
LADIES 19:30-21:00 MARJONS THURSDAYS

CONTACT KATIE (KATIE@THE-WARRENS.ORG) FOR  
MORE INFORMATION



## Chairman's Report

As I'm sure many reports will reflect this year, OPM Rugby has been severely affected by the Coronavirus pandemic in terms of our ability to provide rugby to all, throughout the last 12 months. It has been a very long time since we were able to stage full rugby matches and is currently a distant memory. That being said, it has allowed for periods of reflection, preparation and the ability to ensure that we develop new, engaging and innovative ways to support the OPM rugby family in a fresh way to support health and wellbeing.

After a positive season for our First and Second teams last season, including fielding several Third team games and over 100 players donning the OPM jersey to get on the field, we looked to the future in good spirits for the 20/21 season.

Our Touch rugby had strong numbers and a great environment twice a week and our Juniors continued to build their numbers and age groups each year to draw us nearer to a Colts team in the near future.

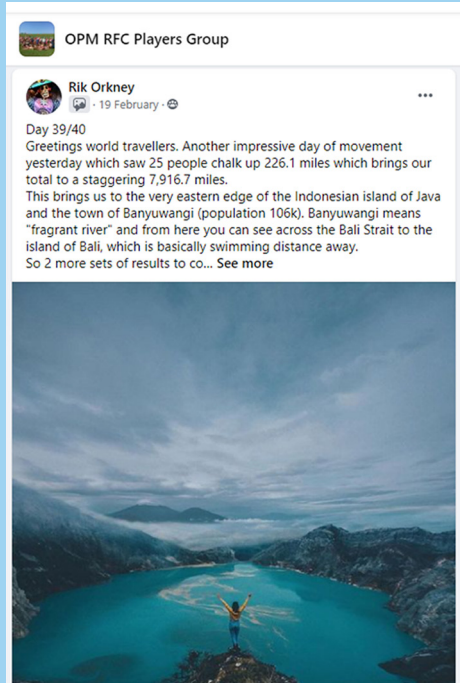
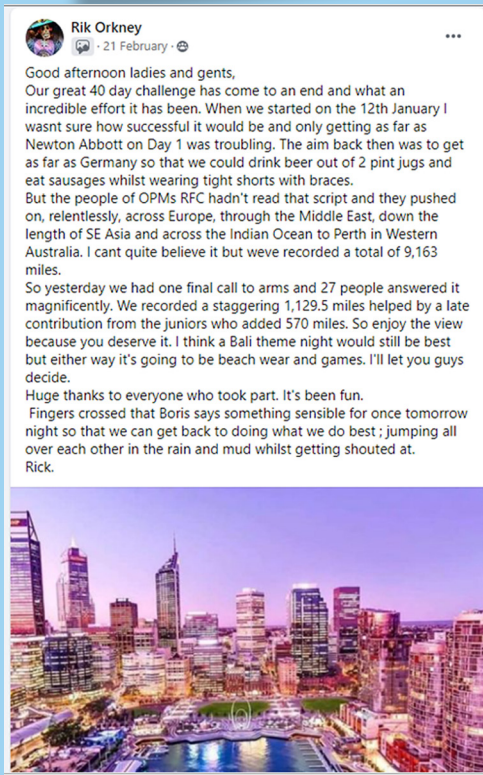
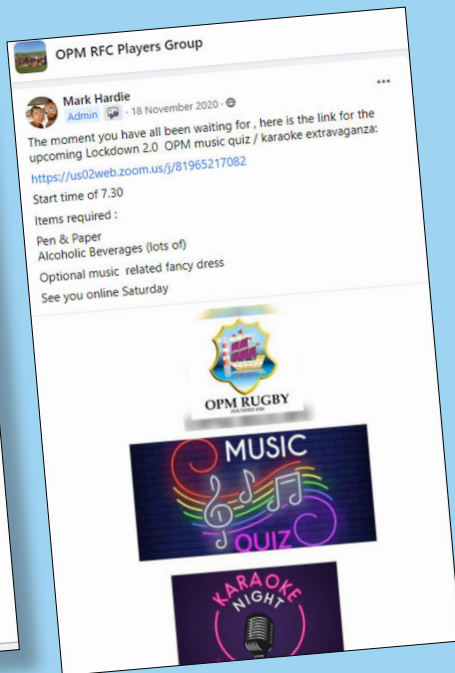
With the restrictions in our ability to provide rugby through COVID guidance comes the ability to provide positive action and the OPM rugby family have been incredible in facilitating just some of the following activities over periods of reduced activity or Lockdown:

- Coaching videos, coaching programmes and fitness support from all groups including seniors and especially our Juniors to support health and wellbeing.
- Social events have continued through Zoom calls with quizzes, games, fancy dress and much more being provided with a few

drinks as well led by Mark Hardie and John Readey in the main.

- Supported a food donation event led by Tamar Saracens to provide donations for those less fortunate before Christmas which provided over 35 boxes from OPMs out of the 150 box total donated.
  - A huge social media presence which has provided engaging posts and forums including greatest OPM Team ever, your toughest opponent, Lions Team and much more. This also provided great engagement with our past playing members who we have not heard from in years all adding to the debate!
  - One of our biggest successes was in Lockdown 3, where a virtual round the world challenge was led by Club coach, Rick Orkney, whereby total exercise miles from the members for 40 days were added with each day arriving at a new country. The whole club was involved and we completed 9,163 miles to get us to Brisbane, Australia. This was so successful it won a Nat West competition and included a message of thanks from the England players, Maro Itoje, Mako Vunipola and Will Stuart and a signed England shirt which will be framed and at the clubhouse in future.
  - An incredible End of Season virtual dinner led by Howard Turner which included tributes, speeches and virtual presentations from Peter Wheeler, Jonathon Webb, Phil De Glanville and Richard Hill ensuring our trophies were awarded in style.
- Going forward, we are pleased to confirm that we will be providing rugby to all levels from the 29th March 2021.





*Life in the virtual world, 2020-21 and OPM RFC kept spirits up and went half way around the world in the process!*

We are very excited to be able to provide rugby again following the RFU guidance and hope to be able to provide this in April and May before a full return in September. The majority of our committee, coaching teams and playing personnel will continue into next season and we are very much looking forward to being able to return to the game we all love as soon as possible.

Sad farewells have also been made in the last 12 months to Owen Walters, Howell Phillips and Jamie Clynych. All of them were true OPMs and will be sadly missed from the sidelines and at the clubhouse in future.

OPM Touch continues to develop in number and runs twice a week on a Monday and Wednesday. Regular sessions full of fun, fitness and enjoyment continue to make Touch Rugby a huge success at the club. Attendance at South West tournaments, social events and even a dedicated 6 Nations league have made for a great environment for anyone interested in attending.

Our big thanks go to Dee, Mylo, Craig, Shaun and Ernie for running this so well.

The Juniors have continued to make great strides this season before and during the COVID pandemic in increasing their numbers, providing rugby to all who are interested and age group support from coaches, parent reps and parents. We have seen some fantastic results last season and continue to be involved throughout the local rugby scene in the South West as we develop our local relationships. Training takes place on Wednesday and Thursday nights and matches are on Sundays and we would like to thank Jenny and all of the Committee, Coaches and Parent Reps for their huge efforts and dedication in making it such a success.

The OPM RFC Committee has continued to support all of the OPM family in all groups throughout the pandemic and ensured that the club continues to provide rugby where possible but also improve facilities and other areas where possible. We have continued

with the majority of committee members for this year but Peter Organ, VP Chairman, and Henry Matthews, Vice Chair, have decided to stand down after 10 and 5 years on the Committee respectively. Pete has led the Vice Presidents' efforts incredibly well and is a regular on the sidelines in ensuring that events were well attended and the club financially supported by his efforts. Henry was instrumental in many of the new projects, initiatives and a terrific link between the committee and playing members to develop the club still further. Both have always supported OPM Rugby, put a huge amount of effort into making the club what it is today and we thank them both for all of their efforts and look forward to still seeing them at the club when able.

Finally, as this year will be the 10 year anniversary of the passing of Simon Adams, our former OPM Rugby Chairman, two of our members, Matt Price and Mark Beresford-Ward will be cycling to all Premiership Rugby clubs plus a few others including Windsor and Southam. We will also be holding a 10th Anniversary Rugby Festival and MNDA Charity Dinner for our chosen charity dedicated to Simon Adams on the 9th October 2021 and we would welcome all OPMs and others to attend. This will be a celebration of Simon's life and time at OPMs through playing, supporting and developing OPM RFC, of which we are so proud, for one fantastic evening.

All information on all aspects of OPMs is available on our website [www.opmrugby.com](http://www.opmrugby.com), join our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter.

As always, this is very much a club effort and I would like to thank everyone involved: players, coaches, committee, sponsors, spectators and many more in making OPM RFC such a great club to be involved in. At such a difficult time as we have faced, I am exceptionally proud and honoured to be Chairman, not only of such a fantastic club, but of such an amazing group of people.

**Matt Glastonbury** OPM RFC – Chairman

# PLAYER RECRUITMENT OPM RFC

OLD PLYMOUTH & MANNAMEDIAN RFC

Contact

Head Coach - Rik Orkney

07875 602846

1st Team Manager - Sean Cook

07970 803354

1st Team Captain - Billy Garratt

07399 386680

## TRAINING

Thursdays 7pm @ KGV fields - Elburton

Facebook - OPM Rugby Club

Twitter - OPM\_ruby

Instagram - opmrugby

info@opmrugby.com / www.opmrugby.com





Heartening to see the following on Facebook courtesy of NatWest:



NatWest Rugby · Follow

20 March at 13:26 · 🌐

...

### Thank You OPM RFC

Thank you OPM Rugby Club! After keeping people active during lockdown, it's only right you're recognised by some of the best...

# Thank you, Old Plymothians & Mannamedians RFC



England  
Rugby

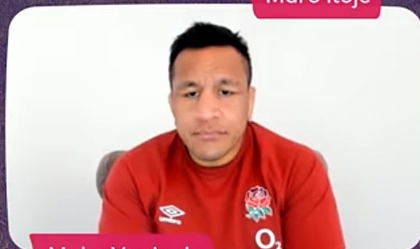


NatWest

SUPPORTING YOUR CLUB & COMMUNITY



Maro Itoje



Mako Vunipola



Will Stuart

It's Maro, Will and Mako here.



Mako Vunipola

Wishing you all the best for next season.

## Get set for **Tomorrow**

### **The Full Text:**

Hi OPM RFC, it's **Maro** (Itoje), Will (Stuart) and Mako (Vunipola) here.

We've been hearing lots about what you've been up to this year, and we just want to say a massive, thank you.

You guys have been doing an amazing job actively promoting health and well being by providing online coaching fitness and social events which is so important during this time.

### **Will:**

We're also really impressed by your activity challenge where you totalled up miles each day through activities including walking, running, bike rides and more, for 40 days of lockdown.

### **Mako:**

It's great to know that you got all your club members involved in activities during this tough year and you were there to support the community. Wishing you all the best for next season.



It will come as no surprise that rugby has taken a side-line due to the events of the last year, so not much on the rugby front to report. After a successful year last year, we started with another successful turn out, numbers increasing, and some games played prior to the first lockdown. All the groups managed to have a game or two before we followed the government guidelines to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. By doing that we all played our part in helping in this global pandemic. Little did we know then that 12 months on, we would still be waiting on a proper return to rugby.

We improvised for our presentation evening and went virtual. The coaches videoed their speeches, and we put together presentations on social media for all the age groups. A celebration of all our players and how proud we are of them. Virtually was the way we were able to keep in touch with our players and parents throughout the lockdowns and provided all the updates and information when we could.

Community input was so important during lockdown, we arranged a collection for

Plymouth Foodbank during October half term, to help those that needed it during the school holidays. This was very well supported by all the Juniors, and we delivered a substantial amount of food and toiletries to them.

We joined the seniors for a lockdown challenge, run, walk or cycle to see how many miles we could do and how far we could get. The juniors contributed 1856 miles to the final total, which was a fantastic effort, and kept the fitness up too.

We are now returning to rugby for what I hope is for good! If you know any children wanting to give rugby a try then send them our way, and they can join us as we continue to build our club and provide enjoyable rugby.

Thank you to all the OPM rugby family for staying with us through a very topsy turvy year, and to the coaches and volunteers for adjusting to lots of changes so that we can return to rugby safely. Fingers crossed for a positive future for everyone, and maybe see you pitch side!

*Jenny Trinder*