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EDITORIAL



Committee members Bob Foulkes, Peter Lowson, David Hardy, Nick Holman, Jason Sweeny, Jayne Logan, Jim Griffin and Chris Robinson at the Autumn dinner.

Last year's editorial was written at the end of the week that saw the new Labour Government take office under Keir Starmer and contained the foreboding sentence: 'It portends a potentially interesting time for Plymouth College if Keir Starmer sticks to his agenda on private education.' In the event he lost little time pursuing that path. On 27 June 2024 Labour announced that from 1 January 2025 VAT would be introduced on private school fees at the standard rate of 20%. This went hand in hand with all 2,421 English private schools losing their charitable status. Added to this, as of 6 April 2025 the rate of employer's National Insurance Contribution increased from 13.8% to 15%, a considerable jump for any employer particularly when employees account for the bulk of your turnover and that

was already nudging something like £10 million per annum.

So it was that a potentially modest annual surplus of something in the low hundreds of thousands was in danger of being turned into deficit overnight. Clearly the future did not look sustainable, hence the decision by the Plymouth College board of governors to take up an offer from Global Galaxy, a multinational company that already had a number of schools on its books, several of them in the UK.

Run by Chinese educator and philanthropist Shangmei Gao, the company aim to have ten schools in the UK, all of them sufficiently distanced from each other to not be in competition for pupils.

The investment in Plymouth College by Mrs Gao's group has already seen substantial investment and the Meade-

King Hall is poised for significant transformation with the addition of retractable seating, which will turn it into a proper theatre space.

Further works are being carried out on other parts of the school fabric including great improvements to the astro turf facilities.

This investment, coupled with the arrival of the new head Peter Watts has undoubtedly had a huge stabilising effect on the school and for the first time in many years the future looks bright.

As the bursar was keen to make clear at a committee meeting earlier this year, one to two small independent schools had been 'going to the wall' every week since 1 January and there are schools queuing up to join the Galaxy group. Plymouth College's sound financial footing made it an early favourite for the group and negotiations were under way even before Peter Watts was appointed.

One of the conditions of the buy out however was that the school had to own the entire freehold of the Ford Park campus and the problem there was that the OPMs had a substantial investment in the OPM Suite.

Thus it was that the Club somewhat reluctantly agreed to sell the Suite on terms that were acceptable to both parties.

Essentially the school agreed to repay outstanding historic loans totalling £50k and pay a further £580k with the club giving the school £80k towards scholarship and bursaries.

The next effect of the is that the OPM Club is now sitting on the best part of £650k, together with our investment property at Saltash, which nudges our total worth towards £1m.

So, the question arises ... what are we going to do with it?

And that, dear OPM, is where you come in. What would you like us to do with it? After all it is our money in the sense that we are all equal in the eyes of the OPM Club. We could come to an arrangement with the school over further bursaries or scholarship, but that might mean a rapid dissemination of funds, and if the unthinkable was to happen and Plymouth College wasn't to prove sustainable in the longer term, then there would be little or no funding for the OPM community for as long as there were to be OPMs in the community. Then the funds could be used to help sponsor, or otherwise organise events in Plymouth, London, wherever.

We could invest in a facility elsewhere. Mutley Plain has been suggested on more than one occasion, it could be a facility we could all use, or like the Saltash property merely be an investment that would generate an income to be used for sponsoring OPM activities.

It's not an easy question to answer but it's not a bad problem to have.

Your thoughts would be welcome!

Meanwhile we still have licence to use the OPM Suite at least 20 times a year.



PRESIDENT Chris Robinson MBE

It has been an interesting a varied year. It was always going to be a challenging one for the school following the election of a Labour Government and that it certainly proved to be.

It was an interesting and challenging one for Plymouth Argyle too, with more changes at the helm there in the last few years than even Plymouth College has managed. I certainly feel for my OPM contemporary and club owner Simon Hallett.

I know from my 22 years on the board at PMC (1995-2017), eight of them as Chairman, that appointing a team leader is not easy.

For a start you can only really choose between the candidates that apply for the job – neither Plymouth College nor Plymouth Argyle are in a position to go head-hunting. What is more once you've made what the school, the staff and the board are agreed is the right decision, it doesn't always work out right. Simon told me that he didn't

instantly think that Ian Foster would be a good fit when he met him but warmed to him and felt he was ideal for the job. The problem was that Foster didn't really manage to get the players and staff to warm to him generally and results suffered. Whereas almost everyone who met Wayne Rooney in his brief stay at Argyle warmed to him. His problem, or at least his main problem, was that even as a retired professional footballer he was still better than the players he was trying to coach and he couldn't work out how to change that. If indeed it could be done.

Results in football come quicker than they do in schools and by the time Miron Muslic arrived it was too late to keep the club in the championship. Relegation was followed by mass migration from the club, with the manager among those jumping ship. Many are they that have been critical of the decisions made by the club and its owner, but it's his money and his



integrity at stake and he's not looking to relinquish either that easily. We wish Simon and Tom Cleverley every success. Certainly the headmaster tells me that the link between Plymouth College and Plymouth Argyle Academy is currently being worked on in a way that it never has been before, so watch this space.

Meanwhile other news from Ford Park is that under the new head, the school is in a much happier place, and despite the current difficulties in the independent sector staff retention this year has been better than it's been in a while. We wish Peter Watts well over the next few years!

The Christmas Lunch in the OPM suite was, as ever, a great success, and like the Autumn dinner owed much to the efforts of part president Bob Foulkes. Bob and Francis did a fine job with help from other committee members, notably Dave Hardy, Jason Sweeny and Jim Griffin.

Also in December my new book, *A*

History of Plympton was published and during the course of researching for it, I found a number of OPM related stories one of which had a fascinating follow up (see page 52-55).

Last month Clare and I spent a happy week in Tunisia with Bill Joice (72), who like his younger brother Bob (73) and his son William (02), are all sailing their way separately around the Mediterranean.

Last week, on behalf of the Club, I contacted Charles Martin (10) about creating an engaging and interactive OPM website, again watch this space. And finally, spare a thought please for the founder of Philanthropists CC, Ernie Bolster, who died last month.

He was a man mainly celebrated for his involvement with OPM Rugby over the last 40 years. Ernie was a genuine leader and an inspirational figure who will be massively missed by all of us who knew him.

Chris Robinson, July 2025

Peter Watts 2025 HEAD'S REPORT



An excerpt from the Head's report made on Speech Day - Saturday 28th June 2025.

'Good morning and a very warm welcome to St Andrew's Church to our students, staff, parents, governors, visitors and our wider community.

And it's the importance of community I'd like to ask you to consider this morning

... specifically what two words both beginning with B mean in relation to living and working in community ... belong (as in belonging) and believe (as in belief).

But first, I am privileged to introduce our guest speaker and prize awarder, Victoria Humphries ... Victoria is a polar adventurer, three times Guinness World Record holder, mountain climber, marathon runner, author, Bath-based businesswoman ... Her online profile reads 'She prides herself on being just

your average woman who happens to believe that Anything is Possible if you put your mind to it...'

Far from average and, in my experience, certainly supra-normal, I know as she used to be my boss as Chair of Trustees of a school we set up in Gibraltar – we look forward to hearing Victoria's wisdom today.

I'd also like to welcome Nick Grenfell-Marten and his wife Suzie - Nick is the Chair of Galaxy Global's School Management Board – for joining us today and for Nick's encouragement and support over the last year with our hugely promising partnership with Galaxy Global Education.

[At this point the Head assumed an angry face] 'Go back to where you belong!' When the Head of the Planning Committee in Gibraltar said this to me in 2016, merely over a matter of an

application to fit some UPVC windows in my new school, it reinforced that I was no longer home, or at home ... I suppose in a very small way I experienced prejudice.

The same word 'belong' was used in a different way eight years later, last summer, at Speech Day in Gibraltar – 'Thank you – You really made me feel that I belonged' – when Claudia, a prefect, an immigrant and a young woman proud of her neuro-diversity said goodbye to me in a card that brought a tear to my eye. What does it mean? Where do any of us truly belong? A dictionary definition suggests: 'we belong to ...a place where we have a sense of home, happiness and trust and confidence in our present and the future.' Our wonderful montage to introduce this section of Speech Day, with apologies to the choir (well ... and Mrs Watts) for the somewhat rogue cameo soloist in The Greatest Show, showed what we can possibly achieve when people are prepared to work hard together in a community where they feel that they belong.



I'd like to thank both Mitch Laughton and Sophie Phillips, our Marketing team, for their amazing work on this video and also in putting together our fortnightly school newsletter, the Mayflower, with all that this celebrates about both communal and individual success...in what seems week in/week out the Greatest Show given all of the achievement and endeavour we get to celebrate... much of which we'll see shortly with the Presentation of Prizes.

The Greatest Show?



Greatest achievements:

- National champions in Netball (U16)
- National champions in Rugby (U15) and, fingers crossed, National Champions in the IET Faraday Challenge (Technology) ...
- County champions in Boys' Cricket both at U15 and U14





- Two amazing musical theatre performances – Bugsy Malone and Oliver!
- exceptional outdoor education engagement and achievement
- a jazz band performing at the Royal Albert Hall
- PCA – Plymouth College Aquatics accreditation
- Race Against the Sun – Sixth Form charity challenge raising thousands of pounds
- on average five trips a week – ranging from the South Hams to South Africa...not every week obviously!
but don't just take it from me – this from a social media response to our new video and website: 'a wonderful, supportive, all inclusive school that strives for the best in the individual and the best well being of all students'.

And so, I hope that our students and colleagues especially, but also our parent body feel that they belong at Plymouth College ... and I'd actually like to thank you all, and the OPM community for the welcome I have received since September in making me feel like I belong ... and I hope that all who are new or visiting feel the same way too.' My speech went on (hopefully not too long ...) to celebrate and thank various groups within the College and to recognise the community of the College as being a place where new people are made to feel that they can belong but that over time and especially for our leavers this year we must hope that this becomes balanced with the self-belief needed to navigate the wider world beyond school.



Since my arrival last September, I have been welcomed by the OPM community, and especially the committee members, and I would like to thank you all for your warmth and patience in learning to cope with the fifth Head appointed in the past six years. I am, I think though, the first Head to sing at Speech Day (a generous interpretation of me accompanying the choir's opening to proceedings – a rendition of The Greatest Show backed by a video montage).

Change is difficult for many, and the school's change in ownership in the Spring Term will have caused uncertainty and doubt, but the greater financial security and possibilities for collaboration with the other Galaxy Global schools in the UK and China are already proving invaluable. Despite a singing Head, the College is recognisably the same this summer as last summer and remains a very successful and independent school, but now better-equipped to face the



challenges that lie ahead, and those ongoing following the harsher taxation regime within which this government has us operating.

As many will know, the OPM committee recently fully supported an initiative to mark the 80th anniversary of VE day by commissioning and erecting a new war memorial to commemorate the sacrifice paid by all OPMs in conflict since 1877. I'd like to thank the OPM community, and especially Chris Robinson and Jason

Cox for their generosity and service with this project. The memorial will serve for decades as a place to record those who once belonged here and allows those of us left behind to believe in their altruism and heroism in serving their country and the free world. We must hope that such times of national sacrifice remain historic and pray for peace in a troubled world.

Peter Watts
Head



**PLYMOUTH COLLEGE
ROLL
OF HONOUR**

DEDICATED WITH GRATITUDE TO THE MEMORY OF
FORMER PLYMOUTH COLLEGE PUPILS WHO LAY
DOWN THEIR LIVES IN SERVICE FOR OUR COUNTRY
IN THE TWO WORLD WARS AND SUBSEQUENT CONFLICTS

1914 - 1918

ANDERSON P.J.	DEAN M.A.L.	JAGO R.A.	RENDLE A.D.R.
ANGON R.F.	DEMPSTERS P.W.	JAGO R.H.	RICKARD G.V.H.
ARMSTONG H.G.B.	DEWINTON C.M.Y.	KELLY W.W.	ROWE R.J.
CARLISLE J.	DOUGLAS JAMES W.	KELLY C.N.J.	SEALE R.A.
BELLAMY G.G.	DOUGLAS JAMES D.C.	LANG C.	SEENON T.H.S.
BETTS R.C.M.	DOUGLAS JAMES W.	LANGFORD C.C.	SEENON W.P.
BALDWIN R.P.	DOUGLAS JAMES W.	LANGFORD M.C.	SIMPSON J.E.
BROWN A.R.	EASTBROOK W.R.	LANGFORD M.C.	SIMPSON J.Y.
BUCHAN E.M.	FINGERSHILL J.	LANGFORD M.C.	SIMPSON J.Y.
BUCHAN E.M.	HINDMIRE P.E.	LANGWORTHY M.S.	SMITH R.H.
BUTCHER F.D.P.	FRANCIS D.C.	LOBB R.P.	SMITH R.G.C.
CARLISLE J.	FRANCIS F.G.	LODGE J.C.	SMITH R.G.C.
BUTFIELD A.T.S.	GARD F.	MACEYNSH P.O.	SNELL A.C.H.
CALEY V.M.	GLANVILLE M.F.	MARTIN C.	SPEDDING A.C.
CARLISLE G.	GOODFELLOW H.	MARTIN C.	SPEDDING A.C.
CHAPMAN R.B.	GREENWOOD J.P.S.	MARTIN S.J.	SPEDDING C.N.
COLEMAN J.	HALL C.	MATTHEW J.N.	THOMAS J.W.
COHEN J.S.	HAMPTON A.G.	MORCOM F.H.	THRELL J.J.
COLA J.P.H.	HARRISON G.E.	MORIARTY J.H.	TUFF P.
COLLIERS J.	HAWKES J.	MORIARTY J.H.	UNDERHILL G.
COLSON E.	HAWKINS F.D.	OLERMAN R.E.	UPFIELD S.G.
COOK G.C.	HEARD R.R.	POINTER R.E.	VADDEY R.H.R.
CORRY H.G.A.	HEWITT C.M.	POINTER R.E.	WAKE H.M.A.
CROFTON-BOWLER H.	HICKS R.E.	POINTER R.E.	WALLACE M.
CUNNINGHAM F.L.	HILL R.	POINTER R.E.	WANNICOTT R.
DAVIES J.S.	HORWILL R.W.	RANDALL H.	WOLSEY R.
DUGAN R.J.	HORWARTH R.V.	REED J.C.	WROTH W.A.
DEAGAN T.	JACKS R.C.	REED J.C.	WROTH W.A.

1939 - 1945

ANDERSON P.S.	BENTTS R.F.	HUTCHINS D.L.	RATTRAY G.A.S.
ANDREWES L.	BENNETT R.	JACKSON J.	TELLER J.
BAKER D.N.	DOWN J.M.	JAMES K.H.	REYNOLDS G.W.
BALL L.J.	DUFTY A.G.	KEVAN R.E.	ROD R.C.
BENNETT A.H.P.	EDWARDS C.S.	LEWIS J.	SAUNDERS J.
BAYLEY G.E.H.P.	ELLIOTT S.E.	LOCKWOOD A.E.	SCOTT J.S.J.
BENNETT R.	FARNSWORTH M.E.	LOWMAN R.P.	SMITH C.
BENNETT R.	FRASER J.M.	MARTIN J.H.	SMITH C.R.D.
BENNETT R.	GILL W.R.	MILLER A.W.	STONE K.J.
BENNETT R.	HODGSON J.G.B.	MURRAY J.	SPEDDING A.
BENNETT R.	GUPTILL F.	OXENHAM R.G.	THAKE W.H.
BERNARD J.M.	HARVEY J.	PAINTER A.J.M.	THRETHWAYE R.G.
CHAPMAN J.C.	HARVEY J.	PARKER J.	THOMAS J.
CARLISLE J.	HARVEY J.	PERKINS P.A.	THOMAS J.
CHAMBERS E.C.	HERBERT HILL R.H.M.	PITTEN R.	WATERHOUSE R.
COLLARD R.	HIBBERD R.	WHITE H.G.	WRIGHT J.M.
DAVAN R.	HIBBERD R.	WHITE H.G.	WRIGHT J.M.
DEAGAN T.	HOPFING G.G.	RAMSAY A.J.B.	WATTS T.H.

OTHER CONFLICTS

INDIA	BOER WAR 1889-1902	N. AFRICA 1919-1920	IRAQ 2003
LEWARNE N.A. 1897	DOMINION OF N.Z. 1900	CONY J.J.J. 1919	WARD J.G.
	PORTUGUESE C. 1901		
	LE TUILER E.M. 1906		
	HAWAII 1906		
	ITALY 1906		
		BREKKA A. 1910	

LEST WE FORGET

CAST IN STONE



Friday 6 June saw the unveiling of the new school memorial to all those OPMs who have laid down their lives for service to their country over the last 125 years. The list of names appear embossed on large bronze plate which itself is set within an impressive granite stone that measures well over two metres.

The event was organised by an OPM former serviceman, Jason Cox (87), and as you would expect from a military man it went like clockwork. Even the weather held up, the summer rain not arriving until hours after the event had concluded.

Peter Watts set the tone with an extremely measured and well composed speech ultimately referring to the memorial as beautiful, dreadful and awful. Beautiful because the finished article is indeed a thing of beauty and more worthy of those who made the ultimate sacrifice than the existing indoor tablets of wood and metal.

Dreadful because it is with more than a degree of dread that we face the future in this country, an observation reinforced by MP Luke Pollard, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Ministry of Defence who later unveiled the memorial. And awful as it will doubtless fill all those who view it with a sense of awe, as they reflect on the great number of names that grace the metalwork and the sacrifices that those named men and boys made. The Head's speech was followed by two female members of the School Cadet Force, Corporals Dixie Turner-Moore and Leonie R reciting *In Flanders Fields*, the poem by the ill-fated Canadian poet of the Great War, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae. Leonie, a German student at the school, adding poignancy to the occasion by repeating the lines in German.

This in turn was followed by an address from the Bishop of Plymouth, James Grier,

Left: Bishop of Plymouth James Grier OPM



himself an OPM (92). His presentation was both moving and heartfelt, tinged as you would expect with sadness at the fact that war between nations is even a reality we all have to deal with.

After the school choir, conducted by Jess Eglinton, gave a rousing rendition of *Eternal Father* aka the Navy Hymn, it was time for the MP Luke Pollard to divest the memorial of its school colours covering.

His improvised speech, without being overly frightening, acknowledged the fact that these are troubling times and that Plymouth as an historically significant base for the armed forces faces greater challenges than most – a fact that is reflected in the list of names that take us from the Boer War through the two World Wars to, most recently, the fighting in Iraq. It was in the Kuwaiti Desert that the last man named on the memorial, Major Jason Ward, lost his life. Jason was just 34 years-old in March 2003, when the Sea Knight

helicopter in which he and 11 other British and American servicemen were travelling into Iraq crashed.

Echoing the sentiments of the Bishop, the MP encouraged us to think not only of the names on the plaque but also of those whose lives were irreparably damaged by the various conflicts and the lives of their friends and families.

Major Ward's mother, Jacqueline, and his brother, also an OPM, were guests of honour, as were Rebecca Smith, local MP for the South Hams, Brigadier Mike Tanner, Royal Marines, Lord Mayor of Plymouth, Cathy Watkin, Adrian Vinken, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, and Caroline Anne Harlow, High Sheriff.

All branches of the Armed Forces were represented and a number of serving OPMs as well as a good few retired OPM servicemen were in attendance – among them Eric Sambell OBE and Colin May.

Current OPM President, Chris Robinson, and his immediate predecessor, Bob Foulkes were also present, representing the OPM Club who had generously agreed to underwrite the cost of the memorial.

In his closing speech, fellow Royal Marine and OPM Jason Cox, who was the same year as Major Ward, paid his respects to his friend and thanked the OPM Club for their munificence.

A reception was held in the now small garden in what had been the Headmaster's House and is currently the main admin block. Much of the garden have been given over to play areas for the Preparatory School that moved up to Ford Park a few years ago.



Above: Recent leavers George Atkinson (now at the University of Leeds), Lydia Lambie (headed for Bristol University in September), and George Wells (at Harper Adams).

Below: Lt Nicholas Dworznikowski, 2Lt Peter Walker, 1Lt Maximilien Symes (all three 2019 leavers, Max is with the Bundeswehr, and AB Oliver Rouse RN who left in 2021.

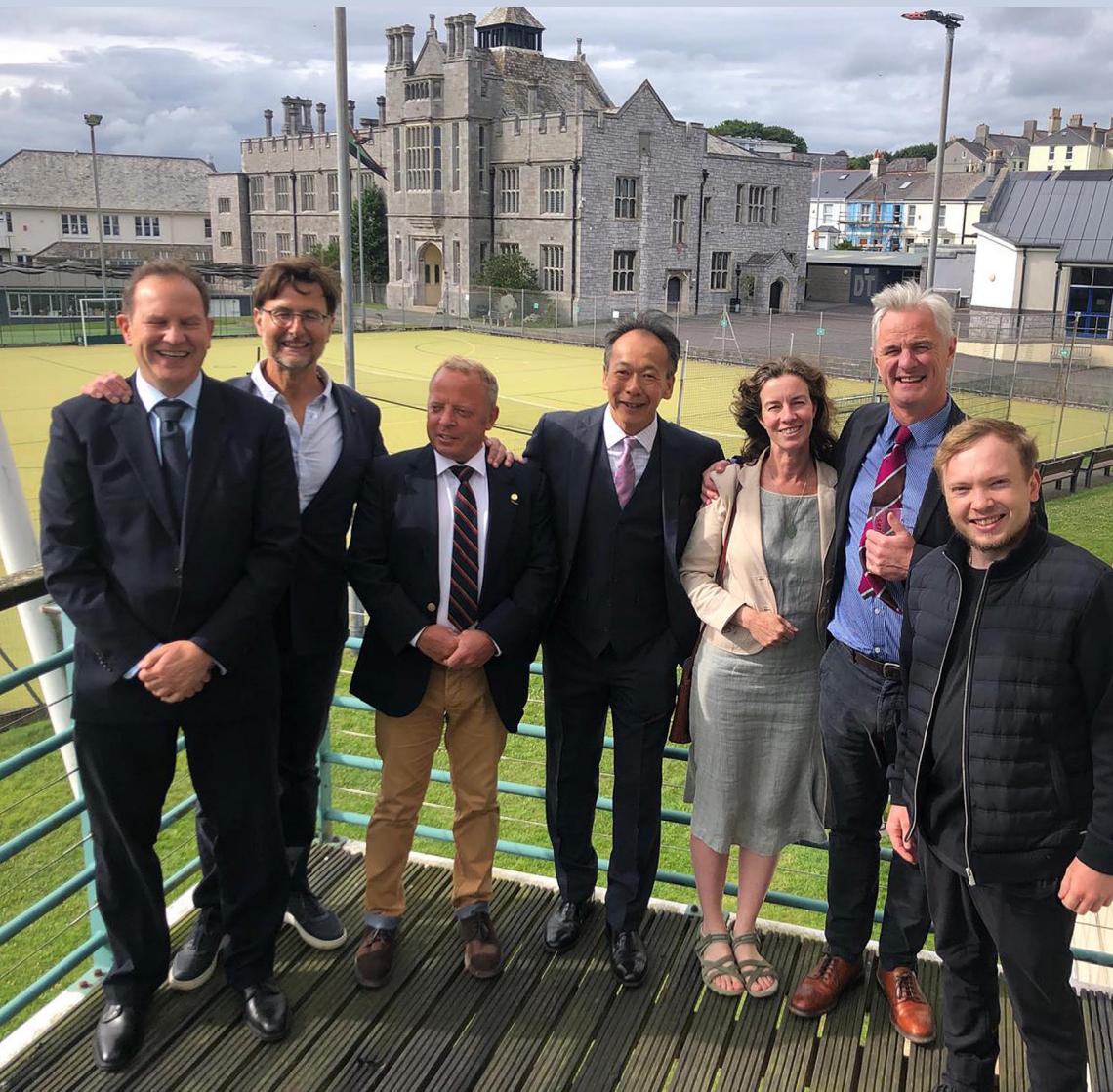


Among the many other OPMs present were a group of Jason Ward's contemporaries and good friends. Since Jason's early and unfortunate demise, the gang have endeavoured to meet annually in March, on the anniversary of his death. Over the years they have congregated in a variety of venues,

including America, Dubai, Scotland, London and Plymouth, indeed they once hired Colson House at Ford Park for one of their 'Wardy Reunions.'

As well as the merry band pictured below are Andy Plackett, Matt Aire, Simon Lucas and retired Brigadier, Al Lister.

From the Class of '87 some of the Wardy crew: L-R: Nicholas Bradley, an architect living in Oxfordshire, Chris Butt, runs a software business in Breckon Beacons, Joseph Ho, a business consultant now living in Surrey, Erica Tiller, living in Plymouth, James Murray-Jones, a marketing director with MotorEasy and far right, Tim Cox, son of Jason, an IT consultant.



GOING GOING GONE!

Once again the decision to hold the recent leavers bash in the Gin Bar on the first floor of the Hyde Park Hotel proved to be a very popular one.

Staff and pupils mingled in the Victorian venue which is roughly contemporary with the main school building.



THE OPM CLUB STORY



Senior OPMs contemplating the fit out of the old social club at Efford.

It's now more than 60 years since the first OPM Clubhouse opened, at Efford, at the top of a small narrow road running off Efford Lane. It was a fairly nondescript, single storey affair, with boarded up windows that was low on charm and running close to empty in terms of atmosphere. Nevertheless it had *zeitgeist* on its side. Before the war there had been no such animal as the teenager. Many young people left school at thirteen, a few stayed on for their school certificate while fewer still went on to further education. With the post war baby boom and the problems finding work for the growing population, there arose a generation that lived at home longer, had a small amount of disposable cash – pocket money – and a huge amount of attitude.

As youthful skiffle groups succeeded the middle aged dance bands and rock and roll ensembles trumped both, so the teddy boy morphed more generally

into the 'teenager', and increasingly there was a new section of society with time on their hands.

It was also a time for social exploration, more young people had access to transport – cars and motorcycles and each of these offered exciting times away from home. Partly in order to keep young people off the streets and give them something to do, the 1960s saw a massive growth in the provision of youth clubs, not just here but across the western world.

Here in Plymouth they blossomed, with their table tennis tables, darts, snooker, pool and record players. Sports clubs were also doing well and former Plymouth College pupils were having hours of fun on cricket, hockey and rugby pitches around Devon and Cornwall.

A number of OPMs had been meeting regularly at the Penguin pub (now the Tap and Barrel), down from Mutley Plain, when, somehow, the OPM Club



The old OPM Clubhouse at the top of the unmarked lane at the top of Efford Lane

managed to buy the old sports facility of the Beechwood – Bowyers – factory at Efford. Described as a very run-down building with a sports field, tennis court and car park, it quickly became the focus of a great deal of excited activity for a number of young and youthful OPMs. Although it came with little in the way of soft furnishings, regular working parties, and some generous early donations quickly transformed it into a hive of activity.

Second hand furniture was donated and a substantial amount of carpet was acquired from the old Gaumont Cinema in Union Street. More significantly still, the Club, as a private members' club, managed to get a 2am licence at a time when the only other 2am licence in town of any general consequence was held by Plymouth Sailing School (a venue the much frequented by young naval officers from Manadon and known affectionately as the GX – 'groin exchange' – it is now Annabels).

This, together with the introduction of a number of fruit machines (aka one-armed bandits or gambling machines), gradually saw the club become a popular, and viable venue. Manned almost entirely by volunteers, visiting sporting teams envied the set up. Back then our rugby, hockey and cricket sides were almost entirely made up of past pupils and members of staff and most sport was conducted on a social rather than overtly competitive basis.

As the 1960s progressed so too did the popularity of this unlikely venue in the heart of Efford. The fact that drink driving laws were somewhat lax, as indeed were the observation of the drinking laws generally in a private members club – I remember drinking there from at least age 16 if not younger – meant that the club thrived.

Many OPMs (and OPMs in the making ... schoolboys) would pitch up around 11.30pm having been ejected from pubs that closed half an hour or so

earlier and spend another hour or two drinking. Most would drive or get a lift, taxis were a rare luxury, after all why waste good drinking money on a taxi. No Ubers in those days, no mobile phones either, just a payphone in hallway and anyway, in those pre-decimal days 10/- (50p) could buy you five pints.

Parents of those too young to drive were not unduly concerned, they would rather pick up those in their care from there, than from some place in Union Street. And by this time word had well and truly got around. The mid-week youth club circuit saw Plymouth College boys mixing with boys and girls from other schools and suddenly 'the Club' was the place to go, especially at the weekend and on high days and holidays – Easter, Christmas, New Year's Eve. Queues would form outside as young non-OPMs would wait to be signed in by members.

Everything was going swimmingly when the committee decided that the venue would benefit from being even bigger and so at some point around 1980 a programme of expansion saw the club double in size. Unfortunately however this had the effect of halving the atmosphere. It wasn't helped by the fact that there was now a lot more late-night licence competition and many more eating out venues around town, not that Edna's burgers and chips could ever have been considered fine dining. And so in order to attract punters at certain times there would be curry nights, or French or Italian evenings. Discos were popular and live bands too and increasingly the venue was booked out for weddings and works dos. But the heydays had passed, drink driving regulations had become much tighter, Frank Jeffery, deputy headmaster, had joined the committee and become a

Scenes from a '1066 and All That' party at the OPM Club, c1979.



particularly strict presence on the door for 'big events' making sure no underage schoolchildren were able to sneak in when he was around.

The rugby teams were no longer top heavy with OPMs and staff members, the world had moved on and the club was struggling. In 1987, after dwindling returns we managed, largely through the excellent work of Ed Keast, to sell the club and its surroundings with planning consent for future development.

A deal was struck with Bill Hitchins about providing alternative playing fields and the OPM Club moved out of Efford with a very healthy bank balance.

For the next 15 years or so, we looked for a suitable alternative, ever mindful of the fact that there would be different demands on any new venture. Plymouth Cricket Club, the Corinthian Yacht Club, the Mayflower Sailing Club and the Fairfield Hotel off Mutley Plain were all

looked at with a view to either outright ownership or engagement as a joint venture. All to no avail.

And then, much closer to home, or at least, closer to our spiritual home at Ford Park, the Christian Science Reading Rooms were put on the open market. We had the property valued at a price of around £220,000, which was close to the asking price, but the committee submitted a bid of £110,000. The offer was rejected. The property was taken off the market. It was sold subsequently for around £330,000. The purchaser then managed to get planning consent for a large development on the site and sold to McCarthy and Stone for around £1.3 million. An opportunity missed?

A year or two later a discussion with the Bursar, Gordon Mills, at Speech Day raised the possibility of getting into bed with the school even more cosily with the idea of building an OPM facility onto





Above: The new OPM Suite in 2004 before the arrival of the mirrors and the large photographs
Opposite page: The OPM Suite in party mode, top 2014, middle 20 xmas 2019 and 2017.

the Sports Hall development. While this proved unworkable a subsequent suggestion to suit both sides was the idea of creating new music rooms on the side of the Meade-King Hall, with an OPM facility above. A facility that would offer wonderful views across the city and back across to the grand Victorian limestone pile we call the Main School building. One of the prominent pioneers of the original OPM Club at Efford led a rather vocal but ultimately poorly supported opposition campaign. And so it was that in 2004 our new OPM Suite opened overlooking the cricket square. Despite many successful functions, dinners, parties and other events the venue has never worked as a day to day social facility, and in many respects, notably from a school perspective, that has probably been a good thing. With the departure in recent years of

the rugby section and the hockey teams, the facility has struggled, post covid, to be any more than an occasional social venue and so it was relatively convenient for the club when the school found itself needing to divest itself of the OPM interest in order to complete their sale to the Global Galaxy Education Group. The ever increasing impact of Social Media, the spread of What's App groups and the fact that there are so many ways to spend time that weren't available to young people 20, 40 or 60 years ago – many of which no longer feature the drinking culture that dominated previous generations – have meant that this is a good time for the OPM body to take stock and consider what might be the best next move to carry the Club on in a meaningful way well into the 21st century.

Chris Robinson



AUTUMN DINNER OPM Suite

There were a number of first time visitors to the OPM autumn dinner, among them Ron Searle (70), who despite living locally hadn't been back to Ford Park for over 50 years, and Andrew Price and Stephen Woodward (93). Guests of honour were the new head, Peter Watts and his wife Diana.

In hushed tones Diana asked about Mr Woodward on the grounds that he looked vaguely familiar to her. Transpires that Stephen was head boy when Diana was here in the sixth form!

Other guests included Debbie Horner the OPM's direct link with the school and her husband Andrew.

Huge thanks to Bob and Frances Foulkes for shouldering most of the responsibilities and to the school catering team for an excellent bill of fare.

Attendees: Bob Foulkes, Frances Foulkes, Chris Robinson, Clare Robinson, David Hardy, Debbie Horner, Andrew Horner, Peter Watts, Diana Watts, Jason Sweby, John Eaton, Lloyd Pickwell, Claire Mitter, Ron Searle, Colin May, Jim Griffin, Peter Lowson, John Herman, Mike Turpitt, Dorothy Turpitt, Pat Newnham, Jill Newnham, Christine Cocks, Willoughby Cocks, Nick Butland, Hazel Butland, John Hambley, Jon Knowles, Stephen Woodward, Andrew Price, David Salter, Lizzie Herman, Jon Cocks, Pete Rutherford, Ian Penrose, Maggi Penrose, Brian George, Pete Heath.





St DUNSTAN'S ABBEY School Reunion



With the Headmaster's wife, Diana, being an old girl of St Dunstan's and Plymouth College it was wonderful to welcome former staff and pupils of St Dunstan's Abbey School to the school for a reunion.

Around 50 attendees gathered to reminisce, enjoying a display of photographs and treasured memorabilia. The event continued with afternoon tea, conversation and a heartfelt rendition of *Non Nobis*, the School's beloved

song, bringing back fond memories and rekindling old friendships.

St Dunstan's Abbey School merged with Plymouth College in 2005, so the schools share a rich history.

This page: Headmaster Peter Watts welcomes the old girls. Opposite page: A selection of photographs, school magazines and other memorabilia was laid out in the old gym. As one attendee noted: 'Fabulous event. Much laughter, reminiscing and delicious cake was had!'





Full list of attendees: Diana Watts, Alison Mills (Wright), Natalie Harrison (Ford), Sarah Webb (Haigh), Liz Undy, Kathryn Skeldon, Lucy Sayer, Natasha Humphrey (Seabrook), Hilary Congdon (Hays), Linda Davies (Borne), Rachel Craig (Thompson), Kerry Simpson (Ducker), Julie Curtis (Willis), Ruth Middlemiss (Peachey), Theresa Brookshaw, Sally Knight, Sarah Trevarthen (Johnson), Sorrel Dryden, Linda Knowles, Jillian Newnham (Stephens), Sally Gresham (Rowe), Stella Hajiyanni, Sarah Selwyn (Larmour), Judith Snaudon (Warland), Cheryl Schofield (Ford), Jayne Morris (Gray), Charlotte Gale (Simpson-White), Gillian O'Callaghan (Constable), Shirley Pring, Claire Haddock (Jones), Wendy Bristow (Vorster), Marie-Louise Cook (Morris), Carmen Henderson, Serene Park, Katrina Wright, Jo Rogers (Eldred), Chris Butterfield (Lewis), Becky Hughes (Ollis), Sarah Spurling (Martin), Hilary Measom

PLYMOUTH COLLEGE

Our Then picture takes us back some 75 years to a time when Plymouth College, which by then had been here over 70 years itself, boasted an outdoor swimming pool, had four clearly marked out hockey pitches and a new, twelve year old sports pavilion.

The comparisons between the two images are instant, the differences more subtle. Society has moved on: note the complete absence of vehicles in Devon Terrace and

indeed almost anywhere back then. At the top of Devon Terrace, buildings have subsequently appeared on the other side of the hedge – originally 1960s science labs now an arts facility. Astro turf cricket nets and an all-weather, all-sport pitch occupy the top end of the playing fields, while the swimming pool has now become an indoor swimming facility. The former Mutley Barracks site is now mostly occupied by the 1986



From the Air THEN & NOW

Sports Centre. The mid-fifties, stand alone, squash court is now a dance studio. Further around a substantial school hall – the Meade King Hall – was erected in 1973 and named after the then retiring head master. On the side of it a social facility for past pupils – the OPM Suite – was constructed in 2004. Behind that a new canteen, classrooms and biology labs had appeared in the early 1960s while the following decade a new

teaching block appeared. This has since been added to and adapted as a Preparatory School for the parent facility, the latter having merged with St Dunstan's Abbey School back in late 2004.

Piece taken from Chris Robinson's Then & Now series for the Plymouth Herald. To date two volumes of From The Air have been published: Plymouth Before the War and Post Blitz Plymouth. Then pic: 1950



HONORARY TREASURER

Pete Webb



I am pleased to present the accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 which again show an improvement in the Club's financial position. Although these accounts will be published in the forthcoming magazine, they are not in the format required by the 2006 Companies Act. However, the latter give far less information when published at Companies House and I have therefore retained the detailed format as in previous years. I have a copy of the Companies Act format if anyone would care to see them before submission. The income and expenditure account reflects the activities of the Club during the year and you will see that overall income has remained relatively static at £23,854 compared with £23,815 in 2023. The main differences in income were the much higher level of interest received on our bank deposits as a result of increased percentage returns and timing with interest being credited in September. Against this we saw a

reduction in donations; I reported a one-off donation of £2,000 last year. Expenditure increased by just under £3,000 from £7,580 to £10,377, the main contributory factors being legal fees of £2,134 in respect of charges and the new lease at Saltash and a contribution of £500 towards the Alumni office salary reflecting our support to the school for this important role. The committee have agreed this level of support for 12 months with the majority of the expense falling in the current, 2025 year.

The Club therefore realised a surplus for the year of £13,477 compared with £16,235 on which a Corporation Tax charge of £1,894 arises on our investment income net of expenses. The balance sheet reflects our financial position at 31 August and again, I am delighted to report continued improvement at the year end and since. At the year end we had placed £75,000 in bank deposit accounts bearing interest at rates between 3.4% and 3.93%. We have subsequently drawn down £12,000 from surplus rental income funds held by our agents in respect of the Saltash investment property and currently hold in excess of £87,000 (including interest to date).

Apart from the above comments, I trust you will find the accounts understandable although should you have any questions, I will endeavour to respond.

One further comment I wish to make is that in January 2024, I was able to de-register the Club for VAT, 20 years after registering and opting to tax the OPM Suite which enabled us to recover

OPM CLUB

Income & Expenditure

the VAT on the build costs. We now no longer need to account for VAT on income albeit that we can no longer recover VAT on relevant expenses.

Finally, I had hoped that this would be my last report to you as I have now been in post for over 20 years. However, to date, I believe there have been no willing volunteers so I have agreed to carry on for a further 12 months. I shall be looking to step down next year.

PS Since I delivered my report to the AGM, you will be aware that we have surrendered our lease on the OPM Suite back to the school in return for a substantial capital sum. At the time of writing, the committee are in discussions as to how these funds will be utilised in the future. I am therefore looking to place as much as possible in bank deposit accounts to generate interest in the short term.

**THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Income		
Subscriptions receivable	5,633	5,096
Donations and sundry income	524	2,366
Surplus from OPM Suite	5,594	5,774
Investment Income		
Interest	2,091	187
Rent (net of expenses)	10,012	10,392
	23,854	23,815
Expenditure		
Printing, postage and stationery (including magazine)	5,187	4,882
Legal and professional fees	2,134	-
Contribution to alumni office salary	500	-
Insurance	2,147	2,088
Sundry expenses	189	110
Sub Sections		
Hockey	220	500
	10,377	7,580
	13,477	16,235
CORPORATION TAX		
Provided for year	1,894	1,866
Over provision in previous year	(197)	-
	1,697	1,866
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	11,780	14,369

OPM CLUB*Balance Sheet*

THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
ASSETS		
Freehold investment property	185,000	185,000
OPM Suite	476,298	476,728
Loan to Plymouth College	50,000	50,000
Stock (at cost)	1,495	1,307
Debtors and prepayments	17,568	19,725
Cash at Bank		
Current account	22,926	32,422
Deposit accounts	75,000	47,919
Cash in hand	-	372
	<u><u>828,287</u></u>	<u><u>813,473</u></u>
LIABILITIES		
Corporation tax provision	1,894	1,866
Creditors and accruals	5,860	2,854
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u><u>7,754</u></u>	<u><u>4,720</u></u>
NET ASSETS	<u><u>820,533</u></u>	<u><u>808,753</u></u>
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
At 1 September 2023	808,753	794,384
Surplus for year	11,780	14,369
At 31 August 2024	<u><u>820,533</u></u>	<u><u>808,753</u></u>

The accounts were approved by the committee on 3 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

N H J Holman
 (Chairman)

P M Webb
 (Treasurer)

I have examined the accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 and found them to be in accordance with the underlying books and records of the Old Plymothian and Mannameadian Club and therefore these accounts give a true representation of the financial position of the Club at that date and for the year then ended.

John Williams

OPM CLUB

Notes to the Accounts

THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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	2,583	
Less depreciation	<u>(430)</u>	
		2,153
		<u><u>476,298</u></u>

4 INVESTMENT PROPERTY

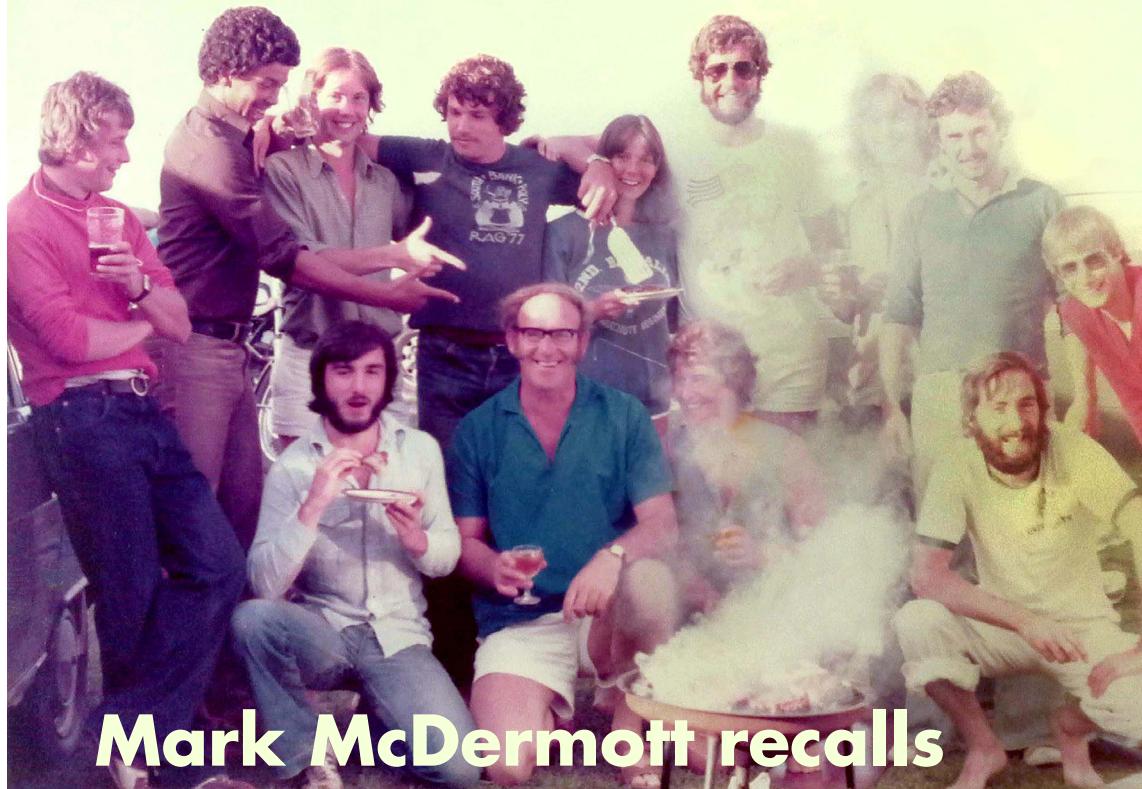
The Club's investment property in Saltash was revalued in 2004 by Viner Fulfords at £185,000.

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 SURPLUS FROM OPM SUITE

	2024	2023
	£	£
Suite hire and rents	6,733	6,713
Licencing	509	509
Repairs and renewals	200	-
Depreciation	<u>430</u>	430
	1,139	939
Surplus for year	<u><u>5,594</u></u>	<u><u>5,774</u></u>



Mark McDermott recalls

1978 at Mother Ivey's Bay, North Cornwall, featuring many OPMs from my (Mark McDermott) year, including Paul Ackford, John Mears, John Godfrey, Ian Horton and elder brother, Simon Parford, Martin Weeks, Mike Piccarillo, Jane Veale, Mel Godfrey and Paul Ackford's parents) – sadly I am not in the picture as I took the photo.

In the process of clearing his desk after lecturing for the last 35 at the University of East London, Mark McDermott made an intriguing discovery, he writes: '50 years ago, in July of 1975, I was in the School's 6th form play, Shakespeare's Henry IV Part II produced by our English teacher, Mr. Tony (AV) Greaves. I played the Archbishop of York. On stage I was terrified of forgetting my relatively few lines, which I did intermittently. Mr. Greaves had asked me to play Hal, a leading role. I declined, thinking I had enough to do working on my A levels. I wonder what would have happened had I accepted? Would life have gone in a

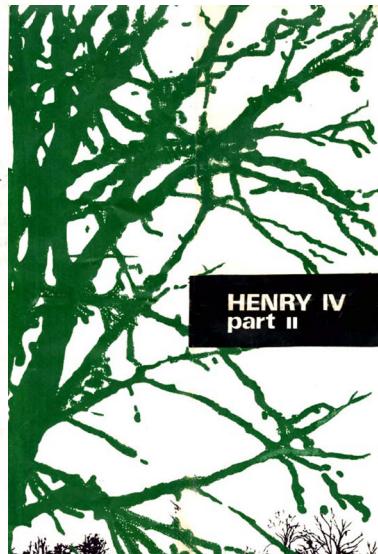
different direction? Would I still be treading the boards today, like one of the cast (Dawn French appearing here as Mistress Quickly) who has done so on stage, TV and big screen ever since then, to great acclaim? Instead, I became an academic and went into 'edutainment' for 35 years in the lecture theatre. That turned out to be my lifelong occupational dramatis personae. In 1975 we were young 17 year olds and completely unsure how life would turn out. The various successes we enjoyed in later years just go to show there is always huge, yet-to-be realised potential in young people of which they may be completely unaware. Never give up.

'I was terrified of forgetting my relatively few lines, which I did intermittently.'

CAST

Rumour	M. Trick
Lord Bardolph	P.J. Beadell
Porter	M.E. Beesley
Earl of Northumberland	J.W. Masters
Travers	R.F. Cooke
Morton	M.L. Elliott
Sir John Falstaff	C.J. Bloye
his Page	I.T. Waldock
Lord Chief Justice	S. Parkes
his Servant	C.J. Bartlett
Archbishop of York	M.R. McDermott-Brown
Lord Mowbray	A.P. Broadhurst
Lord Hastings	N.C. Carter
Mistress Quickly	Dawn French
Fang } Snare } constables	S.T. Crewe
Bardolph	M.E. Beesley
Gower	I.A. Kerr
Prince Hal, later King Henry V	J.S. Jones
Poins	S.G. Clark
Lady Northumberland	M. Trick
Lady Percy	Elizabeth Heppel
First Drawer	Jenny Gibson
Second Drawer (Francis)	R.D.S. Brown
Doll Tearsheet	M.L. Elliott
Pistol	Hilary Sparrow
Peto	R.F. Cooke
King Henry IV	N.B. Mickshik
his Page	C.J. Morris
Earl of Warwick	N. Miller
Justice Shallow	J.S. Jones
Justice Silence	G. Moore
Mouldy	C.J. Bartlett
Shadow	M.E. Beesley
Wart	N. Jaffer
Feeble	J.W. Masters
Bullcalf	S.T. Crewe
Coleville	R.D.S. Brown
Messenger	P.J. Beadell
Westmoreland	M.L. Elliott
Prince John	P.A. Bray
Soldiers	N.B. Mickshik
Duke of Clarence	N. Jaffer, M.E. Beesley, S.T. Crewe
Duke of Gloucester	F.R. Potter
Harcourt	T.M. Hughes
Davy	M. Trick
Beadles	J.W. Masters
Grooms	M.E. Beesley, N. Jaffer
	N.C. Carter, M.L. Elliott
<u>Lights</u>	Stage Manager: D. Woodgate, with
Mr J.L. Arthur, P.H. Martin, M. Trick, B. Michie	C. Barrow, P. Body, G. Scales,
<u>Makeup</u>	A.W. Brooks, G. Paige, A.W. Lambert,
M.E. Wooding, P.D. Aggett	N. Hyde, A. Richards
<u>Music</u>	Stage design: P. Aggett, A.W. Brooks
B. Michie (drums), P.A. Bray (violin), Archer-Lock (recorder), E.D.J. Frost (or P.B. Readings) (trumpet)	with advice or help from Mr R. Benton and Mr. W. Miller
	Call Boy: A.J. Cooper

It's interesting to note that 'Girls from St Dunstan's Abbey School' took part 'by kind permission of the Headmistress. Also those listed above ... future Chairman of Governors, David Woodgate, then Stage Manager, and playing Henry IV, Chris Morris, mentioned elsewhere in this year's OPM Magazine.



Dame Moira Whyte



Moira Katherine Brigid Whyte arrived at Plymouth College from Notre Dame in 1975 to join the Sixth form, and reading between the lines of the school magazine she made a great success of her time at Ford Park.

Girls were something of a novelty at the school at that time and Moira was one of the very first. A talented academic she also proved popular on the stage appearing in the 1977 school production of *King Lear* as well as the Christmas Entertainment in the Autumn term (she played the part of a police woman 'very well').

In the Shakespeare she played the venomous Goneril and, according to the *Plymothian*'s critic (CGB aka Colin Brezicki): 'measured her lethal doses of filial ingratitude with volumptuous

contempt' whatever that might mean. The affable Canadian continued 'Chris May's Edgar's mad beggar was at once chillingly real and endearingly pathetic'. There was also a glowing tribute to the young man who played Lear's Fool in the same production: 'Michael Ball ... screwed his face and his manner to a convincing pitch of idiocy and gravity; his insults never obscured his love of the King.'

Richard Blair (Gloucester) and Mike Gilmour (Lear) were also singled out for high praise, but this isn't about them! Appointed a senior prefect in the Autumn term, after Plymouth College Moira went on to study medicine at St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College and subsequently worked and studied at Hammersmith Hospital,



Royal Postgraduate Medical School and Imperial Cancer Research Fund. She completed her clinical fellowships funded by the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust. In 1996 she became Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the University of Sheffield, later becoming Head of the Department of Infection and Immunity. More recently she moved to the University of Edinburgh where she became their Professor of Respiratory Medicine. That same year, 2014, she was awarded an OBE for services to respiratory medicine in the New Years Honours list.

Two years later Moira was appointed Head of the University of Edinburgh Medical School. Her inaugural lecture was entitled 'Life, Death and a Career in

Captions: Opposite page, Moira Whyte as Goneril in the school production of King Lear, in 1977. Moira post-school. Above left: Mike Gilmour as Lear and Michael Ball as his fool. A more recent portrait of Dame Moira Whyte.

Academic Medicine.'

Fast forward another two years and she succeeded Professor Sir John Savill as Vice-Principal and Head of the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, a position she held until 2022, when she in turn was succeeded by David Argyle. A fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and of the Academy of Medical Sciences, last year, in the King Charles III's second Birthday Honours list she was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire.

Dame Moira has been a trustee of Cancer Research UK since 2020.

GLITTERING BALL



HERALD INTERVIEW
November 2024
by Hannah Stephenson

You only have to look at Michael Ball's calendar to vaguely understand his monumental work ethic.

This year alone he's done a solo tour, taken over Radio 2's Sunday Love Songs from the late Steve Wright, is currently appearing in a *Les Misérables* arena tour, has brought out his latest novel and released *Together At Home*, a new album with his pal Alfie Boe. Their UK tour, celebrating their 10-year partnership, kicks off in March before they take it to Australia late in the year. The momentum of his career never seems to let up and he admits he's hugely proactive.

'I learned that lesson really early on that if you sit and wait for a phone to ring, it won't. If you go out and make things happen the phone will ring more. I get ideas and I'm really lucky now that I'm in a place where people will listen to them.'

At 62, Michael is still a bundle of energy and any hint that he might retire is met with derision.

His six-week tour of Australia with Alfie Boe will be his limit of time away because he'd get homesick, he says. 'I know it looks like I'm constantly working but I'm not, other than doing the radio show which is a couple of hours on a Sunday. I have long periods when I'm at home.'

'I'm inherently lazy and there's nothing I like more than sitting down and reading or watching telly, just lying on the sofa with my dogs and occasionally getting up to cook a meal.'

His partner of 34 years, former journalist Cathy McGowan, whom he met when he was starring in *Aspects of Love*, keeps him grounded but makes sure he doesn't become too sedentary at their home in Barnes, South-West London.

He's currently promoting his second novel, *A Backstage Betrayal*, a follow on from his debut, *The Empire*, about the eponymous theatre in 1920s Yorkshire. Behind the scenes are some murky goings-on in this cosy crime caper, involving gangsters, romance feuds and clashes of egos – and he has seen many of those in his time in showbiz.

'There are people who aren't quite aware of what their position is in the hierarchy,' he says. 'When you have two stars it can be the best thing – like Imelda (Staunton) and me doing *Sweeney Todd*, the greatest creative, friendly and loving relationship I could have ever wished for. We made each other work really hard. We laughed all the time, there was never any ego on or off stage.'

Some of the younger actors he has encountered have a different attitude to his generation of performers:

'Some are hardworking and diligent and some really aren't. There is less of "the show must go on" attitude, without a question. People are far less resilient. There are those who absolutely get it and they'll do really well. The advice I always give to young performers is that it's not about this job, it's the next one. It's about being the person that has a good reputation, that people want to work with again, that delivers, not just on

opening night, not just in the audition, but every night.'

'This is a hard and fabulous business and the rewards when it does well are incredible – not financial rewards – I'm talking about your soul.'

As well as the ups of showbiz, Michael has had his fair share of downs, most notably when he went through crippling stage fright in his early career, during his first run in *Les Misérables* in the West End, which ended in a breakdown and him leaving the show, hiding himself away in his flat for nine months.

He still gets stage fright, he admits: 'It's less, and I know how to deal with it. I give myself a good talking to.' Long term friend Alfie Boe makes things easier, he says: 'You're with someone who's got your back, who's going through the same things you are, who is committed to working hard and doing a good job, just as you are.'

Meanwhile, Michael oozes enthusiasm when revealing that the rights to *The Empire* have been bought for a six-part TV series. He'll be an executive producer and might do a cameo in the show. In the meantime he hopes to write a third novel around *The Empire*.

'It's if there's an appetite for it, like anything I do. The only reason for doing it is to have an audience.'





NORA'S

A brand new steak restaurant has opened in Plymouth city centre, run by the couple behind the award-winning eatery Zephyr. Oz Harborth and his wife Sheena, who have more than a decade of experience in the hospitality industry, have had rave reviews for their delicious burgers.

In April 2022, Zephyr was awarded Burger Chef of the year 2022 by the National Burger Awards, which went to owner Oz after he constructed a delicious technical burger – the Double Patty Melt.

Now the pair have opened Nora's, a brand new restaurant on North Hill, a few doors up from Zephyr, on the site of the former Manuka restaurant.

Nora's opened on February 12 and is named after Oz's grandmother who was a 'fantastic cook'.

'When the site came up we thought, we've had this other concept brewing in our minds for a little while,' says Oz. 'It's only up the road from Zephyr so it should be less challenging to run both spots on the same street, than if it was a little bit further away. We've jumped on it and now it's open!'

'We're kind of billing it as a modern steakhouse,' he adds. 'What we're doing, we're buying in sub-primal big cuts of beef that have been dry-aged for about four weeks.'

'We've got a dry-ager in the restaurant

as well, so all of the meat is on display. Then we'll butcher it down into steaks. We have a special oven that cooks the steaks really, really well for us – locking in a lot of the juices and a lot of the flavour and a lot of that smoke. It's coming out really nice.'

'We're also balancing it out with things like 24-hour brined chicken, big thick pork chops and we've also got a lot of vegetable dishes too. As much as meat is the star of the show, we've really paid a lot of attention to the veg dishes as well. We are trying to create a restaurant with a little something for everyone.' While there are similarities to Zephyr, Nora's is a different concept and feels more 'elevated' than Zephyr as Oz explains:

'Some people have said it's like being in a Parisian brasserie, some have said they feel like they're in a restaurant in New York, another compared it to a London pub. What we've tried to do is create something really new and fresh for Plymouth.'

'In a way, there are a lot of similarities to Zephyr, we're fully independent and we've put our own touches into Nora's like we have Zephyr, as far as the decor is concerned, but there's a lot more space. It kind of feels like it's always been there, with a lot of modern touches.'





Nora's also has head chef Lewis Craig, who was previously at the Mussel Inn. Oz says Lewis has been 'fantastic' and Nora's is 'really lucky to have him on board'.

'He really knows his stuff. Sheena and I had his roast at the Mussel a good couple of years ago and we were blown away and said "the chef here really knows what he is doing".

'We put the advert out for this place and who should apply, Lewis. It seemed like fate.'

Nora's offers big plates and small plates, but the menu is 'essentially built around sharing'.

'Rather than getting a whole meal on one plate you can build the meal up to your taste, based around grabbing a main dish and building your sides in around that. We find this is a very modern way of dining and we're drawing a lot of inspiration from places where we have visited and eaten.'

'You can have everything out on the table and it's this family-style that everyone can dig in and have a little bit of this and a little bit of that, rather than just a fixed meal.'

Cost is something on Oz and Sheena's minds: 'We've priced a couple of the items at what we feel is a more affordable level,' Oz says. 'We have a 6oz bavette steak served with fries and any of our steak sauces. That's on the menu for £18. We feel we're trying to accommodate as many different budgets as possible.'

'People don't have as much money to spend on going out at the moment. You want to know what you're spending your money on is going to be good quality and delicious and you're going to leave feeling you've had a great experience.' Oz says that he and Sheena are 'just passionate about serving good food and that is literally all we want to do', and he hopes people will be 'blown away' when they visit Nora's.

Nora's sources its beef and pork from a farm in Crediton where cattle spend almost 100% of their time outside, with a natural diet of grass and herbs.

The restaurant is open for dinner on Wednesdays, lunch and dinner Thursday to Saturday and for roasts on Sunday.

*Plymouth Herald
by Katie Timms*

SIANIE LANE

La Mer maid's tale

Since leaving Plymouth College, I have remained in Plymouth, and spent much time in and on the water. My open water swimming grew from beach dipping to more serious swimming when I decided I wanted to complete the iconic breakwater swim into the Hoe. I met a group of people who were training to swim the English Channel and was swept along with them into the small world of marathon swimming.

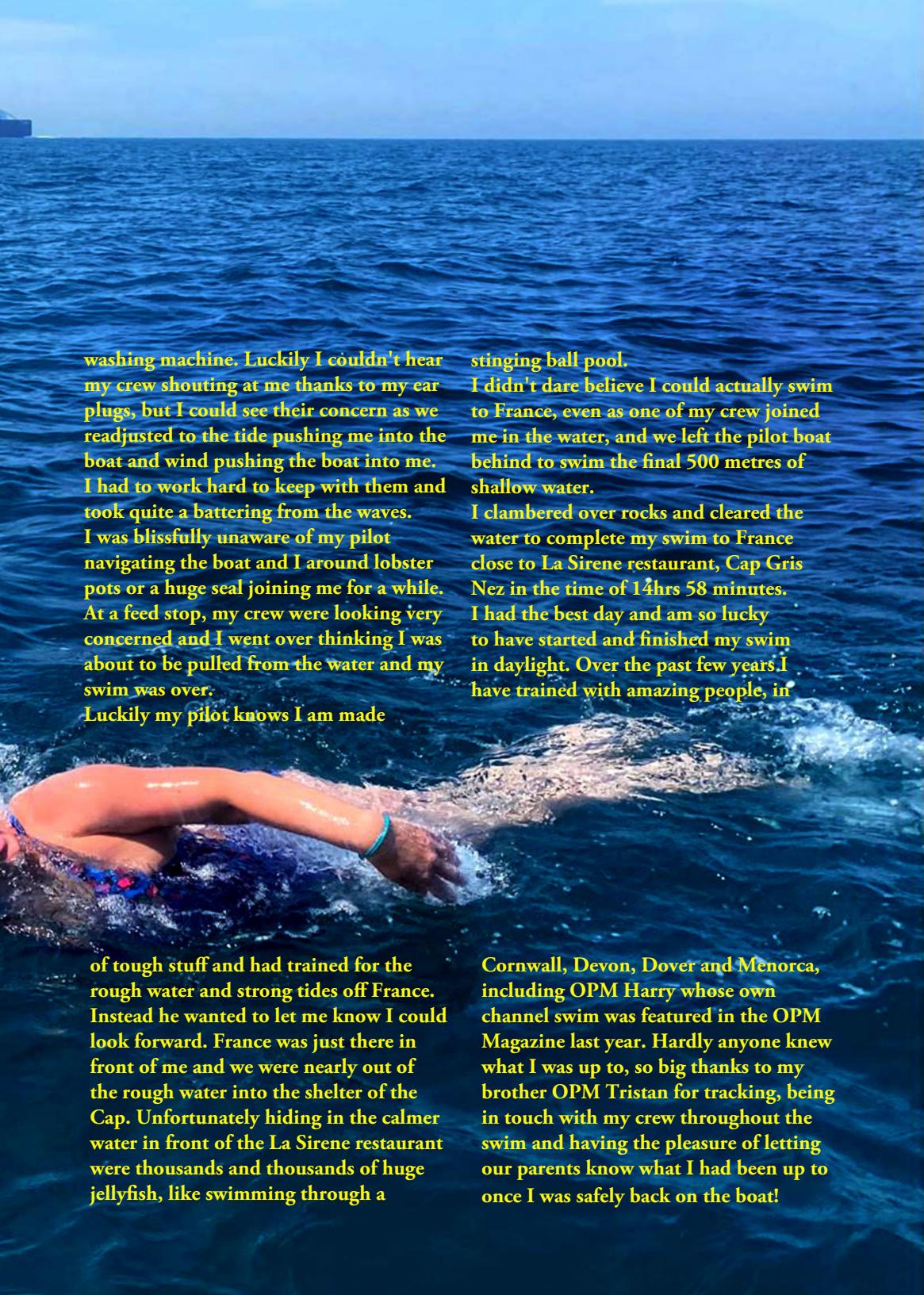
Swimming the Channel is a game of chance, so many variables need to come together at the right time for a swim to even get to the start. A slot is booked a few years ahead, and is only an indication for when you might swim. My first two bookings in 2020 and 2022 were cancelled due to Covid and a chest infection. Then 2023 was blown out by the weather. In 2024 I was booked into a slot in September, however a phone call on 26th July consisting of 'possibly Tuesday, get crew' gave me a few days to gather trusted people, check my kit boxes, and head to Dover. Swims are confirmed after the 6pm weather forecast the night before. As a slower swimmer we were looking for a large weather window. It wasn't a wholly positive weather report, but we decided to go for it and see how far I could get before the weather took over! After a very early alarm call on 30th July, and a smothering in sun

cream and vaseline from my crew, we met my boat pilot, co-pilot and official observer at Dover Harbour at 4am. A few bits of paperwork and passport checks and we were off for the 30 minute trip to Samphire Hoe. The dawn was just appearing on the horizon when it was time for me to get ready, drop in to the water, and swim into the beach.

I cleared the water and after years of training, research and preparation, it was time to swim to France. Without a watch, I could only guess at the passing of time by my feeds, the changing over of the pilots and the sun moving overhead. Each hour went relatively quickly with calm



seas. Just as I was starting to feel a bit bored or hungry it was time for another feed (warm maltodextrin drink and half a mini-battenburg). I had been warned in training that the cliffs of Dover take a long time to disappear, and France takes a long time to appear, so was careful to not look backwards or forwards. About 12 hours in the weather changed as predicted, and it was like being in a



washing machine. Luckily I couldn't hear my crew shouting at me thanks to my ear plugs, but I could see their concern as we readjusted to the tide pushing me into the boat and wind pushing the boat into me. I had to work hard to keep with them and took quite a battering from the waves. I was blissfully unaware of my pilot navigating the boat and I around lobster pots or a huge seal joining me for a while. At a feed stop, my crew were looking very concerned and I went over thinking I was about to be pulled from the water and my swim was over.

Luckily my pilot knows I am made

stinging ball pool.

I didn't dare believe I could actually swim to France, even as one of my crew joined me in the water, and we left the pilot boat behind to swim the final 500 metres of shallow water.

I clambered over rocks and cleared the water to complete my swim to France close to La Sirene restaurant, Cap Gris Nez in the time of 14hrs 58 minutes. I had the best day and am so lucky to have started and finished my swim in daylight. Over the past few years I have trained with amazing people, in

of tough stuff and had trained for the rough water and strong tides off France. Instead he wanted to let me know I could look forward. France was just there in front of me and we were nearly out of the rough water into the shelter of the Cap. Unfortunately hiding in the calmer water in front of the La Sirene restaurant were thousands and thousands of huge jellyfish, like swimming through a

Cornwall, Devon, Dover and Menorca, including OPM Harry whose own channel swim was featured in the OPM Magazine last year. Hardly anyone knew what I was up to, so big thanks to my brother OPM Tristan for tracking, being in touch with my crew throughout the swim and having the pleasure of letting our parents know what I had been up to once I was safely back on the boat!

Chris Morris: The Homecoming



And so, I'm walking in the park with Buster and I meet a fellow dog walker, who I'm told is an OPM, with Jess. It turns out that his name is also Chris, Chris Morris. We get talking and it transpires that he has not long moved back to Plymouth after living and working away for the best part of 50 years. I vaguely remember the name and when I get home I look out an old school register, as you do, the sort of thing they gave to prefects so they can tick off the number of 1st XV games you've watched at Delgany – it was 'compulsory' to watch at least three back in the sixties and early seventies. I look up Chris's class and year group, think I may even have been his form prefect. Next time I see him in the park I ask him if he's aware that at least three of his year group live even closer to Hartley Park than he does, and he lives on the Tor Estate: Chris Daniel, Simon Crewe and Ian Chapman.

Turns out that he's spoken to Ian Chapman, another dog walker, without even realising they were at school together ... and in the same cricket team! A bit later Chris sends me a picture of himself at the OPM Club from back in the day, he's not sure when, thinks it may have been a Christmas/New Year bash. 'There are a couple of my friends behind me, on the dance floor,' he says. I look carefully, I recognise Chris from this youthful image, not the older Chris I see in the park ... I also recognise the people he thought were his friends – it's me, your OPM editor and my then girlfriend, Clare, now my wife of the last 48 years! It was almost certainly New Year's Eve 1976 and Clare's first time at the OPM Club, and the first picture of her in Plymouth that I've ever seen. What are the chances! I asked Chris if he'll tell me what has happened in his life inbetween times ...

Here's his story: 'As a child of the seventies I remember the music best of all, going to gigs at the Guildhall, in particular Family, whose final London concert I also saw about a decade ago in Shepherds Bush.

Unfortunately I neglected to go and see some great gigs like Roxy Music, Gentle Giant and Blondie but Plymouth had a stream of great bands both at the Guildhall and the then Polytechnic. It was affordable in those days. I remember in 1974 going to see Gong, Hatfield and the North and a film of Tubular Bells for 44p.

I left Plymouth College in 1976 having taken the Oxbridge exams but failed to get into Oxford. I hitch hiked around England and visited friends at various universities, including Manchester, Liverpool and Bristol.

I spoke to Brian Curnew, one of the history teachers at school that I was friendly with. He suggested that I should go to Florence. My knowledge of Italian was pitiful, I was no linguist. I had studied Italian for a year with 'Fuzz' Elliott. I remember his advice was generally, stick a vowel at the end of an English word often give you an Italian word



Back row: Peter Bray, Nick Warrilow, Chris Berger-North, Tony Rowlands, Phil Wood, Chris Morris Front row: Ian Chapman, Jon Godfrey, Chris Hall, Danny Weir, Jon Mears

Brian Curnew made a phone call to the Scuola Dante Alighieri in Florence and booked me in for month long language course in the centre of Florence in May 1977. I got a Wallace Arnold coach to Milan and then a train to Florence. I took a guitar with me, which now seems a stupid thing to have done. On the train to Florence an Italian family shared their picnic with me and despite being unable to understand each other I have never forgotten their kindness.

I managed to find work handing out publicity leaflets for the Space Electronic Disco. Having Googled it, surprisingly it's still operating. Whilst punk was big in the UK, it was Donna Summer's *I Feel Love* that I remember pumping through the disco speakers that summer.

Whilst the pay was not high, the job meant that after my language course finished I stayed on in Italy for a couple more months and could afford to share a flat. During the summer of that year I met all sorts of people, some Italian, some expats and a lot of tourists. I used to play my guitar on the Ponte Vecchio before foolishly lending it to one of the locals, who then stole it. One of the musical highlights of my Italian trip was seeing John McLaughlin play with Shakti.

When I came back to England in '77 I took up my place at Lancaster University where I ended up getting a degree in history and philosophy. Unfortunately, I had no idea what I wanted to do afterwards and felt almost unemployable. In 1980 there was a recession and rising unemployment. There was no work for me in Plymouth and in any case my girlfriend lived in West London. So I ended up living in West London. I got a job as a hospital porter. I thought it would be a stop gap

but I did it for two years. Whilst there I started voluntary work on my days off at the local Citizens Advice Bureau. After volunteering for a while I got some paid work as an adviser for what is now known as Citizens Advice in West London. After doing that for about seven years I became manager of the Citizens Advice Bureau in Feltham, Middlesex, known for its young offenders institution. I did that until my mid 30s. I stopped being a manager because it was the advice that interested me. I studied law part time in the evenings (the CPE) which gave me the equivalent of a law degree. I then studied to be a solicitor. It was a profession that had never attracted me when I was younger. It was only through advice work that I realised that the law touches all aspects of our lives and affected both the rich and the poor. I became a trainee solicitor in Twickenham in 1994 in a High Street firm doing all sorts of civil litigation, personal injury, medical negligence, civil actions against the police and housing cases such as homelessness and possession proceedings. Housing became my speciality. I went to a couple of other law firms in London before going to work for Oxford Housing Rights Centre in 2004. After a couple of years that went into liquidation so I came back to London, bought a house in Richmond and worked for Shelter, the national housing charity, as a solicitor in central London between 2004 and 2016. One of my roles was managing the Shelter lawyers in the south west so that brought me down to Plymouth and Cornwall occasionally. I left Shelter in 2016 in search of a better work/life balance, something that I always found elusive. That search

failed so after a year working for the government legal department on immigration cases, I gave up full time work. I lectured in housing law part-time at Westminster University and I did freelance housing law training for Shelter. Having spent most of my life in West London, I moved back to Oxford in about 2018. I lived there with my partner and my dog.

During Covid I delivered courses remotely on zoom. In 2022 I briefly went back to being a solicitor, part time working remotely, but the so called three days per week was becoming more of a full time job. I missed the client and staff contact

and legal aid rates meant the pay was very low so I gave up after a year and retired properly in 2023.

My mother fell down a flight of stairs in March 2024. My mum needed help so I decided to move back to Hartley, where I had spent my teenage years. I came back in September 2024 and I have had the good fortune to meet up with quite a few of my relatives who are still in Plymouth and the South West. I never kept in touch with school friends or university friends and luckily have made a few new friends thanks to walking my dog in the park.'

Chris and Jess. Inset, the guitarist gently ages.





A small but significant collection in the SWiB archives currently vested in The Box is that contributed by Jim Griffin. Jim was in his last year at Plymouth College when, not having made any plans to go into further education, his careers master Tim 'Mac' Forsyth called him in for a chat. 'He asked me what I was planning to do when I left school. I hadn't really given it any great thought, but I wasn't thinking in terms of university as I wasn't sure my parents would thank me for it. Mac asked me what paths I'd considered, what I thought I might like to do, and because my father was in the building trade I said that I could be interested in that. He asked me if I knew what a quantity surveyor was.

"Not really," I replied.

'Then he said that there was an opening with a local firm, Haughton's, and if I fancied it, there was an opportunity to go and work there over the Easter holidays. He suggested that it would give me a chance to see if I liked the idea of working for them, and it would give them an idea to see if they thought I was suitable or not.

'As it transpired I did quite like it, and they seemed happy enough with me. I think Alan Haughton, who ran the firm had been at the school and certainly he sent both of his sons, who were a little younger than me, there.

'After the Easter break I went back to school and had a few weeks off after the end of term and then, in August 1972,



*St Paul's Efford,
completed 1963,
demolished 2007*

I started working there full time. It was a happy place to work and I enjoyed being part of a small local team and was forever grateful that I wasn't working for a large organisation where you didn't really get to know many people. It was more a sort of firm you retired from – there wasn't a lot of hiring or firing. I guess I could have earned more money with a bigger company, but that was never really my prime motivation – I enjoyed the work and liked the people I was working with. One of the guys in my year at school, Graham Goddard, was already working there, he'd left school earlier than me, and another chap, Jim Swales, who was three years older, had gone there, but was leaving, and as it transpired I was his replacement. 'The company had a lot of interesting contracts over the years, I think they started out with Alan's father, back in the early 1930s.

Obviously there was a lot of building work to be done in Plymouth after the war and the firm were involved with a good number of schools, churches, retail premises and houses. We also worked on the Civic Centre, St Andrew's ... and the Cherry Tree pub!

'When I joined we were based in the Royal Building at the top of Royal Parade, then we moved to Ermington Terrace, and after that, Brian Cooper, a big Argyle fan, took over the company. He got together with a few others, including the architect Graham Steen, and refashioned the old primary school behind Stoke Village, into four different office suites.

'Happy days until we were bought out, first by a national concern, Davis Langdon, and then by an American multi-national ACOM, I'm not sure they even knew what a quantity surveyor was!'

John Lintern Webber



Chaddlewood House taken by a German PoW c1948

A Post-War War Story

It's hard now to imagine but in September 1946, more than a year after the Second World War had ended, there were over 400,000 German PoWs in this country, with many more held captive in Russia, France and other parts of Europe. While this only represented around 4% of the number of German servicemen captured during the war, and around 10% of those held captive across all countries, it was still a large number. On balance it transpired that the British were

the best hosts in this regard: of the 3,150,000 German PoWs held by the Soviet Union over a third died in captivity, whereas of those held by the British the fatality rate was only 0.03% (1,254 out of 3,635,000). Here in this corner of Devon, Chaddlewood served as the Headquarters of 137 Camp and, in 1946, that comprised 2,800 prisoners across 13 hostels or working camps (others included Hazeldene at Elburton, Saltram and Home Park).

The man in charge was Lieut Col EA Goodwin, Captain A Grubb was his adjutant, and Captain JL Webber was the official interpreter.

John Lintern Webber was a past pupil of Plymouth College and had previously served in Italy as interpreter during the war.

As it turned out there were no German officers among the 300 or so prisoners at Chaddlewood but they were men 'of the type who have been very carefully screened by Intelligence' according to HP Twyford, the *Herald*'s war correspondent. 'They are,' he added, 'in the top grades of trusted prisoners; the type we are looking to for the rehabilitation of Germany on our democratic lines.'

For the most part the men here seemed reasonably happy with their lot. They lived a communal life, rather than a prison life, and the major complaint, if they had one, was that they wanted to go home. Some of them after all had already been wartime prisoners for five, six or seven years and some had been previously held captive in America and had thought that when they came across the Atlantic from the States, that they were going back to Germany. Nevertheless morale was high and their work was practical and useful with large numbers working on farms, for the Ministry of Supply or the Ministry of Works, helping to reconstruct our roads and infrastructure.



John Webber, as painted by a German PoW

Work was paid, although the remuneration was not great – about six shillings (30p) a week – and it came in token form to be spent in the canteen. Prisoners were allowed 25 cigarettes a week – but they had to buy them, and there was a small, but irregular beer allowance. The men lived in huts 'within a stone's throw of the house' and there was barbed wire around, but Twyford notes, 'it did not seem to me to offer any serious obstacle.'

The men were not allowed out to dances where there was a bar and they had to be back at camp by 10pm.

By late 1947, however, restrictions became a little more relaxed and the ban on 'romantic liaisons' was lifted. This was undoubtedly in relation to pressure that had been building in this respect as, almost immediately, some 796 marriages took place between German PoWs and British women and many more were to follow.

Back in 137 Camp wedding bells were ringing for Captain John Webber and on Saturday 2 August 1947 the 25-year-old OPM interpreter married Pamela Holbrook, a past pupil of St Dunstan's Abbey School. The bride carried a sprig of myrtle in her bouquet, a long standing tradition for old girls of the school, and her bridesmaids were her sister, Anne and the bridegroom's cousin, Audrey Tolley.

Pamela, incidentally, had served with the WRNS during the war.

The wedding was held at St Bartholomew's Church at Yealmpton. A choir of German prisoners sang at the ceremony, while later that day an orchestra of Germans played at the reception held in the Officer's Mess at Chaddlewood House.

That was a piece your editor wrote for the *Plymouth Herald* as part of the research he was carrying out for his book on the *History of Plympton* which was published in November 2024. At the time he was oblivious to the fact that the piece was soon afterwards published on the *Plymouth Live* website, where it would in time

be spotted by Ryan Macdonald, a grandson of John and Pamela Webber.

Ryan was able to not only provide a photograph of the wedding but also to send across an update to the story. 'My grandfather and grandmother moved to Long Island, NY a few years after the war and ultimately had six daughters, the youngest being my mother, Patricia Doreen Webber. My grandfather's life was a fascinating story, albeit a bit of a mystery, and I discovered your article in my own efforts to learn more about my family history.

'As a child, I was told that my grandfather was a suave, stylish, and highly social man with many friends. His incredible linguistic abilities were legendary; he spoke perfect German, Italian, and was proficient in multiple African dialects. His educator parents had sent him to live with a German family and there he witnessed Germans training and goose-stepping. He was discouraged from suggesting that there could be another war—a war in which he would later enlist while still very young. John joined the occupational forces in Kenya and Tanzania and that's where he picked up African dialects.

His stories of Dunkirk, his experience in the PoW camp, and even some undercover missions he engaged in were part of the family lore.

'After settling on Long Island, my grandparents became fixtures of their community in Huntington, known for

their fun parties and fashionable looks. My grandfather built a career in the hospitality industry, eventually becoming the General Manager of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan. My mother and her sisters used to perform for guests at the hotel, and at one point, they even met the Beatles in their early years. My grandfather entertained many celebrities but also formed close friendships with the hotel staff, many of whom attended his funeral. Sadly, he died rather suddenly of a heart attack in his office in 1971, and my grandmother never remarried. He had insisted on being buried at St. Bartholomew's Church, in Yealmpton, and many members of my family, including myself, have visited his grave over the years. My grandmother Pamela went on to raise my mother and five aunts. She remains dearly beloved and missed by us all. She passed away in December of 2016 in Wisconsin, with a handful of her daughters close by.



Plymouth College old boy, John Lintern Webber marries former St Dunstan's pupil Pamela Holbrook, 2 August 1947.

Left: John Webber poses with Jayne Mansfield at the Waldorf Astoria in New York.

Steve May and Robert Mann

Tour of Australia



Fifty years after meeting at the School in September 1973, Steve May and Robert Mann (together with their spouses Rachel and Debra) went on a Tour of Australia in October/November 2023 to celebrate Covid-postponed 60th birthday celebrations.

Robert married Debra in 1986 and has lived in Michigan, USA since 1990. Steve married Rachel in 1998 and now lives in Rachel's home city Lincoln.

'After flying in opposite directions around the globe, our rendezvous was Singapore. After four days, our Australian Tour began in

Adelaide where wine region was then spent two v to Sydney via M Kangaroos, peng and koalas were fortunately no si enjoyed a perfor the Sydney Opera House of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No1 – this was Steve's father's (Charles May – Plymouth's Mr Music) favourite piece of music.

Then it was on to Uluru in the Red Centre to experience the Aboriginal culture and sundowners.'

Two Wheel Ford

Gavin Kelly, Jeremy Ford and Rob Moody (88-95) smashing the Tour de Moor this year, raising over £300 for St Luke's Hospice.



Going Dutch

Last year Penny and Richard Atkinson went to Holland last year to celebrate Julien and Ottilia Bensaïd's silver wedding (Julien lives and works in Twello).

L-R: Penny Atkinson (90), Julien Bensaïd (90), Katherine Van Beveren(nee Willis), Mark Postle Hacon (90), Richard Atkinson.

Our Man in Monte Carlo



Received the following message via school earlier this summer from Dr Michael Horswell (79): 'I featured as an "unknown" in a photograph in the 2024 magazine; the author most certainly should have known better!!

For those in doubt, I am alive and well even sporting OPM colours in Monte Carlo this last Monday. Boy it was hot as my shirt confirms'

Playing the Generation Game

In a world that's all too often obsessed with gambling, I'm not sure what odds you would have got on three OPM siblings all producing babies in the same calendar year. But in 2024 that's precisely what happened with James (02), Bea (05) and Chloe Robinson (09). James and Lucy were first off the mark, in Petersfield, celebrating the arrival of Louis on 18 January, then Bea and Hannah,

in Penegoes, Wales, followed with Lyra Morgan on July 15.

Then it wasn't long before the youngest of the siblings, Chloe together with Sam, gave birth to Nora, in Peckham, on Halloween.

Here we see the three siblings together with babes for the first time in Portsmouth (not Plymouth) over the Christmas period.



Ed Vaughan Harriet Evans

On Saturday 21 September 2024, Ed Vaughan (OPM class of 2008) married Harriet Evans (PHSG) on the outskirts of Plymouth. It was an incredible sunny day on Dartmoor, surrounded by their friends & family - featuring surprise singing waiters, crowd surfing and Cornish pasties. Let's do it again!

OPMs in attendance were:
Chloe Johnson (Robinson), Megan Hanfstingl (Palmer), Chris Robinson, Steve Randall, Josh Webb, Pete Webb, James Worth, Paul Renwick, Richard Skinnard, Ben Tolan, Hedley Putnam, Tom Harker, Laura Harker (Middleton) and Harry Clark supplying the bar and cocktails!

OPMs congregate for a blurry moment!



Ed Vaughan marries former Plymouth High headgirl Harriet Evans.



All Work and a Lot of Plays

Massive congratulations to Dr Chris Savery who, some 50 years after leaving school, has just been awarded a Phd in creative writing from Plymouth University. Not that it's taken him that long, as he's certainly had an interesting journey along the way, most of it as a playwright. Chris founded Plymouth Presents Theatre Company not long after leaving school and over a number of years they performed various Savery plays including *The Megahype* at the old Palace Theatre, *Cromwell* at the Globe Theatre, *Drake* at Devonport Town Hall, and *Marilyn* at the Barbican Theatre.

The latter was performed at the Midtown International Theatre Festival in New York and also in Paris. It was nominated for three awards – best play, best playwright and best director. The New York director was Angie Kristic who also directed and co-produced Chris's historical drama piece *To Win A Crown of Thorns*, which was presented as a

staged reading as part of the Camden Fringe Festival last summer.

Based on the English Civil War the cast for the production included Will Barton, who played Boris Johnson in the hit *The Last Temptation of Boris Johnson* in London. Also lending their talents were fellow OPMs, Peter Seaton Clark the celebrated actor who was featured in a recent edition of the *OPM Magazine*, David (Frankie) Abbott and Simon Petherick (pictured lr above).

To Win A Crown Of Thorns

BY CJ SAVERY

DIRECTED BY ANGIE KRISTIC



LONDON 2024
CAMDEN FRINGE FESTIVAL

1945 & All That

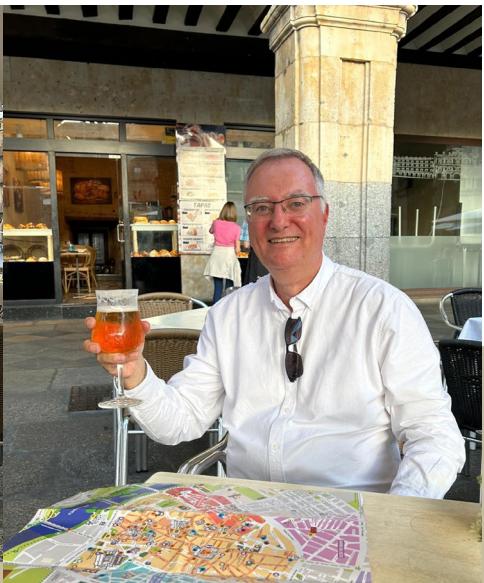
The 80th Anniversary of VE Day saw street parties across the country. Locally Peter Lowson was photographed by the local press at one in Thorn Park. Peter was pictured holding framed portraits of his maternal uncle, Harold Evans and his father, Leo. Harold lost his life during the Second World War when the ship he was on, *HMS Glorious*, was torpedoed. Leo meanwhile fought in the war after training in the United States as a Spitfire pilot. He was involved in a Spitfire crash during a training flight: Peter told the *Herald*: 'They were learning how to fly in formation, and apparently the chap who was flying behind him couldn't get into the proper position, so Leo took the lead to demonstrate what he was supposed to do, and this chap flew into some sort



OPM son and father, Henry & Peter Lowson

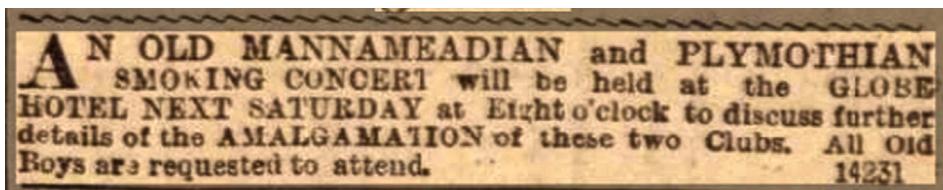
of cable that then knocked the back of the plane off and he crashed. Thankfully, there were no injuries or fatalities.' Peter added that after the war, Leo retrained as a teacher and ended up becoming headmaster of Prince Rock Secondary School..

Right: Peter and portraits



Nick Roper with Richard Lander (78), with whom, he spent a couple of weeks travelling around Spain, where the latter lives. Pictures taken in Salamanca.

A SPORTING UNION



On 27 December 1895, 130 years ago, the above notice was posted in the *Western Morning News*. A Smoking Concert! How times have changed! The two schools, Plymouth College and Mannamead School (just off Seymour Road) had only just become one earlier that month – following the sudden disappearance of Mannamead School's headmaster Theodore Butler. The official line was that after ten years service Mr Butler was 'giving up his work to enjoy well-earned repose.'

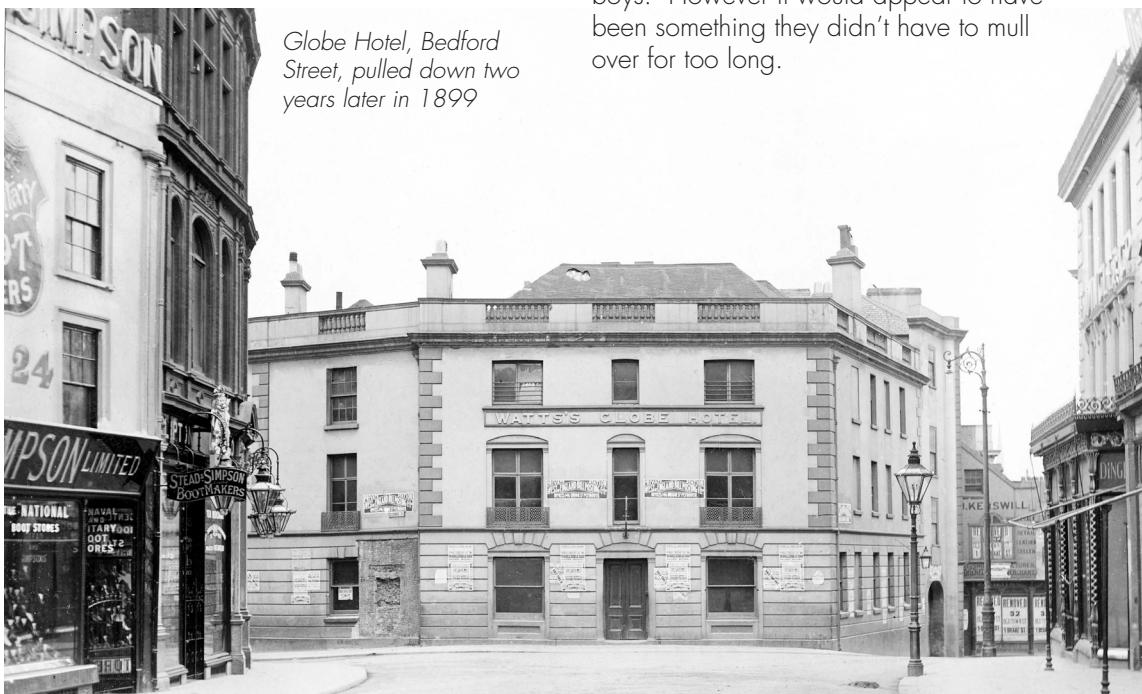
What the report didn't say, and yet just about everybody knew it at the time, was

that not only had Mr Butler left, but so too had his son's German governess ... but not Mrs Butler or his eight-year-old son! Mannamead School was at the centre of a major public scandal, but with no tabloid press or paparazzi, the news didn't travel much beyond word of mouth.

For the two schools however the amalgamation posed something of a dilemma. The encounters between the two had, for almost 20 years, been the most keenly contested events on the sporting calendar.

Not just for the schools but for their old boys. However it would appear to have been something they didn't have to mull over for too long.

Globe Hotel, Bedford Street, pulled down two years later in 1899



On Wednesday 8 January 1896 there was a game between an amalgamated Old Mannameadian & Old Plymothian side against a Home Park team at South Devon Terrace, a then popular sporting venue where the Astor Playing fields are now at Cattedown.

The match was described by the *Western Morning News* as being 'a suitable ending to the Old Boys' annual matches.' 'The Old Mannameadians have been doing brilliant things this year, and the Old Plymothian team, although only a shadow of what it was, has still some good men in it. The OM's county contingent, together with the pick of the OP's, should furnish a team hard indeed to beat. Home Park always play the game and, given a fine day, a splendid exposition of the Association code should be witnessed.'

The team, to represent the Old Boys will be: PN Buchan (OM), goal; HH Butcher (OP - there is a picture of him on the wall of the OPM Suite) and FD Conry (OM) backs; GH Pethybridge (OP), JL Conry (OM) and WM Willoughby (OP), half-backs; EH Babb (OP), FA Prance (OP), EE Ellery (OM), S Vosper (OM) and HJ Roe (OM) forwards.

Remarkably EH Babb had been captain of the Plymouth College team for two or three years running and when he left he captained the fledgling Argyle team for a number of seasons.



EH Babb was one of around 50 old boys of Plymouth College and Mannamead School who played for Argyle between 1886 and 1903, when the club turned professional

The combined Old Boys XI, did win the encounter convincingly, 3-1. It's interesting to note how the newspaper put the OMs first, I'm not sure Mannamead and Plymouth College was ever a serious option, OMPs looks quite weird, but who knows!

Oddly enough with the OPM War Memorial appearing this year it's sobering to reflect that the goalkeeper, Buchan, was to lose his life in the Great War, while James (JJ) Conry was to become a hero of the Boer War and then to be speared to death by Sudanese rebels shortly before that War.

Promoted to Captain in 1901, he was one of a number of British officers who



*James Lionel Joyce Conry
16 Nov 1873
-3 March 1914*

joined the Egyptian army in 1906. It was part of an Anglo-Egyptian pact to take control of the Sudan. In 1908 slavery was made illegal in the Sudan and Captain Conry led mountain climbing sorties on slave-traders to repatriate victims. Promoted to Major in 1910, on 3 March 1914, commanding an Arab Battalion who had surrounded Sudanese outlaws, he was parleying with them, when they treacherously speared him and three of his men to death. Most of the outlaws were killed in the ensuing gun battle. The spot where he died, 250 miles south-east of Khartoum, is named after him.

Incidentally having lost the rivalry between the two schools it wasn't long before football was forsaken in favour of rugby, until it was revived more recently.



The New Swimming Stroke

Saturday 23 July 1921

It was just over 100 years ago and this picture appeared in the *Western Morning News*. Some older OPMs will recognise the backdrop: it's the School swimming pool when it was an outdoor only facility, a feature it retained until the 1980s when the new Sports Hall was built.

The Plymouth College pool was not new though in 1921 as it had been opened officially on 6 May 1902 and even then the School was at the forefront of swimming locally – there were no formal, public swimming pools anywhere else in the Three Towns (Plymouth, Stonehouse and Devonport). Yet locally a significant

number of mainly young people, mostly boys, were losing their lives, messing about in local rivers, creeks and the coastline generally.

It was a matter of some concern, and not just in Plymouth. The need to learn to swim was vital for anyone venturing into the water. Plymouth College was famous for it already and here, in 1921, we find a medical student from Glasgow University, George Robertson, demonstrating a new swimming stroke, 'the crawl' ... 'which is claimed to give a higher rate of speed than others.'

The report continued: 'He interested a large number of swimmers at Plymouth College baths on Thursday.'



Olympic Silver in Paris for OPM in 50m Freestyle

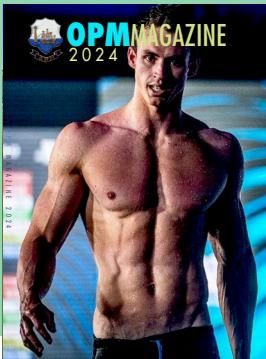
Friday 2 August 2025

Last year's pin up boy, Ben Proud, who appeared on the front cover of the *OPM Magazine*, made international headlines when he won silver at the Paris Olympics.

Ben, whose mother Sally lives in the Royal William Yard, had won gold six times in the 50m freestyle event in the British Swimming Championships – he's also won gold in the butterfly a remarkable seven times.

Ben has been selected for the 2025 World Aquatics Championships this summer in Singapore.

Interestingly butterfly is a much newer stroke than crawl having been introduced by an American swimmer, Henry Myers, in the 1930s. Freestyle is not necessarily crawl but can be any stroke a swimmer chooses as long as it's consistent. A form of it was demonstrated in the UK by native Americans in 1844, although first nation Australians swam also in a similar manner.



Green & Black

Following the unveiling of the bronze statue at the Plymouth Argyle stadium to commemorate Argyle player Jack Leslie, the first black player to receive an England cap, a blue plaque in his honour has been unveiled at his former home at 8 Glendower Road, Peverell. The inscription on the plaque reads:
**JOHN 'JACK' LESLIE 1901 – 1988
Captain of Plymouth Argyle FC and
the first Black footballer selected for
England lived here.**

The unveiling was led by Historic England's chief executive Duncan Wilson, alongside Leslie's granddaughters Lesley Hiscott, Gillian Carter and Lyn Davies.

John 'Jack' Leslie, who scored 137 goals in 400 appearances for Plymouth Argyle between 1921 and 1934, was called up to play for the national team 100 years ago in 1925.



*Matt Tiller
The co-founder of
the Jack Leslie
Campaign at
the unveiling
of a blue
plaque at
Jack's former
home in
Peverell.*

Sadly the striker was denied any actual England appearance after selectors discovered his heritage.

However he continued to excel at Plymouth Argyle and his significance in the history of English football has now thankfully been acknowledged and celebrated.

Three years ago, the FA presented his family with a posthumous cap and apologised by acknowledging that the retraction of his call-up 'should never have happened'.

That Jack has finally been recognised in this way is largely down to OPM Matt Tiller (90) and Greg Foxsmith, co-founders of The Jack Leslie Campaign, who raised £140,000 to erect the statue at Plymouth Argyle three years ago.

Matt says: '100 years ago, Plymouth Argyle's Jack Leslie was a young newlywed with the world at his feet.

'He walked from this house to Home Park where he was given the fantastic news that is so significant in the history of our national sport.

'Jack had been picked for England, the first player of colour to be selected. He returned to Glendower Road to share that achievement with his new wife, Win. And it was here that he would later have to deal with that dream being snatched away. But he bounced back, helping Argyle win promotion and becoming team captain.

'It also became a family home after his daughter Evelyn came along in 1927. 'It is a wonderful moment to see Jack recognised and celebrated here with a blue plaque.'



LIFE WITH THE LIONS

Dream job this summer for Sky Sports presenter Ellie Roper. The experienced sports journalist and reporter has covered many sports in the past, with special interests in rugby, football, boxing and tennis. So covering the British and Irish Lions tour of Australia could hardly tick more boxes for vivacious OPM who's also produced and presented programmes across a number of different BBC platforms.



OPM 65

TOM DALEY

Life After Diving

Extracted from an article for
The Sunday Times Magazine
25 May 2025 Megan Agnew



For more than two decades, Tom Daley's life was about tucks and pikes and backwards half-somersaults, about minuscule gains and millimetre adjustments, about launching himself from a ten-meter diving board again and again. In the 1.6 seconds he was in the air, he would be up against a similar amount of G-force as a fighter pilot and then he hit the water at 35 miles per hour. No splash.

He began his diving aged seven and was soon Britain's boy wonder. He went to his first Olympics in 2008 aged 14, won the World Championships at 15, won his first Olympic medal when he was 18 at London 2012 – he now has five including gold in Tokyo in 2021 – and in 2022 was awarded an OBE for services to diving, LGBTQ+ rights and charity.

But it came at a price. He had to talk to cameras – often smiling – about being bullied [at Eggbuckland Comprehensive before gaining his sports scholarship to

Plymouth College], about the death of his dad Robert, when he was 17, and about his sexuality. Behind the scenes he was suffering from disordered eating and crushing grief, from anxiety so extreme he would bite his nails until they bled and superstitions so dominant he could not walk in a straight line down the street. Last summer after winning silver at the Paris Olympics in the 10m men's synchronised dive with his partner, Noah Williams, he announced his retirement.

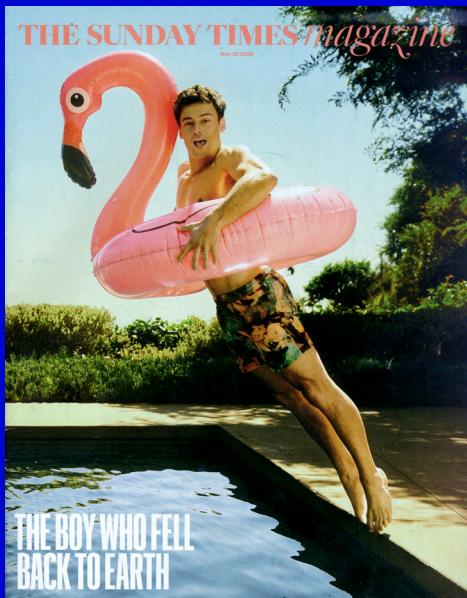




He hasn't dived since. He has just finished filming a new Channel 4 series, *The Game of Wool*, which is like *Bake Off* but for knitting (he took the hobby up in 2020 to try to stop him overthinking between dives). He will appear in the new celebrity version of *The Traitors* alongside Stephen Fry, Alan Carr, Jonathan Ross and Kate Garraway later this year. And he is the subject of a new Disney+ documentary, *Tom Daley: 1.6 Seconds*, about his childhood, diving career and marriage to his screenwriter husband, Dustin Lance Black, 50, with whom he has two sons.

So what happens to the diver without a board, the Olympian without a Games? To the rest of us Tom Daley, now 31, looks exactly the same. To himself, he is a different man entirely. 'I know if I'm rational about it, I should be completely happy,' he says, 'but seeing videos of what I looked like in the Olympics, I'm like, why can't I look like that again?' Home life in West Hollywood is very

different since retirement. He exercises for 'just' an hour each day, pushing Phoenix – their two year old – in his buggy in Runyon Canyon Park, running around Lake Hollywood as Robbie Ray, six, cycles on his bike, or goes to the gym with Lance.



Beijing 2008



'It feels as if that part of me that was a diver is dead,' says Tom.

'Everything hurts,' he continues, 'my knees are screwed, my back is screwed, my hips are always tight.' Diving after all is a collision sport. The force with which you hit the water is enough to break bones and split skin, detach retinas and burst eardrums. It never stopped being frightening to Tom.

'I would never have considered myself an anxious person,' he says, 'the only time that I ever felt anxious was when I was diving, it was always diving.'

Throughout his career he slept badly and developed habits so extreme they sound like an obsessive compulsive disorder. When he was younger he had to touch parts of his body in a certain order before a dive, he bit his nails, had a twitch. As he got older the behaviours became part of his routine: where he placed his water bottle, where he stood on the board and when he took off from it in relation to the second hand of the clock on the wall...

When he retired the anxiety 'just left', he says. 'Stopped'. The 200 plus



houseplants have gone. 'That was, again, one of my nervous obsessions.' What remains is knitting. 'Not necessarily everything should be knitted, but anything you see, you can knit', he says, totally sincerely. 'At home we have knitted lampshades, chandeliers, teapot cosies, pillows, blankets, kids' clothes.' As soon as one thing is finished he starts the next. He has even launched a knitting line, Made with Love, which is sold in more than 600 stores in North America and includes a tiny pair of knitted swimming briefs with 'Don't drink and dive' embroidered across their bottom. There is a cardigan-making kit called 'I like big buttons and I cannot lie'.

'I just bloody love knitting,' he says. 'It has been such a blessing for me. Really.'

So has he definitely retired?

'Yes', he pauses, 'I think so, but I thought so last time too.'

And what would be his dream gig?

'Clare Balding's role at the Olympics.'

'It just feels so weird to be done. I'll be the old man that used to dive. I feel happier but then I feel like I've also lost a part of me.'

The fear, anxiety and obsession might have gone but what has also disappeared are the hits of adrenaline, the thrill of the leap, the rush of survival. 'That adrenaline is the one bit of diving that will never, ever be replicated,' he says. 'Nothing in my life will ever be like that.'

Tom Daley: 1.6 Seconds is available to stream on Discovery+ from June 1.

OCD Diabetes & Me

An extract from **THE SUNDAY TIMES**

by chief sports writer **David Walsh**

14 February 2025

Henry Slade is enjoying a hugely successful career as centre for Premiership rugby club Exeter Chiefs and has over 70 England caps to his name. But he's had to battle not only OCD but also Type 1 Diabetes in order to keep at the top of his game.

Since early childhood he has been afflicted by the unwanted thoughts and repetitive behaviours of someone suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder. It meant that everything from tying shoe laces to turning off light switches had to be done in a certain way otherwise he believed that something bad would happen.

Once when he broke his leg playing for the Exeter Chiefs he believed it was down to the way he'd tied his boot laces: 'I'm pretty much out of that now,' he says, 'but I can lapse'.

However, just as he was beginning to get on top of the condition he found that actually it would come in quite handy... Henry was 18 and in the final year at Plymouth College, with A-levels around the corner. He had just signed for Exeter Chiefs and his plan was to get a place at the University of Exeter and combine that with rugby. The trouble began on an otherwise ordinary school day and a bad flu he couldn't shake off. Jayne his mum wasn't a mollycoddler; 'You've still got to go to school' she'd say. In the end he became like his mum. No matter how he felt, he didn't want to miss

a day and, until that flu, he never had. Coincidentally, his close friend at school, Ollie Wace went down with the same bug:

'I missed Thursday, was back in on Friday, feeling a bit better' says Henry. 'Ollie my mate was still off – I didn't think much of it. Over the weekend I sent him a text, "How are you doing? Feeling any better?"'

He said, 'Nah, I'm in hospital. I have type 1 diabetes.' I said, 'Bloody hell.' I told him I was sorry to hear that. He came into school the next week with his blood-testing kit. It was a new thing and everyone was testing their blood sugars. Mine was ten, which doesn't sound high, but is high. So the next day, I came in and said to Ollie, "Can I test myself again, just to make sure?" My level was 16 the next day. I was like, "Alright this is a bit weird".

He suspected the worst because John, his dad, was a type 1 diabetic, a condition that about 270,000 people in England have and which typically comes on before the age of 40, most often in childhood. His mum drove him to the GP surgery in South Brent. They tested his blood sugars, gave him a sugary drink and asked him to wait outside. If he wasn't diabetic, his body would restore his blood sugar balance.

Back with the doctor, his level was too high. 'You're a type 1 diabetic,' the doctor said, and that was it. One worry transcended all others: 'I'm supposed to



Henry Slade playing for the school against Whitgift in 2011

be starting my rugby career in a month and I can still do that, can't I?' he asked. 'Yeah, you can definitely, but you will have to be right on top of this, make sure you're managing yourself very well. It will just be another thing for you to worry about.'

Weeks later he turned up at Exeter Chiefs for his first days. By now they knew of his diabetes and Lewis Jones, one of the club's doctors, told him they would need to get him a therapeutic use exemption to allow him to use insulin. As Jones filled out the form, Henry noticed one of the questions: how long will the player need this medication? The doctor wrote, 'Life long'.

'I had to get my head around that', Henry says, 'This was me for ever.' Encouragement came from how his dad, John, lived life. Diabetes wasn't allowed to encroach. Five-a-side football, the gym, plenty of runs, always fit, John lived a normal life. Because Henry was a professional rugby player, the demands on his body were greater, but he thought that only meant he had to be even more vigilant.

'So when I wake up, the first thing I do is check how I slept and what my blood sugar levels were overnight. Did I stay within normal levels? Then I think about how long before I eat and what I will have before training. Then you've got to think about when you have your first injection, because where you inject affects the time it takes for the insulin to do its work.'

'An injection into the leg takes about ten minutes to kick in. Arms 20 minutes, stomach 25 minutes, and you've got to keep changing the site where you inject. At home it's challenging, you've got the kids' breakfast to make and then you've got to sort your own. Ok, I've now had my jab, so I have to start my breakfast at a specific time. This is just the first half an hour of your day.'





'Obviously, every meal time, there's an injection. That's another three or four. With the morning one, that makes it five or six, then maybe two or three more after that. I would say I have between six and ten injections every day. And it changes around training matches.

Adrenaline gets my level up in matches, so I will take an insulin injection before the game to counter that.'

He wears his Apple watch right up to kick-off. For the game against New Zealand in November, the haka skewed his level and he had to decide if he needed to bring it down with an injection. Test matches are tough because after getting out on the pitch the preliminaries can last up to ten minutes, which isn't good for the player waiting for the adrenaline of the game to restore his blood sugar balance.

Henry has dealt with all this while playing 71 matches for England. His centre partnership with Ollie Lawrence has become one of the more established units and is one that the head coach, Steve Borthwick, likes. Seventy-one

'I broke my leg playing for Exeter and believed it was down to the way I'd tied my laces'

caps not out is, in the circumstances, a decent haul. He deflects the compliment by talking about the Dexcom G7 that is attached to his upper left arm and constantly monitors his blood sugars, sending readings every five minutes to his Apple watch.

'The graph on my watch is basically my life. Keep the line inside the normal range and I'm good. I stay on the case all the time.'

So have his obsessive compulsive tendencies helped to control his diabetes?

'One hundred per cent I believe that. I always thought it was good that I was the one who got it and not one of my two brothers. Definitely the middle one would have struggled with it. But being a bit OCD does help because once I have a routine I'm good at sticking to it.'

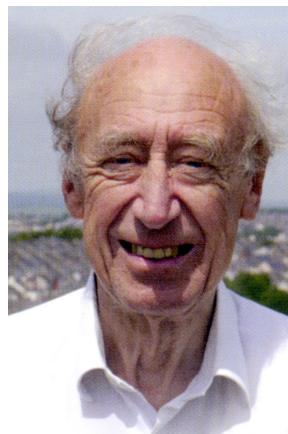
Dr James Morehen, performance nutritionist with the England team, says he is very impressed by Henry's discipline around diabetes. 'Many factors can affect Henry's levels: time of day, macronutrient intake, hydration, quality of sleep, altitude, temperature, illness, strength-based training versus running-based training and of course hormones like adrenaline.'

'You can only guess at the amount of adrenaline release in a Test match. Diabetes doesn't care that Henry is an elite athlete. Pre-game, we monitor his levels all the way up until after the national anthems, at which point he hands me his Apple watch and is ready to play.'

David JAPES

1933 - 23 January 2025

1943-1952



In the 6th form at Plymouth College David Japes developed an abiding love for the Devon and Cornish countryside. In 2013 David told the OPM Magazine that: 'Some years before this, Garnons-Williams had decided that the school should have a full-time music department and, more crucially, a part-time art master. Leslie Wills was that *rara avis* amongst art masters – a watercolourist: not only did I learn how to lay in a wash, but I was introduced by him to the work of our great English watercolourists. I began to see the English rural scene, and the West Country, in particular, through their eyes. Whatever else has been said about Garnons-Williams, his desire to expand the school's cultural awareness was an inspired move. He was also a good sixth form teacher, always encouraging us when we faced difficulties. George Dundas was, perhaps, less disposed to make allowances for pupils of moderate attainment, but he was universally popular. He became a firm friend

after I had left Oxford and had begun my teaching career. I met up with him at the start of each term for nine years in Liverpool (he was then at the Alsop High School), before I embarked on the following day's Manx boat taking boys back to King William's College (in the 1950's – though liberalised later – the Alcatraz of the public school world: only two successful home runs were made during my time there).

In the course of my excursions, some legal, some less so, I had become aware of the artist William Payne, who seemed to have a special feel for the West Country landscape and Plymouth's coastal scenery in particular. His work was to be found on occasion in the antique shops in the Barbican, where I paused before making for the Turnchapel ferry. Payne was thought to be a self-taught Plymouth-born artist, a shipwright's assistant, and after that the most fashionable drawing master of the day in Georgian London. I found much of the tradition implausible, and

determined to discover more about the artist. I could not easily do this during the early part of my teaching career, as I only had a limited period in Devon each year, but by the 1970s and 1980s I had more chance to do so, as I had obtained a post at Blundell's.'

David began his illustrious 29-year career as a classics master at Blundell's, in 1966, retiring in 1995.

The school's website records that 'David's tenure at Blundell's was marked by his excellence in scholarship and teaching. He cultivated a strong record of results, earning the respect and admiration of his students and colleagues alike. His powerful intellect and deep passion for the ancient world inspired generations of students, many of whom went on to pursue classics and related disciplines themselves. Beyond the classroom, David was instrumental in his stewardship of the school's Natural History Society and the Wynne Society, activities he shared with his beloved wife, Mary.'

Mary was well-known for her exceptional culinary skills, delighting many with her preparations of jugged hare, tickled trout, and pheasant, which became legendary among their circle.

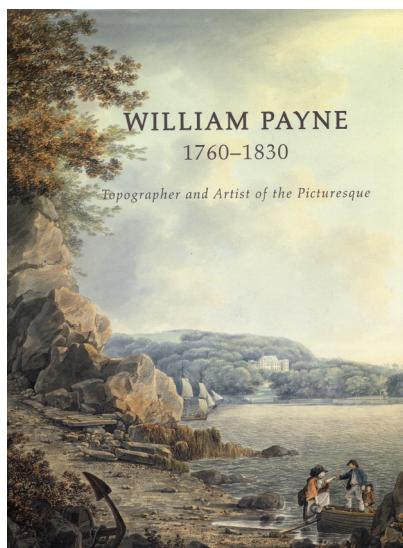
An erudite specialist in antiquities and porcelain, David's expertise extended far beyond his teaching duties. He became a celebrated authority on the Romantic watercolourist William Payne (1760–1840), about whom he published two highly regarded books, the first in 1992 and the second was published in 2013. David's work cemented his reputation as a scholar and lover of the picturesque. His enthusiasm for the arts was further

evident in his talent as a pianist, bringing joy to those fortunate enough to hear him play.

David was also a dedicated house tutor in Westlake for many years, providing mentorship and guidance to countless students. A keen supporter of the school's cricket team and the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), he was a figure of encouragement and camaraderie within the Blundell's community.

In the Common Room, David was well known for his sharp mind, warm wit, and breadth of knowledge, which made him a valued colleague and friend. His contributions to the life of Blundell's were immense, so much so, that his former classroom bears his name.

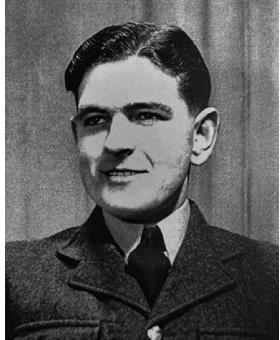
David's life was one of service, passion, and intellectual rigour. He leaves behind his wife Mary, son Huan, daughter Liz Vhadra, and five grandchildren.



David Courtis SEARLE

25 April 1933 – 2025

1940 -1951



David was born in Plymouth on 25 April 1933 to William and Edith Searle (nee Courtis).

He had two siblings Graham and Paul to whom he was very close. He was the son of parents who wanted the best for their children so despite their modest means all three boys went to Plymouth College where he was also followed by his son Peter. His three daughters all attended St Dunstan's Abbey School.

As a sportsman he showed some talent at school and he represented the school at Rugby and also the school and Plymouth at Water Polo. He was also in the school full bore shooting team. In the cadet force he attained the rank of Platoon Sergeant. In the end David decided to leave school early to enter the family business as the eldest son. This was, however, until he was 18 as he was called up for National Service where he spent two years in the RAF posted to Germany. He often talked about the utter devastation there and in particular the total lack of men of a certain generation. However, he was no stranger to destruction having himself lived through the war years and

the constant air raids in Plymouth as a boy. In fact he narrowly missed death when a bomb fell on the front of the house demolishing it almost entirely. Luckily the family were in the back of the house and remained unscathed. It was an experience that stayed with him all his life and he said that every time he heard a siren his stomach would turn over and the memories of the Blitz would come flooding back.

After National Service, David returned to Plymouth to the family business but after three years he decided to move on and expand his horizons. His lack of qualifications made job seeking difficult. A good option was the Metropolitan Police, which he joined in 1956.

After what he called his apprenticeship he took the opportunity to join the Nyasaland Police working for the foreign office in 1959.

By this time David had met and married Patricia whom he had known virtually all his life. They remained married for 69 years until his death. At the time David and Patricia decided to go into overseas service they already had two beautiful

daughters, Julia and Deborah.

He considered that his eventual 12 years in Africa were his main career: five years in the Nyasaland Protectorate and seven years in the dependent country of Malawi. During his career as an officer he served in many posts from regional officer in charge to several senior administrative posts in Zomba Headquarters.

He left Malawi when he took voluntary redundancy in 1971 as a superintendent to facilitate localisation by which time he and Patricia had had a further daughter, Lindsay, and a son Peter.

He had also acquired a love of squash and golf which he played well into his seventies with some flair.

After what he always called his three years in the wilderness, during which time he worked for the MOD and a short stint with Spillers French, though the family also managed an extended trip to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) with a view to moving there full time but that never transpired.

In 1974 David was offered a post in the New Hebrides a French/Anglo condominium which today is the independent country of Vanuatu. He served in the South Pacific for seven years, leaving on Independence Day in 1980. During his career there he ran the Immigration Department and was also later appointed Superintendent in charge of both the Northern and then the Southern divisions. During his last year there he put down a rebellion by the local chief Jimmy Stevens for which he received a commendation.

On leaving the South Pacific he joined the Royal Oman Police where he served as a Superintendent/Major on general duties and then in command of the

Airport division.

On leaving Oman David, moved to work for the port Authorities in Sierra Leone in Freetown where he remained for two years commanding a small police force of some 350 officers. As he said on several occasions, this job was an experience not without its dangers...

In 1987 on leaving Sierra Leone he spent several months on a short contract working for the ports Authorities for the United Nations in Columbia, Sri Lanka. In 1988 David again returned to the UK. John Sherwood of Sealink Ferries had decided to replace the British Transport Police with private contractors, one of which was Capital Consultants.

David secured a role at Capital Consultants on his return. This company was set up to run an operation at Dover Western Docks and Folkestone with just 26 men. David grew this contract under the provision of Maritime and Security Services (MASS) to over 500 officers becoming the largest provider of security for ports and ferries in the UK, stretching from Belfast to Ramsgate back down to Dover. During this time Capital Consultants boosted by MASS had floated on the London stock exchange. David finished his career and working service as Chairman of the Uniformed division of CAPITA security services.

He finally retired in 1997 and returned to his roots in Devon, living comfortably in Tavistock next to his beloved moors where he and Patricia would daily walk the dogs surrounded by wilderness and beauty.

He continued to play golf throughout his retirement winning numerous competitions right up to the age of 75. In his 70th year he achieved three hole in ones of which he was very proud.

A taciturn man who thought more than he spoke, he was immensely proud of his family whom he loved very much. He leaves behind his wife Pat, four children, eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren, one dog (out of many) and a lot of golf trophies.

He had an amazing and privileged life and was part of a generation of adventurers the like of which will not exist again in a world now changed beyond recognition.

David was his own man and he lived life to the full.

Graham SEARLE

10 July 1937- 24 April 2024

1944-1956



In his final year at Plymouth College, Graham was vice captain of the hockey team, captain of the rugby and cricket teams and head boy, all whilst winning a place at Worcester College, Oxford. Having finished school, and after a summer selling Kelly's ice-cream off a tricycle along the Plymouth waterfront, Graham began his compulsory two years of National Service. After completing his officer training he found himself in the Queens Own Nigerian Regiment at Enugu, Nigeria, in charge of a platoon of troops from a mix of local ethnic groups.

Graham started university in 1958, hitchhiking from Plymouth to Oxford on his first day and had only the fondest memories of his time at Worcester College. Unsurprisingly, he played endless amounts of sport, once famously

getting hooked off the cricket pitch in full pads for a tutorial that was already well underway.

On graduating, Graham thought he wanted to teach, but made a pact with a friend that they would both try their hand in industry first to make sure. Forty years later the friend hadn't left, but Graham only lasted six months at Player's in Nottingham before securing himself a temporary role teaching at Bristol Grammar School in the summer of 1962, which convinced him that teaching was indeed the correct choice. Graham moved to Scotland for his first full-time teaching position at Strathallan School where he found his feet teaching and had hockey trials for the midlands of Scotland.

Graham then moved to Stamford School where he was head of history, head

of hockey, and a housemaster, whilst captaining the Sunday Eleven at the prestigious Burghley Park Cricket Club. It was during this period that his career really began to take off, and he was known for his empathetic, enthusiastic, and sometimes unconventional teaching style. On top of everything else, he somehow found time to re-design the A-Level history syllabus and to become a published author with his book *The Counter Reformation* appearing in 1974. In 1975 Graham moved back to Bristol to become Headmaster of Colston's School. He was a transformational head and took the school out of a difficult period, broadening the curriculum, investing in sport and the arts, while improving exam results.

In 1988 he moved to Camberley to become National Director of ISCO, the school careers organisation. Away from work, he found his way to Bagshot

Cricket Club where he once again took on captaincy of the Sunday team. The new millennium brought new beginnings. Graham retired as National Director of ISCO but continued as a part time careers advisor. In 2000 he also began his 23-year career as a volunteer advisor for the Citizens Advice Bureau. He became President of the Surrey branch of the Historical Association and was an active member of the Cricket Memorabilia Society and the Association of Cricket Statisticians.

As well as writing for these groups, he painstakingly compiled a detailed social history of cricket in Bagshot, as well as of the Searle family. He was a lifelong supporter of Plymouth Argyle and kept the programme from his first match in the early 1950s.

This was a life lived to the absolute fullest, which touched so many.

Richard Jeffery MITCHELL

23 July 1944 - 20 December 2024

1956-61



Richard attended Plymouth College Prep and Main School in the 1950s. Keen on cricket and swimming, he trained at Brighton Art College and taught at

a school in Marlow before travelling to South Africa on a £10 scheme, (provided one stayed for at least two years – he stayed for nearly 60!). There he met his future wife Sureen while teaching at the Carinus Art College in Grahamstown and they married in 1972.

Later they moved to Capetown where he set up a very successful Art Restoration business. An active sailor with his own 30-foot yacht he was a long term member of the False Bay yacht club. Richard died following heart and kidney failure at home just before Christmas. His wife, daughter and son were at his side.

Malcolm LeGRICE

15 May 1940 - 3 December 2024

1951-58



By all accounts Malcolm Le Grice wasn't interested in a great deal at Plymouth College apart from art and rugby but he went on to become one of the most influential modernist filmmakers in the world and he had work featured and held in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Louvre in Paris, the Tate Modern and the Tate Britain and the National Film Library of Australia.

In 1958 he met Judith Keast at a school dance, and they married three years later. She survives him, along with their children, Oliver and Josephine, and grandchildren, Ben and Jasmine.

Post Plymouth College Malcolm went to Plymouth Art College and then to the Slade School of Fine Art in London ... as a painter. Like a number of art school students at the time, he also played jazz guitar in a local band.

In 1965, while still on his postgraduate year at the Slade, Malcolm began teaching parttime on Peter Kardia's fine art course, then Freddy Gore's painting department at St Martin's School of Art and, from the following year, at Goldsmiths' College. He began to make films, showing his *Castle One* (1966, one of his works held by Tate

Modern) together with paintings at the Drury Lane Arts Lab, central London, in 1968. He also began exploring computer-generated work, participating in Event One, organised by the Computer Art Society, held at the Royal College of Art in 1969.

To help film artists and a wide range of independent film-makers create their work and retain control of it in a commercial industry, he established a film printer and developing tank at the Arts Lab and, in 1969, a fully equipped film workshop at the Robert Street Arts Lab.

Working with other eminent experimental artists and filmmakers their endeavours coalesced into Filmaktion, a movement that in 1973 had exhibitions at Gallery House, London, and at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. In 2012 there was a reprise of Filmaktion at Tate Tanks, at Tate Modern. He jointly established the St Martin's Film Unit in 1976, and in 1985 became head of media art at Harrow School of Art, soon absorbed into the University of Westminster. In order to provide doctorates in art practice, in 1997 he was appointed research professor at the University of the Arts, London. In 2000 he and David Curtis established the British Artists' Film and Video Study Collection at UAL, dedicated to the work of UK and international moving image artists.

Le Grice's installations were shown regularly in Europe and the US, with solo exhibitions in New York. In London, an exhibition at the Richard Saltoun gallery in 2015 was followed in 2024 by DNA /AND at the Velarde gallery, including early paintings and new collaborations with scientists utilising DNA coding to store data.

The essays collected in his book *Experimental Cinema in the Digital Age* (2001) followed his earlier *Abstract Film and Beyond* (1977).

Peter SPRIDELL

August 1928 - 21 September 2024

1939-45



Peter's entry into Plymouth College coincided with the start of the Second World War and among many memories he could recall was the American Army installing anti-aircraft guns on the school cricket pitch with the cricket master protesting 'You can't put them there – we're playing Kelly this afternoon!' After completing his National Service, Peter went to Exeter College, Oxford (BA Modern Languages, 1948), where he was part of the college's rugby club. He was also a member of the Oxford University Amateur Boxing Club and Oxford University Debating Society. He went on to complete postgraduate study at Harvard University in their Advanced Management Program.

Peter continued his relationship with Oxford and was elected an Honorary Fellow, first of Templeton College, and then of Green Templeton College, in 2008. He was a generous donor and supporter of the community.

Professionally, Peter joined Marks and Spencer in 1951 where, after numerous store managerial roles, he went on to

become alternate director (1970–72). In 1972 he was appointed to the main board where, until his retirement in 1988, he served as personnel director, building store operations director and lastly director of estates and physical distribution. He was a progressive voice within the Marks and Spencer business, promoting the development of the first out-of-town stores.

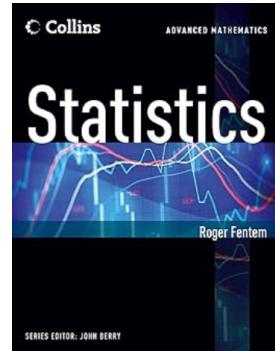
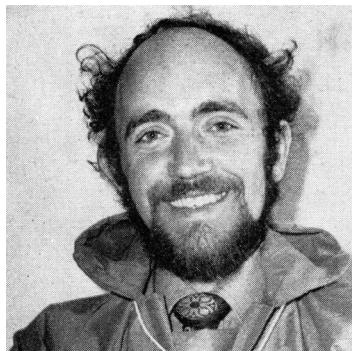
He was highly influential within retail real estate circles – playing leading roles in the British Council of Shopping Centres, the Oxford Street Association and the Town & Country Planning Association. He also served as board director or consultant of organisations including the British Rail Property Board, Royal Artillery Museum and Heritage Company and the Wine Society. He was also honoured to have been Captain, President and Honorary Member of Moor Park Golf Club.

Beloved husband of Joy, and loving father of David, Pippa and Robert. Proud grandfather of Olivia, Samuel, Issie, Sophie and Georgina

Roger FENTEM

20 December 2024

Staff 1972-1982



Roger was a Cornishman, born in Falmouth and schooled at Falmouth Grammar. From there he went to the University of East Anglia where he studied maths. He got a first and subsequently did three years research into the driving mechanisms of ocean currents.

In the Centenary Edition of the *Plymothian* he described his interests as sea-angling, Go, square dancing, DIY, gardening and Kernow-y-Kernewek (Cornwall and the Cornish language).

A form master at the school, he apparently had little interest in sport 'I once held a cricket bat the wrong way up and was run out without moving an

inch.'

He left Plymouth College in 1982 and went on to teach at Devonport High School for Girls.

Later he moved to the College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth and trained primary and secondary teachers to teach mathematics.

He authored, edited, or co-authored a number of books.

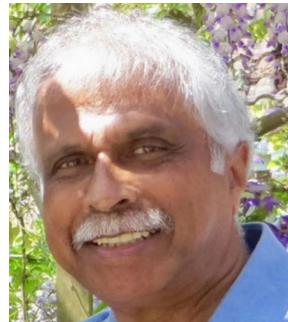
At the age of 70, Roger took up cycling and once cycled 300 miles for Cancer Research. Making an effort to walk every day, Roger would split his time between a number of different activities from leading local walking groups, to feeding his chickens, DIY and taking online

Roy Subroto MITTER

September 2024

1954-64

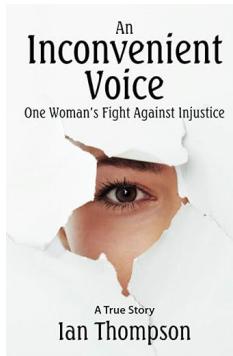
Roy was a junior prefect and Under Officer in the RAF Section of the CCF as he left school, he also played a bit of cricket for the 3rd XI and was secretary of the Wither Africa Society. Husband, father and well-liked by those who knew him Roy passed suddenly but peacefully in his sleep at Derriford Hospital, he was 79.



Ian THOMPSON

1955 - 28 January 2025

1972-1982



A well-liked rugby player at school and a fanatical surfer, Ian Thompson has died in his adopted town of Encinitas, California. A published author, his press blurb states that Ian 'was born and raised in England. He began his career doing menial jobs before starting a surfboard company. He has travelled all over the world, mostly on surfing adventures. A freelance journalist, Ian has published articles in *Surfer Magazine*, in British sports journals, and in local US newspapers. He is also a retired manager and technology executive from the cybersecurity field.

'An Inconvenient Voice' is the true story of Maggie Houlihan, who chose poverty over an abusive marriage and escaped to a small coastal town where she would ascend to become the most polarizing public figure in its history. It's the story of a remarkable woman written by her husband after her death. It's the tale of two strangers who married for the sake of a Green Card, then unexpectedly fell in love and stayed together another twenty-

eight years. It's the story of Maggie's universal compassion, her inability to say no to anyone she found suffering, especially the dozens of animals she rescued and homed or adopted. It's the tale of her election to city council in a seaside village and her unrelenting fight to preserve the town from the forces of greed and self-serving power, in spite of libel and death threats she received along the way. It's a story that stands as a testimony to the triumph of good over evil. But most of all, it's a tribute to Maggie Houlihan's amazing character by the man who knew her best, her second husband, Ian Thompson.'

Ian died on 28 January 2025 following a battle with cancer. He was 69 and was described by friends and colleagues as a vibrant, fun-loving individual who left a lasting impact on the community through his work and advocacy. Known for his quick wit and playful nature, Thompson also had a serious side, particularly when supporting his wife's political and community endeavours.

Tony SANDERS

19 July 2024

1957-1964



Anthony (Tony) William Sanders died in Portimao, Portugal from a rare form of colon cancer for which he had undergone radio and chemotherapy for a few short weeks.

He was the big brother who wouldn't let me get away with anything and, occasionally, made sure I never forgot, but he was kind, funny and generous. He was my mentor and my sporting hero. My memory fades, but he first showed his talent for sport at the Prep School where he obtained the Victor Ludorum. At the Main school he was the fastest sprinter over 100 yards, in the pool he won the backstroke and broke the record every year, he played rugby for the 1st XV on the right wing and he also played for the 1st XI hockey team. In addition he became Deputy Head Boy for good measure.

Tony left Plymouth College in July 1964 at the age of 19 and went to work for HJ Heinz in Hayes. He went on to work at the Milk Marketing Board before becoming Marketing Director at Scot Bowyers and then Telfers in Northampton.

In 1984 he left England to take up a General Manager role with a Saudi Arabian meat manufacturer before semi-retiring in 1992 to Carvoiero in Portugal where he ran a bed and breakfast business. By the time he arrived in Portugal he had virtually retired from exercise too – never mind sport. He became an avid viewer of some of the televised sport he was renowned for at school. It was a life that he thoroughly enjoyed for more than 30 years, where he met and treasured so many new friends.

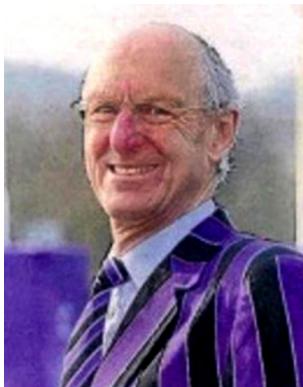
While at school he joined Margaret Bailey's repertory company, the Rapiers. That was where he caught the acting bug and he remained active on the stage until recently. He even shared the stage with Rula Lenska while working at HJ Heinz. She went on to star in *Rock Follies* with Julie Covington and had a regular role in *Coronation Street*.

Strangely, He and I shared working for the same company when Scot Bowyers was taken over by Unigate. This went on for almost 10 years although our paths rarely crossed. *John Sanders*

Keith BONHAM

28 March 1939- 28 January 2025

1946-58



Players and spectators at a Clifton game In mid February observed a silence in memory of Keith Bonham.

Keith was a truly outstanding man with a demanding role for years as managing partner of the Bristol office of Ernst and Young.

Outside of work Keith gave dedicated and incredible service to Clifton Rugby Club. He was the club's Treasurer for a remarkable 49 years, a period which included the ground transfer to Cribbs Causeway.

Affectionately known as 'scattercash,' he captained the 'A' XV for many years, imperious in the lineout, due to his height, and sporting a vintage scrum cap, he was very well known on the Bristol rugby scene. He was a a proud wearer of his lavender and black blazer on club occasions.

Keith was appointed MBE by the late Queen for his enormous contribution to the wider Bristol community. He served

as a Deputy Lord Lieutenant [DL] which is a royal appointment to support Bristol's Lord Lieutenant. DLs assist the work of the Lord Lieutenant in representing the monarch locally.

His charitable work included a major role at St Peter's Hospice in governance and fundraising. He ran many fundraising marathons, was a past President of Clifton Rotary Club and held significant roles in other charities, including Manor Farm Boys Club, and conservation projects. He ran the London Marathon to mark his 70th birthday and once cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats. During lockdown he did 262 laps of 1km around local roads over a period of a month, to raise money for St Peter's Hospice.

A prefect at Plymouth College, Keith left the school and went to the University of North Staffordshire in 1958. He moved to Bristol in 1962 as his then future wife Gill was living there.

Andrew FRY

1966 - 30 April 2024

1977-83



Andrew was born in London in 1966, but his family soon relocated to Plymouth, where he grew up together with his sister and brother (Tim, also an OPM). He took an interest in science from an early age, inspired in part by his father who was a biology teacher. His academic achievements at Plymouth College led to him being awarded a prestigious scholarship to study Biochemistry at St Peter's College, University of Oxford, where he graduated with a first-class Honours degree in 1989, winning a Carl Albert Award. He then completed a DPhil at the Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, University of Oxford, under the supervision of Ian Hickson.

Beyond his academic interests, Andrew's enthusiasm for the high outdoors began with family holidays in the Lake District and Derbyshire Peaks, and on school ski trips to the Alps. His love of the mountains had an influence on his career pathway, as he undertook postdoctoral research in the laboratory of Erich Nigg, initially as a Royal Society Postdoctoral

Fellow at the Swiss Institute for Experimental Cancer Research (ISREC) in Lausanne (1993–1995), and then as a Maître-Assistant in the Department of Molecular Biology at the University of Geneva, Switzerland (1995–1998). In Switzerland, Andrew's passion for climbing grew and, with his friend Kevin Hannavy, he conquered over 30 peaks above 4000 m, including the majestic Matterhorn and Mont Blanc. His adventurous spirit led to some near misses, including a chilling encounter with a thunderstorm on the Ober Gabelhorn. Andrew and Kevin sheltered in a crack in the face of the mountain, placing their ice axes several metres away. Lightning struck the mountain, flowed down the slab and, crossing the gap they were in, gave them a shocking reminder of the forces of nature. True to his character, Andrew assisted in several rescues of other climbers that involved one or two evacuations by helicopter. Andrew returned to the UK in 1999, when he was appointed to a lectureship in the Department of Biochemistry at

the University of Leicester. He quickly established himself as a principal investigator and gifted teacher and was promoted to a Reader in 2005 and to a Personal Chair in 2008. He made many outstanding contributions to the University, as Deputy Head of the Department of Biochemistry (2010–2015) and Dean of Research in the College of Life Sciences (2014–2020). Andrew was also an active member of the Biochemical Society and the British Society for Cell Biology. His achievements and contributions to science resulted in a Lister Institute Senior Research Fellowship and election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Biology. Beyond his direct contributions to the scientific endeavour, Andrew enthusiastically took on strategic leadership roles within the University, most importantly serving for six years as Dean of Research in the College of Life Sciences. In this role, Andrew not only supported and advised the senior College leadership, but also served as a champion of research across the College, often personally supporting colleagues with grant and fellowship applications. Andrew also led a number of major funding initiatives for the College including securing the Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund through which many important projects across the University were funded. Andrew considered his roles as a leader, mentor and advisor as some of the most rewarding and important aspects of his work. Even in his final days, he was supervising postgraduates and communicating with collaborators online as closely as any other great mentor can do in person.

While we reflect on the difficulty of

writing a piece such as this, we recall the ease and joy of collaboration and co-authorship with Andrew. He was always incredibly generous with his time and insights – returning detailed feedback on papers, grants and fellowship applications in a flash. Memories of Andrew's courage and character will continue to inspire all who knew him, to embrace adventure, pursue knowledge in uncharted domains and cherish the bonds of family, friendship and collegiality.

Written for the Journal of Cell Science by a number of his fellow researchers, with the assistance of his elder brother Tim, and his ex-wife, Sue Shackleton.



John R DREWER

July 1951-10 August 2024

1962-69



Dr John Drewer died in August of last year following a lengthy battle with Parkinson's and Lymphoma. The packed attendance at his Newton Ferrers' funeral reflected the passing of a truly special person.

Born within the grounds of Plymouth College at The Charlton Nursing Home (Mannamead House), John was a member of the 1962-69 cohort and had previously attended the Prep. Thompson's House, 'A' Stream, clever but modest with it, he excelled in science subjects. Frank Jeffery was both an inspiration and mentor. Sport wise, John was a runner in both track and cross-country.

As a member of the HQ Section of the CCF, John not only got to wash out and oil the bolt action Lee Enfield 303s on their return from Field Day Mock battles near Cadover Bridge, but he was also able to shoot the special rifles that had been reserved for competition use. The shooting team was coached by the inimitable Smithy (RSM Smith) who drove them in the school's 1940's Bedford 3 Tonner to Wilsworthy Range on Dartmoor. John was a crack shot who earned his place at Bisley.

The early 1970s saw John at The University College Hospital London

as medical student. Clinical training followed at Westminster Hospital. Here he met Judith, who was to become his wife, and they were a devoted couple. John always wanted to become a family doctor and with impressive and appropriate qualifications in place he entered General Practice in Newport, Essex. John was a perceptive and excellent doctor who was deeply appreciated by his patients and much liked.

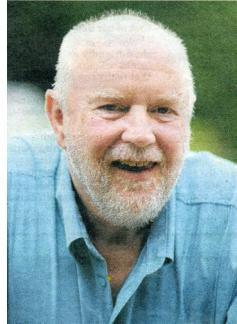
John and Judith acquired the old school in the village of Wendens Ambo and converted it into their family home. Their children, daughter Sarah and son James, were born and brought up there. Their family which grew to include three granddaughters, and one grandson was always central to John's life.

Parkinson's brought forward retirement and John and Judith's return to Devon. John grabbed life with enthusiasm despite adversity. He loved cars, especially fast ones! The first thing that he did when he had to give up driving was to acquire an e-bike. Yes, a light fast one! John was an intrepid sailor and when circumstances dictated the sale of his much loved yacht *Blue Bottle* he bought a modest sized RIB and with son James drove it along the mainland coast to explore the Isles of Scilly. John was a great raconteur with an entertaining repertoire of jokes that he would repeat if you asked him to. It's how he told them that left one aching with laughter!

Modest, perceptive, kind and generous in spirit, John was a good friend to all who were privileged to have known him.

Hugh JENKINS

18 November 1949 - 5 November 2024
1960 - 1968



At school Hugh was in the CCF and the Modern VI under the wing of Dennis Collinson and was destined to pick up the baton as a history teacher, although at Sutton High School, not Plymouth College. A member of the CCF and a keen sportsman – he played 1st XI cricket in the summer of 1968, where, according to John Stevens, 'he proved vulnerable outside the off stump.' TJS continued 'and although he made several useful contributions, he failed to score as heavily as we expected.'

Undaunted, Hugh also took great delight in passing on his enthusiasm for cricket, rugby, hockey and football at Sutton. Posting on the Sutton High School facebook page after his passing at the end of last year he was remembered as being 'one of the few approachable teachers', 'a fine and dedicated teacher with a fine sense of humour', 'balanced and thoughtful without revealing his own

political ideology', 'strict but fun, with a completely unique teaching style', and for introducing various pupils into the aforementioned sports.

Having joined Sutton in the early 1970s he was still there when the school closed in June 1986 and was subsequently 'redeployed' to the history department of the Elize Hele School, the former Plympton Grammar.

A passionate Plymouth Argyle fan, he managed the Sutton school football teams for many years and continued to attend Argyle matches long after his struggle with Parkinson's had started to impact on his ability to get around. He moved from Plymouth some years ago and went to live in Feniton, in East Devon.

Latterly a chest infection made life even more difficult for him and he died just short of this 75th birthday.

Paul Charles Herbert Anstis TRENCHARD

December 1953 - February 2025

1965-2025



Well remembered for selling home-made cider from the family farm near Ivybridge while at school, Paul had gone into the Church after leaving Plymouth College. For the last 20 years or so, he had been living in France, though working from time to time in other countries. In 2014 he moved to Autun 'a wonderful town, just opposite the cathedral in a house whose core is pre-C12th, and was the presbytery of a church (which stood in the garden).' He hadn't been there long when, in 2014, he was unexpectedly called out of retirement to take part in a project, funded by his municipality for the

teaching of English (among a variety of other languages). Sadly that initiative ran out of money just before Covid arrived and Paul converted a room in his house – 'spacious, fairly charmless, with its own entrance and lavatory' – into a classroom and went back to work.

'My last move, the day after hearing of the first Ukrainian arrivals in Autun, was to shoot down to the Hotel de Ville to announce that my classes would be extended f.o.c. to the refugees.'

Paul died of heart issues, in Autun. He was unmarried.

Paul Henry VOISIN

1956 - October 2024

67-74

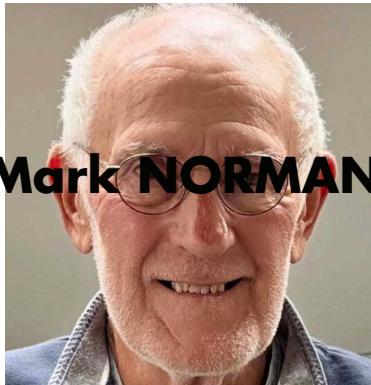
After Plymouth College Paul went to South Shields Marine & Technical College and had a successful career at sea as a Master Mariner, and was notably involved in some major salvage operations, including the Costa Concordia. He died of a heart attack last October.



Christopher Thomas YOUNG

1947 - 6 December 2024

1958-1965



Mark NORMAN

Born in Plymouth in 1947 to Peter, the then vicar of Emmanuel Church who later became Archdeacon of Cornwall, and Marjorie, a teacher, Chris grew up with a strong sense of social justice, an attribute his children Jessamy, Trystan, Tamara and Alex all inherited and that his friends revered.

A highly regarded journalist, Chris started his career on the *Daily Mirror* training scheme and worked on various papers in South Devon and Torbay. Later he became a highly regarded reporter at Anglia TV and a familiar face on regional news bulletins. In 1987 he moved to Cornwall with his family and worked at the *West Briton* newspaper and then BBC Radio Cornwall.

Tamara said: 'He was a well-known voice on the station for many years. Our dad inspired a generation of young journalists as he guided them through the early years of their careers.'

A dedicated football fan and life-long supporter of Norwich City Football Club, Chris would regularly travel from Cornwall to Norfolk to see his team, the

Canaries. He was proud of his team, even when their fortunes were down. He was a very keen runner and completed many marathons in his lifetime. His most recent half-marathon was completed on his 75th birthday in Plymouth, his childhood home.

His much loved partner Linda and his children said Chris spent his retirement working as a volunteer for the Samaritans and Truro Food Bank and dedicated much of his time working shifts for both organisations. His younger brother Tim died of Cystic Fibrosis when he was a teenager and Chris was a keen supporter of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Tamara added: 'His dedication to these important charities was a source of great pride to his family and a testament to his character. His integrity, wisdom and compassion were an inspiration to his friends, family and colleagues. His passing has left a gap in so many people's lives. His family miss him so much but take comfort from the many people whose lives he touched.'

Tribute from Cornwall Live

Ernie BOLSTER

1954 – 22 June 2025



Although he didn't actually attend the school Ernie was a huge figure in OPM circles as evidenced by the notice posted on the OPM Rugby site after his death: 'It is with utmost sadness that OPM great, Ernie Bolster unexpectedly passed away on Sunday 22 June 2025 in the early morning. Having been in attendance at the AGM the previous week, it was a huge shock to everyone.'

Ernie has been one of the greats at the club for over 40 years and a larger than life character who has been the cornerstone of the club and involved with all sections of OPM rugby and the local rugby community for so many years. His huge commitment and passion to ensuring that OPMs was successful has got the club where it is today.

Quick witted, intelligent, always interested in debate on any subject, strong willed and a hugely well liked and respected member of the OPM family, he will be hugely missed.

His wife, Jackie, and son, James, a senior player and Junior coach, and their family are all parts of the OPM family and regular club attendees and we know that they have received so many

messages of support and sympathy to date.

We are deeply saddened by this tragic news and pass on our heartfelt condolences to the Bolster family. A wonderful man who was so loved by so many and will be so very sadly missed.

A gifted and much respected social worker, Ernie had come to Plymouth in the late seventies and, with fellow social worker and rugby player Dave Pickup, whose father was an OPM, the two not only helped lift the fortunes of OPM Rugby but also, established Philanthropists Cricket Club.

Initially seen as a summer activity for the rugby players plus a few boys from the Plymouth Polytechnic (UoP now).

The OPMs already had a cricket team and Ernie wasn't the greatest cricketer. Fortunately however he set the tone for one of the most celebrated local social cricket sides in the area. PCC played their first game in May 1981 and Ernie was still turning out for the annual Old v New game over 40 years later.

Clive BRYANT

PMC Support Staff



Clive joined Plymouth College in July 1994 as maintenance foreman and gave a sterling almost 30 years' service to Plymouth College. He sadly passed away last month after several years' battle with cancer. Clive's presence around the College site will be sorely missed, particularly by his closest colleagues in the maintenance department. Many colleagues attended his funeral just prior to half term and it was heart-warming to hear how much Clive had enjoyed being a part of the Plymouth College community. There was also a good number of his many friends at Plymouth Gladiators Speedway – speedway was a huge passion of Clive's. It was also wonderful to see colleagues from our electrical contractor, KES, in attendance.

The OPM Club are also saddened to record the death's of **Rob Brockington (66-73)** who leaves behind wife Laura and children Chloe, Tom and Sam. We have also recently lost a contemporary of Rob's, **Mark Norman** who passed in 2023. Other OPMs who sadly we must report as having passed recently include; **Richard D Lewis (53-58)** and **William Light (52-59)**

Colin MACFADYEAN

11 March 1943 - 15 March 2025



Half-Scottish, Colin Macfadyean was born in Tavistock. He joined school from the Prep in the Christmas term of 1954. He played for the 55-56 U13 side and the Junior Colts the following season. His father was in the Navy and Colin left Plymouth to pursue the rest of his schooling at Bristol Grammar School from where he would go on to Loughborough where he qualified as a teacher.

He came back to Plymouth to play for an All Star OPM XI against Albion when the OPM Club at Efford was opened. Colin spent his later club career with Moseley. He won the first of his 11 caps for England in 1966 and in his last two internationals, in 1968, he captained the side. Mainly playing centre, he scored a total of four tries for his country, he also played in all four internationals against the All Blacks on the British Lions tour of Australia and New Zealand in 1966. From 1991 to 2000, when he was sidelined by a knee replacement, he was head coach at Bristol. In 2001 he was appointed deputy head of Ilminster Avenue Primary School, Bristol, and it was in that capacity that he met Tony Blair at Downing Street. Colin died of pneumonia and sepsis four days after his 82 birthday.

CRICKET



Not a great deal of formal OPM cricket these days, but there has been plenty of past pupil engagement at Ford Park on the square. On Speech Day, this year and last, the School 1st XI played a side of recent leavers in what has always proved to be a keenly contested encounter, while Philanthropists CC, who now play their home matches here or at Delganey, probably have more OPMs in their ranks than either the current hockey or rugby sections. Indeed there has already been a suggestion that a rebrand might not go amiss to reflect the synergy and certainly any OPMs looking for a bit of social cricket are welcome to get in touch. George Wells, Charlie Watson, the

Smith twins and George Atkinson have all turned out in the last couple of seasons, while historically dozens have turned out over the last few decades (including George Stephenson himself) with many – Jon Hall, Adam Dabbs, Charles Martin among them – playing well over 100 games for the club. One or two older stalwarts have made several hundred appearances.

Anyone interested please contact Chris Robinson on 07954 193441. One game played this summer saw John Sanders (69) bring a team of mature Australians to Ford Park. Sydney Rogues are a touring side of 60-somethings who in July 2025 brought a squad of 15 halfway



around the world to play cricket. As it transpired, John played for Philanthropists, it was only the second time he had played on the

school square. Philanthropists, who, as requested, also fielded a side of over 60s, won the toss and put the Aussies in to bat. It was 20/20 format with



‘The Sydney Rogues had a cunning plan ... all their players could bowl accurately!’

retirements - and there were several for the tourists. Nevertheless they only posted a score of 135 off their 20 overs, with just two wickets falling, both stumpings off the bowling of Nigel Blair and Chris Robinson.

Eminently achievable was the Philanthropists’ mindset when it came to their turn to bat, however when the score had only reached a meagre 29 off the first ten overs, questions started to arise. As Paul Jeffery, the only home team player to score 25 or more observed: ‘The Sydney Rogues had a cunning plan ... all their players could bowl accurately!’

At the end the eminently achievable score wasn’t achieved and the innings closed on 74-5.

In the evening a very convivial meal was had in the OPM Suite overlooking the Ford Park pitch and after a couple of

short speeches and presentations, one of the tourists led the ensemble in a rousing rendition of *Waltzing Matilda*. Philanthropists briefly flirted with the idea of singing the Janner Song back to them, but thought better of it.

The previous month, incidentally, had seen the Philanthropists on tour for almost their 40th outing away and among the handful of travelling OPMs involved was tour virgin, George Atkinson.

George, who has just finished his first year at Leeds University, got a duck in his first innings but recovered spectacularly to score his debut century in his second game on the Saturday against Charlton Down, at Sparsholt. It was a splendid innings and something of a rarity on a Philanthropists tour.

Said George: ‘It was a fantastic day out, a great tour with the club! Happy Days.’



HOCKEY

Liam Jonas



Women's First XI

Overall Club

This season, being the first for the newly formed Plymouth Lions Hockey Club, made up of the former Plymouth Marjon Hockey Club and OPM Hockey Club, has been one of excitement, hard work, incremental growth and successes to be celebrated. Lions seek to offer a space where all can thrive, growing their skills in an encouraging environment which strives for success at all levels of hockey with a warm social environment too.

Women's Section

The final league positions did not reflect the amount of effort and some moments of excellent play on the pitch during the season. The First XI have maintained their position as the highest playing league team in Plymouth and the local area. Despite some very close results and a

final push, in the 2025/26 season, the Second and Third XIs will be playing in Petroc 1 and Trelawny 2 respectively. This is a time for a positive approach where consistent squads and performances will see them bounce back. The fourth team had another good season with some of the younger players in the senior section playing regularly and a good mix of results which bodes well for good foundations for next season.

The fifth team played in the Sunday Development League and although not all games were played, mainly due to the weather, the commitment of the players means that we are able to introduce a 5's Development Team in the Saturday league for next season.

Men's Section

The First XI secured 5th place in the West Premier League achieving the objectives of finishing in the top half of the league, maintaining a positive goal difference, scoring more field goals than penalty corners and an improved relationship with match officials.

The Second XI improved throughout the season as relationships between new team mates developed, culminating in a 5th place finish in South Division 2 scoring more of the chances made and improving discipline without losing intensity.

The Third XI fought right to the very end of the season, managing to avoid relegation and are looking to enhance their performance next season towards the top half of the Piran 1 League.

The Fourth XI continue to support the development of players from the junior section into senior hockey with some wonderful performances and some mixed results: the team finished the season in 6th in the Piran 2 league.

Next season we hope to push for promotion for the 2s, 3s and 4s to better support the first team in the overall club objective of a return to national league hockey.

Juniors

The junior section continues to grow through existing links to local primary schools. From September, Coach Ash Hough will be supporting Plymouth College with hockey on the curriculum and an after-school club. There is also ongoing support of the OPM Puma satellite club which continues to grow and regularly takes part in the Friday Night Hockey Festivals with massive thanks to Patrice Davison for all her efforts. The club is working on extending this offering through an ambitious school's programme, which is currently seeking funding. This programme hopes to offer the opportunity for children of all ages, genders, backgrounds and skills to access hockey, building on the existing pipeline of future talent.



Men's Second XI



*John Clarke Horrabridge Headteacher.
Holding the OPM Cup, John is an OPM*

The Primary School Festival took place in June, with congratulations going to Horrabridge Primary School, who retained the OPM Cup.

There have been many team and individual successes this year, including teams making it to regional and national finals, players being selected for the Talent Academy and Devon as well as success as part of the West Panthers.

Masters

The club has a wealth of experienced and talented players with team successes across many age bands including the Women's O45s making it to the quarter finals of the England Hockey Tier 1 cup. There were a number of individual successes with members playing international master's hockey for England. Congratulations to Matt Bell, Ben Blundy, Paula Clough and Jackie Anning; for the Welsh Dragons Alun Woodcock; and Pete Sandry representing England IX. Congratulations also to members selected to play for West; Jo Clews, Dee Brunt, Bev Urbans, Jackie Anning Paula Clough, Matt Bell, Ben Bundy, Nick Clooke and Nick Carter.

End of Season Awards

Just as important as playing hockey on the pitch is the off-pitch social aspect. There have been many social events throughout the year, but the undoubtedly highlight was the End of Season Awards Evening, with huge thanks to those who organised a memorable celebration at Plymouth Argyle. The evening was an opportunity to celebrate team successes and recognise those individuals who have contributed to the club and excelled on the pitch.

Club Awards: Oliver Houlberg (The Adage Cup), Jackie Daw (Club Member) and Ash Hough (Club Official).

Women's Awards: Rachel Standard (W1 Player of the Year), Lynne Whitfield (W2 Player of the Year), Rebecca Boyd (W3 Player of the Year), Frankie Griffin (W4 Player of the Year), Olivia Chance (Most Improved) and Amelia Gledhill (Youth Player).

Men's Awards: Math Smith (M1 Player of the Year), Kieran Davey (M2 Player of the Year), James Hulbert (M3 Player of the Year), Chris Guard (M4 Player of the Year), Jack Lennard (Most Improved) and Reuben Keeling (Youth Player).

Recognition

Running a club of any size relies on the hard work of so many, with specific thanks going to:

- The Committee and Trustees; Jackie Daw, Rob Logan, Becky Hart, Nick Clooke, Nicky Widdecombe, Pete Sandry, Mel Hulbert, Mike Timson, Hannah Bagshaw-Bale, Dave Smith and Tom Pierson.
- Coaches; Matt Bell, Ash Hough, Nick Clooke, Nicky Widdecombe (keepers), Jo Clews, Donna Lancaster, Mike Timson, Tom Bell, John Flippance, Alun Woodcock, Simon Fraser, Jackie Daw,



The Award Winners

James Hulbert. With support from Young Leaders Harry Timson, Lily McKee, Ella Short, and Wes Flippance.

- Umpires; Rob Logan, Stephen Murphy, Nicky Widdecombe, Chris Coles, Alun Woodcock, Mike Timson, James Hulbert, Andy Dave, David King, Graham Smith, Sarah Harris, Daisy Murphy, Phil Mutlow, Steve Tew, and Lisa Bruckner.
- Captains; Matt Puttock, Rachael Stannard/Donna Lancaster, Sam Hewitt, Evan Cox/Kieran Davey, Hobson Ward, Amelia Gledhill, Izzy Severgnini and Tom Peirson
- The OPM Committee; for their support through the merger and ongoing support of the club at all levels at more hockey more broadly.
- Sponsors; Crow Hockey, BuildX, Salcombe Rigging, Hemisphere Rigging, Fay Pedler Physiotherapy, Tax Assist and Re-Test Group.

Get Involved!

Plymouth Lions have something for everyone; whether you are young or

less young, new to hockey or returning after a few years off, have just moved to the area or are looking for a new challenge... why not try hockey with Plymouth Lions Hockey Club? We would be delighted to welcome you to our club if you are a current Plymouth College student, a local OPM or have recently returned to the area or are just interested in playing hockey at whatever level suits you.

You can find more information or follow us here:

- Website: <https://www.plymouthlionshockey.club>
- SPOND: <https://spond.com/invite/MALNS>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthLionsHockeyClub>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/plymouthlionshc>
- Club Shop: <https://www.futerateam.co.uk/lions>

Many thanks to Laura Bale and Jo Loughran for running the club social media throughout the season.

OPM RUGBY

Chairman's Report



OPM RFC has once again had a very positive season as we have continued to strengthen, develop and implement new projects and ventures throughout the club as well as see continued success on the field combined with some superb work off it.

It has been a hugely positive season for our first and second teams this year and with players old and new wearing the OPM jersey to get on the field, we look to the future in good spirits for the 25/26 season. Our Touch rugby as always continues to have strong numbers and a great environment twice a week and our Juniors continued to build their numbers and age groups each year with an ever growing player base, new coaches and new equipment encouraging those players to become the future of OPMs. Our girls teams are also developing following their second year of playing and we have become a much stronger section this season. The Walking Rugby section has now further developed with a very strong

showing on Tuesday afternoons and Friday evenings.

We continue to build our strong links with Sherford and the local community of Elburton with provision of further improvements to the facilities and car park as well as many other developments taking place. Our Hospitality Team make the clubhouse a welcoming, family friendly and inclusive environment for all visitors as we still offer rugby seven days of the week as part of OPM Rugby Club. Our Senior sides have now become an established part of the Tribute Devon 2 League under our Head Coach, Andrew Williams, now in his third season at the helm. He has been ably assisted by Assistant Coach, James Digweed, our team managers, Sean Grundy and Tim Binding, our physios, Jenny Salt and Megan Brown and First and Second XV captains, Fred Smale and Matt Price. We have continued to develop our game and finished a respectable 7th in the league but celebrated a Devon Junior Bowl final win to cap off the season.





We have had some notable performances this season but what has been fantastic this year is the number of young players joining the ranks from our OPM Junior section which now stands at 13 players across both squads and the development of them as individuals but also as teams and a club which has been admirable. The OPM Jesters have seen a more mixed season in the Merit table but have had some excellent results both at home and away to add to some more tricky fixtures. Thank you to everyone who donned the OPM shirt this season.

There have been huge positives throughout the year including Devon representation with Matt Smale receiving Devon U20 honours and captaining the side to several victories including a Tamar Cup win plus having his first senior appearance for Devon: we expect many more.

We have held several VP, Old Boy and Sponsors days throughout the season to thank our many groups which have seen friends reunite, make new ones and come together to watch our fine players

turn out for the OPM club. Big thanks to Mark Turner and Ash Smith for their continued efforts.

Our Social Committee has provided a superb variety of entertaining events, a hugely successful Family Fun Day and many other excellent occasions, including our End of Season Dinner. The club continue to tour this season with Butlins, Minehead, the choice this year before a further overseas visit next year.

Finally, I would like to thank Andrew and the coaching team and backroom staff who, in their third season under new leadership, have achieved promotion into Tribute 2 Devon. A huge amount of effort, time and drive has gone into this year and this is an amazing first step to moving OPMs up the leagues and I hope we continue to do so. Andrew is stepping down this season but has developed the seniors hugely and we thank him for all of his efforts at the club. I would like to thank all of the players, volunteers and support staff for making every weekend possible and their efforts make this club what it is today. OPM Touch continues to develop in





number and runs twice a week on a Monday and Wednesday at Morley Meadows. Regular sessions full of fun, fitness and enjoyment continue with some excellent 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, Pete and Shaun for running this so well.

The Juniors have continued to make great strides this season 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 and continue to be involved throughout the local rugby scene in the South West as we develop our local relationships. This season has seen players from our Juniors at South West, Devon and Exeter Chief level and we have seen many of our age groups improve and develop as well as create that OPM family feeling. Training takes place on most week nights and training or matches are on Sundays and we would like to thank Jenny and all of the Junior Committee, Coaches and Parent Reps for their huge efforts and

dedication in making it such a success. Sadly, Jenny will be stepping down after 14 years as Junior Chair and we would like to thank you for her efforts, leadership and hard work in making the OPM Juniors such a success.

We are also delighted to confirm our OPM girls team journey continues and following the successes of the U12s and U14s, we will have an U16s team next season to further develop this section. This has been well led by our coaches and has enabled a good group of young ladies to begin on the rugby pathway of which we hope this will be a great success for years to come. We have also hosted the Devon Girls festival for the second year running which has been a superb success and the envy of the county.

Finally, our Walking Rugby sessions for those interested in a slightly less fast paced game have now developed into a hub of activity. We are able to provide a social session where exercise and fun are key but also allows for other games to be played in the clubhouse, hospitality and meeting new people. This has proved a great success and we are looking now at

Devon Junior Cup Final - OPM RFC vs Salcombe RFC

29/3/25 - 14:30ko - King George V Playing Fields, PL9 8HR



Mylo Connell



Isaac Salt



Sonny Rowe



Tom Hughes (vc)



Mark Hardie



Billy Garratt
Ocean BMW



Alex Jewell
Konfidence



Matt Smale
Pro Flex Health



Pete Regan
PJ Farmservice



Keith Pascoe



Callum Morgan
Allisons Butchers



Tom Rayner
Moorland Stone LTD



Fred Smale (c)



Kallan Malone





running two sessions a week on Tuesday afternoons and Friday evenings. An excellent time is had by all and everyone is welcome to give it a go.

The OPM RFC Committee has continued to support all of those in the OPM Family in all groups and areas. The Committee continue to support new projects as we aim to improve facilities at the club, promote all of the good things we are involved in whilst looking to implement a sustainable, long-term plan as we continue to grow and develop all aspects of the OPM club. This year, we have provided new lighting for training, further training courses for our coaches and a new OPM scoreboard for all to view the scores for all teams that play OPM rugby.

We also would like to thank our sponsors in Liberty, Sound Financial, The Mortgage Place, Alan Skuse, The Ship, Thor, Spectre, Samworth Brothers, Base Systems, MLT Recruitment and Scaftec without whom all of what we do would not be possible. With this sponsorship, we have been able to provide a superb

offer to all players and develop the game on and off the field with their financial support. Thank you to all.

As a club, we have also been supporting the local community where we have been involved in supporting many local events, supporting the local community with our provision of all forms of rugby and promoting the OPM family to ensure we are a well known and used organisation to our local residents and long may this continue.

Next season, 2025/26 will be our centenary year as OPM RFC and we are delighted to have achieved this. There will be many events and activities running throughout the season and we look forward to welcoming all OPMs from far and wide to attend, support and volunteer at the numerous and ongoing celebrations that will take place.

#100yearsofOPMrugby
Information on all aspects of OPM rugby is available on our website www.opmrugby.com, join our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter and Instagram. As always, this is very much a club

effort and I would like to thank everyone involved: players, coaches, committee, sponsors, volunteers, parent reps, spectators and many more in making OPM RFC such a great club to be involved in. 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



JUNIORS

Jenny Trinder

OPM Junior Rugby Chairman



As always, it's been a vibrant and action-packed season at KGV, with the pitches buzzing with energy from our enthusiastic junior players and the kitchen alive with the hustle and bustle of our wonderful volunteers. This winter, the weather has been on our side, with only a handful of training sessions affected by pitch conditions, so we've been fortunate to keep the momentum going almost uninterrupted.

Our junior section continues to thrive, with players ranging in age from just three years old all the way up to 16. Next season, the excitement is set to grow even more as we prepare to launch our first-ever Colts team — a long-anticipated milestone for our club. The introduction of this team will create a clear and seamless development pathway from mini and junior rugby through to our senior squads, reinforcing our commitment to nurturing homegrown talent every step of the way. We were also proud to host the U12/U14 Devon Girls Festival this year,

welcoming over 300 young female players to enjoy a full day of rugby at KGV. It was an inspiring event that showcased the growing strength and enthusiasm for girls' rugby in the region, and we're honoured to have been a part of it.

None of this would be possible without the tireless dedication of our incredible volunteers. From our coaches and kitchen crew to the committee members, photographers, and everyone in between — thank you. You are the heart and soul of our OPM offer, and we are deeply grateful for everything you do.

We're always excited to welcome new players across all age groups. If you're interested in joining the OPM family, you can reach out to us via our website, Facebook, or Instagram. Whether you're taking your first steps into rugby or looking to continue your journey, there's a place for you at our club. Here's to an even bigger and better season ahead!





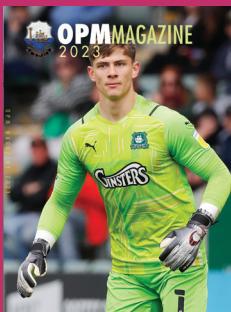
OPM MAGAZINE

Back catalogue

Time was when the OPM Magazine was sent out free to all paid up members of the OPM Club. Printing and postage costs have long since made this unsustainable and hard copies of the OPM have been sent to those paying an additional annual subscription. That option is still available – at a current cost of £9.95 p/a. However the OPM has also been published online for some years now and back copies can be viewed via the School's website just search OPM Magazine Plymouth College. For those interested in acquiring physical copies of the last 12 years of OPM Magazines then see below each cover for availability. HCA indicates that a limited number of hard copies are available to purchase at £10.00 plus P&P; OL means that that particular edition is online, NA, not available. Contact: development@plymouthcollege.com



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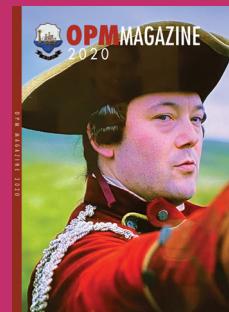
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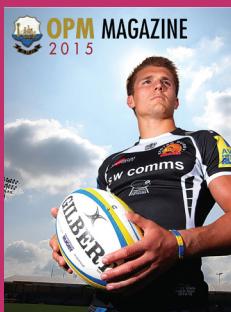
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