



OPM MAGAZINE

2024

OPM MAGAZINE 2024



OPM REGALIA

Show your colours with a Club Tie, available in various styles including formal, sports and bow – *ready-tied or self-tie ... silk or polyester* – as well as Blazer Badges, Polo Shirts, and more.



contact Debbie Horner
via email opms@plymouthcollege
or The OPM Office, Plymouth College,
Ford Park, Plymouth, PL4 6RN



Welcome to the new **OPM Magazine**.

As ever we are dependent on members for information, images and updates. If you see any address that you think may be out of date ... if you have any news you would like to share, or if you have an article or item you would like to contribute to next year's **OPM Magazine**, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with Debbie at the contact above.



CONTENTS

2024

Chairman 2

Nick Holman

President 3

Bob Foulkes

Editorial 4

Chris Robinson MBE

Treasurer's Report 6

Pete Webb

Adam Carr 10

Interim Head

Oldies Lunch 20

Old boys!

Simon Hallett 24

Data Day Living

A few from Class of 22 28

Sophie Watson

OPM Olympians 2024 30

Nine and counting

Ben Proud 32

His third Olympics

Tom Daley 34

His fifth Olympics

Talia Sullivan 36

All American Athlete?

Peter Seaton-Clark 37

A Cunning Linguist

Harry Middleton 38

Swims the Channel for Charity

Jonathan Arnold 40

Wood turning

Matt Bucket 41

Page turning

Mixed Media 42

OPM spotting

Megan Palmer 44

Cornish wedding

Ed Vaughan 46

A London Engagement

Stefanie Hajiyianni 48

Back in Plymouth

Michael Ball 50

A Memoir

Chris Robinson 52

Our Plymouth Historian

Jamie Dawson 58

26,000 Hours Airborne

Robert Mann 60

Letter from America

Tony Byers 62

Schoolboy Snapper

Patrick Hodgson 66

Ever the Diplomat

The Boys are Back 70

Reunion of the Classes of 68,69,70

OPM Lodge 84

Steve Welsh

Obituaries 88

Tony Joyce, Chris U'ren, Eric Mercer et al

OPM Cricket 98

Cricket Week Dates

OPM Hockey 100

Liam Jonas

Rugby Chairman's Report 106

Matt Glastonbury

CHAIRMAN

Nick Holman



After the uncertainties of COVID lockdowns, the past year has seen a more settled and progressive period for the OPM Club.

The OPM Suite has seen regular use for social functions, alongside the School's use of the space for pupil and governor activities. The OPM functions have seen a mix of our routine lunches interspersed by the odd reunion day. The most recent saw a cohort of pupils from the 1960's enjoy a guided tour of the School followed by a convivial lunch. For some it was their first visit to the OPM Suite and like many they were amazed at the location and view from the balcony.

The Club is available for bookings from any OPM. The booking diary is currently administered by Jason Sweby, who can be contacted on jason.sweby@outlook.com, but in future is more likely to be a function of the Development Office.

Liaison with OPMs is a prime purpose for the Club. As part of the increasingly closer relationship with the School, we are part funding Debbie Horner in the Development Office as the Alumni Relations Officer. This will enable us to coordinate more effectively with OPMs and hopefully lead to greater OPM social activities.

Progress has also been made in representation on the Committee with Azza Gasim joining us at the end of 2023. Azza provides a welcome 'new eye' on the Club's purpose and activities. But as one door opens so another closes. Many of you will know Peter Webb who has now been treasurer for some 22 years. He has administered the Club's finances impeccably from the funding arrangements for the creation of the OPM Suite, through the operation of the bar, the challenges of lockdowns and de-registration for VAT. He has been a stalwart for the Club but has concluded that such a long time in office and the fact he has retired from work, makes 2024 the logical year in which to stand down from the role. We thank him sincerely for his support of the Club and wish him well in his retirement which will be effective from the AGM later this year. In the meantime, in Lord Sugar mode, the search for his replacement continues.

Peter will be leaving when, in terms of finances, his stewardship sees the Club in the healthiest position for some years. The more controlled, function-led, use of the Club Suite has ensured this at the very least is now breaking even if not making a small profit. The Saltash property remains fully tenanted and at the forthcoming lease renewal of the micropub there are good prospects for some rental growth. As a consequence, we are seeing a recovery in reserves, year on year. The resumption of a closer working relationship with the School is a significant and welcome step. The School's restructuring of its charitable trusts following the sale of the old prep school has seen the Club co-operating fully in the changes to our second charge on the School's property assets. Just how helpful the Club can be in supporting the School through the anticipated change in VAT status, remains to be seen. What I am sure we are all wanting to see however, is the School ride that storm and continue to be

a force in the private education sector. Finally, after five years as your Chairman I will be standing down at the forthcoming AGM. I do so with the Club moving on an upward path once more and with the optimism that we can secure more involvement of the younger generations. While it is always important to remember our history, so too must we ensure the Club moves forward in a way that reflects the needs and opportunities of the more recent leavers and those who will pass through the School in the coming years. It is my intention to remain on the Committee to support the new Chairman, but close by expressing my grateful thanks and appreciation for all who have been Directors and Committee members during my term of office.

PRESIDENT

Bob Foulkes



1962 to 2024 is a very long time – from the Cuban Missile Crisis to a European war still raging, not to mention the invention of the silicon chip, computing and the internet.

1962 was the year during which I left the School and the intervening period has seen utterly unimaginable change. The School itself has been transformed into a modern co-educational establishment with the Prep now on the main School site while those who left in 1962 have now entered their ninth decade!

As I write this, the opinion polls are predicting yet further change – this time in government with all that this will mean for the future of independent schools. The Club too has faced up to change as well precipitated by the pandemic. We can no longer function as an ‘open every day’ facility. Our emphasis in serving OPMs has had to change to meet that challenge.

It is good to see how the rugby section continues to thrive and develop. As a (long since) retired member of our hockey section, I was keenly interested in developments following a loss in playing membership. The merger with Marjons was wholeheartedly supported by the main Club Committee and we all wish the new club every success both on and off the field.

I was elected President in November 2018 – both a surprise and delight – and expected to serve the customary couple of years or so. Well, the pandemic put paid to that! It has been an absolute pleasure for me to be Club President until I stood down towards the end of last year.

It has been good to see the social side of the Club’s activities gather pace since the pandemic and long may that continue. I am sure that we can do more as a Club in this respect – as well as supporting the School as it faces new challenges. Our members can have confidence the Directors and the Committee are very aware of the continuing tasks that lie ahead.

I wish the Club and the School every good fortune for the future.

EDITORIAL

Chris Robinson

I write this at the end of a week that has seen Britain elect a new government with the man at the helm becoming the fifth person to sit as our Prime Minister in the last five years or so.

It portends a potentially interesting time for Plymouth College if Keir Starmer sticks to his agenda on private education. Quite frankly it would probably be better for education in this country if more establishments embraced the independent school ethos whereby they attempt to try and get all pupils to at least shine at one thing, especially in non overtly academic fields, like sport, music, art and drama, rather than force children to either be a success or a failure in the examination room. We all know school essentially exists to prepare pupils for a working life – Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. You have to attend and do as you're told. We also know that that model is fairly broken these days and desperately needs a rethink. Punishing those institutions that cost the government virtually nothing because they think it confers unfair advantage is not the answer and will end up costing the country more.

What's more it doesn't appear to have been a major doorstep issues for potential voters either, with the cost of living crisis, immigration and the NHS being of much greater concern.

Let's see what Labour do now that the country has voted for 'Change' and stability, after so many years of chaos and corruption at the top.

Meanwhile let's see what happens at Plymouth College. After all it hasn't all been plain sailing here either in the

last five or six years where there have also been five changes at the top: from Jonathan Standen, through Jonathan Cohen, Jo Hayward and Adam Carr to the newly appointed Peter Watts who has just now officially taken over from Adam Carr.

Peter was announced as the new head after a rigorous interview process, however his existing commitments in Gibraltar where he established and ran a very successful school, led to Adam stepping up to the plate and providing excellent interim cover.

Plymouth College now, like the country, waits, hoping for stability, sustainability and growth, although in the current climate it's clearly a tall order. We certainly wish Peter and his wife, Diana, who is an old girl of St Dunstons and ergo an OPM, every success.

Certainly the school is currently in a good place and this summer will see at least nine past pupils/OPMs lined up to take part in the Paris Olympics (see pp 30-35).





Some school related attendees at the wake held for David Gabitass at Plymouth Albion, l-r: Sir George Berwick, Charlie Gabitass, Simon Parford, Robin Moiser, Jay Foster, John Williams, Richard Rabin, Ian Johnson, Chris Savery, Adrian Lewis. Kneeling Nick Roper and Max Strelling.

It was good to see a very healthy turnout of OPMs at David Gabitass's funeral, at least 20, including the Reverend Robin Brown who conducted the service, and of course, Charlie, David's son. Also spotted were Rob Lang, Mike Hockin, Alan Harris, and Phil Avery (difficult to miss in his high-vis jacket – the BBC ex-weather man hadn't anticipated rain, and it was the only extra outer layer he could find in his car!).

There were also a couple of former members of staff, including George Berwick who taught PE and geography

for a few years in the early seventies, and Adrian Lewis who succeeded him as a PE teacher in 1976.

George Berwick, incidentally, went on to become headmaster of Ravens Wood (1993-2011), in Bromley, which became one of a handful of secondary schools in the country to be rated as outstanding five consecutive times. Honoured with a knighthood in 2013 he has long pursued educational excellence around the world and in 2016 he was recognised by The Times as one of the 500 most influential people in the UK.

HONORARY TREASURER

Pete Webb



Following my delight in reporting a return to surplus last year, I am again pleased to report a much improved position for 2023.

As mentioned last year, with the clubhouse remaining largely inactive, our costs are substantially reduced with the result that the clubhouse has generated a surplus of £5,774 this year from the rents payable by the school for the use of the facility during daytime. The committee are keen to make full use of the clubhouse for OPM events in the future and would be pleased to receive any suggestions from the membership. We are also looking at various areas of maintenance and renewal including redecoration and the state of the carpets.

Following some heavy repair expenditure during the 2022 year, rental income, net

of expenses, derived from our Saltash property was £10,392 compared with £1,673 in the previous year. Our tenants, both commercial and domestic, continue to pay their rent without major arrears arising and we are looking at a modest increase on the flat to take effect from the beginning of January.

Subscriptions and other income remain fairly consistent, the main item of note being a kind bequest of £2,000 from the estate of a former OPM. Total income therefore increased from £12,966 in 2022 to £23,815 this year.

At the same time, overhead expenditure was much reduced at £7,580 for the year (2022: £11,605) as detailed in the Income and Expenditure Account

Overall, the club returned a surplus for the year of £16,235 before tax on which I have provided for a liability of £1,866 payable in May 2024.

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 time of writing, our liquid funds at bank amount to over £85,000 with no major liabilities outstanding. We have invested £50,000 of these funds in a 12 month fixed interest account bearing 4.3% and which will therefore generate interest of over £2,000 by this time next year.

OPM CLUB

Income & Expenditure

THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Subscriptions receivable		5,096		5,100
Donations and sundry income		2,366		354
Surplus from OPM Suite		5,774		5,718
Investment Income				
Interest		187		121
Rent (net of expenses)		10,392		1,673
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		23,815		12,966
Expenditure				
Printing, postage and stationery (including magazine)	4,882		6,099	
Legal and professional fees	-		2,400	
Insurance	2,088		2,222	
Sundry expenses	110		162	
Sub Sections				
Hockey	500		722	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
		7,580		11,605
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		16,235		1,361
CORPORATION TAX				
Provided for year	1,866		-	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
		1,866		-
SURPLUS FOR YEAR		<hr/>		<hr/>
		14,369		1,361
		<hr/>		<hr/>

OPM CLUB

Balance Sheet

THE OLD PLYMOTHIAN AND MANNAMEADIAN CLUB
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
ASSETS		
Freehold investment property	185,000	185,000
OPM Suite	476,728	477,158
Loan to Plymouth College	50,000	50,000
Stock (at cost)	1,307	1,432
Debtors and prepayments	19,725	17,450
Cash at Bank		
Current account	32,422	16,114
Deposit account	47,919	47,732
Cash in hand	372	51
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>813,473</u>	<u>794,937</u>
LIABILITIES		
Corporation tax provision	1,866	-
Creditors and accruals	2,854	553
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>4,720</u>	<u>553</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>808,753</u>	<u>794,384</u>
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
At 1 September 2022	794,384	793,023
Surplus for year	14,369	1,361
At 31 August 2023	<u>808,753</u>	<u>794,384</u>

The accounts were approved by the committee on 2 November 2023 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 2023 and found them to be in accordance with the underlying books and records of the Old Plymouthian 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 2023

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	3,013	
Additions in year	-	
Less depreciation	(430)	
		2,583
		<u>476,728</u>

4 INVESTMENT PROPERTY

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

5 LOANS

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

6 SURPLUS FROM OPM SUITE

	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
Suite hire and rents		6,713		6,658
		<u>6,713</u>		<u>6,658</u>
Licencing and legal fees	509		510	
Depreciation	430		430	
		939		940
Surplus for year		<u>5,774</u>		<u>5,718</u>

INTERIM HEAD



HEADLINES

Adam Carr

It is the tradition for the Head to outline the events of the current academic year. But before I do so, I am going to take this opportunity to speak a little more broadly about the key issues which have shaped/shape/will shape (spot the linguist!), the experience of the pupils at Plymouth College.

We continue to work hard on ensuring that we provide a well-rounded education, ensuring pupils excel in all subjects while developing critical thinking and creativity.

Technology has transformed teaching and learning, with blended learning environments becoming the norm.

The pandemic accelerated the use of digital tools, making education more accessible and personalised. Here at Plymouth College we have embraced

this, but not to the detriment of the formation and maintenance of strong relationships in our school, which is the bedrock for successful learning. The focus on mental health and wellbeing is essential in today's educational landscape. Schools now implement programmes and resources to support pupils' emotional and psychological health. This priority is evident in the resilience and well-rounded success of our pupils. This has always (and will always) be a strength of ours at Plymouth College and fundamentally this is integral to our function as a school. The creation of a new wellbeing centre shows clear vision and intent on the central nature of the pastoral support and wellbeing of our pupils.

Our diverse school community reflects the rich cultural fabric of society. Embracing diversity and promoting inclusivity ensures every pupil has the opportunity to succeed. This commitment is seen in the unique strengths and perspectives celebrated in our pupils' achievements. The diversity of the school has been a focus for me and for other colleagues this year with pupil and staff surveys into sexism and sexist language in the school providing us with a clear way ahead for the coming academic year.

Thank you to Mrs Field, Mrs Chubb and Miss Connor for their work on this, in particular.

My dedicated colleagues are at the core of these developments. Their passion and commitment drive our pupils' successes and is essential without them – nothing would be possible.

When I was contemplating what this year would look like as Interim Head, it was clear that I wanted to remain in the classroom. That is, after all, the reason I came into the vocation that is teaching. For me, being in the classroom is one of my favourite times of the week (and therefore is always a highlight for me!) and something which keeps the pupils firmly at the front of my mind. I have made clear my passion for pupil voice and the importance of listening and hearing the voice of our young people, and, as you know, I have been gathering the insights of the pupils in Years 7 to Upper Sixth for my research as part of my professional doctorate (EdD) in education through the University of Plymouth. I would like to extend my thanks to those pupils who have completed their surveys – their feedback has been immensely helpful and thank

you to my colleagues who have also offered their support in many ways. As ever, this academic year has been a busy one....

Mrs Russo in the Physics department successfully bid for funding from the Royal Society to run a long-term scientific study. The Royal Society is an internationally respected independent organisation that is dedicated to promoting scientific research which is of benefit to mankind. The pupils gained wonderful experience whilst out on their field trips collecting data alongside Dr Nicola Quick from the University of Plymouth, including using environmental DNA collection kits to track for signs of otters in the water. Very educational, but lots of fun too.

Middle School and Lower Sixth pupils all enjoyed Careers Days, including 'speed-dating' style carousels of OPMs, parents and professional staff from within the school, giving insights into their chosen careers. These events are key in helping our pupils learn more about the world of work and their future potential career paths. My thanks to all who helped us provide these opportunities.

Mr Mutlow led a group of Year 10 historians on a thought-provoking trip to the Battlefields of the First World War in April. This is an annual feature of the school calendar and having been on this trip myself, I know how important this is and how important it is to honour the fallen. The Ski Trip was a great experience and it was so lovely to have a whole school trip with my thanks going to colleagues who ran this trip. Not forgetting Mr Wesley. Mr and Mrs Wesley send their very best

wishes from New Zealand where they (and Spuggie the dog) are loving their new life on the other side of the world. Prep and Senior pupils took part in the inspirational Charity Concert organised by Jeremiah's Journey at Emmanuel Church in December – it was wonderful for our pupils to sing amongst so many talented local choirs. The highly anticipated production of *Shrek! The Musical* certainly lived up to expectations, with fabulous acting, singing, dancing and an amazing array of hugely colourful costumes! I must express my sincere thanks to all the pupils and staff who worked incredibly hard to bring the production to life. The cast of 50 across Years 7 to Upper Sixth were ably supported by an incredible backstage crew, the Shrek band, face painters, costume and prop assistants, as well as lighting and sound assistants.



The Jazz Band was one of 100 chosen out of 760 ensembles across the UK to play in the Nationals for the Music for Youth Music Festival after playing so well in the regionals in Truro in April, achieving a distinction. This means that they will be performing in the prestigious Birmingham Symphony Hall on the 6th July – a huge achievement for the pupils! If they do well at the Nationals, they are then invited to perform in a concert at the Royal Albert Hall! I am excited to be going along to support the Band and we all wish them every success.

It has been another exciting and productive year in the Art Department. The Sixth Form artists headed to Broomhill Sculpture Park in September to observe, photograph and sketch a wide variety of contemporary sculpture. This year, we have launched the Arts Award as part of the Friday afternoon Enrichment programme. As part of the qualification, the pupils have undertaken a number of site visits including: The Box and KARST Gallery. They have worked alongside local artist and OPM Azza Gasim to create two large-scale murals inspired by Plymouth Street Art which can be seen in the MK foyer when we return to school after today's service.



The Years 5–8 Printmaking Club have been industrious throughout the year producing the design work for the School Christmas card and vibrant lino prints which decorated the MK Foyer during the production of *Shrek*.

This year also saw the launch of the inaugural House Photography Competition. The highlight of the year was certainly this week's Summer Art Show at Market Hall, which showcased work from pupils aged 3–18 years, as well as a 360-degree video produced by our Prep pupils.

Geography pupils have all succeeded in completing fieldwork, Year 7 to Cadover, Year 8 to the Aquarium, Year 9 Eden project, Year 10 to Portwrinkle and Princetown for their IGCSE course. The Lower Sixth have completed their four days throughout the year visiting Totnes, Plymouth, Royal William Yard finishing on their NEA preparation at Dawlish Warren for a mammoth data collection. Pupils have visited the University of Plymouth a number of times for lectures and guest speaker events. The fun of making volcanoes erupt, revision through playdoh, blind-folded revision, 3D sustainable cities, ocean pollution and GIS! Year 11 had the highest attendance of morning and lunch revision ever known – maximising learning and skills.

The English Department has taken various theatre trips this year, highlights including a trip to Harry Potter World for our top readers across the school, a Sixth Form trip to The Globe to see *The Duchess of Malfi* and Quantum Theatre coming into

school to perform *Macbeth* for Year 10 and Year 11.

We have also had author visits from OPM Tom Daley and Joseph Elliot. The whole school celebrated 'World Book Day' where everyone dressed up and celebrated everything 'books'. A huge thanks to our Librarian, Miss Hull, who spends a huge amount of time and energy organising such fantastic events for the whole school.

In Religious Studies, the focus this academic year has been on the Humanities days which took place on Monday and Tuesday of the final week of term. Oddments Theatre Company will perform *The Hiding Place* and *Daniel and the Den*. Oddments retells the story of Corrie Ten Boom, a devout Christian, who risked her own life to hide members of the Jewish community, only to be sent to, and survive Ravensbruck concentration camp. We will be visiting the Kadampa Buddhist meditation centre on Mutley Plain and will have a guided tour and a meditation session whilst gaining an insight into this branch of Tibetan Buddhism.

The Sixth Form will be completing a Barbican Treasure trail, solving clues whilst visiting sites of both religious and historical significance including the Mayflower Steps. In addition, we have a spiritual arts session, meditation and pilates. It promises to be a fun packed week and my thanks in particular to Mrs Paice, Mr Martin, Mrs Chubb and Mr Mutlow for their hard work in planning and organising this and for my colleagues for making this work.

To start the year, the pupils learning Spanish had the amazing opportunity to take pupils on to *El Galeón Andalucía*, a full size replica of the ship used by the Spanish during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries including the Spanish Armada. In March to celebrate the Journée Internationale de la Francophonie, there was a week of events: A French themed lunch, assemblies about the French speaking world, quizzes for pupils and teachers were encouraged to use French in their lessons across the curriculum. In German, pupils continued its penpal link with Grimmelshausen Gymnasium in Gelnhausen, not far from Frankfurt in Germany. Pupils have exchanged letters, gifts and have really benefited from having real life connections with the German speaking world. Around Christmas time, once again the catering team transformed the canteen into a Christmas market with a wealth of German food for our pupils to enjoy. U6 Sports Baccalaureate pupils attended a Sports injury clinic lecture and practical at Plymouth Marjon University, pupils completed a week's work experience at an Outdoor Adventure Centre, organised a sports event for Year 8s and led and instructed outdoor adventurous activity days for younger pupils. Lower Sixth pupils undertook mock job interviews and completed their Level 3 Award in Outdoor First Aid. All of this showcasing the broad, all encompassing qualification, which continues to be popular with our pupils. All change this year in the Outdoor Department with the arrival of Miss Foreman and Mr Hayter, who have seamlessly slotted into the department and brought a lot of fun with them.

The year kicked off as it always does with the Year 7 Whiteworks trips, closely followed by the start of Ten Tors training and the Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award practice expedition. The Outdoor Clubs have been well attended by all years with pupils making the most of the lighter evenings kayaking, biking, geo-caching, ghyll scrambling and navigating, with the wintery evenings spent caving, indoor climbing, night walks and marshmallow toasting.

The February half term was a pre 06.00 departure to drive to the Cairngorm National Park for a week of Winter mountaineering, where pupils got first hand experience of the trials and jubilations that is Scottish winter mountaineering. Ice axe and crampon skills were necessary to journey through the mountains and summit peaks.

Our two Ten Tors teams exceeded expectations and dealt well in the hot and sunny conditions of the event, which contrasted significantly with the torrential rain we had enjoyed for most of our training walks. Both teams arrived mid-afternoon to be welcomed by the thousands of wellwishers. A very impressive achievement.

The Bronze DofE expedition went back to Exmoor, with teams surging up and down the steeply sided Dunkery Beacon and surrounding coast. The Silver DofE expedition again headed to the Brecon Beacons, missing out on sumitting Pen y Fan [pronounced pen uh van] but putting their navigational skills to the test in some very foggy conditions. The Gold DofE walking expedition in the Lake District had a mixed bag of weather, their high mountain day being curtailed by warnings of thunderstorms contrasting

with the warm sunshine on other days, but with high spirits throughout. There have been countless other smaller trips and activities, including the U6 Sports Baccalaureate expedition on the River Dart and Year 5 and 6 residentials. A full and enriching year.

The CCF programme has been a busy one!

The Navy section has managed to get many visits in, *HMS Raleigh* where they practised fire fighting, ship damage repair and the obstacle course. Visit to Royal Fleet Auxiliary Lyme Bay and the submarine *HMS Talent*. This was topped off with new uniforms but with sad farewells to Victoria Willden and Rhi Ward. And a warm welcome to Colour Sergeant Jason Cox.

The RAF section has managed multiple trips, gliding at Predannack Airfield and flying at Boscombe Down. They have also hosted Ivor, a WW2 Bomber Command Veteran and regularly practised flying on VR. They also attended external fairs aid courses, adventurous training with the local Air Cadets, STEM training camp at RAF Wittering.

The Army section has led on Exercises First Look, Second Glance, Senior Stretch and Bickleigh Bullet, where they have learned self-reliance, confidence, teamwork and living in the field along with marksmanship skills. The Army section also competed at the Brickfields cadet competition.

They also completed a map reading weekend on Dartmoor and shooting on the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer at Bickleigh Barracks

Now moving into the sporting successes of the year.

This year has seen numerous players perform with distinction. One player represented Devon Rugby Under 20s, three represented Devon Under 18s and four represented Devon Under 17. Additionally, we have had representation within the Exeter Chiefs Under 17 Academy side.

The Under 18s had a successful season, losing narrowly in the National Vase to the eventual finalists. Their regular season included victories over Mount Kelly, Truro and Torquay. The Under 15s made it to the quarter finals of the National Bowl, defeating Mount Kelly, King's Bruton and Torquay along the way. The Seven a Side season culminated with three teams competing at The Rosslyn Park Sevens in March, with the Under 14s and Under 18s both finishing runners up in their groups.

This year saw more team and individual success for our Hockey players.



All teams competed well in their respective county competitions, special mention to the U16 team who were Devon Champions and went on to represent the county at the Regional Finals in Bristol.



Although they did not make the semi finals, they competed well against the eventual winners in their opening group game. Individually we have players who have been involved in the England Hockey Player Pathway at both County and Talent Academy level. Football continues to be an increasingly popular sport at the College, fuelled by the success of OPM Michael Cooper who played a significant role in Plymouth Argyle's Championship survival bid.



In the 2023/24 we have seen Netball at Plymouth College continue to grow.



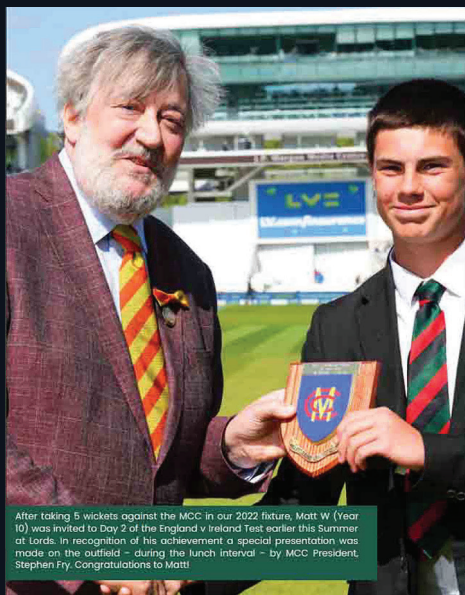
The College now boasts nine teams, reflecting a deep enthusiasm and commitment to the sport among our pupils. Over the past season, our nine teams have engaged in 39 fixtures, highlighting the school's dedication to providing ample competitive opportunities. These matches are crucial for skill development, team dynamics and fostering resilience. The extensive fixture list keeps players motivated and engaged throughout the season, along with National Competitions for our senior players. This season we entered the hugely popular Sister in Sport competition with our U15 squad and the girls had a fantastic set of fixtures, playing against schools we have never played before. We moved through the rounds playing against Truro School, Wellington School and Farmor's School to get them to the South of England Finals against Howard

of Effingham School, where our journey sadly ended.

At the end of the season we hosted our first ever Netball Showcase Event. This was a huge success and a spectacle for our parents and guest spectators with regards to the high level netball played by both our talented players and our invited county-level netballers.

It was also a fantastic opportunity to highlight netball at Plymouth College to our invited guests and this has enabled us to recruit county standard netballers into the school. We hope to do this again in the future.

The cricket programme has continued to grow this year with more and more pupils accessing cricket. Individually we have had some great successes with over 20 pupils being involved in either Emerging Player, County or Youth Development programmes.



After taking 5 wickets against the MCC in our 2022 fixture, Matt W (Year 10) was invited to Day 2 of the England v Ireland Test earlier this Summer at Lords. In recognition of his achievement a special presentation was made on the outfield - during the lunch interval - by MCC President, Stephen Fry, congratulations to Matt!

Girls' cricket at the College is going from strength to strength with the U15s being crowned county indoor winners and coming a creditable 3rd in the regional round. We have also had great wins vs Blundell's and King's Taunton in the U18 national 100 Ball competition as well as Millfield in the U15 Girls. Our mixed teams have also had some great successes this term with lots of our junior sides playing some very competitive cricket.

It's been a very successful year in the pool with three pupils having qualified for the European Juniors (breaking an Irish Junior record in the process!), representing Latvia, Ireland and the Netherlands. We took six current Plymouth College swimmers to the British Championships which doubled as the Olympic Trials, where two athletes achieved European Junior Consideration times in junior finals, and an OPM and current PL swimmer achieved a senior medal. The team won their first ESSA title since 2019 in the 4x50m Freestyle Relay held last November at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games pool.

It's been another fine year of fencing competition success with two of our fencers finishing the season in first place in the under 14 boys and girls national rankings and in second place in the under 17 girls cadet rankings. Our fencers have also been representing Great Britain and England in many countries including Croatia, Switzerland, Italy and Saudi Arabia. Our top fencer will also be representing England in the cadet and junior Commonwealth

championships being held in New Zealand. Our OPM fencer and pentathlete, Kerenza Bryson, and former Head Boy, Myles Pillage have also done us proud by qualifying for the Modern Pentathlon event at the Olympic games in Paris.

One pupil has been selected to represent Great Britain in the Discus and continues to impress on the International stage.



Our divers continue to excel, with international selections and competitions now a regular feature of the programme for a number of our young people.

Our boarders have enjoyed a diverse range of engaging and adventurous activities throughout the year, fostering camaraderie, physical fitness, and new skills. These activities, from tubing and tobogganing, to beach trips and escape rooms, have provided unforgettable experiences, whilst fostering important life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and resilience, making the boarding experience truly enriching for our pupils.

'Holding the fort' has not been my mantra this year, nor has 'steering the ship' or even 'keeping things going'. I've been myself and my authentic self and done all I could have done and we're still here and today is a testament to what we have all achieved together.

Leading the school this year has been my utter privilege. I could not have done this without the support of the community assembled here today. Without my colleagues, nothing would have been possible this year. To all the people who have supported me, picked me up when things have been tough, told me to get a grip when I've needed it and just made me feel safe, accepted and supported – I cannot thank you all enough.

To our parents who have supported me and my staff this year, my warmest appreciation for the trust you place in us to play our part in the lives of your children. Thank you to the governing body for putting your faith in me and for the support you've provided.

Most importantly, I have to thank the pupils. Without you all just doing your thing and providing me with the reason to keep going, this year would have been impossible. I cannot put into words how proud I am of you all for taking on board what I said in my start of term assembly. I said to you, I planned to lead the school being unapologetically myself. To lead in my way, with your interests in the foreground of everything I have done. I challenged you, to be you, to be kind and to look after each other and to cherish the wonderful institution we are. You have risen to that challenge (and then some). So thank you.



I pass on the baton to Mr Watts as our new Headmaster with the school united in a sense of what it means to be at Plymouth College. What it means to be a pupil, what it means to be a member of staff and most importantly, what it means to be part of this community. To our leavers, you're always part of this

community, the history of the school and as you go out into the world, the message is the same as it is to the pupils here.

Be bold. Be brave. Be you. Above all, be kind to others and live your dreams. To all of our community I wish you a wonderful summer break.





To celebrate the 60th anniversary of his leaving school, last year's President took it upon himself to organise an 'Oldies' lunch where most of the attendees had already celebrated entering their ninth decade. So's not to appear too ageist he did open up the event to a few 70-somethings too, plus one or two others who managed to sneak under the radar.

Edmund Davari, whose catering had been enjoyed by all present at the Christmas Lunch, was again on hand and once again provided excellent fare. The proceedings were graced with the presence of Adam Carr, the school's interim head, who has now presided over a full year at Ford Park, and is looking forward to the arrival of the new head, Peter Watts, in September.



L-R: Pam Eaton, David & Christine Hardy, Alan Crickmore, Dorothy & Mike Turpitt, Nick Partridge, John Eaton



Adam Carr, Geoff Fielden, Tim Lyddon

Chris Robinson, the current Club President entertained the crowd with a speech referencing previous interim heads who have stepped up to the plate following an early or unanticipated departure. It was a truly notable list and included three gentlemen who's names were chosen to be 'House' names, a suitable accolade for loyal servants of the school whose names didn't always make it onto

the honours boards as being school heads. Notably Francis Palmer, who fulfilled that role at Mannamead School prior to marching the boys from that place down to Plymouth College for the merger of the two institutions in 1896; Joseph Thompson, who in addition to his teaching commitments stretching almost 30 years here almost singlehandedly funded the original outdoor swimming



Jon Knowles, Roger & Carole Warne, Jill & Pat Newnham, Frances Foulkes, John Wakeham, Bob Foulkes

pool and Herbert Sargent, who gave over 30 years service to PMC from 1903-1934.

Other interim figures included John Dufton, following the untimely death in 1955 of Francis Lockwood, who had taken over at the helm less than two years earlier; Charlie Barnes, who only just overlapped with Bert Sargent, and who like Bert taught here for over 30 years, retiring in 1974 after his brief stint in charge following the early departure of John Goddard. Mac Forsyth and Frank Jeffery all had brief interim moments while more recently Sarah Dunn effectively became the first woman to lead the school, although, like the aforementioned, not in a permanent capacity.

For his part, Adam Carr updated the

room with an review of where the school is today and it's plans for the future.

At one point in the proceeding there were three generations of the Newnham family present as Pat and Jill's daughter Jo, currently the interim head of the Prep School was there, as was their granddaughter, currently a prefect at the school and who did duty on the day as a guide around the school for those oldies who hadn't been back for many, many years!

Honouring an age old tradition at such events, Charlie Taskis, received a bottle of wine for being the OPM who had travelled the furthest to attend, meanwhile, from just across the Tamar it was good to see Nick Partridge back at the facility he had run for so many years. All in all a jolly convivial affair!

Kingsley Bishop, Ed & Val Keast, Ian Johnson, Alan Harris, Nick Holman, Chris Robinson, Peter Lowson





Jon Byers, Tony Byers, Charlie Taskis, Christine and Willoughby Cocks

Full list of attendees: Bob Foulkes, Frances Foulkes, Pat Newnham, Gill Newnham, Ed Keast, Val Keast, Mike Turpitt, Dorothy Turpitt, David Hardy, Christine Hardy, Willoughby Cocks, Christine Cocks, John Wakeham, John Lyddon, Tim Lyddon, Roger Warne, Eric Sambell, Kay Sambell, Pete Rutherford, Chris Robinson, Carole Warne, Nick Holman Alan

Crickmore, Jon Knowles, John Eaton, Geoff Fieldon, Chris Hawkey, Tony Byers, John Byers, Peter Lowson, Jeff Heath, Adam Carr, Charlie Taskis, Walt Terrell, Nick Partridge, Ian Johnson, Alan Harris, Kingsley Bishop, Nick White
Special thanks to John Eaton for the photographs!

Kay & Eric Sambell, Walt Terrell, John Lyddon, Pete Rutherford, Chris Hawkey, Nick White, Jeff Heath



Simon Hallett ...

'It's all about the data,' insists Simon Hallett (73), who has spent almost 60 years supporting Plymouth Argyle and has gone from schoolboy fandom to club owner. In that same timeframe he's also gone from being a successful cheery pupil at Plymouth College, inspired by Dennis Collinson, to becoming an Oxford graduate and an incredibly successful investment manager with a company he helped establish over 30 years ago – investment giants Harding Loevner.

'More goals,' says Simon, 'are scored from set pieces corners, free-kicks, penalties – than are scored in open play, but players don't generally like practising these things over and over again, they'd rather their training be based around playing, which is all very well but that doesn't detract from the facts.'

For Simon success is born of avoiding gut feelings, not worrying about seductive narratives but rather focussing on what the statistics tell you. For anyone in any doubt of his commitment to this approach I suggest you read a few of his essays posted on the Harding Loevner website: they are well argued, well written and thought provoking. They also explain the philosophy behind his approach to Argyle. Shaping a successful club is just like shaping any successful enterprise and is predicated on having a transparent, ethical and challenging culture across the whole of the organisation.

It's also about identifying elements that can give you an edge over your fellow competitors and about creating something that is bigger than the sum of its parts.



5 January 2024, Dolphin Hotel on the Barbican, a bunch of 1973 leavers: Simon Murray, Neil Wonnacott, Simon Hallett, John Pitts, Phil Love, Chris Robinson and Steve Randall. Opposite page: the news has just been confirmed that Ian Foster will be Argyle's new Head Coach. The phone in the bottom corner shows the information that Simon Hallett is responding to online.

Data Day Living

Money will buy talent as we all know from watching the Premiership, the most watched football league in the world, but the presence of 'talent' in a team is no guarantee of success unless the team gel and work together on and off the field. Among the many gurus Simon references in shaping his philosophy is Michael Mauboussin, who in his book *The Success Equation*, talks of how 'Luck can only be managed by having a strong process, with rules or standards constraining decision making and the urge to impute too much importance to our role in any one result. In activities such as investing or team sports—arenas where skill and luck both come into play—narrative is particularly seductive, making adherence to this recipe for success a constant battle.'

Referencing the battle, Simon suggests that 'a good example comes from the success and subsequent decline of Arsenal Football Club, which in the late 1990s broke with English football tradition by hiring a Frenchman to manage the team. Arsène Wenger's on-the-pitch tactics and approach to nutrition and training overturned decades of English football culture and brought a level of domination rarely seen in professional sports. The Arsenal team of 2003-4 was unbeaten during an entire season, a feat that had not been accomplished since the late nineteenth century. Although the club went on to further success, other clubs gradually learned from, adopted, and refined its methods. Arsenal failed to innovate further and gradually slipped down the

league table to a point where Wenger was eventually replaced.'

Simon talks of the lessons he's learnt at Harding Loevner, over decades, where, in the early years: 'we were taking cautious steps in the dark, with nothing to give us confidence that we were on the right path.'

But in order to find that path it was helpful to be transparent, to be honest and to have a vision of what that path should look like, hence again Simon's approach to explaining to Argyle fans, not just what they're trying to achieve on the football pitch, but also on the training ground, and behind the scenes generally. It is about creating a culture based on trust and on decency, ability, fairness and facts.





4 May 2024, Home Park against Hull and Argyle win a nerve wracking last game of the season and survive to compete for another season in the Championship. Fellow OPMs Simon McDermot Brown and Steve Muncer, both also Oxford graduates with Simon, celebrate alongside him.

These are the values that underpin the massive investment that Argyle (read principally Simon Hallett) is making in the Argyle Academy project at the Brickfields.

'Here, again, we are not exactly inventing the wheel. Increasingly the lessons those of us in finance and organisational science took to heart about the role of process in managing our cognitive biases have also found their way into successful sports cultures. The most famous example comes from baseball where the Oakland A's, under general manager Billy Beane, incorporated objective data into their decision-making processes to come up with new ways to gain competitive advantage on a limited budget. Once it was widely revealed in Michael Lewis's *Moneyball*, Beane's approach influenced most of the rest of baseball, spread to

basketball, and is now beginning to have an impact on English football.

'At Argyle, our most immediate source of inspiration has been the outrageous success of Brentford FC, for years a lower-league club of modest means, which, under the ownership and guidance of Matthew Benham (who made his fortune successfully managing his own cognitive biases gambling on football matches) has risen to the English Premier League, the pinnacle of the football pyramid.'

Of course mistakes are inevitable: 'the man who made no mistakes ... made nothing' is one of Simon's favourite aphorisms. Argyle went through a rigorous process when looking for a replacement for Stephen Schumaker, who left rather more suddenly than the board had anticipated, but despite all that, it didn't work out.

“I’ve just met one of the nicest human beings I’ve ever encountered”

Indeed it didn’t end well for either side. More recently the appointment of Wayne Rooney, has provoked a number of Green Army keyboard warriors to voice their incredulity over the decision. However Simon believes him to be an excellent fit in every which way – football, culture and understanding people.

‘Immediately after interviewing Wayne I called my wife, Jane, and said “I’ve just met one of the nicest human beings I’ve ever encountered”.’

As we were about to go to press, Rooney had just left the Euros in Germany, and his job as a BBC pundit, to come down to Plymouth to start training his team for the season ahead. Gary Lineker wished him well, as we all do, although, as some

pundits have suggested, ‘we’re going to have to get used to the world’s media referring to the club as Wayne Rooney’s Plymouth Argyle.’

To which Simon’s tongue in cheek response is: ‘To hell with that—Argyle are massive (everywhere we go). Wayne is going to have to get used to being at a club that’s bigger than he is.....’

But whatever way around, if that’s like the first step towards doing a Brentford, then bring it on. Plymouth has long had the unenviable distinction of being the biggest city in England never to have had firsthand experience of Premiership or top flight football, if not the biggest city in Europe not to have enjoyed that feeling. Let’s hope that that particular piece of data is not cast in stone!



May 2024, Home Park and Plymouth Argyle appoint Wayne Rooney as their new Head Coach.

A Few of the Class of 2022



Harriet Currie

says she's doing an AAT apprenticeship in accountancy. 'I do college one day a week whilst working the other four at Francis Clark. This means I learn, get a qualification and earn money. Also, I get to create connections within the industry and get experience.'

Left: Sophie Watson, Aaron Summons, who leaves Plymouth College this year, and Rocky Dutta

Rocky Dutta has enjoyed a second year at Dartmouth Ivy League University studying a Neuroscience Major, with a government minor. As part of his course at Dartmouth Rocky also spent 10 weeks in Argentina on a study abroad program in Spanish.

Will Stevenson went straight from school to Southampton University and is studying Environmental Science.

Jack Lane is at Lancaster University enjoying playing 1st team rugby and studying Accounting and Finance.

Rebecca Eadie is still enjoying hockey at Exeter University and studying International Relations.

Maggie Crossley is at Plymouth Arts University studying Fashion Marketing

Damien Shamambo is living in Thailand and pursuing swimming full time. He has qualified for Paris 2024 Olympics where he will be swimming the 50m Freestyle on 1st August 2024 for Zambia.





Sophie Watson and **Pippi Harris**

took a year out working to travel to Vietnam, Cambodia and Bali, where they volunteered teaching English, helping with Wildlife and looking after four and five year olds. Sophie is now enjoying studying Psychology and Criminology at Swansea University and

Pippi is studying Music at Southampton University. They both still play hockey in their Uni teams and enjoy the nights out after the matches. Pippi is currently spending the Summer travelling around South America with her sister **Charlotte** (2021).

PLYMOUTH COLLEGE OLYMPIANS 2024

As the world eagerly anticipates the upcoming Olympic Games, Plymouth College once again proves itself a fertile ground for nurturing world-class athletes. This year, the school's legacy will shine brightly on the global stage, with several former and current students competing across a range of sports. Here we celebrate their remarkable journeys and achievements as they prepare to make their mark at the pinnacle of athletic competition.

Ben Proud – Swimming (see p32)
Ben's consistent performance has seen him medal at the World Championships for three consecutive years, including a recent bronze in Doha 2024.

Tom Daley – Diving (see p 34)
Competing in his fifth Olympic Games, Tom's illustrious career includes a bronze medal won in London 2012 while he was still a pupil at Plymouth College. Tom will be competing in the 10m synchronised diving event.

Damien Shamambo (see p28) now living in Thailand and swimming for Zambia in 50m freestyle



Myles Pillage – Modern Pentathlon
Myles Pillage will be competing in his first Olympic Games, hoping to add to his 2019, European Championships gold medals, which he won with Kerenza Bryson in the mixed relay, and his gold in the men's relay.



Honey Osrin – Swimming
At just 21, Honey Osrin is set to make her Olympic debut. This milestone is a testament to her hard work and the support she received during her time at Plymouth College. Honey's selection for the Olympics is a proud moment for all of us, showcasing the emerging talent nurtured within our institution.



Kerenza Bryson – Modern Pentathlon
Joining Myles in the Modern Pentathlon is Kerenza Bryson, who enters her first Olympics as the current Gold Medalist at the Modern Pentathlon World Cup.



Ruta Meilutyte – Swimming
Ruta Meilutyte, the youngest Lithuanian swimmer to achieve Olympic gold, is a name etched in Plymouth College's storied history. While Lithuania's team announcement is pending, we fully expect Ruta to represent her country once again. Her remarkable achievements continue to inspire both her peers and the next generation of swimmers at our school.



Aimee Canny – Swimming
Representing South Africa, Aimee Canny is another shining example of Plymouth College's global impact on swimming. At 20 Aimee holds the current African Record and will be competing in her second Olympics after her 2020 debut. Her ongoing success underscores the international reach and quality of the Plymouth College athletic program.



Laura Stephens – Swimming
Laura Stephens, a name synonymous with excellence in swimming, continues to make waves. As the current World Champion, Laura's journey from Plymouth College to the world stage has been nothing short of spectacular. Her relentless dedication and prowess in the pool have earned her a rightful place at the Olympics, where she is poised to add to her impressive list of accolades.

We eagerly await confirmation of a current 6th form pupil's selection to represent his country in Paris. The School will carry details on its social media channels as soon as the announcement is made.

As the Olympics draw near, Plymouth College celebrates these outstanding athletes who exemplify the spirit of dedication, excellence, and perseverance. Their achievements on the world stage bring immense pride to our school community, and we wish them all the best in their quest for Olympic glory.

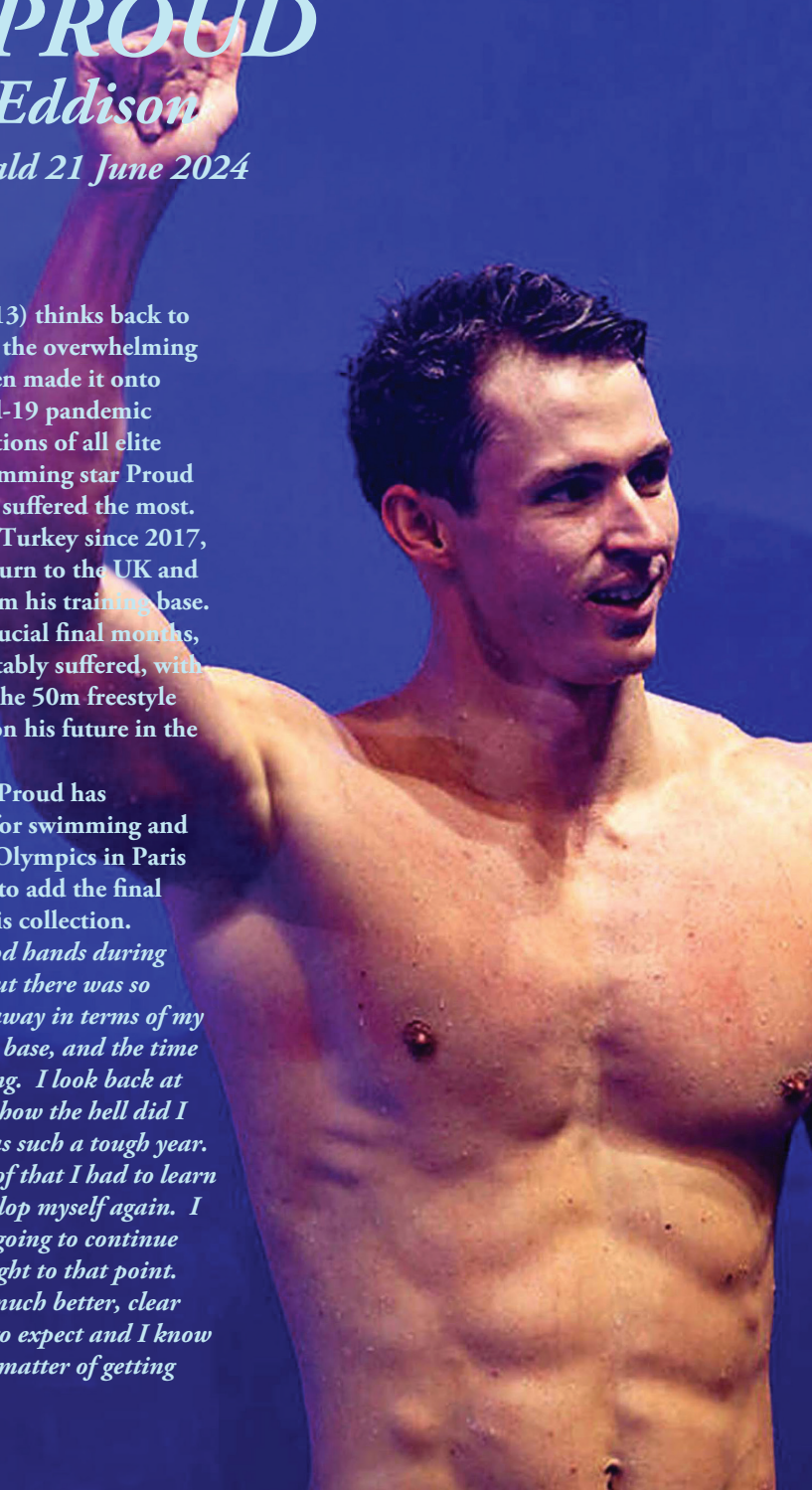
BEN PROUD

by Paul Eddison

Plymouth Herald 21 June 2024

When Ben Proud (2013) thinks back to his Tokyo experience, the overwhelming question is how he even made it onto the blocks. The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the preparations of all elite sports people, but swimming star Proud was among those who suffered the most. Having been based in Turkey since 2017, Proud was forced to return to the UK and train in Bath away from his training base. Displaced for those crucial final months, his performance inevitably suffered, with a fifth-place finish in the 50m freestyle leading him to question his future in the sport.

Now back in Turkey, Proud has rediscovered his love for swimming and will head to his third Olympics in Paris this summer, looking to add the final medal missing from his collection. He said: *"I was in good hands during the Covid situation, but there was so much that was taken away in terms of my resources, my training base, and the time we could spend training. I look back at that period and think how the hell did I get up and race? It was such a tough year. Coming off the back of that I had to learn a whole load and develop myself again. I had to decide if I was going to continue swimming, I was brought to that point. Right now, I just feel much better, clear headed, I know what to expect and I know how to perform. It's a matter of getting there and racing."*





This page and opposite: Ben Proud in action.

Proud is one of over 1,000 elite athletes on UK Sport's National Lottery-funded World Class Programme, that allows them to train full time, have access to the world's best coaches and benefit from pioneering medical support. This is vital for his pathway to the Paris 2024 Games.

Since his Tokyo disappointment, Proud had re-established himself as one of the fastest men in water. He was crowned world champion in the 50m freestyle in 2022, a year in which he also scooped the European and Commonwealth titles.

He added a global bronze last year as Australia's Cameron McEvoy took gold. And while Proud admits that McEvoy and reigning Olympic champion Caeleb Dressel – back from hiatus from the sport – are the two main contenders for gold, the 50m freestyle is an event where surprises are almost expected.

At 29, Proud is the elder statesman of the swimming squad, one of the five swimmers competing in his third Games. While sprinters often carry on longer in swimming than specialists in other events, Proud is aware that this may be the final opportunity to climb onto an Olympic podium.

"I'm lucky that I'm in this position that if I were to retire without a medal I'm really okay," he reflected.

"I feel like I've had a great career. The pressure comes from wanting to please the team around me and everyone who has shown so much support throughout my career. It would be quite a fitting element to have to say 'thank you' to them.

"I just want to go there, be happy on the block and show what I can do. Even that would make my team content. If I can show what I've trained for and what I'm capable of.

"I feel a lot more in control this time around. I can't think of a year where I've had so much precision with my training. That's exciting because it's kind of an unknown.

"I feel like I'm carrying the accolades of the last couple of years with the Championships, I'm carrying that experience through. I have a much better and clearer frame of mind with how I do my race and the performances. With the way I've been training it makes me feel good."

Two months out from Tokyo, Proud was not feeling good. The contrast ahead of Paris could not be starker.

Daley set for

by Tom Harle for Plymouth Live

Tom Daley is ready to make a splash at his fifth Olympic Games

The nation has watched Daley's growth from boy to man and he remains one of the most popular people in the UK

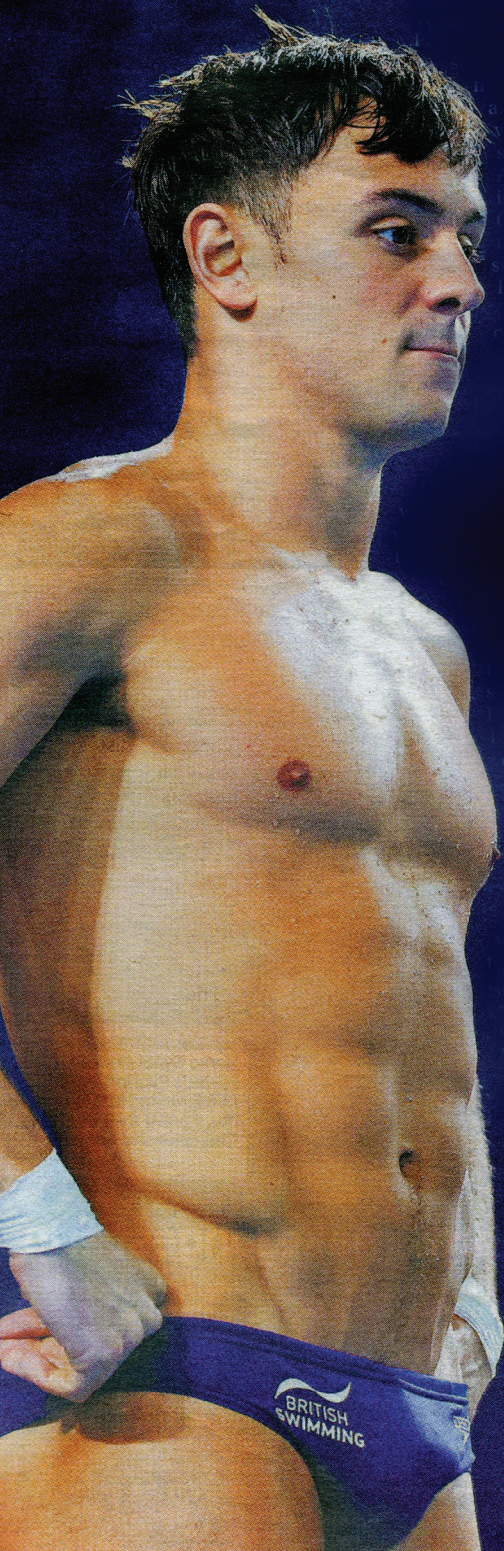
Activist, A-lister, diver and just plain dad: there is no-one quite like Tom Daley. As a nation, we have watched Daley grow from a boy into a man and that unique emotional elixir makes him one of the most well-loved people in the UK.

It's fair to say there aren't many other Olympians who can pull Hilary Clinton, Greta Thunberg and Shania Twain onto their podcast.

Daley has transformed pretty much everything he has touched in the last two decades. He has a few successful business ventures and is now living in Los Angeles with his screenwriter husband and two sons. In Tokyo, he got the Olympic gold he always dreamed of.

It begs the question: why on earth is he coming back for Paris 2024?

The search for an answer starts at the Life Centre in Plymouth where an eight-year-old Daley was spotted by a coach, Andy Banks.



Thomas Daley and Noah Williams compete during the Men's synchronized 10m platform diving final at the World Aquatics Championships in Doha, Qatar

fifth Olympic Games

Banks remembers: *"He was zippy, he was fast, he was aware of where he was and he had an ability to get through the water really quite well. The other thing that impressed me is when you said to him: 'you're doing this but what I want is that,' his ability to make changes was significant."*

There was only one problem: Daley couldn't bear being away from mum Debbie and dad Rob. Training camps were an ordeal and coaches had to ask him to practise sleepovers.

One observer recalls: *"I'd walk into Tom's room and you see these windows - the kind of hotel windows that only open so far - and he's standing, bawling his eyes out, trying to push the window going, 'If you don't call my parents now, I'm going to jump, I want to get out of here, I'm not doing this.'"*

"I was there a long time, listening, reassuring him, reminding him we were there to help him achieve his big-dream goals, and we finally got him downstairs to dinner and he sat right in the corner and all he ate was Jaffa Cakes."

The diving pool was the only place where everything felt okay and that is one of the reasons why we see him back on Team GB for a fifth Olympics.

The images of a 14-year-old Daley, the youngest British Olympian in generations, at Beijing 2008 are still so vivid.

Daley has weathered his fair share of storms. Before arriving at Plymouth College he was seriously bullied at school, taunted as 'Speedo Boy' and threatened with broken legs. The devastating loss of Rob, who followed

his son to competitions around the world, to a brain tumour in 2011 undoubtedly shaped the years that followed.

Daley has always met such moments with openness, a willingness to be vulnerable and a sharp awareness of how he can use his platform to advance causes he cares about.

After coming out on his YouTube channel in 2013, he has been a tireless campaigner and advocate for the LGBTQ+ community. He has used the levers of the Commonwealth Games as a means to challenge anti-gay laws and made it his 'mission' to use sport to shame such countries, carrying a rainbow flag into the opening ceremony at Birmingham 2022.

The answer to Tom Daley's new 'why' is a complex one but we definitely know 'when' he decided to come back to the Olympic stage – a visit to the USA Olympic and Paralympic Museum in Colorado last year.

The 29-year-old started sobbing when a video tugged on the heartstrings of what it means to be an Olympian. His son, Robbie, asked him why he was crying: *"These are happy tears, I just really miss diving and I wish I could go back and compete in the Olympics."*

Robbie returned: *"Papa, I want to see you dive in the Olympics."* The deal was done.

Daley got back into fulltime training, dividing his time between the University of California and the London Aquatics Centre while still putting family first. He is still coached by Jane Figueiredo, who he has worked with since 2013.

Talia Sullivan

All American Athlete!?

Talia Sullivan, daughter of Plymouth College art teacher Mrs Sullivan, left Plymouth College in 2020 with A levels in biology, history and art and applied to study in the United States through an intermediary body called Sporting Elite.



TALIA

SULLIVAN

She achieved a full scholarship to study at Savannah College of Art and Design because of her track speeds and general academic/artistic potential. Her scholarship included all sports kit, medical care, food, accommodation and tuition in beautiful old town Savannah. Within a short time she became the team captain of Women's Athletics at this prestigious independent art college. Talia was the only member of her team to make it to Nationals of the NAIA (National Association of Inter-collegiate athletics in Indiana). This was a huge achievement.

The NAIA comprises of approximately 77,000 college athletes and those who reach Nationals are few and far between. There were more than 30 athletes in Talia's race. If you finish in the top eight competitors you are awarded the honour of being called an 'All American Athlete' which is an annual honour bestowed upon an amateur athlete from the United States who is considered to be one of the best amateurs in their sport. Individuals receiving this distinction are typically added to an All-American team for their sport.

Talia came 7th and has now been awarded the honour of being called an All American Athlete even though she is British.

Peter Seaton-Clark

A Cunning Linguist

Peter Seaton-Clark (1990) is a British stage and screen actor who recently featured as a character in *Coronation Street*. He was involved in a storyline between April and July 2023 as Paul Foreman's MND Specialist which has helped bring more general awareness of this deadly disease.

Born in Barnstaple, Peter began his career in 1993 at the world famous Leeds City Varieties Theatre then went on to appear in *Seaforth* alongside Linus Roach and also appeared in the films *The World Champion*, *Uncharted*, *The Expert at the Card Table* and *Natasha's Dance* as well as the shorts *Red Dust*, *Ria*, *Off Duty*, *Banana Split*, *Whistleblower*, *Better Times*, *Potato Potato* and the award winning *Swiped* which he starred in and produced.

After a stint as a local TV presenter he moved to Europe, became a naturalised German citizen and was also a founding member of an English speaking theatre company in Leipzig.

Peter has worked extensively in Germany in television series such as *14 Tagebücher des Ersten Weltkriegs*, *Der Traum von der neuen Welt*, *Gute Zeiten Schlechte Zeiten*, *Kennedys Liebe zu Europa* and *Das Netz - Prometheus*. He was also involved with Russian films *Chempion Mira* and *Diversant IV* and TV projects include the international production *Concordia*.



HARRY MIDDLETON SWIMS



Endurance swimmer Harry Middleton (2018), an estate agent in Chiswick, successfully swam the English Channel last year to raise over £2,650 for two charitable causes.

In a journey which began on Sunday 18 June at 8.00am, lasting over 12 hours, Harry braved 'tough' waters to complete the swim.

"The two charities I decided to swim for are Make A Wish and the Fine & Country Foundation. Make a Wish is an organization that grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses, bringing them hope and joy during difficult times. The Fine & Country Foundation, on the other hand, works to combat homelessness and poverty, providing essential support to those who are struggling to make ends meet.

"I am a partner at Fine & Country, working in the premium market in West London so I thought it would be important to help all aspects of life and Make a Wish makes a huge difference to the lives of so many children, some of whom request the smallest of wishes."

Reflecting on the gruelling swim, and the training he endured in preparation, Harry told Matt Smith of *The Chiswick Calendar* the journey had been "very tough" but was worth it in the end.

Harry trained rigorously before making the crossing, and had to submit to a six-

hour qualifying swim in water colder than 60°F (15°C) before he could even attempt the challenge.

"I have been swimming for this event for almost two years and have banked almost 1200 km of training miles. I wanted to take on the challenge during lockdown when we didn't have access to swimming pools and the lakes and rivers were available to use. Everyone knows the English Channel so taking on a challenge as huge as this excited me, knowing that more people have climbed Everest than swum the English Channel."

When asked how he managed to keep his energy up and his focus during swim, Harry said: "You were getting fed during the swim. They were chucking food and drinks into the water – it's a pre-made carbohydrate drink and the food was just



THE CHANNEL FOR CHARITY

jelly babies... But it was more of a mental challenge after about seven hours."

Harry shared some unexpected and memorable moments from his journey, recalling:

"We swam with dolphins or porpoises in the sea, which I thought was quite cool."

"I did the crossing in 12 hours 46 minutes which was slower than anticipated," he continues.

"The currents and the tide changed throughout, making the swim very difficult, at one point the currents were going at five knots per hour perpendicular to the coast. And fog made the visibility almost impossible to see further than ten metres ahead."

Despite these challenges, the team successfully completed the crossing, eventually landing in France.



Jonathan Arnold



Jonathan Arnold (92) left a career in banking to embrace his lifelong passion for pens. Working from his base in Probus, Cornwall, Jonathan describes himself as 'maker and purveyor of beautiful writing equipment' and now manufactures his own wonderful range of nibbed pens and rollerballs. Jonathan and his wife are also responsible for a wide range of other hand-turned gifts and homewares created from local woods – truly delightful.





Matt Buckett and Ian P Marchall

Matt Buckett (93) has had a career in graphic design and fine art ever since graduating from art college in 1998. In 2015 he published a graphic novel using the popular crowd-funding website Kickstarter.com and has since continued writing and illustrating.

Matt has now joined forces with author Ian P Marchall to create a new publishing company, River Styx Project, and has released a fully illustrated fantasy adventure novel, *Knight Eternal*.

Reviews have been very encouraging.

"We are really excited to receive some positive early reviews," says Matt. "We can't wait for everyone to read about the *Knight Eternal* and his journey across the ages. This first book sets the seeds of an epic storyline that will continue into and beyond the trilogy of books that span this story arc. Packed with great characters, humour, tension and fast paced story-telling, this is a book for anyone interested in the fantasy/sci-fi genre."

The story revolves around John Godiven, a man born in the 11th century who inexplicably still walks among us in the present day. As a crusader knight during Richard the Lionheart's time, John fought

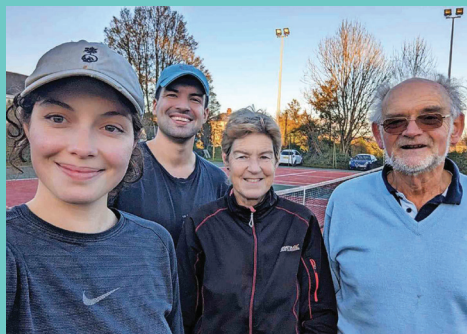
in the siege of Acre in 1099. However, he awakens one hundred years later, with no memory of his past or identity. Given his name by those who find him, John embarks on a journey across ages and continents, seeking answers about his immortality and origins. Along the way, he discovers unique powers that shape him into the enigmatic *Knight Eternal*—a warrior out of time, destined for the present!

In December last year they did their first ever book signing in Plymouth at the Final Frontier, Cornwall Street where Matt says: "We met lots of nice people, had a great time and sold quite a few copies of the book."

Matt and Ian are very keen to gather a following as they will be releasing more books each year, running competitions and offering discounts on books and prints. Earlier this year Matt posted: "We are working hard on the second book in the *Knight Eternal* series, with the final editing well underway and the artwork in full swing."

Sign up to find out more and receive info about upcoming publications on their website at www.riverstyxproject.com

MIXED MEDIA



16 November 2023 *Plymouth Herald*
Despite giving their opposition an 89-year aggregate age gap, Janet Butler and **Dudley Tolkein (64)** were thrilled to take their first win for a few seasons when they faced Alexandria Barkia and Alexander Stephenson in the basement battle of the tennis mixed doubles.



21 December 2023 *Plymouth Herald*
There was a top-of-the-table clash in Men's B between two undefeated pairs when Arash Dinari and **Lawrence Hay (02)** met Dave Gale and Steve Matcham.
The younger pair of Arash and Lawrence used their pace to get to all the shots, even the volleys that looked certain winners. Despite the scoreline, it was a closely contested game that was

settled by very fine margins. Arash and Lawrence were the victors, 6-2, 6-0, 6-0.



If there's a TV documentary about a classic comedy show or comedian, there's always a good chance you'll catch a glimpse of **Richard Latto**. Richard started out with the BBC in Seymour Road many years ago and has now made a name for himself appearing in a variety of shows and formats. He's co-produced shorts on Jon Pertwee, David Renwick and appeared in Channel 5's *Secrets & Scandals of Only Fools and Horses* and *Secrets & Scandals of Are You Being Served*, amongst others. He loves his music and all things archival in media terms.



Quirky spot in a documentary on Nigeria, a woman standing in front of a sign saying OPM God is Here ... not sure which OPM they trying to alert to the situation.



Another recent TV freeze frame moment captured from Sky Sports coverage of the Rotherham game against PAFC saw Argyle chairman **Simon Hallett (73)** sitting alongside a man that many speculated was an Arab Sheik and possibly a foreign investor being courted by the club. It wasn't, it was Simon's guest and contemporary from school, **Simon McDermott-Brown**.

Meanwhile in May 2024 Plymouth Live reported that: 'Matt Binge, the 'UK's Number One Food Reviewer' goes as far as to say the burger he recently ate at Zephyr Burgers 'could be the best burger in the world.' The popular food critic, has been sharing his adoration for the city's restaurant with his 174,000 Instagram followers. **Oz Harborth (02)**, who owns Zephyr, was intrigued!



WEDDINGS

*Megan Palmer
Nils Hanfstingl*





On Saturday, September 9, 2023, Megan Palmer (2010) married Nils Hanfstingl at Roscarrock Manor Farm in stunning Cornwall, UK. The weather was perfect (maybe even a bit too hot), making their three-day wedding event even more magical at their venue. Guests included a few OPMs as well as their friends and family from Germany, the UK, America and Canada (who now all think Cornwall is like the Caribbean, thanks to the amazing weather they had bolted on to either side of their wedding day).

Nils is German and Megan and Nils both live in Munich, Germany with their two-year-old son Kasper. They wanted to tie in a Bavarian theme to their wedding so hosted a 'Tracht' evening the night before their wedding where guests travelling from Germany were encouraged to wear their Dirndls and Lederhosen.

And on their wedding day, they tied in another German tradition where Nils'

groomsman quite literally 'steal the bride' should the groom take his eyes off her. They had around 100 guests across the three-day event and want to do it all over again! The band was a local Cornish band from Wadebridge, and Megan and Nils hired a local boat to serve as a bar for their guests.

Their only regret was not buying more beer – the couple thought that they had enough for the three-days but completely underestimated the Bavarians! Rookies! The celebration was a memorable day for all, marking the beginning of Megan and Nils's life together surrounded by family and friends.





Ed Vaughan and Harriet Evans got engaged in Richmond Park, South West London on 17 December 2023. They are both from Plymouth (Harriet went to Plymouth High) but met in London in November 2022, and the rest is history...! Ed studied Petroleum Geoscience at Imperial College after leaving Plymouth College in 2008 and now works in Energy banking.

Harriet works in communications for Lord David Sainsbury's charitable trust, the Gatsby Foundation, which is dedicated to reforming the technical education system in England. They live in Surbiton with their new rescue cat – Petrice – where Ed plays cricket locally, and occasionally still turns his arm over at OPM cricket week (including 2023). They are planning their wedding in Devon this September - fingers crossed for sunshine!





Stefanie Hajianni

“Despite the incredible experiences abroad, I felt a pull to return to my roots in Plymouth”

‘After leaving school, then having studied psychology and sociology at Brighton Uni, I embarked on an exciting journey working with dynamic start-ups like Pact Coffee in London. It was here that I dipped my toes into the world of marketing that ultimately ignited my passion for content marketing.

The thrill of this fast-paced, creative field was irresistible. At 25, I sought a fresh adventure and moved to Copenhagen. Denmark’s unique charm captivated me, turning what was meant to be a brief chapter into a five-year stay. During this time I managed marketing for a group of high-end restaurants, immersing myself in the local culture and honing my craft.

Despite the incredible experiences abroad, I felt a pull to return to my roots in Plymouth.

My family’s restaurant businesses provided the perfect opportunity to blend my skills with my heritage,

supporting them with marketing and content creation.

This soon revealed a deeper passion within me: creating engaging content for small businesses. Recognising a gap in the market, I founded my own social media marketing business Yanni Creative, dedicated to helping Plymouth’s local independent businesses shine.

Every day presents new challenges and opportunities, and I thrive on collaborating with passionate individuals whose innovative ideas and talents fuel our community.

Living and working in my hometown, doing what I love, and contributing to the success of businesses that make Plymouth unique is incredibly fulfilling.

Each day is different, and I’m thankful for every moment spent supporting and celebrating the hardworking individuals who make our city special.’

MICHAEL BALL

A Memoir

Hannah Stephenson *Plymouth Herald*

Michael Ball is reminiscing about his long-term working relationship with musical theatre impresario and composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, reflecting on his genius, outbursts and his quest for perfection.

The subject comes up in Michael's memoir, *Different Aspects*, which charts his life and career from the first *Aspects of Love* – the Lloyd Webber musical staged in 1989, which made Michael a star and secured his No 1 hit *Love Changes Everything* – and ends with the ill-fated attempt to revive the show in the West End earlier this year.

"I hope he won't mind me mentioning that I've seen Andrew very, very frustrated when things haven't been going well. It's the perfectionist in him. He lives by a code, hates cutting corners and despises seeing bad theatre,"

Michael writes. Today, he says, working with Lloyd Webber over the years has been fantastic and that he's been incredibly supportive.

"He took me under his wing, he's funny, he's really demanding, he knows exactly what he wants. But he is open to contribution from an artist."

"If things aren't going the way he wants then he makes that known – and you deal with that," laughs Michael.

The recent re-imagining of *Aspects* closed after three months this summer due to poor ticket sales, and while disappointed, Michael also seems

philosophical. By his own admission, and despite his passion and enthusiasm for each project he takes on, at 61 he has mellowed.

"I'm mature, I'm pragmatic, I'm confident. Yeah, I'm still hungry, but that's tempered with experience and understanding. I know the pitfalls and the pleasures."

"You do hit a point where you start caring less about what others think. That's one of the gifts of age. If things don't work out, as with this show, you move on to the next thing. It's disappointing for everybody but it's no reason for you not to have a go at doing things. Because there's so much else going on in my life, this was just a moment in time."

Michael is canny enough to have his fingers in a lot of pies. He is doing a major UK tour, *On With The Show*, next year, is executive producing the screen adaptation of his debut novel, *The Empire*, about the on and off-stage dramas in the eponymous fictional theatre, and has his regular BBC Radio 2 slot on Sundays (currently *Sunday Love Songs*).

He hopes to make another album with his friend and fellow performer Alfie Boe next year and also hopes that they'll tour together in 2025.

Famed for roles in *Les Misérables*, *Hairspray* (he reprised his Olivier Award-winning role of Edna Turnblad in 2021), *Sweeney Todd* and the *Phantom of the Opera*, he has plenty to write about.

The memoir is peppered with anecdotes involving a host of famous names from Joan Collins and Judi Dench to Eartha

Kitt, who snored through a show. He also recalls how Roger Moore pulled out of the original *Aspects* two weeks before opening night, unable to cope with the technical demands of singing. There are references to Michael's mental health at the time, how his hectic workload made him feel isolated and how the experience of a previous breakdown, when he left *Les Misérables* in the mid-Eighties after suffering crippling stage fright, lingered.

These days when he needs to pull back, he'll walk the dogs, take some time off to reboot and watch some reality TV – although he's not intending to appear on any of the popular shows any time soon. *"I'm quite private, and certainly the family are, and so it's not just yourself you're thinking about, it's everyone else."*

It was the first *Aspects of Love* – a story of romantic entanglements across three generations of a family and their artistic companions – which lead to Michael meeting the love of his life, journalist and TV presenter Cathy McGowan, who interviewed him in the run up to the show's launch. He says she has kept him grounded throughout his showbiz career. *"She's wise, she's kind, she pulls no punches. She came into my life and I came into her life at a really important time for both of us. It's a really good partnership."*

She has advised him on his work choices on numerous occasions.

"We will talk about it fulsomely. Ultimately, of course, it's my decision. But I trust her guts. And sometimes it's just not worth the aggro – and she's usually right. We clash about things far less than we used to."

He says Cathy has helped him realise he doesn't always have to say yes, which is a really difficult journey.

"I hate disappointing people, and I get excited by other people's enthusiasm and by the idea of something that I think would be an incredible challenge, not thinking that I take on too much."

"My career wasn't that advanced when Cathy and I got together. So she taught me that lesson pretty quickly."

He cherishes their home life in Barnes, south west London. *"I love that little nest of security and I love having my friends around and just talking."*

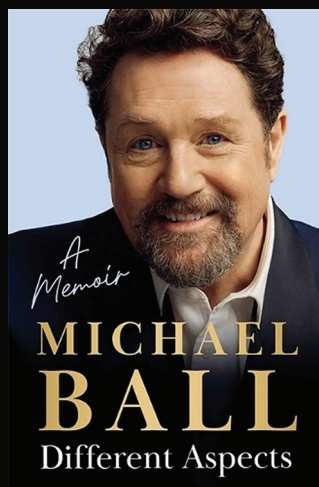
He says he has learned to look after his mental health more effectively:

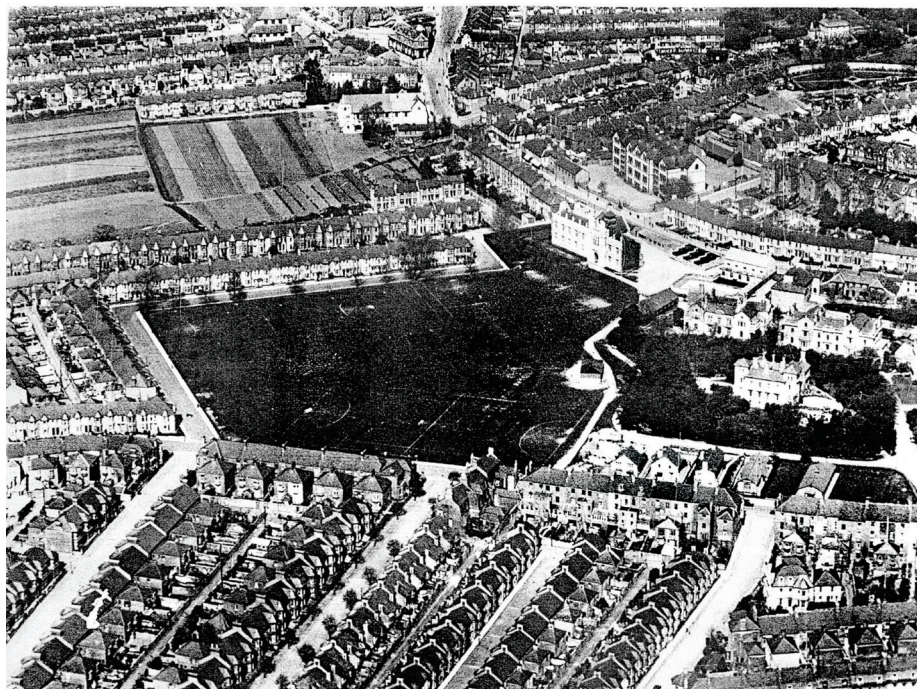
"I recognise the signs when I need to pull back. I understand myself, and I'm around people who understand me. They see when I need to sit back and take stock, I've armed myself with a greater understanding of what I need to get by."

The stage fright still comes and goes, but it's no longer crippling.

"I know the signs. It's when you're on opening night, or there's something that's heightened within something that you know so well. You start having that feeling and then it's like a wave."

"What I've learned to teach myself to do is to surf the wave, and not let it crash over me."





Chris Robinson

Our Plymouth Historian

Over the last 20 years or so **Chris Robinson MBE (73)** has produced a number of Then & Now books depicting various parts of Plymouth. It was a project started with little thought to the original 'Now' photographs becoming, in their turn, nostalgic 'Then' images. His two most recent projects however would not have been feasible when he started out on this mission, as the contemporary images embrace the modern wonder that

is Google Earth and allow him to hover in an almost identical bit of airspace to that occupied by the pioneering pilots who lent out of their uncovered cockpits 100 years ago and took pictures of the world from above that were a source of novelty and fascination to all those who saw them. The results are stunning and a source of great amusement for anyone who enjoys playing 'spot the difference' and, let's face it, who doesn't!

FORD PARK

As ever undated photographs pose problems. Here development at Plymouth College helps provide clues as the extensions to the main building, executed in the early 1930s are not yet under construction, nor has work begun on the science labs that were new in 1928. However the 1920s detached properties that sit on the north side of Ford Park Road, all but one of which now belong to the school, are there, as is the first of the Christian Science Reading Rooms alongside them – it disappeared around 20 years ago when the imposing five-storey McCarthy & Stone apartment block was erected on that site.

Meanwhile the school has expanded greatly over the years, and now it occupies most of what lies inside the perimeter formed by Ford Park Lane, Ford Park Road, College View, Devon Terrace and Hyde Park Road. The Prep School which moved to Hartley Road when Mount House moved out during the Second World War, is now back on site following an intermediate spell at the Millfields, which had become home to St Dunstan's High School for Girls after

the closure of the Royal Naval Hospital. Victorian Villas on the site, apart from the Head's house, have been repurposed primarily for boarding and administration. Various other developments, including what is now the Prep School (since 2021), the indoor swimming pool (2002) the School Sports Hall (1986) the Meade-King Hall and OPM Suite (1973 and 2004), Valletort and new science labs (1960s) have appeared post-war. The distinctive sports pavilion overlooking the playing fields however was completed just months before the war in 1939.

Elsewhere we see fields where Gifford Terrace and College Park Road were to appear in the 1930s, Hyde Park School, still sporting its original pre-wartime-incendiary hit roof line, and part of Mutley Barracks (to the right on the south side of Hyde Park Road). Less obvious is the empty site that sits just to the side of the Co-op building which in turn stands at the point at which Peverell Park Road and Weston Park Road begin.

HYDE PARK CORNER

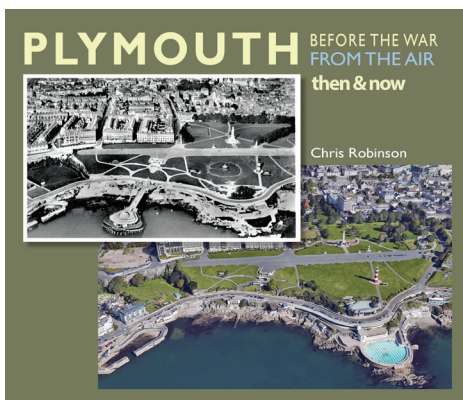
Here we go back to the early thirties as doubtless anyone living in College Park Place, St Gabriel's Avenue and Peverell Terrace will know, as the photograph pre-dates almost all of those houses.

Hyde Park School served the local community then as now, but note the original roof line of the building, before enemy incendiaries prompted the post-war refashioning. Across the road we see Plymouth College and its late-twenties science labs at the top of Gifford Terrace, but without the gymnasium and extra classrooms that were added in 1933/4. Probably the newest building in this shot though is the marvellously art-deco Barton Building, the Austin-Morris-Wolseley motor showroom that opened on 31 March 1930, opposite the Hyde Park Hotel and just below the former Mutley Barracks (now part car park and part school sports hall). However the showroom, at that time, had no ramp or side attachment – garage and forecourt – where a little mini-mart now operates alongside the Swarthmore Hall. Note also the then relatively new, single-

storey, Christian Science reading rooms at what is now the main entrance to Plymouth College, just off Ford Park. In recent years a major new block of residential apartments has been built here. There have been great changes too around Valletort Villa – originally a grand private residence surrounded by trees. However, while many of those trees remain and the house is still a private residence (for the headteacher of the school), the area to the left as we see it is newly occupied by Plymouth College Prep School, while a development of 1960s classrooms and laboratories sits to the right, below the Meade King Hall and OPM Suite.

There have been changes too to the Hyde Park Hotel. Just a few years before our early photograph was taken the pub was on a corner site, but the local authority wanted to improve the flow of traffic, so at the same time as the Barton Building was erected a roadway was cut around the western side of the hotel. In more recent years the hotel's footprint has been sympathetically enhanced.

PLYMOUTH BEFORE THE WAR FROM THE AIR then & now





FORD PARK, MUTLEY 1947

Although it's possible to pick out a handful of bomb sites in our earlier image, Mutley Plain's wartime experience was relatively untroubled, hence the decision of so many stores that were bombed out of the city centre to relocate here after the Blitz.

For the most part the buildings here were much newer than those in the heart of Plymouth, and indeed, Devonport and Stonehouse. Apart from Houndiscombe Farm, which had stood roughly where Beechwood Avenue and Hillside Avenue converge, off to the left of these images, there were very few buildings within our parameters here. Lewis Jones cottages at the southern end of Mutley Plain, that stood alongside the turnpike introduced after the levelling of the plain, were somewhat isolated.

That all changed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Nottingham Place, Nottingham Cottages and the Nottingham Inn (now the Junction) were among the first to appear at the southern end of the Plain (then still recorded as a stretch of Tavistock Road). While at the northern end we found

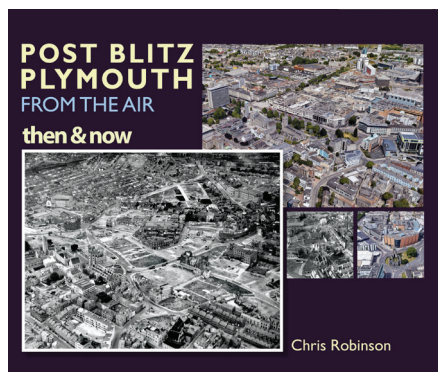
a handful of substantial villas around Ford Park (now all contained within the Plymouth College campus). Just above them, and on a corner site not an island site, was the Townsend Inn (later superseded by the Hyde Park Hotel), the name itself suggesting the limit of development – the end of the town.

By the end of the nineteenth century most of what you see here had been laid out: Napier Terrace, Ermington Terrace (where Plymouth College started as a school in 1877), Seaton Avenue, Trematon Terrace and Coryton Terrace (which would appear to be the original name for the road leading westwards off Mutley Plain) were first and then came those streets west of Pentille Road and east of the Plain.

Mutley Baptist, above the railway tunnel, and Mutley Methodist, appeared within a decade of each other in the 1860s and 1870s, although the latter was demolished in the 1970s. The railway itself preceded most of these developments and we can still see part of Mutley Station (closed in 1939) on the northern side of the tracks.

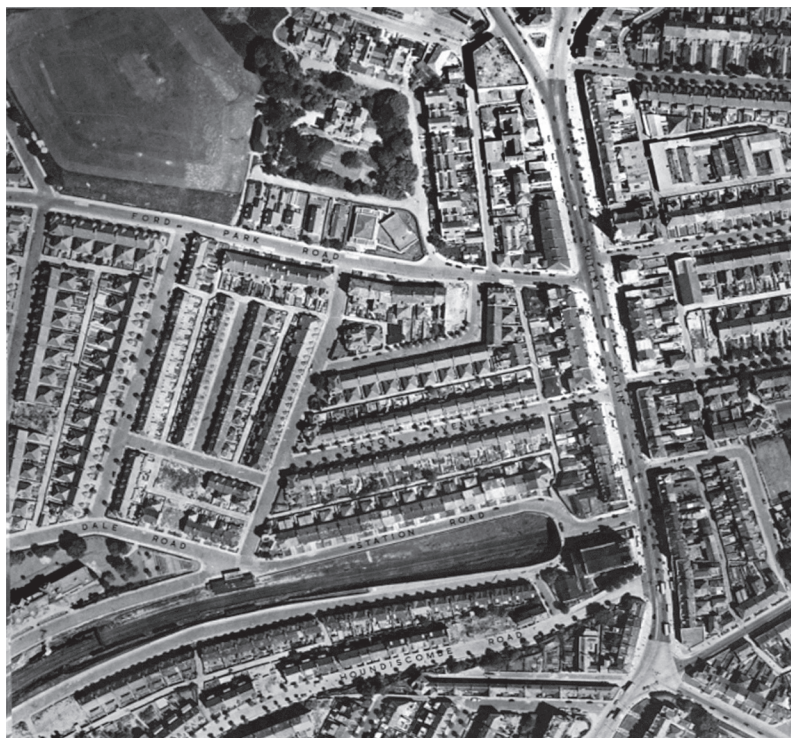
The text and the images on this and the preceding pages are taken from Chris Robinson's two most recent publications, *Plymouth Before the War*, and *Post Blitz Plymouth From the Air Then & Now*.

Each features some 80 or so pre-1960s comparisons from all around the city and are available from Amazon or via his website chrisrobinson.co.uk



POST BLITZ
PLYMOUTH
FROM THE AIR

then & now



Jamie Dawson

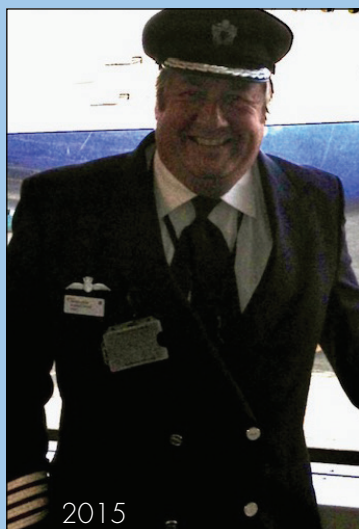
26,000 Hours Airborne!



1975



1982



2015

I'm not sure if I would merit any attention in the OPM magazine,' says the charming but self-efacing Jamie Dawson. 'My career has been pretty mundane. I started with with a Royal Navy flying scholarship whilst a member of the Plymouth College CCF, progressing via Manchester and Salford University Air Squadron flying the Bulldog. 'I enjoyed an RAF short service commission flying the Wessex and Puma helicopters for eight years. 'After that I spent 34 years with British Airways, the last 20 of which were in command of the Boeing 777 and 747 'Jumbo' – the high point being command on the 747-400.

At least I never did a single day's work in an office. I loved every minute of my career and would do it all again if I could.

'I retired in November 2022 at age 65 and now live happily in the Hampshire countryside with my wife of 38 years, Angie. When I'm not mowing the lawn I am occasionally to be found sailing out of the river Hamble.

'Our three kids have all left home and are all "partnered-up" and in professional employment (doctor, lawyer and scientist) in Bath, London and Perth Australia. Since last July we have been enjoying the fruits of being grandparents – but Australia is a long way to go to babysit!



Above an ancient Westland Wessex cockpit, below a modern one is a Boeing 777 on final approach at Heathrow.



A LETTER FROM AMERICA

Robert Mann



Inspecting Officer (1980) Maj-Gen Sir John Acland, with self (looking distracted) and Tim Foster

Thanks to Robert Mann (73-80) for the images accompanying this piece. Robert joined the Royal Navy at BRNC Dartmouth in January 1981 on a University Cadetship. After completing his initial officer training, including sea training, at Dartmouth he studied Classics at Bristol.

He continued training during his time at University and served on half a dozen ships, serving as the Navigating Officer of a minehunter and frigate, and Commanding Officer of one training vessel in Raleigh Seamanship Training Squadron.

In 1991 Robert left the Royal Navy and emigrated to the United States, having

married a girl from Michigan in 1986. The couple had two children, son Chris is a doctor and daughter Alex who is an IT specialist. 'We also have two grandchildren (so far) and have lived in Grand Haven Michigan for just over 30 years. I worked in US automotive industry for a Tier 1 supplier to the automakers for almost 30 years, first in Project Management and later as Commercial and Innovation Lead for General Motors in the North America region.

'I retired in Dec 2019, right before the pandemic. My wife Deb retired after 19 years as a Primary School head in Summer 2022, and we are now both fully enjoying our retirement and travel.



2nd XI cricket. 1979. From the front, Robert Mann, Mark Williams (holding bat) Steve Chipman, Pete Whyte, Simon Dove, ?, Ian Johnson standing on pavilion steps, Kim Rowe (deck chair leaning forward), Jon Rubin, ? Robin Moiser in jeans at the far end. Ned Holt was master in charge.

Below: Brecon Beacons group at base camp probably 1979. Front row, Robert Mann, John Tosh, Steve May, Nigel(?) Kennedy. 2nd Row Milos Stankovic, Andrew Greenway, Mike Asplin, ?,? Tim Foster saluting. Note staff caravan with patio enclosure rear right.



SCHOOLBOY SNAPPER

Tony Byers

We're indebted to Tony Byers on a number of counts for the 2024 OPM Magazine, notably for the splendid set of colour photographs he took just before the end of term in July 1967. Wonderful that he not only had the inclination, but a decent camera as well!

Many will remember Tony, not only from school but also from his days with the BBC in Plymouth – he had special interests in sailing, was a cub reporter with local papers, including the long-gone *Plymouth Times*. 'I joined the Daily Mirror Training Scheme after Bristol University.'

While there he took masses of pop photos for the student newspaper there: of artists like the Who, Pink Floyd, Fleetwood Mac, Yes, Marsha Hunt and Julie Driscoll. 'I even had a couple published in *Melody Maker* at the time ... and the management company of the band Nice stole one to use as a publicity photo, it took ages to get a few guineas "without prejudice" from them.'

Back in his home town Tony recalls taking pictures at a number of gigs locally, notably at the Guildhall and the erstwhile Van Dike Club – Manfred Mann, Fleetwood Mac, Medicine Head and others, including Emerson Lake and Palmer.

'As far as I remember it was Emerson, Lake and Palmer's first public performance before going on to the Isle of Wight.'

It was indeed, the Guildhall show was the debut gig of the so-called supergroup,

despite the fact that many accounts suggest that the Isle of Wight show was the first – it wasn't. The Isle of Wight festival started on 26 August 1970, while the Plymouth show was on 23 August.

The band comprised Carl Palmer from Atomic Rooster, Keith Emerson from the Nice and Greg Lake from King Crimson. There was another gig Tony remembers fondly – King Crimson – as he went through school (Plymouth College) with David Cross, the violinist with King Crimson.

'Sadly I didn't take any photos on that occasion – I've lost touch now.'

Long since retired from the BBC Tony says that he's 'still pottering on off my own bat trying to find out more about the early days of broadcasting in the West Region, indeed he was here earlier this year to co-host an event celebrating 100 years of the BBC in Plymouth.'



Tony working for Morning Sou' West in the 1970s



BIG SCHOOL

July 1967, taken from a higher position but nevertheless a fascinating comparison. It's worth remembering, over half a century later, that the east wall of the main school had only been completed with a door and windows some 30 years earlier, after being blank and notionally just temporary since the initial build in 1880. The section we

know and love today was just a part of the original design. In the event the old gymnasium, with classrooms above, was only erected in 1934. Some six years earlier the science labs had been added, while the original swimming pool, the first outdoor pool in Plymouth, appeared in 1902, a century before the heated, indoor version!





PREFECT'S PATH

July 1967 and Stuart Daniel is crossing the Prefect's Path, that is taking the short cut in front of the school library as then was. Note the CCF Nissen huts sheltering under the trees, and the small but adequate rubbish bin, bottom right.





VIEW FROM THE CHEMISTRY LABS

It is remarkable how little this view has changed for the generations of pupils that have queued in the corridor outside the chemistry labs in almost 60 years.

The properties lining the Ford Park playing field look much the same as does the field itself. The trees have grown, although one has been lost, and between 2015 and 2017 Beckly Point has risen up to make a distinctive contribution to the skyline.



Ever the Diplomat

Patrick Hodgson

Leaving school mid-way through A-Levels (French, English and Geography) was probably a sensible decision all round, but the main reason was the death of my father in 1972, which prompted me to go out and make a living: I wasn't going to shine academically, either! I wasn't pushed, but I left with Martin Meade-King's words ringing in my ears: "Mrs Hodgson, your son will not make it into the Diplomatic Service."

That was probably my "Stuff You" moment. And there was probably a sigh of relief that this boy, who spent more time on the sports field, listening to Led Zeppelin, and reading novels than studying, was moving on!

I am still in touch with Ian Punchard and Roger Harvey and Simon Lawrence in New Zealand. Ian has also put me in touch with David Bruce-Kingsmill, who happens to live just down the road from me, in Ross-on-Wye. As an aside, I went and stayed with Gary French and his family during a couple of the Easter holidays whilst at school, when we did not get a passage to see our parents (they were in Romania, Kenya and Mauritius during my school years), so I moved between them, my grandparents and my sister.

On the career front, there is probably not much I can say about the later years without falling foul of the confidentiality rules, but the three years in London before going to Moscow were fun, despite living in hostels and having a fairly frugal lifestyle.

I did, however, manage to achieve my

school-long goal of beating the long jump record of 20 ft 8 ins that had stood since, I think, 1908: I managed 21 feet at the Toc H sports day in 1976! I also played on the wing or full back for the (rather poor, at the time) Civil Service rugby team, moving briefly to Streatham and Croydon 3rds, and one game in Wasps' 14th or so team: quick, but not outstanding!

In Moscow, my work revolved around the registry, communications and admin, the highlight of which might have been going out to the airport to meet and escort the Queen's Messengers and the diplomatic bags every week.

I played in goal for the Embassy Broomball team (this is a winter sport, where the tennis court is flooded and frozen, the ball is a small inflatable one, and the stick is a straw broom bound up with tape in the shape of a small hockey stick: we played in trainers, and eventually managed to get some padding, and, unsurprisingly, we never beat the Scandinavians).

We also taught the Americans to play cricket, and they taught us softball, all to the great amusement of the local Muscovites! My Russian was fairly basic, but I was the Embassy Entertainments officer, and I organised boat discos, cross-country skiing and events in the Embassy Club. On one occasion, we wanted to set up a Hash House Harriers running group, for which we needed permission from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: my attempt at translating 'Harriers' was a bit out when the refusal



Patrick Hodgson, Petra, Jordan 2024

came back, saying that we were not allowed to ride horses through Moscow! Moving to Freetown was a complete change, climatically and culturally. I arrived in January 1979 in a three-piece wool suit, plus umbrella and briefcase, only to melt in the 40° heat and 95% humidity! Then the rainy season, from March to September, saw unbelievable amounts of rain and sapping humidity (a leather belt could rot in a few weeks). I was Head of Registry in the High Commission of some 10 UK staff, but as the office was on the top floor of a bank, and had previously employed a lot of naval staff as well, my 'office' was massive, consisting of strongrooms, cypher equipment, registry files and spare storage space. One of the relics I found was a brass seal for wax with 'His Majesty's Ships' on it. Given the remoteness and potentially volatile populations of the surrounding countries, I had a twice-weekly VHF radio contact with our missions in Ghana, Liberia, Gambia, Senegal and Ivory Coast, as part of contingency planning for getting people out in a hurry. The hours were good, being 0800-1400 six days a week, which left us free to head to some of the best beaches in West Africa in the afternoons. Whilst there Rhodesia was handed over, which meant 'Flash' telegrams flying around the Commonwealth to tell each head of state what was happening, and resulted many hours in the middle of the night poring over and deciphering, by hand, large telegrams, to be handed over at 0900 in the morning.

While we enjoyed all the tropical fruit and the seafood in Sierra Leone, we became a bit blasé about eating lobster or prawns on a regular basis, and craved a simple cauliflower, which the

Americans occasionally had flown in. Another highlight of the week was after work on Saturday, when the expats converged on the City Hotel (where Graham Greene stayed and wrote *The Heart of the Matter*), and over drinks and locally roasted nuts watched 'Dr Musa, Professor of Acrobatics' downing a bottle of beer whilst standing on his head. I played rugby - just once - for the expats against a Sierra Leonean side, which included Brigadier Momoh (a huge brute of a man, who would later become President). The pitch, on top of one of the diamond mines, was a mixture of sand, gravel and the odd tuft of grass, so bruises and scratches abounded.

On returning to London as Head of Defence Registry, the Falklands crisis was a baptism of fire, but very exciting to be in the centre of a major conflict. I was privileged to be the first person to run the FCO Emergency Unit in a real crisis. The work involved communications across the world, delivered in near-real time to and from Consular, Defence, Political and intelligence services, as well as the Task Force. When it was finished, Margaret Thatcher poured me (and lots of others) a gin and tonic!

I was also there for all the nuclear SALT Treaty negotiations. In Personnel Operations, I dealt with local and overseas postings for a range of people, and of keeping careers on track.

I did another session in Personnel Operations, before making the decision not to send our daughters to boarding school - the Diplomatic Service contract at the time was to spend 70 percent of your career overseas, and we could not guarantee good local education wherever we were posted next (quite apart from the obvious emotional wrench).



1973 2nd XI Cricket Standing: Bryan Michie (Sc); John Haughton; Neil Johnson; Stephen Bagwell; Nick Fielden; Paul Shephard; Malcolm Birrell. Seated: Chris Eve; Patrick Hodgson; Roger Harvey (Capt); Simon Hallett; Allan ('Alf') Garner

So I transferred to GCHQ in Cheltenham for the next 30 years. The details of my later career must remain classified, but it was varied and always interesting. I helped to start up an office automation system (remember the 5" floppy discs?), followed by intelligence analysis and targeting (hedge-hopping in a fully-armed military helicopter just after an attempt to shoot one down was an unforgettable experience!), recruitment (we were the first of the intelligence services to avow ourselves and go out on the road for the milk-runs), cyber security, and finally as head of a team doing national security vetting and investigations.

The move out of London to Gloucestershire was quite a breath of fresh air: we moved to a village between Gloucester and the Royal Forest of Dean, and as I had been exposed to GCHQ's 'product' in the FCO, I had a reasonable run at dealing with it at source, so to speak.

My main specialism in Recruitment was in Linguists, mostly those of difficult or rare languages. In cyber security, I was the Marketing Manager, which involved trying to teach government, Critical National Infrastructure institutions, the military and some strategic commercial enterprises how to improve their communications security: things as simple as not taking your mobile phone into the office and leaving it next to a secure computer or communications system, for example. It took me out on the road to UK and overseas conferences and exhibitions, some of which I organised. Needless to say, any cover I had was blown as soon as I went out on the recruitment drives, and a couple of times I appeared in the press or local TV to promote recruitment or security topics. I retired after 42 years in 2015, and have spent the time travelling, gardening, cooking and enjoying being Grampy to three grandchildren.



THE BOYS ARE BACK

A Happy Day Here Again!

John Sanders has organised a few reunions at the School in the last decade or so, so is no stranger to the effort involved in trying to persuade his contemporaries to return to their Alma Mater for a day of reminiscing. Each occasion has drawn someone new from list of those who left in the late 1960s, as well as a goodly number who've enjoyed one or more of the past outings, most notably Jono Cocks, who has also done more than his fair share of ringing around and firing off emails. This year, in the absence of any staff or prefects being free to conduct a tour of the Ford Park site, the Club President, Chris Robinson, 'volunteered' to take the visitors around. Most were pleasantly surprised by some of the additions that have appeared in

the half a century or so since they left, and amused and bemused by those elements that they found to be much as they remembered all those years ago. Stories abounded about the Fives Courts, one recalling how they used to nip out of the classroom as quickly as they could at breaktime or lunchtime and 'bag' a court which they would then 'sell on' to the highest bidder. There would appear to be much less appetite today for Fives as there was a table tennis table in the middle court, and the third court has now been incorporated in the CDT Department which has moved from behind the Pavilion to make way for the Prep's move from the Millfields (although of course, for this particular group the Prep was remembered as being at Hartley Road!).

Other reminiscences included some 600 boys being squeezed into Big School for assembly with John Bill at the piano and Meade King at the lectern.

A notable change to that space, now used as the library, was the capturing of part of what had been Room 9 and the addition of a couple of stained glass windows from St Dunstons.

Most of those attending the reunion availed themselves of the tour, made all the more interesting for them on account of the fact that the President had been Chair of Governors and on the Board for over 20 years and so had plenty of information that would have been unavailable to prefects and indeed most members of staff.

It was disappointing however that no current member of staff was on hand to welcome back this particular group of past pupils, most of whom are long since retired and well disposed towards their old school.

In all around 30 old boys attended, many from distant parts - Rich Baker made the trip over from South Africa and Mark Thomas travelled down from Aberdeen.

A splendid cream team in the early afternoon was followed by another excellent bill of fare from Edmund Davari and his wife Eleni and son Rocco, who managed to set up a system whereby John could air his schooldays music playlist! Although it was barely audible!

Opposite page: Bob Siddle, Roger Till, Fred Mercer, Jono Cocks. This page: Rich Baker and Mike Hoy





David Gee



Paul Somerville



Fred Mercer



Andrew Westlake



Tony Russell



Peter Milnes



Rob Gallagher



Dave Pepper

Full list of attendees.

Rich Baker, Simon Carder, Jono Cocks, Mike Everett, Rob Gallagher, David Gee, Brian George, Alan Harris, Rob Hookway, Mike Hoy, Iggy Jones, Colin Jones, Fred Mercer, Peter Milnes, David Moore, Roger Murch, John Paton, Dave Pepper, Chris Robinson, Ian Rogers, Dick Rowe, Tony Russell, John Sanders,

Bob Siddle, Paul Somerville, Tommy Taylor, Mark Thomas, Roger Till, Treloar, Andrew Westlake, Andrew Williams, Myles Wickstead.

Sadly there were a few who had to drop out at the last minute, among them Pete Isbell, who was not well ... we wish him well.

The OPM Suite was the perfect venue for the reunion, the sun shone and there was cricket on the square!





CCF HUTS/MEADE KING HALL/OPM SUITE

The site occupied by the CCF huts was doubtless always seen as a potential development site, especially after the early sixties' arrival of the Valletort Quad site that provided the school with it's first purpose built canteen, additional classrooms and laboratories for the biology department that was itself a relatively new addition to the

school - Frank Jeffery having arrived at the Ford Park in 1952 to set it up.

The Meade King Hall was built in 1973 as Meade King himself was stepping down as headmaster and the OPM Suite and music department extension was added in 2004. Meanwhile the seemingly temporary physics labs in the foreground still stand today.



David Moore

Less is More

I was at school from 63 through 71 which should have been 70 but for my total ineptitude to obtain any A levels which resulted in a third year in the sixth form. Having attended the Army Regular Commissions Board and failed to be thought of as Sandhurst material (sigh of relief), in 1971 I was about to join BP-Shellmex (the marketing organization for both Shell and BP at the time) as a management trainee, when I got an offer through the clearing house from the University of Leicester. I leapt at this and three years later graduated with a 2:1 (so what happened at school?!). On graduating I took a job with American Express' Military Banking Division, providing banking services to the US Forces in Europe. I did this for a couple of years before going back to university to study for an MBA at the Liverpool School of Business Studies. After a couple of false starts, in 1979 I joined Citibank as an international bank inspector, travelling the world inspecting branches, and did not look back. My three years inspecting saw me being holed up in Beirut during a flare up in the civil war in 1980, not long after I got stuck in Liberia during a fairly vicious military coup and topped all that off with being in Buenos Aires when the Argentinians invaded the Falkland Islands (wrong place at the wrong place!). Queue a rapid evacuation. So banking is cushy?

I had met my wife to be while inspecting the bank's branch in South Africa and we

got married in December 1982. A more permanent position was required and I was consequently assigned to the island of Aruba where we spent a very happy three years. After that we spent three years in the Dominican Republic and another three in Ecuador adding a son and daughter on the way. By 1990 the bank was opening branches in Eastern Europe further to the iron curtain coming down, and I was assigned first to Poland and then to Russia to open our branches. We then moved on to Taiwan for four years and then Hong Kong where we spent seven years and got our children through school.

I was promoted to managing director in 2007 and was asked to move to Guangzhou in China's Guangdong Province to run the operations of the 10th biggest bank in China which Citi had invested in. I spent just over a year in China before deciding enough was enough and moving back to the UK to take up a final position with the bank's Private Banking Group in Canary Wharf. Further to retirement in 2012, I spent 10 years as a non-executive director on the boards of first Milton Keynes University Hospital and until 2022 on the Board of Northampton General as vice-chair and senior independent director. At both Trusts I chaired the finance committees. I was also appointed as a lay member of the Council of the University of Leicester in 2008 and became the non-executive treasurer in 2013 until stepping down



in 2018. I remain a member of the University's Investment Committee that oversees the University's endowments, I am a trustee of the Leicester Students Union, I still participate in a non-executive capacity at Northampton General Hospital through chairing consultant interview panels and am also a trustee

of the Northamptonshire Healthcare Charity.

Apart from that, I volunteer at Citizens Advice in Daventry, do a lot of running including a few half marathons a year and many parkruns, am a season ticket holder at Northampton Saints and still love to travel.

Dr Roger Till



International Drug Dealer

Corporate meeting in Silverado, Napa Valley, California in 1987. The flags on the wall show which countries the managers came from. Luckily all our meetings were in English/American.

After leaving school I went to university for six years, getting married to a university lecturer half way through my studies. Three years at Kings in London, then three years in the medical school in Sheffield. End result, apart from the qualifications, I didn't want to be an academic so I joined a large international pharmaceutical company as a medical rep, with a territory based around Leeds.

My mother was disgusted, her son a commercial traveller, what would she tell her friends?

After breaking so many rules they had to either fire me or promote me. Because I sold a lot of products, they promoted me, but took away my company car! Since I was now a marketing executive my mum was finally happy.

For the next two years I was in the UK headquarters in various marketing departments, before I was sent to the USA corporation in a management learning capacity. On return to the UK, I was promoted to head up cardiovascular marketing, getting a new company car,

with the objective to launch two new prescription products. Task successfully completed; I then joined another large Swiss company as their UK marketing manager, with a team of product managers and medical reps. Interesting times since one of my teams launched the first product which allowed organ transplantation to occur and another group was marketing a blood product, launched during the ongoing issues with hepatitis and HIV transmission.

Apparently, I had been successful as a rep launching a new product in my region in the UK and as a manager launching new products in the UK market. How about launching a new product globally, I was asked. So, the family was moved to corporate headquarters in Switzerland and I had control initially of dermatology and respiratory products in the 83 countries we had employees. After some success I headed up marketing oncology, gene technology and virology. Since my wife was the only unemployed statistician in Switzerland my company offered her a job.



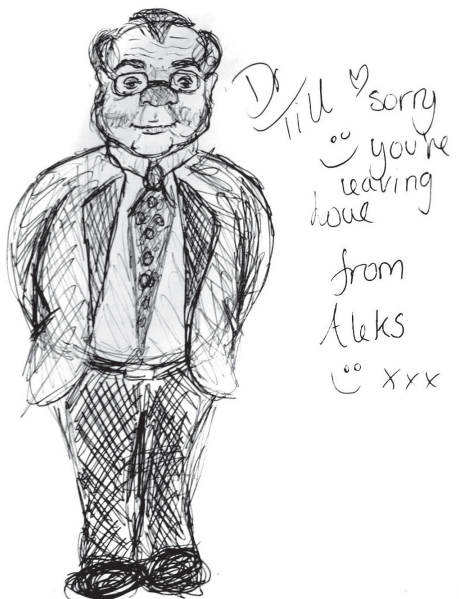
My Tutor group on the day in summer 2006 they finished in the school. What a day that was. Many are still in touch with families of their own. One of my pupils drew this for me on my retirement. Most people say it is a great likeness!

She said she could not work for the same company as me, heck we had 186,000 employees. So, she joined the company I initially worked for, also with its global HQ in the same Swiss city, Basel.

After nine years, I then set up my own company training senior physicians and researchers, running education meetings ranging in size from 20 delegates to over 5000 delegates.

Unfortunately, following a major heart attack, my wife said the company had to go. Too much travelling and stress. She was offered a job back in the UK and our son was going to a UK university so my company was sold and back we came to the UK.

What could I do? Science had been very good to me but I had seen discrimination against women. Solution, I did a PGSE and taught science in a girl's comprehensive school with 1500 11–16-year-old girls enrolled. Most interesting job I ever experienced ... but the worst paid.



I retired when I was 65 and became a volunteer for the National Trust working as an odd job man for the head gardener at Nymans in West Sussex. I have just received my 10-year service award. Well, that's my life so far.

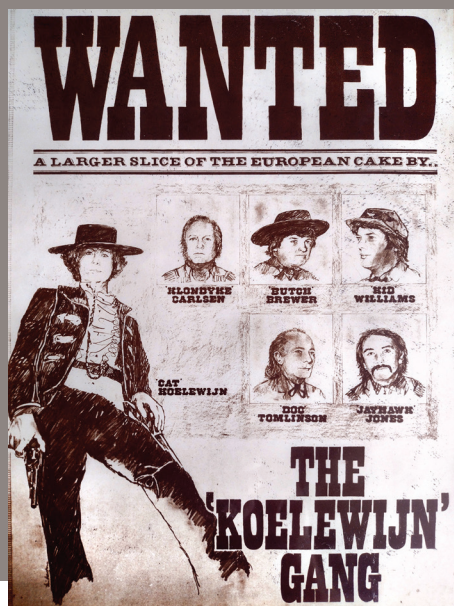


Iggy Jones

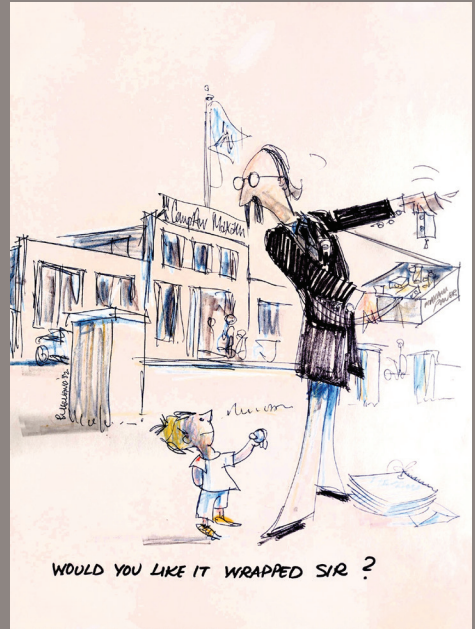
I left school in 1970 armed with one A level and the confidence borne of a 'private' education. I spent 30 years working for two companies involved in the compressed air and pneumatic controls industries, based in the depths of Cornwall, in a sales oriented role. For 16 of these years I was paid to tramp around the world, helped in no small measure by a failed French A level. Following the eventual demise of both of these companies, I spent the last 10 years before retirement, working for the local further education college helping to recruit and support carpentry, joinery and furniture making apprentices. Probably the most rewarding period of my working life.

My biggest regret on leaving school, was the fact that I only played squash after my A levels - a wasted seven years!!

The Wanted poster is from a European sales conference when I was in a sales admin role for a female sales manager.



I spent the majority of my twenties focusing on golf, rugby, squash and a young lady and it was only when I was 29 that I decided to get a grip and had the opportunity to go into field sales. The 'wrap it' cartoon was done for me when I moved from Holman (compressors, mining and quarrying equipment) to Maxam (pneumatic controls..valves, cylinders), so a huge change in the unit price of things. I only have a couple of photos on the job...so to speak. One of me at an exhibition in Singapore c1992 with our Malaysian & Singaporean distributors. The other, taken in an Istanbul night club, with the owner of a local pneumatics manufacturing company who I was trying to tie up a bilateral deal with.....well there has to be some perks to the job!!



Tommy Taylor



On reflection, three themes illustrate my journey since Plymouth College – work, community and discovery. In 1970, eager to experience life elsewhere, I trained to be a secondary school teacher at the Nottingham College of Education. The pull of Devon was stronger than I had imagined, but not before I had spent two years on the Turks and Caicos Islands, working with VSO – a very different life. On my return I joined the staff of Ivybridge Community College, enjoying 31 years, during which I gained a degree through Exeter University, led Education Authority RYA sailing courses from Phoenix Wharf and staged numerous careers conventions, as well as seeing my own children enjoying being part of the school community.

Community and contributing to it has been important. Firstly, Newton Ferrers where I grew up and met my soulmate Gill and Yealmpton where we have lived for many years. We met through the Newton and Noss Amateur Theatrical Society (INNATS) where I was stage manager and later the Chair with Gill acting and being publicity officer. For 28 years I was a Newton and Noss parish

councillor with responsibility for footpaths. In recent times I was the Commodore of the Yealm Yacht Club and Gill and I both contributed to the writing of the community history project 'Spirit of Yealm.' In Yealmpton I was a school governor and chair during a time of change for the school in various ways. Discovery has always been part of my life – discovery of where I come from – four generations of my maternal ancestors being bakers or publicans in the heart of Plymouth and Devonport, while four generations on my father's side worked in the cotton mills of Lancashire. Discovery of my county having visited all the current and disused railway stations in Devon, mainly by bike! Discovery of England by crossing from The Severn to The Wash in a dinghy we converted to a camping boat and exploring the coast on both sides of the channel in our Westerly Storm. Discovery of distant places through camping trips with the family to Europe, house swaps in America and a lifetime experience in New Zealand. And finally, the discovery of the importance of family and being part of their developing lives and individuality.

Roger Murch

I left the college at the end in the autumn term 1968 and transferred to Reigate Grammar School which was at that time the County Grammar School for south east Surrey where I lived at the time. I took my A levels there (twice) before joining City of London Polytechnic.

At City Poly, now University of East London (I think), I took an internal University of London degree in Botany & Zoology.

After a few job interviews I joined International Rectifier as an import clerk importing semi-conductors from Europe, USA, and Japan.

I moved on to Bristol Helicopters where I was responsible for identifying and tracking helicopter components which were imported without payment of import duty and so under HM Customs control.

My next post was with Montedison UK, the UK distributor for a major player in the Italian petrochemical industry. After a re-organisation instigated by the Italian state I was nationalised and the company became EniChem UK. During my time there I moved from the shipping dept into a logistics role in one of the sales teams. When the office was relocated to the Hythe refinery I took voluntary redundancy.



After a number of stop-gap jobs I was head hunted by Honeywell & Stein, the speciality chemical trader for BP Chemicals, in a purchasing and stock control role. H&S were sold to a Dutch speciality trading group where I covered a range of food additive chemicals. After 17 years I retired at aged 65, and I don't miss it a bit.

The methodology of these roles has changed dramatically with the arrival of desk top computers which provided additional challenges beyond merely having the right product in the right quantity at the right time.

Brian George

I studied civil engineering at Southampton. Then, I mainly managed highways in a variety of different roles for Devon County, the last one being as Area Engineer for South Devon.

I married Sylvia the year after graduating. We're both Christians and for most of our lives we were volunteer leaders for church based children's groups, youth groups, and summer christian youth camps. I currently serve as a volunteer Street Pastor in Plymouth.

My third passion in life remains sport, especially rugby which began at PMC. After school I enjoyed playing for OPMs for a number of years alongside other ex pupils, some then current masters, and others attracted to the OPMs style of play. It was great to be in a Lockie Cup winning team one year.



Bob Siddle

Whatever happened to this likely lad?



Disappointed at not getting into the Uni I wanted, I set off in November 1968 to start work at British Petroleum in London. I'd envisaged myself traipsing the deserts of the world searching for oil, but I ended up in their marine insurance department! Highlights include, sadly, being too naive to buy any shares in BP when I started insuring ships and cargo going to Alaska (instead of Abu Dhabi) a year before the huge oil strikes were announced when BP shares rocketed up, and being the sole representative from BP at the tender age of 19 on the newly formed TOVALOP (Tanker Owners Voluntary Agreement Concerning Liability for Oil Pollution) in the wake of the 1967 Torrey Canyon disaster off the coast of Cornwall.

Realising that I wasn't much good at insurance, I turned my hand in the early 1970s to organisation and methods with Britain's largest Reinsurer and, because of the decentralisation trend of that period, I was actually paid to move to Cheltenham such that I climbed onto the housing ladder at the age of 23.

I met and married Anne there and we'll be celebrating our

50th wedding anniversary at the end of August this year.

We have one daughter, Victoria, and two grandchildren, Elodie 6 and Jasper 4, who all live very close to us here in Altrincham.

We arrived in Altrincham in 1988 via a few years in Crowborough where I had been the company secretary of an insurance company back in the City.

Although fully qualified as an FCIS, I describe myself, with some accuracy, as probably the world's worst company secretary. I was a pretty good administrator but a very disinterested custodian of corporate records etc.

My performance wasn't aided by the fact that my technical line boss was the company secretary of Jardine Matheson in Hong Kong. In those days before emails and Zoom meetings etc we relied on long distance international telephone calls to discuss pressing matters.

Unfortunately a combination of bad phone lines, his Chinese accent and the fact that he had a lisp (!) resulted in me often coming off the phone not really understanding a thing he'd said!

My move to Altrincham was a godsend as I'd been approached by an ex boss to move here to run the administration offices of a newly formed UK insurance company which set about transforming the way general insurance was conducted in the UK.

We were very successful and after five hectic years we floated on the Stock

Market and became one of the must-buy shares of the mid 1990s. The future was looking rosy until one day our internal auditor, who reported to me, asked me for some help as he was struggling to obtain claims value details.

After raising this issue with fellow group directors I was a little shocked to be given, a couple of weeks later with no real explanation, what I now fondly refer to as the 'Golden Push Off' (polite version).

To cut a long story short, a year or two later the MD, the deputy MD and the FD all went to jail for fraud

(essentially understating claims values) and the company folded. It was called the Independent Insurance Company - a huge financial scandal.

At the then age of 45ish I decided to do something totally different so I qualified as a financial adviser and worked for The Equitable Life, St James's Place, Standard Life and Bank of Scotland in that capacity until my retirement in 2011.

My love of sport, which developed in those early years of ours at Plymouth College and for which I am very grateful, has resulted in my involvement in many sports over the years and I remain a qualified youth cricket coach and a qualified golf referee.

My only active sport now is golf where my handicap has risen from 8 to 18.5 in far too short a time as my aging body regularly refuses to follow directions.

OPM LODGE

Report 2024



Worshipful Master addressing the Ladies and Widows at the Social Event / Singer Dave Whitfield

Our ladies' Social evening held at Manadon Hall on Wednesday 17 May 2023, was an enjoyable event, well attended by members, their wives and partners, together with a number of guests. Musical entertainment was provided by Dave Whitfield and there was the usual bumper raffle for charity. The funeral of a previous member, namely W Bro John Williams which took place on 23 March 2023 at Weston Mill Cemetery was reported to the brethren. His family kindly donated his regalia back to the Lodge.

The Lodge has a summer recess during the months of June, July and August. However our meetings recommenced in September and Mark Williams was elected to occupy the Master's Chair for 2024. His Installation took place at the October meeting and was attended by 40 members and guests, including a delegation from the Province of Devonshire, headed by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master, Worshipful Brother Charles Yelland.

At this meeting a vote was taken for Worshipful Brother David Luke and Brother Geoff Martin to be invited to become Honorary Members of OPM Lodge.

Devonshire Freemasons attended Evensong in Exeter Cathedral followed by a short lecture and drinks on 5 October 2023. The subject matter was Freemasonry in Devonshire and the Anglican Church and was attended by the Assistant Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England.

OPM Lodge members and their partners had an excellent time at the elegant Ladies' Night held by St John's Lodge at Boringdon Park Golf Club on 21 October.

Brother Jack Lyne of Dundas Lodge 1255 presented a very interesting paper entitled *The Concord and Harmony of Music and Masonic Ritual* at our November meeting. Brother Lyne was congratulated for the work he had put into the preparation of this paper. Two days later, a number of members



OPM's & Ladies at Dundas Lodge ladies' Night



Presentation to Proprietary Library - £1,500

of OPM Lodge attended a celebratory meeting of Dundas Lodge to witness the Provincial Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Nicholas Ball, presenting Worshipful Brother Peter Brookshaw with a long service certificate marking 50 years in Freemasonry. Dundas Lodge is Peter's mother Lodge and he is also a joining member of OPM Lodge.

The OPM Lodge is a generous supporter of Charity and W Bro John Smerdon our Charity Steward, was able to confirm that the Lodge had this year donated £1,000 to the Provincial Benevolent Fund and, in conjunction with the Provincial WAKE Fund, donated £1,500 to the Plymouth Proprietary Library.

OPM Lodge does not meet in December but on the afternoon of Sunday 10th, the Devon Provincial carol service was held at St Marys Church, Plympton. This was well attended by Masons, their families and friends including a number of our own Lodge Brethren.

Our meeting in January considered the

content of the Membership Officer's report, which raised concerns about falling membership. Those present concluded that every effort should be made to attract new members, both initiates and joiners.

In February, with the possibility of two candidates in the pipeline, aspects of a First Degree ceremony were worked. In March, the two candidates were balloted for and approved. At the same meeting, Worshipful Brother Brendon Brookshaw, gave an informative talk based on 'nuggets' from the Solomon Educational Resource.

In anticipation of conducting the First Degree for our two candidates simultaneously, the Lodge practiced a double ceremony in April, to iron out any possible issues.

The annual accounts of the Lodge were also presented and adopted and W Bro Brendan Brookshaw was congratulated on his appointment as Provincial Learning and Development Officer, a role formally known as Provincial Orator.

OPM LODGE

Report 2024



Peter Brookshaw receiving his 50 years in Freemasonry Certificate from the Provincial Grand Master, RW.Bro. Nicholas Ball, with his son Brendan and grandson Henry Brookshaw

Having prepared so thoroughly and with the expectation of at least 40 attendees, our meeting in May had to be called off at the last minute, due to instances of COVID reported amongst members and guests. Also one of our candidates found that he was required to attend an important business conference abroad. Fortunately the Provincial Grand Master readily granted a dispensation for our meeting to be held on 12 June 2024 and 38 masons attended to see Graham Gollard initiated into the Lodge and Freemasonry. The whole event proved to be a very convivial and enjoyable evening with many new friendships being cemented; a fitting way for the Lodge to





Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Mark Williams and Brethren of The OPM Lodge No. 6279 - 2023/4

embark on its recess until September. The candidate was deeply impressed with the proceedings and stayed at the end to ask many questions about the symbolism and meaning of our Order, eventually being dropped home well after midnight! The OPM Lodge meets at Manadon Masonic Hall, Smallack Drive, Crownhill, Plymouth at 6.45pm on the third Wednesday in each month, except June, July, August and December. Our monthly meetings are followed by a formal dinner (Festive Board), and this is always a very sociable part of the evening. Membership requirements for our Lodge are no longer restricted and we welcome all enquiries. If you are interested in

Freemasonry in general or the activities of the Lodge in particular, further information without obligation is available from:

the Secretary, Steve Welsh.
secretary@opmlodge6279.co.uk

Membership Officer,
 Brendan Brookshaw
cadebrook@gmail.com

or any of the members.

Tony JOYCE

8 September 1929-21 July 1923

Headmaster 1983-92



Anthony Michael Joyce was born on 8 September 1929 to parents Lucy, a PE teacher and Arthur, director of an engineering company. They were living in Harrow at this time and five years later Tony had a younger sister, Wendy. Tony attended Merchant Taylors School in Northwood. He was academically gifted, as well as sporty. He was a popular Head Boy and played in the cricket, hockey and rugby teams. This success at school secured him a place at Pembroke College, Cambridge, studying physics. He played in the fives and cricket teams whilst he studied there. Following graduation he undertook National Service. He was commissioned at Dartmouth Royal Naval College and achieved the rank of Lieutenant Commander while teaching at the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon. This experience set him on the path of a teaching career, his first formal teaching post being at Oundle School, near Peterborough. From here the next step was becoming a housemaster at Clifton College in Bristol, where he stayed for 10 years and married his childhood

sweetheart, Jenny, on 6 August 1955. Jenny and Tony went on to raise three children, Caroline, Stephen and Oliver. Sadly, Jenny is no longer with us having passed in 2004.

After Clifton College he secured the post of Usher at the prestigious Magdalen College School in Oxford where he stayed from 1968 to 1972. He fell in love with the city of dreaming spires and not only enjoyed the academic environment but also loved the architectural beauty and history of the city. He and Jenny bought a family home in Headington. When his professional life later took him to Lancaster Royal Grammar School with a promotion to headmaster for 11 years, they kept the Headington home to return to in the summer holidays. As Head of Lancaster Royal Grammar School, one of his proudest achievements was preserving the school's selective status when this came under threat. Tony believed vigorously in maintaining high standards in the pursuit of excellence and also offering opportunities to all. Tony's esteemed teaching career finally

culminated in the post of headmaster of Plymouth College. As well as guiding the school forward, he enjoyed the relaxed Devon lifestyle that he remembered from his naval days. He rekindled his naval connection by serving on the Admiralty Interview Board for a number of years. When he took his retirement at 62, he and Jenny returned to Oxford to enjoy the next part of their lives. He became a founder member and chair of Headington Residents' Association. Retiring from teaching gave him the time and opportunity to throw himself into his other great passion - town planning! He pressed for changes and improvements in Oxford City, lobbying MPs and seeking pragmatic solutions to problems, insisting things were done properly. With his natural leadership qualities, he soon became chairman of The Oxford Civic Society to preserve Oxford's heritage. Sir Hugo Brunner, a former Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, summed up the 'Joyce approach': 'Tony is no firebrand, but he is resolute, even brave. And his concern is for the whole city, as much for the disadvantaged areas as for the historic city centre.' He was honoured with an award acknowledging his exceptional service to the city.

In terms of pastimes, he maintained a love of sport and enjoyed watching tennis, rugby, cricket and snooker on TV. He was also a great fan of Inspector Morse, of course! A deep appreciation of culture included art, literature, history, theatre and opera. Another keen interest was gardens, taking design ideas from other gardens to inspire his own landscaping plans at home. He and Jenny went on garden tours around Europe including the Italian Lakes. He

and both wives, Jenny and later Kate, enjoyed travelling and explored the food and culture of Italy and France. They visited Canada several times but perhaps his most memorable trip was taking the epic Trans-Siberian Railway that links Moscow to Vladivostok (over 9000 kilometres of track!).

After Jenny's death, Tony focused his energy on his various interests and it was through the Oxford Civic Society that he became acquainted with Kate Miller, then working as the planning secretary. With their shared values and energy for instigating local changes, they soon developed a loving relationship and on 15 April 2006, they married. Kate and Tony had 12 happy years together until she too passed six years ago. He embraced her Quaker beliefs and became an active member of the Oxford Quaker community.

As a person, Tony was a natural communicator. He loved social gatherings and parties, his distinctive laugh always there in the background. His excellent social skills would be put to good use, engaging folk in conversations, listening attentively and sharing his knowledge with others.

He remained curious throughout his life, always keen to hear what his children and grandchildren were up to. He felt the best thing he could do in life was to acquire and impart useful knowledge to others. Tony departed peacefully from this world, loving family at his bedside. He had an outstanding career and achieved much in life. He was a man of influence who took on many challenges that mattered; Oxford City has a lot to thank him for.

From the eulogy read at Tony's funeral.

Chris U'REN

31 January 1939-4 Marqch 2024

1945-51



Chris U'ren and David Shepherd batting for Devon



Team-mates and friends have been remembering the sporting career of cricketer and rugby player Chris U'ren, who has died aged 85.

U'ren captained Plymouth CC for more than a decade in the 1960s and 1970s and led them to victory in the 1966 Devon Cup final. It was the first year of the limited-overs competition – a novelty in club cricket at the time – and U'ren had his sights on the silverware right from the start.

'I remember in the 1966 season Rothmans decided to sponsor a club cricket competition and as soon as it was announced I was determined that our name was going to be on the new trophy,' U'ren told local historian Chris Robinson during an interview for the *Plymouth Herald* back in 2011.

"It was our first experience of limited-overs cricket and we met Torquay in the final ... and we murdered them!"

As an early-order batsman U'ren made more than 8,500 runs for Plymouth during a 350-game career that extended from 1957 to 1977. When he retired from playing he pushed the expansion of youth cricket at the club.

The city club contacted 28 primary and secondary schools inviting youngsters to attend nets sessions on Monday evenings at Ernesettle sports hall. It was done merely to aid schools whose facilities were under strain.

The first session was attended by 53 boys from 11 schools.

Dave Tall, now Devon CCC's director of cricket, was one of the young players encouraged by U'ren. He said his former mentor's influence on a generation of players could not be under-estimated.

'I must have been only 12 or 13 when I started with Plymouth and started playing in the colts,' said Tall.

'Chris ran the team at the time and was



The Plymouth team that won the inaugural Rothmans Devon Cup final in 1966. Back (l-r): John Swinburne, Doug Martin, Brian Hughes, Chris U'ren, Keith Baker, Don Stilwell, Brian Ridge; front: Tom Waldock, Brian Crawford, Tony Ward, Jon Solanky (Swinburne, Martin and Waldock were all then teaching at Plymouth College).

very keen on getting the best out of young players.

'He must have been doing well at work as he owned a brown Rolls Royce and would pick us lads up for training and matches in it.

'I remember one Sunday we played away at Werrington. You should have seen their faces when the Rolls pulled-up and we all got out.

'I know Chris was extremely proud of the players he helped along the way who became established Premier Division cricketers, such as Duncan Boase, Martyn Cooksley and myself.

'He was a smashing man. I went to see him shortly before he died and he said what a lovely surprise it was to see me. That was the sort of man he was.'

Richard Widger, who played cricket with

U'ren in the 1960s, said his longevity as captain was helped on the quality of players in the dressing room.

'Chris was a very, very good batsman – extremely quick running between the wickets – and was lucky enough to have a talented side,' said Widger.

'John Solankey (Glamorgan) and John Swinburne (Northants) both turned professional and we also had Devon players such as Brian Crawford and Tony Ward,' added Widger, who appeared for Devon in 1971.

U'ren played for the touring side Gentlemen of Devon, which is how Widger met him. They played against each other when the GoDs toured in the London area in the late 1960s.

Nigel Mounford, then a GoDs' tourist himself, played with U'ren and against

OBITUARIES



U'ren and Sobers returning from the toss

him for Bovey Tracey. He remembers U'ren with affection.

'I toured with Chris a number of times with the Gentlemen of Devon,' said Mountford, now the chief executive of Devon CCC.

'Chris was a really nice guy and a good cricketer, who played the game the right way.'

U'ren was also a first-team rugby player for Plymouth Albion between 1960-1968. He played at scrum-half alongside Bobby Luffman, who went on to find fame as a rugby league player with Hull Kingston Rovers.

Former Albion hooker Dave Fuge, now the club archivist, remembers seeing U'ren in his prime.

'I saw Chris play a few times, mostly on Easter Mondays when my father took me to Albion to watch the Leicester fixture,' said Fuge.

'Chris was very quick around the base of the Scrum – and his pass to his fly-half was swift and accurate.

'He was also very good at involving his forwards in ruck and maul drives, using the likes of Nick Southern, Al Greep, Ron Glazsher and Brian Spiller to good effect.

'I got to know Chris very well over the years. A true gentleman, who will be

sadly missed by all at Albion.'

There were county call-ups for U'ren in both cricket and rugby. He played cricket 11 times for Devon between 1962-1971 and made one county appearance on the rugby field in 1966.

Christopher Cecil U'ren was born in Plymouth in January 1939 and attended Plymouth College between 1945-1951. He moved to West Buckland School in North Devon for his secondary education, where his sporting prowess won him a place in the cricket and rugby teams. While there he was selected to play cricket for Devon Colts.

It was through rugby that U'ren struck-up a friendship with rival scrum-half Robert Hicks that lasted for more than 60 years.

'He was the scrum-half for West Buckland, I was his opposite number for Queen Elizabeth School in Crediton and we quickly became friends off the field,' said Sir Robert, who went on to become a Conservative MP in Cornwall for nearly 25 years: 'We used to meet up regularly at Plymouth Albion and the County Ground at Taunton, where a group of us shared a box and enjoyed watching Somerset matches.'

After doing National Service in the RAF – mostly at Northolt air station in west London – U'ren returned to Plymouth and resumed his sporting career.

There was rugby for Plymouth Argonauts in the winter – he switched to Albion in 1960 – and cricket for Plymouth 1st XI over two decades.

U'ren had many highlights during his cricket career, ranging from making 120 at run-a-minute rate against Exeter in 1964 to averaging more than 50 in the 1968 season, and perhaps the greatest was leading Plymouth against a star-studded International Cavaliers side in 1967.



Plymouth and International Crusaders 1967 Back row: Roy Periton, Mervyn Kitchen, Keith Baker, John Solanky, Brian Hughes, anon, Peter Robinson, Jack Fingleton, Bert Davey, Peter Vittle. Middle row: Peter Harris, Brian Crawford, Fred Rumsey, Peter Langford, Hilton Ackemann, Len Colwill, Clive Lloyd and Mac Donald. Front row: Lance Gibbs, Graham McKenzie, Chris Uren, Frank Chapman (Lord Mayor), Gary Sobers, Fred Truman, John Edrich, Colin Milburn.

In the days before John Player League cricket started in 1969, teams such as the Cavaliers and Whitbread Wanderers turned out against club sides on Sunday afternoons in exhibition games.

Test match stars Fred Truman, John Edrich and Colin Milburn along with West Indian legends Lance Gibbs and Clive Lloyd were in the Cavaliers side skippered by Garry Sobers.

'We had a three-hour committee meeting to discuss whether we should pay the extra £50 that Garry Sobers was asking at the time,' U'ren said later.

'I couldn't believe it, I even offered to pay it myself if necessary.'

One of U'ren's last appearances on the

cricket field was during a 1989 tour to the West Indies by Mendip Acorns that included a match against an Antigua XI that included Sir Viv Richards.

Joe Oliver, a fellow tourist and club rival with South Devon CC, said U'ren was: 'A true gentleman and a lovely guy.'

Richards only made a handful of runs in the match, but the tourists met-up with him again on the way home.

'Viv was on the same flight back as we were as he had to join-up with Glamorgan for the season,' said Oliver.

Chris U'ren, a retired estate agent, is survived by Liz, whom he married in 1964. The couple had no children.

Text courtesy of Conrad Sutcliffe

Eric MERCER

18 February 1947 - 23 June 2024

1957-1964



Colonel Eric Mercer (OPM 1957 – 1964) was born on 18 February 1947 in Plymouth. He joined Plymouth College in 1957 and with natural athleticism and leadership skills, Eric excelled in all sports and in particular, Cricket and Rugby.

Eric represented every school side from under 12s through the age groups to the most senior level. In his last cricket season with the school in 1964 the master in charge of the 1st XI Ted Mercer (no relation) wrote in the School Magazine 'The Plymothian' that 'Mercer was a first-class wicket keeper, his stumping being exceptional. Some of his victims were out whilst still advancing!'. It was in Rugby that Eric was to gain further honours.

He moved up into the 1st XV in the 1963-4 season and then captained the side in 1964-65 albeit up until the Spring Term when he left to join the Metropolitan Police. It was said that he was joined to the hip with his scrum half David Hardy and together they represented the Devon Public & Grammar Schools XV against sides from

Cornwall, Gloucestershire and Somerset with Eric as the Captain. They both represented the South & South West Counties XV against the London Schools in January 1965. He was an exceptional stand-off who could turn on a sixpence and deceptive in his running. He kicked as a last resort! He was approached by an English Schools Rugby selector after his final game against the London Schools however by that time he was about to leave school and therefore was deemed ineligible.

On leaving school, rather than choosing a University route, he decided to join the Metropolitan Police and continued his successful rugby career with Rosslyn Park. Eric was commissioned into the British Army's Intelligence Corps and progressed through the ranks to Colonel, travelling the world – making a huge impact on those he worked with, and for, as he did. His final appointment was with NATO on a Brussels-based multinational programme, the Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System (BICES), where he served from 1995 to 1999.



Plymouth College 1st XV 1964: Standing S Macey, S Daniell, M Uglow, P Davies, W May, M Griffiths, C Brant, B Alford. Seated: M Dean, D Hardy, W Biscombe, E Mercer (Capt), I Hoy, R Square, A Westlake.

Following his retirement from the army he stayed on there as a civilian until 2013 where he was a member of the Board. Adding to many accolades throughout his career, Eric was mentioned in dispatches (MID) for distinguished services, awarded the NATO Meritorious Service Medal for exceptional service, and also received a commendation from the Chief of Defence Intelligence at the UK Ministry of Defence for his work with BICES and the NATO Intelligence community.

Retiring in 2013, Eric moved to Olney in Buckinghamshire with his late wife, Jilly, who he had married in 1974. Now much closer geographically to their two adult children (Emma and Jeremy), and subsequently their four grandchildren, the family enjoyed valuable time together both locally and travelling further afield. Always concerned about how he would

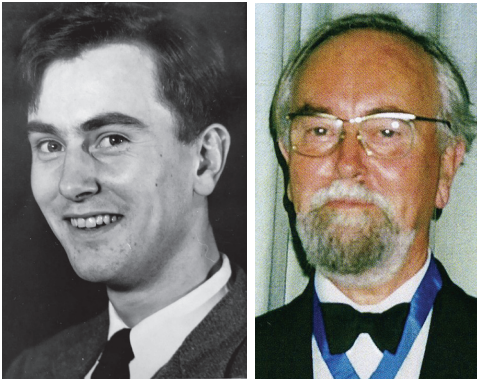
keep himself busy once retired, he needn't have worried! Joining Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands Golf Club, he spent much of his time there with his brother, Fred, and friends; enjoyed catching up with old and new friends alike; and indulging in his passion for live sport – he could often be found at Franklin Gardens watching Northampton Saints and at various Twenty20 fixtures around the country. Eric also found time to give back where he could, becoming a trustee of a national charity, AYME (Association of Young People with ME); taking part in many a charity fundraiser; and more recently had become Head Historian of the Intelligence Corps Museum at Chicksands.

Sadly, he passed away on 23 June 2024 at Willen Hospice in Milton Keynes. *Jeremy Mercer/David Hardy*

Michael LANDER

20 August 1931 - 9 March 2024

1941-48



Michael left Plymouth College as Head Boy. It was not long after the end of the Second World War and life was very different then. At that time it was the tradition and I think actually a legal obligation, for the Head Boy of Plymouth College for Boys to marry the Head Girl of Plymouth High School for Girls who, as luck would have it, was my mother. Proof that this was a marriage made in heaven came from the fact – surely pre-ordained – that my mother's parents lived opposite Plymouth College playing fields and so every morning my mother could stand at the window and see my father cycling past in his school uniform. My father took part in debating competitions between their two schools and – as she was to do for the 65 years of their marriage – my mother hung on his every word.

Before and after they were married they went everywhere together, including, a three week voyage from Liverpool via Gibraltar and the Canary Islands to Lagos just after they were married. Their destination, Nigeria, where Michael

started work as a District Medical Officer Nigeria played a significant part in his decision to specialise in ophthalmology – and one incident which made a big impact was seeing a group of five or six blind boys walking along a road, each with his stick resting on the shoulder of the boy in front and being guided by the sighted boy who was leading the way. On the order of service you'll see you're invited to make a donation to a charity which works in 30 countries to try to ensure that no-one loses their sight from avoidable causes.

My father read voraciously, remembered much of what he'd read, but was only really interested in non-fiction. He didn't see the point of reading novels about people who had never existed, though he made an exception for Shakespeare, and at the end of his life he could still remember speeches from when he'd acted the part of Henry V at school.

Michael's own memories from a long life, all suddenly gone three weeks ago: everything he could tell you about a school trip to Paris only two years after the end of the war, university life at Cambridge when you still had to wear a long black academic gown when you were out in the street after dark, those Schubert records under a sub-Saharan sky, that boat on the river Niger, a wife, a son and daughter, granddaughters, local history, family history, his mother's childhood in Shanghai and her journeys back to England on the Trans-Siberian Express, Shakespeare's plays, poems such as who cares where the tomato juice goes if it doesn't get into the beer – all gone. *(extracted from Richard Lander's Eulogy)*

Ken HUDSON

9 June 1938 - 6 April 2024

1950-57



Ken Hudson was a scholarship boy and member of Palmers House who was offered a place at St John's College Cambridge to read history. However by the end of the first term in sixth form he had become interested in training in medicine and asked Frank Jeffery, who was new, for help as there was no biology at PC until Frank arrived. He gained an open scholarship to Mary's Paddington in June 1957 after gaining three S levels in physics, chemistry and biology.

In his final year he was head of house, gained the OPM prize and was made a prefect. He left school and was promptly called into Royal Marines and finally gained a commission and was given a deferment by the War Office.

He qualified in medicine in 1962 from St Mary's Paddington worked in St Mary's and also Lewisham, becoming a junior surgeon. In 1966 he decided to try general practice in Suffolk. He came back to Devon in 1970, firstly to Chagford finally Teignmouth, living in Shaldon. Ken retired from general practise in 1998 but continued working as a radiotherapist at Torquay until 2014. He also worked on a small liner part time for nine years and maritime and coastguard MO for 35 years.

Christopher FOXWELL

September 1939 - 2023

1948-59



Unfortunately at the time of going to press we had no detailed obituary for Dr Chris Foxwell.

Thelma POWESLAND



We are also sad to note the passing of Thelma Powesland. Thelma joined the school in 1979 and served many years as the Headmaster's Secretary. She retired in the summer term of 2003. The Yearbook recorded that: 'Staff, parents and pupils have all benefitted from her help and advice. Thelma has been an outstanding Secretary, a superb support and a good friend to all. She retires to live France with her husband Mike.' Mike died two years ago. Bill Fisher remembers her as being 'very efficient, very loyal, you certainly didn't want to cross her!' He also recalls that together with MacForsyth and Frank Jeffery they managed to get the late Tony Joyce out of many scrapes! Her son, Richard (91) is working with Aerospace and living near Portsmouth.

SPORT

OPM CRICKET



A Philanthropist side featuring a handful of PMC lads (the Smith twins, George Wells and Charlie Watson) who helped the team to a thrilling last ball win against Oddballs

OPM CRICKET LUNCH

Friday 26 July

12.30 for 1pm

**OPMs v
Philanthropists**

Tickets Contact
development@plymouthcollege.com
or call 01752 505104

To play: Contact Chris Vinson
07866 616956

LUNCH 2024



OPMs and Philanthropists line up for a previous encounter



(back row left to right) Tom Pierson, Chris Guard, Kai Insgrove, Nathan Sutton, Liam Jonas, Hobson Ward, Phil Brokenshire, Andy Chalmers, Jake Abbott (front row left to right) Alex Peacock, Joe Meldrum, Ciaran Smith, Nick Dodderidge (GK), Charlie Oliver, George Guard.

Men's First XI

Flush from the successes of the 2022/23 season, during which the Men's First XI recorded 15 wins in their first 16 games and secured promotion with 6 games to go, the new season began with great optimism. After a strong preseason the stark reality of promotion hit hard in the first league game with a 13-1 loss; leaving the squad with no illusions that division 3 hockey would be a significant challenge. The loss of key players from the league winning squad had undoubtedly impacted the team cohesion and rhythm, however players from the Second XI were quick to show that they were prepared to step up with great individual performances. Over the coming games the rebuilt team found their feet but having to develop

a cohesive new team dynamic against quality opposition proved difficult. While the team was competitive and the scorelines much closer, the team were struggling with availability often travelling with a bare eleven; in this high tempo sport a strong all-round squad is essential to be competitive for 70 minutes. The team often found themselves in contention for much of the game, often finding themselves in commanding positions, only to find the result slipping away in the last 10 minutes as our own fatigue was compounded by the opposition pressing the advantage of a full bench to great effect to frustratingly reverse the result in the dying moments of the games. The performances continued to improve with



2023/24 New Season, new league, new kit

closer scorelines but ultimately did not culminate in results until the end of the season, this sadly proved to be too little too late with the team being relegated back to the division they had worked so hard to escape the previous season.

Men's Second XI

With many regular players from the Second XI progressing to playing in

a higher league the depleted squad faced their own challenges, competing in a tough league with a diminished squad. The team quickly developed, playing enjoyable hockey, but in a sad reflection of the fortunes of the first team the seconds were unable to convert performances into results, ultimately suffering the same ignominious fate as the first team.



OPM Hockey Club family day

Juniors

The junior section continues to grow taking part in the regular local tournaments, these see junior squads from all over the city take part in a round robin competition every other Friday throughout the season. Thanks to the efforts of volunteers, coaches, parents and of course the children the future hockey generations are being developed; the future really does look bright!



Social

Despite the challenging times on the pitch the Hockey Section continues to enjoy great times off the pitch with several social events taking place throughout the season, including club curry nights, Christmas parties and the highlight of the social calendar, the end of season celebrations. This year's end of season took place at The Loft, which was transformed into a sea of maroon and sky blue for the night. The festivities were well attended by players decked out in their finery for a fantastic evening with awards for the season and most notably a presentation to Rob Logan in recognition of his unwavering dedication to the OPM Hockey Club and hockey in the wider community.





Merger

Availability and subsequently the ability to put out full and competitive teams has been a real challenge since Covid, this has affected not only OPMHC but other hockey clubs. In the past few seasons OPMHC have had to make difficult decisions about the number of teams we are able to field; losing the men's third team and the entire ladies' section. Despite the best efforts of the committee and club to increase membership the direction of travel is very clear; which is why the OPMHC committee took the opportunity to engage in merger discussions with Plymouth Marjon Hockey Club, whose men's section were suffering similar challenges around availability. The discussions have shown the commonalities between the two clubs with a shared aspiration to create an encouraging and supportive

environment which offers enjoyable and competitive hockey for all abilities. A joint working group with representatives from both clubs developed a proposal which was presented at a joint EGM. Members were invited to ask questions, provide their feedback and ultimately vote on the proposed merger. The support for the merger was overwhelming with both memberships voting more than 97% in favour of the proposal. The new club, Plymouth Lions Hockey Club, will be entering five men's teams and five women's teams into the leagues next season as well as offering hockey opportunities for juniors of all ages. The OPM Junior section will remain, supported by the newly formed club, this is to ensure a diverse and competitive offering to young hockey players throughout the city.

Plymouth Lions



What follows here are extracts from the merger proposal that was put to both clubs earlier in 2024.

Player availability (full squads)

We all know the issues we have in managing teams with diminished numbers and being unable to select consistent and stable squads so we can enjoy playing each week.

We plan to run four league sides which will enable players to play at their skill level. We also intend to add a development team.

Training and match days

The decision on training and home pitch has been taken from a financial standpoint.

Training will be at the Marjon University pitches because the hourly rate is cheaper than Lipson.

Home matches will be played at Marjon for the same reason.

After investigating other venues that failed to bear fruit, teas will be provided at Barjons (a licensed bar) with catering provided by Marjon University catering team. Menu choices to be decided at a later date.

Membership and Costs

We have reviewed the benefits of both club's membership offers and plan to provide options that are both affordable and flexible.

Most importantly costs with not really change and for some may be cheaper! Membership options will be simplified to fewer products.

The price options will be confirmed once the new club's Treasurer is in post.

Club Identity and Ethos

It was decided criteria for the club name should reflect the heritage and imagery of both clubs and the city in general.

The name: Plymouth Lions

References the lion in the coat of arms of St Mark and St John and the two lions from Plymouth's coat of arms. Plymouth in the name is also a nod to the Plymothian in OPM and the design of the crest will carry further visual references.

Kit: Green, Gold and Black

References the coss of St Andrew, patron saint of Plymouth.

The secondary colour is gold from the golden lions in the city coat of arms.

The tertiary colour of black is taken from the Devon coat of arms.

Away kit will be white, green and black

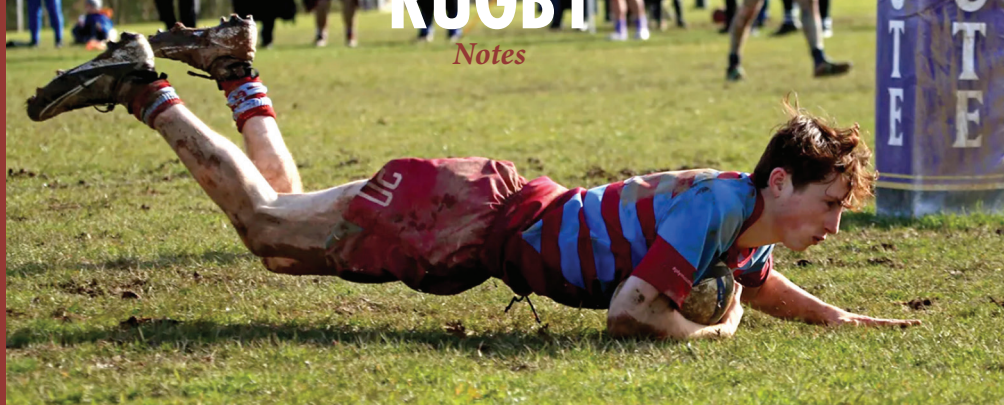
Kit

We are very aware that new kit costs might be an issue for some. The new club will provide current and new members of all the adult teams with a subsidised matchday jersey. We will be able to provide this offer for one season only. The new kit will be sponsored by local businesses to reduce the cost to members



RUGBY

Notes



Monday 1 April 2024

'A great game at the end of season, away to old rivals Argaum, saw the home side start well and pretty much camped on OPMs' line, but Argaum were deemed to have been held up over the whitewash and from that OPMs went up the other end and got a penalty, which Matt Smale kicked to put them in front,' wrote Sarah Raine in the Plymouth Sports Gazette.

'Four minutes later OPMs scored the game's first try when Matt Smale put in a great cross-field kick for his older brother Fred to touch down. Matt added the conversion to make it 10-0.

But OPMs messed up the restart and Argaum instantly responded with a converted try by Eddie McGinley, playing at scrum-half, after Tom Holliday and Tom Worboys had done well. Holliday was then yellow carded as Argaum were close to the try line again. Nine minutes later home fly-half Adam McCrohan was held up over the line after Avery had done well with an off-load.

The home club were then denied by a forward pass before Fred Smale scored a converted try out of nothing to put his side 17-7 up at half-time.

Argaum, playing down the slope in the second period, did cut the gap to just three points straight after the break when Herbie Owen touched down from a maul and McGinley added the conversion.

But Matt Smale then kicked a penalty before Fred Smale put replacement Ellis Foale in to score under the posts and make it 27-14.

Argaum's afternoon was summed up in the 74th minute when they looked certain to score with an overlap out on the right. However, the pass to the winger five metres from the try-line was a bit low and the ball was dropped and OPMs kicked it forward and Fred Smale collected it and ran in to score a length of the field effort.

Worboys did pull a try back for Argaum late on which gave them hope of two bonus points. They had a great chance at the death to score the all-important fourth try but they were unable to take it.



12 June 2024

OPM RFC was awarded the coveted Old Suttonians Cup last night (12th June) at the Plymouth Combination AGM held at Devonport Services RFC. The award is presented to the Plymouth Combination Club which the Plymouth Combination Referees have voted for and this year OPM RFC was awarded the trophy. It was announced that a total of 17 refs cast a vote and OPMs came out on top. OPM Vice Chairman Sean Cook pictured above receiving the award from Richard Ronayne from Plymouth Referees Society. Matt Glastonbury OPM Chairman remarked "I am very pleased to pick up another trophy for the season to top off a very successful year for the club and gain promotion as league winners. It is a great award and the club appreciates the work of the managers, coaches, players, supporters and backroom staff who have put in the effort and made the referees very welcome at KGV."



June 2024

Well, what a weekend we've had with the End of Season Dinner, our Volunteer Awards and an amazing on field performance!!!

Let's start with the on field performance of Matt Smale who came off the bench in a 36-all game full of excitement and great rugby. Eight players from Devon played in this one which is another great feat for Devon rugby.

Comments from the sideline were that he ran the game well and kicking from hand was spot on. With a penalty and two conversions, he added to the final tally and had an excellent game from 10.

Well done Matt and congrats on the game.



Matt Smale being presented with a shirt for being selected for Devon and South West England U20s.

Annual Dinner

Fred Smale collecting the Simon Adams Young Player of the Year Trophy for his brother Matt (away on South West England U20 duties)



Fred and Matt Smale

It will be of interest to the wider OPM Rugby fraternity that Fred and Matt Smale are grandsons of the late Dave Smale (44) and the sons of Tim Smale(83). Both currently play for OPM 1st XV



Paul and Jasmine Decourcey

collecting the Malcom Vincent Trophy Club Person of the Year for the tireless work in setting up the Girls U14 and U16 sections of the Club

Matt Glastonbury presenting **Sean Cook** with the John Gillan Award for Services to Rugby for the time and effort in managing the 1st Team, acting as Membership Officer and Data Officer over a number of years



Chris Carpenter picking up the Gary Wesley Award as voted by the players for Player of the Season





3 May 2024

20 tourists took on the epic voyage across the Channel to improve Anglo-French relations. It was a four-day tour emulating the OPM tour of 2006. It was planned that the squad would take in the sites of Brest before playing Plabbanec RFC in a clash of the titans on Saturday.

23 June 2024

The Club has a number of volunteers recognised by Devon for their services to the Club. Girls Coaches Paul, Jasmine and Saf have been selected as the Devon RFU volunteers of the year and have won a trip to Twickenham to represent Devon in the RFU country wide volunteer of the year award.

Main photo: left to right, Sean Cook, Martin Finlay, Safiia Ibrahim, Ciara Moran, Tim Binding, Jasmine Decourcey and Paul Decourcey picking up their awards





Training sessions are open to all, with the Senior Rugby with two sides, one in Counties 2 Devon and the second XV in the Plymouth Combination Merit Table. Senior training is on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at King George V Playing Fields, Elburton. Touch Rugby sessions are held on the all weather pitch at Morley Meadow School on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the year. Walking rugby sessions have now started on a Tuesday afternoons and Friday evenings at the Club. For more information DM the Club on facebook @OPMRugbyClub or email to info@opmrugby.com/

OPM PRE-SEASON TRAINING

Walking Rugby is well attended on Tuesday afternoons and Friday evenings, with a more relaxed approach on a Tuesday with tea and cakes and the odd game of chess when the weather is bad. Friday evenings is a bit more competitive with 10 to 12 players regularly turning out for an hour of rugby followed by a social drink.




OPM WALKING RUGBY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH






-  **Health & Well-being sessions**
-  **No experience necessary**
-  **All ages welcome**

Tuesday's 14:00 till 16:00
 Friday's 19:00 till 20:00
 Both sessions @KGV



 **Call Dave on 07905 447323**
 **DM our Facebook page**

King George V Playing Fields, Elburton, Plymouth, PL9 8HR



OPM MAGAZINE

Back catalogue



OL



HCA/OL



HCA/OL



OL



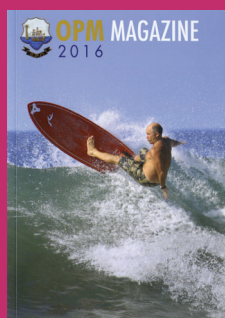
OL



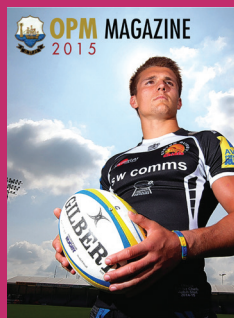
HCA



HAC/OL



HCA/OL



OL



NA



HCA



HCA

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

OLD PLYMOTHIAN & MANNAMEADIAN CLUB



Officers 2024

President:	Chris Robinson
Chairman:	Nick Holman
Immediate Past Chairman:	Nigel Lyons
Honorary Secretary:	
Honorary Treasury:	Peter Webb
Chairman (House):	Jason Sweby
Membership Officer:	Debbie Horner
Vice Presidents:	Pete Organ, Mike Turpitt
	Pat Newnham, Ed Keast
	Nick Partridge

General Committee

Tim Binding, Peter Lowson, Liam Jonas
Jason Sweby, Azza Gasim

OPM Suite Bookings: Jason Sweby

Headteacher: Peter Watts

Sports Section: Martin Finlay (Rugby),
Chris Vinson (Cricket), Liam Jonas (Hockey)

Lodge Rep: Nick Holman

OPM Magazine

Editor: Chris Robinson MBE

OPM Club Directors 2024:

Nick Holman (Chairman), Chris Robinson, Peter Webb,
Nigel Lyons, Ed Keast and David Hardy

Diary Dates



Friday 26 July: *OPM Club Cricket Lunch in the OPM Suite.
Enquiries about this function to opmclubdiary@gmail.com please.*



Friday 25 October: *Autumn Dinner OPM Suite 7 for 7.30pm*

Saturday 16 November: *Annual Dinner, Old Gym, at Ford Park*

Saturday 7 December: *OPM Christmas Lunch OPM Suite*

Friday 11 April: *Spring Dinner OPM Suite 7 for 7.30pm*

*for more details of these events contact
development@plymouthcollege.com*