



# OLD RYDEIANS' ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER 2024



## 2024 LEAVERS

Another group of adventurous Sixth Formers have left Ryde School to venture into the world. Our 2024 Leavers are an exciting bunch, destined for amazing things. Those not heading straight to university have planned a wide array of activities, from backpacking in Australia and climbing to the Mount Everest Basecamp to starting businesses and joining the armed forces. We can't wait to see them next year and hear all about their experiences.



### WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF THE OLD RYDEIANS' ASSOCIATION

We hope you enjoy reading this first edition of the Old Rydeians Newsletter, a publication that I believe to be really important as we endeavour to develop the way we communicate with past pupils across generations and with our current leavers.

The intention is to keep our network and relationships strong and to inform you of our events throughout the year. We are excited about the reintroduction of the Christmas Drinks at Yelfs, performances at our new Theatre, Cowes Week Drinks at the Island Sailing Club, and in London at the Royal Thames Yacht Club, our visits to our most popular university towns, sporting events throughout the year and opportunities to mentor current students. We want you to find connections throughout the world of people with at least one thing in common, having been to Ryde School on this little Island off the south coast of England.

I hope you enjoy reading the stories of some of our Alumni and look forward to meeting you back at school or at some of our events over the next few years.

**Mike Hooper** – Head of Economics & Business (1986 Leaver)



### WELCOME FROM THE HEAD MASTER

I am excited to welcome you to our new alumni newsletter. As the Head Master, it's my pleasure to reconnect with you and share the latest news and updates from our community. This newsletter aims to keep you informed about what's happening at our School, from achievements and events to opportunities you might be interested in. No matter when you left Ryde, you remain an important part of our community, and we look forward to celebrating your successes and stories. Each edition will feature interesting articles, interviews with fellow alumni, updates on current projects, and details about upcoming events. We hope therefore that this newsletter helps you feel connected and engaged with our community and I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support and enthusiasm towards the School and the Old Rydeian Association.

**Will Turner** – Head Master

To catch up on the OR news please visit [www.ryde.ora.ptly.uk](http://www.ryde.ora.ptly.uk)  
or follow us on [facebook.com/oldrydeians](https://facebook.com/oldrydeians) and [instagram.com/oldrydeians](https://instagram.com/oldrydeians)



RYDE SCHOOL PRESENTS

**The Crucible 28 & 29 March 2025 | Matilda 26, 27 & 28 June 2025**

# RYDE SCHOOL SAILING STARS

Ryde School's sailing team finished the 2024 season on a high! Ryde hosted the BSDRA Team Racing Finals in June which was not only the biggest turn out in the history of the event but also the biggest team racing event in the world so far this year with over 50 teams competing including teams from China, US and Ireland.



The first Ryde School team (Fred, Noah, Killian, Finn, Annabelle and Charles) came 2nd overall and were placed 1st school and the BSDRA Team Racing Champions. The Ryde School junior team (Olly M, Olly S, Cassius and Ellie B) came 3rd in their fleet against some highly rated teams.

The team then travelled to the National Youth Match Racing championships in Weymouth and won again! This was not a school event and one that the school was not expected to win. Fred, Noah, Ruby and Killian did an astounding

job with consistent results all weekend. In the finals, a best out of five races made for some very tense viewing. However, despite all odds, they came out victorious becoming the U23 National Match Racing Champions. The team they beat had not lost a race all weekend and was made up of three current national champions. This stunning performance qualified the Ryde School team for the Match Racing World Championships in Jeddah.

Earlier in the season Ryde School also won the Schools' Fleet Racing Championships, meaning that Ryde School has won the triple! As far as Ryde can work out no other school has achieved this ever!

*"These recent two events have capped off an amazing season for our sailors. To have been so successful across the year is a testament to the teamwork, dedication and ambition of our elite sailors and the fantastic staff who support them. They are a credit to themselves and our School."* **Will Turner, Head Master**

# GOODBYE



**PHILIP MOORE**



**SOPHIE BROYÉ**



**ALLAN GRAHAM**



**KERRY GALLOP**

This Summer the School bid farewell to some long-standing staff members. including **Philip Moore** and his wife **Anja Lengersdorf**. Philip held a number of roles over his 10 years here as Deputy Head (Academic), Acting Head (for a term), Head of Prep and more recently as Head of Senior School. Anja built German into a flourishing department of, at one point, 140 pupils and opened the Ryde School cookery classroom, a welcome addition to the School.

We also said goodbye to French Teacher **Sophie Broyé** who joined Ryde in 2003. In her 21 years here, she has been a stalwart of the modern languages department. Sophie has also been heavily involved in the CCF, being our Contingent Commander for a period of time.

**Allan Graham** has retired after a career in education that spans 50 years. With four

Headships under his belt (in the UK and South Africa) he joined Ryde in 2009. Part of the Senior Leadership Team, an IB coordinator and a much-loved Maths teacher.

**Kerry Gallop** was part of the School for 27 years, and an integral part of the academic team and will be missed by all who have worked with her.



The end-of-term theatre productions are a highlight for many students, and this year saw four major performances take full advantage of the new Jenny Kerry Performing Arts Centre. Opened in 2022, this professional 250-seat theatre has become the heart of all school performances. From its opening show in June 2022, "Jesus Christ Superstar," to the latest blockbuster, "West Side Story", this new facility has quickly become central to school life.



# ROGER PECK AND JIM BALL PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ORA

## ROGER PECK 1957- 1962

Hello to all Old Rydeians' and former pupils of Upper Chine and Bembridge. I'm Roger Peck, and I've been invited to be the President of our Association. It's a huge honour, and with my old mate Jim Ball as Vice President, we aim to introduce new changes and improvements. We hope you will support and welcome our initiatives.

I was at Ryde for senior school from 1957 to 1962 and became a management trainee at Marks & Spencer afterward. I met my wife Judy there, and we have two wonderful daughters and eight grandchildren. Our daughters attended Ryde School, and we eventually moved back to the Isle of Wight.

Over the years, I've been involved in various organisations, including the Ryde School board of Governors. Now, we want to reconnect with all of you and encourage you to visit the school, see the changes, and be part of the Old Rydeians' Association. Let's make Ryde School a place we are all proud of.

## JIM BALL 1950 - 1962

My first memory is walking into Highclere at age five, meeting lifelong friends Phillip Long and John Hobbs. Mr. Mornard, the Head, wore odd socks, and Miss Bevan brought back a "chicken" from the Holy Lands. Teachers like Mr. Spencer-White inspired my love for sports, while Miss Turner and Mr. White taught English and Maths.

After leaving school I joined the family businesses. returned to play ORA rugby, hockey and cricket over a number of years. Both my daughters attended Ryde, so as a responsible parent I re-connected with School and Staff. I joined the ORA Committee at about the time my friend Roger Peck breathed new life into it. I did Sports Sec with Randall Cross, Social Secretary with my dear friend Keith Brading. I later replaced Dick Hale as Chairman. I joined the Board of Governors in the nineties chaired by Dick Dabell, later Mike Lugg. I was thrilled to get back to being involved with the School and to be Vice President. It feels like the ORA and school are entering a really exciting period and I am pleased to be part of it.

# LEAVERS 1945 - 1970



## DEREK ABEL 1945 - 1956

I left school in 1956 to undertake a "sandwich scheme" in aeronautical engineering. In

1964, I moved to the US with my German wife; I completed a master's in management at MIT. Five years later, I received a doctoral degree from Harvard Business School and spent the next 12 years as a member of the HBS faculty. Since then, I have been engaged in management education - most recently as founding president of the ESMT in Berlin. Widowed in 2019, I am privileged to remain where we bought 30 years ago - at the lake side in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Since, at various life and career stages, four or five individuals held out invaluable helping hands to me, I have tried to do the same for others on the way up - in the words of a recently deceased Dutch friend (Bert Twaalfhoven) ' Learn, Earn, Return!' I have been particularly active in Europe's East since 1989 providing help to management education institutions and young professors. Partly for these efforts I was awarded in the late

1990's the Medal of Freedom of Slovenia.

I have lived outside of the UK for the past 60 years (14 in the US, 2 in France, 4 in Germany, and some 40 in Switzerland). I have therefore missed a lot of reunions and the many positive benefits of being an active "Old Rydeian". However, I am certainly one in spirit, avidly reading the information that is sent around about the school's remarkable progress and development, and still keeping touch with a few classmates who are still living on the Island.

I count myself as lucky to be in good health and able to live independently. I still work as a consultant and board member of several not-for-profit institutions. I also serve as president of the accreditation process aimed at management schools in Central and Eastern Europe. I have three children and five grandchildren and I am proud of each one of them. Thank God for Ryde School and what I have been able to pass on as they prove they can navigate their way through this increasingly challenging world.

## DEREK PRIDDLE 1952 - 1961

I attended Ryde School between 1952 and 1961. I married Jacqui in 1969 and we have two daughters and three grandchildren. We have lived in Farnham, Surrey for 50 years.

I decided to open my own estate agency business in 1970 and over the next decade opened a further five offices. I retired in 2020. I have always been interested in vintage transport.

In 2021 I became Chairman of the Isle of Wight Bus Museum in Ryde, Lord Montague of Beaulieu is our Patron. We recently featured on the Channel 5 TV series I.W. Jewel in the South.



## IVOR RAWLINSON 1953 - 1958

I might be the oldest Old Rydeian (82) to reply! I was at Ryde School from 1953-58 ending up as Head Boy.

After reading English at Christ Church, Oxford

(1960-4) I joined the Foreign Office. I learned Polish and served in Warsaw, going on to Barbados, Paris, Mexico, Italy and Canada, finishing as Ambassador in Tunisia. I was awarded the OBE for my service.

I got married in France and have three children and eight grandchildren. Since retirement I have lectured to schools about the diplomatic service, chaired a charitable trust, served as a governor of Ryde School and chaired an NHS patients association. I published a novel *Tunisian Dreams* in 2012 and *The 88 Bus and other Short Stories* in 2023 which includes two short stories based on the Isle of Wight.



**PETER POWELL**  
**1956 - 1960**  
**1964 - 1969**

I attended Ryde School as a day boy from 1956 to 1960, later returning as a

boarder from 1964 to 1969.

Leaving Ryde School at the end of the summer term, I went to college in Bournemouth until 1971, afterwards starting a career in road haulage with initially Carryfast and then with Henry Smither & Son/P&O Roadways Container Logistics as a traffic operator and vehicle planner. I left the company in 2009 and now work part-time for Waitrose and Partners.

Living in Southampton I have lifelong interests in history, gardening and motoring; owning several older Land Rovers. I still visit the Island and I am very impressed to see how the School has grown.



**TED WILLIAMS**  
**FORMER STAFF**  
**MEMBER 1960 - 1964**  
**P.E AND HOUSE**  
**MASTER**

After four happy years at Ryde School (my

first post) I went to Beaminster Comprehensive School (formerly a grammar school) in Dorset; (residential) for two years. I was then seconded for a year to Laban College of Movement in Addlestone which gave me my Dip. Modern Ed. Dance - all the rage at that time. I did not return to Dorset but took a one year post at Addlestone Junior School. I then became i/c P.E. at Carew Manor School, for ESN children (7-16) at Wallington, (Lon. Bor. Sutton) and remained there for eleven years and again seconded for a year at London Uni. to obtain my Dip. in Education

Handicapped Children. I then became the second Dep. Head Master. i/c Discipline pupils and staff My final move was back to my old grammar school now Redruth Comp. which had a special unit for ESN. Of course that post included PE with classes in the main school. I took early retirement in 1983 but continued working in the Magistrates Courts, in Camborne (home town) Truro, Falmouth and Penzance - finally retiring in 1998.

I refereed rugby throughout my teaching career including thirteen years in the London Society reaching the top list. Highlights included Touch Judge at Twickenham for u/15 Schools international and also the London v North (Bill Beaumont era) international trial. Still in contact with Graham Fowler and regular exchanges on rugby with Jim Ball. Finally, now married with a son who is a sergeant in the Intelligence Branch RAF.

**TIM FAWDRY**  
**1950 - 1953**

Our family returned from Africa and we lived with our grandfather, a retired Town Clerk of Ryde. My older brother and I went to Ryde School. My sister to West Wing. I was 8, it was 1950. These were happy days, good school friends, hot summers and great places to explore on bikes. In 1953 we sadly left the Island, me to boarding school. Married in '63 with a career in advertising and marketing in London and abroad. I brought the family to Ryde/Seaview for our first summer holiday in 1975. it was all so familiar! After many visits we finally bought a bolt hole in Bembridge. I am now heading for gentler times in my 83rd year.



**TONY GALE**  
**1937 - 1945 - TRINITY**

I am 94 and a widower. I am living in Ryde, mainly looking after myself but going out to Probus, Friendship

Lunches, 41 Club dinners and, as an honorary member, IOW Rotary meetings and dinners.

My late wife and I founded the Isle of Wight Branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society in the late 1960s. Subsequently I became Chair of the Cheshire Home Committee at Shanklin for 10 years. Thereafter I was involved with Rotary charities and the Greater Ryde Benevolent Fund.

Looking back to my school days I remember the winter of 1945. There was a heavy snowfall and it was decided there would be an organised

snowball fight. We all changed into sports gear and assembled in house groups. Battle then commenced between the houses with groups changing every 10 minutes or so. I think there were some bruises but no serious injuries. Health and safety would intervene today!



**TONY LAUGHTON**  
**1940 - 1952**

After National Service and 3 years at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, I moved to Cheshire and now live in the foothills

of the Pennines near Macclesfield. Most of my working life was in the textile industry, specifically in the world of narrow fabrics, at first travelling the world for sales and later working locally.

My charity work has been limited to financial support for charities involved in support for the environment.

My memories of life at school are of teachers such as "Crusty" Wilcox who gave me a love of languages and ran the Scouts; Gilbert Talbot for English and those who coached cricket and hockey. I can recall returning from 100 point defeats at rugby from Portsmouth G S. My "nightmare" memory is of the day that a German bomber, aiming at the barrack-like school buildings hit a neighbouring house from which two bloodied residents were brought to the safety of the Westmont basement where all the pupils sheltered.

Because I have been very distant from the school, my personal memories are of the Casale brothers, Mike Stanley, Christopher Gibson with whom I kept in touch, some because they were also friends at university. Mike Stanley was my best man at my wedding and I was his when he married a French girl in Paris.

I was born in Bristol in 1933, moved to Ryde in 1940 because my father was involved in aircraft production - Saunders Roe at Cowes - married in 1962, have two children and five grandchildren of whom I am very proud. My wife who was part Dutch died in 2017. I also have to thank the school for giving me a love of cricket on which subject I have written several books.



# LEAVERS 1970 - 1999

## ANTHONY PREWER

### 1978 LEAVER

Having left school, I went on to do a degree in architecture, plus two post graduate diplomas.

I worked briefly for Kirklees Health Authority; I then had time working as a Department of the Environment registered energy consultant and then moved onto Kirklees Metropolitan Council, training as a building surveyor. After eight years in West Yorkshire I moved back to the Island and spent the rest of my career working in local government, becoming a full member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and a senior local government officer. I retired nine years ago, but have done some part time work privately and for the Local Authority.

I have been very happily married to former Ryde School maths teacher Sally for the last 26 years. I had two daughters from my first marriage, Hannah and Rachel.

I am a keen member of our local Probus Club and have been their Walks Secretary for several years. More recently I have become a member of the 41 Club. I am a keen long distance walker, indoor bowler, bird watcher, photographer and croquet player (reaching the all UK 'C' level croquet final three years ago).



## AMANDA AND DAVID ANDREWS

### 1972 - 1974

Amanda was one of the first intake of girls into Ryde School in 1972. She

met her husband David in the lower sixth and they married six years later. They were the first Rydeian couple to marry. Keith and Jean Simons attended their wedding. David had spent some time as a boarder and Amanda's brother Raymond Dragonetti also attended Ryde School. They remember Ryde School with great fondness and attended a reunion about 11 years ago. It was very interesting to look around and meet old friends.

Amanda remembers sherry parties with Keith Symons on a Friday afternoon in his drawing room; the girls and boys undertaking a 20 mile walk; performing in productions of Oh! What a Lovely War and Oliver!

David remembers visiting HMS Dolphin with Keith Symons and being shown around a submarine; taking a fleet of sailing boats for a week on the Norfolk Broads; going on a minesweeper together with Nick Westgarth for a weekend to Jersey.



## CAROLINE JACOBS

### 1984 - 1986

Some of you may know that I am currently a Governor and have strong family links with Ryde School.

Being a Governor is a family tradition as both my father and grandfather also served as Ryde School Governors .

After leaving School I worked in a boarding school: Roedean School in Johannesburg, South Africa. I returned to London to have a successful career in the NHS for just over 35 years. I worked in adult intensive care and school nursing on the Isle of Wight.

I like to keep busy and amongst other things I am the secretary of the Isle of Wight Branch of the Historical Association. I am also, steward coordinator for the Isle of Wight Music Drama and Dance Festival which had its 93rd year this year, having started in 1924, minus the war years. We achieved as a team a Queen's award for Voluntary Service.

I am married to an Old Rydeian who has run a family business on the Island since the late 80s. Both our children attended the school and are following successful careers.

I have a lovely memory of the Summer Fete. We always participated in fetes as Mum ran the cake stall and Dad helped out with the scout group who always performed mini skits on the stage. Subsequently, Dad built a hubbly bubbly in the garage, and I helped to run the stall alongside the coconut shy, wet sponge throwing at staff, pillow fighting on gymnastic equipment and much enjoyment. It rarely rained during a fete. The sun shines for a special day at Ryde School.



## CHRIS WRENN

### 1967 - 1979

With A-levels out of the way the summer of '79 drifted by as I lounged in a deck chair in Puckpool Park

notionally collecting parking fees on behalf of Ryde Town Council. As September approached I pocketed a generous student grant and headed off to explore London. Graduation and a summer in Chicago followed before the real world arrived.

I was offered an administration job with a large Japanese firm and from there navigated myself into the world of banking and finance. By following my nose and with a strong tail wind I carved out a career in structured and project finance, running out of steam as an investment manager at Blackrock.

Along the way I met my lovely wife Annie, and had two boys, Milo and Louis (both ORs). Our lives quickly became dictated by sports fixtures and training camps. We enjoyed many nervous hours on the touchline and made more than a couple of trips to A&E!

In recent years, and having moved back to Bembridge, I helped set up Tackt-Isle Adventures, an outdoor adventure activity centre and trained as a maths teacher. I now spend my time as a volunteer tutor supporting local students.

I stay in close touch with quite a few ORs, and have enjoyed many adventures over the years with Andrew Duff, Jason Murray and Tim Wort.

A happy school memory, but one that is tinged with guilt, must be my surprising triumph at the school's annual cross country race. I was jogging along, mid table, and well behind Hugh Verey, William Page and all those rapid boys, when suddenly I saw Mr Fenn furiously waving his arms. To my delight I discovered that the lead group had taken a wrong turning half way across Dame Anthony's common. Finding myself unexpectedly in the lead I dug deep and crossed the line to the bemusement of Mr Symons and his team of timekeepers.

### CHRISTOPHER DENNIS BROWN

#### 1973 LEAVER

What did Ryde School teach me? Obviously, academics were delivered by some excellent teachers who motivated and inspired. Mr Peters and Mr Price of note. Some were the antithesis with little interest in the subject. The glue which held this diverse collection together was Keith Symons, the Headmaster. He was inspirational, always immaculate, a good manager and a born leader. In addition to academics were sports, and the CCF. I joined the RAF section, commanded by Bruce Price, whose dedication, enthusiasm, and self-sacrifice contributed to an excellent section.

Ryde School taught me teamwork, self-confidence, and the determination to succeed.



### EMILY PECK

#### 1987 - 1992

Leaving School I went to London University where I met my future husband and we now live in Dorset. We

run our business together from our shop called Elephant Moon, retailing clothes, giftware and global handicrafts from our travels around the World.

My husband and I have five children. The youngest two are about to sit their GCSEs whilst the others are off studying at various universities in fabulous cities around the country.

Life in Dorset is gentle and familiar with glorious countryside and beachy dog walks in all weathers.



### JAMES HILTON

#### 1986 - 1993

I attended Ryde between 1986 and 1993 as a weekly boarder. Following completion of my A

levels I went on to study Spanish and History (BA Combined Hons) at the University of Swansea with one year spent at the University of Salamanca in Spain, graduating with a 2:1 in 1997. Since then I have spent most of my life in and around the London area and worked for the majority of that time in retail as a Stores Director with Tesco.

I am currently a Senior Volume Crime Investigator with the Home Office (Immigration) based in Central London and live in Buckinghamshire.

I have fond memories of my time at Ryde, most significantly with the Combined Cadet Force RAF Section. I travelled to Gibraltar, Larbruch in Germany, attended Summer Camps at RAF Coningsby and various adventure training opportunities. As if this was not enough I was able to go flying in a Chipmunk aircraft and a glider. I took advantage of personal development opportunities, a leadership course at Hereford, and I led our team in the South East District Patrol competition. These experiences have definitely helped me since leaving School. Other than the CCF, I remember a School Rugby 1stXV tour to France where I got to visit the Moët and Chandon wine cellars in Epernay.

I married my wife Azeeza in August 2013 and my daughter, Maya, born September 2000, currently lives and works in Amsterdam. The other important addition to the family is my dog, a sprocker spaniel called Daisy, who is now four years old. I regularly visit my parents on the Island and always enjoy seeing the School as it evokes great memories.



### LISA PECK

#### 1985 - 1989

I first performed in a school play at Ryde School in 1987 and that started a lifetime love and career in

theatre. I trained as a drama teacher and returned to the Island to start my career as Head of Drama at Medina High School. Since leaving the Isle of Wight I have continued to teach drama. I am currently a Senior Lecturer in Theatre Practice at the University of Sussex where I have worked since 2012.

I live in Shoreham by the Sea with my partner Simon and our daughters Ella, Olive and Isobel.

### MATTHEW HILTON

#### 1984 - 1990

After leaving I decided a career in agriculture was for me. I studied at Harper Adams University for a further four years, which included about a year and a half working on the Europe's largest dairy unit in Portugal. For the last 18 years I have been manager of a large dairy unit looking after 800 dairy cows just outside of Bridgwater, Somerset. We are very lucky to live on the Steart Peninsula. I have just started a new side business called Blue Carbon farming, where we graze angus beef on the salt marshes and produce carbon free meat which we sell in a variety of box sizes.

I am married to Rachel and have four children; Thomas 26, Jack 24, Reagan 22 and Fletcher 14. I still travel to the Island regularly to visit my parents.

Like many I suspect, I fondly remember Mr. Fenn's tuck shop and especially his classical studies lessons! Handing back my hymn book to him after six years with most of the pages missing was a daunting experience! Being a boarder I was in Trinity House. I was able to enjoy all the School's facilities, especially swimming in the summer and all kinds of sport and I was in Trinity House.



### NEIL SOMERVILLE

#### 1967 - 1972

It has been a long time since I left Ryde School and a lot has happened since.

For 25 years I was a

BBC researcher, but my lifelong ambition was to become a writer. Over the years my belief and persistence paid off. So far I have written 58 books, many best sellers; including *Cat Wisdom*, a series on Chinese horoscopes, a novel called *Legacy* and a series of successful themed puzzles.

My journey started well at Ryde and my travels have taken me beyond my wildest dreams.



### NICK GILES

#### 1959 - 1971

I left Ryde after resitting my A levels in January 1971 and I went to Birmingham University to study law.

After graduation I went to Law School and then became an Articled Clerk. After 40 years as a law firm partner I stepped down in 2019 to become a consultant with my old firm Edwin Coe LLP in Lincoln's Inn.

I also help my wife with her business of assisting students from West Africa to study at schools and universities in the UK and elsewhere.

I am a trustee of three charities. Hoopers Africa Trust, which funds the education of girls in Kenya from deprived backgrounds; Blood Pressure Research Trust, based at Barts Hospital which campaigns to reduce our consumption of salt and sugar; and The Gosling Foundation, a substantial grant making charity with strong links to the Royal Navy. Ours was one of the first 6th forms during the



time Keith Symons was Headmaster. We were a tight knit group, most of us having known each other from Miss Hinson's Form 1 in the Junior School! About ten years ago, eight or nine of us went down to have lunch with Keith at his house in Wiltshire. The memories came flooding back. We had a riotous time. Some of us made it to his funeral a few years later.

I re-married in 2017. I have four children and two grandchildren.

I have had a wonderful and interesting life and I'm not finished yet!



**NICOLE BALL**  
**1985 - 1992**

I played hockey at school and was selected to represent the Island and Hampshire. I left Ryde

School in 1992 and decided to take a Gap Year. With a passion for travel I moved to New Zealand for the year and coached hockey to young adults, playing for Napier.

Returning to the UK I did a degree in Cheltenham, whilst making friends for life. I then embarked on a career that facilitated travel.

In 1996 I went to Namibia with Exodus Expeditions and Worlds Apart Travel (think small / independent Trailfinders) and ended up climbing a now famously oversized sand dune, ending up on the front page of a travel catalogue. It looked pretty but was brutal!

I then linked travel with sport and worked for Gulliver's Sport Travel on Rugby World Cup, Cricket World Cup, British Lions and what was then the Five Nations soon to be Six. I enjoyed watching the elite sport, but realised I had to seriously improve my office skills whilst leading and guiding groups around the world to watch sport! It was a fantastic experience and again! made life-long friends.

Moving forward six or seven years I got lucky when I left Gulliver's. I was gifted a ticket to allow me to come home slowly. So I travelled across China and Hong Kong, Laos, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, India and other incredible countries.

In China I first saw a garment made from bamboo. Inspired, I came home wanting to bring bamboo fabric to the UK shores. An old-fashioned letter and CV secured a meeting

with my now business partner and best friend. Another journey started.

I am now one of the Directors and co-founders of BAM (bambooclothing.co.uk). I have staff to look after, a business to nurture and, most important of all, a wonderful family of my own.

I am a Trustee and Co-Chair of an arts charity in East Sussex that is life transforming for its participants, an involvement of which I am very proud.

**PETER KIDD**  
**1974 LEAVER**

I left school in January 1974 and moved to Norwich working at Lotus Cars. I married Angela in 1976 and moved to live and work in southern Eire as a bread salesman. My family with three children returned to the Island in 1983 and I started working at the Weekly Post newspaper in advertising. In 1987 I joined the County Press newspaper advertising department. I was furloughed in 2020 and then made redundant.

I am now remarried to Linda and retired in Sandown. I enjoy cycling, DIY & holidays in France or the UK. I am happy and enjoy life. My three children and six grandchildren all live on the Island.

I remember on a CCF experience day (circa 1971) I had the opportunity to go flying in a 'Chipmunk' trainer over Chichester Harbour. After ten mins or so there was a noise in the earphones. I paid no attention assuming this to be air traffic control and was just marvelling at the scenes below. About three minutes later the pilot announced quite clearly that he would take back the controls, commenting I'd done quite well. My experience days after that were quite understandably much more naval based !!!

In October 2023 I organised a 50th reunion for the upper sixth year of 1973 which marked girls attending the school for the first time. 12 out of 19 ex-pupils met for a celebratory buffet lunch. The friendships have remained as if 50 years had not passed, commented one attendee.



**R JUSTIN**  
**FARRINGTON SMITH**  
**(RJ)**  
**1970 - 1977**

I left school in 1977 planning on a career in the merchant navy

but ended up in retail. Following roles at the Co Op and Safeway I was fortunate enough to have senior positions at Booker, Focus Wickes and then CEO of one of the UK's biggest privately owned retailers. A need for change saw my last executive role running an international equipment rental business serving the offshore energy, aid and defence sectors. I semi-retired in 2021 and now undertake NED roles including chair of our local Independent Drainage Board.

In 1998 my wife Sue and I bought a diverse farming estate in North Buckinghamshire where we still live with our two daughters.

I have been a council member for the National Grocers' Benevolent Fund, a regional committee member for The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust and an active member of The Fruiterers Livery Company.

In 2001 we lost our niece Alison to a brain tumour. Sue and I soon recognized how underfunded this terrible disease is, the biggest killer of children after road accidents. In 2009 Sue founded Brain Tumour Research. From humble beginnings this now has four dedicated research centres and is the biggest funder of trying to find a cure. I am immensely proud that in 2016 Sue was awarded an MBE.

Many of those in my year will remember Mr "Smiler" Taylor. Whilst I was not his greatest academically gifted student he recognised my love of the countryside. I was invited to go for a stroll in Havenstreet Woods and he let me fire a shotgun! I've been hooked ever since!



**SAM BILES**  
**1986 LEAVER**

After leaving school I completed a degree in Rural Land Management at The Royal Agricultural

University at Cirencester. I worked for two years with the National Trust in Surrey qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor. I returned to the Island in 1992 with James Harris of Winchester and set up their Isle of Wight Office as a land and estate agency before establishing my own company in

1998 which I ran for 20+ years as Creasey, Biles and King and then Biles and Co.

I married Fiona in 1997 and we have three boys all of whom attended Ryde – the third generation of our family to do so. I took the opportunity to make a career change four years ago and am now involved in property development and running our family farm in Calbourne where we breed and finish Aberdeen Angus cattle.

Ut Prosim. I have for some years been a member of or Chair of the Committee which runs Corf Scout Camp – an amazing wooded, coastal

campsite near Shalfleet which is a great resource for Island and mainland Scouts – particularly those from urban and under privileged backgrounds. I give historical talks which raise money for local charities and generally help out on various committees supporting the Island's rural community.

Trip down memory lane. I was cast as the Snow Queen in the Junior School play in a fine white dress - which was interesting; and Rev. Parris in The Crucible when the whole theatre was painted black. In one end of term assembly a lacy lingerie set descended in front of Maurice Fenn

the Second Master. He made a lunge for it but it was pulled out of reach. We often managed to avoid the masters on the way back from mainland rugby matches to buy beer on the old Ryde-Portsmouth ferries. On a school scout trip to the Lake District we were flooded out of our tents by torrential rain and spent the night in survival bags.

Social events or reunions. Our year has kept up with each other well and at least once a year a group of a dozen or so meet up at a restaurant or an Islander's house for a meal and reunion..

## LEAVERS 2000 - 2023



### ADAM HANDEL 2000 - 2003

I work in Oxford as an academic clinical neurologist. In my role as an MRC new investigator and consultant neurologist

I lead the Oxford Autoimmune Neurology Group, which researches the causes, diagnosis and treatment of autoimmune encephalitis. I provide medico legal opinions on cases of autoimmune encephalitis. I also teach neurosciences and neurology to medical students at the University of Oxford.

I sit on a Royal College of Psychiatry clinical guidelines committee with the goal of promoting earlier and more accurate diagnosis of encephalitis for patients admitted to psychiatric hospitals. I have spoken at the NeuroTales festival to promote public engagement in science and to students in schools.

I am married to Katharine (a fellow nerd!) with whom I have two children; James and Sarah. We recently moved into a rambling, quirky house in Kidlington just north of Oxford.

Thinking back to my school days, I still have fond memories of squeezing into my ancient Nissan Micra and driving off to play squash during games lessons. It was astonishing that any of us made it back alive! I also recall with pleasant nostalgia spending hours playing nerdy games with friends. It was the beginning of a lifelong love of board games.



### CASPER THOSTRUP 2014 - 2017

Most of my favourite memories are not shareable due to their inherently mischievous nature! However, one of my favourite

moments of the week was always playing squash with Mr Johnson and the associated banter. This extended into lessons, perhaps not always the most productive, but lots of fun! In the boarding house there was always something fun to do. The big games of hide and seek we used to play with 50 boarders were always amazing and the games of football in the hall at Bembridge were something I'll never forget.

Currently I'm pursuing my master's in Construction Management and Engineering at TU Delft, exploring AI's potential in predicting bridge conditions. In the last three years I began rowing and discovered immense enjoyment in the sport. Last year I participated in the Club-8 men's field where we became champions, competing against student teams across the Netherlands. Right now I am training for a rowing marathon of 100km which I plan to complete in a single scull boat where I unexpectedly ran into Mr Moore, which was a great surprise.

Most of my volunteering work has been within student associations. In my BSc I wrote for the Civil Engineering magazine where I had a column called "Toasting with Thostrup". In this I would go for a few drinks with professors and try to get them to tell me good stories. I was also the treasurer of the University Big Band where I helped us through the troubling Covid-19 period. Since the masters' I have been active in the history committee of my rowing association Proteus-Eretes, trying to collect valuable stories which define our club.



### LINUS BARTHE 2019 - 2022

After leaving Ryde I went to Exeter University to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics. I am loving it here and and I am currently completing my third year.

Ut Prosim has been a big priority in my life since leaving Ryde. During the past year I was elected for a committee role at the Exeter University Nightline Association; a student-lead listening service which offers support to other students throughout the night. I also completed my first half marathon, raising well over £2000 for the Alzheimer's Society. Additionally I took part in Exeter's Movember campaign, shaving my hair off in the forum and helping Exeter raise more funds than any other UK university.

Thinking back to my time as part of the boarding community it is impossible to pinpoint one experience as standing out, every week having something special about it. I was however recently reminded of the murder mystery night we had during the lockdown at Bembridge because one of my friends organised the same one for her birthday. The second was a much boozier version of course!



### LIZZIE LAWN 2000 - 2007

Birth announcement: Elizabeth Collins (née Lawn) and her husband Josh welcomed their daughter Cleo Artemis

Maia in August 2022, and son Hector Atlas in December 2023. They live in Barnes, London.



Lizzie Collins (née Lawn), is now Sales and Marketing Director for beauty brand Pixi Beauty, having started her career with L'Oreal after graduating from Cambridge (MA Classics). When she came to speak at Speech Day last year, Lizzie discussed the many twists and turns of her career to date and the many side hustles she's taken on. Never one to stand idle, one of these including tutoring Mick Jagger's children; spending an Easter with the family on Mustique! (It makes for a great 'two truths and a lie' ice breaker on corporate retreats...) Lizzie is currently enjoying her second maternity leave and contemplating writing a novel - watch this space!



**OLIVER LOACH  
2002 - 2011**

Graduating in 2015 with a chemistry degree at Nottingham University, I went on to complete a graduate scheme with Veolia

and continued to work with them as a project manager in the water sector with involvement on the Army Basing Programme across the Salisbury Plain. Late 2021 I left for pastures new and I am currently a construction manager for Lidl. Based in the South Central region I manage new store construction from planning and design through to opening.

During my time with Veolia I completed a placement in Scotland where I worked on a project with a local youth charity in Edinburgh to expose young and disadvantaged people to potential lifetime careers. I undertook a site visit with a number of people from the charity around the water recycling works that Veolia operated. The operations team agreed to make a single six week placement available for anyone that expressed interest following the visit.

During my time at school I was very privileged to go on so many fantastic school trips. The cricket tour to South Africa particularly stands out. We went expecting to be battered in all our games, however we played some excellent cricket and completed the tour with three wins out of five. As well as the cricket there were water parks, safaris and plenty of down time to take in the beauty of the country. Playing Cricket at school was always the best excuse to get out of a Maths lesson early on a Wednesday!

I attended an ORA event at the East India Club, London in 2016 and met up with some teachers and old school mates. I still regularly meet up with several very close school friends.

I got married to Georgia in 2021 after three years together and we welcomed a daughter, Florence Isla, to the world in February this year. My Brother Will is moving into his final year of Natural Sciences at Bath University and my sister Megs returned to the UK after five years practising as a farm vet in New Zealand and Australia. We regularly visit our parents who still live on the Island.



**RHEA LEWIS, NÉE  
CAMPBELL-SMITH  
2008 - 2014**

After leaving school, I went onto study a university course covering a multitude of different subjects

relating to climate, environmental psychology, geography and sustainability, with the aim of understanding all the complexities that there are regarding the current environmental state of the world.

I now work as the Environment, Social and Governance Manager for a sustainable energy business, committed to delivering net zero transport at the speed and scale the climate crisis requires to prevent global temperature rises exceeding 1.5°C of warming. I love my work and feel incredibly blessed to be doing something that I feel makes a difference.

After university, I took some time out working at an American summer camp, lifeguarding and teaching children to swim. It was amazing to help children to grow in confidence and to support them to learn a skill that will hopefully stick with them for life. I am now married!



**SAM TODD  
2004 - 2006**

I graduated from The Open University in 2011 with an Honours degree in English Language and

Literature (the same year I volunteered at the Island Games by updating the results website with match details from the football tournament as they happened) and subsequently worked in various academic support roles based at the University of Portsmouth.

I've also contributed articles to Writers' Forum and Late Tackle magazines, recently started volunteering for Sight for Wight as a reader on the Talking News service and, by the time you read this, will have participated in Walk the Wight for the second consecutive year.



**TIM SHERIDAN  
2007 - 2022**

I applied to join the Royal Navy as a Weapons Engineer just before taking my A Levels in 2022 and started my Initial

Training at HMS Raleigh that September. At the time of writing I am on my first deployment on HMS Prince of Wales taking part in Exercise Steadfast Defender, the largest NATO exercise since the Cold War. We have spent most of the time at the top of Norway in the Arctic Circle and have been lucky enough to see the Northern Lights on more than one occasion.



**WILL PERKINS  
2007 - 2015**

After studying a bachelor's in art history at the Courtauld Institute of Art, I went into film & TV where I worked my

way through the Locations Department.

My credits include Emmy & BAFTA winning director Peter Kosminsky's *The Undeclared War*, Dome Karukoski's *The Beast Must Die*, J Blakeson's *Culprits* and Nora Fingscheidt's *The Outrun*. My most recent credit was working on a new series written and produced by Steven Moffat.

I am looking to pivot into a more creative role in the industry by studying a two year masters in producing at the National Film & Television School and hoping to use my experience to support the Media Trust to enable access and outreach for the National Film & Television School.

Recently I worked on season 13 of Lee Mack's *Not Going Out* and we ended up filming at Chessington World of Adventures. It was the first time I had been back since a Year 6 trip where I conquered some minor (and reasonable) fears of roller coasters. Having moved recently for my masters I discovered one of those pictures you pay for; it captured me terrified on the suspended swinging ride known as Vampire. Sadly, I could not relive those happy memories between takes of Lee Mack on the dodgems!

# OLD RYDEIANS IN THE NEWS



**PONGCHAM MICHELIN STAR** | This year an alumnus of Ryde was awarded a Michelin star for his restaurant. Pongcham 'Top' Russell (2006 - 2008) runs Mia in Bangkok with his wife Michelle Goh, a well-known pastry chef. Thailand-born Top moved to the Isle of Wight in his teens and attended Ryde, going on to work for Priory Bay Hotel before working for a number of prestigious restaurants in the UK and abroad, for example Sketch in London and Pollen in Singapore. Additionally, Top was named in Forbes 30 Under 30 in Asia.



**NICK PERCY 2004 - 2014** | Nick Percy, OR and Ryde School Sports Coach, made the Isle of Wight and Ryde School incredibly proud this summer! Isle of Wight discus thrower Nick Percy qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics by taking silver at the British Athletics Championships at Manchester Arena.

Whilst throwing shorter distances in Paris than earlier in the year in the States he came 20th in Paris and the second longest throw for a male Brit ever at the Olympics for Discus! His grit and determination throughout the Olympics truly inspired us all. As an alumnus, he set a fantastic example for our current pupils.



**MARK GIBBS (1988 LEAVER)** | Former ORA Chair Mark Gibbs OR and his wife Evgenia won the Hampshire Nursing Home of the Year 2024, for their family run Care Home, Gorselands. The Care Home was assessed "mystery shopper" style by inspectors, who then submitted reports to a panel of independent, expert award judges. Congratulations to them both! Picture courtesy of Gorselands Nursing Home



**LEIGH MCMILLAN (1997 LEAVER)** | Well done to OR Leigh McMillan (1997 Leaver) and the INEOS Britannia team who ended Britain's 60-year wait and secured a spot in the 37th America's Cup Match by winning the prestigious Louis Vuitton Cup! Although they were ultimately defeated by the Emirates Team New Zealand in the final battle for the America's Cup, they got closer than ever to the dream of bringing back the Americas Cup to the UK.



**JOE ROBERTSON (1997 - 2002)** | Joe was elected as a conservative MP in the 2024 General Election: I am honoured to have been elected to represent Isle of Wight East - my home - in Parliament. I first got involved in politics when I was at Ryde School. During the 2001 General Election I knocked on doors for Andrew Turner who successfully became MP for the Isle of Wight in that year. After qualifying and working as a family solicitor in London I joined the charity Dementia UK working as an in-house advisor, and became an Isle of Wight Councillor. After 23 years of campaigning in elections I finally became the candidate myself, and Andrew Turner returned the favour by knocking on doors for me. My passion for our Island, politics and people, all started at Ryde School.



**JACK ELSOM (2007 - 2015)** | Congratulations to OR Jack Elsom who was shortlisted for The Lord Salisbury Award for Political Journalist of the Year. Jack works as the Chief Political Correspondent for The Sun, was shortlisted alongside Beth Rigby (Sky News), Tim Shipman (Sunday Times) and Chris Mason of the BBC. The prize was ultimately won by Tim Shipman of the Sunday Times.



**GILES CLARKE (1983 LEAVER)** | Ryde School was honoured this year by a visit from Giles Clarke, a renowned photojournalist. Giles has dedicated his career to capturing the poignant realities of global issues, particularly in conflict and post-conflict regions. His work has taken him to diverse locations, including Bhopal, India, and Haiti, where he documented the lasting impact of the Union Carbide gas disaster and environmental issues, respectively. Clarke's powerful images have been recognised with numerous awards, including the Lucie Statue and the PX3 Prix De La Photographie Paris Gold Award. He has also had the honor of working with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, documenting his final year in office. Giles Clarke's commitment to social justice and his ability to tell compelling stories through his photography continue to inspire and inform audiences worldwide.



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**EMILY SCADGELL (2007 - 2010)** | Emily Scadgell carried the Olympic flame through the streets of Strasbourg for the start of the 2024 Paris Olympics on behalf of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation & their strategic partnership with Coca Cola. She passed the flame over to Arsenal FC legend Arsène Wenger to light the celebration cauldron. Emily said 'What an absolutely insanely wonderful experience and a moment I will never forget! Merci Paris 2024.'

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**ANNIE CADDICK (2003 - 2015)** made her Paralympic GB debut in the PR3 Mixed double sculls (PR3 Mix 2x) with her partner Sam Murray. They achieved a historic silver medal and became the first crew to win in this new boat class. Annie started rowing while studying at the University of Birmingham. Rowing appealed to her as it was the first time she had participated in a sport where, as someone with cerebral palsy, she felt she could keep up with her able-bodied teammates and was treated as an equal rather than someone with a disability.

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**RORY TAYLOR (2021 LEAVER)** | In March this year, Ryde School had a surprise visit from past pupil and current England U20 rugby player Rory Taylor. Rory kindly came in to present his playing shirt to the school from his recent fixture against Scotland U20 in the U20 Six Nations. Frank Bagnall, Director of Sport at Ryde and one of Rory's old rugby coaches commented on how lovely it was for the current Ryde School rugby players, many already in the DPP programmes for London Irish, to meet Rory. 'It was a pleasure to welcome Rory back to school as an Old Rydeian and we will be displaying his shirt in the pavilion to inspire the next generation of athletes at Ryde. We wish him the best of luck with his career moving forward and look forward to welcoming him again soon!'

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**LIBERTY TURRELL (2014-2021)** | We're thrilled to celebrate former Head Girl, Liberty Turrell, whose groundbreaking research on microplastics in the Medina River has recently caught the attention of a major water company. Liberty's dedication and first-class honors dissertation bring much-needed awareness to critical environmental issues. Through her research, she discovered that most microplastic fibers originate from wastewater sources, like laundry, rather than plastic litter—a finding she described as "shocking." A story on Liberty was run on the BBC news website.

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**JOE STAUNTON (2010 LEAVER)** | Joe, Endurance coach, and nutritionist this year completed the Haute Route Alps! It's a beast of a race—a seven day mountain stage event through the stunning (but brutally tough!) French Alps, and it's often hailed as the hardest amateur cycling challenge in the world. Well done, Joe!

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**MR DICK DABELL** | Congratulations to Mr Dick Dabell (1942 Leaver) on turning 100 this year. As well as an Old Rydeian, Dick has long association with the school as Chair of Governors from 1987 - 1992 and was President of the Old Rydeians Association. We would like to thank him for his support of the school all these years. He is a living example of 'Ut Prosim'.

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# THE JENNY KERRY PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Opened in the Summer of 2022 by HM Lord Lieutenant Susie Sheldon with a host of special guests, the Jenny Kerry Performing Arts Centre is a brand new state of the art 250 seater theatre. The Performing Arts Centre was made possible by Vern Tyerman, husband to the late Jenny Kerry, a former Upper Chine Girl and one of three generations to attend Upper Chine and Ryde School. Vern's vision was to create a suitable legacy for his wife on the Island she loved and for the School she had enjoyed being part of for so many years. He challenged the old Upper Chine Girls' and parents of Ryde School to raise extra funds and through his major funding, their seat sponsorship and donations, the new theatre was born.

Our new theatre has transformed school life, engaging students of all ages in daily activities and spectacular performances. From *The Addams Family* musical and *The Wizard of Oz* to GCSE classes, the theatre serves as a hub for both our school and the wider community.





**The school would like to acknowledge the following Ryde School community donors for their support in making the theatre possible:**

ABERCROMBIE FAMILY	THE MCCUE FAMILY
A. APPLETON-MITCHELL	THE MCGILLIVRAYS
MR & MRS ARMSTRONG	THE MCISAAC FAMILY
MR IAN ARNOLD	MEEK/MITCHELL FAMILY
CLYDE PATRICK AYLIN	K AND G MILLS
CHARLES & PIPPA BALL	THE MOODY FAMILY
THE BECKETT FAMILY	PHILIP MOORE
JACK BELL	SAM AND JOE MORTON
THE BOND FAMILY	K. MURRAY & D. HURLEY
KIERON BREAR	THE NASH FAMILY
THE BURNS FAMILY	THE NEWTON FAMILY
OLIVIA & GRACE BYRON	THE NUTTALL FAMILY
VANESSA CHU	LOUISA O'SULLIVAN
THE CRAIG FAMILY	OLD BEMBRIDGIANS ASSOC.
THE CROSS FAMILY	MR & MRS D ORR
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PETER AND ALEX DEMPSEY	THE PALIN FAMILY
CHANTAL-AIMEE DOERRIES	RICHARDSON - HAY
THE GALLERWOODS	POPPY ROBINSON
DAVID & ELISABETH GUY	THE ROSS FAMILY
THE HAIG-THOMAS FAMILY	THE ROWLAND FAMILY
MRS J HARVEY	IZA & MIKE RUSSELL
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THE HOLBROOK FAMILY	JANE SIEW & RONALD FU
CHRISTOPHER A. HOLDER	THE SPENCE FAMILY
THE HOOPER FAMILY	SEAN SUZUKI
THE HOPPER FAMILY	PETER C TAYLOR
THE HORSLER FAMILY	THE TERRY FAMILY
CHEN FANG HUNG	TILLEY BOYLE FAMILY
IOW DEER FARM	MR & MRS TILLMAN
ZOË AND SAFFRON IRONS	EVELYN TIMMS
MARK JACOBS	IAN TIMMS
CAROLINE JACOBS	W. TURNER & A. SWIFT
THE JARMAN FAMILY	VEREY FAMILY
THE JENNESS FAMILY	MARK WALDRON
THE JENNINGS FAMILY	TOBY & OLLIE WARDALE
THE JONES FAMILY	THE WATSON FAMILY
JAMES KNOX	MRS SAMANTHA WEBB
STUART LEATHERDALE	MR AND MRS RW WESTER
THE LEES FAMILY	ANTONY AND KAY WHITE
MICHELE LEGG	WILSON FAMILY
MICHAEL LUGG	PATRICIA WOODWARD
JONATHAN MARREN	THE WRENN FAMILY
THE MARSHALL FAMILY	MR ROBIN WRIGHT
THE MAYO FAMILY	THE ZANINONI FAMILY

## OBITUARIES 2023 - 2024

### **JAMES OKELLO (1996 - 2009)**

James Okello died suddenly on 20 December 2023, in his 32nd year. Predeceased by his grandparents Eamon and Josie Crosbie Navan, Jephania and Rebecca Okello Uganda, his aunt Joan Gavin Navan, and his cousin James Ongom Uganda.

James will be dearly missed and forever loved by his devoted and heart-broken father Martin, mother Dolores (née Crosbie), and his sister Caroline. He will also be remembered with much love and affection by his stepsisters Rebecca and Jane, his many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

### **JENNIFER MORGAN-JONES**

Jenny Morgan-Jones sadly passed away on Tuesday 19 December 2023 aged 88 years. Loving aunt to Kevin, Fiona and Paul. She will be hugely missed by her family and friends.

Jenny was a much respected teacher in the Junior School in the 1970s and 1980—retiring in the 1990s as the school's then longest serving member of staff. She was Form Mistress of Form 3 Alpha and was renowned for her annual puppet plays where the pupils all had to fashion puppets from paper mâché and write a play to perform for the pupils and parents.

### **JUSTIN LEANG**

Justin Leang who worked at Ryde School in 2018-19 died suddenly in March 2024. Justin was a well-liked and valued colleague who began his teaching career at Ryde and was working as a Lacrosse coach and house tutor at St Mary's Calne School, Wiltshire when he died.

### **RICHARD MOSS (1976-1986)**

Richard Moss very sadly died in hospital on Wednesday 3rd April 2024 following a heart attack. A successful data centre operations manager in Hampshire, Richard was known at School for his computer skills and achievements in the swimming pool.

### **JOHN GURNEY-CHAMPION (1938 LEAVER)**

Isle of Wight resident, solicitor, rambler and sailor John Selwyn Cecil Gurney-Champion died at the age of 100 on April 15 2024. John was born in Taunton, Somerset, but as a child, the family moved to the Isle of Wight and lived in Clatterford Road, Carisbrooke. John attended Westmont Primary School in Carisbrooke Road, then Ryde School, then for his final school year he attended Monkton Combe School, near Bath.

### **ROY BLACKMAN**

Roy Blackman attended Ryde during the early 1950s. On leaving school he did National Service. During his time in the Army, he learnt to speak Russian, as a result of which he later became the Russian correspondent for the Daily Express newspaper. Prior to that appointment he worked as journalist for IW County Press, followed by a period with Portsmouth Evening News and then on the Daily Mirror and Daily Express. On his retirement from journalism, he bought a small farm in West Sussex. Roy, passed away peacefully at his home on Sunday 17 November 2024 aged 90.

# OLD RYDEIANS' EVENTS 2023 - 2024

## 1973 LEAVERS REUNION



In September 1972, for the first time ever, girls were allowed to attend Ryde School, previously known as 'boys only'. Just two girls, Denise Palmer and Victoria Tomlinson, joined the Upper Sixth to study for their 'A' levels. 50 years later, on October 7th, 2023, they met up with their male counterparts again, to celebrate that Form leaving their secondary education at the school - the first ever collective reunion.

The event had been strongly prompted by the very sad and unexpected death of Graham Sayles, in November 2022. He had been an

integral part, and such a character, within our group since the junior school.

A reunion at the school would have been ideal but the date that the majority favoured clashed with an Open Day. However, the Royal Esplanade Hotel in Ryde were able to offer us very good facilities and close proximity for the mainland travellers. Approximately half our group were based on the Island, so the remainder made their way across the Solent. One very unfortunate absence was Stephen (Doug) Pritchard - he had suffered serious facial injuries in a fall. Therefore, just twelve ex-pupils and some wives met up in The Brasserie Room - some of us not having met for those 50 years. It was particularly pleasing to hear the conversations begin as members of our Form arrived during the morning.

It was so lovely to see everyone and enjoy many stories from the past, embellished with laughter and friendly warmth from years ago. Those attending also enjoyed a finger buffet lunch as the event continued on through to late afternoon. The reunion was a wonderful experience to share - just showing that memories may fade

but friendships do stand the test of time !! One interesting comment made afterwards ...'it was as if 50 years had not passed us by at all'. We shall be meeting up a bit sooner next time!

Pictures and report courtesy of Peter Kidd

## ALUMNI IN CARDIFF

The ORA hosted an evening in Cardiff in October to catch up with our most recent leavers. Word got around and alumni from Bath, Bristol, Exeter, Swansea, Aberystwyth and even from as far as Leeds and Coventry, travelled to join us. It was a fantastic event with over 30 Old Rydeians' at the Head of Steam pub. A big thank you to Mike Hooper, Matt Windsor, Sophie McCue, Jonathan Comben and Adam Jackson for joining in.



## 1984 LEAVERS REUNION

The Class of 84 had a most enjoyable day on Saturday 25th May 2024 the day after Founders Day. They left in the last year of Headmaster Keith Symons.

Following the 80th celebrations of D-day it was all the more poignant for the class to meet as Mr Symons was a veteran of the 1944 landings. The day started with a tour of the School including seeing the new Nursery where their Headmaster had lived, and followed Lunch in the Symons Pavilion.

Some have not been back to school since the day they left. Fourteen members of the class came with their partners and two retired members of Staff Mr Simon Mead and Mr Bruce Price.

The afternoon was full of stories shared while leafing through old Rydeian magazines and

photos. After the lunch the majority continued appropriately to Yelfs which traditionally was where Boxing Day drinks were held.

Mark Russell, who organised the afternoon commented:

*"It was fantastic to see everyone on Saturday and spend some time reminiscing.*

*The reunion allowed us all to take a moment to reflect on the memories we've shared, the laughter we've enjoyed, and the friendships we've forged over the past four decades. It's been quite the journey from the sports matches we won (or lost!) to the dances we awkwardly shuffled through at Zanies nightclub to the questionable fashion choices we made. Some of them were considered cool at the time but might be viewed as shockers today!*

*Let's face it: we've all come a long way since those school days. We've built careers, raised families, travelled the world, and hopefully learned to cook*

*something other than pot noodles and toast. We may have a few more wrinkles and grey hairs, but that means we have more stories to tell!*

*We raised a glass to old friends and new beginnings, shared experiences and individual paths, and the bond that will always connect us - our time together at school. Here's to the Class of '84 - may we continue to laugh, love, and live our best lives for the next 40 years and beyond."*





# OLD RYDEIANS DENDERMONDE RUGBY 10s TOURNAMENT, BELGIUM



In May, a team of Old Rydeian's, parents and friends departed to participate in the 30th anniversary of the prestigious Flander's Open Rugby 10s Tournament in Dendermonde, Belgium. The biggest tournament in Europe.

Apart from the hosts the Old Rydeians are the only team to have played in every one since the tournament began. On Saturday the ORA played 3 matches drawing 5-5 with Dendermonde before beating previous winners Senlis 25-10 on the main pitch in front of a huge crowd. Unfortunately the final match was lost 5-30 to Migso-XV from France. This meant the team finished 2nd in their group.

On the evening there was a reception for all the teams. John Mitchell, former Ryde School staff

member, was presented with a print for having been at all previous tournaments and had to give a speech about the changes over time.

On Sunday the team played two more matches to determine their overall position in the Kris Vandamme Cup. Kris was a great friend of Ryde School having been instrumental in organising our trips to Dendermonde for years and our invitation to the Flander's Open. He is sadly missed. The first resulted in a 40-10 victory over Octopus Uden followed by a 25-5 victory over Lokeren by 25-5. This meant the Old Rydeians finished in a highly respectable 15th out of 41 teams. Very impressive for a scratch team!

There were 118 teams from 17 different countries participating in the various men's, women's and mixer events.. Every team received a trophy presented by the Belgian PM.

A great weekend was enjoyed by all with most tries being scored by Old Rydeians Jacko Davis, Jevon Dry and Cameron Mitchell . It was great to see them play alongside their fathers! A fantastic tournament as always.

## BOYS CRICKET 1ST XI V OLD RYDEIANS

Ryde School won. Old Boys score 123 all out. Ryde School scored 126 for 1 from 14 overs.

A great evening game played in a fantastic spirit. Old boys batted first getting off to a strong start with Ben Attrill and Sam Chalice scoring boundaries early. Ryde's 1st team bowlers, Edison (U6) and Tom (Year 10) bowled well taking the first few wickets with Old Rydeians, Cameron Beal and Archie Lucy making a 74 run partnership. Some strong hitting from Robin Mounter and Harry Willmot toward the end got the ORs to 123. The school's Dan (L6) replied with a quick fire 71 well supported by Joe (U6).



### OLD BOYS TEAM:

Cam Beal, Oliver Humphray, Jack Curtis, Sam Chalice, James Woodward, Harry Willmot, Ben Attrill, Freddy Ware, Archie Lucy, Robin Mounter, James Potter.

### Yelf's Xmas Drinks

A great OR tradition has been resurrected. On Dec 28 2023, over 100 ORs gathered at Yelfs Bar and Hotel in Ryde to celebrate the Christmas Season and reconnected with friends. It was a great evening and wonderful to see so many age groups brought together.

### Summer Drinks at the Island Sailing Club

What a great start to the Summer! Thank you to all of you who came to the ORA Cowes Week Summer drinks party. It was wonderful to see so many ORs from such a range of years. Big thanks also to the team at the Island Sailing Club for looking after us so well. We can't wait till next year.



### London Drinks at the Royal London

The annual London Drinks in March was another successful event. Hosted in the Royal Thames Yacht club in Kensington. We enjoyed meeting up with old faces and some new ones. We look forward to seeing everyone next year.



### Gold DofE Buckingham Palace

A total of 18 past and present students were invited to Buckingham Palace in May to attend the celebrations of the Duke of Edinburgh awards!

### 2024 Leavers

The Chair of the ORA, Mike Hooper, and Vice President Jim Ball welcomed the current Upper Sixth with a presentation, explaining the ORA's operations and giving trinket boxes or ties as gifts. They also invited students to upcoming events, officially becoming ORs on Founders Day, Friday, May 25th.



# INTRODUCING THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

**Retired members of staff who are working with the school to support the ORA include:**

**Nick England** was Headmaster from 1997 to 2013.

**Bruce Price** began teaching at Ryde in 1969 and he retired in 2003. Bruce was Head of geography, CCF contingent commander, where his tireless support for flying days and camps saw the start of several successful RAF careers; he also coached rugby, cricket and basketball.

**Simon Mead** served with five Headmasters from 1978 to 2018; during his tenure he was a Boarding Housemaster, Head of Trinity House, Head of Chemistry and a Head of Year. Simon also contributed to the CCF, and coached hockey and cricket throughout his career.

**Sian Evans** joined the staff of Bembridge School in 1983, before moving to Ryde School in 1997. Sian was Head of Drama throughout her career, being part of the team who put on some twenty musicals, which were enjoyed by the school community. Sian finished her career as a Senior Teacher with a broad portfolio of responsibilities before retiring in 2018.

**Keith Dubbins** joined the staff in 1984 and retired in 2020. He had many responsibilities including running the boarding house, being Head of Biology, CCF contingent commander, Head of Year, a coach of rugby, cricket and sailing; he was appointed to the senior management team and finished this career as Second Master.

**Martine Burgess** started her career at Upper Chine in 1989, before moving to Ryde in 1995. Martine took over the geography department from Bruce Price. She was part of the summer musical team and she was also a CCF officer. She retired in 2022.

Between them this team served Ryde and associated schools for 194 years. Not only was each teacher an exceptional classroom practitioner, but they also contributed much to the pastoral care and personal development of pupils, the extracurricular life of the school and the school's ethos.



**NICK ENGLAND**



**BRUCE PRICE**



**SIMON MEAD**



**SIAN EVANS**



**KEITH DUBBINS**



**MARTINE BURGESS**



**OPEN MORNING**  
SATURDAY 1 FEBRUARY  
10AM TO 12.30PM



RYDE SCHOOL  
WITH UPPER CHINE



**OPEN MORNING**  
SATURDAY 1 FEBRUARY  
10AM TO 12.30PM



WESTHILL NURSERY  
AT RYDE SCHOOL

**SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES AVAILABLE TO APPLY FOR ENTRY TO YEARS 7, 9 & SIXTH FORM**



## OLD RYDEIAN EVENTS 2024/2025

Friday 27 December - Yelf's Christmas Drinks

Saturday 22 March - Royal Thames Yacht Club London Drinks

Saturday 2 August - Cowes Week Summer Drinks