

THE MERCHISTONIAN

2016

CLUB MAGAZINE

Desk to deck...



Gavin Reid tells us
how his oceanic
journey changed
his aspirations





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Welcome from the Secretary

Welcome to the 2016 Merchistonian Club Magazine.

This is my first year in the Merchistonian Secretary post. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting many of you at various Merchistonian events and issuing your weekly newsletter. I do hope that some of you are now getting to know me.

Some of you will know that the Merchistonian Club team has changed over the last year, with Joanna Khan moving on to pastures new. Louise Pert and I now work in the Development Office with David Rider. I am most grateful to Louise – who is responsible for putting so much of the magazine together and without whose help it would not be possible. Also I would like to thank our proof-readers and advertisers, whose support of the production of the magazine is invaluable.

Finally, I am grateful to those who provided us with detailed obituaries of former pupils who passed away in the last year and, in the absence of such details, we have tried to put together information from School records and other sources.

A number of interesting contributions appear in this edition but we are always grateful for more. If you have a special announcement, would like to reminisce with other Merchistonians, or would like to suggest a future feature please contact me. It has been very exciting for us to put together the 2016 edition and we really would love to hear what you think.

Louise says: "I have enjoyed the interviewing, writing and collaboration of putting this year's edition together. It's been fun working on this as a duo with Gill, and it has been of great value to talk with Merchistonians and to learn more about the Club."

I look forward to meeting more of you at Merchistonian events over the next year.

Gill Imrie



Left to Right Louise Pert, David Rider and Gill Imrie

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Advertising

The Merchistonian Club Magazine connects advertisers with a wealthy, educated, sporting readership with a shared heritage of the prestigious Merchiston Castle School. This annual print publication reaches the full breadth of Merchistonians and the Merchiston communities with a print run of over 5,000 and a readership far greater. Each annual edition of the magazine has a long lifespan and is kept as a coffee table magazine. The Merchistonian Club Magazine is a great addition to your marketing plan if you want to raise your profile amongst an audience that matters to your brand. To discuss advertising opportunities, please contact merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk or telephone 0131 312 2262.

President's Report



Fellow Merchistonians

As I sit down to write my last President's Report, I recall yet another busy year for the Club that has given me the privileged opportunity to meet many of you at a whole variety of events, ranging from reunion dinners to sporting events and business network meetings. I was also pleased to hear of Merchistonians meeting informally, even accidentally, overseas and also supporting the Headmaster's visits abroad.

The Club's Committee, Sports Secretaries and Area Representatives have continued to play their parts in providing varied opportunities to participate in Club activities. These gatherings involve a great deal of planning and co-ordination so I continue to extend a huge 'Thank You' to all those who get involved and who help in their organisation.

Unusually in 2015, we decided not to hold a separate Annual Club Dinner but instead to join with members of the current School to help in launching and raising funds for the School's proposed new sport and leisure facilities - the fundraising Gala Ball at the Sheraton Edinburgh was very well attended and an undoubted success.

Our Edinburgh Business Network Meetings continued to grow in popularity and there were reunions for the Class of 1981, the Class of 1995, the Class of 2005 and the Class of 2006, with Merchistonians travelling from far afield to attend. The year was rounded off with a very successful, well-attended reunion for those who arrived at the School in the mid-1950s. Having looked at some of the photos from the 1950s, and now as a current parent, I can see how much the School has changed, not just since then but since my own time at Merchiston.

For our sporting clubs, there were competitions, with varying success, for the Rugby Club, the Golf Club, the Curling Team and the Shooting Team. Our fishermen also enjoyed a day of competition on the Lake of Menteith this year, and there was the regular

Merchistonians v School cricket match. Reports for the sporting sections can be found in full on the Club website. Some sporting sections of the Club continue to thrive in terms of membership whilst others are always on the lookout for new participants. Enquiries from new members, particularly younger Merchistonians, are always very welcome and are a great way of networking as well as keeping fit.

Our Annual Club Dinner for 2016, to mark the conclusion of the 150th year of the Club, was held at The Macdonald Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh. At these dinners, it is now traditional to hand out the Merchistonian Award and it was my pleasure this year to hand over the award to Stephen Biggart (96-03). Over the years, I have been encouraged to read the nominations for the Merchistonian Award which reflect some of the inspiring achievements and dedication of Merchistonians. I hope that the Award is a showcase for the Merchistonian talent and continues to flourish in the future.

I would like to finish by offering a huge 'Thank You' to the Development Team of David Rider, Gill Imrie (Merchistonian Club Secretary) and Louise Pert for their unstinting support throughout the year. I would like to extend a warm welcome to your new President, and I look forward to meeting up with many of you at events in the coming year.

Ready Ay Ready

W Andrew McDonald (79-85)
President

Dates for your diary 2017

February

24 February - Edinburgh Business Breakfast

March

7 March – Careers Convention

10 March – Pre-Calcutta Cup Dinner

13 March – Merchistonian Club AGM

18 March – Rifle and Clay Day

April

28 April – Edinburgh Business Breakfast

May

Class of '07 Reunion

20 May – Intake of '60 and '61 Reunion

June

Fishing Club outing to Oykel Bridge

London Scottish Schools Golf Society Match

30 June – Edinburgh Business Breakfast

August

Saturday 12 August – The Latimer Cup – Lake of Menteith

29 August – Golf Autumn Meeting

September

29 September – Edinburgh Business Breakfast

October

Rugby Supporters' Lunch

27 October – Edinburgh Business Breakfast

November

Remembrance Service

Rugby Supporters' Lunch

24 November – Edinburgh Business Breakfast

24 November – Merchistonian Annual Dinner

There will be many more Merchistonian events throughout the year and around the world: your Area and Sport Reps have noted their contact details at the back of the magazine should you wish to confirm any event details.

To make sure that you are kept updated, informed and invited to the above events, please ensure that the Club has your most up-to-date email address by sending Gill an email to merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk with your name and years in the subject.

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Introducing Your New President

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In March 2017, Matthew Gray will become your new Club president.

.....

Matthew started life as a pupil at Merchiston in 1979.

Over the six years that Matthew enjoyed at the School he participated in just about everything on offer. Upon leaving he studied Business in Edinburgh before travelling overseas on a gap year. Returning to Edinburgh, Matthew developed a passion for property honed through years of touring Europe with his architect father and family.

Having spent many successful years working for estate agencies, Matthew, along with Glen Gilson, founded and manages the Gilson Gray group of companies, known as the 'largest legal launch in Scottish legal history'. The business is now well into its third year, with over 100 staff and the number of partners has grown year on year. Matthew is proud to employ two other Merchistonians, Ricky Cowan (81-88) and Oli Green (99-07), and is delighted to be the main sponsor of Merchiston Rugby.

Matthew was invited to join the Merchistonian Committee by Roger Baird (37-80) after almost being knocked down by him on Morningside Road! Matthew has been a contributor and board member of the Club for over 10 years working closely with present President Andrew McDonald (Scrog) and having enjoyed working with previous presidential incumbents inclusive of his brother Chris (75-81). Matthew is passionate about the Club recognising the rich history of the School and the many spectacular achievements of fellow Merchistonians. He believes that there is great value in maintaining links with MCS and is working hard to create a 'Global Business Network' predominantly designed to assist young Merchistonians in many aspects of business life across the world. He is keen to encourage all Merchistonians to consider how they might assist in this and join the Merchistonian family network.

Playing an active role in career advice seminars for pupils within the School, Matthew regularly attends the innovative 'speed dating' career workshops with



Left to right - Oli Green, Zach Mercer, Ricky Cowan, Matthew Gray

colleagues of Gilson Gray, giving advice on all aspects of developing business and commercial networks along with exploring careers in property, law and financial services. Gilson Gray provides regular opportunities to existing senior boys and recent leavers.

Away from his business life, Matthew enjoyed a long rugby career playing for the Watsonian Football Club, travelling around the world with the Club and playing on the Borders Sevens Circuit. He is a member of the Edinburgh Merchant Company, is the Scottish Executive for the National Association of Estate Agents, sits on the board of the Home and Place subgroup of Homes for Scotland, is a Member of The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, the Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society and Gullane Golf Club. Matthew recently raised a considerable sum of money walking the Caledonian Challenge with other Merchiston Dads (and still has the blisters to prove it!).

He is married to Tracey. They have three children - a son (who is currently enjoying life at the School) and two daughters (both of whom attend St George's School for Girls).

Matthew looks forward to taking over next year and building on the solid foundations laid down by previous Presidents. He would welcome any contact from Merchistonians across the world or indeed parents of former pupils or those connected to the extended Merchistonian family.

EASTER MULTI-SPORTS 2017



Join us at Merchiston for our fun-filled Easter Multi-Sports Camp. Open to boys and girls aged 6-12, it is a great way to keep your children active and entertained in the holidays!

We will be batting, kicking and swimming from 10-14 April 2017.

Full details of the programme and how to book a place can be found at:

www.merchiston.co.uk/community/activity-camps

e activitycamps@merchiston.co.uk t 0131 312 2237



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Merchistonian Award 2016

Stephen Biggart (96-03)

When Stephen joined Merchiston he was following in his brother, father and grandfather's footsteps, being the third generation of the Biggart family to attend, Stephen had very high standards to aspire to.

Stephen excelled on the playing field at School and became an incredible sportsman. At Merchiston, his sporting achievements included competing in the IXV rugby team, IXI cricket team, golf team, first pair fives and he even got to the semis of the National Fives Championship. He represented Edinburgh at U16, and Scotland and Edinburgh at U18 level in rugby and continued on to represent Scotland at U19 and U21 level after School where he played in a World Cup in South Africa.

Not only did Stephen excel in sports he also did so academically and this was cemented when he was awarded the Gibson Scholarship for academic achievement. He then went on to study medicine at Glasgow University in 2002. From a young age medicine was his goal, and he worked consistently hard to reach it. Stephen is known as a very kind and deeply caring individual. His

genuine care and concern for other people is what led him to become a doctor. Ironically, after spending years caring for others, in 2015 Stephen was diagnosed with thyroid cancer after noticing a lump in his neck.

He subsequently had his thyroid and some lymph nodes in his neck (where the cancer had spread) removed. The doctor told him at the time, if there is any cancer to get, this is the one.

Stephen originally signed up to the Ride2Recovery event with friends before his illness and despite his diagnosis, was still determined to take part. Ride2Recovery is far from an easy challenge; it is a gruelling 850km charity cycle over six days from Barcelona to Biarritz on the Atlantic and includes some of the famous mountain passes of the Pyrenees. Prior to signing up to the event he spoke with his doctors who agreed for him to take part on the proviso that he got in the broom wagon if struggling at any point.

Whilst recovering from an operation in April 2015 Stephen was undergoing training for the demanding event, which he knew would be a struggle but was



determined not to let life pass him by. On 21 June 2015 he began his charity cycle to help raise money for others affected by the illness.

David Kirkpatrick (97-03) and Ross McClymont (01-02) also completed the cycle alongside him. This was their third instalment over the last six years with the first two being London to Morzine and Morzine to Nice. The gentlemen plan a fourth trip in the Dolomites next year; each trip is getting a little bit harder. To date the group has raised over £300k for Aspire!

Both David and Ross applaud Stephen's efforts and attitude while on the cycle.

David stated that:

"Steve never once gave up and completed every day with a smile on his face and a beer in his hand – and to be fair didn't ever have a 'moment', which is more than can be said for the rest of us. On day four of the trip, which would have been categorised as a very hard day on the Tour de France, we climbed four cols (going steeply uphill for over 50km!); Steve started at 7am and finished cycling at 6pm."

The Ride2Recovery team was very supportive and were keen for Stephen to raise money for his charity of choosing. Stephen found the resources and support he received to be invaluable, and for this reason decided to fundraise for Maggie's Centres.

Stephen's father, Willie Biggart (66-72), former Merchistonian Club President and Golf Captain has enjoyed playing golf with his son during his recovery period, at Gullane Golf Club where he is now Captain. Stephen has renewed his dedication to golf where he has managed to drop his handicap to four and is hot on the heels of his old friend and nemesis, Mike Rolland (98-03).

There is no doubt that along with Stephen's positive attitude the support of his friends, fiancée Caroline and family was instrumental in aiding his recovery.

In his own words... "It's not until something like this happens to you that you appreciate the phrase 'life is too short' and 'make the most of what time you have' but now these words hold some resonance with me. I am lucky in that following completion of treatment I will make a full recovery and continue to do the things I love. I hope this inspires you to donate to a very worthwhile cause and in my opinion a charity that helps people deal with the hardest part of being diagnosed with cancer."

<http://www.ride2recovery.org/>

If you would like to submit a nomination for the Merchistonian Award 2017, please contact the Club Secretary at merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk by 28 February 2017 with supporting testimony.

Headmaster's Headlines



I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the School's progress throughout the last academic year 2015-16. Merchistonians can also follow the School's news on **Twitter @merchinews**.

It was a great pleasure to welcome 93 new pupils and their families to the Merchiston Community at the start of the 2015-2016 academic year. We will all be aware that we are living in very competitive times and equally, that those who wish to educate their sons in the private sector have a vast choice of schools available to them. I always see it as our role in this commercial area to ensure that we add value within the classroom and outside the classroom so that the question of affordability is the last, last question that any parent may ask.

So, I am helped by many teams of staff, not least our External Relations and Admissions Office. There have been a number of trips and events organised to promote the School. Our international recruitment programme included trips to Grand Cayman, Bermuda and Dubai to meet with agents, prospective parents, current parents and Merchistonians. We held successful events in School, including two busy Information Mornings and three Taster Weekends. If you feel that you would be able to assist with promoting Merchiston in your local area, please do contact me.

But moving to what actually happens in the School, for what happens in the School leads to prospective pupils!

Academic Results

The results achieved by our pupils in external examinations over the summer were excellent. What we are trying to do with each and every boy is two-fold: first the development of the mind. We are trying to motivate and inspire each and every pupil in this School. We are

trying to switch the 'light bulbs' on in the mind of every young man in this School, even more than they are switched on at present. How? Well, my staff might well smile, but I do not ask them to be teachers. I ask them to be more akin to gurus, mentors, trusted advisors, sages and persons of warmth.

Yes, of course we measure the obvious questions. Is James doing worse than expected (a disaster!)? Is James doing as expected (actually, to us, it is also a disaster!)? Is James, for whatever reason, finding hidden depths in the development of his mind? Are we inspiring James, and finally, how can we prove that we are inspiring James?

And yes, at the end of the day, we spend all of our time concentrating on improving performance. And the winning – and winning does matter – is each and every young person leaving this School with the best possible academic results to allow him to open doors in the future. I will leave the two-fold aspect of what we are trying to do with each and every boy for another edition!

So, this year's A level examination results day saw the usual flurry of activity in School. 43% gained grades A*/A; the School's combined A*, A, and B grade pass rate was a highly gratifying 77%. 50% of successful pupils have achieved places at the prestigious Russell Group of universities. We received five offers from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and one successful candidate received an offer from an Ivy League university (Cornell).

Turning to our GCSE results, the pass rate A*-C this year was 97%. Moreover, 59% gained grades A*/A; the School's combined A*, A, and B grade pass rate was an excellent 86%. We are delighted that five boys achieved 10 A/A* grades; seven boys were awarded 9 A/A*s and one pupil achieved a remarkable 11 A/A*s!



Careers

It was a very productive year from a careers perspective. There were Careers Cafés focussed on the value of different post-school pathways; for example, Mr Alistair Whyte joined us to tell us about his journey in developing a successful business, having decided not to attend university. We also had a focus on gap years and experiences - John and Anna Dawson were on hand to explain what Ski le Gap (<https://skilegap.com>) has to offer in this area. Then there was the topic of CV writing, with Mrs Angela Houston from The Upper Hand contributing her expert knowledge.

The Chalmers East boys embarked on an evening of careers-themed speed dating. The career areas represented were wide ranging, including Media, Accountancy, Architecture, Retail, Medicine, Law, Engineering, Hospitality, Food industry, Management and Property. The boys certainly made the most of the time with the professionals, with a great buzz of conversation filling the room. As a result, everyone came away with really good information about each career area, touching on what each involves, how to enter each particular profession, and the skills and attributes required for success.

Co-curriculum

The Co-curriculum forms a significant part of the School's Total Curriculum and it is an area where the boys discover their talents outside the classroom. Merchistonians may be aware of my 13 words, namely, "Look after each other; try your hardest; make the most of your talents." We deeply believe that that concept of a boy or a young man feeling, "Yes I did that well!" is extremely important outside the classroom as well as inside the classroom. Indeed, I do not mind where a boy gets this rooted sense of self-worth, as long as wherever

possible, it is happening every day. That is why I call it the co-curricular as opposed to the extra-curricular!

The Upper Sixth delivered our annual Prep and Primary Schools' Science and Technology Days, which involve our young men being mentors and trusted advisors to the boys and girls visiting our laboratories. These two days give our visitors a flavour of the expertise we have in our Science Departments.

As an in-house activity, debating continues to thrive and we have large groups of boys attending every Monday evening and Tuesday afternoon. Merchiston's Junior Debating Team took part in the Edinburgh University's National Short Prep Competition in October 2015. With a mere 20 minutes to prepare, the boys had to debate topics as diverse as the legalisation of performance enhancing drugs in sport and the need to raise a sugar tax. All boys were commended for the clarity and passion of their delivery.

Art and Music

Enlightenment and Enrichment – Last year's Arts and Cultural Programme included a typically eclectic range of events, helping us to make the most of what the city of Edinburgh has to offer. Events have ranged from musicals like 'Shrek' and 'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels' through to the absurdist drama of Samuel Beckett's 'Waiting for Godot'. On the music side, we have taken boys to Scottish Opera's production of 'Carmen' and to hear the Royal Scottish National Orchestra playing a concert of music included Saint-Saëns' 'Organ Symphony'. The Arts and Cultural Programme remains an important part of what we do as a School. It exposes the boys to a wide range of opportunities and encourages them to broaden their cultural horizons beyond their comfort zone.

Boys from Pringle and the Middle Years performed ►



in two internal concerts, with two of our pupils performing at the Rotary Club of Braids Music Competition. I refer later to the wonderful work of our choirs, and once again this year, as they do every year, the Chapel Choir performed at our Whole School Start of Term Service. Their major concert of the 2015-16 academic year was the joint choral performance with St George's School in the magnificent surroundings of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral at the end of the Lent Term.

Drama

Merchiston's actors were on stage in four different productions. Our Fifth and Lower Sixth Form actors went over to St George's to take part in what was a darkly funny Christmas romp - Alan Ayckbourn's 'Season's Greetings'. The play was a quick-paced comedy about a dysfunctional family trapped together at Christmas and I think we all enjoyed the variety of Christmas jumpers and fun slippers on show on the stage! The Seniors performed Arthur Miller's 'A View from the Bridge' having been inspired by the play writer's honesty and raw humanity. 12 Merchiston boys from Shell to Lower Sixth made up the cast, along with two actresses from St George's. The explosive tale of forbidden desire down by the docks in 1950s New Jersey still resonates to this day, and the cast explored the emotional complexities of Miller's scintillating text. The Merchiston Drama Department was also proud to present a world premiere - Drama prefect and graduating student Ethan Hemmati wrote the play 'Suburban Poetry', which he directed and starred in as part of a small but very strong cast. A story of young people searching for purpose and strength in a confusing world, it was an ambitious piece exploring ideas of life expectations, dreams of the future and the oppressiveness of love. Finally, the Juniors staged 'Pinocchio'. It was no small undertaking, for every

boy from J4 and J5 was involved, and singing urchins, dancing puppets and confused fish made for a lively evening!

Sport Rugby

The rugby season started well with the 1XV through to 3XV training together. Rob Moffat was our Director of Rugby, ably assisted by Roddy Deans. What has been so interesting about this team in the long line of outstanding practitioners at Merchiston, is the way in which they have continued to promote an inclusive team culture and positive environment with all our rugby playing boys.

Again, I have the pleasure of watching so many boys playing sport, and on Saturday I whizz around the School on my personalised number-plated "Headman" golf buggy! One Saturday afternoon some boys in our B4s came bounding up to me with huge excitement and declared, "Sir, Sir, we have just won our first match for Merchiston!" Going back to that taste of success, unequivocally, this team won my Team of the Week award in our weekly Headmaster's Assembly.

On Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, our Senior boys act as 'big brothers' to the younger year groups in the School and run clinics for specialist positions for the first 15 minutes of the session.

Major rugby fixtures included: George Watson's (twice), Edinburgh Academy, Stewart's Melville, Sedbergh, Barnard Castle, Dollar and Glasgow Academy. Notably, there were two clean sweeps against Strathallan and Edinburgh Academy, with all teams winning during the block fixture. Our 1XV performed for the 17th time at the annual St Joseph's Festival, Ipswich, now in its 29th year. We finished in sixth place overall. This tournament is a valid learning experience for the



boys and year on year Merchiston continues to gain the respect of its competitors south of the Border.

Our U15XV once again travelled down to the festival at Langley Park School, Beckenham, Kent. After a disappointing first day, they performed very well on the Sunday, winning the Shield competition.

The U13 Sevens team won both the Loretto and Ardvreck Sevens tournaments convincingly again this year. The D1XV is currently unbeaten at this early stage of the season. Unfortunately, the U16XV went out in the first round of the 2015-16 Schools' Cup but they went on to win the plate.

The 1XV reached the Semi Finals of the Scottish Schools' Cup but sadly went out to Dollar in an extremely close game. However, earlier in the year they managed a win against George Watson's on Saturday 21 November 2015 to win the Merchiston Memorial Bowl. This is a new trophy presented by Mr & Mrs Lascelles on behalf of their son John (11-15), and it is awarded to the winning team after the annual Merchiston/George Watson's fixture.

In November 2015 Merchiston was also the first winner of the Scottish Schools' Red Conference. The new Conference league system is designed to encourage whole school participation because teams at all age groups contribute to the whole school points total. The Red Conference is made up of Merchiston, Dollar Academy, Edinburgh Academy, George Watson's College, Stewart's Melville College and Strathallan School. Last year, Merchiston finished top of the table with 107 points, beating George Watson's College by one point.

Golf

Over the past five years, the Merchiston Golf Academy has continued to go from strength to strength under the guidance of Alan Murdoch and his team of instructors.

The 2015-16 season was the most successful year to date, even surpassing the previous year's incredible results. Our Juniors finished ranked no. 1 ISGA School in the UK for the second straight year, and our U18 team can also be proud of their UK national ranking position of fifth.

Swimming

In swimming, we had a record number of boys entered into the Edinburgh Schools' Championships, coming away with an impressive 18 medals overall. Three boys have qualified for the Scottish Schools' Competition in Glasgow.

Football

The 1XI enjoyed a very good year with a healthy number of "friendlies" which allowed the team to gel and establish themselves after a few high scoring games. The Scottish Independent Schools' Football Association (SISFA) started well for the team and all performances have seen real enthusiasm and vast improvement before important fixtures.

The Senior Football Team won against Clifton Hall, Fettes and Stewart's Melville, drew in another match with Stewart's Melville and lost to George Watson's and George Heriot's who later went on to win the SISFA cup.

Basketball

The Senior Basketball Team won seven out of its eight fixtures, with notable wins against Dunbar Grammar School, North Berwick High School, Strathallan and Glenalmond.

Athletics

We had three boys performing in the UK Youth Development finals in September. They were all part of the Edinburgh team which won the team event. ▶



Tennis

In tennis, David Brewer (Director of Tennis) has been a tremendous addition to the Sports Department. He has been able to adapt to each boy's performance needs along with existing Head Coach Nathan Lundy.

The boys successfully defended both Scottish Schools' Cup titles by beating High School of Glasgow in the Year 8 final and Robert Gordon's College in the Year 10 and did this without losing a single match. Both of the teams also won the Schools' Regional event and played in the National Schools' Final in Bolton. The U13 and U15 teams qualified for the AEGON UK National Schools' Finals after winning the Scottish Schools' and Northern Regional Finals earlier in the year. Both teams unfortunately just fell short in two tie-break shoot-outs against Reeds and Bournemouth on day one. However, the boys showed real character the following day - winning against Lancaster and Foremarke Hall. This resulted in our U13s and U15s finishing the competition being ranked third in the UK.

Cricket

There were a record number of boys playing cricket with 14 teams playing 76 fixtures, and a 62% win ratio across the board. The 1XI won all but one of its block Saturday fixtures, with excellent wins against Loretto, Stewart's Melville and Strathallan. They struggled with the T20 format of the game - this has been a steep learning curve for a young squad. There were 1XI debuts for boys in Pringle and Chalmers East which is a great sign for the future and an indication to all young cricketers in the School that age is just a number.

The winter net programme will be crucial for the boys to develop their batting technique and this will also provide crucial preparation time for the 1XI Development Squad, which travels to Sri Lanka during

the Easter break in 2017. This will provide the team the most wonderful opportunity to develop.

The U15XI had a really strong season, winning the 2016 Cricket Scotland National Secondary Schools' Cup. The Pringle 1XI also produced some good performances, winning eight of its 10 fixtures played. It was delightful to see Captain of Cricket, Angus H, selected for the Scotland U17 squad after a number of very good performances for the School.

Combined Cadet Force

Merchiston and St George's continue to work together as a CCF Contingent. Two boys have attended and passed the Senior Cadets Instructors' Course. Interest in a military career remains, with one pupil applying for an Army Scholarship and a recent leaver applying for the Royal Marines.

Outdoor Education

Middle School instructors supervised the Pringle night hike and Junior instructors supported the Pentland navigation sessions in December 2015. We had a wonderful canoe trip out to Loch Lomond and the boys undertook a journey visiting six of the 11 islands in the loch. Mountain biking trips continued in Glentress Forest and a concentrated group of Silver Duke of Edinburgh boys practised their biking skills with a trailer attached. Indeed, canoeing and mountain biking proved to be popular alternative choices for Duke of Edinburgh Award qualifying expeditions. Of the 10 boys working towards their Gold Award, eight chose to do a canoeing expedition on the Great Glen Way, and of the 12 boys working towards their Silver Award, five chose to do a mountain biking expedition in the Cairngorms. The traditional hike for the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition was once again a House



activity for those in Chalmers East, and Darren George developed a wonderful programme of events over three days on various routes across challenging courses in Perthshire. The Climbing Club continues to flourish and develop: we supported the Senior boys through advanced levels of the NICAS Climbing Scheme and there are several boys now delivering training to the Junior climbers.

Koinonia – Teamwork with the Community

We continue to be closely allied with the charity Place2Be, and this last year we were fortunate enough to have had all of our Lower Sixth trained by the charity; we had 30 boys working in two schools directly with P2B: Murrayburn and Longstone. Our longstanding link with Braidburn continues where many of the children are severely disabled. Our link with Davidson House Retirement Home has really taken off and 15 boys volunteered to visit on a weekly basis.

Chaplaincy and Services

The Morning Assemblies and Sunday Chapel Services are an integral part of School life. We now include a Focus on Faith slot in assemblies twice a term to focus on particular festivals of all world religions, which last year were Yom Kippur and All Saints' Day. The major School Services included the Whole School Start of Term Service, The Harvest Festival, the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols and the Commemoration Service. The important Service of Remembrance and Dedication took place with Mr Andrew Halls, Head Master of King's College School, Wimbledon, as the guest speaker. The Boarders' Chapel Services on a Sunday evening are also important and on 1 November 2015 there was a particularly moving Service at which over 150 boys lit candles in memory of a loved one who has been a light

in their life. Mrs Anne Richards, Merchiston parent and Chief Executive at M&G, delivered an inspirational talk entitled 'Little History, Big History' at our annual Prizegiving ceremony.

To conclude, having a study in the centre of School is absolutely marvellous. I hear so many wonderful sounds, not least the sound of boys scurrying to English and other boys going to see the Academic Leadership Team. One of the great, great pleasures of this study within the body of the kirk is being close to the Memorial Hall. I hear boys playing the Bösendorfer. I hear musicians practising for concerts. I hear members of staff (and pupils) practising the organ. I hear the Close Harmony Group practising. I hear the Choir practising. These boys are very, very busy in so many different parts of this School and it is always a joy and a pleasure to listen to our Choir. And then, from this amazing study, there are different views over the course of the year with regard to the Pentland Hills, and as I whizz up the drive, that vista in the distance of Edinburgh Castle. And at the back of the School, it will soon be three bridges, as opposed to two bridges as one looks into the distance to Fife.

Ours is a great job in which we reap what we sow! As ever, thank you to Merchistonians for reading this entry. Please do not forget that the relationship at Merchiston between all of us is so critical; namely, the relationship between the boys and their coaches and mentors within and outwith the classroom; the relationship between Merchiston and the home of every boy at Merchiston; and finally, the relationship between those of the present Merchiston and the Merchistonians. Thank you for your support.

RF	Ronald	Aitchison	(48-53)
JA	John	Aitchison	(53-58)
STW	Stan	Anderson	(46-51)
JM	Jimmy	Arnott	(48-53)
JA	John	Baird	(51-55)
GTG	Gareth	Baird	(70-75)
DM	David	Baird	(67-70)
RG	Richard	Barber	(88-92)
JR	Roy	Barr	(75-79)
DJ	Donald	Biggar	(65-69)
ACS	Sandy	Boswell	(42-46)
SR	Stephen	Bowie	(78-81)
KM	Kenneth	Boyd	(51-56)
AHW	Alasdair	Boyle	(59-64)
P	Peter	Brewis	(75-78)
SL	Stuart	Briggs	(60-65)
JM	Michael	Brown	(49-53)
DJ	Dougie	Brown	(75-80)
PD	Peter	Buck	(62-66)
AM	Alastair	Burnet	(59-62)
RS	Rick	Burnett	(52-56)
JH	John	Burton	(50-54)
D	Duncan	Campbell	(49-54)
AJ	Alastair	Campbell	(62-67)
JG	John	Carruthers	(56-61)
AWR	Alisdair	Cochrane	(50-54)
AG	Andrew	Connel	(56-60)
AE	Sandy	Corstorphine	(59-64)
C	Chris	Cosh	(83-89)
GO	George	Cowan	(52-57)
WRC	Robert	Craig	(46-51)
RAS	Richard	Cram	(73-77)
WAM	Bill	Crow	(53-58)
JH	John	Cunningham	(48-53)
AR	Andrew	Cunningham	(55-58)
J	James	Davidson	(54-58)
PB	Peter	Davie	(68-73)
HS	Hans	Denzler	(85-91)
WG	Greg	Desson	(58-63)
GL	Graham	Desson	(60-64)
JL	Leslie	Dickson	(52-57)
AP	Peter	Dickson	(80-87)
HP	Hugh	Dinwoodie	(43-48)
JR	Richard	Dodds	(82-86)
GR	Geoff	Donald	(50-54)
BR	Brian	Donald	(54-59)
RW	Ronald	Douglas	(44-48)
L	Len	Douglas	(47-53)
JD	John	Drummond	(52-56)
ASM	Andrew	Duff	(76-79)
J	Jack	Dun	(39-44)
JAH	John	Duthie	(65-71)
AJ	Andrew	Edgar	(68-73)
RS	Rob	Elliott	(64-69)
WJ	John	Ferguson	(90-92)
WJ	William	Findlay	(70-75)
GN	Graeme	Finlay	(90-97)
PJ	Peter	Fleming-Brown	(47-50)
BM	Ben	Flett	(08-13)
MR	Matt	Flett	(08-13)
IG	Ian	Forman	(44-48)
PW	Pete	Forman	(72-76)
DG	Dave	Forman	(73-79)
RL	Roley	Fraser	(44-49)
DP	David	Fullerton	(43-47)
FK	Forbes	Geekie	(84-89)
SC	Simon	Gilmour	(01-06)
WS	Bill	Glen	(46-50)
SS	Stuart	Goldberg	(83-85)
AWR	Andrew	Goodyear	(52-56)
JM	Malcolm	Gourlay	(56-61)
CM	Chris	Gourlay	(93-98)
IA	Ian	Graham	(60-65)
CM	Charles	Grant	(57-62)
AH	Alistair	Gray	(53-56)
TMT	Tim	Gregory	(83-90)
DK	David	Grieve	(58-63)
AR	Andrew	Haddow	(60-65)
WT	Bill	Hannay	(54-58)
JC	James	Hardie	(52-57)
THD	David	Hardie	(59-64)
T	Tom	Harvey	(80-85)



Merchiston Castle School is grateful to the following Merchistonians who, along with those attending the 2015 Gala Ball, have donated to the sport and leisure appeal, It's Time For Sport...

JW	John	Hay	(42-46)	AM	Angus	MacDougall	(74-79)
DMJ	Donald	Henderson	(39-44)	AC	Angus	Macfarlane	(90-95)
AB	Alexander	Hutchison	(63-68)	EP	Euan	Macfie	(59-63)
MG	Martin	Ingham	(63-68)	IR	Ian	Mackay	(59-63)
PD	Peter	Ingham	(68-72)	CC	Colin	MacKean	(55-58)
AC	Andrew	Inglis	(62-66)	JC	Mac	Mackenzie	(47-51)
RA	Robert	Inglis	(66-70)	GH	Graeme	Mackenzie	(91-96)
REM	Ronnie	Irving	(52-58)	JHF	Forbes	Macpherson	(40-43)
WM	Murray	Jamieson	(49-54)	ES	Eddie	Maguire	(54-59)
NH	Norrie	Judd	(47-51)	PG	Gordon	Malan	(55-59)
NO	Neil	Kilpatrick	(51-56)	HCG	Hamish	Marr	(75-80)
RM	Ruaridh	Kohler	(74-81)	JD	James	McAlpin	(87-89)
IAS	Irvine	Laidlaw	(56-60)	DI	David	McCallum	(66-70)
JD	John	Laidlaw	(63-68)	RB	Robert	McColl	(55-59)
W	Bill	Laidlaw	(61-66)	JA	Alan	McGregor	(64-69)
RH	Ronnie	Lamb	(56-61)	CL	Colin	McKenzie	(50-55)
JW	John	Laughland	(49-52)	RD	Bob	McKeown	(57-61)
HW	Hugh	Laughland	(45-48)	JA	James	McMyn	(52-57)
CT	Charles	Lindsay	(43-47)	JW	Winton	McNab	(50-54)
JN	John	Lindsay	(58-63)	JK	Kelman	Mearns	(43-47)
AW	Alistair	Lindsay	(52-55)	RG	Gray	Mickel	(44-48)
CWF	Fraser	Low	(56-60)	AG	Alan	Mickel	(48-52)
DM	Murray	Low	(50-55)	IGA	Ian	Miller	(57-62)
JDG	James	Lugton	(94-03)	IMG	Ian	Miller	(49-53)
DC	Duncan	Macdiarmid	(52-57)	AG	Alastair	Milligan	(58-63)

It's Time For Sport...

DWG	David Mitchell	(55-59)	J	James Robertson	(71-76)	A ED	Andrew Taylor	(98-03)
JM	John Moar	(41-45)	MW	Michael Robertson	(79-84)	RC	Charles Thompson	(75-80)
AL	Drew Mole	(58-62)	JE	John Robertson	(49-54)	MG	Michael Thomson	(51-55)
WI	Ian Moncrieff	(73-78)	RS	Scott Robertson	(71-75)	NC	Norman Walker	(65-70)
JCH	Charles Moorhouse	(60-65)	JRH	James Robertson	(50-54)	RWM	Michael Wallace	(47-49)
WN	Neil Morley	(42-47)	JR	Roy Robertson	(64-69)	RM	Magnus Wang	(82-87)
RD	Richard Morton	(53-58)	AJ	Alan Roy	(64-69)	MW	Mike Wathen	(41-50)
CC	Chris Muirhead	(70-75)	GT	Gordon Russell	(56-60)	ARW	Angus Watson	(88-95)
PM	Peter Murray	(61-66)	DMC	David Rutherford	(49-53)	WC	Will Watson	(59-64)
AM	Alastair Murray	(86-91)	CA	Charles Samson	(95-03)	RG	Richard Watt	(61-65)
JD	Duncan Murray	(54-59)	GRC	Graeme Scott	(53-58)	RG	Ranald Watt	(85-91)
DJ	Dan Nutton	(05-15)	PDR	Peter Scott	(56-61)	GH	Graham Webster	(53-58)
EA	Eric Osborne	(49-54)	FHWF	Francis Sempill	(93-97)	TF	Fergus West	(63-68)
KH	Kenneth Osborne	(50-55)	AJK	Andrew Short	(74-79)	RE	Roy Williamson	(76-81)
H	Harvey Paterson	(38-42)	RAC	Campbell Slimon	(54-59)	GR	Gavin Wilson	(61-66)
PN	Peter Paterson-Brown	(44-49)	IA	Tod Sloan	(56-61)	RJS	Robin Winter	(89-96)
JM	Michael Paton	(34-38)	DE	David Small	(63-67)	JP	John Woodford	(92-97)
J	James Peat	(72-76)	AG	Alastair Smith	(77-80)	IA	Iain Wright	(60-65)
RS	Roger Platfoot	(56-59)	BD	Bruce Speed	(51-56)	CH	Colin Wright	(62-68)
NWL	Nick Quin	(95-00)	GWB	Graham Stewart	(59-62)	DB	David Yellowlees	(70-74)
BJ	Bryan Rankin	(58-63)	MA	Mike Stove	(82-87)	RB	Brian Young	(51-55)
BAJ	Bruce Readman	(78-84)	CS	Craig Street	(83-90)	AMR	Andrew Young	(01-07)
MJ	Michael Riddell	(69-71)	P	Paul Sukhum	(76-80)	AM	Morison Zuill	(50-55)
WA	Tony Rigg	(60-65)	G GP	Grahame Sutherland	(77-82)			
DK	Derek Ritchie	(68-73)	GS	Gordon Taylor	(64-69)			

And of course, all anonymous donors.

Bill Wilson Memorial Prize 2016



This prize is in memory of Merchistonian and former School Governor, Bill Wilson. Preference is given to applicants who are undertaking travel projects of a charitable nature.



Last year's winners share their experiences with us.

Words and photographs from prize-winner Ben

In July I travelled as part of a group from South Morningside Explorer Scout Unit to the village of Banteay Kabalchin in Cambodia to help build two new

classrooms and refurbish existing parts of their school, ravaged by termites.

On arrival we had two days acclimatisation in Phnom Penh learning about the recent brutal history of the Khmer Rouge regime.

We then travelled six hours by bus to the village and set up our campsite in the school grounds, living alongside the local community and mosquitoes! For a fortnight we worked moving stones, compacting sand and rock, brick laying, sanding, grouting and painting in temperatures in excess of 40°C and humidity of up to 90%. We also had the opportunity to meet the villagers, Buddhist monks from the local temple and spend time with children from the school. They were fascinated by our kilts, enjoyed listening to us sing Scottish songs and had fun competing with us in a sports day. A group of Cambodian Scouts came to visit us and swap stories (their English was better than our Khmer!). The school was officially opened on 17 July with a blessing by the monks, speeches, the unveiling of a plaque inscribed with all our names and a party involving the community and partner charity who had facilitated the whole project.

We spent the next week in Siem Reap having cooking lessons from a local restaurant, visiting the world heritage site Angkor Wat and taking a guided quad bike tour at sunset along paddy fields.

Our month in Cambodia concluded with a few days on an island: jungle trekking, snorkelling and relaxing. I returned to Edinburgh with incredible memories and the knowledge that I have made a small difference in enabling the children of Banteay Kabalchin to attend full time rather than part time education.



Words and photographs from prize-winner Tim

During the summer I joined The Leap volunteer team in Cambodia with the help of the Bill Wilson Memorial Prize to assist with various projects in Siem Reap and Sihanoukville. Our journey started in London Heathrow where I, and 15 others aged between 17 and 20, travelled 23 hours to Siem Reap. Despite our apprehension and severe jet lag, we were greeted by the unending and honest cheer of our Project Leaders, Serakyuthe and Survan, who proved to be not only vital to our projects as translators and guides, but also great friends. Serakyuthe and Survan took time out of their days and weekends to take us on various trips to waterfalls or the great Tonle Sap Lake, and were often unpaid to do this!

On our first day we were taken to a Cambodian restaurant where we tried our first Cambodian food; Fisk Amok and roast vegetables. In the afternoon we were given a short lesson in the Cambodian language of Khmer and were given a small tour of Siem Reap. Our first night was fitful with jetlag and the 40°C of Cambodian heat. We were really forced to acclimatise as the air conditioning caused power cuts and one of the fans went on fire during the first night! Our next four weeks followed a fairly standard routine. We awoke at 7.00am for a breakfast of fresh fruit, followed by a drive in a sweltering van to the local village, where we worked on the construction of a water pump and a toilet. Lunch would be rice with a rotation of very thin chicken legs, fish or roasted vegetables. We were given a chance to rest during the midday heat before being driven to our afternoon assignment, teaching English in the Spitler Secondary School. Our time in Siem Reap was incredible and we were sad to say goodbye to the place that had been our home and to the friends we had made. We ▶



were tested by the monotonous diet, illness and climate. Everyone left Siem Reap more mature and responsible than when they arrived..

Our final two weeks were spent on the southern coast of Cambodia in Sihanoukville, where we helped encourage pupils at another school to participate in art and sport. We spent much of our days enjoying the beach and even visited the tropical island of Koh Rong Saloem. Our project in Sihanoukville was far more relaxed as we were only spending half the day working, which we were thankful for. We were all very exhausted and in some cases caught tropical illnesses not worth mentioning. After six weeks we were truly reaching the

end of our tolerance and were looking forward to returning home.

After our time in Sihanoukville we were driven to Phnom Penh for our last night with the ominous words a fellow tourist had told us: "Nobody leaves Phnom Penh happy." This proved more than true after we discovered the Killing Fields and saw the horrific past that the Cambodian people have endured, and it put into perspective the cheeriness and honest friendship that almost all Cambodian people seem to exude. Our final meal and goodbye with our tour guide seemed absolutely surreal, and I'm still struggling fully to process what a life changing experience I had in Cambodia.





New Arnold Palmer Trophy up for grabs

Arnold Palmer's connection with the School has resulted in the emergence of a new trophy bearing both his name and one of his old clubs.

The link was formed when Andrew Haddow (60-65), struck up an acquaintance with Palmer through visiting him at his family home in Pennsylvania.

Through that relationship, seven-time major winner Palmer gave Haddow one of the gloves he used during the 1966 Masters and, having been mounted on a plinth, it became the Merchison Castle School Arnold Palmer Match-Play Trophy.

Now that trophy is the 1-iron that Palmer used at Augusta National the same year, with around 70 pupils, led by members of the School's flourishing Golf Academy, set to compete for it for the first time next year.

"Just to be associated with the great man is fantastic and we are grateful to Andrew Haddow for that," said the School's director of golf, Alan Murdoch. "To also have a trophy bearing his name, and it now being one of his old clubs, is just brilliant. In addition to the 18 players currently in our Golf Academy, we've got three other groups that are involved in the golf activity programme on a weekly basis, so we could have between 60-70 pupils playing for it."

During his visit in the mid-1960s to Latrobe, PA, where Palmer's ashes were spread earlier this month following his death at the age of 87, Haddow caddied for the man known in golf as "The King". He also went with him to watch an American Football game involving his old school.

[The Scotsman]

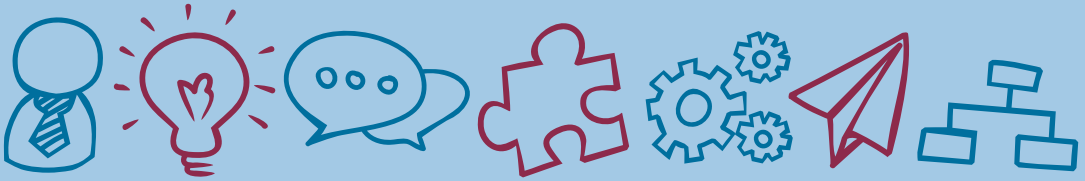


Careers Café

.....

The School holds a Careers Café every month with the aim to develop the pupils' skills for learning, life and work.

.....



This year, two of our cafés featured Merchistonians - Jonny Patterson (98-06) and Michael Nicol (04-11), here is their round-up:

Jonny returned to the School to outline his career path from Merchiston to Los Angeles, where he works as a film producer. He was incredibly interesting to listen to and had great knowledge on the different roles and routes within the movie industry. Jonny recommended to those with film aspirations what they should be concentrating on in School to help them later on. The key messages were to collaborate, network, and make content! It is obvious that Jonny has achieved so much in the relatively short time since he left Merchiston, and he was clear about the role which agencies such as the Scottish Film Talent Network can play in supporting others to do likewise. Jonny sent us some feedback upon his return to Los Angeles -

“It was awesome for me to be able to come home to Scotland this month, six months after the premier of HALFWAY, to talk to the next generation of film-makers coming through the ranks at Merchiston. I was thrilled to see the level of enthusiasm they had for embarking on this career path”

Merchiston was also delighted to welcome back to School Michael who kindly volunteered to talk to



Merchiston and Firrhill High School's fifth and sixth form pupils about his career and experiences in Chiropractic Medicine. Michael described how his interest and career choice stemmed from a Chiropractor successfully

treating a sporting back injury sustained at School. He explained to the budding future medical practitioners how chiropractic is concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of mechanical disorders of the musculoskeletal system, especially the spine, in the belief that such a disorder affects holistic health via the nervous system. The main chiropractic treatment technique (of which there are many variations) involves manual therapy, especially manipulation of the spine, other joints, and soft tissues, but may also include exercises and health and lifestyle counselling. With a ratio of 30,000 patients to each registered chiropractor here in the UK (cf 3,000:1 in the US) there is growing recognition of the benefits of this alternative medical approach with rapid growth in the sector and job opportunities.

We are very grateful to both Michael and Jonny for taking the time to speak with the pupils. If you feel that you can offer careers' mentoring, advice or support to existing pupils or recent School leavers, please let us know at merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk.



Peace Pipes

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the First World War



James L, a current pupil, has come up with a very interesting idea to help the School mark the end of the national commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1 in November 2018.

James, a keen piper from the age of 10, would like to amass a group of 100 pipers and drummers, past and present pupils of Merchiston, to play and parade on Remembrance Sunday 2018. "I thought it would be a fitting way to remember all those who fought and died", James says". We still have the pipes my great-great-

uncle Duncan McNaughton played while serving with a Scottish Regiment in the War. If this happens, I plan to have the pipes re-furbished and would proudly play them on that day".

While plans are still at a very early stage and logistics need to be worked out, we at the Club wondered if there were Merchistonian Pipers or Drummers out there who might wish to be kept in touch with the planning with a view to participating. If interested, please contact merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk.



Looking out over the



Duncan Rodgers (78-83) has built his life in Africa and here he talks about his career as operations director at Leopard Hills Game Reserve, Mpumalanga...

Words and photographs provided by Duncan Rodgers

Although I was born in Edinburgh my parents were living and working overseas, which saw me spend the first year of my life in the Cameroons in West Africa. From here my parents were posted to Swaziland, where I spent six years before we were once again on the move, this time to the wilds of Tanzania. At the age of seven and a half, I was sent to boarding school back in

Scotland, which after spending the first part of my life in the African Bush was a slight 'shock to the system'!!! I completed my prep school at New Park School in St Andrews, Fife, before enrolling at Merchiston.

I enjoyed my time at Merchiston, and in particular the sport. My highest achievement was being able to play for the IXV in my last two years. The first thing I did after



South African bush

Prizegiving was head to the airport to catch a flight back to Africa. It was time to go home.

After completing my schooling I did a three year Business Management course in Johannesburg, to get a qualification behind my name, and then followed my dream of becoming a Game Ranger. Having spent the last 30 years following this dream, I am now the

Operations Director of Leopard Hills Private Game Reserve, a lodge which my wife and I were a part of building nearly 19 years ago.

My average day starts at sunrise where the rangers meet their guests and take them on a three hour safari into the reserve. Here they are able to witness the incredible beauty of the bush, flora and fauna. ►





There are definitely no low lights from my time working at Leopard Hills; every year has been a blessing. The highlight has most definitely been raising our two daughters in this beautiful place we are privileged to call 'home'.

We are involved with numerous conservation projects, but the majority of our time at the moment is taken up with trying to save the rhino, whose population is being devastated by poaching. A lot of our time is spent on anti-poaching patrols and creating innovative ideas to stay one step ahead of the poachers. South Africa is losing nearly three rhinos a day due to poaching, which is not sustainable.

Leavers of Merchiston may be interested to know that there is a number of places that offer ranger/guide training courses, which are a fantastic way for people to experience and learn the profession of guiding. Two I strongly recommend are: www.natureguidetraining.com and www.ecotraining.co.za. Some lodges offer internships and volunteer programmes. We have five lodges in our own portfolio under the 'Seasons In Africa' banner and we also have a hotel division.

If anyone is interested in further information, they are welcome to contact Duncan Rodgers directly on duncan@leopardhills.com.

www.seasonsinafrica.com



257km on the Highway to Hell



The Marathon des Sables, also known as the MdS, is synonymous with lunatics running, marching and walking their way over rocks, river beds, salt flats, cliffs and of course sand dunes under the savage Saharan sun that beats down relentlessly. The streams of runners steadily making their way across a record breaking and gruelling 257km course, which unbeknown to us, would also turn out to be the hottest MdS on record with temperatures reaching well into 40°C plus each day! I was offered much advice – the best single piece of which was “take poles”. I shall be forever grateful that I did.

Fast forward to zero hour and I find myself – inevitably having done far from enough training – at London Gatwick with a few hundred, predominantly lean and athletic-looking Brits who all look like they know what they were doing and are well prepared to boot. I hoped my white running suit and hat would see

me through.

It seemed like an age before the event actually got underway. There was the six hour coach drive from Ouarzazate (roughly translated as the “door of the desert”) and a day of camping in the desert before being issued our GPS trackers, kit checks and briefings until we were at the start line of the MdS. With nearly 1300 competitors in a truly international event from as far afield as Australia, Canada, the USA, Thailand, Peru, Costa Rica and Somalia – it was still heavily bolstered by a strong British contingent.

A countdown from 10 and then we were off...this was it...I was running in the Marathon des Sables! The surprisingly frantic early pace was slowed somewhat when we arrived at the first few kilometers of dunes of Erg Chebbi (the biggest sand sea in the northern hemisphere). The initial excitement of trudging up them and running down in your silk gaiters (praying they held

Michael Ferndale (86-92) ran and shuffled his way on the Marathon des Sables through the Saharan Desert raising money “to give young people – particularly those with disabilities – a sporting chance”.

Words and photographs provided by Michael Ferndale



out and sand didn't exploit a tiny opportunity to filter into the forever protected feet) quickly evaporated and the realisation set in...this was a massive undertaking and one which I had probably underestimated. Well I was here and while I was only 5km into a 257km event I was not going to let it beat me!

Just to reinforce the severity of the challenge we were quickly facing head on into a massive sandstorm. Buff on (a protective piece of clothing that doubles as a scarf and face/head protector), head down and follow the footprints ahead was the only approach. Then at the checkpoints – arrive, get 1.5 or 3 litres of water depending on the distance to the next one, get your tag stamped, take a short pause to refill bottles, add the electrolyte/carbohydrate powders and off you go again.

Your tent is a key and unique component of MDS. Tent #150 was memorable and I wouldn't have changed

it for anything. As a former Cavalry soldier I was pretty 'gob smacked' when I discovered I was sharing a tent with four serving cavalry soldiers of the Light Dragoons. Even more so when I found out that two of them were, like me, members of The Cavalry & Guards Club in London. I felt at home right away – something that was to prove a big help in completing the event. In many ways it was like a trip down memory lane and it is most reassuring to see that Army banter has not changed a bit! The rest of our tent dwellers were very interesting and kind – a London-based chartered surveyor and a London restaurant manager who successfully became the first Peruvian to complete the MdS. Seven people all with different ambitions, reasons for participation and approaches but tied together for a week in a way that each of us will remember and cherish for years to come.

The night before, we had cut the umbilical cord of ▶

clothing and luxuries. The MdS is a self-sufficient event, obviously minus water stations (you are provided with on average 14 litres a day depending on the stage), so all those ‘nice to have’ items have to be set aside. Toothbrushes are cut in half, loo roll rationing becomes a subject of intense debate (we didn’t get that one right at all by the way) and grams/space are saved here and there – the potential for serious kit envy is immense.

Day two and three followed similar patterns. Wake up at 6am followed by the daily ritual of our group’s elongated refusal to get out of sleeping bags until the last possible moment; taping up blisters; counting the number of toenails missing; porridge down the hatch and race start post Highway To Hell at 8.30am. My first day had caused some particularly nasty blisters which were to get worse throughout the race – 16 in total by the finish. So the start to each day was a stiff, cold and rather unpalatable affair. In fact, one of my highlights of each day was to take half an hour out of the race to get my feet attended to by the French nurses – lancing of blisters, application of iodine (stings like hell!) and then binding. Thank goodness I had heeded the advice to get trainers a size larger than my feet!

Running the MdS is a subjective thing – each person adopts their version of the “Saharan Shuffle” – the speed at which you can sustainably move...it’s deceptively slow, by the way. Everyone comes up with their own strategy to get through. Mine was to immerse myself in the wondrous surroundings as if I was on a geography field trip or Sir David Attenborough commenting on the amazing wildlife.

Then came the much discussed ‘Long Stage’. This was a double marathon, i.e. 85km, on the back of almost three marathons already completed. Madness really. None of us had completed anything like that distance before in one go, so weren’t sure how to attack it. As it transpired, you just do the same as the other days and work for the next checkpoint without looking too far ahead.

The mental and physical battle was heightened on the long stage particularly as I ended up getting sick (the dreaded V&D). This meant I was slow through the night and had to rest up fairly regularly leaving me with another day time session in the searing heat. However much water you were given,





or salt tablets you wolfed down it was just never enough. In fact I managed to spill some water on the side of a steep sand dune and it was to me very much an “Ice Cold in Alex” moment!

The finishing line eventually hove into sight and you start to hear the music being blown on the wind of hope 10km away. That said, I was so drained by this time and desperate to finish that it never seemed to get any closer! A fellow competitor compared it to the Monty Python and the Holy Grail scene when they approach the castle – however much they tried, it never seemed to get any closer. It was totally mind-boggling and very frustrating but crossing it eventually was an emotional and euphoric moment. I had very little left to give.

The first thing they do when you finish is load you down with 9 litres of water to see you through the rest of the rest day, night and morning. Just what you need when you are dead on your feet! I must have been a pathetic sight as a delightful French lady doctor took pity on me and asked me if I was okay. She offered to carry my water for me and help me get back to my tent. All remaining pride – the Mds strips you of your dignity pretty quickly – rapidly evaporated and I gratefully accepted. When we reached the tent there was a big cheer. I had taken longer than the others and my fellow tent mates had wondered if I had been eliminated for not making the timed check points. Fortunately I hadn't and I quickly perked up as we all recounted our experiences. Then it was off to get my feet seen to by the army of specialist French foot specialists at Doc Trotters.

What a relief it was to be at the start of the final day. Although my feet were in tatters I knew that nothing would stop me completing the course now that the 85 km beast had been conquered. That final day was great as we made our way over the last marathon before crossing the 2016 Mds finishing line with arms aloft.

I now have some insight into the great Olympian Sir Steve Redgrave's point, when he said: “Anybody who sees me in a boat again has my permission to shoot me” after winning his fifth Olympic Gold Medal. I sort of feel the same way about sand!

The Merchistonian Club Whisky



Roughly this time last year Patrick Costello (01-09), Charles Maclean (65-69) and Edward Davidson (86-89) sat down at the Canny Man's in Morningside and discussed the idea of creating something together as Merchistonian alumni. Patrick tells the story...

Words and photographs from Patrick Costello



As it turns out we all left exactly 20 years apart; in '69, '89 and '09. Charles is a world renowned whisky expert and a great mascot for the industry, so we decided that with him it would be possible to create something really special.

We are all fans of Clynelish but we wanted to work with a whisky that Charles was particularly fond of. We all agreed on Clynelish and Cask88 set out to source a cask; we found an American oak refill from 1997 (#12382) and decided it was fit for the job! We then worked with our design team and the School Development Team to create a design.

Cask88 purchased the cask and took the responsibility of producing the bottles, labels and decanters; the whisky was then unveiled and launched for pre-sale in March. After some initial setbacks with production we managed to get the first bottles and decanters out the door in June.

The initial reception of the whisky was fantastic and roughly half of the 264 bottles available were sold in the first month. The idea of having a completely bespoke whisky just for The Merchistonian Club caught on fast and not just with local alumni: orders came from all over the world - from Australia, the Falkland Islands, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

With all bottles sold £21,989.11 was raised, and as agreed before the start of the project, 10% will go towards the Sport Development Fund.

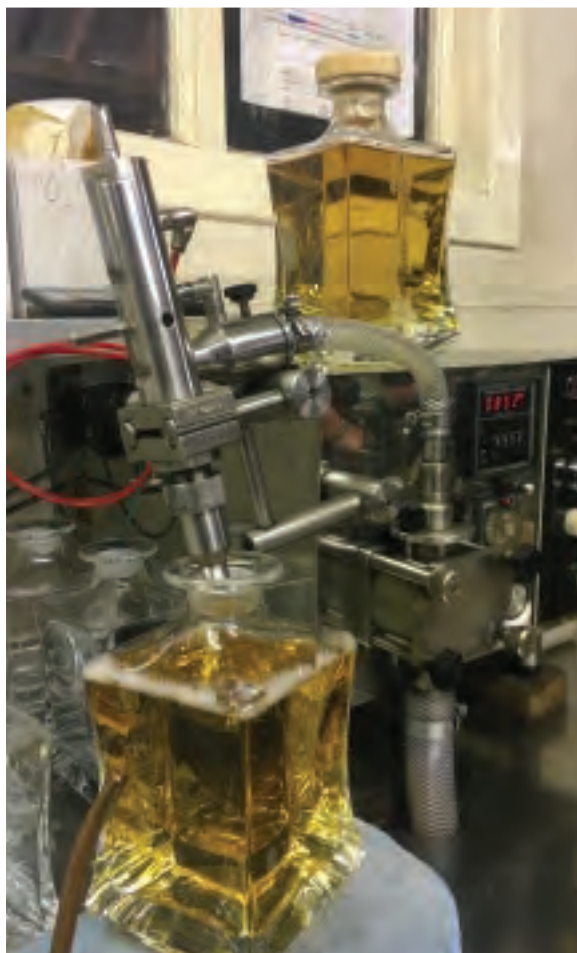
Charles Maclean's tasting notes:

Appearance: Pale gold/white wine. American oak refill cask. Good beading.

Aroma: A mild nose with an aromatic herbal top note (hand-soap, shampoo), giving way to fresh fruit (green apple, melon, white grapes) on a base of warm, melted candlewax – the keynote of this malt, increased by the addition of a drop of water, which also makes the aroma more acidic.

Taste: Pleasant to taste at natural strength; a smooth waxy texture, lightly teeth-coating. Sweet and crisply acidic, with a long warming finish. A drop of water introduces a slight saltiness, appropriate to a coastal distillery.

Comment: A splendid expression of Clynelish, embodying the make's sophistication and elegance. When I first assessed it, I was reminded of aromatherapy oils!





Savouring a Fine Decision

London is certainly not calling anymore for this self-taught brewer.

Words and photographs provided by Sandy Kirkpatrick

When Sandy Kirkpatrick's (96-03) wife organised a break in Belgium he came away with more than a tan and a phone full of photos. He had thought of a game changer, and all it took was a few glasses of Belgium's farmhouse beers. Sandy wanted to return to the farming life in which he grew up, and create his very own craft beers.

"My story began on the family farm near the small town of Sanquhar in South-West Scotland where I was born and raised. Like anyone who has experienced growing up on a farm, agriculture becomes part of you. Following three years of working in London and that rather fortuitous weekend in Belgium discovering farmhouse beer, I quit my job to start Savour.

"From the beginning my biggest mission has been to support and promote British produce. Growing up on a farm you become acutely aware of the pressures of imports, decreasing self-sufficiency and the effects this has on British producers.

"I believe that, as a country, we have the best resources, experience and knowledge to produce the best products in the world. With our British Farmhouse beers we're on a mission to promote British produce so come and join

us to show the world what makes Britain great!"

Savour was founded in 2013 by Sandy Kirkpatrick in the belief that more needs to be done to support and promote British produce. They produce a range of British farmhouse beers using unique ingredients and brewing methods to highlight British produce as being amongst the best in the world.

Savour Beer has secured a national listing with John Lewis for two of their gift packs which launched in August. Following a string of national awards, including being crowned Guild of Fine Foods Small Producer of the Year, the Windsor based company has secured national listings with Waitrose as well as being stocked in numerous high end bars, restaurants and department stores throughout the UK.

Sandy said "It's fantastic to be able to partner with such a prestigious retailer as John Lewis and it's great to see them get behind the beers and what we are about as a brand...The packs are a great gift for anyone with a passion for quality British food and drink".

The Merchistonian Club wish Sandy all the best in expanding his business and range of beers.

www.savourbeer.com



Letters from Flanders

.....

Donald Herbert Hutchison (1909-1914), lieutenant in the 16th Battalion London Regiment, was the great uncle of David Hutchison. From re-discovered letters, David describes his great uncle's experiences during the First World War.

Words and photographs provided by David Hutchison

.....



School Captain in 1913 and 1914, Donald had won a place at Cambridge. He had a bright future. But he had also been the senior under-officer in the School cadet corps, so as soon as he heard the news of the outbreak of war in August 1914, he joined up.

Donald was not alone in joining up. Almost all his contemporaries, and many of the junior staff, did so as well. One of the latter, Mr Macdonald, knew Donald well. *'It was no love of fighting that took him into the army, it was the same high sense of duty that characterised everything he did. It is difficult to say what he meant to those of us at Merchiston. Looking back, what stands out is his devotion to honourable duty, his cheerfulness and courtesy, his tact in dealing with refractory masters, and his absolute straightness. As long as he was the head of the school, nothing much could go wrong.'* Mr Young, also in France, agreed. *'His influence at school was wonderfully good. He did not care a bit for popularity – and he won the admiration and love of all. He saw a light ahead, or so it seemed, and nothing deterred him from following it.'*

Of course, it helped to be a sporting hero. He was Captain of Rugby for two years, winning the Scottish Schools' Championship both years, his team unbeaten. He was Captain of Cricket too, playing in the IXV for four years and won the School Mile four years in a row. He was one of the finest athletes of his generation.

'I am so grateful to your son, who was a hero. That he spoke to my boy on the field was exaltation enough for quite a long time,' wrote one mother. Of course, it was a different world then. *'I am struck by the looks of serious wistfulness in boys' faces whenever his name is mentioned,'* wrote the School matron.

But as Mr Strathairn, who had enlisted in the Black Watch, said *'to be remembered merely as the hero of so many footer games – that is at best a transient fame,'* referring to the sporting obituaries in the Scotsman and Glasgow Herald, and all the national papers. *'It is a strange thing for a schoolmaster to confess, but I shall never forget that I am the better for having known him. I have seen in him the ideal Merchistonian, considerate, thorough, sincere and brave, who saw the straight course and never flinched in following it.'*

Donald did his basic training as a junior officer in London and was posted to France. *'I remember being told that they were sending the best reinforcement officer they had – and this was truly borne out,'* wrote Major Cohen of

the Queens Westminster Rifles. Donald knew nothing of this glowing endorsement. His first postcards home, written on the three day journey to the front line in France are those of a home-sick and frightened boy.

'I have given you all the news on the way up and for heaven's sake don't worry about me, for God will take care of me. I am in his hands,' this written on 25 December 1914. *'I will now relate to you my Xmas'.*

'I was fitted up yesterday (Xmas Eve) and came right up to the firing line in broad daylight. It was a beautiful day, but coming up by the communication trenches, I walked in water over the tops of my knees and then it was clay mud, ankle deep. For the rest of the day I walked up and down the firing line to find out what happens. Fairly late I retired to my dugout, but only put on a greatcoat and covered myself with a rug. I was very frightened the water in my boots would freeze.

Rifle fire and guns raged furiously some distance away. The men sang hymns, and shouted to the Germans in the trenches opposite. I was so cold that I hardly slept.'

He goes on to describe the Christmas Truce, its negotiation, local signed agreement, the fraternisation, and the football. Not only miserable, he is now confused. *'This is what they call war. Inconceivable; yet soon the ringing of guns and rifles will recommence. The Saxons wish us the best of luck, and neither side have the slightest wish to shoot each other.'*

After this remarkable induction to trench warfare, Donald settled down to his duties, which involved digging improved positions, and being sniped at - relentlessly. He was very lonely. His Merchistonian friends were all in Scottish regiments, and his fellow officers in his London regiment were both older and squabbling amongst themselves.

His colonel realised he was unhappy, and sent him off on a machine gun course in February 1915. By the time he got back two weeks later, other young officers had arrived from England, and his letters get much more cheerful.

He also brought back good memories. He was billeted for a short spell in St Omer with 'Madame', who had four small children and a husband interned in Germany. She came from a wealthy family who were based in an impressive local chateau. Featuring in three consecutive letters with increasing enthusiasm, he tells of *'French lessons' over tea for two hours every evening. 'She is a delightful creature and full of fun considering these times.'* ▶



I shall be quite sorry to leave here. She has asked me to come back at any time.'

It was perhaps unwise of Donald to convey this information to Mother quite so bluntly, and she responded by going into an immediate decline. Donald, however, was used to her histrionics and told her to buck herself up, though he had the good sense not to mention 'Madame' again. He subsequently mentions only in passing his relationship with the Antoine girls whose father owned the subalterns' billet at Houplines in France, talking more of Merchistonians met by chance in the trenches. His brother Colin, visiting the girls later to recover his kit, comforted them in their grief and remained in touch even after the end of the War.

Donald was still digging endlessly, and snipers were accounting for a man in the battalion almost every day. By June 1915, the battalion had lost 20% of its number to death, wounds or illness. His mother knew the danger he was in, and asked one of her contacts to arrange a safer place for him to serve. *'No, mother, now that I am here, I am going to see this game through. Let the future take care of itself. I told you long ago what I had decided.'*

Winter on the trench line was to be endured. The summer fighting season was when most of the dying was done. Donald knew he had small chance of survival when they moved to the active battlefield at Ypres. *'Personally I have resigned myself to 'Fate'. If I get an order to expose myself, I do it. But I never go a seeking.'* An infantry brigade on their right made a disastrous attack on the German lines, losing 73 out of 96 officers and over half its 3600 men. Volunteer working parties from the Westminster's helped pick up the dead and wounded.

'Rumours have started that in about a month's time, our division is to have a long rest. But before then something will happen I feel sure,' this on the 11 July. Sure enough, the day after surviving a major assault on the enemy lines on the 9 August, he was hit by a chance shell very early the next morning, and killed instantly. It was his 20th birthday.

The deluge of condolence letters that follows is overwhelming. From the battalion alone, the colonel, major, and six other officers wrote. But there is one letter that says it all. *'We, the undersigned, venture to assure you of their very sincere sympathy in your great sorrow. The late officer had endeared himself to those under his command as a gallant gentleman and a thorough sportsman, and his death is felt by all of us a personal loss. His burial, at dusk and to the sound of shell and rifle fire, was a fitting commemoration of a noble death,'* this missive individually signed by 32 N.C.O.s and riflemen.

The letter does not say that Donald had cheerfully

carried four of their rifles in relays during the long march in mud and rain up to their new trenches. It does not say that he had, diffidently but decisively, purchased four Primus stoves out of his own money to enable them to brew tea safely in those same trenches. It does not say that *'if any of my men have to go out in front of our lines, I go with them.'* These were secrets shared only with them and his mother.

It was not his death that was noble, and those men knew it. It was his life. *'It was like coming in to a brightly lighted room to stop at his dugout on ones rounds of the trenches,'* wrote his major. *'He was always cheery and bright-keen-reliable,'* wrote his captain. *'I spoke to him immediately before his death. He had been under intense shell fire for some 20 hours, a day that might shake any man's nerve and he replied with a cheery smile and a laughing 'good night' as I passed along. I can see his face now. I saw a laugh on his face a minute before his death and have no doubt he so died.'*

Mr Macdonald summarised the cold comforts on offer; *'If ever there was a pure sacrifice, freely offered and ungrudgingly carried to its fulfilment, it was the sacrifice that Donald made of his life. If ever anyone enjoyed the spring time of his life, he did. If ever anyone gave his life gladly for a great cause, he did. There is nothing to regret. The sorrow is all with those who stay behind.'*

Mr C E Edwards (Assistant Master at the School in June 1917) offered no comfort. He was writing the obituary of the 11th of Donald's colleagues in the School XV to be killed in the war, *'and most of the rest wounded. This horrible war has been going on so long now that at times I seem to have become callous. But whenever I am reminded of the boys who were here during those three years, and their promise for the future, I feel the loss of all these young lives most deeply.'* Like an artist whose life's work has gone up in flames, he was shattered.

Along with mothers the length and breadth of the land, the most poignant condolence letters are those from Merchistonian mothers who had already lost a son, to Donald's mother, as she joined the sad club. And she was lucky. She lost only one out of three.

Donald was my great-uncle. His older brother, Colin, who was in the artillery, was my grandfather. It is impossible to list here all the boys of Merchiston mentioned in their letters, most references to individuals being fleeting. Of the staff, Messrs Bell, Edwards, Donaldson, Macdonald, Shathairn and Young all wrote with Merchiston news. I would be happy to answer any queries arising from this article by e-mail, on theyounggunnerfa@hotmail.com.

David Hutchison



Making Waves in BC

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Once again Chris Reid (55-59) gathered his Merchistonian crew to join him in his annual “shake down”, or post winter, cruise around some of the Gulf Islands off Vancouver Island.

.....

Chris's two brothers David (51-55) and Duggie (58-62) are experienced hands on the 34ft. Californian yacht and for the last five years Charles Grant (57-62) has been graciously accepted on board as part-time cook and bottle-washer. Many school memories and stories are recalled during our usually somewhat leisurely sails, interlaced with putting the world to rights with the wit, wisdom and maturity of four men in a boat enjoying themselves. Some old school traditions too are observed on the trips including the mandatory Sunday breakfast with sausages (burnt) spread with marmalade... and remembering the reign of the Kitchen Queen.

It was noted previously in *The Merchistonian Club Magazine* that this event marked the only known formal date in the Merchistonian Sailing Club of British Columbia's calendar and until last year Sandpiper the only participating yacht at it! This changed in 2015 with the welcome appearance of Guy Warren (57-60) along with his partner Karen who had sailed up from their Friday Harbor, Washington State home. Guy (now known

as Jock), despite not having seen any of the Reid crew for 50 plus years, cannot have been too dismayed at what he found, for he and Karen joined us again in 2016 much to our delight.

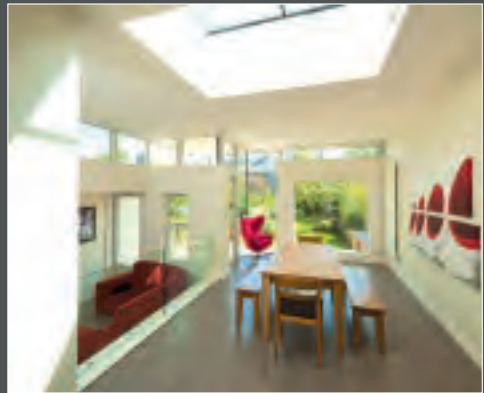
So what would be better than two yachts at a regatta? Answer, three! Following a chance meeting at a Merchistonian Dinner in 2014 in The New Club Edinburgh, contact was made with Peter Watson (60-64) who it was established lives in Victoria, Vancouver Island, just round the corner so to speak from the Gulf Islands. Arrangements were made and Peter sailed his fine Beneteau yacht to meet us. Thus on Thursday 7 April at Maple Bay Marina V.I., we had a trio of vessels tied up while owners and crew met in an excellent hostelry for a very enjoyable evening and reunion.

We hope that all being well, this meeting can be repeated in 2017. Better still, if there are any Merchistonians out there with or without their own yachts who can get to Vancouver Island around April/May then do get in touch with Chris Reid through the Merchistonian Office and come and join the party.



Left to right - Peter Watson, David Reid, Jock (Guy) Warren, Chris Reid, Douglas Reid, Charles Grant

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Adjusting his sail for new prospects

Gavin Reid (01-06) signed up to the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race, despite having little sailing experience! After 11 months on the water he walked away with more than he had imagined when he received the prestigious seamanship award...

Words and photographs provided by Gavin Reid



Can you tell us what brought you to take part in the Clipper Round the World Race?

I have always been an active/practical person who enjoyed being outdoors. I had always said that I didn't want to work behind a desk and unfortunately I ended up working behind one for two years, so decided to do something much more challenging and exciting. My father heard about the race on the radio and it was perfectly timed with how I was feeling about my working life.

Before the race you had only done topper sailing when you were 10 years old. How on earth did you prepare and train for such a feat?

I completed a week of topper sailing when younger but that was no preparation for the race. I honestly didn't know what to expect from the race except that it was going to be tough. The only preparation (outside of the four weeks of compulsory training) was to sort myself

out with some decent hearing aids so I could wear them in a wet environment. It's tough to mentally prepare yourself for an event that you have no experience of before, but I just went into it with an open mind and a willingness to get stuck in and learn everything that I possibly could.

Did you know the crew personally beforehand or did you only get to know them while preparing for the Clipper?

I met my team a week after signing the contract. It was a bit daunting as they had already done some training whilst I hadn't even done a day of sailing! We had some team building in the Beacon Brecons (in Wales) with our team sponsor, Mission Performance, which was a good opportunity to meet some of them. You only really get to know people on the boat when their true self is revealed, you can't really get away with pretending to be someone else on the boat in such a close environment.



What kind of bond do you have now, quite unbreakable?

I certainly have an extremely close bond with my fellow 'around the worlders' who have all been through the same trials and tribulations as me. As I mentioned before you can only be honest on the boat. In such close quarters you find out a lot about your crew mates and although I have only known them for 14 months it feels like I have known them for over five years! I intend to keep in touch with them for a long time after and we have already had a 'reunion' after two months.

Where did you set off from and what was running through your mind at the time?

We set off from St. Kat's dock in London before the race start from Southend. It was a long drawn out day with lots of goodbyes to family and friends so it was difficult to really contemplate what I was about to do. I settled into life on the boat pretty quickly so I never really felt panicked or worried at the race start, I was just excited to finally get going.

One of your friends had the ingenious idea of using glow in the dark lipstick so you could lip read. Why did this not work out as planned and how did you work around it?

We were having a bit of a discussion in the pub (as you do) about how to improve communication on board the boat as it was tough for myself and others to hear each other when the wind is howling past your ears. The idea of glow in the dark lipstick was born and was immediately latched upon by the media. In theory it was a great idea, however practically it didn't quite work out with application of the lipstick proving difficult and also people were far too tired to be fiddling about doing up their lipstick at 2am! I have heard other successful applications of the lipstick for deaf people at festivals so it has proved useful to someone. In the early stages of the race I often had a 'buddy' with me to relay any orders but as the race progressed I became familiar with the orders and what we were trying to achieve without much verbal communication. ▶



You had brand new waterproof hearing aids to use which were apparently ‘dunk proof’. You certainly got to test that out when you went to the aid of a distressed sailor! Could you please tell us about that story and why it was you in particular who jumped into the ocean? Did your hearing aids survive the dunking?

We got a distress call off the East coast of Australia about a man trapped up a mast so we suspended our racing and went to their aid. Our skipper asked for a volunteer and I put myself forward on account of my experience of going up the mast before. As the water was far too choppy to align the two boats I had to jump overboard with a throwing line tied to me so the other boat could pull me in. I kept my hearing aids inside my dry suit as I didn't want to test them fully in the water, I think they are more 'splash proof' than 'dunk proof'. They didn't prove particularly useful as I couldn't quite hear either of the crew on the deck or the man up the mast. It didn't turn out to be a huge problem as we used a lot on non-verbal communication to untangle the trapped man.

What did your parents say when they found out that you had made such a brave rescue?

They said they knew it would be me going up the mast when the article was released notifying the viewers that Mission Performance had gone to the rescue of another vessel. I think they were fairly proud.

Receiving the Henri Lloyd Seamanship award must have been a great surprise. What did your friends and family say?

It was a lovely surprise when there were so many other worthy candidates. The credit goes to the entire boat for agreeing to suspend racing to help those in need. It made the award extra special to have other crew members come up to me and congratulate me.

Did you have any other scary moments when you feared for you and your crew's safety? The waves must be incomprehensible to land lovers?

The first proper storm that we experienced as a crew was a moment that stood out for the rest of the race. We were hit by winds of 60 knots plus off the coast of South Africa as we were embarking into the Southern Ocean. It was an extreme experience as our fore sail ripped and we had about 10 people on the bow trying to pull the sail down as the boat bounced through some big waves of 40 feet plus whilst whales were jumping around us. I was awake for about 12 hours on deck helping get the boat under order. After this storm our crew were very adept at dealing with future ones which we handled with less fuss.

What did you find yourself missing and craving while out at sea?

There wasn't a lot I missed when at sea. I did miss a change of food as the menu was the same every seven days and after six months it was difficult to deal with. I did miss a flat toilet too!

How long were you sailing for and what were some of the challenges you faced?

The whole journey took 11 months and the race was separated into 14 races, with roughly five to 12 days stopover in each port. Physically I coped really well with the race and although there were a few moments of tiredness I was able to work hard most of the time. It was difficult dealing with people towards the end as your temper gets shorter once you have heard the same excuse or complaint over and over again.

I particularly enjoyed the challenge of taking on the role of watch leader for four races which gave me a chance to lead a team and try and get them to perform.



What were the good, bad and ugly aspects of sailing in a yacht around the world?

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience. There were days of laughter, boredom, tears and wonder. It was a real joy to see wildlife in the middle of the ocean, from leaping whales and dolphins to be followed by seagulls who rained pellets over the boat. There were a few arguments and fights on the boat but nothing serious. Going to the loo and cooking were some of the hardest things to do as you were often fighting against a 45 degree angle.

Would you ever compete in the race again, and would it be with the same team and boat?

I would certainly do the race again if I had the time and

would enjoy the chance to share my experience with future new crew members.

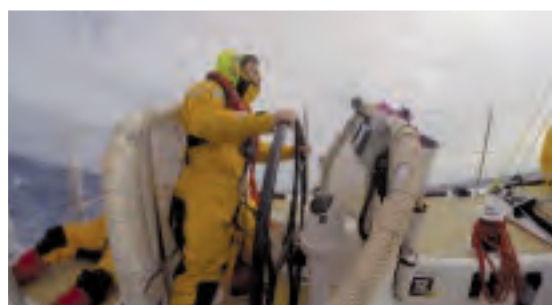
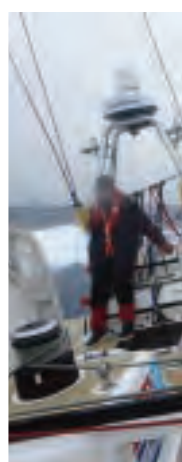
I noticed you had a JustGiving page to raise money for UNICEF UK. Why did you choose UNICEF?

UNICEF was the charity boat but they do some excellent work in large scale operations around the world that change many children's lives. I was fortunate to see a centre set up in Vietnam by UNICEF that helped with mentally disabled children who had suffered from Agent Orange in the Vietnam War. It was a real eye opener to the impact that war still has on Vietnam.

What have you been up to since the competition?

I have taken time to readjust to life away from the boat.







It has been a tricky month as I was struggling to focus on tasks and quickly became demotivated. Meeting up with friends and family has been good to regale my tales. Now I am actively looking to get back into employment in something preferably more practical and worthwhile.

Looking back now, do you feel that your time at Merchiston did anything in the way of preparing you for such a team event, and if so what?

Merchiston produced many successful sports teams that came about from working hard, respecting each other and good leadership. Having performed in many sports since a young age I found it much easier to transfer these skills over to the tough environment on the boat.

Are you still in contact with your school friends? What subject and teachers have left memories and what did you enjoy/dislike?

I have been in touch with a few mates from school but it was difficult to keep track as I went to a different university though I did meet a few in some university rugby matches.

I fondly remember lessons. I studied English Literature at Lancaster University because of how much I enjoyed English at Merchiston and I remember my English teachers, Mr Williams and Dr Mortimer, having a big impact on that decision. Mr Caves was also my rugby and cricket coach for several years at school, ensuring that we had fun as well as coaching a competitive team (we had two seasons of unbeaten cricket!)

What did Merchiston do for you as a whole?

Merchiston gave me the chance to develop as a rounded individual in many areas so that I could adapt to any challenges that came up. I have taken my passion for sports and competition from Merchiston and it has ensured that I have always looked to enjoy a new challenge regardless of what it is.

You recently walked the West Highland Way? Was that you embracing land again? Did you go walking on your own or as part of a group? Did you manage to do it in your planned timeframe?

After returning from my sailing around the world adventure I felt I needed to get back outside and keep doing exciting and challenging things. Unfortunately, we didn't complete the WHW but it was a good chance to rebuild some leg muscles that had disintegrated during sailing! It was good to return back to Scotland.

So what now? You left as a Supply Chain Co-ordinator but I should imagine you have a thirst for more. Do you have an itch to get back out on to the seas?

I'm glad to have a break but I definitely want to get back onto the seas. Next plan is to get my Yachtmaster Ocean Certificate which would allow me to take on sailing jobs and to skipper boats. I have also talked with a few people about also rowing the Atlantic as a four person team which could be my next challenge.

A day out at Rule Valley

The Merchistonian Club Shooting Secretary, Richard Macmillan (81-87) spent a day at Rule Valley

Words from Richard Macmillan and photographs from Jamie Reddihough



An exciting day lay in wait as a team of Merchistonians consisting of myself, Iain Brechin (79-84), David Jobling Purser (82-87), Calum Miller (81-88) and Peter Wright (82-89) travelled to a farm in the Scottish Borders to experience simulated game shooting. Owned and operated by two former pupils, Jamie (94-99) and David Reddihough (96-01), Rule Valley simulated game is set up on the family farm and has been thriving for three years now. It offers the excitement, hospitality and social interaction of a live game shoot with the live birds being replaced by clays.

We were greeted by the hosts and welcomed into the shooting lodge with some bacon rolls and drinks followed by the safety briefing and drawing the peg numbers for the first drive. We were here for a full day shoot which consisted of three drives in the morning and two in the afternoon, with a competition to finish the day off.

After the team photo we all clambered into the gun bus known as Humphrey, a former army vehicle converted with some creature comforts such as padded seating. A large cool box was sat in the middle waiting for us, packed with drinks. The day was looking up already.

Our first drive was known as Jamie's Brae and it put

out some spectacular pheasants. Much like wandering pheasants, clays came from nowhere and appeared from the other side of the river rule at the top of a high bank. It was certainly one to warm the gun up after a long few months in the gun cabinet. Barrels were smoking and cartridges piled up. Luckily for us part of the package was unlimited cartridges so there was no need to hold back.

Our second drive was Rule Corner and with our backs to the river it was a most picturesque setting. Again clays came from hidden locations. These came in fast and lower than before with a few crossers thrown into the mix, simulating the flights of the partridge. It was fast and furious so it was a welcome break to then have an elevenses stop by the river. Sloegasms were poured out and a smorgasbord of home-made treats was handed around. This was certainly at the upper end for most shoot hospitality.

One more drive before lunch again had us by the River Rule. The Fairy Dell Drive threw out some glorious high pheasants. By this point we had warmed up and our eye was locked in, so there was a notable increase in some "poached" birds! Highly frowned upon on a game day but actively encouraged on a day like today when



there are thousands of clays put out over you. Nothing can be quite as satisfying as dusting a high clay just before your mate is about to pull the trigger on it.

It was back to the shooting lodge for lunch and a great place to relax and talk of the morning sport and bragging rights. Lunch did not disappoint with a superb homemade chicken and haggis pie. A trolley of desserts was then brought out followed by a cheese board. The wine was flowing, so it was going to be a struggle to get up and out for the second part of the day.

We manned up and clambered back into the gun pass for round two. The third drive was perfect after lunch. Some nice mid-range birds to get us back into swing of things. Confidence was high.

The fifth and final drive however brought us back to reality. Braes Bank was a huge embankment from where the birds were coming 80ft plus above us. A drive utilised on the pheasant shoot, this threw out some stonking high birds that moved around and swung left and right. The sun was shining and the valley boomed like 'the Guns of Navarone'.

It was fantastic drive to finish on but there was one part of the day still to complete, the competition. It was everyman for himself as we all stood up front and had

20 clays to shoot. David's wife Katie stood behind with the clicker and recorded the score. Thankfully no bribery was required as yours truly won the shoot off!

After an exhilarating day we ended up back at the shooting lodge where we had some tea, coffee and cake. Some unexpected bonuses were handed out in the form of rather plush shoot cards with our team photo and a prize for the victor in the competition: a branded stainless steel folding cup which will come in useful for some future shoots.

In all, it was a day that far exceeded our expectations. The shooting lodge and farm location was set in some wonderful Borders countryside. The excitement and realism of the shooting was superb, with unique settings and great variation of drives. From start to finish the hospitality from the Reddihough family was up there with the best we had ever experienced at any shoot. We heard they have had great success with corporate days as well as large groups on stag weekends. We can certainly see why! The day had been documented, with Jamie taking 100 plus photos of us in action which provided us with some great memories to look back on. We can't wait to come back again and make some more!

Rugby in the Land of the Long White Cloud

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Patrick Kelly (10-14) received the John Macphail Rugby Scholarship and as a result found himself in New Zealand training at the Crusaders International High Performance Unit.

Words and photographs provided by Patrick Kelly

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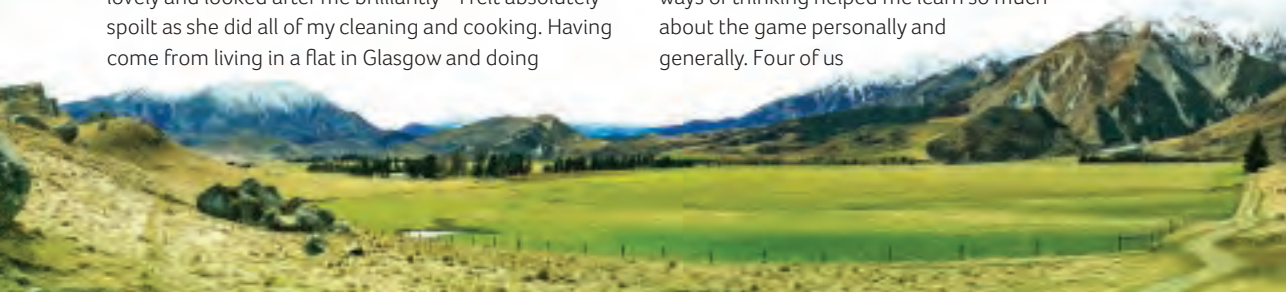
When I received the scholarship I was absolutely delighted and felt privileged to be following in the footsteps of some top class Scottish players. I knew it would be the perfect opportunity to develop as a rugby player and a brilliant chance to experience living in another country.

Prior to leaving for New Zealand I was seen mainly as a strong carrying, at times, one dimensional centre. My main goal for my time away was to up my skill set in order to be able to play as a second receiver, or second five eighth as they say in NZ. This would increase my versatility as a rugby player, allowing me to play as any coach wanted me to, given the team I am a part of. The Macphail Scholarship was the perfect opportunity to have an intense period working on my game in the top rugby country in the world. I believe I have developed massively as a rugby player and also as a person, having been given the chance to live and learn in a foreign culture.

I arrived in Christchurch on a warm autumnal day in April and was greeted by John Haggart, manager of IHPU. John took me to my new home, just five minutes from Rugby Park where the IHPU is based. I was placed with a woman called Jo, who has two sons that were studying in Wellington, and a cat called Maggie. Jo was lovely and looked after me brilliantly - I felt absolutely spoilt as she did all of my cleaning and cooking. Having come from living in a flat in Glasgow and doing

everything for myself I was delighted to be mothered again! We got on very well and enjoyed each other's company in the evenings.

The first couple of days were very relaxed to get over the jetlag and adjust to my surroundings. I had entered the programme at the five week stage so there was already a group of guys well into the full time training routine. The other boys were from all over the world, ranging from Brazil to Japan. Everyone was very friendly so I settled in very quickly and soon got used to the workings of the IHPU. The average day consisted of two skills sessions, a gym or speed session, a seminar or presentation and time for us to work on anything we needed to do. The skills sessions focussed on different areas of the game and the level of detail with which the coaches examined us brought my game on in every area. The main difference I noticed there is that the coaches work with a player to make a particular technique or skill work most effectively for them: not everything has to be done in an orthodox way. John Haggart and Joe Maddock were the main coaches who led the sessions; however, we also had many sessions run by coaches such as Reuben Thorne (Former All Black), Mike Cron (All Black Coach) and Razor (NZ 20s coach). Being exposed to so many different ideas and ways of thinking helped me learn so much about the game personally and generally. Four of us



were lucky enough to train at the Crusaders Academy and I learned so much from playing with some of the best players in the world.

During my time there I was assigned to Marist Albion Rugby Club and I played for their Division 1 side. I grew in confidence with every game and I nailed down the starting spot at inside centre. Unfortunately we had a run of losses in the first few games and we ended up in the bottom half of the league when the midway point arrived. Although it was disappointing to not make the top six, I would say it was best for our team as we were quite young and relatively inexperienced. We pushed on and were undefeated in the second half of the season, finishing fifth (the highest position we could finish). To have a winning run of seven games gave individuals and the team an unrivalled feeling of confidence, which was a great experience. A highlight of the season was playing Burnside at Rugby Park as I got a hat-trick and Man of the Match for the day (made even sweeter by the fact that I only scored three tries in NZ!). Throughout the games I felt I was solid in defence and in my ball carrying, and I received good feedback from the coaches. Moreover, I began to learn to play more as a second receiver and create space for the outside backs. I learned from playing against and analysing top class centres by whom I was schooled in some games! I continued to work hard on my passing and kicking game, as well as my footwork, and I return to Scotland a much more rounded rugby player.

During the 15 weeks we were in Christchurch we had a lot of exposure to the Crusaders team, who also trained at Rugby Park. The team is packed full of All Blacks and being amongst legends such as Kieran Reid was inspirational. I would watch their training sessions and analyse players in my position which helped me learn and develop my own game in their mould. I watched the likes of Ryan Crotty and David Havili who are both excellent readers of the game and have top class distribution skills. The main difference between them and I was the speed at which they could scan and react to the picture they see on the pitch.

Each match was filmed, so every Monday Joe Maddock and I would watch the replays. He was a massive help with changing the way I analyse my performances, increasing my game understanding, and how to fit into a new team. I also had Crusader Robbie Fruean as my mentor and he helped me a lot, particularly regarding defensive systems.

Apart from all the rugby I absolutely loved life in Christchurch. I made loads of new friends from all over the world so the training was good fun and everyone got on well. Playing with the Marist Albion boys was fantastic and we had a couple of very lively social events at the clubhouse post matches. I even had my bagpipes out to play 'Flower of Scotland' which went down a treat with everyone! We also took a trip to Akaroa which is absolutely spectacular, had a relaxing day in the hot pools at Hamner Springs, and ventured to Castlehill and Arthur's Pass which, being a massive Lord of the Rings fan, made it even more incredible. The highlight for me, however, was spending a long weekend in Queenstown. The Remarkables mountain range is a buzzing little resort and we did everything from jet boating to luging down the mountain!

The biggest change for me after completing my scholarship is that my confidence has soared. I now know I can adapt to any team that I play for whilst leading the players around me. I have played against, and competed with, some of the best players in the world of my age and I have returned confident that I am not far behind them. The programme has given me new skills as well as clarity about what I still need to develop. I am now very excited to push on with my rugby and give it the best possible effort to earn a pro contract at the end of this year.

Patrick is currently contracted with the Glasgow Warriors Academy and playing for London Scottish.



A black and white portrait of Mark Gordon, a man with short hair and glasses, wearing a dark shirt. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

||: Networking: ||

The key to musical success

Mark Gordon (88-93) has followed his life long interest in music and turned it in to a career. Mark has got to where he is today, a successful music composer in the creative industry, through hard work and a lot of networking.

Words from Mark Gordon from an interview with Louise Pert and Gill Imrie, photographs provided by Mark Gordon

Tell us about your time at school

I did lots of music orientated things like formed my first couple of bands, did really terrible concerts and school discos with friends. I remember bringing one of my friend's records to a school disco and asking the teacher to play it, he played it for 20 seconds and then took the record out and actually threw it across the room! I guess it was not music that he particularly liked!

I was also in the choir and we went on a tour of Hong

Kong, which was led by Mr Rossiter, who was very focused on what he wanted from people who participated in music activity: he was very rigorous in a positive way. I put on a production of a Becket play in my last year which I directed and had a small acting role. I absolutely loved French as we had an amazing French teacher, her name was Mrs Limb. I also had great English teachers: Mr Mortimer, Mr Hall and Mr Williams.

What did you go on to do after Merchiston?

I did an MA in English Literature at Edinburgh Uni, and after that I started working in the music industry full-time and have done ever since.

Do you think that your time at Merchiston helped you get into the music industry at all?

I am definitely very fortunate to have had the experiences that I had at Merchiston. I can recall one year the choir performed Mozart's Requiem at St Giles' Cathedral on the Royal Mile. Opportunities like that and the rigour of practising and learning before them were definitely beneficial. I had a music teacher called Mr Hibbart and I was with him the first time I ever saw music software on a computer and the first time I did music composition pieces, wrote original score and music cues. I have strong memories of doing those early pieces. At that time in 1991-92 it was quite exciting.

Looking back at your love of music at school, did you think you would end where you are now: a music composer, working with a major UK broadcaster?

I suppose I didn't have a specific plan for career development. Most of the kind of work I have done has been through building a strong network, working hard, serendipity, kindness, all those things. I guess there is a point about people who work in the creative industries which is to do with no two career pathways being the same. I didn't study music at university but I did have a strong sense of knowing that I wanted to pursue a career in the creative industries, and the success I have had has been a constant surprise. It's been a lot of really hard work and the critical thing, other than talent and commitment, is the network that you build throughout your career.

So you went to Hong Kong with the School. Has your career taken you to any other countries?

Yes, quite a lot, this year I have already been to America three times, North America would be the main place I go outside the UK. When I was doing performance I went to Russia and Japan and all over Europe. Now, outside of the UK it's mainly North America.

Do your trips to the USA have anything to do with working with Dolly Parton on Lily's Driftwood Bay?

They do! Lily's Driftwood Bay, which is a BAFTA nominated children's pre-school animation, is set on a Scottish island and the conceit is that a girl lives with her Dad, in a single parent family, her mum has passed away, every day she goes down to the beach and things

wash up on the shore and spark your imagination. It is all about imagination, playfulness and nature. The cast already is fantastic, Stephen Fry, Ardal O'Hanlon, Peter Mulin and Jane Horrocks. However, one of the guests for season two was Dolly Parton so I wrote five little episodic songs for her to sing. She plays a chicken called Noleen and the show's creator and I flew to Tennessee to record her in the early summer this year, which was incredible and really good fun. Season two of the show also had Rob Roydon feature and I skyped in for the voice recording with him which was great. Dolly Parton was very kind, extremely professional, and would have us starting work at 7.45am. She has an amazing voice, is enthusiastic, and wanted to get everything right so was happy to keep doing takes until things were correct. It was just such a fun experience.

Did you get to socialise with her after?

We were lucky enough to spend the rest of the day in Dollywood where she was doing her parade and meet and greet. It was a long day but an extremely rewarding and successful one.

Are you working on any other projects at the moment?

We are finishing a three part series for Channel 4 starring Tony Robinson called Britain's Ancient Tracks and it will be shown on a Saturday at 8pm. We have two or three series that we are starting work on at the moment so I am very busy. Also, a large commission for Adidas as part of ongoing advertising work that came in. We have a six part BBC series coming up too. Lots of work on the slate at the moment!

Is there anything on your bucket list?

We were lucky enough to do our first feature documentary two or three years ago, which was narrated by Liam Neeson and premiered in Leicester Square. At that stage that was the first time I had been there for a premiere for something that I had created music for. If there was a single item on the list it would be to do an original animation feature, like a long form animation film, that would be very cool. That is definitely the one bucket item that I have not done yet. It will be coming, it will be coming!

What would a typical working day look like for you?

There is a very rough and broad rule that on any working day when music is being written that you can probably write and produce about two and a half minutes of music a day. I normally go in to the studio, there are two guys that work for me and we will get an episode, scene, or rough cut. We will have a conversation about music ▶

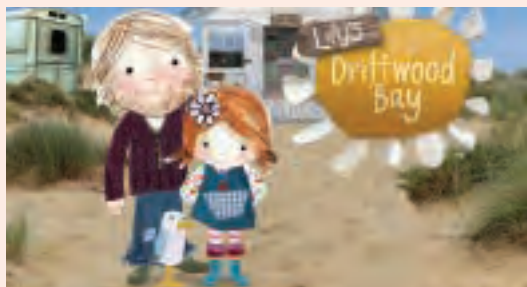
and then play some music. I have a studio at home too so I tend to bring music in that I have been working on. We will then divide the work for the day and each of us has our own room to go and work in, we move between the rooms all the time, benchmarking ideas off each other, finishing things, uploading files to production companies and broadcasters. It is very creative work but absolutely it is work that's on demand. So the biggest thing about composing music for visual media is that you can't have an off day; you can't have a day that you feel that you can't face writing music. In any one production here could be up to 80 or 90 people waiting for the next cue or piece of music that you have agreed to deliver. Writing music for television is completely distinct from being in a band or being a song writer or doing something that is more elementary creative. This is very much creative but for the betterment of a story, to support a narrative, to help the director and a producer tell a story so it's highly collaborative. It does not allow for ego as it is very much about working within a small highly creative team, so to tell a story and music is part of that story. The best music, as I often say, you shouldn't really notice it. But if it were not there you would be like "wow what is going on!?"

What would someone be surprised to know about you?

I really struggle to sight read music - I did up to a grade four in piano and that was the extent of my formal music training! I play by ear but if you set a piece of score in front of me it would take me ages to read it. A lot of the work that we do is on computers and we can generate score for other people to play along but I am awful at sight reading music.

You have given us a list of things you have been working on – but what would your biggest achievement or most memorable project be?

I think it would be Lily's Driftwood Bay as it has won a couple of awards for music and it is a BAFTA nominated television show that goes out in over 100 countries globally. So it's been quite a significant project for us, definitely. The documentary I mentioned 'Road'... to go



to a Leicester Square premiere and sit in the cinema listening to material that you have worked on is pretty exciting too.

You must have had quite a few challenges along the way. What have been your unexpected hurdles?

I think the biggest challenge when anybody is starting out on a pathway like this is to meet with creative collaborators who you can work really well with, who are at a stage in their career which is not dissimilar to yours. So as you grow through commissions and larger scale projects you become part of a creative team. It is very easy for a graduate to go out and find someone who is making a short film and go and join them. Maybe it will be great or maybe it will be awful but to move from that, to your first regional BBC commission, or your first advert, or your first piece of work that you can leverage your next five opportunities off, that point in which you are starting to grow your creative address book is certainly the most challenging part. You are an independent sub-contractor in a highly competitive field trying to create differentiation between you and the next 50 companies who all claim to be able to do something within 5-10% of what you also claim you can do. That is the hardest part, definitely.

Outside of working, what do you do for fun?

I have a fantastic family, two children, dogs and we live in the countryside and do all of the countryside stuff. My daughter who is 9 years old is about to take grade one in the trumpet and the piano, small steps. She started coveting all of the drum kits and guitars in the studio! I still go to music festivals, love discovering new music, and despite the fact that I do it as work I have not grown to dislike music at all! I am as interested today in the next fantastic thing I hear in BBC 6 music than ever I was when I was 15 and listening to Nick Drake and The Cure, sending away for a 7-inch from Record Collector. I own a lot of records, thousands and thousands...

If a pupil had a strong interest in music, what would be your advice for them turning their interest into a career?

So for people who want to write, compose, be in a band, or be a singer/songwriter there is only one silver bullet and it is writing a great song. Whether you're a song writer for Adele or a guy round the corner in a bedroom with a guitar, the only thing that can unlock genuine opportunity is by writing a fantastic song. That sounds like a really easy thing to do, it really is not! But creatively that is the only silver bullet.

And then for those who want to work in the formal industry i.e. labels, publishers, managers so on and so



forth that industry has always been London centric but there are lots of opportunities either through people like Creative Scotland, Xpo North, and there is an organisation in Edinburgh called Wide Days that do music conferences and networking opportunities. There are lots of places that you can reach out to get a sense of what the regional industry is. I don't need to move my studio to London for it to work! For people in Edinburgh interested in the industry there is a lot of local support and interest in micro record labels. As I say there are Wide Days to take benefit from and that is what I would do. Go down, meet some people, get some business cards, and once you have written a gold smash song go and knock on their virtual doors!

If someone did write a brilliant song, how would you recommend that they get it out there?

Well before putting anything in to the public domain you have to do two things. Firstly, play it to your most objective inner circle. Secondly, you have to benchmark it against the top tier of the music that you love and ask yourself "Is it any good?". If it meets both of those

requirements and if it is a song that you want to perform yourself then social media would be a smart way of doing it, going to the music discovery portals like BBC New Talent introducing and so forth, and upload it there. There is definitely a situation whereby too many people get over excited too early on in their creative journeys and want to share content before they have actually written off early stuff and started writing really fantastic material. I am a massive believer in write loads, discard loads and only put in to the public domain something that you feel is within 5% of whatever it is Bjork, Ian Curtis or Ennio Morricone or whoever.

Are you still in touch with any of your School friends at all?

To be completely honest I am not someone who is on social media myself so I am somewhat below the radar. But I did meet up with loads of my class mates at our 20 year reunion, and I look forward to another reunion in the future so we'll have to see who comes out of the woodwork for that!

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From the Archives

Excerpt from *The Merchistonian*, October 1986

Form 4 - Schiehallion Camp

We arrived at Glengoulandie in a van whose suspension had made David Aird sick on the way up.

We scrambled through a forest of ferns which was situated on a slope, and were presented with the problem of getting over an electric fence without having ourselves fried. Ross Campbell was the only one to touch it and he thought that Brian Boucher had hit him until he realised it was the fence.

By now Issam Malas had lost Mr West's football in the stream and was trying to retrieve it. When he finally succeeded we plodded onwards for an uneventful mile and eventually pitched camp.

Anthony Macnaghten and I didn't like the campsite, so we set about and chose our own, which was about a hundred metres away from everyone especially Mr Clark. When we had lit a campfire and had some food we all went for a swim in a fairly large and deep pool in the river.

Mr Clark declined the offer of a swim—I think he knew we were going to get him. Guy Workman sat on the bank taking photos, forcing us to pose in freezing cold water. Andrew Milne threw my boots in the water. Fortunately they floated and were retrieved, or he would have joined them. We all returned to the camp to dry off and reclathe ourselves.

There were then a few expeditions up the top of the hill, which had some nice overhangs and vertical climbing. Eventually we all went to bed, but the minute Mr Clark was in his tent everyone was out again, except for Anthony and I. We stayed in the tent, and ate and talked until about half past one, and then went to sleep.

We were woken up at about six o'clock

by some of our 'friends', who were none too kindly received. We had breakfast which consisted of chocolate éclairs and other such foodstuffs, as Mr Clark had eaten the rest of our food. After breakfast we packed up the tents and piled the rucksacks at the edge of the river.

We all went to do some climbing and see the waterfall upstream. We headed up the river in dribs and drabs of people and did some climbing along the way. I got out in front and forced my way to the top of the waterfall, below which was an extremely large and deep pool. I then headed back downstream, I didn't get past the pool but sunk at the edge, and nearly broke my ankle when a rock hit it. I eventually found the party and led them the way I had come up to the falls. After a splashing session we headed back to camp. Guy Workman was still there and had not been attacked by the robber sheep. He was still in possession of his camera.

David Aird, Andrew Milne and I hoisted on rucksacks and hatted back to the van, leaving the rest behind. We braced ourselves in case of attack from the herd of deer, Highland cows, and goats which were occupying the field we were traversing. We made it to the electric fence and squeezed through a gap we found, and put our gear in the van. The next three to arrive were Ross Campbell, Guy Workman and Andrew' Dickson. We persuaded them that the safest way to cross was to pile up their rucksacks and step across the fence. They believed us. Eventually everyone else arrived and we set off for home, only stopping to visit Pitlochry and to let Mr Clark recover from motorway madness.

Neill Gibson (Form 4)



Weaving a rich tapestry

After accepting a sales position from a fellow Merchistonian, John Glen (83-90) is now managing director of Bute Fabrics Ltd and rubbing shoulders with royalty...

Words from John Glen from an interview with Louise Pert and photographs from John Glen.

John has worked in the Scottish textile industry for over 20 years. He initially accepted a role in the industry from Ross Dempster (83-90) as sales rep. In November 2015 John became a managing director at the weaving company Bute Fabrics Ltd.

When you started off as a sales rep did you know then you wanted to work your way up in the textile industry?

No, I had been self-employed for a number years and had the opportunity of a salaried job so took it. I had no idea I would end up where I am now - it was by chance and not by design. I was taken into the business by fellow Merchistonian Ross Dempster, it was good fun; we had known each other since Pringle and that helped as we are great mates. Growing the sales was my main responsibility, and I got excited by the business development side of things.

How do you think Merchiston set you up for your career path?

The School gave me confidence, communication skills,

the ability to manage people so as to get best out of them, and to understand how to keep my mouth closed and listen! So I listened and interpreted what my customers told me. It's important to get customers to talk to you and understand what opportunities can be gained from what they have told you. Merchiston gave me the confidence to do that. Many sales reps do all the talking and miss out. I was also provided with basic business finance and strategy skills, the ability to prepare properly and do the groundwork for meetings.

Now that you're a managing director, what advice would you give your younger self?

Looking back, it would be to prioritise better and to focus more on understanding the business and the customers. It's important to keep the wheels turning but to also have an understanding of where the business is going long-term. This knowledge should drive you in your everyday work. I would also question a bit more, about my role, my skills in that area, and look 'outside the box'. It's also important to realise that I now have

working relationships with friends as I keep a personal element with my customers. Many a times I have gone back to old contacts when changing jobs, to stay aware of future opportunities.

What has surprised you most about working on the island?

There's an island mentality; a strong culture and way of doing things. The economy is not great, employment is not great, and staff need a lot of motivation. So I am tasked to increase business and to increase numbers in the business. I want to leave a legacy of employment opportunities for future generations.

Does your job see you doing much travelling and what benefit does this bring?

I travel to NYC, Dallas and LA – they are my main focuses for the USA. Then there's Moscow, Abu Dhabi, Stockholm, Amsterdam. 60% of our turnover is exported so I have to be in front of the market as personal relationships are hugely important. I recently had an order from a fellow Merchistonian from Amsterdam, Charlie MacGregor (88-91) for his company, The Student Hotel, and that was fabric for upholstery and curtaining for the new hotel in London. Ross Dempster uses a lot of fabric too for his furniture company, Charlotte James Furniture Ltd.

What motivates and inspires you and how do you entwine this into the company?

I love business development and am passionate about teamwork and an individual's development. I get excited about educating my staff and improving their prospects. I also love product development and working in collaboration with other sectors. Day-to-day the challenges are working as a company that isn't overly well financed and to use the resources we have, this is both challenging and rewarding. Team ethos too, if we don't have a good team we don't have anything and I'm very fortunate to have a great team at Bute Fabrics.

Can you tell us why Prince Charles visited Bute Fabrics?

Having met Prince Charles, The Duke of Rothesay, on a number of occasions, I invited him to the mill in Rothesay to highlight the focus on youth development and thank the staff at Bute Fabrics for their dedication to the business.

Prince Charles' visit marked a celebration of the company's efforts in creating a unique apprenticeship scheme, for which they have won several awards, and to introduce the launch of the Rothesay Atelier with the aim of developing the skills of individuals within the local community and students from the local schools in the area of textiles and manufacturing. ▶



What would you still like to do both in personal life and working life?

Next summer I would like to do the Iron Man and then in four years, when my son is older I'd like to take him on the Lions tour to South Africa. At Bute Fabrics I would like to work with more global brands and double turnover in the next three years. By the time I'm 50 I would like a four-day working week so I can enjoy a day of golf.

What do you do for fun?

Golf, rugby (until I retired this year), I coach my son's U16 team and I play quite a bit of squash.

Are you still in touch with anyone from Merchiston? Who are they and what are they up to?

I had dinner with them recently in Edinburgh; Dougie Macrae (84-90) organised it and there were 27 of us. We watched the Scotland vs Argentina game and then had dinner at Rick's Bar. Ross Dempster and a whole crowd of guys were there and travelled from all over, including Dubai, Cornwall, Devon, Belfast, Aberdeen and

Edinburgh. I will see them again soon as Robbie Mitchell (85-90) is organising an event for 2017 at Wasps Arena.

History of Bute Fabrics:

- Bute Fabrics is a contemporary textile manufacturer of wool-rich fabrics, based on the Isle of Bute.
- The company and the island share a unique family history as the 5th Marquess of Bute set up the company in 1947 to provide employment for returning servicemen and servicewomen from WWII. The Bute family are committed to the development of the island as a whole and to supporting the team at Bute Fabrics in realising the full potential of the company and securing its future as a pioneer of the textiles industry.
- The landscape, colours and textures of the island provide rich inspiration for the in-house design team, and BF pride themselves on the colour palettes resulting from their surroundings.

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- No.3 UK Tennis School (LTA, 2016)
- 65 Merchistonians capped at full international level. Representation in all of the 2015/16 Scottish National Rugby Teams
- In 2015/16, there were 87 different teams, of all abilities, playing competitive fixtures across 16 sports: a total of 590 fixtures
- 89% of all pupils, from 7-18, represented the School in sport in 2015/16
- New floodlit 2G Astro turf-opened September 2016

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A trip down memory lane

Bad times and good times at Merchiston

Sidney M Donald (56-60)



My days at Merchiston were pretty happy although there was all the confusion of growing up and working out what kind of person I was. Merchiston then, was almost excessively dedicated to rugby. I was no more than a journey-man prop forward, and although I made the under 15 ½ team, my enthusiasm for the game was at best, moderate. I recall a game on the third and fourth pitch when I was about 16, with iconic former-coach Gilbert Mair watching, no doubt talent-spotting for next year's XV. The opposition dropped out and I was at the receiving end. I knew what I was supposed to do was catch the ball cleanly and punt it into touch, failing which I should catch, fall on the ball heroically and await a loose scrum to form around my prone body. I clearly did not fancy heroics and instead I hoofed the ball on the half-volley for a scruffy touch. Gilbert Mair was not amused. He strode on to the pitch, gathered the players around him, and fixed me with a basilisk stare. He commented "That is the most pathetic piece of rugby I have ever seen in all my life!". I was certainly very mortified and would have welcomed a handy chasm to open up before me, but in my casual way, I was not galvanised into improving my game and never made the XV. Incidentally, behind his stern exterior, Gilbert was a kind and gifted schoolmaster.

Then there was my stutter. I had a pronounced stutter from the age of six to 16 and was excused reading the lesson in assembly or reciting in the classroom. It did not much worry me but it probably embarrassed my friends. Gradually the stutter disappeared. I always enjoyed attending the regular Literary and Debating Society meeting presided over by Alan Bush. With his kind encouragement I at last participated in debates. On one occasion the motion was "it is better to be a satisfied pig than a dissatisfied Socrates?". I decided to argue for a plague on both houses and proposed with due eloquence that we should instead abstain. To the dismay of the contending parties, the abstainers were in a healthy majority. I had triumphed – a tiny triumph maybe, but I was thrilled. I subsequently debated regularly, edited *The Spirit*, sometimes controversially, and read the lessons at various services. These were things I liked to do, and when in my final report Alan Bush generously stated "he was always influential", I was delighted and have ever since tried to be influential.

Memories of Merchiston

Jain Wright (60-65)



Life at Merchiston in 1960 started with the car journey from Glasgow along the three-lane A8, which was a challenge in itself! Having been delivered by my parents, I spent much of my first night in tears, but was fine from the next morning on. Next door bed-mates in the dorm were Mike Smart (60-65), and Herbert Goodenough (60-65) (with whom I have still been in touch, and who created my long-lasting nickname "Wilbur"). An early event was the choir voice test, which I failed and felt badly about; you didn't want to fail anything. However, this was a blessing as I was no longer expected to attend choir practice!

In first year most boys were required to be fags, whether choir, or bin, or for prefects. The bad news for IXV team's fags was the need to clean rugby kit for each match, which included washing bootlaces with soap, then winding them round hot pipes to dry. The payback was the end of term fags' feast in the basement of Dante's Snuff Box - a veritable death trap!

My rugby career started on the 11/12th pitch and ended in the IXV in my final year, when I was capped in a successful team. Bill Donaldson still has a photo of a try I scored in the Royal High match that season! Team sheets for Saturday matches were eagerly awaited when pinned up outside the dining room, and the IXV sheets were prepared in coloured copperplate by my brother Colin (62-68). In my second year, the Evans swimming pool opened, with Gus Forsyth (58-63) the winner of the raffle to dive in first. There was a one metre springboard, which was great fun, but was later removed on Health & Safety instructions.

School houses were the centre of social activity. Dorms had 16 open beds, a Dorm Captain was appointed (to little effect) and at the end of term we moved up to the next house. You bagged a bed at the start of term, ideally next to your best friends ("Tosh" and "Slosh"). There was not supposed to be talking after lights out, with prefects often listening outside the door. A weekly bath night included water fights.

BP in Rogerson East was incredibly generous with his time in a wide variety of clubs, 7&9 films and the scouts: does anyone remember trying to cook an egg up a tree in the Dell with only a candle and an orange? Finally, memories of the sheep in the back field, the six hole golf course, the wild garlic in the Dell, and all the beautiful trees in the grounds that remain.





Photography Left an Impression

Walter G Benzie (57-61)

My memories of Merchiston are still very vivid, even after all these years; the smell of polish, the space around the buildings, a lifelong distain for petty rules, Mrs Mack and the biting wind. I first went to Merchiston in 1957 and left four years later with the briefest valedictory statement on record! During my time at School I enjoyed the sciences and for a hobby I joined the school photographic society. The darkroom was one of two rooms set aside for photography and many happy hours were spent there messing around with foul smelling chemicals and producing some very mediocre photographs; I still remember that a whiff of concentrated acetic acid worked wonders in clearing the sinuses.

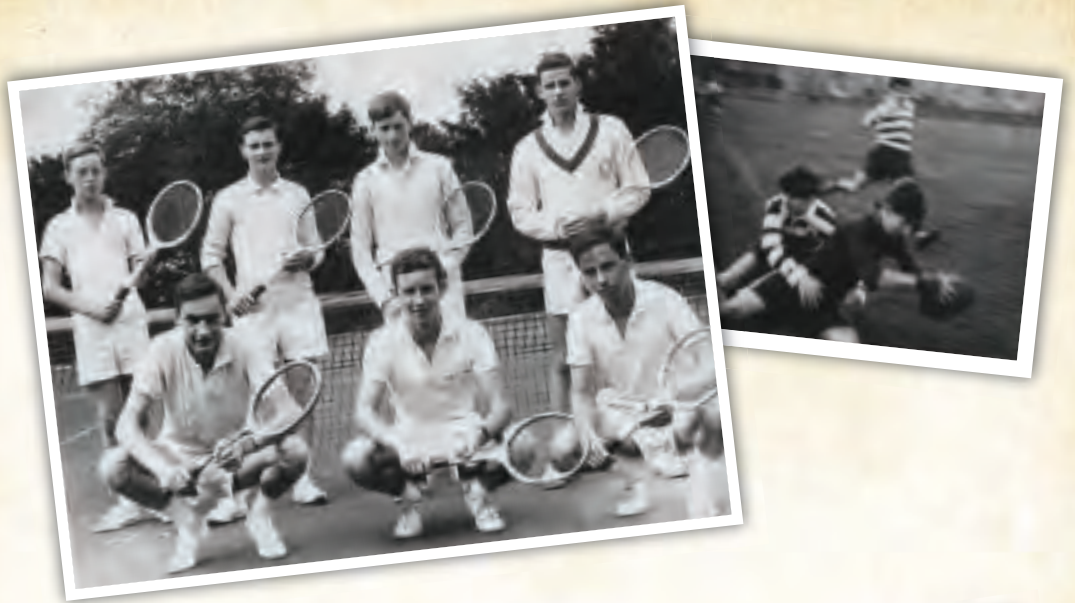
Photography has often been referred to as a black art and my fingers at that time attested to the veracity of this statement. However the first time an image appeared in the developing tray was a formative moment in my life and I look back to this era with a mixture of amusement and nostalgia. Despite my early interest in science, I chose to become a chartered accountant and, after qualifying, I spent many exciting years travelling the world. Later in life, having finally settled down with a family I joined my local photographic club and again experienced the pleasure of this unique combination of art and science. I progressed to becoming a photographic judge and joined the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) to expand my horizons (I am now the treasurer). We have over 11,000 members worldwide and I am having a wonderful time meeting a vast range of people I would otherwise never have had the opportunity to meet...and to think it all started in the corridors of Merchiston!

Open Range

Jan Rose (59-63)

As a pupil at Merchiston I couldn't stand cricket, so the school offered an alternative sport to people like me, namely "Open Range" shooting. When I think of the world today and look back to the summer terms at Merchiston where most afternoons my fellow shooters and I would rock up to the Armoury, draw out our .303 rifles with a few bandoliers of ammunition and then ride our bikes up to the Dreghorn range with rifle and ammunition slung over our shoulders. How peaceful and safe the world seemed then.





Time Well Spent

Bill Mitchell (60-63)

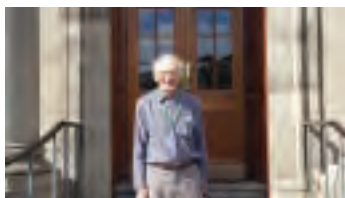


I have fond memories of participating in the John Melliush Memorial Mountain Meets of the 1980s and 1990s. These events usually took place in the autumn. An outing which is strong in my memory is traversing the Mamores ridge (across the glen from Ben Nevis). I had just bought a new pair of boots with the result that my feet suffered to a considerable extent! The irony of this incident was that two years previously, with my cousin and her husband I walked the Annapurna circuit in the Nepalese Himalayas, taking three weeks and covering some two hundred miles without any feet problems! Returning to matters of school, after Merchiston I studied horology at the Uhrmacherschule Solothurn (Watchmaker School), Switzerland in April 1964 and after four wonderful years there graduated in April 1968. I look back with fondness and gratitude to John Morrison-Cleator who supported me and taught me German, which was a great asset. Another strong memory I have was my desire to study music seriously and I couldn't have had a finer teacher of piano than Donald Sprinck.

Thank you for visiting!

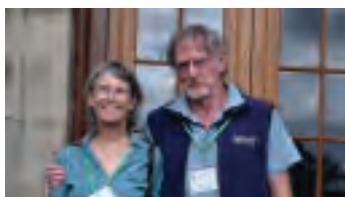
Many of you have popped by the School over the last year and it has been great to see you! If you are ever passing by and would like to arrange a visit please contact merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk.

John Bowie (47-51) visits us from Canada



John, originally from Dundee, moved to Canada in 1952 after his education at Merchiston. He enjoyed a stroll around the School grounds, was impressed with the headmaster paintings and perused some of the archived materials.

Guy Warren (57-60) visits us from the USA



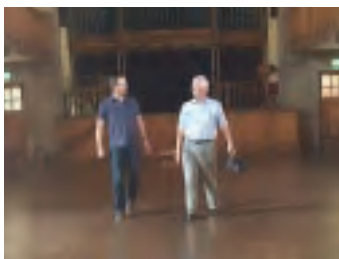
Guy and his partner Karen Whetstone met us for a tour of the School having not visited in eight years. Guy now lives in the town of Friday Harbour, Washington, USA.

Alastair Burnet (59-62) and Bill Mitchell (60-63)



It was a pleasure to welcome Alastair and Bill back to the School, both of whom were kind enough to share their memories. I enjoyed listening to their tales of mischief and the adventures they have embarked on since leaving. Alastair was returning to donate a double bass stool to the Music Department, which we all know will be well used!

Robin Hall (60-64)



Robin and his son James travelled from South Africa to enjoy The Open Golf Championships in St Andrews.

Sam Cox-George (71-74)



Sam retraced old footsteps with his wife and daughter. This was his first time back in Scotland since leaving in 1974.

Boon (KB) Low (76-77)



Boon returned to Merchiston with his wife, sister and daughter. Now living in Malaysia Boon has not been back to school since 1996 but while in the UK for his niece's wedding took the opportunity to pop by. Boon's daughter, Chloe, was very impressed with Merchiston, it is about eight times the size of her school in Malaysia.

Dean Atkins (78-81)



Dean visited us from his home in Yorkshire; it was time for his son Jevin and daughter Anouska to see the School after their Dad's cheeky tales.

Nicholas Allen (82-84)

Nick visited Merchiston as part of his teaching development. This was Nick's first time back since 1984.

Big Activity Weekend



This year three Merchistonians brought their sons along to the 'Big Activity Weekend' Neil Armstrong (81-86), Colin Pratt (82-88) and Tom Harvey (80-85).

Greg McCulloch (82-87)



It was great to see Greg back at the School with his family. Greg moved to Canada in 1988 and has enjoyed living there since whilst working in logistics. It is fair to say they were all very impressed despite the sudden downpour

Malcolm McNeill (89-94)



Malcolm returned to talk about his newest novel, "The Beginning Woods".

Jason Cheng (00-07)



Having studied Chemistry at Loughborough University Jason returned to Hong Kong and now works as a Product Co-ordinator for CPL Aromas. Whilst in Edinburgh Jason also took time to catch up with his old friend Max Robson (03-07) whom he has not seen since leaving Merchiston nine years ago.

Michael Nicol (04-11)



The School welcomed back Michael who kindly volunteered to talk to Merchiston and Firhill High School's fifth and sixth form pupils about his career and experiences in Chiropractic Medicine.

Sam Hidalgo Clyne (06-11) and Magnus Bradbury (11-13)



Sam and Magnus made up a team of four who competed at The Games in June, and the relays provided a fitting climax to the day. Unfortunately, they were beaten in the relay race despite being strongly fancied as winners by some in the crowd.



Snippets

.....
News updates from Merchistonians
across the world and across the decades.
.....



Michael Paton (34-38)

On Remembrance Day, School Chaplain, Nick Blair, spoke to Michael who might just be one of the last remaining Merchistonian WWII veterans. Michael passes on his best wishes to the School.

Ewan MacDonald (54-60)

Ewan and his family all had a great time when they visited his twin brothers Neal (57-62) and Peter (57-62) in Australia in August. Neal lives in Perth and is retired from Medicine and has three grandchildren. Peter lives in Manly, a Sydney suburb and has 10 grandchildren. Peter is still practising as a doctor, primarily doing 30 day 'locums' in remote aboriginal areas three or four times a year. The rest of the time he runs "Australian Doctors International".

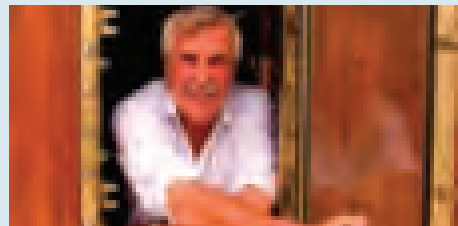
Ronnie Auld (58-63)

Ronnie has recently attended the 2016 RHS "Britain in Bloom" competition to represent his village, Dalston, who were awarded a Silver Gilt for their first attempt. Ronnie spends a lot of time travelling, recently returning

from a walking trip in Ireland and a trip to the US. While enjoying visiting new places, Ronnie likes to document his trips. You can read more about Ronnie's adventures on his travel blog at RonnieAuld.com.

Andy Thoms (59-63)

Any fans of the BBC series "Coast" may have seen Andy making a debut. Andy owns Majestic Lines, offering Scottish cruises around the idyllic coastlines and islands of Argyll and the Hebrides. Andy was the perfect feature for the series which was seeking out local charismatic characters.



David Clements (57-62)

David continues to spend as much time as possible sailing and would like to hear from other Merchistonians who would be interested in forming an informal sailing section of the Merchistonian Club, exchanging information about sailing plans and hopefully meeting up on the water from time to time. When not sailing, he is heavily involved in community projects, being Chairman of the community-owned village shop in Somerset and running a large conservation project on the local church.



Ian Graham (60-65)

Ian is busy in his retirement and shares his update with us, "I still compete in athletics for Bournemouth Athletic Club, of which I am currently President. The attached photograph shows me (486) and some team-mates after a recent 10-mile road race in Dorset. I'm also a UKA qualified timekeeper (not as easy as it sounds!) so I spend many summer weekends timekeeping at athletics track and field fixtures in the Dorset/Hampshire area. I've also, at long last, achieved one of my vague retirement plans of taking piano lessons. I played the piano (and the organ) when I was at Merchiston. I didn't play the piano very well then, and I don't play it very well now, but I enjoy it!"

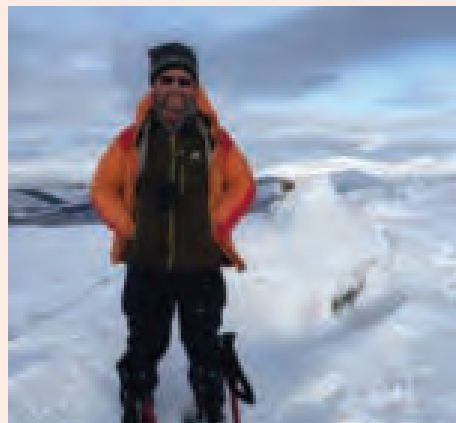


Ian Dun (63-68)

Ian has a new project in the mines of South Africa, "I am now in Johannesburg on a nine month contract to help with the engineering of a new tin mine and processing plant in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We left our home base in Brazil while the Olympics were being staged but such a challenging project in the DRC I can't miss."

Alan Black (67-72)

Having already completed all the Munros and Corbetts, Alan has now climbed all the Donalds (140 hill tops), which are all the Lowland hills in Scotland over 2000 ft. Alan's next aim is to climb all 224 Grahams which are Scottish hills over 2000 ft and under 2500 ft.



Nick Bevens (76-80)

Nick has moved to Hong Kong to join South China Morning Post as their business news editor.

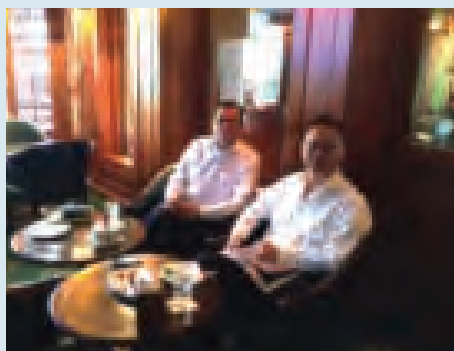
Rt Rev Dr John Armes (69-74)

Joined the School on Sunday 24 April at the Commemoration Service.



Pakorn Paul Sukhum (76-80) and Pongsakorn Thiengham (77-80)

Having attended School together and worked in industry and financial services for over 30 years in Thailand and the Asia-Pacific Region, Paul and Pongsakorn have set up Castle Partners Co. Ltd, a Business Advisory Company specialising in mergers and acquisitions both for Thai and International Companies investing in Thailand and the region. If you are visiting Thailand the gents can be contacted on pakorn.sukhum@gmail.com or pongsakornntt@gmail.com



Niall McDiarmid (79-85)

Niall has been photographing the people of Britain for five years now, though with the recent Brexit vote his work seems to have been given an extra edge. The work is far from political, but it is a real snapshot of a nation, with beautiful aesthetics thrown in.

Neil Speed (76-81)

In July Neil, his wife Sue and some friends took part in the week-long “Oyster Regatta” organised by the Royal Southern Yacht Club in their Oyster 45 “YoHoHo” on the Solent. After five days of racing “YoHoHo” came first, winning by 12 seconds! A great celebration was had at the prizegiving dinner at the Royal Yacht Squadron in Cowes.



Michael Gardner (76-81)

Michael has been reunited with the watch that he lost at School in 1978. Metal detector in hand, Rev Nick Blair discovered the treasure in the School grounds and, thanks to Michael’s etching on the back of the watch, we were able to return it to its rightful owner.

Craig Street (83-90)

After leaving School, Craig joined “Princess Cruises” as a deck cadet and, after serving three years as an apprentice, qualified as 3rd Officer in 1993. Since then he has advanced through the ranks. Captain Craig Street has commanded a variety of Princess vessels, including Caribbean Princess, Sea Princess and the former Royal Princess. In addition, he has previously had the opportunity to bring three Princess cruise ships into service from the same shipyard in Italy; namely the Caribbean Princess, Sea Princess & Dawn Princess.

Lt Col Stuart Irvine RAMC (85-89)

“Carrying on from last year’s cycling exploits, this year I write having just completed the ‘Ride London 100 Sportive’ with - amongst 27,000 others - fellow Merchistonian Seumas Grey (82-89), although our cycling paths did not cross on the day! A fantastic day and I managed to raise £1078 for the Anthony Nolan Blood Cancer Charity.”

“The Army and the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) have promoted me to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and I am now working at Headquarters in Andover managing the Army’s Medical Capability Development – a very welcome promotion!”



Shane Corstorphine (89-97)

“I’ve recently relocated to Key Biscayne in Miami with my wife Katy and kids Georgie (8) and Charlie (6). I’m still with Skyscanner but have come over here to head up the Americas operation having previously been CFO for four years. We’re all really excited about the adventure ahead.”



Simon Carpenter (97-03)

After working in property for almost six years Simon finally realised that the office world was not for him. Simon has landed his dream job and is now working as an arborist (tree surgeon) for TD Tree and Land Services Ltd.

Simon Thomas (87-92)

Simon continues to enjoy life in Los Angeles, working in PR and events; living and working in London seems like a distant memory. When not working, Simon enjoys travelling within the States as well as back to the UK twice a year to see friends and family.

Allan Dobson (88-93)

Allan is now the Regional Director for Workiva, a business software company based in Ames, Iowa.

Stuart Dickson (92-98)

Stuart has started his own business, Body Performance Therapy. For anyone recovering from an injury or looking to get a performance advantage, Stuart offers a wide range of services from one-off relaxation massages to tailored rehabilitation and treatment plans.

Jonathan Baird (00-06)

Current Captain of School, Luca, met his counterpart from 10 years ago when Jonathan returned for a tour following his 10 year School reunion.



Jonny Paterson (98-06)

“Spring of 2016 proved to be a milestone season for me, both professionally and personally, with the world premiere of my feature film HALFWAY at the 2016 Dallas International Film Festival and my marriage to Britney. I've been pursuing a career in the ultra-competitive film and entertainment industry since I moved to America in 2010 and, after a number of entry level job opportunities in 2011-13, I set up my own production company, JP International Productions. In 2014 I produced my first film, HALFWAY, which has in the past months played at a number of film festivals across America and won the award for Best Film at the Julien Dubuque International Film Festival. The film stars Quinton Aaron (THE BLIND SIDE) and we had an amazing time in Dallas.



Andrew Knox (99-06), Simon Gilmour (01-06), Pat Clarke (99-06) and Andrew Duff (99-06)

The group all travelled to California to be a part of Johnny Paterson's (98-06) wedding. Andrew and Simon were both best men for Jonny and Pat and Andrew were groomsmen.



Hamilton McMillan (04-10)

On 20 February Hamilton was part of the winning team that took the title of Scottish Curling Champions, beating the Olympic Team silver medallists led by David Murdoch.

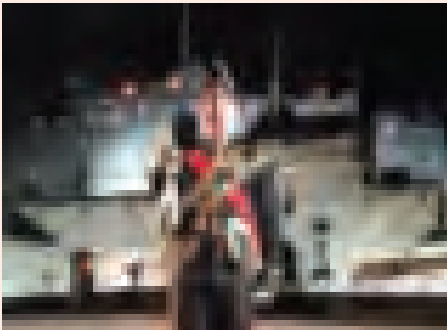


Duncan Nicholls (02-10)

Duncan graduated from Lancaster University with a 2:1 in Environmental Science in 2014 and went on to complete an MSc in Sustainable Water Management at Lancaster, graduating with Merit in 2015. After a three month internship with JBA Consulting, his first graduate position was with BWB Consulting in Birmingham where he worked for eight months. He then started a new job with RAB Consultants in their Durham office at the start of August. His work involves flood-risk assessment and hydraulic modelling for a variety of customers, including large agencies and individual landowners.

Richard Tidy (08-12)

The Edinburgh Tattoo saw Richard parading as a Drum Major with the Officer's Training Corps. We wish Richard the best of luck in his final year of a Civil Engineering Masters degree at Heriot Watt.



Andrew Law (09-13)

Andrew is currently in his third year at Durham University studying Economics and is on exchange at Sun Yat-Sen Business School in Guangzhou, China. Andrew is still keeping up rugby practice in China, with his team recently winning the bowl at the Cebu 10s tournament in the Philippines.

Magnus Bradbury (11-13)

Magnus made his Scottish debut against Argentina at Murrayfield in November. Magnus is the 65th Merchistonian to play rugby at International level.

Fergus Crawley (10-14)

Fergus won bronze in the GPC Powerlifting European Championships in Finland, and is now in his third year at Durham University reading Theology.



Andrew Stuart-Cox (10-16), James Fisher (05-11), James Johnstone (02-08), Daniel Moussa (00-02) (Hong Kong rep), and Graham Fisher (76-82).

The group were all brought together by the Hong Kong Sevens in April.



Calum Hill (11-13)

Well done to Calum who fired an 8-under 63 in the opening round of the Alister MacKenzie Invitational to equal the lowest score in Oregon State men's golf history.



Jamie C (12-14)

Congratulations to Jamie who has been selected by Lancashire County Cricket Club for this year's Academy.



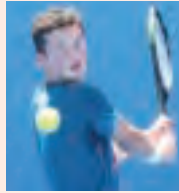
Alexander Ogilvy (10-15) and Dan Nutton (05-15)

Alexander and Dan both playing 1XV Colts for Easts (Eastern Suburbs) Rugby Club in Sydney. Looking rather warmer than Merchiston!



Ewan Moore (12-15)

Ewan competed in the Junior Australian Open 2016 Junior Championships at Melbourne Park. Hopefully a rising star of the future!



Do you have a story you would like to share? We love hearing about all sorts from expeditions to promotions, new ventures to adventures, memories to future plans- email the Club at merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk with your news and photos.

Book Reviews

The Young Gunner

David Hutchison

David Hutchison's *The Young Gunner* is not a novel, yet as the story of young Colin Hutchison, MCS 1905- 1911, the author's grandfather, unfolds, one is as much caught up in his story as in any of Sebastian Faulks' or Pat Barker's fictional WW1 characters. The author's meticulous research aided by extensive letters and

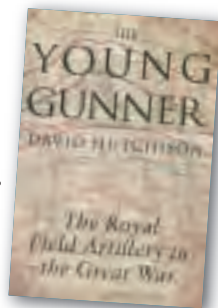
journals from his grandfather makes this a book for anyone from the military historian, to those who want to ponder what really went through the minds of the young men of that 'lost generation' of the First World War. The author allows young 2nd Lieutenant C.R.M. Hutchison to speak for himself through his letters and journals, so that we get a vivid picture of who he was...and are able to trace the development from a young, innocent,

talented Artillery officer, quite quickly to battle-hardened veteran and onward to war weary and possibly slightly lost acting colonel at the end of the War. For Colin Hutchison emerged at the age of 25 from four full years of war as a highly decorated (DSO and bar, MC and Bar plus mentioned in dispatches x4) officer, into a land not really fit for heroes, with little understanding of what those heroes had been through. In the pages of this book we gain at least some of this understanding. One very poignant passage tells of his simply walking into a barrage and sitting down waiting for a shell to fall on his head...desperately needing rest or a 'blighty'.

Because Colin served through the whole War, the journey his letters take us on reads like a list of all the major battles of WW1, from Mons to First Ypres, from Second Ypres to the Somme, from Passchendaele to the Spring Offensive of 1918 and finally to the Armistice. And herein lies the skill of the author, for he manages to weave his grandfather's personal story around a very well-constructed insight into the job of the Royal Artillery in WW1 as well as explaining the military strategies and plans of each battle. If you read it as a military historian there is much of great insight and interest, but if you read it as someone interested in people, via the extraordinary story of this remarkable young man, you will learn lots of military history too almost without realising. The style is clear, the footnotes and diagrams are informative and interesting, the content absorbing.

The author understandably says he regrets never knowing his Grandfather; I suspect after writing this labour of love he knows him better than he could have imagined, and in doing so has given us the privilege of knowing him too. There are some stories so important that they really cry out and need to be told. I thank David Hutchison for telling one of them.

'The Young Gunner' intertwines with the 'Letters from Flanders' feature in this magazine as Colin Hutchison is brothers with Donald Hutchison. The brothers are unique in Mercheston history in that they are the only two brothers on separate war memorials, WW1 and WW2.



The Arran Malt – An island whisky renaissance

Neil Wilson (68-70)

In April 2015 whisky writer and publisher Neil Wilson (68-70) was commissioned by Isle of Arran Distillers Ltd

to research and write a book on the company's history for the 21st anniversary of the establishment of Lochranza Distillery. His publishing company, NWP, also project managed the production of the book.



Despite being only 21 years old, Lochranza Distillery on the Isle of Arran is the latest in a long line of distilleries that once existed there. The island's illicit whisky, made in the 18th century, was considered so good that it was on a par with the best smuggled Glenlivet, and Skye traveller John MacCulloch recorded in 1824 that Arran Water, as it was called, was 'the burgundy of all the vintages'. The last legal distillery on Arran closed in 1837 and it was not until David Hutchison, a Glasgow architect whose family owned property on Arran, attended a dinner of the Arran Society of Glasgow in March 1991, that the idea to start a new distillery took seed. He approached his friend Harold Currie, a retired ex-Chivas Regal MD, and together they brought about the creation of Lochranza Distillery, which started production in June 1995.

But that's not the whole story, as the project was beset by NIMBY objectors, nesting eagles, licensing problems, SNH concerns regarding the impact on a National Scenic Area, European environmental regulations, and, once approved, a race to raise sufficient finance. Despite all that, the distillery was built and is now world-renowned for the quality of its spirit. Neil Wilson spent a year researching the company and its evolution. His entertaining insight tells the history of how the distillery was created and how it has evolved with full financial disclosure, which shows that without the support of two major shareholders, the whole business would have collapsed.

Now Arran is seen as the inspiration that has brought over 20 or so new distilleries of varying sizes into creation since 2000 across the length and breadth of Scotland. The story reveals how the Currie family's interests in the company were eventually subsumed by shareholder power, and control passed to the current owners who continue to invest heavily in the future. It is a fascinating story, illustrated with archive and contemporary illustrations, and includes interviews with many of the people who have been involved in the story from the start.



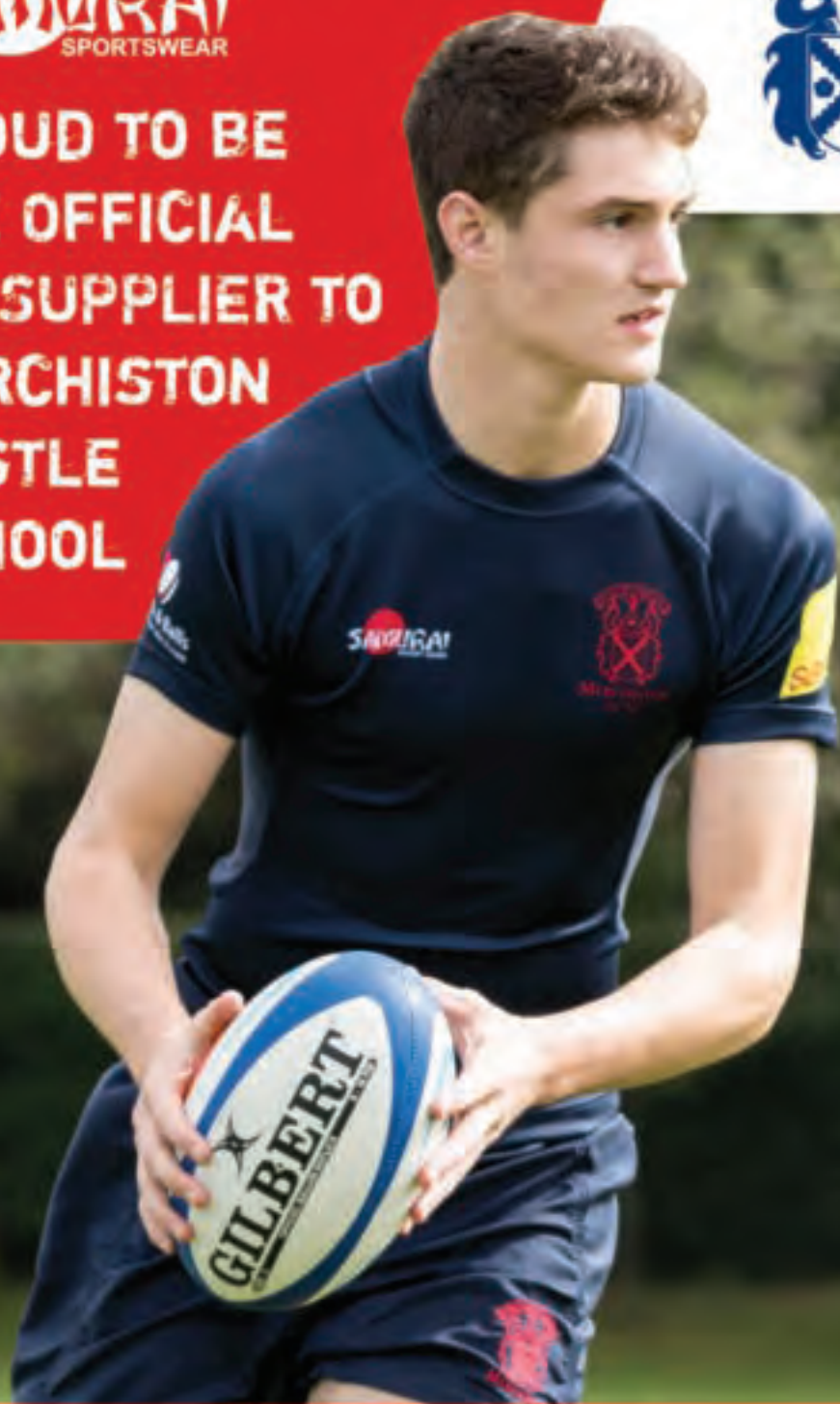
Merchistonian events and reunions

1981 reunion | 1996 reunion | 2006 reunion | 2016 Annual Dinner
Merchistonian fathers and sons | Headmaster's visits | London drinks
MRFC vs Accies Dinner.





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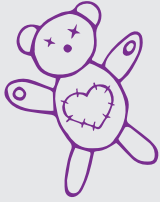


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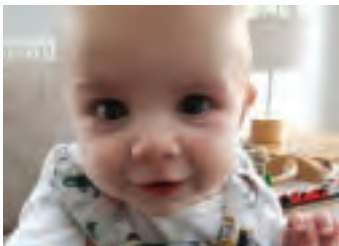


Births

James Rankin (85 – 92)

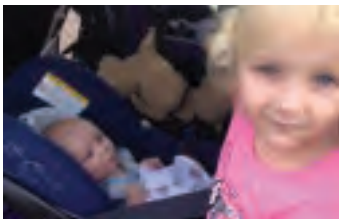
In September James and his wife Holly were blessed by the birth of their first child, a son named Alastair.

Ryan Stevenson (89-95)



Ryan Stevenson and his wife Melissa were delighted to welcome the birth of their third son Charlie Taylor Stevenson on 19 July. A little brother for Daniel and Jamie and a trio of nephews for his uncle, Gregor Stevenson (92-98)!

John McGregor (89-96)



John and his wife Jessica would like to announce the arrival of their second child, Aiden, who was born

on 8 March 2016. Aiden is pictured with his big sister Melody.

James Hardie (95-00)



In a classic Merchiston link-up James Hardie married Alexandra, who attended St George's, on 25 July 2014. James and Alexandra were proud to welcome Elena Elizabeth Ana Hardie in to the world on 23 January 2016. Elena was born in Dubai and the family have since returned to live in Edinburgh.

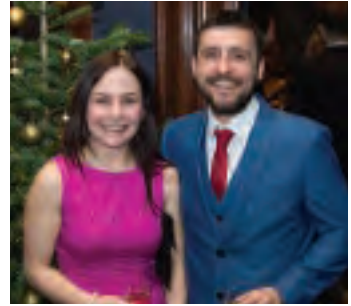
Danny Xiang (01-06)

Danny is proud to announce the birth of his son, Daniel. Danny is hoping that Daniel will follow in his footsteps and attend Merchiston.



Engagements

Jonathan Koo (91-99)



Jonathan is now engaged to his partner Laura Sturgeon after 9 years of 'testing the waters'. The pair plan to get married late 2017 or 2018.

Oli Green (99-07)



Oli became engaged to Elaine McKendry in New York in December 2016. They met while Elaine studied Podiatry at Queen Margaret University in 2010 and are looking forward to their wedding. No doubt a strong squad of Merchistonians will be attending.

Weddings

Andy Roger (92-97)

Andy became engaged to Natalia Maynard on 23 January 2016 in Rome, and got married on 30 September 2016 in Glasgow.

Michael Rolland (98-03)



Michael and Sarah were married in St Andrews on 1 October 2016.

Kenny Wan (99-05)



Kenny married Theresa in March this year in Hong Kong. After spending over half of his life in the UK he returned to his birthplace in 2013. Excited to start this next phase of his life, Kenny notes that “the only minor negative being that when a banker and a barrister have an argument, the one who triumphs is always the wife”.

Oliver Rodi (98-06)



Oli married Danielle in September at St Michael's Church, Basingstoke. “It was an epic day, and great to have a number of Merchi faces there to celebrate with us.” Oli met Danielle after being neighbours at St Aidan's College, Durham University.

Jonny Paterson (98-06)



Jonny got married in California in April to Britney Paterson and the wedding was well attended by the Merchistonian community with Andrew Knox (99-06) and Simon Gilmour (01-06) being his two best men, and Pat Clarke (99-06) and Andrew Duff (99-06) being groomsmen.

Duncan Nicholls (02-10)



Duncan married Robyn Pope on 9 July 2016 at St Peter's Church, Humshaugh, Northumberland. It was the very happiest of days! Duncan and Robyn met at Lancaster University.

Congratulations

John McLeod (70-77)

John McLeod, a music teacher at Merchiston from 1970 to 1974 and Director of Music between 1974 and 1985, has been awarded a CBE. John retired from teaching to pursue his career as a conductor and composer.

Chris Goodman (90-93)

Chris has completed his postgrad qualification; on 3 June Chris graduated from IESE Business School in Barcelona with a Global Executive MBA.

Iain Harding (91-97)

Iain and his wife Lesley have been approved as foster carers in the Permanence Service. They are awaiting a permanent placement but in the meantime are doing respite. Iain, Lesley and their daughter Georgia are all very happy and excited.

Desperately Seeking

Colin Briggs (59-63)

Colin is trying to trace one of his old friends and golfing partners, Alan Sym (51-55). Alan was originally from Troon but travelled all over Scotland for work and at some point went to live in America. If anyone is in contact with Alan please get in touch so we can reunite these old school chums!

As with all families, Merchiston does not want to lose touch with former pupils once they fly the School nest. Once a Merchistonian, always a Merchistonian! If you can help us re-connect with anyone on the list below, please get in touch. We are especially keen to find these lost members as their classes are reuniting in 2017.

Intake of 1960

Roger Cameron, Beresford Gubbins, Thomas Laing, Stuart Macdonald, Michael Rowan

Intake of 1961

Michael Davies, Alexander Grieve, Blair Sinton, Keith Skilleter, Robert Thomas

Class of 2007

John Hutton, Jonathan Lawlor, Ka Lee, Michael Swinburn, James Valpy, Philip Werner

Obituaries

John Cameron Carslaw (34-37)

John was born in Glasgow in 1920. He was the second youngest of a family of five. His father was a surgeon and his mother an artist. The family spent many summers sailing around the West Coast of Scotland where John developed his love of sailing.



After leaving Merchiston he joined the army, at the age of 19, and was posted to Gibraltar in 1941. John worked as a signalman in military intelligence for several years during the war. He was also a keen amateur radio transmitter for many years.

In addition to his love of sailing, he was fond of climbing and skiing. He met Joan in Helensburgh and married at the age of 35. They had a house built which John designed, where he lived until the age of 93. They did not have a family but they doted on their dachshund called Eiger whom they had for many years. They travelled extensively and John was very proud to have flown on Concorde.

John was a member of the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen. He worked for Singer for several years. He then went to work for the Ministry of Defence at Coulport working on submarines until he retired. Sadly Joan died when John was 73.

John was best known as a keen artist. His time working as an engineer, where he often had to work on intricate drawings sparked his interest in portraiture and sculpture. He honed his aesthetic skills in art classes at Glasgow School of Art. His work often featured at the annual art exhibition in Helensburgh where he won many prizes. He was made Honorary President of the Helensburgh and District Art Club in 1994. Latterly he took an interest in writing poetry and also published some books of his artwork. He spent the last 18 months of his life at Fidra Nursing Home in North Berwick where he was centre of attraction.

Words by niece Judy Ross

William (Neill) McNeill Carslaw (36-38)

Neill was born in Glasgow in 1922 and passed away in December 2015. He was the youngest of a family of five.

His father was a surgeon and his mother an artist. When his father retired, he bought a house in Rhu and a clinker built boat called Rowan.

He joined the HMS Conway training ship for Merchant Navy cadets after boarding at Merchiston. Thereafter he was taken on as a cadet on the Patrick Henderson's Shipping Company. He joined his first ship the SS Kindat which sailed for Rangoon around the Cape.

The next ship he sailed on, at age 20, was HMS Daldorch, which was part of Operation FB on the Arctic Convoy from September – December 1942. After setting sail from Hvalfjord on 3 November, word was received that ships ahead were being attacked. 27 hours after setting sail, they turned round and headed back to Hvalfjord at full speed. Donald Smith was another cadet on SS Daldorch. In November 2014, Neill and Donald Smith were awarded the Ushakov Medal by the Russian Federation. They reunited after 72 years!

Thereafter he joined various shipping companies, including Fyffes Group Limited – sailing worldwide. He married Audrey in 1950 and had five children and lived in Helensburgh for most of his life.

When he retired in 1983, not one for being idle, he sailed with friends on the west coast of Scotland, built two dinghies and at the age of 78 crewed with two others in a 31' boat across the Atlantic from the Canaries to Antigua. At the age of 91 he was still riding a bike!

Decorations - Arctic Star, Africa Star, Atlantic Star, Italy Star, Burma Star, 1939 – 1945 Star, The Ushakov Medal and Commemorative Medal marking 70th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War

Words by daughter, Judy Ross.



John Kirk (35-40)

John was the third child and second son of Dr Henry Bruce Kirk and Catherine Logan of Gullane, East Lothian.

He was educated at Warriston School, Moffat and Merchiston. He studied



medicine at Edinburgh University, and played rugby for Scottish Universities. On leaving university he joined Edinburgh Academicals Wanderers, at that time a combined team, which contributed four forwards to the Scotland team in the Victory Internationals which were held in season 1945 - 46 before the resumption of "full" internationals in the following season. Two of the others were I.C. Henderson, who had played for Scotland before the war, and the renowned W.I.D. Elliot. John played in the famous victory by 11-6 over the New Zealand Army Touring team, the "Kiwis"; Scotland were the only one of the home countries to beat them, something which should be remembered when the statistic is recalled that Scotland have never recorded a win against the All Blacks. At the time of the victory John was working hard as a junior doctor in the Deaconess Hospital in the Pleasance, and part of his self-imposed training schedule was to run round Arthur's Seat in the dark.

On conclusion of his military service at Aldershot, during which he played for the Aldershot services team which qualified for the Middlesex Sevens and the Army, John joined his father and latterly also his brother-in-law in general practice in East Lothian. In 1957 he emigrated with his wife and two young children to Adelaide in Australia where after three years in general practice he undertook training in dermatology in Sydney; he then set up a private practice from which he did not retire until 2000.

John was married twice: to Mary whom he met in the army and who died as a result of an accident in 1988, and then in 1996 to Anne by whom he is survived. He died peacefully in a nursing home aged 94 and will be missed by her, by his beloved daughter Jennifer who lives in Adelaide, by his son Henry who returned to Britain and is a school chaplain in Croydon, and also by his younger brother in Dumfries.

Words by brother, Reverend WL Kirk (44-49).

George Neilson Donaldson CBE (40-44)

Born 2 April 1926 in Lundin Links. Died 29 September in Upper Largo, aged 90.

George was a leading figure in the Scottish timber trade and played a key role in building one of Scotland's most successful family companies, James Donaldson and Sons, a timber merchant. Like his father (and sons and grandsons) he was educated at Merchiston where he developed a keen



interest in cricket and made numerous friendships which were to endure for 70 years.

He left in 1944 for Mons Officer Cadet School at Aldershot, and was commissioned into the Black Watch early in 1945. His unit was sent to the Far East, but he broke a leg in training. While recuperating he was introduced to the distinctly unmilitary recreation of fine needlework. This hobby absorbed his attention for much of his life, and his intricate tapestries are now collectors' items. When fit for duty he was sent to Egypt to fight malarial mosquitoes. His mission was to eradicate them. After demobilisation in 1948 he was sent to learn the family trade, in the forests of Scandinavia.

In 1969 he became managing director and then chairman, only to be faced by the biggest fire in the history of the county. Virtually nothing was left. The stock was destroyed, the offices reduced to ash. The company could easily have collapsed but his staff, customers and suppliers rallied round and supported him. The disaster was turned into an opportunity to modernise and a brand new sawmill was soon in operation.

George was a devout man – an elder of the kirk for almost thirty years. Despite being one of Scotland's most successful businessmen he took a salary equivalent to only three times that of his labourers. He was surprised when his efforts were recognised particularly in 2000 when he was summoned to Buckingham Palace to be invested as a CBE by the Queen.

In 1953 he married Fiona Todd, a childhood playmate whom he had known virtually from birth. Together they created an exquisite garden at their home in Upper Largo. They enjoyed a quiet and very peaceful life. Her death in 2009 was a huge blow but one he met with characteristic courage and determination. They had two sons. His eldest, Neil, succeeded him in the business and is current chairman. There are four grandchildren, two of whom now serve on the board of James Donaldson and Sons – the sixth generation to do so. There are six great-grandchildren.

Contributed by his son, Neil Donaldson (68-73).

Alexander (Alex) Lyle (44-48)

On leaving school Alexander did his National Service in the Royal Navy and was commissioned. He then served in his father's dry cleaning business which was based in the north east of England. This was in due course sold, leaving Alexander free to travel widely, often to New Zealand from where his mother who had died at his birth had come. Brought up by his father and his sister, the trio lived together in or near Newcastle. When his

father died, Alex and his aunt lived for a time at Crossmichael in Dumfries and Galloway. Left on his own, Alex moved to Southsea, Portsmouth, making this a base for his foreign travels and as a place to entertain his many friends. Here he died peacefully shortly after his 84th birthday.



Written by friend and school contemporary Reverend WL Kirk (44-49).

Photograph: A Lyle (Back Row – second from right) with classmates in 1945

John (Douglas) Arnold Henshaw (42-49)

When Douglas Henshaw came to Merchiston he soon showed his talents at fencing with both foil and the epee. He won the Drummond Cup and captained the School fencing team. He was a Junior Prefect and was chosen to play for the IXV on occasion but he was not a regular member of the team. On leaving School he joined the Royal Air Force for his two-year National Service which was compulsory, and became recognised as a pilot of exceptional ability. At the passing out parade Douglas was selected to perform the solo aerobatic display before all the proud parents. His performance drew plaudits from the senior instructors who were present, and the Squadron Commanding Officer pleaded with him to make the RAF his career, even trying to get his father, a First World War fighter pilot to help. But Douglas wanted to be a surgeon and so he was accepted by Edinburgh University, which he entered in September 1951. He continued with his fencing, winning the Scottish University Epee Championship in 1954 and the Foil Championship in 1955. Awarded his University Blue he was a member of the Scottish fencing team in 1952-54 and then again in 1956. All this time he continued flying with 603 Squadron and completed his pre-registration year as a house surgeon/physician at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

During his student days Douglas continued to fly with 603 Squadron in Edinburgh, and when the Queen presented new Colours to the Squadron Douglas was given the honour of being the Standard bearer and receiving the new flag from Her Majesty. He graduated



MB ChB in 1957. He accepted surgical training posts in Edinburgh, at the Royal Infirmary and at The Deaconess Hospital, passing the Primary and Secondary surgical examinations, eventually being elected to the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in 1960.

Douglas found it difficult to watch, or assist surgeons less skilled than he was. The toll incurred by his wife and family was hard to accept and slowly he came to realize that perhaps a move away was required. The family moved to Nova Scotia where Douglas was freed from hospital politics and the politicking that was part of the academic, teaching milieu and was not for him. A move to Nova Scotia gave him his own career as a surgeon.

Sadly, his last few years saw a substantial running down of his health with consequent pressures on his Canadian wife whom he married after a divorce from his first wife. He thoroughly enjoyed his surgery and the political contacts that he now was able to create. However, his last few years were all downhill as he became progressively less able to move and debilitated by Parkinson's Disease. He died on 6 September 2016.

Words by Dr R A Burt (49-55).

John (Hamilton) Howatt (45-49)

Hamilton (Bunny) died on 26 August 2016, aged 85.

John (Duncan) Brack (46-50)

Duncan passed away peacefully in hospital on 4 January 2016, aged 83, with his devoted family by his side.

Duncan enjoyed his years at Merchiston and spoke fondly of his time there. He was honoured with the role of Prefect at the school in 1949 and 1950. Duncan played rugby for the IXV between 1948 and 1950 and was a lifelong rugby fan, later playing for Northern RUFC in his home town.

Duncan loved sport and was a competitive player. He played squash for many years. At school, he was the captain of the Fives Team in 1949 and 1950.

He is survived by his wife Mary, his three sons John, Timothy and Andrew and his seven grandchildren.

Contributed by his son, Tim Brack.



George Cameron Summers (46-51)

George passed away peacefully in St Columba's Hospice, Edinburgh on 17 August 2016 after a long and brave

battle with cancer.

He enjoyed his time at Merchiston, where he won the Burgess Cup in shooting for three consecutive years. He was on the Merchiston team which won the Brock Shield against Scottish Schools. After Merchiston he served two years National Service in Germany and then went on to train as a Chartered Accountant, becoming a partner at Touche Ross in Edinburgh.

His passions though were in the outdoors, where he spent much of his time on the golf course, fishing for trout and salmon, skiing, curling, enjoying wildlife on long walks, or simply attending to his vegetable garden.

He was patient, kind, dependable and a great companion. He always loved to tell stories and was a mine of information which shortened any long car journey. He is sorely missed by his wife, Shelly, his children, Gillian, Richard and Lindsey, along with other family and friends.

Words by his son, Richard Summers.



Archibald (Malcolm) Thomson Currie (47-51)

1934 – 2016

Malcolm was born in Wormit, Fife where he lived for most of his life. He entered Merchiston after attending the High School of Dundee.

After National Service with the Royal Artillery he joined the family business, Thomson Currie, estate agents in Dundee and for many years was the principal partner.

He was president of the National Federation of Property Owners and Factors of Scotland 1980 - 82. In 1992 he closed the Dundee office and moved south to support his son, Iain who had opened a branch office in Inslington.

His great interest was rugby. After school he played for Panmure RFC and was their President in 1979. In recent years he has supported London Scottish RFC and greatly enjoyed his visits to the home matches and the social side in the clubhouse.

Malcolm married Norma Sommerville in 1962. She died in 1992. He is survived by their two sons, Alistair



and Iain and their daughter, Jane, as well as a grandson, Duncan. In 1994 he married Aileen Caulfield who survives him.

Malcolm passed away on 5 August 2016.

Words by his son, Iain Currie.

Henry Robb (47-51)

Henry Robb was the first child of late Mr and Mrs JB Robb and was brought up in Stirling. He was a man who had many interests, local and national. His working life was as a respected solicitor in Stirling; his life's work was ornithology – a field in which he was held in high regard and to which he made a material contribution.

By the outbreak of the Second World War he was at Stirling Primary, where he completed his junior education as Dux before advancing to the upper school. He left Merchiston in a blaze of academic glory, with an Oxford entrance and a pile of prizes.

National Service followed, during which he was taught Russian to interpreter standard, finally being demobbed from the Intelligence Corps.

He then went to Worcester College in Oxford, and as well as having a high old time and making many life-long friends, he graduated and then moved on to Glasgow University for a law degree. Afterwards he came back to Stirling and joined his father in Welsh and Robb.

His main interest was ornithology, one he shared with so many of his friends. Being a member of the Tay Ringing Group meant so much to him, and he valued greatly the friendships he formed here. The work he did with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) in Norfolk was also very important to him.

He received the BTO Jubilee Medal in 2002 for his contribution to ornithology. He maintained friendships with farmers all over the Carse of Stirling and around Loch Katrine through tending to his nest boxes. He would never tell just how many there were; the number could be in the hundreds!

He also prized his membership of the Scottish Ornithological Club and working with the Isle of May bird observatory and Field Station Trust. He was, at least once, marooned on the Isle of May for several days – much to the amusement of his family.

Outwith ornithology, he was an official of the Stirling Burns Club, a churchgoer, a Stirling Guildry brother, a member of two of the Incorporated Trades, and a one-time member of Stirling Golf Club.



He travelled extensively, loved going to the opera in Europe, using his knowledge of French and German – and if these languages did not work, he retained a more than useful knowledge of Latin.

Henry was also a generous host and loved when people came to stay with him. When the family visited, there were certain rituals to be followed – the massive gins (with some ice and very little tonic) which always had to be consumed in the furnace-like temperature of the sitting room.

Despite all these interests and anecdotes, Henry was, in fact, a very private person, though one who enjoyed company. He was ever grateful to the ladies who helped him at home, who made light of his foibles and carried on regardless.

He put at least as much into life as he took out of it and would wish to be remembered for the pleasure he so willingly gave to others.

Henry will be sadly missed by his brother, Iain (50-55), and all his family and friends.

Words by family and friends, [The Scotsman]

John (Jack) Teacher Hutcheson (50-54)

John Teacher Hutcheson (known always as Jack), son of John Curtis Hutcheson (1918 – 1922) and grandson of John Hutcheson CBE (1885 – 1888), MCS School Governor and Chairman.

Jack died in the Marie Curie Hospice in Edinburgh on 28 December 2015 only a year after the initial diagnosis of cancer. He was born in Melrose in 1937. One of seven children, Jack's youngest brother was born the very day Jack left school.

Jack did his National Service in the Royal Navy and often reminisced about steering an anti-submarine frigate in the Mediterranean during the Cyprus crisis and Cyprus Patrol.

In spite of a diagnosis of manic depression, Jack went on to achieve a degree in History and a career in teaching. After retiring, he took up writing and painting, having several articles published and holding a successful art exhibition. He also pursued his love of tree surgery and the accumulation of an impressive log pile.

Jack was very happy being together with his wife Fiona for almost 34 years. They moved from Edinburgh to Penicuik in 1992 and enjoyed the life there, walking with their dogs.

He had several books dedicated to him, including



Evensong, a book of poetry by Kenneth Steven and Without Fail by the international bestselling novelist, Lee Child. Just a few days before Jack died, Lee sent a moving message:

“You’re a good man, Jack, and you lived a good life. I valued our friendship more than you could know. I’ll never forget the times you showed up – the Skoda, the dogs, the conversation. I’ll miss you, my friend. I know you’re a man of deep faith, and you should let it be a comfort now. You’re heading for a good place. Don’t be sad. You loved and were loved, and you will never be forgotten. You touched lives, and raised smiles and chuckles, and you left the world a better place than you found it. That’s all a man can do.”

Jack became a Christian in 1995 which had a profound effect on the rest of his life. He was a generous and forgiving man, never afraid to share, encourage and support others. He endured his illness with courage and was certain of his final destination.

Contributed by his wife, Fiona Hutcheson.

David Mackie Pattullo (53-57)

Suddenly, after a long illness bravely borne, at Beach Manor Care Home, Blairgowrie, on Sunday, 31 January 2016, David Mackie, much loved husband of Maureen, loving dad of David, proud grandad of Archie and May and brother of Dorothy.

[The Edinburgh Evening News]

George (Iain) Christison PhD (53-58)

George passed away on 11 December 2015. George's wife, Nadia Cymbaluk got in touch to let us know that George spoke very fondly of Merchiston and the friendships he made there.

David Macfie (54-59)

David 25 February 1941; third son of A. Macfie 1917) passed away on 2 June 2016 after a battle with leukaemia in Australia.

In 1958-59 he won his IXV cap in the unbeaten School team and after leaving he went to Edinburgh University to study Agriculture and won his rugby blue playing for them.

During his work placement on a farm in Fife he played for the Howe of Fife and packed down behind the Scottish International, David Rollo.

He emigrated to Australia in 1962, initially to New South Wales to continue a farming way of life. He



continued to play rugby for Goondiwindi Town Club and finally the Queensland county side when he moved there.

He became a cattle ranch manager for a large property near Maryborough and ran this for a number of years before building his own house near Kumbia.

David was first and foremost a cattleman. He made an outstanding contribution to the Queensland beef industry and the Australian Society of Animal Production. He was elected as Branch President 1990-92, then a Federal Council Member 1994-96 and was the only industry member on that Council. He was enrolled as an Honorary member of the society for his outstanding service to the animal industries of northern Australia.

He is survived by his wife Christine, step-daughter Brenda and grandchildren.

Written by his brother, Euan Macfie (59-63).

Alexander Robert Lennox Wood (55-60)

Died peacefully at Ayr Hospital on 20 May 2016.

Notified by son, Graeme Wood (79-84).

William (Bill) David Mitchell MacAdam (56-60)

At Merchiston, Bill was one of those students necessary to the healthy mix of every school: friendly, fastidious, going with the flow, focused on the task of achieving his potential; in addition he showed early signs of developing the fine singing voice which was to stand him in such good stead in adult life. In this he derived much encouragement from choirmaster Iain Robertson and the Director of Music, Donald Sprinck. His former study-mates recall with pleasure meeting Bill again at the Donald Bienfait Sprink Memorial Concert given in school in May 2011, raising funds for a Music Bursary.

After school he attended Perugia University in Italy to hone up on his Italian, leading to a 10 year spell with Scottish Opera, where he met his wife Alice. Bill had a range of business interests, spending some time in South Africa, and investing in several properties in both the Central Belt of Scotland and the North of England. Specialising in antique glass, Bill found a niche market by acting as a consultant/buyer to many antique dealers who relied on his expertise. It was whilst he was away on one of his business trips that his wife Alice sadly died of a heart attack.

By the time Bill was living in Edinburgh where he established a base and, upon marrying his second wife



Gillian, started up two restaurants in the City under the name 'The Sizzling Scot'. A well kent figure in Morningside, Bill was the epitome of sartorial elegance, often to be found at his local watering hole – 'The Canny Man's'.

Bill, who is survived by Gillian, died of cancer on 12 February 2016.

Words by friend, John Rigg (55-59).

Ian Gibson Ashbridge Miller (57-62)

Ian died peacefully on 31 August 2016 aged 72 in the Borders General Hospital, surrounded by his family. Ian was born on 25 June 1944 in Edinburgh to Cecil and Sadie Miller. His education started at Kelso Infant and Abbey School and then he progressed to St Mary's School, Melrose from 1953 to 1957 where he was a member of their 1XV. He was a keen sportsman not just in his years at Merchiston but after. He was a junior prefect, was in the 1XV for two years and was also in the tennis six for two years where he was captain in his last summer. As a sportsman after leaving Merchiston, he played for Murrayfield Wanderers in his university years and became the Merchistonian Tennis Secretary from when he left in 1962 till 1998 – quite a feat!

After leaving, he did a Chartered Accountancy apprenticeship from 1962-67 to Dr David Bogie and Jack Shaw (later Professor and Sir) at Graham Smart & Annan in Charlotte Square in Edinburgh, qualifying in 1967. He then went overseas from 1967-69 and was an audit assistant with Alex Aiken & Carter in Johannesburg, South Africa. It was whilst over there that he met and married Diana Frances Harvey in Grahamstown, Cape Province S.A. In 1970 they returned to Britain and he worked for ICI in Welwyn Garden City in Management Accounting, Research & Development. His father, Cecil, was managing director of John Hogarth Ltd, Kelso Mills and said that they were looking for an accountant, hence he moved north again, back to his roots, in 1971. In 1972 he became a director and in 1998-09 he was managing director. Whilst there, he was also President of the British Oat & Barley Millers' Association (BOBMA). In 1974 he had a daughter, Katharine, and in 1977 a son, David (88-95).

Ian was always a keen sportsman throughout his life and it continued with tennis being very much at the forefront. He was an accomplished member of Kelso Orchard Tennis Club and played in the Border League, Winter League and the Scottish Cup; he was also chairman for 18 years. To quote, 'in his time as the quiet President he still maintained an air of authority. He was also very much a hands-on repair man who simply loved

to retain artefacts that some would consider as scrap' - a sentiment that others in the milling trade shared.

Ian also enjoyed golf, having taken it up a little later in life. He was very proud to have been 'member number one' at the Roxburgh Golf Club near Kelso, and he was a keen member of the 'Wedgers' come rain, shine, hail or snow.

I know that Ian's passion and love of Merchiston was something that he cherished and he was very proud to have been Vice-President of the Merchistonian Club in 1997-98. He attended many 1XV fixtures as a spectator, however less in later years due to ill health. He also made not just friends but lifelong friends who will all feel the loss, and he will be sorely missed by those who had the privilege of knowing him. He was a proud husband and father and a 'true gentlemen' to the very end.

He is survived by his wife Diana, children, Katharine and David, and his sister Joan.

Words by son, David J A Miller (88-95).

Colonel John (Charles) Hope Moorhouse (60-65)

Born 26 April 1947, died 27 July 2016 aged 69.

Charlie was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on Cup Final Day. He was always very proud of his Geordie heritage. While at Merchiston, on the advice of Jim Hindshaw he sat for, and won, a scholarship to Sandhurst and passed the last Civil Service Commission Exam for entry to RMAS in 1965. It was good job that he did as he left school with only an E grade in maths at A level! He was a Junior Prefect in Rogerson West under Charles Chamberlain, a Sergeant in the CCF and played in the golf team.

Sandhurst tried to improve his maths and physics but failed miserably, and in his fifth term he failed two exams and was reduced in rank from Under Officer to Senior Cadet. Despite these setbacks he still passed out 75th and was commissioned in July 1965 into the Royal Engineers.

He completed the All Arms Royal Marine Commando Course before being posted to Singapore, Hong Kong, Germany, Northern Ireland and England. For his work at Northwood, Charles was awarded a C-in-C UKLF's Commendation. He was also the Army author on the London Gazette Report on the Falklands War.

The early 90s found Charles in London in the tri-service Directorate of Personnel. 1991 saw him running



the Casualty Reporting Centre and POW Bureau during the first Gulf War. This earned him a CDS's Commendation, which was the first time these had been awarded and Charles was asked to design it! He was promoted to Colonel in 1992 and soon after left the Army after 30 years, aged 48.

Always a keen sportsman, he had played rugby for the Combined Services in Singapore and Hong Kong and captained the Royal Engineers Corps XV in 1972-73. He ran a three hour 42 minute London marathon aged 44. He did not take up golf seriously until he was a CO. He continued playing to single figures into his sixties and aged 60 played 72 holes in a day. Having lost his son Edward, to pancreatic cancer a few months before his retirement, Charles took the view that life was for living every day and dedicated his retirement to enjoying his extended family, friends, golf and his garden. He did sometimes wonder, what he might have achieved if he had worked as hard at school and in the Army as he had done as a Golf Club Secretary! Sadly, he was diagnosed with leukemia in late 2008 which took until 2010 to overcome, then in early 2016 he was diagnosed with advanced bowel cancer. This was despite being up to date on the bowel cancer screening trial!

He was married three times and is survived by his wife Sheila, son James and daughter-in-law Michela, grandson James and his stepsons Steven and David and their families.

Alan Massey Woodward (60-66)

Alan, aged 68, passed away peacefully, on 19 September 2016, at the Marie Curie Hospice in Edinburgh. He is survived by his three children, Paul, Emma and Holly and his two grandchildren, Evie and Zachary. He was born in Croydon, to Clifford and Martha, and when Alan was just a toddler, the family moved to Edinburgh where he spent the remainder of his life. After graduating from university in both Dublin and Paisley, Alan qualified as a chartered valuation surveyor, working up until the time when ill health forced him to step down. Alan was an avid cricket fan and also loved cooking for family and friends at every opportunity. His holidays to France and Italy with the family were when he was at his happiest.

[The Scotsman]

Peter John Dixon (65-69)

Peter's widowed mother married Graham Dixon (1935), a widower with two daughters when Peter was seven years old. Peter was then dispatched to Merchiston in 1965 to redress the balance of living with four sisters.

An accident at school terminated his rugby career but he became a great asset to the swimming team, and even beat David Wilkie (Stewart's Melville College) at the crawl. Peter was drum major in the school pipe band which promoted a love of the pipes, and music in general, throughout his life. In his teenage years he set up a mobile discotheque which featured at all the best parties in the west of Scotland, followed a few years later by a share in a record shop with a couple of good friends.



He always enjoyed the opportunity to sail and ski at school and maintained friendships throughout his life formed from those pastimes. Peter's mother's marriage to Graham Dixon introduced Peter to sailing and this kindled a lifelong love affair with the sea, starting with family cruises and sailing dinghies in Arran, reinforced by school sailing at Port Edgar. Peter went on to be involved in racing and cruising extensively in the West of Scotland, one design racing in Europe and the States, and passage races to Norway and France.

After leaving school Peter began accountancy and retail management in preparation for a career in the family business Telfer & Co which had retail department stores in several towns throughout Scotland. Telfers was one of the first companies to install one of the early computing systems which ignited Peter's enthusiasm for this new technology and when the company went into members' voluntary liquidation he joined the emerging computer industry as a sales executive, originally with NCR and then with Data General, a large multi-national computer hardware company where he rose to become Scottish sales manager. He moved from there to the new growing market of computer software with Oracle Corporation and eventually became Regional Director of Scotland and Ireland. He was one of the founder directors of the Arran Brewery which combined his love of the beautiful Isle of Arran and fine ale.

Retirement indulged Peter's love of the sea and adventure which culminated in a 12,000 mile cruise through the Mediterranean to Croatia, Greece and Malta only to sail home to Scotland with the onset of grandchildren.

He was Commodore of the Royal Western Yacht Club and Chairman of the Colquhoun Charitable Trust.

He lost his battle with cancer in December 2015. He is survived by his wife Suzie, children Graham and Lorne

and their spouses Lisa and Nicholas and his three beloved grandchildren.

Contributed by his wife, Suzie Dixon.

Andrew Jackson (65-69)

Andrew passed away on 11 July 2016.

Andrew attended Merchiston following his time at St. Mary's School, Melrose.



I am unconvinced that Andrew would regard his preparatory education or his time at Merchiston as being the true high points of what was, comparatively speaking, a short life. His true interests lay neither in the classroom nor on the sports field.

Upon leaving Merchiston, Andrew pursued a career in textiles based initially in Galashiels. His introduction into that industry in which his father was also engaged, was as a student at the Scottish College of Textiles in Galashiels. His first post was with Kemp Blair and Company where his formidable reputation in the dyeing industry began. It was a natural career progression for someone of his skills and talent to move to West Yorkshire, which he did in 1988, along with his wife Anne and their two boys.

The textile industry changed drastically as time passed. In 2003 Andrew accepted a post manufacturing cashmere with Johnsons of Elgin. He would have completed his career in Elgin had it not been for the passing of his father and a feeling that his mother needed his support. Finishing his career with Robert Noble of Peebles in the industry that he was passionate about, he retired to Ancrum, his final Border home.

In many ways a private man, but no recluse, his passion beyond his family life was for sailing, a sport at which he did excel. His devotion to classic cars meant that no-one quite knew what car he would appear in next. At home, his love and knowledge of rock music was very deep. His extensive collection of albums would be the envy of many.

Sadly declining health took Andrew from amongst us too early in life. I once heard it said that no-one ever heard Andrew say a word against anyone and I believe that to be true. If he had no good words about someone, he had no words at all.

I followed Andrew through St. Mary's and Merchiston, but was two years younger. That meant that we did not meet outside school until 1972. I recall many nights in

Melrose in the post school years. Alas the Melrose Pubs Safari Team (1972-1975) has lost another member and I am saddened by his passing.

Words by David Girdwood (68-72).

Lionel (Mark) Lunn (80-85)

1967 - 2016

Mark, after leaving Merchiston, moved to London to study business studies and remained in London for most of his career. He worked for some years for Laing Construction, Kennedy Scott and Remploy in various roles before finally working his way back up to the north of England a couple of years ago when he moved to Halifax to take up a post as Financial Director for Calder College.

In his spare time Mark indulged in his twin passions of pottering round visiting family and friends and salvaging and refurbishing lawn mowers, which he distributed round the family. In time his hobby grew to a wider variety of agricultural machinery and cars, and in his spare time he was most often found at farm auctions and working in his barn in Northumberland.

Kind and considerate, with a keen wit, Mark is greatly missed by his family and friends.

Mark passed away on 14 May 2016.

Contributed by brother, Ramsay Lunn (84-87)



Bruce Duncan Cameron (81-86)

Bruce, who died on 29 January 2015 (first reported in the 2015 magazine) was one of the most talented and successful bowlers ever to appear for the XI. In the course of the '1985-'86 seasons he took 64 wickets for the XI at an astonishing average of only 12 runs per wicket.

When Bruce arrived in Chalmers West he quickly became a popular figure due to his whole-hearted effort and mischievous sense of humour. He displayed his talents across a wide range of school activities but he excelled in sport.

It was as a cricketer that Bruce made his greatest impact and, in particular, in the defeat of Edinburgh Academy in July 1986. This was the penultimate match



of the season and both Merchiston and the Academy arrived at New Field on the morning of 5 July 1986 undefeated. It was a two-day match which the Academy dominated from start to finish, with the exception of the dramatic final hour. The Academy won the toss and batted first, scoring 198 for 9 declared. Merchiston replied with a modest 86 before being asked to follow on. In the second innings Merchiston fared little better scoring 137 which left the Academy with a paltry target of 26 runs to win.

I recall the Merchiston captain asking the master-in-charge of cricket, Dr Mike Gill, whether or not it was worth wasting a new ball on the Academy innings. Once they had decided in the affirmative, the captain threw the ball to Bruce and asked him to do his best. It was not long before the Academy were 9 for 6 and only a few overs later we stood on the cusp of a famous victory as we had reduced the Academy to 14 for 9. However, a few minutes later all appeared lost due to two very fortuitous boundaries through the slip cordon from the Academy no.10, Malcolm Holmes which took the Academy total up to 24 runs - just one run short of a tie and two short of a victory. But that was before Bruce summoned up one final effort and clean bowled the last batsman to secure Merchiston a famous win by one run.

Bruce's figures in that game of six wickets (five of them clean bowled) for 13 runs will go down as one of the best ever bowling spells in the history of the XI. I was very touched to hear from his life-long friend, Niall Ballantyne that Bruce had kept the match ball safely at home for nearly 30 years. Shortly before his untimely death, he handed the ball over to Niall for safe-keeping.

Away from the sports field Bruce settled near the Borders near Soutra where he met his partner Jane Lothian. He worked variously in the oil industry; as a highly skilled furniture maker; and latterly as a property developer. He was the founder of the Gilston Gun Club and was always accompanied by his faithful black Labradors.

The esteem in which Bruce was held was demonstrated by the turnout for his funeral when some 300 friends came to celebrate his life. As ever, Bruce decided to do things his way and he went to great trouble to meticulously plan the day in particular by insisting (to the undertakers' great dismay) that they use his ancient short wheel-base Land Rover to carry him on his final journey.

Words by Logan Mair (80-86), Richard Dodds (82-86), Niall Ballantyne (82-87) and Evan Jobling-Purser (82-87).

**Euan Charles Stuart
Barley (92-95)**

30 May 1976 – 14 May 2016



Euan, it was just heart-breaking and an unreserved shock to hear we had lost you in May this year. Not only were you part of the Merchi family, but you were part of the extended Hong Kong family too. You were a fixture in our lives and of so many others; a fixture that we expected to last forever – we are so very saddened that this is not the case.

You leave so many with such great unforgettable memories; the alcohol fuelled Hong Kong neon lights of Wan Chai, your passionate (and very vocal) support for the All Blacks and like for designer clothing – to mention just a few.

To us all you were a true gent with amazing qualities. You always had time and energy for people, you always shared and always looked after others independent of the circumstances. You always 'had our backs' – from the simple gesture of offering a bed in the early hours,

to a helpful hand in the time of need – we will always love you for that. We loved that you were so blunt, never suffering fools and always had a sarcastic response when deserved. It was all part of your oh so unique charm.

As life, family, careers and ambitions created distance – with you there was no such thing as reacquainting... instead things slotted in as if it was yesterday. You valued strong friendship and it was not measured on how frequently you saw them. So many are lucky to have known you and be able to call you their friend.

Our tears are a mix of absolute devastation that you are gone and tears of laughter for all the times you made us fall about with a joyful belly laugh. You were truly a massive influence on so many, you were a fabulous man, a great friend to many and a proud son, husband and dad. We will miss you our old friend.

Rest easy Nicam. Rest easy.

By 1995 Merchistonians

Where available, the extended obituaries can be found on the Merchistonian Club website (www.merchistonians.co.uk). Every effort has been made to ensure that the information included within the obituaries is accurate and we are grateful to the Merchistonian community for sending in newspaper clippings and published articles for this section.

 A collage of architectural images and text for NGP architecture. The central text reads:

NGParchitecture
 222 Queensferry Rd, Edinburgh EH4 2BN
 contact: Chris Gray, tel. 0131 603 7540
 mail@ngparchitects.co.uk
 www.ngparchitects.co.uk
 twitter: @ngparchitects

 The collage includes:

- A white house with a gabled roof and a driveway.
- A modern open-plan living and dining area with large windows.
- A bar area with a long counter and stools.
- A landscape view of a large building complex at dusk.
- A close-up of a circular architectural feature with lights.
- A modern interior with a fireplace and seating area.
- A bright, airy interior space with large windows and a chandelier.
- A modern building with a glass facade at night.

The MRFC Report

Words by Oliver Green (99-07)

In an 'all action' game at Raeburn Place the Merchistonian XV took on the Edinburgh Academicals for the third time since our revival in

2014. Phil Godman (95-00), Graeme Smith (94-99) and Jamie Mayer (91-95) returned with their boots in hand and made appearances at fly half, lock and centre respectively. Despite the 53-19 loss, the Committee are encouraged by the amount of enthusiasm from the players to don the blue jersey again. This can only stand us in good stead for the future.

Alongside our annual Accies fixture, the Club also took part in the 'Stay Strong Stu' 7s tournament on 18 June. MRFC were in a tough group and pitted against Stu's Blues (A Tynedale team), Blaydon (National 1 Team) and Tynedale Colts.

Their first game against Stu's Blues was tough, however the boys managed to come out victors after a hard fight. The second game was against Tynedale Colts, which was won convincingly. The team then went on to play against Blaydon who were a strong outfit and, while we led for two-thirds of the game, they got a breakaway try to win. This unfortunately put MRFC into second in the group, missing qualifying as best runner-up to remain in the cup competition by one try. Merchistonians were then put through to the plate final against Austin Fryers Old Boys; unfortunately they lost the final and had to go and try the numerous beers in the beer festival to drown their sorrows!



On 24 June the Merchiston Old Boys chanced their luck against the Upper Sixth Leavers in a game of touch rugby at the School. In the spirit of accommodating imminent new members to the Club, it was decided that a 9-9 try draw at full time (after some generous 'extra time' from the School referee) would go to sudden death which saw the School finish off a fun evening with a well-deserved try to officially beat the Merchistonians on the night! The onus now is on the Leavers to reverse this result next year when they will be eligible to play for the Merchistonian team.

None of this would have been possible without our

sponsors, who have been extremely generous in supporting the Club financially. Not only has their help enabled the team to take part in various tournaments but to do so in style, modelling our fantastic new kit.

The 2017 fixture list will be published in January and I hope that any of you with an interest in playing rugby will take the opportunity to sign up to represent the Club. The Committee would love to hear from anybody with tournament entry ideas, and from those interested in playing, sponsoring or helping. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible throughout the 2017 rugby season.

You can contact us through the following links:

-  Facebook page - facebook.com/merchistoniansrfc
-  Twitter @merchiRFC
- Email at rugby@merchistonians.co.uk

MRFC Committee

- President** - Roger GT Baird (73-78)
- Vice President** - Shane A Corstorphine (89-97)
- Secretary** - Oliver J Green (99-07)
- Treasurer** - Alexander TD Yates (00-07)
- Fixtures Secretary** - Finlay RB Maclean (02-07)

Committee Members

- W Andrew McDonald (79-85), Matthew S Gray (79-85), James E Sutherland (75-80), Peter JD Aitchison (00-07), Freddie Main, and David Rider

MRFC Sponsors

- Bonk and co
- Mackie's Crisps
- Cask 88
- Anderson Strathern
- Rule Valley
- MAKE Summer School
- Best Intent Marquees



The Golf Club - Secretary's Report

Words by Robert Foreman (89-94)

I am pleased to report that there has been another busy season for the Merchistonian Golf Club on the social and representative front. Under Bill Hannay's (54-58) captaincy there have been a number of fixtures and these are reported on below.

Autumn Meeting

Despite a later date for the Autumn Meeting this year we had an extremely successful Autumn Meeting at Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society on 8 October. 51 golfers gathered for lunch prior to heading out for a shotgun start and to compete for the various prizes on offer. The change of venue and format last year has proved to be a success and it was very pleasing to note that the age range of the participants was from the early 20's to the 80's, with a number of new participants as well as some well-known faces.

After golf there was a slight pause for drinks and then dinner was held in the dining room at Bruntsfield Links. There were 58 people at the dinner including the Headmaster, Mrs Hunter and the captain of Bruntsfield

Links Golfing Society. Bill Hannay, Captain of the Golf Club, gave a brief summary of the golfing year, and the Headmaster then provided an update from the School.

Thereafter, there was the usual presentation of prizes - a list of the prize winners is below. However, notable achievements were by Mike Rolland (98-03) who won the Gold Medal for the third year running with a gross score of 67 (three under par), Sam Paulo (94-02) who won the Silver Medal with a net 65 and Morison Zuill (50-55) who produced a "clean sweep" of all of the prizes in the categories for the over 50s. All in all it was a hugely successful day and the Captain, the Secretary and the Committee of the Golf Club would like to thank all the participants for turning out.

Competition	Age Group	Type	Winner	Score/Points	Runner-up	Score
Gold Medal	All	Scratch	Mike Rolland (98-03)	67	Martin Stein (84-89)	71
Silver Medal	All	Handicap	Sam Paulo (94-02)	65	Mike Rolland (98-03)	66
Merchistonian Quaich	Under 30	Scratch	Freddie Ward (07-11)	73	Pete Legget (03-11)	75
Abram Jug	Under 30	Stableford	Freddie Ward (07-11)	37	Pete Legget (03-11)	36
Centenary Trophy	Under 40	Stableford	Sam Paulo (94-02)	40 (bih)	Mike Rolland (98-03)	40
Biggart Donaldson Trophy	Over 40/Under 60	Stableford	Robert Forman (89-94)	36	Andrew McDonald (79-85)	35
Allan Salver	Over 50	Scratch	Morison Zuill (50-55)	81	Andrew Mack (63-67)	83
Ness Tankard	Over 50	Handicap	Morison Zuill (50-55)	70 (bih)	Andrew Mack (63-67)	70
Hewat Driver	Over 60	Stableford	Morison Zuill (50-55)	36 (bih)	Charles Abram (65-69)	36
Biggart Memorial Trophy	Over 60	Scratch	Morison Zuill (50-55)	81	Andrew Mack (63-67)	83
Tujoh Puloh Tappit Hen	Over 69	Stableford	Morison Zuill (50-55)	36	Fraser Low (56-60)	33
Mickel Cup	Past Captains	Stableford	Morison Zuill (50-55)	36	Charles Abram (65-69)	36
Ladies	Ladies	Stableford	Lesley Abram	29	Margaret Milligan	25



Social Matches

There was a fairly full schedule of social matches this year including: Lorettonians, OG/Fettesians, Sedburgh and the match against the School boys. Once again can I thank the match managers (Ian Wilson (72-77), Malcolm Gourlay (56-61), Gavin Thain (79-85) and George Walker (69-74)) for the time and effort that they put into arranging these matches. It is much appreciated by the Committee and also the participants.

The results were as follows:

Lorettonians – The team of Charles Abram (65-69), Iain Brechin (79-84), Doug Allan (87-92), Duncan Bland (70-74), Alan Brown (52-57), Colin Barbour (78-83), Peter Young (77-82) and Malcolm Gourlay had a great day at Muirfield playing the Lorettonians. Malcolm Gourlay led the side to a 6-2 victory and despite a soaking after 4.00pm the match was played in excellent spirit with some fine performances from the team.

OG/Fettesians – Ian Wilson again took charge of the team at Panmure and was joined by David Morrison (82-89), Sandy Robertson (75-81), Bill Peterkin (55-60), John Hewat (51-56) and Ken Fisher (80-86). The scoring in this match never appears to be easiest to understand but I can confirm that the final result was Merchiston 4, Fettes 4, O.G. 1 and that we will interpret that as a win!

Old Sedburghians – The team consisting of George Walker, Steve Biggart (96-03), Neil Kilpatrick (51-56), Ken Fisher, Alistair Milligan (58-63), Donald McIntyre (72-77), Ian Ballantine (61-65) and Campbell McLaren (54-58) played the match at Muirfield in lovely, if cold, conditions arriving at lunch 3-1 ahead, having won two and halved the other two matches. The afternoon session proved tighter with two matches won and two lost, however the MGC were always in control of the match with their morning lead and ended up winning the match 5-3.

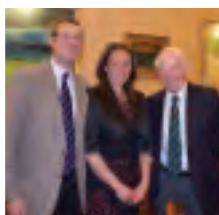
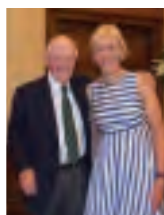
School – Unfortunately Gavin Thain's leadership of the Merchistonian team was not quite as successful as the other Match Managers. His team of Chris Cowan (79-85), Roger Baird (73-78), Nick White (83-89), Matthew Gray (79-85), Ronnie Irving (52-58) and himself treated the School golf team to a fine lunch at Muirfield on 19 June – the boys regard the lunch at Muirfield as one of the highlights of the golfing year! The golf match, which is only an incidental to the lunch, was won by the School 2 – 1...and for those interested Ronnie Irving lost to his grandson 7-6.

As with previous years I would recommend participating in these social matches. They provide a fabulous opportunity to play some of the finest courses in Scotland at a knock down rate and in good company.

Representative Matches

As well as the social matches the Club fielded teams in a number of representative fixtures throughout the year. The Club entered teams in the Stenhouse Quaich, the Halford Hewitt, the Cyril Gray, the Senior Wayfarers and the Queen Elizabeth. As with the social matches, can I thank Stuart Briggs (60-65), Chris Cowan, Chris Smith (96-02), David Hutchison (73-76) and Gavin Spencer (73-78) for organising the teams at these events.

Scottish Wayfarers/Stenhouse Quaich – We have a terrific record in this competition and we are multiple winners over the past 10 years. This year was no exception with the team seeing off a strong challenge from the Academy to win over both days in Elie. >



The final results were:

Position	School	Wins	Holes Up/Down
1	Merchiston	4	17
2	Academy	3	16
3	Loretto	3	9
4	Fettes	3	0
5	Glenalmond	1	-16
6	Strathallan	1	-26



The Queen Elizabeth Coronation Schools Trophy – The last weekend in September saw the Merchistonian team of Martin Stein (84-89), Jamie McIntosh (02-09), Chris Smith (96-02), Pete Legget (03-11), Mike Rolland and Alistair Duncan (69-73) compete in the QE at the Royal Burgess. It was a tough (and tight) first round match against Glasgow High which we sadly lost with all three matches going down the last.

Halford Hewitt – Over the Easter break, the Merchistonian golf team headed to Kent for the Halford Hewitt Competition. Unfortunately, it was twice the agony for the team of Martin Stein (84-89), Jamie McIntosh, Chris Cowan, Dougie Cowan (84-91), Charlie Simpson (94-98), John McKean (75-81), Chris Smith, Robbie Bremner (85-91), Harry Thomson (72-78) and Mike Rolland. They were beaten 3-2 in the first round by a strong Cranleigh team. They were bitterly disappointed with this result, but all was not lost as six of the team then had the opportunity to compete in the Plate Competition at Princes Golf Club. In the first round of the Plate, the team beat Aldenham 2-1 in a good quality match. In the next round the team played Malvern, one of the consistent top-performing school sides in recent years and won 2-1. Their next opposition was Berkhamstead in the last eight, who they again beat 2-1 setting up a semi-final against Felsted. Again, the team prevailed with Martin and Jamie winning 2-1, Charlie and Mike halved their match and Chris and Robbie winning 7-6. Unfortunately, a very good run in the Plate came to an end against The Leys, who rode their luck over the last five holes of the deciding match, and beat Merchiston 2-1.

Cyril Gray – The team of David Hutchison, Graeme Dickie (75-80), Donald Thomson (74-80), Colin Braid (79-84), Alastair Duncan (69-73) and Gavin Spencer represented the club on 23 and 24 June at Worpleston Golf Club in Surrey. In the first round Merchiston defeated Wellinborough 2½ - 1½ but unfortunately crashed out in the second round losing to Wrekin 2-1. Thank you to Colin Braid who stepped in at the last minute after Harry Thomson (72-78) had broken his hand falling off a ladder.

Senior Wayfarers – The highlight of the year was the victory in the Senior Wayfarers at Muirfield on the first weekend in May. In this competition the first four teams qualify for a knockout match play event on the Sunday morning with the bottom two teams left to fight it out for the Wooden Spoon. The team of David Hutchison, Graeme Dickie, Alastair Duncan, Rory Bell (75-80), Roger Baird (73-78), Ken Lauder (72-77) and Gavin Spencer was the leading qualifier on Saturday afternoon. On the Sunday morning Merchiston defeated Fettes 2-1, David Hutchison and Graeme Dickie won the deciding match on 20 May with a birdie.

On the Sunday afternoon Merchiston beat the Edinburgh Academy 2-1. The deciding game was again down to the final pair. David Hutchison and Graeme Dickie who won on 18 May. Merchiston were in the final of this event for the third year in a row. The team lost last year to Edinburgh Academy and the previous year to Fettes, so it was good to get a win at last.

Joining the Club

The fixture list for 2017 will be published in January and I hope that as many of you as possible will take the opportunity to sign up for representing the School and the Club when this is issued. If you are interested then please do get in touch as we are always keen to attract new members of all abilities for social and competitive golf alike. In the meantime I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible throughout the 2017 golfing season.

The Cricket Club - Secretary's Report

Words by Alistair Evans (90-97)

On 20 May 2016, the 1XI played its annual fixture against the Merchistonians. This is always a great occasion and this game did not let us down. Merchistonian Captain, Mike Legget (97-04), won the toss and decided to bat. After a couple of early wickets for the 1XI from opener Johnny Alexander (11-16), Chris Sole (07-12) and Angus Paterson (05-12) steadied the ship. Angus hit a quick fire 16 and Chris ended up on 56 off just 40 balls. Chris still plays competitively and has recently been selected for the Scotland Development XI against Ireland A. The Merchistonians reached 121-7 off their 20 overs.

It was then the 1XI's turn with the bat. After losing four quick wickets for the loss of just 20 runs, it looked in trouble. However, a marvellous 76 off 46 balls from 1XI Captain, Angus H, nearly won the game. In the end, the 1XI finished just 10 runs short of the total in its 20 overs. The match was followed by a meal in the beautiful WWI Centenary Pavilion. Thank you to all the Old Boys who came back for the game – we look forward to the next fixture in summer 2017.



The Curling Club - Secretary's Report

Words by Alastair Campbell (62-67)

In the Wanderers League last season we beat Glasgow Academicals, lost quite narrowly against Strathallians and Aberdeen Grammar School FPs, and lost not so narrowly against Kelvinside Academicals and Old Glenalmond. We ended up fifth out of the six teams in the League, which was won by Strathallians. A little disappointing, but the games were enjoyed by all and we remain hopeful for better results next season.

We also participated in the Bongspiel organized by Glasgow Academicals Curling Club on 31 March 2016 as part of the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Glasgow Academical Club.

The season was over-shadowed by the death of stalwart member Tom Gibson. He was well kent in curling circles and had a full and interesting life, including running an ostrich farm in Lanark. He is greatly missed.

Any Merchistonians interested in joining the Curling Section please contact me. You will find my contact details at the back of this magazine under 'Sports Secretaries'. All the matches take place at Braehead Curling Rink near Paisley.



The Fishing Club - Secretary's Report

Words by Andrew McDonald (79-85)

Another busy year has passed with many enjoyable lunches and our fair share of reasonable weather to offset the occasional catching of brownies and rainbows (and perch!). It must be noted that the deserving 2016 winner of the Latimer Cup was Nigel Rickard with a fine 2lb 11oz Rainbow Trout from the Lake.

The 2017 outings will take place throughout the season at Black Loch, Dunwan Dam, Linlithgow Loch and Glencorse Reservoir (check website for confirmed outing dates).

Our annual visit to Oykel Bridge will be in early June 2017 and The Latimer Cup will again be fished for at the Lake of Menteith, on Saturday 12 August 2017.

Open to enthusiastic anglers of all ages and experience, please contact Andrew with your details to be kept up-to-date with arrangements for each outing.



The Shooting Club - Secretary's Report

Words by Richard Macmillan (81-87) and The Merchistonian, Autumn 1993

The Schools' Veterans Match, held in Bisley, Surrey each year is a competition that sees five former pupils from usually the top 50 shooting schools in the country competing against each other.

In 1993 Merchiston entered their first team for the Veterans meeting at Bisley and finished in a highly creditable 20th place out of 58 entrants.

Alistair Craig (89-93), Michael Ferndale (86-92), Jason Dodd (89-92), Richard Macmillan (81-87) and Douglas Allan (84-88) at Bisley in 1993, taken from [The Merchistonian, Autumn 1993]

Merchiston can enter a reasonably strong team and generally beats the other Scottish school entries but struggles against the strength and depth offered by the likes of Uppingham,

who won this year with a maximum score.

This year Merchiston were due to take part in the match on Thursday 14 June. Unfortunately one of our team, James Anderson (83-88), was unexpectedly hospitalised a day before the match and we were unable to find a bonafide MCS replacement and could therefore not compete this year.

The remaining team used the opportunity to have a pressure-free shoot with great performances in particular from Iain Brechin (79-84) and Richard Macmillan.

We wish James Anderson a speedy recovery.

Our 'Rifle and Clay Day' will take place on Saturday 18 March 2017, please contact me if you would like to get involved.



Fives – It would be great to get a Merchistonian team together in 2017. If anyone is interested please get in touch with andrewd@donaldson-timber.co.uk.

Tennis – We are looking for a new Tennis Secretary. If you would like to take up this role then please contact Gill Imrie on 0131 312 2262 or by emailing merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk.

Sailing – There has been some real interest to introduce a Sailing Section to the Merchistonian Club. If you would like to be part of the new Merchistonian Sailing Club then contact Gill on 0131 312 2262 or by emailing merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk.

Contact us – If you would like to become more involved in the Merchistonian Sports Club, then please get in touch. You will find contact details for all of the Merchistonian Club's Sports Secretaries at the back of this magazine.

Merchistonian Blazer and Waistcoat

By popular demand, a further bolt of Merchistonian cloth has been procured for stylish, distinctive, bespoke blazers and waistcoats.

We have negotiated, through a local tailor, the supply of made-to-measure blazers and waistcoats, as pictured below, for:

£350 for a blazer

£150 for a waistcoat

Both prices include VAT.

To place an order, please contact the Merchistonian office by phone or email on

0131 312 2237 or **merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk**



If unable to attend a personal measuring, the tailors can talk you through supplying your own measurements and, once made up, we can post the item(s) out to you. Alternatively if you would like to purchase the material and have your blazer or waistcoat made up by your preferred tailor, a length of cloth will cost £75 per metre, including postage.



Proud to support Merchiston Castle School



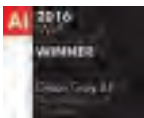
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Merchistonian Merchandise

If you would like to order any merchandise please telephone **0131 312 2237** or email **merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk**



Merchistonian tie | £20



Tankard | £25



Socks | £20



Bow tie | £26



Pre-tied bow tie | £26



Jumper – round neck | £45



Laing silver cufflinks | £50

Other merchandise are also available from the school shop.
Telephone 0131 312 2253

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Merchistonian Club Officials 2016-17

Club Committee

These Club Officials are here to help you with your queries.

President

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Vice-President

M S Gray (Matthew) (79-85)
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matthewsgray@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer

G M Thain (Gavin) (79-85)
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Immediate Past-President / Social Convenor

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Secretary

Gill Imrie
0131 312 2262 (business)
merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk

Chairman of Governors

Gareth TG Baird (70-75)
07778 680 830 (mobile)
gareth@baird.gbtbroadband.co.uk

Committee Members

I A Wright (Iain) (60-65)
0131 444 2424 (home)
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G R T Baird (Roger) (73-78)
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0141 221 3075 (business)
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J G B MacLean (Jamie) (71-76)
01738 582450 (home)
07739 431975 (mobile)
jgbmac58@gmail.com

UK Representatives

Whether you're just passing through an area, or relocating - do get in touch with our Area Representatives. They can give pointers, reminisce and often meet for a beer. Every year, all the Merchistonians in an area will get together and it's the Area Reps who will be your point of contact. Give them a bell and make the most out of your Club.

Glasgow & West of Scotland

J D Glen (John) (83-90)
07747426352 (mobile)
jdglen0211@live.co.uk

London

M Ferndale (Michael) (86-92)
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Overseas Representatives

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Southern California

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juwood1@netzero.net

Sports Secretaries

These are the Merchistonians who are passionate about their nominated sport. Each one co-ordinates fixtures every year – get in touch with them to find out what they are planning.

Cricket

A R Evans (Alistair) (90-97)

07791 090069 (mobile)

alistairevans@me.com

Curling

A J Campbell (Alastair) (62-67)

0141 638 1753 (home)

ajcampbell82@hotmail.com

Fishing

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Golf

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Rugby

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oligreen@gmail.com

Shooting

R D Macmillan (Richard) (81-87)

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richard@forbeslawson.co.uk

Skiing

M S Murphy (Stuart) (98-02)

0131 225 4668 (business)

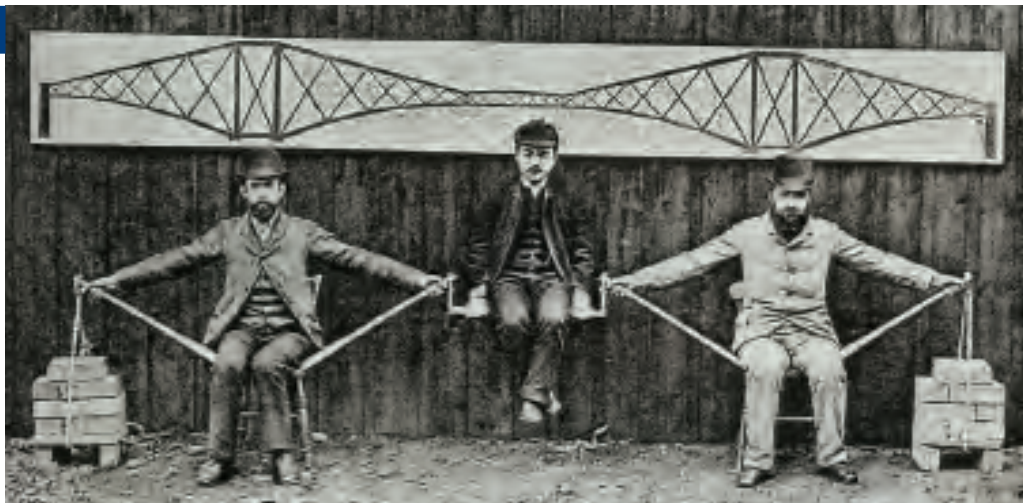
07968 564112 (mobile)

stuart@snowtraxx.co.uk

There are still a number of areas and sports which do not have a Merchistonian representative. If you would like to become more involved in the Merchistonian Club, then please contact the office on 0131 312 2237 or by emailing merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk

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