

THE MERCHISTONIAN


2017

CLUB MAGAZINE

Highland Experience

**Michael Bremner
shares his journey
to tourism triumph**





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Welcome From the Merchistonian Office

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the 2017 Merchistonian Club Magazine.

We have thoroughly enjoyed working on this year's edition, and hope that you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together. Having edited all of your stories, one thing is clear: the friendships created at Merchiston are strong and lifelong.

Thank you for sending us your news, without which there would be no magazine. Please continue to get in touch with any stories throughout the year. A special 'thank you' goes out to our advertisers, who make the publication possible, and to our proof readers, who scrupulously check each page.

This year has seen the launch of the Club's new clothing merchandise range, of which we are very proud. Please do keep sending us photos of you modelling your new gear! You can see a snapshot of the range on page 30.

We are also delighted to introduce your new Merchistonian Affinity Scheme. With discounts and offers from a growing number of companies, it has been established to give something back to you. Take a look at page 16 to see who is currently offering a discount, and get in touch with us if you would like to get your business involved.

Finally, we are seeing more involvement from area reps around the globe and we encourage you to get in touch with each other to organise meet-ups. See page 108 to



Left to Right David Rider, Gill Imrie and Louise Pert

find your nearest rep and remember to send us photos of your get-togethers. We look forward to meeting many of you at Business Breakfasts, School tours, sporting events, reunions, and dinners in the upcoming year.

Ready Ay Ready.

Gill (Editor), Louise and David

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ADVERTISING The Merchistonian Club Magazine connects advertisers with a professional, 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

Every time I put on my blue and red Merchistonian tie, I do so with pride, and reflect on what a privilege it is for all of us to be part of a thriving Club with such a rich history. This year, I have an even greater honour, as I am serving as the Club's president. I have taken over the reins from Andrew McDonald (79-85), who ran the Club with such enthusiasm over the last six years.

Perhaps the most distinctive and special feature of the Club is the camaraderie; the atmosphere of unity and inclusiveness. We are a family with the goal of supporting one another, and I am passionate about celebrating the many spectacular achievements of fellow Merchistonians.

I believe that there is great value in maintaining links with MCS and I am working hard to create a 'Global Business Network', predominantly designed to assist young Merchistonians in many aspects of business life across the world.

As a Club, we have enjoyed our annual calendar of sporting and social events; networking breakfasts, the pre-Calcutta Cup Dinner, the annual MRFC v Accies match, the Golf Club's Autumn Meeting and London drinks, to mention a few.

Over the last year, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with many of you to reinvigorate aspects of the Club. It was great fun to work alongside John Bruce (76-81), James Angus (81-85) and Andrew Taylor (98-03), with an aim of reviving a Newcastle Golf and Drinks event. Many laughs were had in the run up and it was great to see new friendships forming along the way. John has written an update on the event, which you will be able to read on page 106.

Undoubtedly, the biggest highlight of the year, was presenting



Professor Ian Duncan (61-66) with the 2017 Merchistonian Award at the Annual Dinner on 24 November. It is fair to say that Ian has had an outstanding career in pursuing pioneering scientific research, and you can read more about his unbelievably impressive achievements when you turn the page.

A big 'thank you' for the time and commitment given, prior to leaving their respective office bearer roles, to: Iain Wright (60-65) (Committee); Bill Hannay (54-58) (Golf Captain) and Brendan Mc Kerchar (96-01) (London Rep). In return, I would like to extend a warm welcome to: Duncan Brown (98-02) (New Zealand Rep); John Bruce (76-81) (North East England Rep); Greg McCulloch (82-87) (Vancouver Rep); Allan Dobson (88-93) (Florida Rep); Stuart Walker (86-90) (Dubai Rep); Richard Bent (76-81) (Committee) and Luke Morrow (07-09) (Committee).

I am indebted to the committee, sport and area/overseas representatives for their time, energy and assistance with Club affairs and aim to speak with each of you over the course of the next year.

I must also extend a special thanks to Frazor Murphy (77-83), from ThinRedLine Design, who has been so committed to introducing a new Merchandise range for you.

Without Gill and Louise's drive and unbounded enthusiasm, the Club would not be in such a strong position, so special thanks must go to them for all of the hard work and commitment that they have given to the Merchistonian cause.

I encourage all Merchistonians to consider how they might assist and expand the Merchistonian family network. Please get in touch if you would like to join us at a committee meeting to meet the team and get involved. We meet quarterly to discuss Club matters and have introduced a dial in, so you can join us from any corner of the world.

Along with the rest of the Club Committee, I will strive to uphold the traditions, quirks and atmosphere that make this Club the place we all love.

If you still have questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or anyone else from the committee.

In the meantime, I look forward to meeting you at our upcoming events.

Ready Ay Ready

Matthew Gray (79-85)
President

Dates for your diary 2018

January

Friday 26 - Edinburgh Business Breakfast

March

Tuesday 6 - Careers Convention

Saturday 10 - Rifle and Clay Day

Monday 12 - Merchistonian Club AGM

Friday 30 - Edinburgh Business Breakfast

May

Saturday 19 - Class of '66 - '70, 50 Year Reunion

Friday 25 - Edinburgh Business Breakfast

June

Saturday 9 - Edinburgh Academical FC v Merchistonian FC

Monday 11 - Merchistonian Club Committee Meeting

September

Monday 10 - Merchistonian Club Committee Meeting

Friday 28 - Edinburgh Business Breakfast

November

London Drinks

Sunday 11 - Remembrance Service

Friday 30 - Edinburgh Business Breakfast

Friday 30 - Merchistonian Annual Dinner

December

Monday 10 - Merchistonian Club Committee Meeting

There will be many more Merchistonian events throughout the year and around the world: your Area and Sports 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 an email to merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk

Merchistonian Award 2017

Professor Ian Duncan (61-66) is this year's very worthy winner of the Merchistonian Award. It was a pleasure to have Ian (who travelled over especially from his home in the USA) and his brother Peter (63-67) join us at the Merchistonian Annual Dinner, where Ian was presented with the award.



When asked about Merchiston, Ian credits the School for his well-rounded early education, specifically identifying Ian Balfour Paul and Brian Thompson as inspirational mentors who guided him towards his much acclaimed research career. At Merchiston, Ian found a love for the outdoors and sport, which he pursued throughout his adult life, spending over 30 years competing as an endurance athlete.

Following his education at Merchiston, Ian trained in veterinary medicine at Glasgow University, followed by a

PhD in experimental neuropathology, and then did a Post-Doctoral Fellowship at McGill University, Montreal, funded by the Canadian MS Society, and later he became a Scholar of the Medical Research Council of Canada. He moved to the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1982, where he now holds a Named Professorship, "The Sir William Lee Weipers Professor of Veterinary Medicine."



Photo top: The presentation of the 2017 Merchistonian Award. From left: With Bjorn Daehlie (8 time gold medal Olympian) at the American Birkebeiner. Tackling Mont Ventoux, August 2017. Competing in Iron Man Wisconsin. With, Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte in 'Lorenzo's Oil'.

Weipers was the founding Dean of the Glasgow University Veterinary School and a mentor to Ian.

Since 1977, his research has focused on myelin, the insulating material of nerve fibers of the nervous system, and he has played a vital role in understanding the basic biology of inherited disorders of myelination of the central nervous system. He is recognised internationally for his range of scientific expertise as an integrative biologist. He has applied cellular and molecular techniques to explore and define the group of animals known as myelin mutants. Using these animals, he has defined how mutations in myelin genes affect the development and maintenance of myelin. Most recently, he identified a mutation in a rat that turned out to involve the same gene as in a rare myelin disease (leukodystrophy) of children. His lab is extensively involved in studying diseases such as multiple sclerosis (MS) where myelin is lost (demyelination), in regard to how to promote remyelination or repair. He has pioneered approaches to the transplantation of myelin-producing cells and has extensively explored cells such as embryonic stem cells as the origin of these cells. Most recently, his lab has defined the morphologic basis of remyelination and how remyelinated axons persist for decades. He has challenged the dogma that only immature cells (stem cells) can give rise to cells that replace myelin. This fundamental work is crucial to ongoing therapeutic approaches to MS.

Ian has been elected to a number of notable societies; most especially, he is a Corresponding Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists and Fellow of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts and Letters. In 2010, he was awarded the WSAVA International Award for Scientific Achievement and in 2015, the AVMA Lifetime Excellence in Research Award.

Ian's research on myelin and his outside interests in

endurance sports led him to help produce a documentary for Public Television called "Multiple Sclerosis, The Vikings and Nordic Skiing" (available on YouTube) with Steinar Hybertsen, a Norwegian-American film director. The documentary tells the story of MS and how outdoor aerobic activities such as cross country skiing benefit people with chronic diseases. The documentary follows six MS patients in the US and Norway as they train and take part in the Birkebeiner ski races in their countries.

Ian has been on the board of many scientific organisations, most notably The Myelin Project, which he has served on since its inception in 1989 and which he chaired. The Myelin Project arose from the story of Lorenzo Odone, a boy with adrenoleukodystrophy, a rare inherited disease of myelin. His parents, despite having no scientific background, discovered that an oil ("Lorenzo's Oil") could benefit their son's disease by improving the biochemical defect. The oil went on to become a therapy for the disease and the story was told in the acclaimed movie, "Lorenzo's Oil" starring Nick Nolte and Susan Sarandon. Ian was featured in the film, though played by a New York actor who had difficulty pronouncing Edinburgh!

Outside of work, Ian competed as an endurance athlete in cross country skiing, marathon canoe racing, running and triathlon. He has completed three Ironman (IM) triathlons finishing second in his age group, and he regularly has won his age group in half IMs and other distances. He has completed 32 American and three Norwegian Birkebeiner ski marathons (55K) and achieved a Gold Coureur de Bois award at the 160K Canadian Ski Marathon.

There can be no doubt that Ian has made a substantial impact on scientific investigation; he has had, and continues to have, an outstanding career in pursuing pioneering scientific research.



If you would like to submit a nomination for the Merchistonian Award 2018, please contact the Club Secretary at merchistonians@merchiston.co.uk by 28 February 2018 with supporting testimony.

Farewell from the Headmaster

Dear Merchistonians and Friends

Barbara and I will be standing down from Merchiston at the end of the academic year 2017-18. By then, we will have completed 20 years of service at Merchiston. It has been an enormous pleasure and privilege to be the custodian of this school. Our three children, Edward, Oliver and Laura, have grown up during this time and we have very much enjoyed living and working on this stunning campus on the outskirts of Edinburgh. This position, throughout all the challenges and joys, has been without question, the pinnacle of my professional career and our family has developed a great love for the School and its community. There is plenty we will miss but it is time to let someone else enjoy the privileges and challenges of leading this wonderful school through its next chapter.

It is perhaps enough for me to say that the School's reputation, in pupil support and pastoral care, academically, charitable endeavour, on the sports field and within the co-curricular programme is currently very strong. Therefore, I am confident this position will attract many first-rate applicants.

As you will know, we are fortunate to have a forward-looking, strong, supportive and committed Board of Governors; industrious, invigorating, imaginative and inspirational teams of staff; a wonderful, committed and talented pupil body, let alone parents, who over the years, have supported us and been alongside us on their own Merchiston Journey! We have appreciated the warmth extended to us from all Merchistonians as we have endeavoured to spread the name of Merchiston in Scotland, UK, Europe and the World.

We both feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for our time at Merchiston, for the belief in us, the hand of friendship, laughter and fun. No school is ever easy to run but it's all been a remarkable experience.

Let's bear in mind that premature nostalgia is almost as bad as premature goodbyes, so here's a resolution: to do our best to avoid any further mention of leaving over this academic year. There is much to do and relish in the interim.

With our very best wishes

Andrew and Barbara Hunter



Headmaster's Headlines



I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the School's progress throughout the last academic year, 2016-17. Merchistonians can also follow the School's news on Twitter @merchnews.

It was a great pleasure to welcome 102 new pupils and their families to the Merchiston community at the start of the year, we trust that they will feel at home here and part of the Merchiston way of life.

Peter Hall

Mr Peter Hall retired after an incredible, 33 years' service to the learning and teaching profession at Merchiston. Peter's progression at Merchiston has been fascinating: joining the English Department in 1984; Head of Drama from 1986 to 1996; masterminding the annual skiing trip for many years; helping with the choir tours to Austria, Hong Kong and the USA; often being a soloist in the performances of the Merchiston/Colinton Community Choir and Choral Society.

In terms of Peter's journey to pupil support and pastoral care, over the years he has been a Pringle Tutor and a Rogerson West Tutor. With his wife Marjorie, Peter moved into Pringle House as the residential Tutor in 1989. Thereafter, Peter became the Pringle Housemaster. I appointed Peter to the new position of Head of the Junior School in 1999, whilst he remained a fully committed senior school teacher. Peter then became Senior Deputy Head in 2012. Some will know that these four years have seen great change. In terms of my tenure, Peter has had the hardest job of all of my Deputy Heads over 19 years.

There are many excellent qualities that Peter has had as a leader, for which I am extremely grateful. In particular, I remember his close support of the Forum of Housemasters; the mentoring of new staff; the mentoring of Heads of Houses/Senior Prefects through their weekly meetings and the annual Heads of House

Dinner hosted by Marjorie and Peter.

When one describes somebody as being committed and hard-working, it is not fulsome enough. Peter exudes warmth, kindness, love, honesty, positivity, energy, enthusiasm, and all the good things we need and respond to. Peter has the ability to make tough decisions, an attribute which all of us at times need; yet simultaneously, in times of change, he is very supportive. From my point of view, he steadied the ship of the whole of Merchiston, and he has always dealt with so many aspects of the Merchiston way of life without fuss or fanfare, and with a remarkable sense of candidness and discretion.

I am sure you will all join me in congratulating Peter on an outstanding career at Merchiston. He has really made a difference.

Academic Results

This year's A Level examination results day saw the usual flurry of activity in School. 47% gained grades A*/A, compared to 43% in the 2015-16 academic year.

The School's combined A*, A, and B grade pass rate was a highly gratifying 75%. 56% of successful pupils have achieved places at the prestigious Russell Group of universities.

Turning to our GCSE results, the pass rate A*-C this year was 94%, 3% lower than last year.

Moreover, 61% gained grades A*/A compared to last year's 59%; the School's combined A*, A, and B grade pass rate was 4% lower than last year's at 82%. We are delighted that two pupils achieved 10 A/A* grades and 16 pupils were awarded 9 A/A*s.

We received four places at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

These glowing results are a real testament to the hard work, drive and talent of our pupils and staff – well done to one and all!

Careers

Careers Education has once again been very wide ranging. Various career areas were put under the spotlight during the Careers Café programme in the Autumn and Lent Terms, with fund management, gap years, film and media, the British Army, surveying, and alternative healthcare (chiropractic and physiotherapy) taking centre stage this time around.

In addition to this, the Shell year group attended a one-off event in the shape of 'Careers Speed Dating'.

Other education components have been provided through drop-in clinics focused on CV writing and work experience, with the Stewart Ivory Financial Education Trust delivering a session on managing finances.

A major component of the careers calendar which bridged education and guidance was the Merchiston Careers Convention in the Lent Term. The convention offered the opportunity for the pupils to raise their awareness of career areas as well as to seek guidance from a diverse range of employers, in what was a packed and very engaged Memorial Hall. We remain keen to increase representation of Merchistonians and their companies at this event, as it is clear that the pupils find it easier to engage with them due to a common link.

The Convention ran alongside the Merchiston Juniors' Career Week, in which a number of speakers presented to the pupils. The discussions post-presentation were lively, which again highlighted that Careers education and guidance is in no way only for those with the end of schooling in sight.

Co-curriculum

The School's ethos of all-round personal development places great emphasis on participation and active involvement in co-curricular activities. In line with Curriculum for Excellence, Merchiston understands the importance of the recognition of wider achievement, which aims to give credit to achievement in non-academic areas, as well as to attainment in examinations. We believe that sport and co-curricular activities are just as important as academic pursuits.

Art and Design

Once again, the highpoint for the Art and Design Department was our summer exhibition. This exciting display of the pupils' creative endeavours encompassed the First Form's mixed media representations of chickens and rabbits, the exciting collaged self-portraits of the Second Form, the expressive landscape paintings

and sculptural insects of the Third Form and the very popular themes of graffiti and the 'wacky' teacups from the Fourth Form. The Shell and Fifth Form have explored the more traditional themes of Impressionism, Pop Art and Cubism in their work. Although at this stage in their artistic journey, our Sixth Form artists explore themes of a more personal choice, there was a strong leaning towards portraiture.

It was pleasing to see how both digital and film photography are being investigated and used imaginatively and ever more creatively. It is remarkable how adept our pupils have become at using new technology, and how quickly this has taken place.

Music

The year kicked off in emphatic style with the teachers' instrumental concert, with many notable performances. Following on, the first pupil performances were in November's Pringle lunchtime concert, with solos from eight pupils, half of whom were new students. The first opportunity to showcase the department's various instrumental groups was at the Choral and Instrumental Concert.

The Pipe Band performed at the School's Burns Supper, while pupils from Pringle to Upper Sixth entertained the residents of Old Farm Court with a programme of Burns songs and traditional tunes.

The Summer Term saw a Whole School Service of Commemoration; the Chapel Choir performed Stanford's magnificent anthem "For Lo I Raise Up".

Schools from across the city descend within our castle walls for the Junior School's evening of music at the end of the first half of the term. It was a lovely evening's music-making with strong performances from each ensemble, and the final massed rendition of "Down to the River to Pray" was another memorable moment.

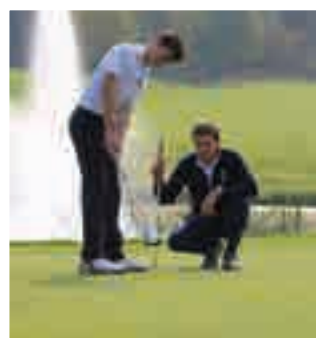
I must recognise the dedication of our School's organist, David Turner, as he steps down from full time employment at Merchiston. His abilities as a conductor, organist, accompanist and teacher of Music are only matched by his patience, and his resolve to do things the right way.

Drama

Merchiston's actors were on stage in three different productions. Our Fifth and Lower Sixth Form actors, alongside pupils from St George's, performed Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest".

Four intrepid actors went over to St George's to take





part in their musical production of "Little Shop of Horrors". The show itself was impressive, with strong performances and excellent music.

The Lent Term saw the triumphant return to the director's chair of former Head of Drama, Mrs Binnie. She chose "The Jungle Book" as the Pringle musical – and what a show! "Jungle Book" was an absolute triumph of song, dance and all-round energy that will be a tough act to follow.

Rugby

In rugby, the School has had another successful year with Roddy Deans as our Director of Rugby, ably assisted by David Blair. The rugby season started well on the back of the very successful senior tour to New Zealand in August.

There were block rugby fixtures against George Watson's, Edinburgh Academy, High School of Dundee, Stewart's Melville, Sedbergh, Dollar, Strathallan and Glenalmond.

We were crowned winners of the SRU Red Conference for the second year in a row. Unfortunately, the 1XV and the U16As lost both Scottish Cup semi-finals against eventual winners, Stewart's Melville and St Aloysius. However, the C1s remained unbeaten this season and the U13 Sevens team won the Loretto Sevens tournament, with the F1s finishing as runners up.

Our 1XV performed for the 18th time at the annual St Joseph's Festival, Ipswich, now in its 30th year. We finished in third place overall; a fantastic achievement. Our U15XV once again travelled down to the festival at Langley Park School. After a disappointing first day, they performed very well on the Sunday, winning the Shield competition.

The 1VII, alongside the U16 VII, won the Merchiston Sevens Cups respectively. This is the third year in a row that the U16s have won this event. The U16s were also victorious at the Heriot's tournament this year.

We are also delighted to announce that there are 17 pupils in the Scotland underage training camps. There have also been a number of pupils who have played for, or been selected to represent Scotland at different underage levels.

Golf

This season has been another very successful season for Alan Murdoch and his wonderful team of instructors at the Merchiston Golf Academy. This year's numbers remain healthy, with 18 pupils enrolled from five different countries and, interestingly, two new pupils

from Thailand and Canada. It just goes to show how attractive the School's name is throughout the world.

Our two Merchiston U18 teams reached the Scottish regional finals, with the Merchiston "B" team coming out eventual winners and qualifying to play in the UK national finals.

At the ISGA Scottish National Open, the U18 team finished in a very creditable third place. In the same event, the U15 team won the team national title.

This has been an incredible season for the U13 golf team as they won every national event in the UK. They remain at the top of the ISGA national school rankings list. At the ISGA Juniors' School Cup, the pupils were pipped into second place, with a very strong Hall Grove team winning the title.

This year has seen the introduction of 9-hole medal competitions for the pupils, and the introduction of an internal competition to help further the pupils' progress. The winner of this competition receives the special Arnold Palmer Trophy - Mr Palmer's 2 iron that he used to win the 1966 US Masters, kindly donated by Andrew Hadden (93-00).

Swimming

Building on last year's successes, the swimming team has had many new and return fixtures. Notable outings included wins against Loretto, Fettes, Clifton Hall and Sedbergh, a well-fought joint competition with St George's against ESMS and an enjoyable new match against Firrhill. Merchiston was well-represented at the Edinburgh Schools' Championships, despite the competition falling during weekend leave.

Football

In football, the 1XI has had an excellent season. Mr Lieberman's enthusiasm and expertise towards the senior football programme continues to rub off on the pupils. His commitment to developing each and every boy has been first class. Mr Monteith has also been helping with the staffing of more 2XI fixtures, which we will look to enhance next year. We had three pupils who were selected for Scottish Independent Schools' matches throughout the year.

Basketball

The basketball team played 12 fixtures this year, winning six; of these five were in the second term, just showing how much improvement had been made over the course of the year. It is a young squad with an exciting group of players coming through the ranks. Mr Sanford

has taken over as coach, following on from Mr Capaldi.

Squash

There were 17 fixtures across three age groups in squash. The senior team progressed well throughout the year, recording good wins against Edinburgh Academy and Fettes.

Athletics

In athletics, there have been some impressive performances. The senior squad won five medals at the Scottish Schools' Championships, including the 4 x 400m. This is a fantastic achievement, as all of these pupils are products of the School's athletics programme and none is a club runner. There were also 12 medals won at the Edinburgh Schools' Championships, including gold in the javelin, 400m and high jump. The junior athletes also tasted success as winners of the HMC North of England Athletics Championships. The new format of the Junior and Senior Games, integrating the Senior Clan Competition, seems to be popular and is continuing to build momentum.

Tennis

In tennis, David Brewer continues to raise the bar in his second year with us. There are more pupils playing more tournaments than ever before: 423 events, 49 titles won and 34 finalists. He has introduced Saturday afternoon tennis for the Tennis Academy and has also helped develop the club team, which is for pupils who want to play tennis fixtures outside of the Tennis Academy.

The U13 and U15 teams have won the Scottish Schools' and AEGON Regional Schools' Finals. The U15s were crowned UK National Champions, beating Millfield to win the title. The U13s finished in third place at the same event, after a close play-off win against Leicester Grammar School. It was a year to remember for our senior U18 pupils. A second place finish at the ISF World Schools' Championships in Brazil was an experience that these pupils will remember for the rest of their lives. A highlight was their win over England (Reed's School), whom they have never beaten before. Since this, they have secured the Scottish Schools' Title for the eighth time in 10 years.

Cricket

In cricket, there were 14 teams and over 100 fixtures played in just 10 weeks. The 1XI won all but one of its Saturday fixtures, with excellent wins against Loretto,

Glenalmond and Edinburgh Academy. They reached the final of this year's Scottish Schools' Cup where they won against George Watson's, Stewart's Melville and The High School of Glasgow, but lost to a strong Fettes side in the final.

There was also a successful tour to Sri Lanka in Easter 2017, which provided pupils with a wonderful opportunity to visit a cricket mad country! There have been 1XI debuts for pupils in Chalmers West and Chalmers East this year, which is a great sign for the future. The U15 XI had an excellent season, winning all but one match and beating Glenalmond in the final of the Scottish Schools' T20 Cup for the second year running. Both the U14 XI and Pringle 1XI finished the season with some good performances.

Combined Cadet Force

Merchiston and St George's continue to work together as a CCF Contingent. 19 voluntary cadets from Fifth Form and Upper Sixth paraded for the start of a new training year with the CCF. Also on parade were 58 pupils from Shell starting a new activity within the School.

This year saw the largest number of voluntary cadets attending a CCF Camp from this contingent, with 32 boys and 40 girls from St George's in attendance.

Outdoor Education

Every boy in the Senior School has to attempt the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, with the opportunity to progress to Silver or Gold as he moves up through the School.

This year, excellent team work was displayed by all pupils on the mountain biking trip to Glentress Forest. Whilst tired, the pupils showed admirable optimism and team spirit.

Canoeing was also a popular alternative choice for Duke of Edinburgh Award qualifying expeditions and a group enjoyed a wet, yet wonderful trip on the River Tweed, taking lots of fun experiences and memories home with them.

Other outdoor activities are accessible through weekly clubs, Sunday trips, or more extended excursions during the school holidays.

Koinonia – Teamwork with the Community

The Lower Sixth programme of events was expanded exponentially this year, with our pupils now working in the Gorgie Foodbank, Davidson House, Braidburn

School, Longstone rugby training and mentoring with Place2be.

It is thanks to these efforts and the pupils of Merchiston that we can honestly say we are 'giving back' to the local community, and that community values and community service are at the heart of the modern Merchiston.

Chaplaincy and Services

The Morning Assemblies and Sunday Chapel Services are an integral part of School life. This year, we have had seven outstanding whole School Services.

Olivia Giles, founder of the charity 500 Miles, gave a humbling talk and clarion call to service and to utilising our gifts at the Harvest Festival.

We welcomed Rob Moffat, coach, teacher and sage, back to School to address us at our Commemoration Service. His message was simple and profound: positivity, thankfulness, and service are the keys to successful living. In February we were treated to a very special Senior Prefects' Service, led by the Captain of School. The important Service of Remembrance and Dedication took place with Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas

Mackay as the guest speaker.

Mrs Smita Suchde Grütter and son, Siddharth Suchde (99-03), delivered an inspirational talk entitled 'Stepping Out of your Comfort Zone' at our annual Prizegiving ceremony.

Other School Services included the Whole School Start of Term Service and the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Looking Forward

The tradition of academic and sporting excellence, for which the School has become rightly known, is sound and there are many exciting and rewarding opportunities ahead for the School, including the opening of Merchiston Castle International School, Shenzhen in September 2018. In time, I look forward to hearing about the completion of "It's time for sport" leisure facilities, which will make the Merchiston Journey for any pupil an even more remarkable experience.

Thank you for your support.

With very best wishes

Andrew Hunter



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Bill Wilson Memorial Prize 2017



Alasdair Nicholls (09-17) received the 2017 Bill Wilson Memorial Prize and used the opportunity to travel to the Peruvian Amazon. Alasdair reflects upon his time spent mapping rivers, exploring cloud forests and building bio gardens...

I went to the Peruvian Amazon for five weeks, it was amazing! The first three weeks were spent in the jungle in the Manu National Park. Basecamp was situated underneath the Piñi Piñi Ridge, alongside the Madre de Dios River. It was very remote; the closest town was a place called Salvación which was about eight hours away by road and two hours by river or foot. My 'fire' (or group) managed to do several projects and expeditions.

The first project was mapping the Olivetti River. This river was a small tributary to the Madre de Dios and ran by our camp; it was where we collected water from. In order to map it, we started at the confluence of the Madre de Dios and the Olivetti and recorded important data at set intervals. Data included the bearing, the channel width, the GPS location, and many other smaller, less important measurements. This river had never been accurately mapped before and the map we managed to produce will be put up in the Royal Geographical Society which is very exciting!

The second project involved walking along the bottom of the ridge to a more open area of the jungle called the wetlands where we could do some bird spotting and make sound recordings. These sound recordings will be sent to a researcher who will analyse them.

Our final project was to get to the top of the Piñi Piñi Ridge. It was a five-day expedition which took a lot of time to prepare and get ready for. We couldn't take any extra clothes with us (no need really) as we were all carrying a lot of group equipment, mainly food! On the first night of this expedition we camped very high up and then the following day pushed on up to the top of the ridge to where the cloud forest was, peaking at over 1000m above sea level.

The cloud forest was magical, there was moss everywhere, thick enough to sink your hand in to, and we could once again see the sky (we had been under the canopy for a long time!). I loved the cloud forest.

We then trekked back down and packed up basecamp as the next two weeks were going to be spent in Salvación doing community work. We helped Crees, a Peruvian, non-profitable organisation who work alongside people living in the rainforest, building bio gardens. These bio gardens allowed the people living there to have an opportunity to grow their own food. This meant that they could have better diets by eating home grown food, they wouldn't need to chop the forest down to make space for farmland, they would have produce to sell, and they wouldn't need to buy food which had been exported from Cusco, an 11 hour bus ride away.

The bio gardens were fun to build and we managed to finish four of them; four families were better off! We also worked with Crees to help farmers on their banana plantations. Banana trees are vulnerable to fungi growths and insects if they aren't peeled. Therefore, we worked on the plantations peeling the trees, macheting around them so no other plants may grow to compete with them, and painting the trees' bases (the paint was anti-fungi and anti-insect). Working on the plantation was repetitive, hard work but ultimately very rewarding, and I now have an appreciation of how much work goes into producing the bananas that are in supermarkets.

We then spent a couple of days in Cusco before we made our way back to the UK. During my trip, I had my birthday and results day. On my birthday, we were leaving the jungle to go to Salvación and so there was no time for cake (or any equivalent). Instead I had 'Happy Birthday' sung to me 18 times from 6am to 11pm. They sung to me on the hour, every hour. They did wake me up several times; but who am I to complain, I had my 18th birthday in the jungle!

Overall, this was an unforgettable experience and I would like to thank the School for awarding me the Bill Wilson Memorial Prize which helped fund my trip.

The Merchiston Travelling Scholarship 2017



An insight into the post earthquake effects in Kaudi Gau, Nepal; Calum Macniel (11-16) recounts his three-month expedition funded by the Upper Sixth Travelling Scholarship.

In February, I travelled to the rural province of Gorkha in Nepal, alongside a group of British and Nepali volunteers, to help in rural communities with post-earthquake livelihood development. The organisation that I went with was the International Citizen Service under Raleigh International.

We began our three-month placement in the bustling city of Kathmandu, where we received lessons in Nepali culture, basic first aid and information about our project work. After a quick acclimatisation to both the food and the humidity of Nepal, we went on placement to the small village of Kaudi Gau, located seven hours away from Kathmandu.

The journey to the village was an adventure in itself, travelling along the side of a mountain ridge, after a worrying few hours, we arrived at the remote village of Kaudi Gau. The welcome that we received was astonishing: the whole village had stopped work to come and greet us and, after an initial meeting, we were introduced to our hosts and went to visit their homes. My host family was very welcoming and treated me like a member of the family; each day they made me the traditional dish of Dal Bhat. Staying with a host family was a major part of my experience: it allowed me to see how the locals lived and worked, whilst being fully immersed in the culture and the language. During



our three months in Nepal, the village integrated us into its festivals, with one of the highlights being the festival of Holi, which involved throwing coloured dye to ward off bad spirits. These festivals involved everyone in the community, something you do not see often in the UK.

At the beginning of the placement, our main aim was to integrate into the community. We met with various village elders and group leaders to help us understand the challenges the village faced. It became apparent that there was a severe lack of young people: due to low wages, it was common for them to travel abroad in a

search for higher paid work. This meant that there were fewer young people working in the reconstruction of houses damaged by the earthquake.

Another of our project aims was to find out more information about the village. To do this, we visited each of the 40 households and conducted a survey about what farming techniques they used and how the earthquake had affected them. We then relayed our findings to our charity partner.

In the second month, we began to do more work alongside our local charity partner. This allowed us to provide training in various skills such as agriculture, the



impact of climate change and livestock. To help gain a better understanding about agriculture in the village, we spent a few days working in the fields with our host families. We used hand tools to plough the terraced fields and by the end of the few days, I had blisters covering my hands.

Doing these various jobs made me more aware of how lucky we are to have modern technologies and techniques in the UK.

The last phase of my stay involved developing business skills within the village. With a lack of young people and a stagnated economy, most of the village's

income comes from remittances from abroad. To help diversify the villagers' income, we helped some of them write out business plans and gave small loans to certain projects. This was an insightful experience: I was able to see both the problems with setting up a business in a developing economy as well as the passion that many of the villagers showed.

Experiencing life in a small, developing community in Nepal for three months has been life changing. I have a greater understanding of the problems that people in developing countries face and I have a strong drive to volunteer for similar projects in the future.



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Fundraising and Development Update



Architectural design for Paties Road Sports Ground.

An enormous ‘thank you’ to everyone who has contributed and those who continue to contribute towards the fundraising for the ‘Time for Sport’ sport and leisure facilities appeal.

When we launched our campaign to raise £4 million towards the £12 million costs of new sports facilities, we set out upon the most incredible journey which has taken us on a fascinating path.

The very good news that I can deliver to you is that we will achieve everything that we set out to in our original plans, but not in quite the way that we had expected. As we have progressed, we have seen changed circumstances, but been uplifted by wonderful and unexpected new opportunities. Let me tell you about it.

The first phase of our work is complete, and the pupils are enjoying the benefits. Parents and Merchistonians helped us raise an amazing £3 million towards the project. We have our first all-weather pitch in what was the back field, which is now in near constant use for hockey, tennis and football. Even in the evenings, pupils are queuing up to book tennis courts, and play under the lights. We have also renovated the cricket pavilion, creating new changing rooms, showers, toilets and catering facilities. What a transformation!

Every time I see the pupils using our new facilities, I am reminded of the generosity of everyone who made this possible.

However, it hasn’t all been plain sailing. As you probably know, the independent school market has

changed in recent times, and in particular, the impact of Brexit and the prospect of Indy Ref 2 have created uncertainty, particularly for European pupil recruitment. In this climate, along with the governors, I must think first of the School’s financial strength. In rapidly changing market conditions, we cannot put pressure on the delivery of the quality education the pupils receive, and so we simply could not commit to such a substantial spend on new sports facilities.

However, we desperately want to deliver for the current generation, and for their successors. I am delighted to report that, despite these challenges, we will be able to do so.

Sometimes it is extraordinary how things work out, isn’t it? Whilst I was thinking hard about how to get this job done, the capacity to do so presented itself, in the form of two of the most remarkable opportunities I could imagine.

As we pondered the next stage of the project, replacing the swimming pool, creating a new sports complex adjoining the current sports hall and putting down a new artificial rugby/football pitch, our conversations led us down an unexpected route, with an opportunity to collaborate with local sports clubs operating on the City of Edinburgh Council recreation park adjacent to the School.

This will provide us with the 3G rugby/football pitch with all the benefits that go with that facility, and the council has suggested that it would support locating a

swimming pool onto this site as well.

This is even better than our original plan, as we will be afforded the opportunity to work with our neighbours, supporting sport in our local community. We will be able to create charitable activities which support disadvantaged young people, enabling them to develop their sporting potential. This is a privilege and a great thing for us to be able to do.

A new charity will be established to run these facilities and the trustees of this new body hope to apply for planning permission for the sports ground improvements in early 2018.

But what, I hear you ask, of our planned new sports complex? Well, that too is an aspiration that will be realised, with the help of the second opportunity that we have identified.

For any of you who follow independent schools' progress south of the border, you cannot fail to have noticed the growth in big (and not so big) brand name schools opening in overseas markets, generating income for the home school. I am delighted to say that Merchiston has been approached by a former parent, who, at his own expense, is establishing an international school chain in China, drawing on Merchiston's brand. The first of these schools will open in Shenzhen, in September 2018.

Working with our former parent, I have pulled together a team of professionals led by the Deputy Chairman of the School's Governors, Dr Duncan Moore (72-77), to progress this opportunity, ensuring Edinburgh life is not disrupted in any way. Our Development Director, David Rider, has been doing

much of the day to day planning and liaison with China. Significantly, this means that I am not drawn away from the essential task of looking after the pupils' education, here in Edinburgh. I am indebted to Duncan and David for the marvellous work they are doing.

Providing a Merchiston education in China is a tantalising prospect. At the same time, the overseas income generated will help us to do all the more for our pupils here at home.

What an incredibly exciting time this has been. I hope I have been able to convey something of the 'ups' and 'downs' of our journey – which has featured rather more 'ups' than 'downs', I might observe. I am very grateful to all of the people who have made it possible: our fabulous staff and governors, City of Edinburgh Council and our friends in local sports teams, our very generous former parent in China, and, most of all, every one of you who generously donated.

It makes me very pleased to be able to tell you that 'Time for Sport' will now achieve everything that we set out for it to do, even if by a somewhat different implementation route than we had expected. I would reflect that this is one of the things we try to teach the pupils. Life does not always proceed exactly as you expect it. However, you have to have the alacrity of mind and the flexibility of purpose to make the very best of the circumstances before you, to achieve the outcomes that are important. We hope that a good education will help the boys, as they grow into men, to do just that.

Andrew Hunter, Headmaster

Architectural design for the new International School.



"Creativity is intelligence having fun"

Albert Einstein

Since leaving School, Frazor Murphy (77-83) has worked with some of the top design agencies and consultancies in Edinburgh and London, and works on many major blue chip accounts.

Now an award-winning graphic designer and photographer, with Scottish Design, SWOT and Precision Marketing awards, Frazor's 30 years' creative industry experience have led to specialist skills in idea generation, graphic design & illustration, printing techniques and photography.

He is a founding partner of ThinRedLine Design, an Edinburgh-based agency offering graphic design for company literature, brochures and corporate identity, websites, photography, marketing, and branded product solutions.

ThinRedLine is an artistic hub with a wide range of freelance support services; with creatives working in Switzerland, Australia and India, and drop shipping with manufacturers in Hungary and Poland. Its established industry knowledge and ability to source the right creative team and products mean client marketing needs, no matter how big or small the project, are facilitated with the support of optimum studio resources. It has worked within many industries, including financial services, retail, tourism, property and construction, the Scottish Government, manufacturing





Iain Wright (60-65) and Matthew Gray (79-85).



Richard Bent (76-81) and Chris Gray (75-81).

and education.

A now valued member of the Merchistonian Club Committee - press-ganged earlier this year after initially thinking he had been invited as a one-off to provide advice on Club Merchandise - Frazor's company has used its extensive branding and marketing expertise to help establish the Club's new range of highly desirable, top quality garments, that arrive direct to your door - emblazoned with the Merchistonian crest.

Frazor enjoys his involvement with the Merchistonian Club, fully appreciating the opportunity to meet up with

old friends and make new ones too, even picking up a golf club for the first time in eight years whilst attending the recent Merchistonian golf and drinks event in Newcastle!

As a businessman, the Club has also provided Frazor the chance to network and establish professional links; ThinRedLine Design is now working with Graeme Crossly (95-99) of Bloodhound Digital and Matthew Gray (79-85) of Gilson Gray.

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From the Playing Field to the Medical Field

Life is series of twists and turns. Here Duncan Brown (98-02) shares his story of how his strongest ambition ricocheted to something a world apart. When life gives you avocados make guacamole!

Growing up on a farm in Carstairs with younger brother Fraser (01-07), Mum (Nicky) and Dad (Pete), Merchiston was just a pipe dream. There was no family tie to the School but my father's old Headmaster, Bill Donaldson (44-49), had been a Housemaster at Merchiston and I was told that if I wanted to play rugby for Scotland I needed to go to Merchiston - I was in second year at Biggar High School before it seemed like

a real possibility. My great aunty put aside some money for my schooling but I needed a scholarship to meet the fees. I had extra tuition from mum, and my uncle via fax machine, and was so determined to take my chance that I had started to wet myself by the end of the entrance exam rather than lose time going to the bathroom!

I started Merchiston in the final term of Chalmers West with a skinhead, a puffa jacket and a wicked

Feature

nervous twitch and if it were not for the kind words and encouragement of JRB I might never have settled in. Generations of us owe our enthusiasm and sense of adventure to a man who can never be replaced.

I loved my time at Merchiston and was honoured to be Captain of School in my last year. Life was never boring and mentioning only a few stories or names would be an injustice to the rest. Suffice to say that the only place with sufficient security for our year group to go on rugby tour was Belfast, twice...

I had no real academic aspirations when I joined Merchiston but left with four Science A levels and a place at medical school which is a tribute to the hard work of my teachers. GCSEs in English and German were nothing short of miracles as I could barely read or spell and opened my German oral exam with the phrase "I am horny" – I was completely stitched up by some last minute 'advice' from a 6b German exchange student!

Sport played a big part in my life at School. An unbeaten B1 season, back to back Scottish Schools' Cups and a gold medal in the 4 x 100m at the Scottish Championships are amongst my fondest memories. Amid many outstanding teachers, Charles Swan and Tony Millard were big influences. Charles was my rugby coach every year at Merchiston. He kept me honest and got the best out of those he coached. I probably owe the fact I live in New Zealand to Tony and the horizons which were opened to me on a trip to Fiji in 2000.

I wanted a rugby career when I left School, but was naïve, and probably never good enough. I travelled in the Pacific for five months with friends and played for a season in Australia before starting medical studies at Durham University (joint with Newcastle) in 2003. I captained Yorkshire to the U20 County Championship at Twickenham but ended the season with injuries to both shoulders. I spent two years out of the game after surgery and although I got back playing club rugby my aspirations of a professional career were over. It was a difficult time in my life. Rugby had provided my purpose and my place in the social pecking order. Without it I was insecure and self-conscious. I was lucky to be in medical training and during this time I met Jen (my wife), started surfing and focused on medicine. In hindsight it was a pivotal time: that was the making of the life I have now.

I qualified in 2008 and worked for two years as a junior doctor in Newcastle. I planned to join the Army after this for some adventure, but in the end valued my freedom too much. I withdrew my application and in September 2010 Jen and I moved to New Zealand to start our own adventure.

We fell in love with Taranaki on the west coast of the North Island, living for the first few years on the beach with the backdrop of the 2800m high volcano. Despite not being on the main tourist route, Taranaki was rated by Lonely Planet as the second best place in the world to visit this year. A place you can



Fraser Brown, Hilary Fisher and Duncan Brown.





ski and surf in the same day.

We enjoyed our new lifestyle so much that we stayed and I began my specialist training in anaesthesia while Jen trained as a GP. Our son Fraser (jnr) was born in 2015 and having completed four more years of training at Waikato Hospital we returned to Taranaki, so that I could start a consultant job.

Anaesthesia is a perfect mix of science, drugs, practical procedures and adrenalin. You work closely with the surgeons and theatre team, and interact with a lot of patients. Combining work in anaesthesia and intensive care in a regional hospital brings variety and a healthy degree of fear. You deal with everything; from infants to the elderly, obstetrics, major trauma, elective surgical procedures, helicopter retrieval work and the critically ill. You share the joy of new arrivals or a life saved but also the devastation of a bad outcome or a life lost. You have to think and act quickly but you get to wear pyjamas at work as compensation. After 14 years of training and exams the real work is only beginning. Medicine is a life of learning.

On our return to Taranaki, we bought a small farm and avocado orchard to balance our busy medical lives. It has been an exciting experience for us novices, and in time we would like to develop a market garden, and possibly a 'paddock to plate' business. Brother Fraser (snr), set us up with an Instagram account to document our progress but with full time jobs, a two year old and too many hobbies, it is slow progress. Fortunately, in this beautiful corner of the world we are in no rush.

The hardest thing about life in New Zealand is distance from family and missing Fraser's rugby. I spend a lot of time watching his games, in the small hours, in the dark with the dog. We never miss a game and flying across to watch the victory over Australia in Sydney this summer was a special experience. We visited Suva the weekend after the match, it was a great opportunity to catch up with Merchistonians Hillary Fisher (00-02) and Kele Qiodravu (01-03), who hadn't seen Fraser since he was in Pringle.

My advice to young Merchistonians is to have things you are passionate about, people you care about and a way of contributing to society. These things will keep you content in life and Merchiston helped provide these for me. Expect your goals to change with time, and move on when things don't go to plan. I did not envisaged when I left School that I would be doing what I am doing now and may have been disappointed if you'd told me. I'm not sure what our next adventure will be but likely something completely different again. For now this chapter is about avocados, surfing, raising a family and midnight rugby.

As the NZ Merchistonian representative I'd like to invite anyone in New Zealand or the smaller Pacific islands to get in touch via email (duncanjmbrown@gmail.com) or join our Facebook group "NZ and South Pacific Merchistonians" to keep updated with correspondence and social gatherings or even information about living in New Zealand.

Calling all Students

“Sorry, you don’t have enough work experience.” Read how Daryll Morrow (08-10) and Luke Morrow (07-09) are turning this platitude into an enterprise with Udrafter.



Daryll and Luke attended Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen where they both played for the local rugby team Gordonians RFC. Luke graduated in 2013 with BSc (Hons) in Architectural Technology and Daryll in 2016 with an MSc in International Business. They credit Merchiston for their academic achievements: “if it had not been for the support and knowledge that we gained through our time at Merchiston we would not have had the great opportunity to study at such a brilliant university”. In Daryll’s postgraduate year, he was working on a university project when he first thought of the idea that established Udrafter.

Udrafter is an online platform where local businesses and individuals can post one-off jobs or tasks to be completed by skilled students in the local area. “We are an on demand recruitment service, giving businesses a chance to set a price that they believe is fair. We provide a wide range of different student skillsets all in one user friendly platform.

“We came up with the name after watching the NFL draft in America. We wanted to create a mirror image concept of student athletes being drafted into the professional football league. The beauty of Udrafter is that

our clients have complete creative freedom to post jobs that they need help with; gardening to graphic design.”

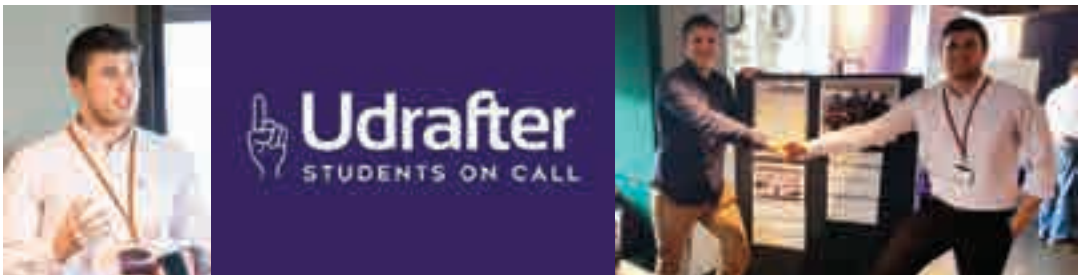
Daryll and Luke have spent 12 weeks working on an Elevator UK Accelerator Programme in Aberdeen. Here they received high quality business advice delivered through interactive workshops, pitch training and exposure to industry experts.

They have just received some initial funding from Business Gateway through a By Design Grant, which offers start-up businesses an opportunity to test and manufacture their specific technologies. The brothers will be pitching for a £10,000 grant at the final of the Young Scottish EDGE Competition and, if successful, they will be invited to the Scottish EDGE final at RBS Gogarburn to receive the award.

Moving into next year, Daryll and Luke will be aiming to officially launch the Udrafter platform in Aberdeen, with hopes to expand the service into Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee later in 2019.

If you would like to find out more please get in touch with Daryll – daryll@udrafter.com or follow their start-up journey on Facebook –

www.facebook.com/udrafter/ or www.udrafter.com





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The Stars: My Destination

Connor is leaving no stone unturned and has made a life changing decision which will take him on a career path not travelled by many.

Do you have any stand out memories from School?

I have countless great memories; it is hard to pick one.

The first time I played for the 1XV has to be the one that stands out the most. It was the first game of the season and I was playing for the 2XV. Just after half time, I was called over to the 1XV match, due to injury. All I can remember thinking on the run over was: 'forget how tired you are and just don't mess up!' I was very nervous but excited at the same time.

Do you have any memorable teachers?

Throughout my time at Merchiston, two teachers really helped me, especially in the latter years.

Being the School Chaplain, Mr Blair is well known to everyone. He made every effort to know every boy individually and I just always found we had a good rapport. Since my accident, we've kept in close contact and it always makes me smile when I receive an email or call from Mr Blair.

Mrs Prini-Garcia was my Housemaster during my final year. Despite the trouble I caused in Fourth Form Spanish, I was one of the Prefects in her House. Mrs Prini was close to all the Prefects in the house and I always loved popping round for a cup of tea and a madeleine after prep.

You visited Merchiston at Prizegiving 2016 to receive The Merchistonian Club 150th Anniversary Salver. What was it like to come back?

Very strange at first! Driving back down the drive felt like going through some sort of time travel. After a warm welcome and seeing some familiar faces, I soon felt right back at home. It was great to be back: I did not realise just how important Merchiston was to me until I returned. The School has had a massive impact on me.

Are you still in touch with your Merchiston friends?

I've been in touch with many from my year group since leaving. They are spread far and wide, with most now finished university and starting work. The two I've kept in closest contact with are Jamie Dagg (06-12) and Jock Galbraith (07-12).

Jamie and I spent the first month of our gap year exploring Hong Kong before going our separate ways. Jamie headed to Australia and I left for New Zealand. Jamie has now completed his degree in agriculture and is on the hunt for the perfect job. Jock has been enjoying work at Strutt & Parker for several years now.

A serious spinal cord injury sustained whilst playing rugby at university in 2014, left Connor quadriplegic.



For any current pupil unsure what step to take after Merchiston, would you recommend travelling?

I'd highly recommend travelling! I learnt a lot during my time away, got to see some fantastic sights and had a lot of fun doing it. The only reason I'd not recommend it is if your university position won't allow.

I loved Hong Kong. It was just so different to any other place I've visited. Whether it is beaches with palm trees or the big booming central city district, Hong Kong did not disappoint.

You recently participated in the Etape Caledonia. Tell us a little bit more about that:

Etape Caledonia is an annual closed road cycle event. It is a challenging 81 miles, starting and concluding in Pitlochry. Every year, Marie Curie is the main charity: whilst you can enter and raise money for a different charity, I chose to ride for Marie Curie. A team of us took part in the event: my sister, Stephanie, my brother-in-law David, Jamie and Jock. As a group, we raised around £2000, which we were very pleased with.

Once you have set off, the ride takes you around Loch Rannoch and Loch Tummel, soon followed by the steep climb of Schiehallion. It truly is a beautiful ride and

would highly recommend to any keen cyclist or anyone who is up for a challenge.

Do you have any plans for future fundraising? Should any Merchistonians want to support your fundraising, and how could they do that?

Currently, I have no set plans for further fundraising. However, it is definitely something I enjoyed and will be doing more of in the future. Once plans for fundraising are in place, all of the information needed will be posted on my online blog – connorsjourney.com

What are you up to now?

I am keeping active and as fit as possible. I start wheelchair rugby in the very near future, which has been something I've been really looking forward to. I am learning to drive again. Recently, I got my hands on a fully adapted Ford Ranger and hope to pass my test soon.

I was studying Accounting at Stirling University, but I got little enjoyment out of it. I therefore decided to study Astronomy and Planetary Science via The Open University. Astronomy has always been something I've been interested in and I find I put a lot more into



From top left, clockwise: Connor playing rugby for Stirling 1XV, Teddy Bonfield (06-12) and Connor on their final night at School, Connor playing for the Merchiston 2XV and in Hong Kong with Oli Wilson and Jamie Dagg.

something I enjoy, so decided it was a good option for me.

Astronomy and Planetary Science sounds really interesting. What are your top facts so far?

It's really just the unimaginable scale of it all that I find fascinating. The observable universe is 13.8 billion years old, made up of 100 billion galaxies. Our galaxy alone, the Milky Way, contains 100 thousand million stars. If you just think that our Sun is one of those 100 thousand million stars in one of the 100 billion galaxies, then the potential of other intelligent life being out there is almost guaranteed. Whether we can find it, is another question entirely.

Where do you hope this qualification will take you?

It is a very niche subject and there aren't a huge number

of paths to take with it. The best case scenario would be doing my own research. If I was to go down the research path, then I'd be relying on contacts I have at the university. The only other alternative for a degree like this would be to move over to teaching. As for where I will actually take it, I do not know yet. I still have two years left of this current degree, so I'm planning to finish this then I'll be looking into doing a Masters; then, who knows, maybe a PhD.

What is your advice to students who have started studying a subject that they don't have a passion for?

Unless you have a long-term goal and your current course is a stepping stone towards that goal, then the best advice I can give is swap it for something you love. Honestly, for me, it's made what was a chore now enjoyable.

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The Student Spirit

You are now the CEO/Co-Founder of The Student Hotel in Amsterdam. Where did the idea for The Student Hotel come from?

My inspiration was born from frustration. I saw student accommodation being built in the UK which was all the same. Nobody put any design into the projects or really cared about it. I had developed a few student projects in the UK before moving to the Netherlands and I always found it hard to get my bosses or banks to allow me to do things differently. When I moved to Amsterdam in 2003, I saw that there was a huge structural shortage of student accommodation, and also that nobody was doing it, or even knew how to do it (like we did in the

UK). As such, when I started, I had a blank piece of paper, a blank canvas if you like, nobody around me knew any different...I made the project as I wanted to, focusing on the student experience. I wanted to make the best student accommodation in the world!

Were there any obstacles in setting up this business project?

Yes, many huge obstacles...money, experience, trying to convince everybody, from building owners to planners, banks to investors...it was hard. Just after I got started with a project in 2008, the bank I was with went bankrupt and wanted its money back immediately. This

Charlie MacGregor's (88-91) father built student halls for the University of Edinburgh back in 1982. Charlie followed in his footsteps in 2005, when he started his own student accommodation company in Amsterdam. Read how Charlie battled to open his first hotel, how he now runs an expanding empire, and is in the process of building 35 hotels across the EU.

was a very hard time; I gave the keys back to the bank, only for them to be thrown back in my face. I learned a huge amount and eventually convinced new partners to come on board opening the first TSH in 2012, I proved the model worked. A great experience to look back on and one which I also, maybe perversely, really enjoyed at the time.

Can you tell us about TSH's popularity and how it has grown?

We largely focus on the customer experience, and since a lot of our student customers stay with us for five or ten months, they really use the spaces we provide. They end

up knowing the building so well, they can really relax. The young professionals and the day travellers (regular hotel guests) feel this vibe and love it. We call this atmosphere 'The Student Spirit'. What I love so much is this great vibe and energy that the place has: it attracts the locals and other visitors. They all like to connect with each other. Ideas are born here and we see that the student spirit is alive in all our guests, not just someone at university.

Each of our guests is open to learning and meeting other people: this is fantastic to see and feel. As such, we are now able to grow very quickly. It is proving to be very popular.

Have any Merchistonians stayed at the hotels?

Yes, a few of my old pals have stayed here. Richard Kirkwood (91-93), Barney Waygood (86-93) and Stevie McGill (89-93) have. The student spirit was definitely alive in them - they partied like they did at School.

What would you say are the top three positive aspects of the hotel?

The guests and the atmosphere they create are, for sure, the best aspects of TSH.

The areas that we have designed to help our guests connect, enjoy the space and relax, are also a real positive part of TSH.

The great facilities we have for students, young professionals and hotel guests are really top notch.



*'Enjoy
the moment,
be happy
and smile'*

You live in Amsterdam...does your role see you travelling much?

I fly around 160 times a year. This is to enable our EU expansion. I am away each Sunday night until Wednesday. Schiphol Airport is really an amazing airport and, as such, it's not too hard with all this travelling. I will be happy when I am able to enjoy the cities I visit a bit more. Right now it is usually in and out.

What have been your biggest achievements in your career and personal life?

My biggest achievement for work is creating this company. There are ten hotels open today, 12 being built and another 13 going through the acquisition process. The company will have over 2,000 team members and over 17,000 rooms, so I'm kind of proud of that.

My personal achievements are, of course, my two boys, Cameron and Jake, trying to bring them up and see them as much as possible. I'm divorced so only have them 50% of the time but I make sure I'm there for them. This I enjoy very much.

What's your personal philosophy in life?

'Enjoy the moment, be happy and smile'. This is my mantra. I love Eckhart Tolle & Mo Gawdat and his philosophies. 'Everybody should like everybody' is another one I like.

How would someone describe you?

It depends on who you ask...I would hope it is positive, open, kind and fun, although I'm sure it's more like stubborn and a pain in the ass.

What do you do when you aren't working?

When you have your own company, you are always working. I'm lucky as I love it and really enjoy getting up each day and coming to work. The rest of the time I'm playing at being a dad...oh, and I also spend some time with the refugee crisis with a charity I started - www.movementontheground.org; this is also a great challenge and inspiring stuff.

What led you to start this charity?

I saw the crisis for refugees unfolding on the shores of the EU and I felt compelled to help, so I went there. I ended up going there 14 times over the next year or so and started a charity with some good friends, to try to make a difference there. We now are working with the government in Lesbos, the UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) as well as the local NL and Amsterdam government to "re-define refugee camps". We saw that the old model of how to rehabilitate refugees is expensive and not so effective; it has not been updated for decades. As such, we see there is need to define a new model which costs less to build and to run and has a much higher success rate.



Photo top: from left, Frank Uffen (Partnership Director), Charlie MacGregor (CEO and Founder) and Felix Hillen (Managing Director).



If another Merchistonian was keen to get involved with the charity, how could they do that?

Call me, email me...we are always needing help and money. We really think that we can help to change the world in a very positive way.

What might we be surprised to know about you?

I did not go to university and failed all my exams at School, but that is probably not a surprise to anyone now. Maybe a real surprise is I speak fluent Dutch: that would definitely be a surprise for a few teachers.

What are your memories of Merchiston? How would a teacher describe you as a pupil?

I am not sure the teachers were too keen on me; I was a real challenge for them. For me, I loved my time at Merchiston: I really enjoyed it and being with some great people who are still my best friends. The biggest thing I learnt at School was to keep challenging myself and thinking outside the box, and of course manners. I got so many punishments for not holding doors open or being

polite that I now do this very well...it's very nice to do.

Have you been back to the School since leaving? Do you attend any Merchistonian events?

I have been back to show my kids once, and it would be fun to go to some events...I think the School was happy to see me go when I was younger.

Do you think that Merchiston helped you to get to where you are now?

Yes, for sure: friendships created at Merchiston are an important symbol of what life is all about. Relationships made at this time of your life are very special and I love seeing the guys. We never see each other enough though as we are all now dads and busy, but I know these friendships will never die. When we do see each other we all fall back to where we left off. I have amazing memories from Merchiston and I would not change them for anything. It for sure helped me form who I am today....and, of course, my good manners have helped.

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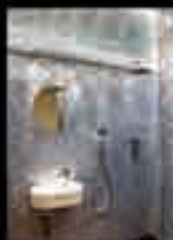
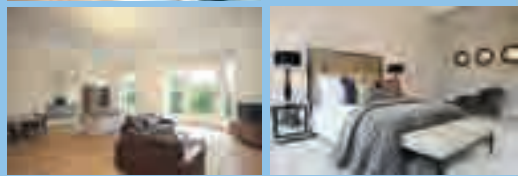
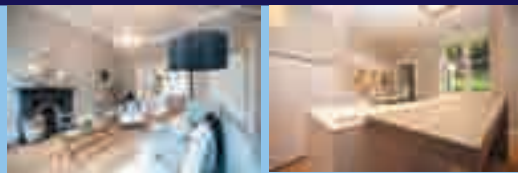
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Capturing the Beauty of Life

James Raeburn (15-17), a promising young photographer, is pursuing a career in photography and videography. Earlier this year James reached out to the Merchistonian community for support and work experience. Here, James tells us what he has been up to since we last spoke to him.

Thanks to the help of the Merchistonian Club, Andy Weston (92-97) of Weston Sports Marketing invited me along to join him at the Scottish Squash Doubles Championships on Sunday 16 July. We were there to shoot the event which was great fun; a few of the images were actually published in various regional papers.

Since leaving Merchiston my photography has continued to improve and I have started a BA in Digital Film Production which I am really enjoying! We are currently on our second short film, for each we are split into different groups which has been great for getting to know everyone and familiarising ourselves with crew roles on a set.

Over the summer I was asked to photograph a wedding and the happy couple were so impressed that they bought my entire selection from the day!

Recently I was commissioned to photograph products for an online pharmacy - I ended up taking shots of everything from anti-malarial tablets to Viagra.

My photography continues to be very broad although I mostly enjoy landscape and wildlife - I get a real buzz from capturing the weather in a particular place at a particular time or the mood of an animal and its relation to the environment; much easier said than done in one frame! Recently, one of my shots of a farm and the island of Ailsa Craig on the Clyde (top right) was shared by VisitScotland on Instagram and received over 17,000 likes. I think this proved that beauty can exist anywhere and you don't have to go far to find it; this picture being taken a short walk from my house.

Within film at the moment, I'm most interested in camera operation and the directing of photography; who knows where I'll end up.

Anyone in the Merchiston community can always call on me for any photography tasks; from portraits to product marketing.

Here is a link to my 2017 Edinburgh Christmas video; I'm looking forward to adding to the series this winter! <http://bit.ly/2xk9tYB>
Instagram / Facebook - @jraepics
Email - jraemedia247@gmail.com

Read an update from Andy Weston on the Club website under the 'News' tab.



Keeping an Eye on the Ball

From one side of the lens to another; Charles Samson (95-03) has gone from being a referee to a TMO.

I had a fantastic time at Merchiston starting in First Form at Pringle, and progressing all the way through to Upper sixth and being a Prefect in Chalmers West. We had a fantastic year group; we had lots of banter! One of the main things to come out of Merchiston for me is the friendships: both from within my own year group, and lots of friends from other year groups, that I see on my travels.

I still played a bit of rugby whilst studying at Edinburgh University, but it was only when I returned home to work on the farm that the rugby refereeing route began. I saw an SRU advert for referees and thought I would give it a go. I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time as the SRU was looking for some younger referees. I got fast tracked into the academy set up where we received one-to-one coaching, strength and conditioning work and monthly meetings at Murrayfield.

Initially I progressed my way up through the levels of district rugby, then into national league games and eventually Scottish Premiership games. My first taste of international rugby was at the U18 Millfield International Festival. After that I was lucky enough to be appointed to various U18 and U20 internationals including both Six Nations and Women's Six Nations games.

In 2011, I was selected to referee for a year with the World HSBC Sevens World Series, working in Australia, South Africa, Dubai, Glasgow, and London. It was amazing to travel around the world and feel the energy in these wonderful venues.

Last year I started a new path as a television match official. It is only when you start dealing with the broadcasters that you appreciate what goes on behind the scenes. It takes a lot to get a game of rugby on the TV. For each game of live rugby over 40 people are required; cameramen, sound engineers, producers,



directors, graphics, commentators, presenters and pundits!

As a TMO I work alongside the producer and director in the outside broadcast truck. I have access to view all of the camera angles, and replay the footage back and forth as required.

Last season I got around most of the grounds in the Pro12, going to venues such as Thomond Park, Galway Sportsgrounds, and both Parma and Treviso in Italy.

At the end of the season I was selected by World Rugby to TMO at the U20 World Championships in Georgia. This was a fantastic opportunity for me to gain more experience, working under pressure with some top-flight rugby. At the tournament, I had the opportunity to use Hawk-Eye tracking software for the first time which is slightly different to what we were used to in Pro12. It provided our team with instant replays of incidents, it could use zoom technology and do split screen replays which was very helpful. Using Hawk-Eye meant that instead of sitting in the broadcast truck we were based in the stadium for a change - there just isn't enough room to get the extra equipment out in the trucks!

Now that I've returned from Georgia it is straight back in to the new-look Pro 14 with the arrival of two sides from South Africa.

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Highland Experience

The Road to Success



Entrepreneur, Michael Bremner (87-90), said farewell to a career in banking and bought himself a one-way ticket to tourism.

Being a keen sportsman, it was a natural choice for my father to send all three of his sons to Merchiston. As we're from Drumnadrochit, by Loch Ness, boarding was the only option; I was a little nervous initially, but having my older brother Robbie (85-91) there really helped. David (89-95), our younger brother, joined a few years later.

I found the social side of Merchiston phenomenal: one of my favourite memories was from Pringle when a group of us went to the 'Grand Slam'. I had never been to an international rugby match before. It was great fun.

The School organised weekend trips away, which gave me my first taste of independence from my parents and it was great. Merchiston gave me confidence – you don't necessarily know you have it when you leave, but it is there; it sets you apart and helps you in later life. I believe

that boarding school can be hugely beneficial for some children and I would recommend parents to consider boarding as an option.

My best friends from Merchiston are still my best friends today: Andrew Marshall (88-94), Keith Murray (89-94), Ewan Mackay (89-94), Will Lindsay (87-94), Sandy McFarlane (90-94), Grant Milligan (89-94) and Richard Philip (89-94). We all travelled to South Africa this year in October for Sandy's wedding: it was fun for us all to get together and it was a brilliant celebration.

My time at Merchiston was not all easy; I had a different learning style which did not always fit in with the way things were taught. Back then, it was very different. I remember JRB as one of the Housemasters who recognised that I had a different learning style and encouraged my creative side.

I have returned to the School recently, and having talked to the staff, I can see how much things have changed and adapted since I was there. Different styles and abilities can be harnessed and encouraged with the many different options on offer. I was particularly impressed by the Golf Academy. Having seen the School recently, I would definitely consider Merchiston for my two boys!

After School, I studied International Business Studies



at the University of Northumbria. I very much enjoyed it but felt that the course could have been compressed into two years. I'm all about efficiency and would have liked to get out into industry faster. I graduated with an honours degree and got a job in banking in London. It went well and I enjoyed it, but again felt like I did not fit in the 'box', and in the end I did not want to be a number.

As my father was involved in tourism, I had a fair understanding of the sector and was certain that I wanted to make a move in that direction. Not being scared of risk, I received a bonus from my banking job, handed in my notice and moved back to Scotland to look at opportunities. Starting from the ground up, I got a job as a bus driver for what was then perceived as the number one tour company.

Tour guiding was not new to Scotland, but I knew it was not being done anywhere near as well as it could have been. My plan was to work for 'the best' tourism company to see what the gaps in the market were and how I could do things better.

For eight months, I carried out tours all over Scotland, which gave me a chance to carry out some vital research and build on my own knowledge. At the end of my eight months, I had found the gap in the market; it was the middle market. The competitors in Scotland positioned

themselves at the top end of the market or the lower end, i.e. backpacking, and there was nothing in between.

With help from my mother and brothers, I bought a 10 year old transit mini bus and kitted it out. I installed a microphone through the radio: it wasn't of great quality but it did the job! That bus was definitely positioned at the backpacking end because that was all I could afford, but it allowed me to get started.

On the day of my very first tour, I drove to Waverley Bridge and asked people if they would like to join me on a day trip to Loch Ness, and when the bus was full, off we went. I continued to do this five times a week, which today is stretching your driver hours, so I tried to sub-contract drivers when I physically couldn't drive any more. I would come back from a day and use the profits to fill the bus up, and so on. That year I incorporated Highland Experience Tours.

By year two, people were writing in saying "we love your one-day tour to Loch Ness but can't you up-scale?" It was time to grow the business; I had developed a website (which was basic but this was all the budget would allow) and took the proceeds from year one and bought a used Mercedes mini bus. I set about employing a driver and we ran three tours.

On my 'time off', I would take brochures to B&Bs and



hotels and ask them to display them in exchange for commission. Internet bookings were not so powerful then. Year three included my first overnight tour and the company received a five star grading from the Tourist Board!

By year four, I got a brand design company to improve our image. This was the year I started to position the company properly in the middle market. The pricing was in the middle but the quality was as good as the high end, which is why we are now five star operators.

I spotted a further opportunity; nobody had a base, somewhere to begin their tour from, so in all-weather conditions the customers would gather on the pavement outside the bus to wait for the tour to begin. You don't expect to stand outside and wait for your plane at an airport; you want a seat and facilities, and so this is what I introduced.

With the help of my brother David, I gained a lease on a property on the Royal Mile, which meant I could position a Highland Experience help desk within a café. This aspect has definitely enhanced the customer's experience: it gives them somewhere warm to meet in





Photo: **1** Michael Bremner, **2** Keith Murray (89-94), **3** Gill Murray, **4** Richard Philip (89-94), **5** Sandy Macfarlane (90-94), **6** Lizzie Bremner, **7** Angus Macfarlane (90-95), **8** David Bassouni (90-95).

*'The more you
enjoy something
the more
successful it is'*

the morning and means that they can get a coffee before we set off.

In 2009, I set about copywriting the word 'eXperience' in the UK and in Europe to future-proof the brand, and by 2011 I started tours departing from Glasgow, and later from Inverness as well.

This year, I expanded further with the introduction of 'England eXperience' tours, where I run day tours from London. The story behind that was that Qantas had advised that while they loved our tours, they were not long enough for long haul markets and were not interested unless we could create 7-8 day tours. I scoped it out and spent a lot of money getting the tour right, in the end they didn't sell the product, but the irony was I put it out to market and now it is one of our best-selling tours. The beauty of it is that it can connect with our tours from Edinburgh to make a 13 day UK tour.

I feel that there is further growth available. I expect next year to be the company's biggest year yet, with projected sales in excess of £7 million per year. More people are visiting Scotland as the Euro is so strong,

and, as a country, we are good value for tourists. Also, sadly, security has become a consideration for travellers, which means that Paris' tourism is down 40% (it used to be the number one destination for weekend breaks), London is stagnating, but Edinburgh has not stopped growing.

Today, Highland Experience Tours have 37 different departure locations, with one to eight day tour options. Next year, we'll have 36 buses, and they will range from 16 seats to 29 seats. I have spent the last six years travelling the world building working relationships and securing contracts with travel agents. Only 5% of business was online when I first set up a website; now it's around 50%. I am very comfortable to say that Highland Experience Tours is now a leader in the Scottish tours industry. I have programmers building a bespoke website which will be released for next season; we have gone from being a bus company to an internet-based company.

Our most popular day tour is Loch Ness, and the most popular extended tour is Skye. Our 7-8 day Orkney tour in the Hebrides is becoming very popular; the TV programme, 'Outlander' (which was filmed on Lewis) is massive in the USA and they think Scotland is just like Outlander.

That's another form of tourism; 'set-jetting', where people get on a jet to see the set. Another new term is 'flash-packers' - backpackers who have their parents' credit cards. They no longer want to stay in bunkhouses like earlier generations did: they expect en-suite bathrooms and their own bedroom, and any hostel that doesn't keep up with these demands will get left behind.



What was once luxury is now expected. Each of my 36 vehicles has this year been kitted out with a USB port, Wi-Fi, and a fridge as standard!

We now have over 50,000 passengers a year. Our largest market is from India. Bollywood films a lot in the north of Scotland. Large markets also come from the USA, and now we see more Europeans.

I recognised an opportunity for vertical expansion. On every overnight tour, we were passing business to hotels and, with this, our ability to ensure quality was maintained.

I found a little lodge on the banks of Loch Ness at Fort Augustus and converted it into a 12 bedroom, five star rated guest house. The tours can fill that most nights. High quality accommodation is an area of the business where I believe there is potential to scale up as well.

My newest acquisition, Scottish Routes, is a similar but smaller tour company which runs bespoke whisky and gastronomy tours, e.g. a four day Islay tour, involving visits to eight distilleries. Last year, we didn't have a single date left and a full bus departed every week from March right through to October. I am now working on adding more bespoke tours to the Scottish Routes complement.

You meet amazing people in this industry; I had breakfast with Prince Edward and I travelled with the Scottish Commonwealth team to Delhi. It is all about networking: I have often had to travel abroad to carry out research and bring inbound business direct to my company.

I now have a business development manager, who will do most of the travel so that I can concentrate on looking ahead. I have 86 staff, but by March 2018, this will have increased to 120; we have already started recruiting.

My final words are, the more you enjoy something the more successful it is. If you walk into work every day and don't enjoy it, go and find something that you love doing; it's remarkable. Don't go looking for the money; look for something that you enjoy because the money is a by-product of that.

www.highlandexperience.com
www.englishexperience.com
www.scottishroutes.com
www.lochnessguesthouse.com

Congratulations to Michael and his team on winning the "2017 Best Bus Tour Company in Scotland" award at the Scottish Outdoor Leisure Award's.



Education Wins for Young Rugby Star

Read why Edinburgh Rugby Scrum Half, Hugh Fraser (12-14), is taking a step back from rugby...

In 2010, Hugh was identified by the SRU's Exile Programme, and at 15 became the youngest ever player to be centrally contracted by the SRU. Alongside 'A' Level studies at Merchiston, Hugh benefited from 15 - 20 hours per week of training supported by the Scottish Institute of Sport and coaching staff at Merchiston.

Hugh considers his time at Merchiston invaluable. "At 16, my world was rugby. I had wanted to be a pro player since the age of five, and without my Housemaster, Rupert Heathcote, and academic staff at Merchi, I doubt I would have achieved the grades I did. I owe a lot to my parents and my teachers, as without reminders that rugby would not last forever, I would not be in the fortunate position I am in now."

In 2014, Hugh deferred a place to study International Business at Loughborough University on its Elite Rugby Programme to accept a two-year Academy Contract with the SRU. A nasty ACL injury, followed by a shoulder injury, saw Hugh out for almost 15 months, but the care and rehab by the physios at Murrayfield helped Hugh regain his starting position to compete in the U20s Six Nations in 2016 and the Junior World Cup in June. Hugh

admits coming back from the injuries in time to compete at that level, having lost so much game time at such a crucial stage of his development, was a real challenge. "To stand any chance of a full professional contract, I needed to have a decent run-out in the two big U20 competitions: fortunately it paid off". Hugh was voted the Junior World Championship scrum half of the tournament in 2016.

During his downtime from rugby, Hugh had redirected his focus to his studies and is already part way through an honours degree with the University College of Estate Management, Reading. It was during training in pre-season this year that Hugh decided to take a step back from the professional game to finish his education.

"Ironically, in pre-season I worked harder than ever, beat everyone in the fitness tests and achieved personal bests. Rugby was going well but I made the decision to step back from pro rugby to finish my Real Estate Management Degree. I have always been interested in the property industry and it is something I want to pursue more than a career in rugby at the moment. I will have graduated by the end of next season, so if I want to play pro rugby again, if I'm good enough, I'll get back in".

"This is a huge decision and change of direction for me, but one that I am very excited about. Rugby has given me so many great experiences and while I'm still young and in the zone for formal education, I want to take advantage of other opportunities available, as an investment in a future career in commercial property; rugby-wise, I'm not finished yet".

Photos from left: Playing for Merchiston in Cup Semi final 2012 v Dundee High School, School chums: Michael Craig (09-14), Edward Page (09-14) and Hugh Fraser and representing Scotland against Australia in the U20 Junior World Cup - which Scotland won 15-10!

Pearl of the ORIENT



More and more of you are heading off to the bright lights of Hong Kong. We spoke with four Merchistonians who are living there right now.



Benjamin Kenderdine (09-15)

1. What are you doing in Hong Kong?

I am currently out in Hong Kong as part of my third year of university, studying Law and Mandarin at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Asia appears as the place to be for the future, and having studied Mandarin (although it is predominantly Cantonese spoken in Hong Kong), I thought it would be the ideal situation to take my studies here.

2. Do you ever meet up with other Merchistonians in Hong Kong?

I was met by Charles Li (09-15) at the airport, whom I have been good friends with (*above photo*) since we both joined Merchiston in Third Form. I have also met up with Victor Yiu (09-15), but while it is good to have a friend already in Hong Kong, I wanted to integrate with all the local and international students at CUHK as well.

3. What did Merchiston do for you?

Merchiston has provided me with a raft of experiences that have enabled me to move seamlessly into society. I feel comfortable with current challenges, and for those that are yet to come.

4. Sum Merchiston up in three words.

Espirit de corps.

5. Now that you've moved away from Edinburgh, what do you find best about Hong Kong and what do you miss about Scotland?

Hong Kong, was initially quite a culture shock; I didn't quite realise how densely populated it is. However, I've grown to love the busy, vibrant nature of it, alongside the food, and sharp contrast between city and jungle. At the moment there honestly is not much that I miss about Scotland (of course friends and family), I am currently just trying to really immerse myself into the culture here, and I am thoroughly enjoying doing so.

I am hoping to take up a vacation scheme with an international law firm out here before I return to Scotland.



James Fisher (05-11)

1. What are you doing in Hong Kong?

I am working for a power tool manufacturer and spend a lot of my time in China as well. I arrived in HK in September 2015, in the hope of getting my first job out of university. I had been to visit friends and enjoyed my time here so much I decided that after graduating that was where I wanted to be.

2. Do you ever meet up with other Merchistonians in Hong Kong?

Yes, I regularly see some of the guys at social rugby events or the arranged Merchistonian Drinks events, when the Headmaster has visited. The HK 7s week is a busy time, and I have met up with many Merchistonians (*Above photo, with Bobak Afshar (09-11)*) who have flown in for the week or sometimes even just a few days. I have also had a few visitors from my year and have tried to meet up with the local boys when I can.

3. What did Merchiston do for you?

Merchiston always pushed me to challenge myself inside and outside of the classroom, which gave me the confidence to believe a move to HK, to find my first job out of university, would be possible. My sporting interests and capabilities developed while at school and have given me the opportunity to join sports teams and meet new people through clubs, societies and affiliations. This type of networking proved vital during my search for a job when I first arrived.

4. Sum Merchiston up in three words.

Friendship, fun, memories.

5. Now that you've moved away from Edinburgh, what do you find best about Hong Kong and what do you miss about Scotland? Do you ever return?

Hong Kong offers a fantastic, vibrant, city lifestyle where you meet people from all over the world. However, 10 minutes from the concrete jungle you can find yourself in country parks hiking or by the beach!

I definitely miss the feeling of space from Edinburgh and not being able to golf as regularly but I currently have no limit on my time in HK.



Brandon Kwok (01-09)



1. What are you doing in Hong Kong?

I came out to Hong Kong mainly for the vast work opportunities, as well as to spend time catching up with my parents, who I had been away from since the age of 11.

Currently I am working as a lead coach with Rugbytots Hong Kong, and as a part-time development strength and conditioning coach with the Hong Kong cricket team. I also do a lot of freelance personal training in my spare time.

2. Do you ever meet up with other Merchistonians in Hong Kong?

Not usually as my schedule is fairly hectic. Personally I don't think Merchistonians meet up enough in Hong Kong, as there is a fair few number of us out here!

3. What did Merchiston do for you?

I was very fortunate to be able to have attended Merchiston and it offered me the chance of a superior education. I would not have had experienced the same luxury if I had grown up in Hong Kong. It taught me to be independent and to be a driven individual - which are principles I still go by today.

I am hoping to go into PE teaching and to gain my PGCE and work with international schools in Hong Kong / or with schools in the UK / Scotland. Actually, I hope to be a member of staff at Merchiston one day!

4. Sum Merchiston up in three words.

Demanding, rewarding, rigorous.

5. Now that you've moved away from Edinburgh, what do you find best about Hong Kong and what do you miss about Scotland?

I love the work opportunities that Hong Kong offers as well as the constant buzz of activities here. There is always something going on.

One thing I do miss about Scotland is the space available. There are too many people in Hong Kong which takes away the glamour. I have not been back to Scotland since I left the University of Aberdeen, but I am planning a break in Edinburgh next year.



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James Bragg (88-93)

1. What are you doing in Hong Kong?

I am the co-founder of a debt advisory boutique and credit insurance broker.

I visited for the first time, with a group of university friends, to attend the Rugby Sevens in 1998. Upon arrival I was amazed by the; exotic sights and smells of a truly alien environment, the picture postcard skyline of gleaming skyscrapers, the famous Victoria Harbour, criss-crossed by the Star Ferry, the 24 hour party and of course the biggest rugby sevens tournament in the world.

I returned again for the Rugby Sevens in 2004, this time armed with my CV! Luckily, from my London work-life, I had contacts with several banks in Hong Kong and I remember sitting in Captain's Bar in the Mandarin Oriental and opening my sales pitch of "I am young, cheap and will work hard". Through a combination of luck, perseverance and stalking I managed to secure a job.

2. Do you ever meet up with other Merchistonians in Hong Kong?

Yes often, with Peter Stevenson (49-54), Stephen Lai (90-95), Euan McLeod (84-91) and Daniel Moussa (00-02).

3. What did Merchiston do for you?

Broad academic curriculum, diverse and fun after-school activities, strong long lasting friendships with classmates.

4. Please sum Merchiston up in three words.

Rugby, friends, character-building.

5. What do you find best about Hong Kong and how has it changed over the years since you have lived there?

Hong Kong is undoubtedly a "world city", a financial



centre with first class infrastructure, white beaches, low tax rates, negligible crime rates, a tropical climate and it conveniently sits next to the economic super power that is China. The city was described in a recent survey as "a first world city, with third-world air pollution". In 2014 the city centre was paralysed for 79 days by local protesters complaining at the performance of the undemocratically elected government, perceived reducing levels of free speech and a "Mainland-isation" of Hong Kong.

Then there is the cost...Hong Kong regularly ranks at the top of surveys for cities with the highest cost of living in the world. Factors which are made more painful in the context of Sterling's depreciation since the BREXIT referendum. You will struggle to find a pint of beer for less than GBP7.50. Whilst every city has pros and cons, the cons should not be underestimated - and government figures show that the number of Brits living in Hong Kong fell by 10.6% in 2016, the number of Americans dropped 8% and Aussies 5%.

I met a British friend recently who is a long term Hong Kong resident. He explained that he felt that the "expat" in the traditional sense is disappearing in Hong Kong. Businesses are increasingly hiring Chinese staff where they may have hired expats in the past. The main issue appears to be our lack of local language skills together with cost. There is now a large pool of highly skilled, western educated, multi-lingual, local employees - who will be cheap and work hard, much like I was in 2004. Upon reflection would I be able to make the same move again today? Probably not, unless I had a unique skill, or the necessary language skills. I feel grateful for the opportunity I have been given to live in this wonderful and flawed city.

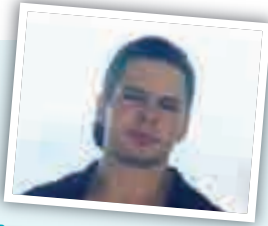
I frequently return to Glasgow to visit the family. In 2013, our year (especially KCM Roger (88-93)) arranged a 20 year reunion, where we visited the School and enjoyed a group dinner.

Merchistonians in HK playing for St Andrew's Society v St George's Society, Euan McLeod (84-01), Stephen Lai (90-95), James Bragg, Guy Robertson (86-93) and Alistair Murray (90-95)



© www.flickr.com/photos/wkc1/

Richard Whalley (05-09)



1. What are you doing in Hong Kong?

I've been working for a recruitment company, coaching sales, for the past three years. If I'm honest, I came out on a whim, having visited HK for the Sevens a number of years previously and loving the constant juxtapositions in the culture, scenery, climate, and basically everything about the place. I managed to secure myself a job which I love within the first couple of months of being here.

2. Do you ever meet up with other Merchistonians in Hong Kong? If so, who?

When he's not at the gym cross fitting, I catch up with Ali Reece (03-09) for a beer (or, in his case, diet beer) every couple of months. Also, I bump into Danny Moussa (00-02) every now and again, over a 'not-so-diet-beer'.

3. What did Merchiston do for you?

I think Merchiston equipped me with the gregarious personality which is necessary to thrive in a city like Hong Kong. One of the key skills required when moving to a new city is the ability to make friends, to go out and meet new people, and that is certainly a skill forged at the School.

4. Please sum Merchiston up in three words.

Friends, family, sport.

5. Now that you've moved away from Edinburgh, what do you find best about Hong Kong and what do you miss about Scotland? Do you ever return?

The community here is great. All expats have at one point, been in the same situation; knowing nobody. So when you are new, everyone is really keen to help out and get you involved.

I miss my Merchi mates as well as my dog...also grass, flat grass. Every so often, I even miss the cold weather and the chance to wear a cardigan!



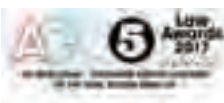
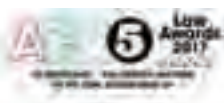
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Norman Dummond and Norman Walker



My family is no stranger to Merchiston: my father, myself and my siblings, John (58-62) and Hugh (68-73), all attended. I started School alongside my cousin, Norman Drummond (65-70).

The five years I spent at Merchiston were to be more than formative for me and hugely enjoyable. Sport then, as now, was important and I was fortunate to be in a very successful 1XV led by Norman, a subsequent Cambridge blue; I made up the numbers in an outstanding cricket XI captained by Richard Swan (65-70), who went on to captain Scotland for 10 years and gain 90 caps.

After School, Richard Swan and I left Scotland with £100 each in our pockets and made our way, through Europe, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and into India. It was the Hippie Trail but we were unlikely hippies...

We then headed to Thailand, and south to Malaysia, taking a ship to Perth, Australia, where we arrived with £5 between us. After various temporary jobs we ended

of a pipeline of world class talent and creating leadership programmes to support this. These areas were where I gained most satisfaction and I decided it was where I wanted to focus.

After 30 years in the corporate world, I set up my own firm, Ardfern AG in 2003. We chose to stay in Basel, and Switzerland has been my home now for over 20 years.

Starting my own firm proved to be both challenging and rewarding. It opened up opportunities I could not have anticipated: e.g. in 2005, I co-authored the book, *Leadership Passages*, seeking to support those going through both career and personal challenges.

For the last 12 years, my primary clients have been some of the world's largest private equity firms, which I could not have envisaged at all. I have been responsible for assessing and selecting the CEOs and key leaders for their portfolio companies and working with them to support their personal success. Determining who would be successful in a particular business situation was the key

Norman Walker (65-70) has climbed the stairs of the business world and is now able to hold out a helping hand to the next generation of CEOs. Here is the story of how he got there.

up working for the service company supporting the construction of a gas pipeline north of Perth. Richard started in the kitchens and my first job was cleaning the toilets, but was happily soon promoted to the kitchens. Our paths parted as I went by ship to South Africa where my sister was working. I travelled back through Africa and started studying business in Brighton after what was a most wonderful year.

My career started at Ford Motor Company, where I spent eight years, and then I moved on to Grand Met, today Diageo, before I left the UK in 1991 to work for Kraft Foods in Munich. I moved with Kraft to New York and attended Harvard Business School's 13 week international programme, before returning to the European head office in Zurich.

In 1997, the world's largest merger, at that time, between Ciba Geigy and Sandoz, was announced, creating Novartis, a 120,000 employee company. I joined the executive committee with responsibility for human resources and helped shape and develop the organisation. I took a particular interest in the building

judgment, and in so doing I have met well over 600 CEOs!

It was against this background that the idea of Boardroom Business Success (BBS) was developed. The four day retreat is designed for executives wishing to sustain their success and increase their effectiveness in the boardroom. They are likely to be on track to becoming a CEO, and are just gaining their first exposure to boards, and it is equally relevant for recently appointed CEOs.

Happily, my cousin Norman has been part of this enterprise from the start and we run this together at Ardoch, a Columba 1400 location on Loch Lomond. Now in its sixth year and with very strong alumni, we feel we are contributing our experience and lessons learned to the next generation of leaders.

There is a synchronicity of life that having left Scotland in 1971, once a year I return to Ardoch, a mere 20 miles as the crow flies from my place of birth in Greenock.

Should you wish to learn more you can visit Norman's website: www.ardfern.ch

Merchistonian Sailing Regatta

Merchistonians from far and wide responded to the call to the sea and assembled for the 2017 Merchistonian Sailing Regatta at beautiful Chemainus on Vancouver Island. Chris Reid (55-59) tells us about their trip.

Our first day of sailing in sunshine was to Maple Bay, a picturesque marina where we assembled with the other yachts. The night there was spent in the traditional way – not too abstemiously at the marina pub. Day two was a seven hour sail, dodging ferries and testing our navigational skills round the Southern Gulf Islands. We stopped at Lyall Harbour on Saturna Island for an early dinner and libation before motoring across to Browning Harbour on North Pender Island.

Sailing in this part of the world would not be complete without a visit to Ganges, the main town on Salt Spring Island. Here we were able to enjoy an outstanding dinner at a world-renowned Italian restaurant before retiring to our bunks.

This year, Charles Grant (57-62), our usual deckhand, was unable to join us, so a senior member of the House of Lords was seconded from his political duties to serve in his absence. We were subjected to a blow by blow account of events in the UK election.

We are already planning for the 15th Merchistonian Regatta, when we will venture into some new, but well charted, territory. Merchistonians are welcome to consider joining us. No sailing or cooking experience is required. Please contact the Merchistonian office.





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Merchiston's Arms: A Story Less Than Obvious!

Former Head of Mathematics, Peter Arter (CR 1988 to 96), has long been interested in the evolution of the School's coat-of-arms. Until now this has been lost in the mists of history, but Peter's research has started to part those mists.

The arms of the School and the Merchistonian Club were granted on 28 September 1921, and the following year the Merchistonian Club replaced the thin white stripe in its colours by a thin red one, as now. The Lord Lyon involved in the grant was Sir James Balfour Paul, grandfather of the very long-serving master, Ian.

This was not the first apparently heraldic device used by the School. At some stage, someone modified the arms of the Lord Napier (and then also Ettrick) to create something visible on team photographs as late as 1949. Their modification created a problem, given that John Napier of Merchiston, the mathematician, was clearly to be seen as a role model for members of the School. Why is the motto adapted from that of Scot of Thirlestane, and not from Napier of Merchiston, as are clearly the shield and crest? Napier's image can be found at the School, and also stories about him, and he clearly

features in a verse of the School Song from 1883 to 1949 that reads, "In vain the mazy problem may strive to lead astray, the rays that shine from Napier's shrine shall surely light the way."

Fortunately, a Captain of School who would have sung that verse received, by inheritance, a piece of wood painted with the heraldic achievement of the School's landlords from 1883 to 1915. His family had provided those landlords with a minister at Thirlestane, by Ettrick, not by Lauder, so the gift would have been personally meaningful. It was his grandson, Henry Duncan (62-65), who showed me what he had inherited (above left), and thus a problem was solved, as according to the verse!

There are two other illustrations accompanying this article. One is a recent photograph of the coat-of-arms at the Colinton Road entrance, which was maintained by JRB (opposite top right).

It is a beautiful reproduction of the artistry of the illustration on the document granting the arms, which itself can be seen currently in the Old Library (opposite top left). That photograph, of the gate crest, was taken to remind many readers of what appeared on the back page of the School magazine for some years. The photograph on this page was supplied by Henry Duncan, and is the full heraldic achievement of the Lords Napier and Ettrick in the late nineteenth century.

If we look at the School achievement of arms, we see the motto going with the crest, not separated by the shield, as happens elsewhere in the United Kingdom. We can notice this also in the family arms, where a Napier motto and crest are above the shield and a Scot motto and crest below it. The shield itself there is quartered, the red and white for Napier, the blue and gold for Scot.



Lords have coronets and supporters, but schools do not, so the “baronial” coronet and the Napier eagle and Scot man in armour disappeared on the way to making the representation that the grant of 1921 displaced.

For over 60 years, the School reverted to its previous practice of putting crest above the shield and motto below, and that must have been what happened in the modification of the noble coat of arms to create a device for the School in the late nineteenth century. The top element of the arms, the Napier motto, was deleted, as was the bottom element, the Scot crest. That resulted in the non-Scottish ordering of crest above the shield and motto below. There is a book presented to John Rogerson with such a shield, and certainly there are the team photographs to demonstrate this usage. The grant of arms regularised this device by differencing the elements and uniting crest and motto.

Before describing those modifications, I should mention from where the shield of Napier of Merchiston comes. It is silver, with a red saltire engrailed between four red roses. A host of families and institutions use devices very similar. Somewhere, there is almost certainly a connection by blood or location with the Earls of Lennox, north of Glasgow, who used this pattern with a straightforward saltire.

What were the modifications in 1921? Each of the three elements was modified to establish relationship with the family, but not identity with it.

The Scot quarters disappeared and so a simple Napier shield resulted. Sir James Balfour Paul replaced the top rose with a book, and I am pleased that recently someone has taken the initiative to darken the pages of the book to make it stand out a little from the silver

white on which it is set. Heraldry is about clear communication, and that is why colours are set against gold or silver, not against other colours, to make contrasts clear.

The Napier crest involved a right forearm grasping a silver crescent, so the School’s crescent became gold. The Scot motto, “Ready Aye Ready” was also slightly altered for the same purpose. It became “Ready Ay Ready”. And, of course, the Lord Lyon reunited motto and crest, for the School is set in Scotland, not elsewhere in the UK!

The illustration on the grant of arms is a particular interpretation of the words in it, the definitive part of the document. It is the work of Arthur Law Samson, one of three or so heraldic artists who established today’s practices in heraldic representation. His lettering is distinctive, as is his use of elaborate mantling, the cloth flowing out of the wreath. When one enters the School from Colinton Road, one passes beautiful and accurate reproductions of his work on the School gates. But if one is privileged to enter the building by the entrance underneath the cornucopia, one can glance up and see a simple unpainted stone oval. It contains an engrailed saltire below an open book, and otherwise surrounded by three roses. It is simple and it is effective. Both are excellent heraldry, for they communicate well.

In 1991, I could not have written the article this way. Henry Duncan’s information changed my understanding, and colour printing has made it easier to communicate the journey from the arms of the one-time landlords of the School to the arms as they are now. I would like to thank all those who have enabled this illustrated piece to be composed and published.

Re-united

Seeing everyone together after years apart is heart-warming. We are already organising reunions for the Classes of '66-'70 and the Class of '13 for 2018. If you would like to be the key contact for a reunion please get in touch and we can get plans underway.

Sixties Reunion

On Saturday 20 May, accompanied by 10 wives, 25 of us, who joined Merchiston in 1960 and 1961, met up once again at the School. We were given a tour of the School's new buildings and the 2G pitch in the back field, followed by a drinks reception from the Headmaster, which was hosted by Peter Hall, the Senior Deputy Head.

Our other guests on the day were Bill Donaldson (44-49), our former 1XV rugby coach and Chalmers Housemaster; Brian Thompson, former Rogerson West Housemaster and Second Master; Gareth Baird (70-75), Chairman of the Board of Governors; and Andrew McDonald (79-85), immediate Past President of the Merchistonian Club.

A wide range of memorabilia was displayed in the Old Library, including photographs from the 1960's, which caused much hilarity. We then repaired down to the Spylaw Tavern, in Colinton Village, for welcome drinks and dinner, complete with continued conversations amongst us all, remembering our days at Merchiston.

Many messages of thanks and congratulations have since been received by Gill, the Club Secretary.
Iain Wright (60-65)



Class of '07 Reunion



On Saturday 30 September, 30 members of the Class of '07 met 10 years after leaving School.

Handshakes at the front door; a photo with the Headmaster and Mrs Hunter on the main staircase; and then to the Old Library to be reminded by the ever-philosophical 'Headman' (he said it, not me!) that 'to whom much is given, much is expected.' Well, we'll drink to that!

Forgetting the final score in the rugby – though a fantastic, gritty display was certainly in evidence – so began our lovely trip down recollection road with an afternoon tour around some of the old quarters, as well as some new residences (you should see the plush accommodation for those sixth formers these days!).

After a stop-over pint at The Kilted Pig, play reconvened at The New Club – the strict jacket and tie

policy mostly adhered to. The former head boy (yours truly) said a few words before we were treated to a formidable feast...and, more importantly, before the stories, singing and nostalgic choruses began. Particular enjoyment and pleasure were taken from the return of some of our better travelled alumni, who had journeyed from as far as Munich, Moscow and even Seoul for the big stramash!

And well were they repaid for their efforts. This was a great night, with next-to-no black eyes though many shared salutations, and a round of golf was enjoyed by those that could make it on the Sunday. We look forward to again being re-united when the next big anniversary dates comes around. Ready ay ready!

Archie Millar (00-07)





Rugby in Rio

After university, Dougal Balfour (06-14) took some time out to volunteer and soon found himself jetting off to Rio de Janeiro.

I first found out about UmRio in my final year of study at Cambridge when an email appeared in my inbox highlighting the opportunity to teach kids how to play rugby in Rio de Janeiro. Not wanting to turn down such an opportunity I had to find out more, and after meeting with an Oxford student and hearing about his experience there last year, I was sold.

UmRio is a charity based in a favela called Morro do

Castro, located on the other side of the bay to the city of Rio de Janeiro. It was set up by Robert Malengreau, a Brazilian-English, and former Oxford University rugby player. After completing a Master's degree on the subject of the social divide in Rio emerging from the favela culture, he was convinced of the need to combat the problems they face.

The charity was initially set up solely to coach rugby, so that the kids had something to do after school instead of becoming bored and getting sucked in to drugs and gangs. However, it has been so successful over the past four years that UmRio now operates five days a week. The full weekly schedule consists of rugby training, English, and project based learning focusing on the key issues that the kids face in the favela every day. Rob has even organised for professional dentists to treat the kids once a month for free! He has almost single-handedly built a community in which the kids are able to thrive and feel a sense of belonging, which is truly



inspirational.

My role in the charity was to be a rugby coach for two days a week and come up with new and exciting ways for the kids to play sevens. It was impressive that the kids played to such a high standard given the lack of resources. They play with so much joy and energy, even though they train on a sub-standard pitch where gun fights can occur just metres away. In fact, some of them had become so good that we were able to take them to a trial for the regional sevens team. This was a real highlight for me because they got to play on the Olympic training pitch and play against much more established Brazilian teams. While the older kids tested out for trials, we arranged transport for the younger kids to travel from Morro do Castro to watch the trials and have a tour of the university. It is almost unimaginable for kids from favelas to be given these opportunities and this is what makes UmRio so special.

After three short weeks of coaching, teaching and exploring the city of Rio I was heartbroken to be leaving. It was amazing; the strong bond I had created with the kids after such a short period of time despite the obvious language barrier. The kids loved being coached and responded well to having an outsider around to interact with. Being a positive role model in their lives was incredibly rewarding. Using rugby in such a different way from the very competitive environments of Merchiston and Cambridge University has been an incredible experience. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity

and I would highly recommend volunteering for such a great charity. After Rio I travelled around South America, and then, at the beginning of December, I started a ski season position in Val D'Isere in the French Alps.

You can find out more about the charity UmRio and the great work that they do on their website - <http://umrio.org/>

The kids loved being coached and responded well to having an outsider around to interact with

Snippets



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

Hugh Dinwoodie (43-48) Roy Humble (44-48)

Hugh's son, Colin (former Teacher, Physics/Maths, 94-02), has run a number of 'parkruns' in various parts of the world, and wanted to take part in a new parkrun at Calgary. Hugh saw this as the perfect opportunity to visit his good friend and contemporary, Roy.

(From left, Hugh, Colin, and Roy)



Drummond Laing (44-48)

"I have been retired for more than 26 years but still go into the Cape Observatory. There has been a huge surge in astronomy in South Africa with the construction of the world's biggest observatory taking place. When I started it in 1959, it was pendulum clocks and 13 figure logarithm tables."

Inglis Lamont (45-49)



Inglis and his wife, Margaret, celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary in July. Their children gave them a three-night break at their favourite hotel in Portpatrick.

Roger Platfoot (56-59)

As a member of the Vintage Sports Car Club, Roger enjoyed attending the Scottish Tour in St Boswells. Roger has spent many years lovingly restoring his car. "The car will do over 80mph and possibly more, and is great to handle – always a pleasure to drive a few miles on a summer's night"



Ian Lawson (62-67)



"50 years after my last organ lesson from the late, great Donald Sprinck, I have finally achieved my first post as an organist! I am now the Director of Music at the (Episcopal) Church of the Good Shepherd in Murrayfield, where the photograph above was taken by fellow congregation member, Jim Paterson (57-62). I'd be delighted to see any Merchistonians at the regular 10am Sunday service - nice and handy for Thanksgiving or consolation after rugby internationals!"

David Strachan (65-70)



David has been awarded an honorary degree by Aberdeen University, Doctor Honoris Causa (DHC). He has also been appointed Vice Chair of the Board of Governors of Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen (RGU), and an honorary professor at Stirling University.

Colin Campbell (66-71)

"I retired last year after teaching for 32 years at the Vienna International School. I was a Grade Level Leader, a teacher of English Literature, introduced and developed rugby, and was Senior Rugby Coach. I am domiciled in Austria and in retirement play golf, sail, and sing in our village choir. I am a member of Vienna Pipes and Drums and we made our second foray in August to the RSPBA World Championships 2017. My warm up began with five rounds of golf around East Lothian, with Willie Biggart (66-72) and Rob Elliott (64-69)!

Retirement is good!"

Stuart Riddell (76-81) and Ewen Rose (76-81)



A charity ceilidh organised by Stuart and his family raised over £13K for the Maggie's Centre in Edinburgh. The centre offers support and advice to cancer sufferers and their families. There was a healthy turnout of Merchistonians at the event.

(From left, Ewen and Stuart)

Rory Forbes (84-88)



Rory and his wife, Anita, would like to announce the birth of their daughter, Elise Kesson Forbes, who was born on 14 October 2017 at the Matilda Hospital in Hong Kong.

Liam Sharp (85-90) and Iain Fullarton (89-94)



Liam and Iain bumped into each other on a skiing holiday in Canada. Despite not seeing one another since leaving School, Iain immediately recognised Liam, and as it turned out they were staying in the same hotel! While Iain was in Chalmers West, Liam was a prefect in Rogerson East, and they also attended the same primary school in the Borders. (From left, Iain and Liam)

Simon Corry (86-91)

"I restored a 1936 Riley after I left School. It is used as a car should be, not polished and put on show, but gets a lot of use doing rallies, hill climbs and auto testing. I have done about 25,000 miles in her, not bad for a car with no doors, windscreen, windows or roof!"



Michael Ferndale (86-92)



Michael ran the London Marathon...backwards!

"Most people thought I was completely mad when I shared my plan to complete the London Marathon facing backwards to raise money for the Lord's Taverners."

Des Armstrong (88-95), David Bremner (89-95), Kevin Paterson (89-95), Ryan Stevenson (89-95) and David Bassiouni (90-95)

In mid-June, five Merchistonians and a Dundee High School former pupil convened in Ibiza to celebrate their joint 40th birthdays. Whilst clearly old enough to know better, the boys had a good stab at pretending they were 21 again for four days.

"Lots of splendid food and drink set the scene for some great reminiscing about the good old days at the Castle." At the end of the trip, the Balearic band of brothers went on their weary way, a tad sleep deprived and lighter in the wallet, but looking forward to another 28 years and more of friendship. "Vegas for our 50ths?!" (From left, Des, Kevin, Ryan and David Bassiouni).



Sandy Macfarlane (90-94)

Sandy married Caroline in South Africa summer past - a number of Merchistonians travelled over to celebrate with the happy couple.



Will Biggart (94-01)

In February 2017, Will proposed to Katy McGuinness at the top of Eiffel Tower...she said yes! Congratulations to the happy couple.



Ben Dunnett (96-02)



This year, Rudi B was victorious in breaking the School record of 26.5 seconds for 200m set by Ben in 1997. Rudi managed to complete it in 26.4 seconds!

After leaving Merchiston, Ben

studied English at Oxford University where he also received a full Blue for rugby league. He graduated in 2006 before taking a job in the City as a broker with Guy Carpenter Ltd, the financial risk and reinsurance advisory arm of Marsh and McLennan Group. He now lives in Singapore and is happily married to his wife Beth with whom he has two daughters. He still secretly hopes for a boy to send to Merchiston! He doesn't run much anymore!

Callum Brooks (99-04)

Callum met with current pupil, Amaan, at Repton School in Dubai. Callum enjoyed swapping Merchiston stories with Amaan and asked him to help referee the Repton Prep School's Football Finals. *(From left, Callum and Amaan)*



Charles Costello (01-09)

Charles moved to Melbourne this year to use his fluent Korean to set up a distribution company on behalf of Unience (producing an Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) used on the facade of residential and commercial buildings). Charles is the Regional Sales Manager and is helping to grow Unience's market share in Australia and New Zealand and he travels to the USA three times a year. Here is a photograph of Charles (far right) at an exhibition in Orlando.



Fraser Brown (01-07) and Magnus Bradbury (11-13)

James Boyd (CR. 09-13) caught up with Magnus and Fraser in Coogee, where he was able to wish Fraser all the very best ahead of the Australia v Scotland match. He enjoyed hearing about Magnus' journey post Merchiston. *(From left, Fraser, James and Duncan)*



Simon Collins (00-06)

After proposing to Tracey at Gleneagles, the couple celebrated their wedding there in December 2017. This wonderful photograph was taken in the wine cellar at Gleneagles, the very spot where Simon proposed to Tracey.



Rob Dickson (04-12) and Benjamin Kenderdine (09-15)



The Glasgow 1XV won the BUCS (British University and Colleges) Trophy final against Edinburgh, which was played at Bath University. Benjamin and Rob both played for Glasgow, and Benjamin scored one of the tries in the final. The team was victorious against Manchester, Leicester and Exeter to reach the final. A great advert for Scottish rugby. (Benjamin, third from the left and Rob, wearing the blue scrum cap)

Jamie Maran (04-15) and Dan Nutton (05-15)

Dan and Jamie played together for Newcastle University's 1XV team against Birmingham University; they won the game convincingly! Dan is captain of the 1XV and Jamie is captain of the 2XV. (From left, Jamie and Dan)



Grant Hardie (05-10)



Grant skipped the Scottish team to success at the World Mixed Curling Championships. He and his team beat the strong Canadians in a final that went all the way to an extra end, where the Scots counted three stones, to win 8-5.

James McDiarmid (07-13)



James now competes in the Junior British Rally Championship after his team built its own Ford Fiesta R2 National car, from scratch.

Tom Diggie (08-16)

Tom won the Men's BUCS Small Bore Outdoor Championship and, with a score of 776 out of a possible 800, he has smashed his personal best!

Antoine Magre (10-14)



Antoine received a 2.1 in his finals, and graduated from the University of Cambridge in Natural Sciences. Antoine is looking very dapper in his blazer, which he received in alpine ski racing!

Hamish Burn (10-15)

Hamish (second from right) was selected to play for the Northumberland District XV.



Gavin Parker (11-13)

"Having graduated from university, I was very keen to travel and see a bit of the world. I arrived in New Zealand at the end of April and have been in Wellington, playing for Old Boys University RFC Premier side (1XV) in the Wellington Jubilee Cup, which we won.

The game pictured was against Hutt Old Boys Marist (HOBM), a league game we won at our home ground in Nairnville, Wellington." Gavin plans to stay in NZ until summer 2018, with a view to break into the representative setup, and then travel around Australia before returning to Scotland.



Angus Roberts (13-16)



Following two days of stiff competition, Angus (*second*

from the left) was proclaimed as one of the winners of the 2017 Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards. The judges said that for someone so new to the industry, Angus showed incredible depth of knowledge and a great passion.

Aaron Tait (14-16)

Aaron was named in the Bay of Plenty U19 rugby squad in New Zealand.



The Belfry Bell

There are no excuses for being late now! The Belfry Bell has been refurbished with the installation of a brand new clock on the outside tower. The bell strikes on the hour between 7.00am and 10.00pm, and once on the half hour.



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**Based on ISGA ranking table as of November 2017

MERCHISTON
EDINBURGH | Boys first



A Boarding and Day School for Boys aged 7-18

A trip down memory lane

Merchistonians remember their time at School...

Russel Lang (39-43)



"When I entered Merchiston the only way to achieve recognition was on the rugby field, but thanks to many childhood illnesses (I almost died of whooping cough) I was simply a hopeless athlete. The highest I ever got was second row of the scrum!

But I had a talent for piano and after a year or two the organ too, when I became allowed to use it. I sometimes liked to make that organ sound like a cinema organ, which of course displeased the Headmaster. Once there was a music competition which was judged by Dr W.Greenhouse Allt, the organist of St.Giles Cathedral. I heard afterwards when the Head complained about

it to Dr Allt, expecting sympathy, Dr Allt said "how very clever of him!"

Toward the end of my last term I was allowed to play the evening service once, maybe twice.

I migrated to America in 1952, then stayed there and qualified as a board certified ENT surgeon, enabling me, eventually, to acquire my home organ. This allowed me to learn some of the major organ works, including Liszt's Fantasia & Fugue on Bach, Pierre's Prelude Toccata, and Gigout's Grand Choeur Dialogue, Mendelssohn's 1st Sonata, all of which I have played in recital in Bangor, by invitation."

You can watch Russel's impressive Conn650 video on the Club website under the 'News' tab.

Mike Pancheri (61-66)

"I was amused to see the photo from the 'Scottish Field' magazine of November 1965 in the Merchistonian newsletter. I recognised John Wright (61-66). John was School Captain during the Autumn Term that year, and you probably know all about the tradition of 'touching hands' as everybody filed out of evening assembly.

Behind John is Jimmy Sharp (61-65) who was captain of rugby that term. He left at Christmas and Bill Laidlaw (61-66) took over. Behind him is George Allan (60-65), and behind him Grant Tait (61-66).

The photo opposite top right shows the 11th XV which defeated the Edinburgh Academy on 11 February



1961 for the first time in 10 year, their first win since November 1952.

Back then, there was a small team who produced a news sheet containing reports of the junior matches written by members of the 1XV. This was the 'Sports Report' and was distributed around the dormitories at bed time where you could purchase it for the princely sum of 1 (old) penny.

I also noticed the photo of all the prefects standing informally with the Headmaster, Alan Bush, on the front steps of the main building. A few days after the magazine was published, a letter arrived from some girls at a school in Glasgow. They had drawn rings on a copy of the photo around four of the prefects whom they fancied, and sent that with their letter inviting them to come to Glasgow one Sunday to meet them.

Regrettably, I was not one of those chosen, but somehow I found myself included in the final group. The girls were nice enough, I was accepted as a replacement for one who was unable to be present, a pleasant afternoon was passed, and nothing further ever came of it as far as I am aware."

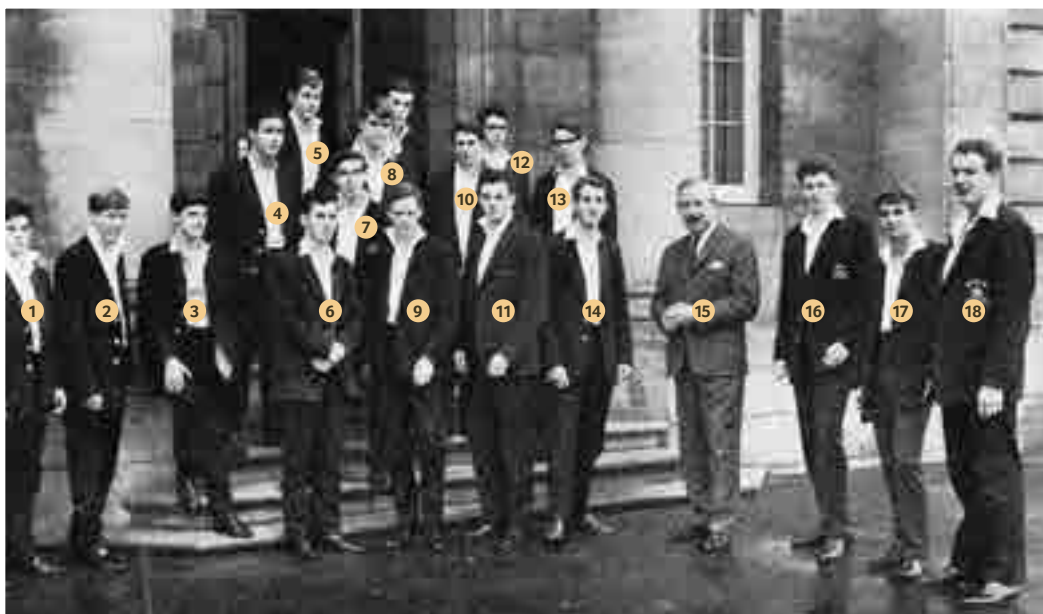


Back row – from left

S B Macdonald (60-65), D A Hendry (59-64), H A Ford (60-64), G W M Allan (60-65), N P Cardigan (60-65), J A Millar (59-64), R E MacLennan (60-65) C D G Guest (60-65), G P Cardigan (60-66)

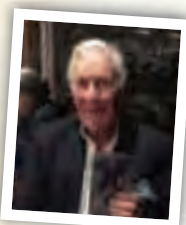
Front row – from left

M A Pancheri (61-66), G S McDavid (60-65), J A Keay (60-64), P J A A Muir (60-63), R Orchardson (60-65), P J W Thornton (60-64), A M Woodward (60-66)



1. M A Pancheri (61-66), **2.** K Lawson (61-66), **3.** R E MacLennan (60-65), **4.** N P Cardigan (60-65), **5.** T D Yellowlees (61-67), **6.** I A Graham (60-65), **7.** W Marshall (61-66), **8.** J E Millious (65-65), **9.** G Brantingham (61-65), **10.** J J Graham (61-66), **11.** J W Clay (64-66), **12.** I D Duncan (61-66), **13.** R P Thomas (61-66), **14.** J N Wright (61-66) **15.** A Bush (Headmaster 58-68), **16.** G W M Allan (60-65), **17.** G P Tait (61-66), **18.** J M Sharp (61-65)

Graham McConnochie (46-50)



"Considering food rationing in 1946, I can recall feeding extremely well and enjoying many basic dishes from the cook who was known to everyone as the 'kitchen queen' and wielded a mighty ladle, if necessary.

Stodge (steam pudding), banana custard (where did the bananas come from)? Highlight every Sunday morning was always prunes in unlimited supply followed by sausages. You can guess the use of prunes – who could eat the most which could have disastrous results!

Lunch was always served by masters who sat at the end of each long table. They filled the plates with food, which were then passed down to the bottom of the table. The trick, if at the bottom was to finish before everybody had been served and pass up plates for seconds and not to give the master time to eat.

Perhaps others of the same vintage may have other memories e.g. the then Headmaster known as "the tank" was as liberal with his cane as were prefects with the tawse.

Today's students are spoilt with all the amenities and benefits available."

David Clements (57-62)

"It must have been back in 1961 or 1962 that I had the idea of starting a Sailing Club at Merchiston. With the help and encouragement of the carpentry teacher, appropriately named Mr. Gibson, we bought a kit for a Graduate Sailing dinghy and started to build it in the

basement of Gibson House. I seem to remember that Andy Thoms (59-63), who now runs Majestic Cruises, was one of those who were equally keen and we spent many happy hours knee-deep in shavings and glue."

Bill (Chic) Henderson (64-70)



"My first term I was a bin fag and remember one day when I and the other boy (sadly I can't remember his name) fell into the main bin! He turned to me and said 'I thought we were the privileged ones!'

I recall the rules of blazer buttons – Done up (three buttons in Chalmers West, two in Chalmers East, one in Rogerson East and no buttons at all in Rogerson West).

I have two memories of Gibson House – firstly the Coca Cola vending machine at the entrance and

secondly BP cooking bacon sausage and eggs in a classroom using a Bunsen burner. No Health and Safety in those days!

There are now curtains and carpet everywhere – no such luxuries in my day!!

I remember waiting outside for breakfast in sunshine, rain and even snow! That's maybe the reason I still don't feel the cold. One great memory is sitting in the Memorial Hall listening to Donald Sprinck play the organ. In a sometimes hectic world, this was a good place for peace! Not everything was perfect but there were happy times."

Merchiston, the Here and Now

Pringle pupils tell us about their experiences of Merchiston today...

'Life at Merchiston now is really good because you do so much sport; in fact we do it every day. In J4 you get to use Bunsen burners, two years ago only II Form upwards could use them.'



'My old school had a very short day and we only did PE inside. The choice of food is much wider and I always find something lovely to eat.'



'We grew pumpkins in the outdoor classroom in Science. There is a pond in the outdoor classroom and there are fish and frogs.'



'In the boarding house it is good to get tuck some days, and I have lots of friends to play games with.'



'In our Science lessons we get to plant seeds and work in the outdoor classroom. Our lessons in the Pringle Centre are fun too – we sometimes go outside to learn.'



'I really like Merchiston because it has so many facilities. We are so lucky to be able to use them all. My old school was tiny and did not even have a time table.'



'So far I absolutely love my experience of Merchiston. The thing I love the most in the classroom is English – I really like the teaching because I think I learn a lot more. I love sports as well – this is because I hardly used to do any in my old school. I really like how the days are longer and we do prep in School. The teachers help us and it is nice to be with friends and work together. The activities are mind-blowing I cannot find words to describe how great everything is.'

'Rugby at Merchiston is amazing! The lessons are really interactive and it has helped my tackling skills. I think I work my hardest in English and Religious Studies. My favourite subjects are Maths, Sport and Tutorial. I am excited about Science this year and getting to do lots of experiments.'

'So far at Merchiston, I have loved doing sports like hockey, football, rugby, skiing and swimming. History is really fun and I learn something new every day – today we did a rap about Roman gods and goddesses. Science is my other favourite because we get to do practical lessons and it is so much fun working with Bunsen burners. I love being in First Form.'

'When I first came to Merchiston, I didn't know how to play rugby but now I am quite good at moving with the ball and scoring tries. I need to work harder on my tackling but I'm new and have lots of time to practise. In class, I like Art, DT (Design and Technology), ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and Music. I like English but I'm not very good at spelling. Sometimes I go out of class for support for learning in the Harvey Hub and learn how to make my spelling better.'

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.

2017 Careers Convention



A special thanks to **James Fearon (02-07)** from Aberdeen Asset Management, **Will Lindsay (87-94)** from McInroy Wood and **Oli Green (99-07)** from Gilson Gray, who returned to School to share career possibilities with the pupils at the 2017 Careers Convention.

Hugh Dinwoodie (43-48), Roy Humble (44-48) and Bill Donaldson (44-49)



We had a visit from Roy, Hugh, and Bill (CR. 69-73). After a warm welcome and catch-up with the Headmaster, the troupe made their way around the grounds, where some vivid memories were brought back to them.

Whilst in the Old Library, Bill pointed out the old kit that once belonged to his uncle, Ross Logan (1923-1929). In Chalmers West, the dorms used to look more like a hospital, with all the beds lined down each side. The beds were made of steel and there were no curtains and certainly no carpets!

Hugh remembered lining up for his new shoes during WWII in the library, which was the sports hall then. There was a line down the edge of the floor, used as a measuring tool, and if your feet passed over the line, you got new shoes. However, this line was not straight and Hugh cottoned on to stand at the far end where the space narrowed to get his new shoes! *(From left Headmaster, Roy, Hugh, Bill)*

Hugh Drummond (53-58)



Hugh now lives in Canada and returned to Edinburgh to visit friends. Hugh reminisced about his

time at Merchiston; we were amused to hear about how the pupils used to learn to ski on the slopes next to the Athletics Arena. *(Hugh, far right)*

Robert McColl (55-59), John Rigg (55-59), Ian Duncan (61-66) and Tim Gregory (83-90)



Whilst in town to attend the Merchistonian Annual Dinner, the gents all returned for a tour. The group was welcomed with bacon rolls and a quick School update from Alan Johnston, Senior Deputy Head, in the Old Library before taking a walk around the grounds. It was great to listen to tales from across the years and to hear the group comparing notes.

Peter Macdonald (57-62)





Peter visited with his son and grandson, who were visiting from Australia. Peter has lived in Sydney for the last 45 years and thoroughly enjoyed taking a tour of the School with his family.

Barclay Low (63-68) and Colin Crabbe (64-69)



Barclay and Colin visited the School to get the planning underway for their 50-year reunion. The reunion will take place on Saturday 19 May 2018 and Classes of '66, '67, '68, '69, and '70 will all be welcome. *(From left, Colin, Barclay)*

Michael Carslaw (70-74)



Michael, Headmaster of St Leonards School in St Andrews, returned to Merchiston as guest speaker at the

Whole School Service of Remembrance. He delivered an inspiring talk which linked his personal history to the School's history, but also to his hope for a shared vision of international co-operation. *(From left, Norman Dummond (65-70), Mrs Hunter, Captain of School, Michael Carslaw, Andrew Hunter - Headmaster, Gareth Baird (70-75) and Nick Blair)*

Graham Gibson (83-88)

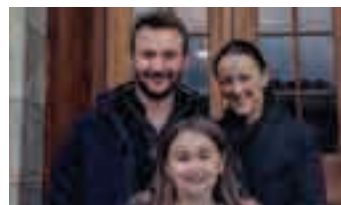
Graham is taking lead on the planning



of a 30 year reunion for the Class of '88. Graham enjoyed making plans for a get together over lunch in the Dining Hall and walking around the grounds reminiscing about his school days. He was blown away by Laidlaw and the facilities that the pupils have access to now. The reunion will take place on Saturday 8 September.

Philippe Lemaître (88-96)

Philippe returned with his wife, Charlotte and daughter for a trip down memory lane. Philippe now lives in Brussels and enjoyed seeing



Pringle House, where he found his 'leaver's brick'. When Philippe joined the School, he was the youngest boy, starting at only nine years old. He was allowed to join as his older brother, Laurent (88-95), had already enrolled. However, it did mean that Philippe had to repeat his first year!

Dan Duerr (15-16), Victor Labitzke (15-16), Ross Hughes (15-17), Richard Braun (15-16) and Johannes Moell (15-16)



After leaving Merchiston in 2016 to continue their schooling in Germany, the group returned to see their classmates and teachers, and to once again experience that special Merchiston flair. *(From left, Victor, Johannes, Ross, Richard and Dan)*

The MFC Report

Words by Oliver Green (99-07)

MFC v Accies

On Saturday 4 June, Merchistonians and Academicals came together once again to celebrate the oldest fixture in rugby.

A pre-match lunch organised at Raeburn Place was enjoyed before the game kicked off. We were all very keen to end the Accies Old Boys four year run of victory, and vowed to bring the old boys' cup to Merchiston.

After 60 minutes, the score was tied at 19-19. Unfortunately, Accies went on to win 34-24.

The match sponsor, Richard Macmillan (81-87) from Forbes Lawson and his party decided on the Man of the Match Award (*photo bottom right*), which went to Seitaro Usuda.

We look forward to playing for the old boys' cup again

on Saturday 9th June 2018!

Squad

Ali Edwards (02-07)

Alex Ogilvy (10-15)

Alex Cowan (00-06)

Ally Brunton (08-14)

Andrew Ferguson (05-08)

Cammy Gray (Captain) (13-15)

Chris Reid (01-08)

Don Crawford (06-11)

Donald Voas (05-14)

Edward Page (09-14)

Hamish Burn (10-15)

Jamie Harris (01-08)

Jonathan Byrne-Leitch (06-10)

Max Stobbs (12-14)

Max Oliver (10-15)

Olly Nesbitt (10-14)

Pat Clark (11-15)

Seitaro Usuda (07-14)

Teddy Bonfield (06-12)

The SRU board has granted the MRFC its historic status of being an FC instead of an RFC so once again our rugby club is named the Merchistonian Football Club (MFC).



Stay Strong Stu 7s



Alongside our annual Accies match, the team once again competed in the Stay Strong Stu 7s Tournament on Saturday 17 June.

Our first fixture was against the Janitors - last year's winners under a new guise. After a couple of early tries conceded, the boys found their rhythm but narrowly lost 4-3.

Second up were Ryton. We had heard that they had been beaten by the Colts, so we were hoping to come back strongly. After a couple of early tries from the wingers, we started playing some good sevens structures to win 43-0.

After the first two games, we were given a boost by the rangy, former Scotland U20 lock James Taylor, although he was fined later for being so late! James was a welcome addition to the squad.

Our third match was going to determine if we would progress in the tournament - we were up against Tynedale Colts, who had beaten Ryton by seven tries, so we were expecting a tough fixture. Again, the forwards competed well under high ball and space was well created to run in some good team tries: another 43-0 win.

At this point we did not know if we had made the cup or the plate. It turned out that a team had dropped out, meaning the three teams, on equal points, were in the running to get the spot in the main cup semi-final. Captain, Simon March, picked 'out', which unfortunately meant the boys did not make the cup semi-final but went straight into the plate final against Novocastrians.

The team defended well and finished some long range opportunities to win comfortably on the great pitch in front of the beer festival attendees! The final score was 34-7.

We were happy to receive £50 of beer tokens, which were consumed with ease as we enjoyed celebrating in the evening sun.

Squad

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Si March (c) (05-09) | 7. Mike Scott (guest player) |
| 2. Robbie Cowan (00-07) | 8. Matty Smith (guest player) |
| 3. Al Cowan (00-06) | 9. Cam McKenna (guest player) |
| 4. Ralph Appleby (02-07) | 10. Finlay Magowen (guest player) |
| 5. Fin Maclean (02-07) | |
| 6. James Taylor (02-07) | |

Merchistonians v Staff v Leavers (Round Robin)

On Monday 26 June, the School hosted a touch robin between Merchistonians, staff and Upper Sixth pupils. This was a great summer event, which all three teams enjoyed. The Club and School are looking to making this an annual fixture. Look out for next year's date and sign up for the Merchistonian team!

The rugby section is looking for fresh impetus into how to grow the Club going forward, as we look to develop a regularly competing sevens side next season. We'll hopefully have some exciting news for you in the coming months. If you would like to be involved, please email rugby@merchistonians.co.uk.



The Golf Club Report

Words by Robert Foreman (89-94)



The start of the year saw the potential Halford Hewitt squad gather at Gullane Golf Club for their annual trial and the following months saw plenty of Merchistonian golf being played, some good, some bad and some really bad.

This year was Bill Hannay's (54-58) second as Captain of the Club before handing the captaincy on to Alastair Milligan (58-63) at the Autumn meeting in August. In terms of fixtures and competitions I report as follows:

Autumn Meeting

The Autumn Meeting was moved to the last weekend in August due to a fixture clash at the Bruntsfield Links. We had 40 golfers meeting for lunch, prior to heading out for a shotgun start and to compete for the various prizes on offer. All attendees enjoyed the relaxed barbeque lunch that was laid on for us.

The course itself is undergoing some huge changes and the green staff should be complimented for ensuring that the course was in as good a condition that it was – we are all very much looking forward to playing the redesigned course in 2018.

Dinner was held in the dining room at Bruntsfield Links after the golf, there were over 50 people in attendance, including a number of wives, partners and other guests. Special thanks must go to the School Chaplain, Nick Blair, for coming along to the dinner with his wife Fiona. Nick gave a great update on the health of the School.

Bill then gave a brief summary of the golfing year. After the speeches there was the usual presentation of prizes – the list of the prize winners is below.

Competition	Age Group	Type	Winner	Score/Points	Runner-up	Score
Gold Medal	All	Scratch	Mike Rolland (98-03)	72	Pete Legget (03-11)	75
Silver Medal	All	Handicap	Sam Paulo (94-02)	67 (bih)	Phil Robson (94-01)	67
Merchistonian Quaich	Under 30	Scratch	Pete Legget (03-11)	75 (bih)	Freddie Ward (07-11)	75
Abram Jug	Under 30	Stableford	Pete Legget	36	Freddie Ward	34
Centenary Trophy	Under 40	Stableford	Sam Paulo (94-02)	42	Phil Robson	39
Biggart Donaldson Trophy	Over 40/Under 60	Stableford	David Morrison (83-89)	37 (bih)	Douglas Macrae (84-90)	37
Allan Salver	Over 50	Scratch	Morison Zuill (50-55)	87	Gavin Thain (79-85)	91
Ness Tankard	Over 50	Handicap	Morison Zuill	76	Graeme Scott (53-58)	78
Hewat Driver	Over 60	Stableford	Morison Zuill	30	Graeme Scott	29
Biggart Memorial Trophy	Over 60	Scratch	Morison Zuill	87	Graeme Scott	92
Tujoh Puloh Tappit Hen	Over 69	Stableford	Morison Zuill	30	Graeme Scott	29
Mickel Cup	Past Captains	Stableford	Morison Zuill	30	Bill Peterkin (55-60)	28
Ladies	Ladies	Stableford	Niamh Waldron	29	Margaret Milligan	19

Social Matches

There was a fairly full schedule of social matches this year including: Lorettonians, OG/Fettesians, Sedbergh and the match against the School. I would like to thank the Match Managers – Ian Wilson (72-77), Malcolm Gourlay (56-61), Gavin Thain 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 – There was a slight confusion with the OL match this year, in that we had a date in June for the fixture and Malcolm Gourlay had organised a team. Unfortunately, the date was incorrect and was scheduled to be in October at Prestwick – the Secretary was very apologetic for this confusion! Second time round, the team consisted of Robert Forman, Martin Stein (84-89), Graham Fisher (76-82), Michael Bremner (87-90), Connor Bolton (07-09), Grant Milligan (89-94), John Glen (83-90) and Graeme Dickie (75-80), who took on the Lorettonians in blustery conditions. At lunch we had a commanding lead with the pairings of Stein/Bolton, Forman/Glen and Dickie/Milligan all providing wins. In the afternoon Fisher and Bremner made amends to their loss in the morning by winning their matches with their respective partners. In total the match was won 5 ½ - 2 ½.

OG/Fettesians – Ian Wilson again took charge of the team at Panmure and the format this year was a three-ball sixsome Pinehurst. A great day was had by all in attendance although Ian's report did note that they had a "minor disaster" on the course – Merchiston halved one match and lost two. Fettes and Glenalmond tied for first place.

Old Sedberghians – The team consisting of George Walker (69-74), Freddie Ward, Sandy Corstorphine (59-64), Graham Hardie (66-71), Ian Ballantine (61-65), Charles Abram (65-69), Colin Barbour (78-83) and James Henderson (01-09) took on the OS team at Prestwick. As luck would have it, it was also the same day that the Club were taking on the Lorettonians at Prestwick and in extremely gusty conditions (precursor to Hurricane Ophelia) the team just came up short on the day. The morning matches were lost 2 ½ - 1 ½ and despite being bolstered by an excellent lunch in the company of the other MCS team ended up sharing the points in the afternoon to lose narrowly by 1 point overall.

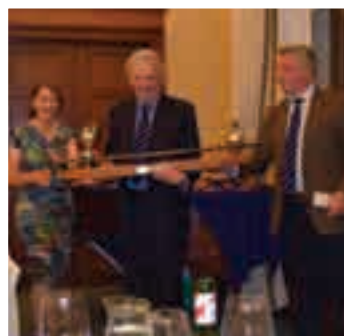
School – In June, the Merchiston Golf Academy played its annual match against the Merchistonians at Muirfield. Blessed with glorious sunshine, with little wind, and a pre-match lunch, that would equal any royal banquet, the match was set to be a cracker. In match one, the pupils were up against it right from the start; 4 down through 4 holes, playing against two of the Halford stalwarts (Chris Cowan (79-85) and Harry Thomson (72-78)), the pupils fought back hard, eventually losing on the 18th hole. Match two proved to be a tight affair also, and, had it not been for one or two, and too many stray shots from the boys, the loss on the last hole could have been quite different! In the final match, and playing Muirfield for the first time, the two "young guns" proved unfazed by the course's reputation, as one of the toughest links courses in the world. With impressive know how and quality precision shots, the youngsters went round in 3 over par, which, especially in foursomes golf, is mighty impressive! Noting that Match Manager, Gavin Thain, was in this last match and that he stated "thankfully we did not lose on the 10th but it was not long after that", I will leave you to your imagination what you think that result finished up as..! All in all, this was a wonderful day out, with the Merchistonians victorious in the final result, winning 2-1.

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.





Pupils taking part in the Merchistonian v School match.



Winners of the Golf Autumn Meeting competitions.

Representative Matches

As usual 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, I would like to thank the Match Managers: Stuart Briggs (60-65), Chris Cowan, Martin Stein and David Hutchison (73-76) for organising the teams at these events.

Scottish Wayfarers/Stenhouse Quaich – Once again, Merchiston were the winners of the Stenhouse Quaich played as always at the Golf House Club, Elie in March. The competition involves eight person teams from six schools (Merchiston, Edinburgh Academy, Fettes, Loretto, Glenalmond and Strathallan) playing each other once over the weekend. Merchiston won the quaich for the fourth time in a row and the eighth time in the last nine years, beating Loretto into second place. Thanks to all the players who played over the weekend – C Cowan, D Cowan (84-91), M Stein, C Smith (96-02), M Rolland, R Crummey (06-09), S Biggart (96-03), H Thomson, D Thomson (74-80), J McIntosh (02-09), D Morrison, S Briggs, Q Dunlop (57-60) and D Hutchison (73-76).

The Queen Elizabeth Coronation Schools' Trophy – The last weekend in September saw the Merchistonian team of Martin Stein, David Morrison, Stephen Biggart, Mike Rolland, Pete Leggett, and Freddie Ward compete in the QE at the Royal Burgess. Lenzie Academy were the first round opponents. Ward and Leggett won the top match but then disaster struck. Stein and Morrison had been 1 up on 17th tee, but lost 1 down on 18th. That left Rolland and Biggart who were heroically hanging on with a nine foot putt on the last being holed to take the game into extra holes. Up the 19th Biggart hit a very good drive and Rolland hit a lovely shot into 2 feet. Sadly Lenzie knocked their shot in to 2 feet and closed out the match.

Halford Hewitt – The Merchistonian team of Martin Stein, Jamie McIntosh, Chris Cowan, Dougie Cowan, Charlie Simpson (94-98), Ross Crummey, Chris Smith, Robbie Bremner (85-91), Harry Thomson and Mike Rolland travelled to Kent for the Halford Hewitt competition. We met Harrow in the first round and after losing in that round last year and then having to play in the plate we were happy to avoid that fate this year with a good first round victory. We progressed to the quarter finals by beating Radley 4-1. We then had a very tight match with Haileybury only winning at the first extra hole thanks to a brilliant birdie from Chris Smith and Robbie Bremner. Robbie's epic 6 iron to 12" at the 19th being the shot that took us through. In the semi-final we met Ampleforth who were the better team on the day and deserved the win. In summary; a good campaign with the team acquitting themselves well both on and off the course at Royal Cinque Ports GC. Special mention goes to Douglas Cowan who reached his 51st game at the HH during the campaign.

Cyril Gray – The Cyril Gray Tournament took place at Worplesdon Golf Club on 22, 23 and 24 June. The Merchistonian team was David Hutchison, Graeme Dickie, Donald Thomson, John McKean (75-81), Alistair Duncan (69-73) and Harry Thomson. There was a disappointing start to the tournament as we lost 2-1 to Wellingborough. However on the Friday we comprehensively defeated Eastbourne 3-0 in the morning and Stonyhurst 3-0 in the afternoon. On the morning of 24 June we lost narrowly to Rossal.

Senior Wayfarers – Senior Wayfarers took place at the end of April at Western Gables Golf Club. The Merchistonian Team was David Hutchison, Donald Thomson, Roger Baird (73-78), Alistair Duncan, Martin Judd (76-69) and Gavin Spencer (73-78). The Merchistonian team were lead qualifiers on the Saturday afternoon, defeated Strathallan comprehensively in the semi-final on Sunday morning and lost narrowly to Glenalmond in the final on Sunday afternoon.

Joining the Club

The fixture list for 2018 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 2018 golfing season.

Robert Forman, Hon Secretary, Merchistonian Golf Club – robertforman76@gmail.com – 07891399457

The Cricket Club Report

Merchistonians v School Cricket Match

The Merchistonian match is always a great occasion, and this year the annual event took place on Friday 19 May. This was another super evening of T20 cricket. The Merchistonians batted first, posting a very competitive 144-2 from their 20 overs. Dan Nutton scored a quick fire 67 from just 46 balls and Patrick Glennie finished up with a run ball 61. In reply, the 1XI chased the score down with just 2 balls to spare. Matthew scored 66 from just 46 balls and John got the boys over the line with a composed 27 not out from 24 balls.

Team

Dan Nutton (05-15)
Patrick Clarke (99-06)
Douglas Voas (04-11)
Andrew Light (01-03)
Zach Mercer (13-15)
Hamish Burn (10-15)

Mike Legget (97-04) (12th Man)
Angus Paterson (05-12)
George Ogilvie (07-12)
Alastair Maxwell (01-11)
Patrick Glennie (00-05)
Dan Barry (94-99)

Words by Rory McCann, Director of Sport

Marylebone Cricket Club V Merchiston Castle School

On Friday 24 June, Jamie Kerr (88-93) and Peter Legget (03-01) represented the MCC in the School's 1XI v MCC fixture.

A strong opening partnership produced 117 runs, on a tough pitch against some tight bowling, with some lovely shots square of the wicket. We played through the rain until it forced us off for a 10 minute mid-morning tea break. A notable bowling performance from young spinner, Douglas, of 4 for 43 from 11, made it hard for the MCC to push on.

Tom Hilton opened the bowling for the club with good pace, control and lateral movement, which led to 3 wickets in the first over! There was a great catch at 2nd slip by Simon Whait (1 of the 4 keepers in the

side) to remove a promising young player. This meant that the School had to rebuild, and it did so with great maturity. 14 year old Max showed resilience to get to 29 (earning him the Spirit of Cricket cap) before Chris (61*) got the School from 47 for 5 to a respectable total of 140 with the help of the tail end.

It was a fantastic fixture, as always, which was enjoyed by all and played with a brilliant attitude by both teams.

Thanks must go to the School for hosting us so kindly and efficiently, as ever, for the pupils who played so competitively and the grounds men for a great pitch (despite the conditions).

Words by Marylebone Cricket Club

Sole Success in Cricket

It was wonderful to see two Merchistonians and brothers, Tom Sole (09-14) and Chris Sole (07-12) fighting it out against some of the best cricketers in the world on the same weekend in May. Chris was playing for a Scotland XI side against Sri Lanka in Beckenham, Kent. He was only needed with the ball, picking up 2-64 from his 9 overs. Scotland ended up toppling Sri Lanka, winning the match by 7 wickets. Chris has been a regular in the Scotland squad, earning himself 5 full ODI starts. Chris was also on a summer contract with Hampshire.

Tom earned his first start for the Northamptonshire Steelbacks against a very strong South African side. This was on the back of a number of impressive performances for the 2XI. Tom can be delighted with his debut. He picked up one wicket and then showed his batting capabilities with a calypso 54 from just 43 balls. I am sure both of these experiences will live long in the memory of these two exciting talents and will be long remembered by the Sole family.

Words by Rory McCann, Director of Sport



Peter Legget (03-01) and Jamie Kerr (88-93).



Merchistonians v School

The Curling Club Report

Words by Alastair Campbell (62-67)

In terms of results, we had a mixed season in the Wanderers' League last season, with wins against Strathallians and Aberdeen Grammar School FP, losses against Old Glenalmond and Kelvinside Accies; the match against Glasgow Accies was abandoned when a curler in a neighbouring rink collapsed with a suspected heart attack. More importantly, a good time was had by all (apart from the chap who collapsed, but I'm glad to say he made a full recovery). All matches are played at Braehead Ice Rink. We have a pool of 11 curlers and more are always welcome. If you wish to join us, please contact me.

We were saddened to lose one of our stalwart curlers this year, namely Jock Armstrong (53-57), who died in May. He was a charming man and we miss his good company.

Efforts have been made to form an Edinburgh curling section of Merchistonians as we have the opportunity to join the Edinburgh FP Curling League (with matches against Watsonians, Stewarts-Melville, Heriots and Edinburgh Accies, all at Murrayfield Ice Rink). The clubs play each other twice per season. So far four Merchistonians have put their names forward, but unfortunately that is not enough to be viable. Realistically, a pool of at least 10 curlers is required (including some with experience as skip). If you are interested in joining this venture, please let me know.



The Shooting Club Report

Merchistonians v School – Rifle and Clay Day

The annual Merchistonian 'Rifle and Clay Day' took place on 18 March.

Those Merchistonians shooting in clays & rifle were as follows:-

Richard Macmillan (81-87), Simon Collins (00-06), Iain Brechin (79-84), Tom Diggle (08-16), Sandy Jennings (06-13), Euan Jennings (06-15), Cameron Rogers (10-15), James Duncan (05-09), Calum Miller (81-88), Peter Wright (82-89), Lewis Allen (98-04) and Richard Dodds (82-86).

The day kicked off with clays at Cluny Clays in Fife, where the Merchistonian team were victorious with a score of 241 v 205. The gentlemen then enjoyed a trip

down memory lane over lunch in the School Dining Hall followed by the rifle shooting in the Miller range.

The result is taken from 16 submitted cards. All on the Merchistonian team managing to fire and submit cards and a select five firing a second card. It was great to see father and son competing against one another with Merchistonian and current parent, Richard Dodds and son both taking part.

In a very close shoot with Internationalists, county, club firers on each team, the result had the pupils winning by 47. Merchiston – 1399; Merchistonians – 1352.

Top rifle shot was Tom Diggle and top guns in the clays were Euan Jennings and Richard Macmillan.



The teams gather for a photograph in the Miller Range.

Bisley 2017

In glorious weather on 13 July, six Merchistonians, ranging in ages from 25 to 74, met in Bisley, Surrey, to shoot in the School Veterans Match. This year there were 45 schools represented. Some had multiple teams so there were upwards of 60 teams competing. The shooters consisted of James Anderson (83-88), Richard Dodds, Bob Allan (56-61), Patrick Costello (01-09) and John Brodie (85-90). I coached each of the shooters through their sighters and 10 shots to count. Two members of the team had not shot since leaving School and most had not shot since Bisley last year, so the expectations were not high. However, we shot well through the steady conditions and ended up third top Scots, narrowly beaten by Glenalmond and Fettes. The competition was won by the Old Gilfordians, with a perfect score of 250/250. Our top scorer was James Anderson, with a creditable 49/50.

It is traditional that following the shoot we have a team BBQ and this year we were delighted to have two wives along, June Allan and Claire Brodie. Patrick put his mixology skills to good use and Pimms was flowing before dinner. We had put a honey glazed ham on a slow cook setting on the BBQ before our shoot and were delighted with the results. Ham, chicken, potatoes, parsnips, corn and salad - not a burger in sight!

Thank you to all that took part and especially to Richard, who travelled down from Scotland especially for the match, stayed the night and then nearly missed his flight home.

If anyone is interested in taking part in July next year they should get in touch with Iain Brechin or Richard Macmillan, who was watching the Lions in NZ this year but will hopefully be back to Bisley next year.

Words by Iain Brechin (79-84)



Food prep before the shoot.



Richard holding court. (clockwise) Claire, Julie, James and Bob.



Roast Ham with veg and potatoes and a little chicken on the side.



Richard, John, Claire, June, Patrick and James.



Our score sheet.



John, Patrick, Iain, Richard and James.



Iain coaching Richard. This also gives you an idea of the distance we shoot at. The targets you see are 500 yards away.

The Fishing Club Report

Words by Andrew McDonald (79-85)

Nigel Rickard (CR. 84-12) and I, enjoyed a trip to the Lake of Menteith in July, although neither of us caught a fish, so on this occasion I guess the fish won!

We would be delighted to hear from any Merchistonian fishermen who would like to compete next year. Please contact me with your details to be kept-up-to-date with arrangements for each outing.



The Sailing Club Report

Words by David Clements (57-62)

2017 saw the formation of the Merchistonian Sailing Club. Still really in embryo and looking for someone to take it forward (I am based in the south-west of England, whereas I imagine the centre of gravity of Merchistonian sailors is in Scotland), a start has been made by members registering their interest and their sailing plans for the season.

My own time to develop the section has been curtailed this year by the fact that I was circumnavigating Great Britain, something I had been planning for some while.

I am sure that there are many other Merchistonian sailors out there who have not yet put their heads above the coaming. Please do register your interest and we shall try to arrange a meet on the water (or on dry land!) sometime in 2018.

You can read David's journal from his Cruise of Bagheera of Whitby on the Club website under the 'News' tab.



Bagheera in Laggan Locks (DRC).



Skipper tries being Coxswain! (MG) - Portpatrick.



The crew for the leg from Newcastle to Inverness – David is on the left.



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A Life Well Lived



Reverend Professor Norman Drummond (65-70) remembers the late John (Michael) Paton (34-38). Michael was one of the last surviving Merchistonian WWII veterans.

When you lose your father when you are young, and your children and their children have respectively known neither grandfather nor great grandfather, each of you falls upon every remembrance of that father or grandfather.

Imagine, therefore, our delight when our youngest son, Ruairidh (03-12), in his penultimate year at Merchiston, which three generations of the Drummond family have attended, called me and said “Dad, you’ll never believe it, I’ve just met Grandpa’s best school friend here at Merchiston.”

In 2011, Michael, with daughter, Lesley, was on a pilgrimage to Edinburgh, which included Merchiston, where he had been recalling happy days over 70 years previously, spent in the company of my father and Ruairidh’s grandfather, Edwin, known by the nickname

‘Coco’ Drummond (34-39). Nick Blair, School Chaplain, who was showing them around, spotted the connection and arranged for the two of them to meet.

The following year, Michael returned to Merchiston with Lesley and her husband, David. They attended Ruairidh’s final Speech Day, at which I was proud to be the guest speaker – a very special occasion for all of us.

Michael became for me the father figure whom I had never been able to consult for the past 40 years and, particularly for our sons, the substitute grandfather, whom we so enjoyed visiting and to whom we could all turn at any time and never feel a nuisance.

Michael passed away on 30 January 2017 at the great age of 97.

As a youngster, Michael took an early interest in nature, especially birdwatching – a hobby he enjoyed for the rest of his life. In fact, he had an obsession with anything that flew, whether birds, planes or kites. Michael grew up in south-east England, but completed his schooldays at Merchiston, where he met my father and then went on to study medicine at Edinburgh University.

It was there, on his 20th birthday, that a friend suggested they went to visit the family of a girl in the French Department. Many years later, Michael’s sister gave him a heap of letters he had sent home at the time. Reporting on his birthday, he had written: ‘Today I met a girl called Margaret’. The rest, as they say, is history.



However, within only a few months, early in 1940, Michael got his call-up papers and spent the next 6½ years in the army, where he saw much action, including the battles at Anzio and Monte Cassino.

Two things made 1944 a very special year for Michael. Most importantly, he and Margaret were married. Being wartime, it was a low-key affair, but the union was to last for over 50 years. Also in 1944, Michael was accepted for training as an army pilot, so he finally achieved his dream of learning to fly. He was a natural – flying solo after only 6½ hours' training.

After the war, Michael and Margaret settled in Edinburgh and he joined the hotel trade to train as a banqueting manager. In 1947, his son, Alan, was born, and in 1951, Lesley arrived. Michael enjoyed hotel work, but the hours were too anti-social for a family man, so he resigned and took a position in a timber importing company based in Salford. Other moves followed – first to Cardiff and eventually to Brighton.

In 1992, Michael took to the air again. For a Christmas present, Margaret gave him a trip in a Piper Tomahawk. His instructor had not been born at the time of Michael's last flight 47 years earlier!

And it doesn't end there. In 2009, on the occasion of his 90th birthday, Michael was airborne again, this time in a Tiger Moth – the type of plane he had trained on. Tiger Moths are notoriously difficult to control but, unknown to his family who were watching, the instructor allowed Michael both to take off and land the

plane – not usual practice but, according to the instructor, executed perfectly!

1994 marked Michael and Margaret's golden wedding anniversary. By this time, Margaret's health was failing and Michael supported her constantly until she passed away three years later, almost 58 years after they first met. Michael's complete devotion to Margaret throughout her illness was humbling, and he remained devoted to her memory for the remaining 20 years of his life.

In 2006, Michael moved from Brighton to live next door to Lesley and David in Buckinghamshire. He joined the local church and two art groups, and soon established a new life for himself.

In later years, being reunited with the Drummond family was a real highlight for Michael, and we were all delighted last autumn, when Michael's grandson, Rory, met up with my youngest son, Ruairaidh. So the two best friends at Merchiston both had grandsons called Rory, and they met for the first time over 70 years later.

By far the most important thing in Michael's life was his family. He never tired of hearing about their progress, and looked forward enormously to their visits, particularly to seeing his three great grandchildren.

Michael's name and example will live on, and what an example – so smartly turned out, eager to help, to influence but never to interfere, to always look on the bright side. In his presence one was always very conscious of his abiding Christian faith and his belief that death is not the end but merely a bend in the road of life.

Obituaries

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.

John (Jack) Macnaught Weir (33-38)



Born in Glasgow in 1919, Jack died aged 97 on 1 November 2016 at Storrington, West Sussex.

Soon after arriving at Merchiston he showed his talents for rugby and shooting, quickly becoming the captain of both teams. In 1937, Jack played in the Scottish versus English Schoolboys' Rugby Tournament and was a keen member of the Athletics Team.

As a young man, Jack joined the City Line Ltd, where he spent a brief spell working as an office junior before being commissioned and mobilised into the Highland Light Infantry (T.A.) in 1939. In 1943, he was transferred to Gordon Highlanders (R.A.C.) and spent the following three years in India and Burma before demobilising as Major in 1946.

Returning to his home city, Jack re-joined the T.A. (Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry) as Major, where he was awarded The Territorial Decoration. In 1961, he was appointed a Director of the City Line Ltd and transferred to the Liverpool branch in 1973.

Jack took great interest in genealogy but his main interest was shipping and shipping history.

In 1982, Jack retired and enjoyed spending time in the garden and playing golf. He was a loving husband of the late Moyra, a loving father of Maureen and Jean, and a very proud grandfather and great-grandfather.

David Porteous Fullerton (43-47)



David was born in Broughty Ferry, Dundee and lived there for the majority of his life. He had fond memories of his time at Merchiston where he acquired his love of rugby and made many lifelong friends.

After leaving Merchiston, he did his national service. He spent most of his time as an orderly sergeant stationed at Edinburgh Castle and playing rugby for the Scottish Command.

David was a jute merchant and worked in the jute trade in Dundee for 67 years. He joined Fullerton & Wilson Ltd in 1950 after national service and worked for (and latterly ran) it until his death. The business was started by his namesake and grandfather, David Fullerton, in 1917 and David was particularly pleased to celebrate its centenary earlier this year. He was extremely proud of his ability to keep Fullerton & Wilson going when most of the

other small jute firms did not survive.

David was passionate about sport throughout his life: as a player, administrator, selector, and latterly, as armchair spectator. He was very much in favour of amateur sport and greatly disliked the encroachment of professionalism and money into sport – especially his beloved rugby.

He played for Panmure RFC and was captain for four years (1957-61). This was his favourite period of his life and his stories about it were legion. The camaraderie of the game after a hard fought match meant a great deal to him as did the many friendships formed during his time at Panmure and through rugby.

David was a keen cricketer and played cricket for Forfarshire Cricket Club where he was honorary match secretary. He was also an enthusiastic golfer throughout his life. He was a member of Panmure Golf Club's "Dawn Patrol" – a group who played at dawn on Sundays regardless of the weather.

He was involved in the administration of sport at different levels and became President of Forthill Sports Club from 1974 to 1976.

David has been described as a character. He was certainly very independently minded and self-reliant. He was a proud man who was happy to plough his own furrow while being an intensely loyal friend to many.

David died on 26 September 2017. He is survived by his daughter, Karen, and son-in-law Harris.

Contributed by daughter, Dr Karen Fullerton.

Edgar Robert Hunter (43-47)



On leaving Merchiston, Edgar served in the RAF before having a short career as a football reporter with STV. Edgar then went on to teacher training at St Andrews University which led him to teach at Belmont House Hurst Grange, where he had once studied, Ardvreck in Crieff and Craigclowen in Perth.

He was well known in prep school cricket circles and a regular at Classics conferences. He loved his music, something that was nurtured at Merchiston. He played the organ and piano.

In later years he potted in his garden, loved the challenge of a crossword and touring around Scotland long after his mountaineering days ended. He died in Crieff on 24 May 2017 following a cancer diagnosis.

My dad was married to Catherine for 58 years. Mum is still alive; they had three children Iain, Heather and Gordon. He was a loving and much loved grandad and uncle.

Words by son, Iain Hunter

William (Hamish) Gray Jamieson (43-47)



After Merchiston, Hamish joined Edinburgh City Police where he played for their XV and XI teams.

Hamish died aged 86 on 24 May 2016.

John (Colin) Kirkwood (43-48)



Colin died aged 86 on 15 October 2016 in Vancouver British Columbia.

His working life was spent in Glasgow, Teheran and India as a sales executive for the thread company of J & P Coats.

He enjoyed his time at Merchiston where he played for the 1XV and was a Prefect. He moved to Canada from Scotland some years ago and enjoyed spending time with his two brothers there, Kenneth (46-51) and Euan (48-53). He never lost his love of Scotland and travelled back as much as possible.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth, his four children and 12 grandchildren. He was a true gentleman who will be greatly missed.

Words by brother, Euan Kirkwood

Ian Grant Forman (44-48)



Ian died peacefully on 17 September

2017 in Dundee, aged 87.

At Merchiston, Ian excelled in sport, being a member of the 1XV and Captain of both the Cricket and Athletics Teams. Ian was also a Senior Prefect in 1947.

After School Ian studied at Sidney Sussex College, where he gained a BA in Mechanical Science in 1952 and then went on to achieve an MA in 1969. Joining the Royal Navy in 1954, Ian worked as an Electrical Officer on HMS Corunna, HMS Dainty and HMS Crossbow before spending three years working for the Ministry of Defence. During this time Ian tested the waters of teaching, and was a lecturer for the Britannia RN College from 1956 to 1958.

Before retiring from his post as Lieutenant Commander in 1970, Ian became a Weapons Electrical Officer for HMS Lincoln. Having enjoyed lecturing so much Ian decided to pursue this, and gained a teaching qualification in 1970, becoming a maths teacher at Harris Academy until retirement in 1988.

Husband of the late Angela (née Eaton), much loved father of Peter (72-76), David (73-79) and Sheena and devoted grandfather.

Reverend William (Logan) Kirk (44-49)



The youngest of a family of five, Logan was born in 1931.

Logan attended Merchiston with

his elder brother, John (35–40) and his maternal cousins. Soon after leaving School Logan completed his national service, serving as a second lieutenant with the Royal Scots and the Royal Scots Fusiliers. In 1951 he went to Edinburgh University, graduating MA in 1954. Accepted for training as minister of the Church of Scotland, he then entered the divinity faculty at New College, graduating with a BD in 1957. While at university Logan played rugby and captained the 1XV. Logan represented the Scottish Universities and the Edinburgh District teams; he subsequently played for Edinburgh Wanderers until his playing days were curtailed by injury.

In 1957, Logan was licensed by the then Presbytery of Haddington and Dunbar and served as an assistant at the High Kirk of Edinburgh St Giles until 1959. Logan at that time, embarked on a life in farming in East Lothian and in Berwickshire. In the early 80s a new minister arrived at what was to become the Kirk of Lammermuir. This newcomer was quick to spot Logan's abilities. Logan went on to represent the congregation at Presbytery.

Over the next years there was a decided change in his thinking, with thoughts again moving towards ministry and in 1988 he was ordained and inducted into the charge of Dalton. Logan was particularly well prepared for this charge from both an academic and from a farming perspective; with his hands-on farming experience he quickly endeared himself to his people.

Logan was an active Commissioner at the General Assembly and a not infrequent contributor to the debates. An avid

reader, he kept up to date with developments in theology and in a wide variety of other topics. Logan had an abiding interest in people and always had kind words to say about them. He was much loved by a wide circle of friends and even in his latter years when mobility issues posed problems, he thought nothing of overcoming convoluted travel arrangements to visit friends. Until comparatively recently he made trips to Germany to keep in touch with friends there.

[The Scotsman, 11 April 2017]

Hugh William Laughland (45–48)



Hugh passed away unexpectedly, but peacefully, at home on 20 January 2017: loving husband of Louise, much loved father of Brian (75–81) and Tracy, proud grandpa and close brother to John (49–52).

Hugh qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1953, having served his apprenticeship in Wilson Stirling & Co in Glasgow. He then completed two years of national service: the Fleet Air Arm, serving most of his time in Canada. On returning home, he joined Scottish Aviation Ltd. in Prestwick and became Managing Director. He moved on to SUITS (Scottish and Universal Investments Ltd) in the 70s before the company was taken over, whereupon he moved south and joined BTR, where ultimately he

became Director of European Affairs. Hugh and Louise returned to Scotland in 2005 and settled in North Berwick. Hugh was a keen sportsman, playing hockey for Ayr and South West District, and he was a member of Prestwick, Luffness New and a past Captain of Royal Dornoch GC. *Words by brother, John Wilson Laughland.*

Friend, Graham McConnochie (46–50) remembers the late Hugh Laughland.

One memory of Hugh was we were both in the Fleet Air Arm at the same time for national service. He drew the lucky straw and trained in Canada and I was in England both in Cornwall and Londonderry. Hugh was an atrocious writer and when he got top marks in his CA exam we, his peers said the examiner had two choices: no marks or top marks because impossible to read. This vouchsafed itself, many years later – we regularly exchanged faxes – and one I received just could not be read, so I returned it to him asking him to print what he sent. The reply came back in Morse which we had both used in the Navy so thereafter for a bit of fun our letters were in Morse!

I also went with Hugh to Antarctica in 2008 and visited Mawson's Hut in Commonwealth Bay, the closest point to Tasmania, which was a privilege reserved for a minority. Most ships go to Antarctica from Ushuaia which is on the opposite side of Antarctica.

Duncan Diarmid McDiarmid (45–49)

Duncan died aged 84 at his home on 9 September 2016.

When the Duke of Atholl's private army, visited the United States in 1978, they were taken by bus through the streets of the Bronx. As they drove along the crowded



streets, Duncan hoisted himself through a hatch in the roof of the bus and treated the bemused New Yorkers to a blast on the pipes. The recital, and the bus, only came to a halt when the NYPD became concerned that he would entangle himself in the overhead cables.

Duncan was born in 1931 at Rannoch. While at Merchiston, he played in the 1XV, and learned the pipes from Pipe Major Hance Gates of the Edinburgh City Police Pipe Band.

His time at agricultural college was cut short when, in 1949, he was called back to take over his father's two hill farms.

In 1961, he married Margaret, and they set up home at Castle Menzies Farm, where they brought up their three children, and where Duncan remained for the rest of his life.

By his 30s, he was active in the National Farmers' Union. His unstuffy manner and can-do approach enabled him to get on with all sorts of men, and made him lasting friendships which he maintained. He was asked to take on many other jobs and seldom refused.

For 30 years he was a member of the Scottish Agricultural Consultative Panel. In 1976, he was asked to join the Scottish Land Court, he remained a devoted member of the Court for 20 years.

After retirement, he wrote a fascinating account of his time in the Court's centenary publication, 'No Ordinary Court'.

He was a gifted musician and could play the piano and accordion well, but his first love was the highland bagpipes.

As a young man, he travelled to Balmoral to study piobaireachd, the classical music of the pipes. In the 60s and 70s he won many prizes on the highland games circuit. Throughout his life, he always found time to play the accordion for gatherings and dances.

He was a member of the Atholl Highlanders for over 60 years, serving as Pipe Sergeant for over 20 years and Pipe Band President until his death.

At his funeral, Weem Church and a marquee were full to overflowing, testifying to the widespread affection and regard in which he was held.

His wife Margaret died in 2013 after a long debilitating illness, during which Duncan nursed her devotedly. He is survived by his three children, to whom he was a constant source of support and encouragement, and, in his own words, seven "cracking" grandchildren.

[*The Scotsman*, 19/11/2016]

Gordon McKay Bruce (46-52)



Gordon died after a short illness, on 31 July 2016, at Raigmore Hospital.

Whilst at Merchiston Gordon played for the XV team. Gordon's love for sport continued at Aberdeen University where he played for the XV team and was Secretary for the RFC. Gordon went on to obtain a MB ChB.

Gordon was the secretary for the Highland Health Board General Practitioner Sub-Committee and a member of the Medical Secretarial Sub Committee of Inverness College of Further Education.

Devoted and loving husband of Rosemary, much loved father and a loving grandy.

Alexander (Sandy) Campbell Newton Ferguson (47-51)



Sandy died peacefully on 6 December 2016, aged 82.

After Merchiston, Sandy studied at Edinburgh University before joining the 4th Royal Tank Regiment as 2nd Lieutenant from 1957 to 1959. Following this Sandy joined Fahnestock & Co. as a Stockbroker, becoming General Partner in 1969, and retiring in 1989. Sandy was a keen golfer; he was a Semi-Finalist in the Boys' Amateur Championships in 1955 and part of the Merchistonian teams that won the Halford Hewitt in both 1970 and 1976.

Much loved father and grandfather.

Donald Passmore Sommerville (47- 52)



Donald: Born 13 February 1934; died 27 August 2016. He was born in Radlett, just north of London, and went to a prep school nearby, and, at the age of 13, went up to Merchiston for his secondary schooling in the footsteps of his elder brother, Gordon (38-42).

Merchiston was a great success for Donald from the start. In his first year there, he was appointed dormitory second in charge and the writer can remember receiving a tremendous row from him because of receiving low grades in his subjects in the fortnightly report cards. This meant demoted grades for the whole dormitory! However, this did not stop him from becoming one of the closest friends anyone could have – a friend for life, as others could testify. Before leaving School, the Headmaster appointed him a Senior Prefect. Donald often talked of his rugby days in the 1XV; having left School, he played for Edinburgh Wanderers and later on West of Scotland. He became the Merchistonian Club Rugby Secretary from 1983 to 1988.

After leaving School, he spent two years doing his national service joining the Royal Scots, and served in the Korean War as a Lieutenant, which made a deep impression on him. For his service, he was awarded the UN Korean Medal. Following on after demobilisation, Donald joined

the Territorials and ended up with the rank of Major in 1957. This became another of his great interests: the British Legion, and, in particular, "Combat Stress", for which he raised money and regularly attended the Castle Douglas Branch meetings.

In 1958 he married Anne Cappel; they lived in Bearsden and moved later to Kirkintilloch. They had two children, Claire and Alister (81-83). For some years, Donald joined Brownlie & Co Timber Exporters as a representative and travelled very widely, but by 1979, he and Anne moved to St Andrews, where Donald was employed by Weatherseal and, finally, he became a tour guide. This involved taking guests, mostly Americans, all over Scotland, which he much enjoyed, in full Highland Dress.

On retirement Donald decided to move down to South-West Scotland, Castle Douglas to be nearer his brother, who by this time was a patient in Fleet Valley Nursing Home in Gatehouse. Gordon had been in the Royal Marines during World War II but had been invalided out, which had affected his entire life. This was one of the reasons why Donald was to spend so much time raising funds for "Combat Stress", known as "Shell Shock". Donald looked after his brother long as he was able. "Donald was in every way larger than life", summed up so well by his close friend, Rev Dr David Bartholomew, in his tribute at the funeral: "Always ready to share a story with his courteous humour and reaching out to others." That was Donald Sommerville, never to be forgotten. Treasured Memories
Words by friend, Colin Donaldson (48-53).

James (Jimmy) Brown Campbell (48-52)

Jimmy passed away peacefully, on



15 March 2017, after suffering from Vascular Dementia, at Norwood Care Home. Jim was a loving and much loved husband of Marion, devoted dad of Julie and Gordon and loving grandpa.

Jim's family miss him terribly but is glad that he is now at peace. He was known by his colleagues as a drummer both in a Pipe Band and a group which played together, including David McCardel (47-52) and Clive Murphy (48-53)

Words by son, Gordon Campbell

George Logan Strang (51-56)

Upon leaving Merchiston, George joined The Royal Corps of Signals for two years, before becoming Captain in the TA from 1966 to 1973. In 1964 George gained a Bachelor of Forestry from Edinburgh University and received a Diploma in Biology in 1971. Becoming a Master at George Heriot's School in 1971, George remained there until 1980 when he made the move to George Watson's College where he continued until retirement. A keen sailor, George sailed solo from Plymouth to Cape Town in 1978.

George passed away suddenly on 25 March 2017, aged 79 years. George was a beloved father, uncle and friend to many. A life well lived. RIP.

John (Jock) Frederick Cunningham Armstrong (53-57)

John Armstrong, entrepreneur and fly fisherman. Born: 29 December 1939, in Glasgow. Died: 21 March



2017, in Bearsden, aged 77.

Jock was a highly-successful and widely-travelled Scots businessman, entrepreneur and investor who spent most of his career at British Leyland, the Mallinson-Denny Timber Group, Wickes plc and ultimately at financial consultants Muir Brown plc. He was known for giving away a significant proportion of his investment profits to good causes. He had long stints as a member of the Forth Valley Health Board and as Director of Stirling Enterprise Ltd.

Jock was also a near-fanatical fly fisherman – trout, sea trout and salmon – from Castle Grant near Grantown-on-Spey to Canada, Alaska, Norway, Iceland and even far-flung Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost point in the Americas. After a three-hour battle, he once landed a 44lb salmon on the Kedgwick river in New Brunswick, Canada, one of his proudest achievements.

During the war, he was evacuated to Gargunnoch, outside Stirling, where his father ran a hospital for war evacuees on the Buchanan estate around Drymen. He went to primary school in St Andrews before attending Merchiston, leaving after his O Levels to become a trainee mechanical engineer on Clydeside.

Jock recalled once fishing with his big brother Bill (50-55) at the Manse Pool on the Spey at Castle Grant, when he heard a huge splash and turned to look for a large fish. All he saw was his brother's floppy hat

floating on the surface. Bill had stepped back off the high bank into the deep pool but soon surfaced unscathed to Jock's relief and, it must be said, unbridled mirth.

Jock's pioneering spirit was evident during his work in Kenya. He once persuaded the pilot of the company plane to fly him and his wife Evie high over Mount Kilimanjaro: so high, in fact, that both Jock and Evie passed out from lack of oxygen, but fortunately the pilot remained conscious.

Jock passed away at his home in Bearsden, two years after being diagnosed with terminal cancer, a fact that he accepted with the same positive outlook with which he had lived his healthy life.

He is survived by his wife Evie, their sons, daughter, grandchildren and his brother Bill.

Phil Davison

[The Scotsman, 1 June 2017]

James (Fergus) Lenaghan (54-59)



Fergus died on 6 November 2016, aged 76.

Although Fergus was born in Glasgow, the Lenaghan family moved to London shortly after the onset of WWII, but on its cessation, they then moved to Hartlepool and, whilst there, he was educated at St Nicholas's, Hexham. They then moved to "The West" in the 50s and settled in Kilmacolm. During his years at Merchiston, Fergus

developed interests in sailing, photography and travel, although travel then was somewhat more restricted than it is nowadays! Golf also featured in his list of hobbies, most of which were to remain with him throughout his life.

On leaving School, he embarked on the course at the Glasgow School of Architecture and in time became FRIAS and ARIBA. Whilst he was a student in Glasgow, he continued with his sailing and travelling. More importantly, however, he made frequent excursions across the road to the Glasgow School of Art, where he met Brenda, who was to become his wife of very nearly 50 years. On graduating, he initially joined the renowned Glasgow firm of Keppie Henderson before having a brief spell in Galway. On his return to Scotland, he joined, and became a partner in, a large architects' firm in Edinburgh. Finally, he decided to set up in practice on his own in East Lothian

In addition to a busy professional life, he managed to travel with Brenda on expeditions abroad to get inspiration for her next series of paintings and exhibitions, both of which took place in many parts of the world. This gave them both much pleasure. As well as taking part in these activities, he always wanted, as many architects do, but not all succeed, to build his own home, 'Clouds', in Tynninghame. This he did with great aplomb and those of us who knew Fergus and Brenda appreciate just what they achieved, as well as developing a beautiful garden. It was a wonderful setting and latterly became one of the main interests of their lives.

Fergus was proud of his Irish descent and he retained many of his ancestral ways. His quiet, gentle, philosophical way blended well with

a great sense of humour. However, it was also not unknown for him to exhibit that Irish, (or perhaps it is Merchistonian?), characteristic of becoming a wee bit thrawn on occasions! He continued working well beyond a time when most others would not have considered doing so.

Travel has been mentioned but the journey that always gave them the greatest pleasure was to visit Japan: a destination visited on many occasions, especially as they were able to spend time there with their son Nicholas (89-93) and their grandchildren. They were on the point setting off for another visit there when illness sadly intervened.

Not only will Fergus be greatly missed by Brenda, Nicholas and his family but also by his many friends. *Words by friend, RCM (52-57)*

William (Leslie) Gilmore (54-59)

Leslie died on 19 October 2015, aged 73.

Roderick (Rod) Paton (60-64)



Rod died on 7 October 2016, aged 70, in his native Carlisle. He gained his licence as GM3SZP while attending Merchiston as a boarder, and attending Lothian Radio Society meetings. Rod was also the Secretary of the School's Wireless Club: at that time, he operated a mobile station running 150W AM in a Mini!

After a degree in Electrical

Engineering from Edinburgh University, Rod spent his career in the Control Department of the National Electricity Grid, retiring in 1979.

Rod developed a passion for music at Merchiston which continued throughout his life. Upon retirement, Rod dedicated many years to The Scottish Cinema Organ Trust (SCOT), restoring organs back to their former glory. Rod was also the President of the Glasgow Society of Organists in 2005 and Secretary for the Scotby Village Hall Committee.

[GM3HAM – Lothians Radio Society, 7 October 2016]

Alan Scott Brydon (60-65)

At Merchiston, Alan was a Senior Prefect and played for the 1XV team. Alan was a Drum Major and received the Douglas Patterson Memorial Prize.

In 1970 Alan graduated from Glasgow University's School of Veterinary Medicine. He worked for a year in a mixed practice in the Scottish Borders, but moved on to get experience in Canada and the USA before heading to New Zealand in 1974. He initially worked in Auckland for three years, and then moved to Tauranga, Bay of Plenty to set up his first practice. In 1990, when diagnosed with renal carcinoma he relocated to Christchurch in the South Island, where he continued to practise until 2010.

His other great passion in life was his photography which predated his veterinary career and expanded beyond it. He first became recognised for his fine art work using the human form as a photographic medium, but during the past decade had specialised in wildlife photography. He made photographic expeditions to Tanzania, Rwanda, Borneo and Antarctica and since 2001 he held

12 exhibitions of this photography work in New Zealand and Australia.

Alan is survived by wife Anne and three sons.

Words by brother, Raymond William Brydon (57-59)

Scott Gunnar Broen (92-99)



Scott passed away on 27 September 2016, aged 35. Scott was a beloved son, brother, father, uncle, cousin and friend to so many.

Scott lived in Scotland with his parents and his younger sisters.

Scott later lived in Sacramento, California; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Bakersfield, California. Scott graduated from Bonanza High School in Las Vegas, where he lettered in track and field and football. Most recently, He worked in the oil/solar energy fields. He was a lifelong Dallas Cowboys fan, a great confidant, and a protector of those less able than himself.

Scott is remembered for his very witty sense of humour, his athletic abilities, his great smile and handsome demeanour, and most of all, for the love he had for his family.

He is survived by; three sons, whom he adored and who adored him; his parents, Dr Ames Gunnar and Mrs Jacqueline Broen; his two sisters; his fiancée; aunts, uncles and cousins.

Scott's ashes were returned to Scotland, the land that he loved as a child. *[Greenlawns: Funeral Home Cremations, 27 September 2016]*

Hero Unearthed

Robert Donald Brown (1928-32) was hailed a hero during the Second World War after singlehandedly holding off a German attack, armed only with a pistol and hand grenades...

A skeleton has been unearthed close to a strategic point that was the focus of a fierce battle in September 1943 in the days following the Allied landings at Salerno, south of Naples. About 10 yards from the human remains the Italian 'Salerno 1943' Association, an amateur historical group, found a silver bracelet which is inscribed "R. Donald Brown".

The historians believe the bracelet – and probably the skeleton – both belong to Captain Robert Donald Brown. Belt buckles, buttons and ammunition found with the skeleton indicate that the soldier was British.

Captain Brown was serving with The Leicestershire Regiment, when he led a company attack against a German-held position known as White Cross Hill. Under heavy machine gun fire, he managed to storm the hill and take a German trench.

During close quarters fighting, he killed several German soldiers, but his own troops were unable to reinforce him, despite desperate appeals for help.

"He was last seen holding out by himself and being

attacked on all sides," an official regimental history recounts.

The 28-year-old officer was never seen again and was listed as missing in action. A year after the war ended he was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Service Order for his role in the battle.

His body was never recovered but Salerno 1943, believes his family can now at last be given closure, 74 years after the soldier's death.

"We think that Brown probably lost the bracelet while fighting in the German trench," said Matteo Piero, a member of Salerno 1943. "When the Germans retook the position, they threw his body down the hill, and that's where we found it."

Brown was born in 1915 in Galashiels, Selkirkshire, and went to the original Merchiston Castle. He was training to be a veterinarian when war broke out.

In 1940, after attending officer training school, he joined The King's Own Scottish Borderers but in 1943, while serving in Tunisia, was seconded to the 2/5th Battalion of The Leicestershire Regiment in Tunisia.

In 1946, Donald's widow, whom Donald, aged 21, had married in 1935, married Donald's brother Charles, himself badly wounded in the war and a former Japanese POW.

[Nick Squires, The Telegraph, 8 September 2017]

Two generations of the Brown family were consumed by war. His father, Charles William Brown (1892-97) was killed in WWI; Donald and his father are both commemorated on the war memorial outside of the Memorial Hall; they are the only father on son on the memorial.

You can find out more about 'Salerno 1943', on their website www.1943salerno.it



(Left) Donald aged 17 years at Merchiston Castle School in 1931. (Middle) The silver bracelet found by amateur historians from the group Salerno 1943 CREDIT - SALERNO 1943 (Right) British buckles and ammunition were found near the remains of the soldier CREDIT - SALERNO 1943

Area Representatives' Updates

An update from your North East Representative John Bruce (76-81) ...

Earlier this year, the Merchistonian Club asked if I would be interested in taking over as the North East Merchistonian Club Rep, and having thoroughly enjoyed the dinners and golf days in the past, I of course said that I would be delighted to step up.

For our first event it was suggested I organise a golf day, with the help of James Angus (81-85), Andrew Taylor (98-03) and the Merchistonian team. James suggested the Northumbria Golf Club and we agreed on a date of Friday 13 October. Club President, Matthew Gray, was actively involved in the teleconference calls, thus ensuring a good Edinburgh crowd could join us on the day.

We kicked off the day with a bacon sandwich and a drink of choice. We formed ourselves into a number of four balls and the experienced golfers followed as a two ball. While I might not have played the best golf of my life, I can assure you I had one of the most entertaining four balls I have ever had the pleasure of playing. I received similar comments from players in the other

groups. A few extra arrived for supper and there was lively chat around the dining table, some catching up with old friends and others meeting for the first time talking as though they'd known each other for years.

After our meal, we bundled ourselves into taxis and off we went to meet another group at The Brandling Arms in Gosforth, where there was a hearty welcome and greetings, and the night began. I might add that this may have been the first pub, but it certainly wasn't the last. We had an absolutely tremendous afternoon of golf and an excellent evening.

Thank you to all who came to help make this a great Merchistonian day, thank you to Gill and Louise at the Merchistonian Club for all their help in making sure the event was a success.

We plan to make this an annual event and welcome you along to enjoy the day. I would like to hear from those Merchistonians in the North East; if you would like an annual dinner and quarterly or regular meet ups for a couple of beers. We are going to send out a short survey to Merchistonians in the area and I would be grateful if you could complete this as it would give me an idea of what type of events you are looking for and hopefully I can build a programme to accommodate. I look forward to hearing from many of you soon. Once again thank you to the Club President, Matthew, and his team for coming down from Edinburgh, and to all those who came along and made this a very successful first event: there are many more to come.





An update from your London Representative Will Biggart (94-01) ...

The Autumn Internationals kicked off with a victory over Samoa. This, coupled with the leaves deserting the trees and trumpet sounds from across the courtyards of Buckingham Palace, meant only one thing; it was time for the Merchistonian London winter drinks reception in Victoria.

Following on from the sell-out pre-Calcutta Cup

Dinner earlier in the year, it was great to see a 'tour de force' turnout at Greenwood.

In the region of 50 Merchistonians, from the Class of '79 to the Class of '16, got together for what was a great night of catching up with old friends, meeting new, discussing rugby, work and the other halves.

It's important to keep the old network going, particularly in a city like London, where links are significant and friendships more so.

Gill and Louise in Edinburgh have the unenviable task of organising these events from the other side of the wall, and without their hard work along with the other reps involved, these great fun nights we have wouldn't be possible, so for all you do we are eternally grateful.

If anyone has ideas for future events, do please get in touch to ensure that we are 'Ready Ay Ready' for them!



Merchistonian Club Officials 2017-18

Club Committee

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

President

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President Elect

R A Forman (Robert) (89-94)

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Treasurer/Vice President Elect

G M Thain (Gavin) (79-85)

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Secretary

Gill Imrie

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UK Representatives

Whether you're passing through, or relocating - do get in touch with your Area Rep. They can give pointers, reminisce and often meet for a beer. Your Area Rep will organise an annual get together. Give them a bell and make the most out of your Club.

Glasgow & West of Scotland

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West of England

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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)
alastairevans@me.com

Curling

A J Campbell (Alastair) (62-67)

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I am honoured to represent Merchiston out here in Vancouver. I am currently living just outside of Vancouver, approximately one hour away in the Fraser Valley. I am interested in lending my support to those who pass through and venture out this way. I have been in Canada for 28 years and spent six years on the West Coast of Canada and the other 22 years in Ontario. I am an avid golfer and play floor hockey. My other interests are poker and skiing.

Caribbean

Cayman and Bahamas

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Taranaki

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As the NZ Merchistonian representative I'd like to invite anyone in New Zealand or the smaller Pacific islands to get in touch via email or join our Facebook group "NZ and South Pacific Merchistonians" to keep updated with correspondence and social gatherings or even information about living in New Zealand.

South Africa

Capetown

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Thailand

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pakorn.s@castlepartners.co.th

Pongsakorn Thienngtham (77-80) and I have joined forces to establish Castle Partners Co., Ltd. a boutique Investment Banking House situated here in Bangkok Thailand, where we provide financial advisory services to our clients in areas of Mergers & Acquisitions, fund raising and strategic partnering. We would be most pleased to assist in any cross border transactions between U.K. and Thailand and look forward to hearing from any fellow classmates and Merchistonians who may be visiting Thailand.

USA

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Florida

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Anyone living in Florida, or visiting, should send me an email. I am always happy to grab a beer if you are going to be close by.

New York

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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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Dear Merchistonian,

As part of our ongoing support for the Merchistonian community, we would be delighted to offer all Merchistonians and their family £100.00 against any stove purchase and 10% off accessories, parts and fuel for the whole of 2018.

Terms and conditions apply, contact us for more information.

Offer only valid if chorus of school song is sung in Yell, Inshore.