

# Bedford School

By Julian Dalzell (55-67)

When I say Bedford School was in my blood I talk almost literally. I was born in the Bedford Hospital North Wing and at the time my parents were still living in a small flat above the old Music School. My father had taken up a position at the school in 1947 as the first Art Master and remained there until 1970. So many of my earliest memories were through the eyes of my parents and the many friends they had connected with the school. "Agah" Hodges, who had been wounded in the 1st World War and wrote a book "Memoirs of an Old Balloonatic" based on those experiences. Harry McKay, who was an incredible pianist who could play almost anything by ear from what I recall, and perhaps most of all, Cyril Rhodes-Harrison who was a dear friend of my father and for whom my father designed and created many amazing sets for the school play that "Rhodes" produced. That said, the most amazing achievement of that dear man was as my form master in V1 and motivating me to get decent "O" Levels!



Ron and Molly Dalzell



David Money

The other master with whom my father had a special relationship was David Money for whom he illustrated numerous books over the years. David later became a rival on the cricket pitch when I was in the school 1st XI - a difficult man to get out. But the incident I most remember with David was in the summer I left school and I was playing in a representative cricket match at the Somerset County Ground in Taunton. David took a touring team to that area, the South Oxfordshire Amateurs, and asked if I would be interested in joining them. He was a man that I found a little intimidating, to be honest, but I accepted the invitation. He walked into the hotel where I was staying, and I greeted him in

normal manner. "Good morning, Mr. Money. Nice to see you Sir." "It's David - you have left school now." It was a very nice touch that I recall to this day.

As a teacher's kid we had some special experiences, including Staff swimming times when we had the pool to ourselves and where friendships with the Fitts, Fletchers, Rushworths, Whatleys and others were formed. That said, there were some drawbacks. You inevitably picked up some of the school intrigue and gossip, heard views expressed etc., but knew that under no circumstance could you ever let any of that slip. And inevitably other boys felt you got favourable treatment - although my personal impression was that if anything the staff went out of their way to NOT show favour. One will never truly know if we did or did not. And, of course, any wrongdoings in which one got



involved inevitably found their way back home. I recall once that Alan Gardiner, who tried to teach me geography, once wrote on a report "This was the worst map I have ever seen. I hope you cop it from Dad." In truth I had forgotten homework and drew the map of the British Isles from memory in 5 minutes before class. It was AWFUL.



Form i5 in the Inky

I took the entrance exams in 1955 and entered the Inky that September. In the early years I seemed to compete academically, enjoyed music enormously and was in the orchestra playing the recorder (including competing as a soloist at the Bedfordshire Musical Festival as well as doing duets or trios with two other Master's sons, Christopher Roseveare and Christopher Money.) Later I also played the violin. But sports fairly rapidly came more to the centre and academics less of a focus, a trend that lasted to the end of my happy 12 years at the school. My first year I

actually had two Mistresses, Mrs Sparks (whose husband got transferred) and Miss Elliott. Then the redoubtable Lynn Harman in i3, followed by Joey Butler i2A (who ran both the soccer and cricket 1st team) and then, after one term in 11b with Donald Palmer, the last two terms with Tom Snow who had already ignited my love for France and the French language at an early age. Singing the Inky Christmas Carol written by Eva Fovargue was another fond memory of Inky Days.

Apart from inspiring teachers, Inky Sports were major highlights for me. The actual Sports Day, complete with very nicely engraved silver spoons as prizes, tugs of war, and cricket and soccer alongside boys that would be team mates throughout my years at school like Ray Cornish, Jack Stenhouse and Jeremy Mytton. Summers always seemed hot and dry (they were not of course) and winter terms full of excitement especially remembering marathon sessions of conkers.

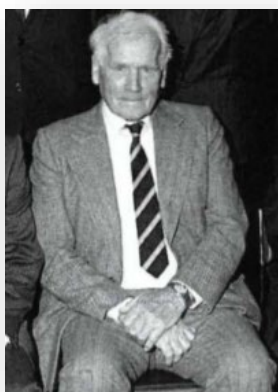
The Lower School days were dominated for me by 2 teachers - Gavin Squibbs, who coached the 1st XV Rugby, and Mike Keall, who led the cricket program. I remember to this day some of the pneumonics that he would use to help us remember key facts. One example was to remember the order of the Houses of the Monarchs of England where each letter represented the first letter of the House – No Plan Like Yours To Study History Wisely.



Myself and Mike Keall

The year before I came to the Lower School the Cricket 1st XI Played and Won 10 matches, which in an English summer was quite a feat. We repeated that winning all 7 games in 1960 and achieved 7 wins and 2 draws in 1961.

Eddie Cooper, who had spent a career as an opening batsman with Worcestershire, brought the science of "stroke drills" to the table lifting batting techniques to new heights at the school at all levels. He was a kind and generous man who was tragically killed by a falling window shade outside the shop that he opened as I recall. Squibbs has played rugby at a high level and although he was quite old by the time I had the chance to play for him, he still had the ability to personally demonstrate some of the basic skills. Keall was my form master in ii2 and Squibbs in iii2 - with "Sooty" Sutcliffe as the Head Master. Other teachers I recall from that era were "Bugs" Worsdall, David Whatley, and Mike Stephens complete with his legendary "iron finger" used to tap us on the head when we had committed some minor misdemeanour.



OV Bevan

If sports were a large feature of my life to this point, my Upper School years in retrospect were completely dominated by them - rugby and cricket, of course, but even more so Fives. I was fortunate to play alongside some immense talents like Peter Fitch, who was runner up at the Public Schools Championship, and Jeremy Mytton, who won that same championship. 2 years later. Hours of practice, supervised in part by Fred Norton who was Master in Charge, but, in reality, coaching ourselves. We inherited a legacy from Peter Mellor, still the only boy to win the Public Schools 3 years in a row, and Malcolm Chesworth who won it the year after Peter left. Mellor was frankly the most naturally gifted player of the game I ever saw. He was completely ambidextrous, a lovely timer of the ball and always seemed to have endless time to strike the ball exactly where he wanted. The other towering figure in the game there was O.V.

Bevan. He was getting on in years (mid 50's?) by the time I reached the level where I would play against him, but was still a canny and cunning doubles player. His nephew, Mark Daniel, was for many years the driving force in the OB Fives Club. Daniel and the Bevans (OV plus sons M.V. and S.V.) would form games in the Easter Holidays and it was a great honour to be invited to play in those sessions. All of them were so encouraging to younger players of the game and I recall those matches with great pleasure. While I completely understand the logic of moving towards games like soccer and hockey (which occupy far more boys) in the Spring, there is a tinge of regret that those sports have taken some of the more gifted games players away from Fives, where many of the top boys of my era spent their Easter Terms and which lead to the school being one of the top schools in the sports for a good number of years.

Rugby was of course a central sport for the school. In my early years there, attendance at home inter-school games was mandatory, with roll being taken!! You can imagine the atmosphere was pretty special. In my early years watching we went through a rough patch under the leadership of Mike Allison. He was a great chap, but we went several years where I recall we did not win a single school game. Murray Fletcher and Cyril Fitt, who had coached my brother in the 50's, were brought back to coach the 1st XV which coincided with the arrival of some immensely gifted players like Phil Spray, Mike Banham (Captain), Simon Strong, Peter Godber (a huge lineout specialist) and a fearsome and fearless crash tackling centre, Chris Clarke, who was an immense influence on the defence. That team went undefeated in inter-school games and only lost by a narrow margin to Budge Rogers XV. Rugby was back and although some years were better than others, Bedford was once again a force to be reckoned with. We nearly had another undefeated season in 1965 but were narrowly defeated by Dulwich, a result repeated by the 2nd XV in which I played that year.





In my final three years I played cricket in the 1st XI alongside John Poustie, who had been in the 1st XI since he was a fourth former, Jerry Mytton who repeated that feat and a prodigious Rhodesian, Alan Greene, who came to the school for his final two years and was a terrific left-hand spinner and batsman who played in the Public Schools representative games those years. We were never a great team, with sides like Tonbridge and Oundle usually proving a bit strong for us, but there were occasions when we did well against both schools. Eddie Cooper was still there alongside Pat Briggs. Both made indelible marks on me.

Academically the teacher who stood out for me in my final years was Tim Elliott, who came in my last year and managed to guide me through A Level French and Spanish. He also formed the School Shooting Club and grew that to be a force to be reckoned with at the National Championships at Bisley.

Other fond memories that randomly come to mind? CCF Camps in the summer, including playing the drums as we marched through the City of Wells to worship at the cathedral; joint choral performances with the Convent, Dame Alice Harpur or Bedford High School. Playing the timpani in the school orchestra. Taking part in school plays, including *Le Malade Imaginaire* (done entirely in French under the direction of Anthony Ridley), Anthony LeFleming playing the chapel organ and singing in the chapel choir for quite a few years. The list goes on.

I know this is a long ramble but 12 years at the school and my father's time there made this a central and enjoyable time of my life for which I am immensely grateful. The lessons learned come back to help me in many ways today.

**Julian Dalzell (55-67)**

26<sup>th</sup> December 2021



**1st XI 1967 with Pat Briggs and Eddie Cooper**

Back Row L-R. Lionel Oakley. George Baker. Bill Colledge. Peter Marks. Pete Rudolf. Simon Culliford

Front Row L-R. David Lindsell. JCD. Pat Briggs (Master in Charge). Jerry Mytton (Capt). Eddie Cooper (Cricket Professional) John Dicks. Bob Goodall.

**2<sup>nd</sup> XV 1964**

Back Row L-R. JCD. Bill Arnold. Bill Eayrs. Brian O’Bree

Middle Row L-R. Peter Micklejohn. Jocelyn Cornish. ? Stephen Harte. ? ?.

Front Row L-R. Dave August. David Warbrick-Smith. (Burnett Capt). Jim Davidson (Coach). Nick Fairhurst. Adrian Danby. Perry





**The Lower School 1st XV 1960 with Gavin Squibbs**

Back Row L-R. Nick Cooper (Touch Judge). Bill Eayrs. Robin Barrett. Stuart Wilkinson. Robert Bright. Martin Stainer. James Fergson-Lees. ? Jeremy Addison.

Front Row L-R. Steve Harte. Alan Wright. "Buff" Howard (Capt). Gavin Squibbs (Master in Charge). Alex Kerr. Bill Arnold. Nigel Hawkes.  
Sitting L-R. Peter Dudeney. JCD

**Undefeated Fives 1st IV 1966.**

Standing. Peter Laxton. Jeremy Mytton. (Public Schools Fives Championship Runner Up 1967 and Winner 1968).

Seated. Peter Fitch (Captain) Public Schools Fives Championship Runner Up 1966. JCD





**The Inky – 1-5 1955**

Back Row. L-R. Martin Downie. Raymond Cornish. Ian Marks. Bill Arnold

Front Row. L-R. Christopher Smith. John Norris. Miss Elliott (Form Mistress). Christopher Johnstone-Smith. Peter Dudeney.

On Ground. L-R. Robert Chignell. JCD. Robert Lowe.

**The Inky – 1-3 1956**

Back Row. L-R. JCD. Christopher Pick. Christopher Smith. Malcolm Newell. ? Robert Chignell. Martin Downie. Julian Nixon.

Middle Row. L-R. Robin Barrett. ? (Maybe Skinner). Robert Bright. Giles Godber. ? Raymond Cornish. Ian Marks. Bill Arnold.

Front Row. L-R. John Norris. Bill Eayrs. Robert Lincoln. Lynn Harman (Form Mistress). Peter Dudeney. Jeremy Addison. Robert Lowe





### **The Inky – 1-2A 1957**

Back Row. L-R. Simon Slaffer. Robert Lincoln (I think). ? . Bill Arnold. Jeremy Addison. Richard Watling.

Middle Row L-R. Christopher Pick. Christopher Smith (I think). Robert Lowe. Martin Downie. Jonathan Edwards. Robin Barrett. Robert Chignell. John Norris. Julian Rixon.

Seated L-R. Malcolm Newell. Giles Godber. Raymond Cornish. Joey Butler (Form Master). Ian Marks. Robert Bright. Graham Kirk.

Ground. L-R. JCD. Peter Dudeney.