



# The Martlet

Issue Number 12

February 2009



## Help for Heroes Parachute Jump.

On October 9th, Martlet **David Owen** and in his 80<sup>th</sup> year, made a jump that has helped him raise over £17,000 for Help for Heroes. His target is £25,000 and the money raised goes towards a family house near to Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham, currently the only dedicated military ward in the UK. When built, families of the wounded undergoing treatment will be able to visit their loved ones and at the same time be able to chat to other families with the same worries.

Come the day of the parachute jump, how did I feel? Obviously fairly nervous, but I felt I was in good hands as I was jumping with the famous Red Devils – the Parachute Regiment's Free Fall Team. I made the jump at South Cerney, Cirencester and firstly I went through half an hour of instruction, during which I had to contort my body into different shapes, presumably the shapes I would be in when the slipstream hit me. Then I was kitted out in a red jump suit, several sizes too small and finally there was a long wait as the dropping zone was shrouded in fog. Waiting is not good for the nerves and several trips to the loo had to be undertaken before the fog lifted.

We were at about 13,000 feet up (2½ miles) when I was beckoned to the open door. "I think I have changed my mind," I mumbled with my legs hanging over the precipice. "Too late now," my instructor said, as he nudged me forward and out into the void. We were ABOVE the clouds, for Christ's sake. Forty-five seconds of freefall and then, wham, the parachute

opened with a jerk and we started to drift down. I opened my eyes but not my mouth as, for economy of scale and one jump only, I was clenching a Royal British Legion Poppy in my teeth.

This was almost the best bit as I could make out my matchstick family looking like ants below as well as the countryside now bathed in sunlight. The only thing now was the landing and I have a 'dicky' knee, but I need not have worried as ten seconds later I was on terra firma without a bump or scratch. And my charity Help for Heroes was £17,000 better off. Would I do it again? Maybe for another £17,000 I thought, until I remembered my promise to my wife Judy.

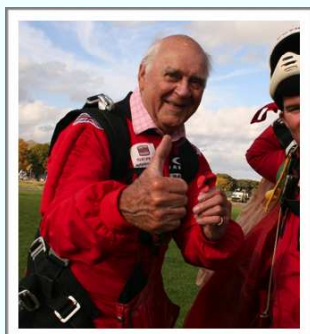
Where's the nearest Bowls Club?

**David Owen**

Further details: [www.bmycharity.com/davidsparajump](http://www.bmycharity.com/davidsparajump)

<http://www.sussexmartlet.co.uk>

*It is a number of years since David played Martlet cricket. For those who remember him, here's what happened in the interim:*



I had quite an interesting time after being invalided out of the Army. I took over the debts of The Blenheim Club at the top of New Bond Street (a dive I went to from Aldershot) cleaned it up and think I invented the Happy Hour, as we used to have a half-price drinking hour on Thursdays. Monday to

Wednesday was also quiet so I encouraged my new young members to run the bar with a girl friend for one of the nights to see if they could have more in the till at the end of the evening than those on the other two nights. Prize: A Fortnum and Mason Hamper. We were booked ahead for 5 weeks and I was able to not employ a barmaid on those nights. We also cut everyone's tie ends off and put on the walls and ended up with about 800 I believe, all with the name of member and what tie it was. In those days the only ties one wore were School, Club or Service. *The Martlet* tie was, I seem to remember, 'donated' by David Nicholson.

From there I started The London Visitors Club, which was merged with Clubmans Club, then Intercham, selling Champagne like Interflora. Later on I ran a villa renting business mainly in Spain and Brittany and finally The Public School's Wine Club.

I have actually retired three times but now am settling for a quieter life (although I have challenged Henry Cooper for 3 rounds in aid of H4H, but no response so far).

**David Owen**

## THE CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

As I write this, mince pies are already being wheeled out, Christmas decorations are starting to appear and talk of good cheer seems to have been dampened by a worsening economy. How distant our cricket season seems to be already! And yet despite another rain affected fixture list, from the matches I visited I can report that Martlet spirits have remained buoyant!

We played some good cricket this year winning a good number of games – the full cricket report is elsewhere so I won't dwell on that further, except to say that the season's award winners were thoroughly

deserving of their trophies – Nick Seager's batting was, once again, a revelation and his 159 at Fletching against the Stragglers of Asia exemplified an explosive and destructive style that has become his trademark.



*"Swampy" Allum*

Rich "Swampy" Allum has been a consistent and popular performer for the Martlets with both bat and ball, but it was his efforts with the latter that have won him the bowling award. The Junior Martlets' award went to Philip Roper who, over the last few seasons, has become a regular in the side, captaining this year with distinction, and as he

now graduates to the senior Club, Match Managers will be eager to employ his canny left arm over bowling and solid batting. The Sussex Martlet of the Year award went "off-field" to Chris Snell whose leadership and organisation of the Juniors has been exemplary. He has had a difficult and an exceptionally busy year but his demeanour was never less than cheerful and positive. Chris has been and is a wonderful asset for the Martlets.



*Chris Snell*

Your committee has worked tirelessly for the Club and on your behalf I would like to thank all of them for their significant contribution as a group. Finding members who are willing to take on this extra voluntary task is often difficult, particularly with commitments to work and family. We are very lucky to have a dedicated band who works to sustain and improve our Club with such dedication. There have been some changes too. We sadly bade farewell to Neil Bushell and we shall miss his company not to mention his excellent cooking! Keith Manning has decided that after more than 15 years at the helm as Fixtures Secretary it's time to hang up the 'phone – he has been quite phenomenal in this painstaking role and he has showed what an outstanding and detailed organiser he is. Kindly Adrian Ford, from whom Keith took the job on in 1993, has agreed to step in temporarily in March. Matt Lowndes' demanding new IT project job has restricted his Martlet time significantly and he has decided to retire in the New Year as Secretary. In his place we welcome Patrick Jackson whose work and skills as a communications consultant are eagerly anticipated! Sandy Ross has decided to stand down as chairman



Patrick Jackson

of the cricket sub-committee after setting it up so efficiently two years ago; of course he has been intimately involved in the organisation of our cricket over many, many years but thankfully his experience will not be lost as he will continue his long and

distinguished relationship with the Martlets by remaining on the main committee. Sandy has made this decision in light of the many other commitments he has to the Sussex Cricket Board, MCC and Chance to Shine and we do wish him the very best of luck in those roles – they are fortunate to have him! Rob Walker moves into the chair of cricket and he's already facing up to the challenges of organising the 2009 season. Finally a welcome to Nick Creed who brings to the committee playing experience at the highest level and a schoolmaster's eye for talent!

There have been two innovations this year. First has been the introduction of a Girls Section in the Club. After discussions with Sussex Women's CA, the County Development Squad at U13 and U15 is to form the nucleus of this new section and they will play their first season in 2009 as a trial. We are hugely grateful to Charlotte Burton and Andy Hobbs, both based at the County Ground, who have helped provide the stimulus for this initiative and to Ray Fogwill, an ex manager of Sussex Women U17 and of Horsham CC, who will manage it. Secondly, in 2008 we introduced Twenty20 cricket to the fixture list as a trial; four teams – the Martlets, the Juniors, Fletching CC and The Griffin CC met in August at Fletching for a day of fun cricket. It was a great success and the format, with some tweaks, will be repeated in 2009. It is important that our Club remains relevant in this age and the introduction of both Girls' cricket and Twenty20 will, we hope, help to enhance our profile and stimulate interest from the current generation.

Our membership list continues to grow and thanks to the excellent work of the match managers and the cricket committee we bring on talented, young (and some not so young!) players who enjoy *the Martlet* ethos. Inevitably some do slip below the radar and our challenge has been to keep all new players interested and to make them feel part of this great Club right from the word "go"; your committee is doing all that it can to improve procedures in this respect. On a lighter note we have been really pleased to welcome into our ranks as Honorary

Members, Richard Montgomerie and Robin Martin-Jenkins. "Monty" has already played Martlet colours this season but unsurprisingly "RMJ" has been engaged elsewhere overseeing his benefit year at Sussex and turning in some vintage performances with bat and ball for the County. We look forward to seeing more of them both in the future. Congratulations also to Martin Bodenham who, having been selected for the First Class umpires' panel in 2009, creates a unique double having also been a past FIFA referee; it's wonderful to see another Martlet in the news and we wish him all the best next year.

On the subject of the social calendar, our thanks to Rob Walker for organising yet another excellent dinner at Jeremy's Restaurant, attended by a good number of Martlets covering our full age range from young bounders to non-benders! It was a great pleasure to welcome so many for yet another wonderful occasion.

You will also read elsewhere and in more detail that a number of distinguished Martlets very sadly were "promoted" during the year: Derek Corbett, Tony Thackara, Jeremy Blanchard, Michael Wingfield Digby and John Dew. At their funeral or Thanksgiving Service I am pleased to say that the Martlets were strongly represented in each case.

Finally, can I wish all Martlets a good 2009? We have much to look forward to: the West Indies in May and thereafter what promises to be an enthralling Ashes series, a new captain leading a new look Sussex and to cap it all another mouth watering Martlet fixture list!

**Nigel Russell**

## THE 2008 SEASON

2008 was an enjoyable summer, despite the wet weather, with 37 matches played, resulting in 10 wins, 10 losses, 8 draws, 6 abandoned and 3 cancelled – through no fault of our own!

There were memorable wins against M.C.C, who were bowled out for 141 at Arundel, Yellowhammers, with us reaching 294-8 to win by 2 wickets, Lady Mary Mumford's XI, and Old Hurstjohnnians – for the first time for several years! We had four very closely fought draws in June, and were well beaten by Brighton College, St. George's Weybridge, Goodwood and Cuckfield.

In August, we were visited by Kingswood College from Grahamstown, South Africa. They beat both our Juniors and Seniors – some sort of record I'm sure – and displayed talent and discipline both on and off the field, to be envied by all.

Nick Seager scored our only century – 159 against Stragglers of Asia – demonstrating that he goes "big" when he gets to three figures, and was deservedly our Batsman of the Year, with the Bowling Award going to Richard "Swampy" Allum.

On 10<sup>th</sup> August at Fletching, we held the first excellent Martlet 20/20 day, which we won against our own Juniors in the Final. This day should definitely be repeated in the years ahead, with a slightly modified format.

The Annual Challenge Match for the "President's Trophy" between the Seniors and Juniors ended in a hard fought draw, with Sandy Ross and Josh Burrows playing out the last 17 balls. Andrew Thornely bowled very well to claim 7-38 with his off-spin for the Juniors.

The future will be bright, given increased player commitment and more playing members, to bolster a healthy hard core of regular active players, who really enjoy each other's company both on and off the cricket field. I recommend a Membership Secretary, to encourage more quality cricketers to come and join the great fun and friendship that Martlet cricket provides!

Finally, a huge and very grateful thank you as always to our Match Managers, Scorers, Umpires and all our Friends at Arundel Castle for all their terrific support! What a team.....we are very lucky!

**Sandy Ross**

#### AVERAGES.

##### Batting

	I	N.O	R	H.S	Av.
M. Murray	10	3	367	82	52.43
M. Harrison	5	3	101	52*	50.50
N. Seager	11	0	436	159	39.63
I. Cox	5	0	167	92	33.40
S. Carter	10	1	277	61*	30.77
R. Thacker	6	1	149	52	29.80
P. Jackson	9	3	137	59	22.83
W. Ross	5	0	101	57	20.20
E. McGregor	11	0	170	53	15.45
P. Walker	5	1	59	27	14.75
T. Harrison	6	0	82	28	13.67
S. Ritchie	6	0	81	19	13.50



##### Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Av.
N. Creed	30	4	102	7	14.57
P. Goodwin	22.3	3	72	4	18.00
S. Ross	33	8	149	8	18.62
R. Allum	60.3	10	302	16	18.87
M. Murray	72.6	17	274	14	19.57
L. Tomsett	16.1	0	105	5	21.00
M. Shaw	43	4	142	6	23.67
P. Lack	51.2	7	232	10	23.20
J. Burrows	40	4	145	6	24.17
P. Walker	39	2	201	7	28.71
R. Thacker	55	8	243	8	30.37
M. Harrison	43	6	214	6	35.67

#### JUNIOR MARTLETS 2008

**Played 4 Won 2 Lost 1 Drawn 1**

**24<sup>th</sup> July v. Brighton & Hove U16 at the Nevill Ground, Hove (35 over game).** Junior Martlets 291 for 3. Brighton and Hove 182. Won by 109 runs

This game was good experience for the younger players and resulted in an admirable win for the Junior Martlets. A superb inning by Darryl Rebbetts (106 retired out) with excellent support from Tom Chamberlain (73 not out) and J.J. Kilmartin (37 not out) enabled us to reach a formidable total of 291. After a good opening partnership with both openers getting into the thirties, Brighton and Hove were never up with the required scoring rate and ended up 68 runs short with Sam Cocum taking 4 for 33 with his off spinners. An encouraging performance all round.

**30<sup>th</sup> July v. Preston Nomads at Fulking (35 over game).** Preston Nomads 177 for 6. Junior Martlets 178 for 6. Won by 4 wickets

An Under 17 game on arguably one of the best grounds in the county. Preston Nomads batted first and made 177 for 6. Tom Chamberlain bowled very economically taking 1 for 9 off 6 overs and was ably supported by Jack Sunderland, Eswar Kalidasan, Henry Longden and Ryan Wadey. In reply the Junior Martlets reached their target with 6.3 overs to spare due to two excellent innings by captain James Askew (74) and David Watson (49). This was an admirable win against a strong side.

**14<sup>th</sup> August v. Kingswood College at Littlehampton (40 over game).** Kingswood College 258 for 5. Junior Martlets 141 for 8. Lost by 117 runs.

Kingswood College, a touring South African side, batted first and a magnificent second wicket partnership of 179 enabled them to reach a



formidable total of 258. Needing six and a half runs an over the Junior Martlets were never in the hunt against an excellent all round attack and despite a very good innings by Alasdair Wilson (57), well supported by Felix Jordan (27) the Juniors fell well short. Kingswood College were stronger in all three disciplines and had an excellent tour of England.

## 22nd August v. Sussex Martlets at Arundel Castle.

Junior Martlets 189 for 9 declared. Sussex Martlets 134 for 8. Match drawn.

Our final game of the season against the Seniors on the beautiful ground at Arundel Castle ended in a draw. The Juniors chose to bat first on a seamer friendly pitch and soon found themselves in dire trouble at 68 for 7, but a magnificent innings by captain Philip Roper (51 not out), very ably supported by Lewis Hatchett (25) and Jordan Rollings (31 not out) enabled us to declare, an unlikely scenario just before lunch!

The Seniors made a cautious start and at 65 for 2 were batting well. Andrew Thornley then bowled his off spin superbly, taking 7 for 38 off 14 overs and reduced the Seniors to 134 for 8. Sandy Ross then came to the wicket with an over and a bit to spare to stave off defeat. Altogether a most enjoyable game of cricket and it was splendid to see so many Vice Presidents and friends at the match.

It was disappointing three matches had to be cancelled due to the opposition being unable to raise sides, but I was very pleased that 35 boys played for the Junior Martlets this year and I very much hope they enjoyed their cricket. Congratulations are due to Philip Roper, our excellent Captain who has been a wonderful ambassador for the Juniors and deservedly won the Junior Sussex Martlet Player of the Year Award.

**Chris Snell**

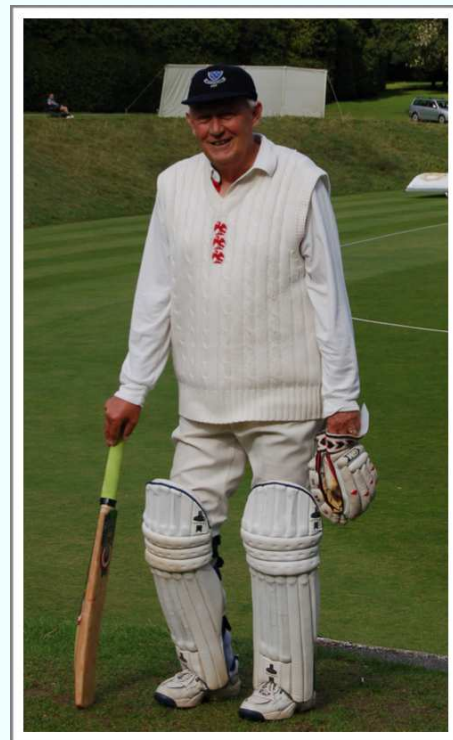
## DEREK SEMMENCE

This year's match against the Junior Martlets marked Derek Semmence's final innings at Arundel Castle.

For the record, Derek estimates that he must have played 80 games since the late 70's at the Castle, for a variety of sides, including the Martlets, Lavina Duchess of Norfolk, Old Sussex sides and for the Sussex Lord Taverners (run by Michael Marshall).

He has special memories of Arundel, including "watching the Duke of Norfolk's X1 v Duke of

Edinburgh's X1, being 12<sup>th</sup> man for the South Africans in 1960, talking cricket on numerous occasions with Billy Griffith, commentating with Southern Counties Radio, playing in front of large crowds for the Old Sussex X1 against the Lord Taverners."



When playing against the actor Oliver Reed he recalls him advancing down the wicket towards him with his bat held high. "I thought my time had come!" However he adds that, "in the bar afterwards he was marvellous company." There were other famous names too. He played with Jeremy Kemp just after he had starred with Ursula Andress in The Blue Max. Amongst the cricketers, there was Bill Edrich and Paul Shehan, to say nothing of bowling to Colin Cowdrey.

His top score at the Castle was 118 and altogether he probably scored between 2,500 and 3,000 runs. His best bowling performance was 6 for 12 "in the days when it was quite a good wicket to bowl on."

A particular Martlet memory is a family one: a partnership of 150 with his son Mark, paying against the Junior Martlets. A real masterclass, as I recall.

Please note that Derek IS NOT RETIRING, and has every intention of continuing to play. "For the future I still play with Worthing Cricket Club and also Captain a newly formed Sussex Over 70 side, so if anyone would fancy a game, you actually qualify when you are 68. We are looking for players. One of our opening bowlers last year was 79!"

**Desmond Devitt**



*Standing: Peter Ross, Brian O’Gorman, Sandy Ross, Adrian Ford, Ham Whitty, Chris Snell, an interloper, Charlie Hartridge. Seated: Peter Collymore, Keith Jenkin, Nigel Russell, Lady Mary Mumford, Geoff Wills, Geoff Seaton, John Bartlett.*

Once again a large majority of Vice Presidents gathered for their now annual day at Arundel in August to witness the match played for the President’s Trophy between the Martlets and the Juniors. Lady Mary Mumford joined us as well. It is always a pleasure to have her support and to enjoy her company.

**Nigel Russell**

## THE MARTLET IN THE MIDDLE.



This time last year Martin Bodenham told me, “Even now in my mid-fifties I hope one day to be promoted to the ECB Umpires List. I will then have achieved my ultimate goal of officiating at the highest levels in both cricket and football.”

Almost exactly a year later Martin has achieved his ambition. The ECB have elevated him, along with Nick Cook, Michael Gough

and David Millns to the list of 25 full-time, professional umpires for the 2009 season.

Martin hails from Ovingdean and played for the Martlets at both junior and senior level. In the early 1970s he was probably *the Martlets’* top wicketkeeper / batsman, good enough to play a few games for the Sussex County 2nd XI. Perhaps one

of the highlights of his Martlet career was the 1972 tour to South Africa under Mike Griffith, then the

Sussex captain. In 1979 he averaged 48.8 for the Martlets, with a top score of 99. The fount of all Martlet knowledge, Sandy Ross reveals that his last match for the Martlets was against Cuckfield in 1998.

The 1998/9 season was by coincidence the date of a second retirement. Since 1966 Martin had been working his way up as a football referee. Between 1992-99 he was a Premier League referee. The highlights of his career included refereeing the 1997 League Cup Final, being the Reserve Referee for the 1998 European Cup Final between AC Milan and Barcelona along with officiating in a number of European and International matches. In his time he sent off Vinnie Jones for threatening to break an opponent’s legs and was brave enough to take on (or rather “off”) Roy Keane.

Martin then turned his attention to umpiring, progressing from club and league umpiring to the ECB Reserve List in 2006. Thus far he has umpired a

number of first class games, whilst still fitting in some recreational matches, including school games and various wandering sides, including the Martlets.

Finally, I am delighted to report that Martin has fond memories of his Martlet days: "I remember my days of Martlet cricket at both Junior and Senior level with great affection. I hope that many more generations will have the same opportunity to play cricket and meet new friends as I did."

**Desmond Devitt**

## AN OVAL MARTLET.



Quite some of my fondest memories from my early days are of playing Martlet cricket. My Sussex roots remain firmly ingrained, despite now living in Kent and working at Surrey! It was a total privilege playing in such delightful surroundings such as Arundel Castle – even for the Duke himself, and learning skills (few of which rubbed off) from great cricketers

who went on and played for the County. The place for "wandering" cricket rightly still holds firm, despite the pull of league and representative pressures. Martlet cricket gives us a unique blend of competitive cricket on the world's most beautiful landscapes – not to mention conviviality and friends for life.

Many of us traditionalists bemoan the fact that cricket has changed out of all recognition in the last generation. But it has changed as life has changed, and if we live in that delightful past, then the game will never attract the young boys and girls who have flocked to the cricket pitches to play and watch in the last few years. Perhaps the aspect of the game that has changed for the worse, and saddened us most, is the manner in which it is now so often played. Most of us will have witnessed the bad language, bad sportsmanship and constant jabbering on the field of play which so demeans the roots of the game. The responsibility to stamp it out is our own – as players, officials and parents. Colin Cowdrey's initiative so nobly championed by MCC to promote the Spirit of Cricket is admirable.

I feel very privileged that fate has landed me in a career in Cricket Administration running Surrey County Cricket Club and the Oval. Most people dream of combining a hobby, or principal interest, with their job, and I count myself most fortunate. Cricket has moved through a very fast journey between 1996 – when I started, and now. It is now quite a mature "business" that I take charge of – with a turnover of nearly £30m and a rich variety of activities to contend with. The traditional Committee-run institution long since ceased and the powers that be allow executives to run the Club on a day to day basis. It has been a revelation to me – adding a rich variety to each day. One of the most enjoyable aspects has been the extraordinary range of people involved – and the way the sporting family, whether it be Wimbledon, Lords, Twickenham, the Olympics, is a close knit and vibrant community.

The last few years have been full of change and full of thrilling and unpredictable events. There were real glory years for Surrey under Adam Hoolioake in the late nineties and early this decade. And sadness that we have not managed to continue that form in recent years. The triumphant final day of the 2005 Ashes Test when the urn was returned to its rightful home! The unique events of 2006 when the England Pakistan Test Match was forfeited and Pakistan refused to take the field after tea - being close to that incident was an immense experience. The bomb at the Oval tube. Royal visits to the ground. Helping to rebuild villages in Sri Lanka with £1m raised at one charity match for the tsunami victims.

Being involved in cricket is special – in whatever capacity. It is enormous fun and rewarding; but it is also a big responsibility – to preserve the traditions, but to move with the times. The Twenty20 revolution, and everything it has brought with it is perhaps the biggest challenge of all. Some of it is good; some bad, and I'm not sure future generations will thank us for dabbling in the Stanford pond ....

**Paul Sheldon**

*(Paul played both Junior & Senior Martlet cricket in the 1970s and 80s and turns out for the occasional golf fixture as well. He spent nearly twenty years with the publishers, Hodder & Stoughton, including a spell from 1988-91 running their office in New Zealand, before joining Surrey C.C.C. in 1994. He has been Chief Executive at The Oval since 1996. Ed).*





*John Whittaker, Ham Whitty, Adrian White, Keith Silk, David Scrivens, John Nixon, Peter Ross and Alan Newman at the 19<sup>th</sup> at Piltdown.*

## MARTLETS GOLF 2008

Our cricketers were not the only Martlets to be frustrated by the weather in 2008.

Four out of our nine matches either did not start or, in the case of Ashdown and Seaford, were rained and blown off the course at lunchtime, the Martlets having led in the latter but being down 2 1/2 to 4 1/2 when the heavens opened over Ashdown Forest.

Another wonderful day was enjoyed at West Sussex in April, the home side narrowly winning back the Gilligan Putter. Crowborough having been abandoned without a ball being hit, the Martlets under John Guess were victorious in our other Spring fixture at Hankley Common.

John Whittaker again organized a fun day at the Mid Sussex Club in May when Martlet golfers of all abilities, led by the Chairman, came together for a day's golf followed by an evening meal. The 2009

Golf Day will be on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May and all Martlet golfers are encouraged to come.

Three out of our five autumn matches were played, two being lost to strong opposition at Rye and Piltdown, where the Club retained the Bobby Locke Putter, but an excellent win being achieved by Adrian White's side at Cooden Beach.

Although he has been remembered elsewhere in *The Martlet*, no account of the year's golfing activities would be complete without remembering our friend Jeremy Blanchard, who so enjoyed his Martlet golf and gave so much pleasure to all those who played their golf and cricket with him. He is greatly missed.

***Ham Whitty***



## OBITUARIES.

### DERYCK CORBETT

Deryck Corbett died in 2008, but just too late for the news to be included in the last edition of *The Martlet*. He had not been in good health in recent years.

Deryck was educated at Windlesham and Bradfield and served on minesweepers in the Mediterranean in the last years of the war. He followed his father (a master at Brighton College) and after gaining a teaching qualification joined forces with Bob Stainton, another well known Martlet and county player, at Glengorse Preparatory School at Battle. He stayed there for the whole of his career, becoming headmaster after Bob retired.

I played a lot with him in the fifties. A left handed bat, he was extremely difficult to bowl to. One was as likely to be hit for six first ball as to have him caught off a steeping catch in the outfield. If he got settled, bowlers risked an attack of what was once memorably called "Pringle's neck," a condition caused by the continual turning of the head to watch the progress of the ball to far parts of the ground.

Records are scanty for those years but show in 1950 – 478 runs at 68, 1952 – 365 runs, 1955 – 838 runs, 1957 – 653 runs.

He was in the Martlet side that played the county in the half centenary celebrations of 1955.

I played with him in a match against the County 2nd XI in 1955, when he severely dented the reputations of a number of young hopefuls by scoring 90 not out in quick time. In the photo below, those with long memories will recognise Jim Langridge, (leading the applause) Denis Foreman, Ronnie Wilson, Don Bates, David Manville (wkt). It is generally agreed that the other batsman is Ken Sherwood.



I am sure others from that era will have their own memories of Deryck.

*Keith Jenkin*

### JEREMY RENDALL BLANCHARD (1936 – 2008)

*Michael Virtue, who as a close friend of Pam and Jeremy in Danehill and who gave the wonderful eulogy at Jeremy's Thanksgiving Service, writes:*



"Jeremy died peacefully on May 17th. The cruel and debilitating Motor Neurone Disease was only diagnosed five weeks previously, although he had been growing increasingly weak for some time. He was my closest friend. I hardly know the difference between a golf club and a cricket bat, yet somehow we

had much in common – perhaps especially the appreciation of a shapely ankle, and an enthusiasm for Harvey's Best Bitter.

Jeremy knew everyone and everyone seemed to know Jeremy, although his memory for names was never very good. To most of the chaps that he met it was "hello, old boy" and the girls (of any age) were "hello, m'darling" or "hello, m'dear". He was always cheerful and always the first to put his hand in his pocket for the round of drinks.

The tragic and untimely death of his beloved son Nick in 1995 was a bitter blow, as was the loss of his job with Humberts estate agents three years earlier, but somehow he "picked himself up, shook himself down, and started all over again," comforted and supported by the wonderful Pam.

Setting up as an independent estate agent in his home village of Danehill, he made a very respectable living over the last few years. It is not for me to extol his skills on the cricket pitch or the golf course, but I have always considered him to be a truly natural sportsman and a great and good friend to many. I miss him dreadfully. Our deepest sympathies go out to Pam, his daughters and their families."

Ham Whitty remembers Jeremy as being a man who played his cricket as he lived his early life – fast and furious! He was a quick and often aggressive bowler who batted in the lower middle order with a penchant for the big shot. He was the stereotypical Martlet – he loved his cricket and gave every encounter his all

but equally important was the social gathering of like minded spirits, the analysis of the match with a pint in his hand and the comparing of notes of boundary distractions. He possessed a wonderfully generous spirit and Ham recalls a time in the 70's when the two of them were playing together against Barcombe for the Martlets; Ham was discussing the state of an unsatisfactory employment at that time and Jeremy promptly arranged for a change in fortunes by taking him to John D Wood where they shared many happy years together.

Jeremy was a good club golfer too, belonging to Royal Ashdown Forest and captaining the Club in the mid 90's and at the same time enjoying his society golf with the Old Rugbeans and the Martlets. In 2002 Jeremy was made a Vice President of the Martlets and he and Pam made every effort to support our social functions – we will all miss his bonhomie and that notorious twinkle, a signal that there was fun to be had on every occasion.

*Nigel Russell*

#### **DR JOHN DEW**

In company with many others who had the fortune of being acquainted with John Dew, the news of his passing will be mourned not only throughout, but also far beyond the Sussex borders. To me, in my 16 year old days at Horsham, he was my hero portraying everything that was good about cricket. His advice and patient coaching in the arts of wicketkeeping stood me in good stead, and his captaincy skills and conduct extended far beyond the playing field. A true English gentleman.

When I first met Molly (at a Horsham C.C. dance!) she was a nurse at Horsham hospital and knew the other professional side of John. Totally dedicated to



the care of his patients, I am told that nothing was too much to ensure their comfort and recovery.

Over the years I corresponded regularly with John each winter and reproduce as follows the ultimate paragraph of a letter received in March of this year:

“Unfortunately my own health has suffered a bit of a nose dive since Christmas and my mobility is grossly limited, so I require three fine legs, two “stoppers”, and someone to tell me where the ball is! Molly would be a vital help!”

How typical of the man to relate his poor state of health to the game of cricket.

*Geoff Wills*

#### **CDR A. THACKARA, RN Ret'd.**

Tony Thackara, who died on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2007 aged 90, was a delightful character and fine cricketer who figured prominently in Sir Michael Marshall's splendid book on Arundel cricket, where by 1974 he had played more times and made more runs than any other player – as a matter of record 1728 runs, about 400 or so more than the runner up (with a similar average), another distinguished Martlet Peter Robinson.

1959 was “the year in which Tony Thackara burst on the scene” – his own words – “I arrived with my then girl friend and a girl friend of hers. I can only explain the number by suggesting that perhaps my girl friend at the time didn't trust me. I am glad to report we have been happily married ever since.” Peter Robinson thereafter recorded “Somehow the image of Tony and pretty girls at that time seems right. He brought an incorrigible sense of humour and a huge enjoyment of life to his cricket. His batting was just the same. In that splendid bustling style of his he would keep the score moving along in the manner of Bill Edrich.” He played several times for Combined Services and regularly for the Navy in the fifties, when all the Service sides were very strong due to National Service. He, and Mike Ainsworth, who played frequently for Worcestershire, were the dominant Navy batsmen of that period. He also at times during several seasons played for Cornwall.

Tony was educated at RNC Dartmouth. At tennis, he was a junior finalist at Wimbledon. His wartime career embraced time in both the Fleet Air Arm and the engineering branch of the Navy. He had his share of luck. In an operation off North Africa he was originally due to sail in HMS Neptune, but was switched to another role. That mission was a disaster with various ships lost, Neptune hitting a mine and going down with all hands. Later, on a carrier in the Pacific he had the kamikaze experience. He was mentioned in dispatches, details unknown – he was reticent about

such things. After retirement from the Navy, he was involved in insurance and later with a Japanese engineering company, from whom he apparently pressed for the perk of a specially shafted driver in pursuit of improved length off the tee.

On the golf course, he was in the nicest possible way a tremendous competitor, invariably fuelled by two stiff starters and then very focussed and very straight, with a good repeat swing and an excellent short game honed by hours of practice on his land at home. He had an enviable competition record at West Sussex, where his scalp was one to be treasured, and he continued to play until near the end of his life.

I first met Tony when playing for the Army against the Navy in the fifties, and subsequently frequently at golf at the Club and sometimes with the County Cricketers Golf Society, where "the Commander" was well liked. He was not only a highly talented but also in every sense a true sportsman, who will be fondly remembered with great respect by all who knew him.

**Geoff Seaton**

#### **MICHAEL WINGFIELD-DIGBY (1938 – 2008)**

Wingers was a great friend, as he was to a lot of people. He had enjoyed a very varied life, being at different times a soldier, an ordinard (his calling lay elsewhere), a schoolmaster, forester and racehorse owner. He went to both Oxford and Cambridge University, quite apart from all the cricket played for many & various sides. He also rode in the Military Stakes at Sandown, hunted and regularly rode out with his horses, particularly Kendal Cavalier, the former Welsh Grand National winner.

Who can forget that boyish grin when he misbehaved, which he did frequently. He was most certainly one of life's great eccentrics. It was always a great pleasure to play cricket with him; you never knew what was going to happen next. He was a fine wicket-keeper batsman, who scored thirteen centuries and was good enough to play a number of times for Dorset with his cousin Andrew. At school he was not able to make it into the Sherborne 3rd X1 which must have been a great battle of wills with the master i/c, the great Micky Walford, but as Wingers told me, he was so small in those days he could hardly hit it off the square. He played for a lot of wandering clubs, chief among them being the Free Foresters. I was lucky to have spent some time with him before he passed away at his beautiful home in Kentisbeare and he told me that the Foresters had actually had over the years 33 England captains playing for them. A few years ago he toured with them to the USA.

He went on many cricket tours. He very much enjoyed going with the Cryptics to Malaysia and he played cricket in South Africa when he was a young man. He came to India with my family when Mark was captaining a Young Cricketers side and he went on several Martlet tours, the last being to the Dordogne just two years ago. He was a much travelled man, particularly so with Jackie in recent years.

He loved playing for the Martlets, especially at Arundel. The stories about Wingers are legendary. For example there was the time when the Duchess of Norfolk was expected for a formal occasion, and a red carpet had been laid out. Just moments before her arrival his prized whippets father and son, Percy and Tommy both preformed on the said carpet. They similarly performed in the pavilion at Fenner's which Mike Atherton mentioned in his recent book. On another occasion at Arundel he had been extremely annoyed with the behaviour of the opposition and on being dismissed he stormed back to the pavilion, got his kit together and went straight off without changing to his car and drove off, only to return very sheepishly about half an hour later, as he had left his wicket keeping gloves behind.

Probably the team closest to his heart was his own Cavaliers, whom he took three times to the Gambia and once to Uganda. He also arranged a tour of England for the Ugandan side in which they were unbeaten, which gave him great pleasure.

On the first tour of the Gambia we had the tragic death at the wicket of the Middlesex and England



*Bertie May with MW-D*

cricketer Wilf Slack. Wingers was at his best in handling the situation, both with the international press and all the attendant things to organise. He truly showed his leadership qualities.

He was beautifully politically incorrect. I always thought there was a trace of Laurence of Arabia in him. Given the right time and place he could have won a V.C.

I know the racing world could claim him for their own. I always thought that his beloved Kendal Cavalier was the substitute son he never had. Kendal finished 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> in two Grand Nationals having been tipped by Richard Pitman as a future Grand National winner. Ironically, a few years ago when the going was extremely heavy and would have suited him ideally, he was first reserve for the race.



If he had run who knows what would have happened. Bertie May will continue to race. He has two victories to his credit and will be jumping this winter. Wingers married Jackie shortly before his passing. She was a great rock for him, both before and after his illness was diagnosed.

Wingers is irreplaceable, a one off. He will be greatly missed by his legion of friends all round the world.

**Derek Semmence**

### **LIFE BEYOND THE AIRING CUPBOARD**

As you would expect, Johnny Barclay has written a delightful book, as much anthology as autobiography but still self-revealing. In an age when publishers prefer promiscuity, *Life Beyond The Airing Cupboard* strikes a rare blow for charm.

The airing cupboard is where, as a tiny boy at his prep school, Johnny hid away while preparing himself mentally for what mattered more than anything, that afternoon's cricket match. "Echoes of that childhood can be heard among the pages that follow," he writes, "and perhaps those echoes add something to the tales." Well, they certainly do.

As Mike Atherton says in a warm and enlightening foreword, "a kind of joy and schoolboy fun" infuses Johnny's evocations. There runs through them, too, a thread of humour, sometimes of a piece even with the account of the cricket match in *England, Their England*, A.G. Macdonnell's masterpiece. Modesty surpasses self-mockery and Johnny's enthusiasm never wanes, despite a long and hard-fought battle with depression. If they don't know it already, readers will very soon realise how fortunate Arundel are to have him as the keeper of their cricket. He does an incredible job there, not so much with the privileged as the under-privileged.

I have long thought he would have made a distinguished diplomat (like his father), a marvellous schoolmaster, a wonderful clergyman or a welcoming water-keeper. Now, to be added to the list, is disarming essayist. A highly skilled fisherman, Johnny would have been brought up, I am sure, on Harry Plunkett Greene's classic, *Where The Bright Waters Meet*, the bright waters being the two Hampshire chalk streams, the Test and the Bourne. Like Plunkett Greene's book, *Life Beyond The Airing Cupboard* gently recalls "days in the distance enchanted," and Stephen Chalke is to be much thanked for publishing it.

**John Woodcock**

(John is of course the former Times cricket correspondent and this is the second contribution he has made to our magazine. Ed).

### **AND FINALLY...**

#### **Bands of Brothers**

Few of cricket's bands of brothers  
Shine in "Wisden" or "Who's Who":  
Incogniti, and the others,  
Cryptics, Cyphers, Thespids too;  
Wanderers, Perambulators,  
Sussex Martlets, Hampshire Hogs:  
These are ballad instigators,  
Famous names a poet logs.

Classic batsmen, lusty slammers,  
Joy's the essence of their game;  
I Zingari, Yellowhammers –  
Who could call their innings tame?  
Nondescripts, Authentics, Stoics,  
Brighton Brunswick, Harlequins,  
All eschew cheap mock heroics,  
Seldom care a rap who wins.

Dumplings, Invalids, and Stragglers,  
Barnacles and Buccaneers,  
Brook not disputatious hagglers,  
Battle only with their peers:  
Quidnuncs, Butterflies, Grasshoppers,  
Blue Mantles, Free Foresters –  
Not for clowns or mere clod-hoppers  
Thrills their sporting prowess stirs.

This is a poem from *Slip Catches* by W Curran Reedy. The clubs mentioned have nearly all featured in the Martlet fixture list. The Thespids was the theatrical team founded by Brian Egerton and for which Aubrey Smith, Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Michael Wilding and so many actors played.

The poem's sentiments sum up the aims and purposes of Martlet cricket, which is not for "clowns or mere clod-hoppers"!

**Brian O'Gorman**

As always, ideas and articles for *The Martlet* are gratefully received. Please contact:

Desmond Devitt ([dpdevitt@btinternet.com](mailto:dpdevitt@btinternet.com))  
Flat 3, 15 Rawlinson Rd., Oxford OX2 6UE.

Designed by Stan Halcin