

# Old Persean News

Summer Newsletter 2009



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THE PERSE  
SCHOOL  
CAMBRIDGE



## President's address



After a quiet winter we have just come back from the Annual Old Perseans Open Day at the school. We had a really enjoyable day. Did you

know we are National Champions in the Under 18s indoor hockey? That's quite an achievement. This and other snippets came out on our tour with current students of the school before a wonderful lunch. We then rushed to a superb musical performance where Gavin Richards, Director of Music, and his team put on an excellent concert, highlighted by a string quartet and solo pianist of the highest quality. We then had a selection of activities to choose

from. I chose the rifle range this year. Current CCF members were there to 'show us how it's done' and there were some good shots amongst us ... maybe evidence of a murky past? Finally we were entertained in true cinematic style – the school brought out a gem from its archives; a colour movie created by Eric Mival from 1957 (now available on the OP website). We all sat entranced and interrupted the show with shouts of who we recognised, "That's IFC Brown" etc!

I wish you all a good summer and hope to see you at The Annual Dinner this year – we are coming back to the school on Saturday 19th September with a large re-union and a chance for everyone to see the new developments currently underway. Book your tickets now!

**Ashley Edgar**

## Future Events

**Date to be announced:**  
Stockbridge Golf Tournament

**Saturday 19th September, 2009:**  
Annual Old Persean Dinner, from 6pm.  
Please contact Amanda Augstein,  
Alumni Officer at [alumni@perse.co.uk](mailto:alumni@perse.co.uk)  
or **01223 403838** for further details.

**Looking ahead:**  
OP reunion events will soon be organised around the country in cities such as Bristol, Norwich and London. To find out about reunions planned in your area, please contact Amanda at the details above.

## Honorary Doctorate for Old Persean

The award of Honorary Doctor of Business Administration at the University of East London was conferred upon Laurie Marsh on 5th November 2008. Laurie is a consultant and entrepreneur who has worked in the charity field for over 28 years. He is currently working for Core Arts – a charity working with people with long term mental disabilities, based in Hackney, and has helped to raise £5million funding for the organisation.

Born in 1930 in London, Laurie became interested in the arts as a young boy. His father was a shopkeeper and a professional magician, which captured his imagination and generated his future interest in theatre and cinema. As a boy, Laurie toured the Darby & Joan clubs in central London performing his magic and ventriloquism during the school holidays. With his passion for theatre, he helped rescue and restore five London theatres in the private sector and one on Broadway in New York called the Billy Rose, now known as the famous Nederlander Theatre. In 1975 he started work on his major charity project for the Theatre Royal in Bath, which was due for demolition. He took over the project, restored the theatre and became the Chairman for 5 years.



Whilst working in Bath, Laurie was also the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) for 15 years, eventually being elected as chairman of LAMDA. His ongoing ambitions continued and he built up a chain of 150 cinemas in the UK called Classic which were sold as MGM in 1983. He also started a film production and distribution company called Tigon, which is still continuing today and is one of the most successful independent film production companies in the history of British cinema.

Closer to home, Laurie's contribution to The Perse in 1972 for the construction of what was then the Sixth Form Centre (now the library) was unprecedented. His personal family charity is currently funding two bursaries for music orientated students and will shortly be funding a Chamber Music Award.

Laurie is working on a number of projects including funding and restoring a national cancer hospital in the London area and a scientific research centre in Kent.



## Eric Mival Videos

An incredible video made in 1956/7 by Perse pupil, Eric Mival, is now available on the Old Persean website, showing a year in the life of the school. Filmed by Eric when he was a sixth former, the film runs through most of the main activities of the year, including everything from CCF parades, drama productions, cricket matches and even gliding on the sports pitches! This is an extraordinary record of the school fifty years ago, both quaintly dated and in some respects surprisingly unchanged. The video can be viewed at [www.oldperseans.org](http://www.oldperseans.org), or by visiting the school's Facebook page.

# Life after The Perse



In our last issue we asked for your stories about life after The Perse. Here's a couple of those we received...



## **Arnold Sherman (1948)**

Arnold Sherman left the Perse in 1948 when Hillel House was closed. He qualified in London as a Chartered Accountant in 1954 (placed second in order of merit in both examinations).

In 1956, he emigrated to Toronto, Canada, with his wife and ten month old son and re-qualified as a C.A. in Canada. He joined Massey-Ferguson's Toronto head office in 1959, and was in charge of the farm machinery group's world-wide tax function from 1961 to 1977. For three of those years he was based in São Paulo, Brazil and he is still fluent in Portuguese.

He moved to Monaco in 1978 and spent three years there running the tax function of a major multinational corporation (Thyssen-Bornemisza). He returned to Canada in 1981. In 1982 he incorporated his professional practice as an international tax consultant, based in Calgary, Alberta. At age 78, he is still in full-time practice in Calgary, with clients all over the world. In his professional practice he has worked in over 60 different countries, on every continent except Antarctica.

He has three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



## **Dr Peter Jackson (1955)**

From a very early age I wanted to train to become a veterinary surgeon. The Perse School was not sure that I was 'university material' and wondered if I might be better suited to a 'career in business'. They predicted a few weeks before the exams that I would fail all my three science A Levels which I found extremely depressing and distressing.

Fortunately they were wrong and I passed them – albeit taking two attempts to do so – and was awarded a place at Edinburgh University to study veterinary medicine. Despite the school's predictions and after five years of hard work I graduated with distinction, gaining 6 silver medals for achievement along the way. I went into practice at March in Cambridgeshire, becoming a partner at the age of 26.

After 16 years I had to leave the practice because of back problems and entered

academic life. I lectured in veterinary obstetrics at Edinburgh University before being appointed as University Physician to the Cambridge Veterinary School where I worked for nearly 20 years. I was lucky enough to gain a college fellowship, and my late parents were delighted when my name was inscribed on the Fellowship Board.

I was later appointed Senior Tutor at St Edmund's College Cambridge and couldn't help occasionally thinking that perhaps I had proved the school wrong. I had become a Fellow of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine & Surgery. It seemed I was possibly 'university material' after all – I had become a don at Cambridge and the author of three text books.

I enjoyed my time at The Perse but their educational psychology was not well developed in those days. I would like to say to others that with hard work you can achieve almost anything.

# Obituaries



**Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Carew (1919–2009)**

*Grateful thanks to The Telegraph for allowing us to reprint this passage. (To read the full*

*version, please visit the Obituaries section of the OP website).*

Thomas Arthur Carew was born in Dublin, the son of a former officer of the Royal Navy who had served at the Dardenelles. He was educated at the Perse School, Cambridge, and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, from where he was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1938.

Promoted to Major to lead a Jedburgh team comprising Captain John Cox and Sergeant John Sharp, who had served with Jedburgh teams in France, and an officer familiar with the people and language of Arakan, he was parachuted into western Burma two days after Christmas 1944. After making contact with a local guerrilla group, Carew called for an air attack on a concentration of Japanese troops at Minzgyang, which inflicted about 200 casualties on January 4, 1945. Subsequently, he organised a series of ambushes by the guerrilla groups,

inflicting more than 100 casualties and, rather more importantly, disrupting the enemy's logistic support at the time of General Slim's third and decisive campaign to clear Arakan of Japanese troops.

The success of this operation, code-named Camel, was attributed very largely to Carew's personal courage, coolness and resourcefulness, for which he was awarded the DSO. By the time the citation for this award was submitted, he had been withdrawn from Arakan and parachuted in to the Pegu Yomas. This broad strip of territory, between the Irrawaddy River and the Rangoon-Mandalay Railway, was the obvious refuge for the bulk of the Japanese 28th Army withdrawing southwards as General Slim advanced south from Meiktila into central Burma.

Carew attributed his success in working with the Burmese resistance and other groups to his "Irishness" and belief in a new independent Burma, in sharp contrast to the British civil servants of the prewar regime who, isolated in northern India for the duration, persisted in the view that restoration of the old colonial structure was an essential precursor to any form of political advance. The most significant event of his second Jedburgh operation in Burma was his meeting with the commander of the Burma Defence Army,

General Aung San, father of Aung San Suu Kyi, today's leader of the Burmese National League for Democracy. Slim was suspicious of Aung San, because of his prewar anti-British stance and co-operation with the Japanese, but was interested to meet and persuade him to operate under Allied command. Carew had a hand in facilitating safe conduct for Aung San to 14th Army headquarters in April 1945, when Slim decided he could do business with him and subsequently arranged for their co-operation in the final defeat of the Japanese in Burma.

At the end of the war in the Far East, Carew returned to the Royal Artillery and served with 6th Airborne Division in Palestine. He was later an instructor at the Mons Officer Cadet School in Aldershot and an intelligence officer in Trieste. He retired as a lieutenant-colonel in 1958 to begin a new career as a boat builder. He also set up his own management consultancy and was a pioneer of employee out-placement. He later built a house in France and lived there.

His wartime marriage to Margot Goodchild was dissolved soon after the war and he married Jane Suckling in 1953. This was also dissolved and in 1975 he married his business partner Jill Strahan, who predeceased him. He is survived by two sons and two daughters of his second marriage.



**Geoffrey Whiteman Day (1919–2009)**

*Grateful thanks to his son John Day for the following:*

Geoffrey was born in Cambridge in

1919. He won a scholarship to the Perse in 1930, where, as well as thriving academically, he also excelled at rugby, playing regularly for the First IV, and in music, becoming an accomplished violinist.

On leaving school he got a job with Barclays Bank in Newmarket, where he lodged during the week, cycling to and from Cambridge at weekends; he recalled wryly that his initial pay was £1 a week and his

lodgings £1-5s. When the war came, Geoffrey's aptitude for science got him a posting in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, where he was involved in the development and deployment across the UK of RADAR, which was then in its infancy. Later in the war he took part in the D-Day landings and the liberation of Nazi-held Europe.

Geoffrey married Kathleen shortly after the ending of the war, and resumed his banking career in Ramsey, Huntingdonshire. After a few years he moved with his young family to Harlow, and then in 1963 was promoted to Assistant Manager at Cherry Hinton Road in Cambridge. Managerships followed in Thaxted, Essex and in Sawston, Cambridgeshire where he remained until his early retirement in 1978.

In retirement Geoffrey pursued long-standing interests in gardening, golf and music, continuing to play violin with a local orchestra.

Geoffrey's family life was marred by the early deaths first of Kathleen, and then of his second wife Eileen. He married for a third time in 1986; and he and Marion were together for 23 happy years, which were full with their involvement in their extended family of children and grandchildren.

Geoffrey will be remembered as an extremely modest man despite his many talents; but above all he was kind and loving to those close to him. He leaves his wife, Marion, daughter Sheila and son John.



## **Graham Fuller (1935–2008)**

*Grateful thanks to his wife Olwyn for the photo and following:*

Graham won a scholarship to The Perse in 1946 from Milton Road Junior School. He won an exhibition to St Catharine's College to read law followed by articles with Alan Swift, Town Clerk of Cambridge. He qualified as a solicitor in 1962 and worked in York and Solihull for five years before joining the Department of the Environment. He worked in various fields until his retirement as Assistant Secretary in 1993. He then spent five years as a planning inspector before moving to Seaford in East Sussex in 1998.

Whilst at The Perse, visits to Fenners during lunch breaks and after school were lifelong

memories. A retirement present of life membership of Sussex County Cricket Club led to much joy when they won the championship for the first time in 2003. Graham was a lifelong church member and for some years was a lay preacher in the URC. Latterly he was assistant organist at his local church. As a tenor he sang in many choral societies from York to Seaford. In 1961 he married Olwyn Moore, a former pupil at the Perse Girls School. The service was conducted by Rev C Keith Forecast who Graham met on his first day at The Perse.

Graham finished his year as President of Seaford Head Probus Club only a month before his sudden death. He is survived by Olwyn and their children Adrian and Katharine.

## **Dr John Hay Hobson (1936–2007)**

John Hobson died on 14th September 2007 at the age of 85. He was a late entrant to The Perse, his family having moved from Dorset to Cambridge in 1936. He followed the Classic stream through to the Upper Sixth, but having left school, decided to become a doctor. He trained at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and after holding two "house" positions at two hospitals was called up for National Service. He was attached to the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, and was among the last British

troops to serve in Palestine before the mandate ended and the state of Israel was born. He was then posted to North Africa.

As a committed Christian, this time overseas convinced him that he could share his faith most effectively by using his medical skills in caring for people in countries where even the most rudimentary health service did not exist. He was accepted by a Church of England missionary society, took specialist training as an eye surgeon, and then spent 35 years – first in Burma (where he met his English wife) –

and subsequently in India. Apart from coping with all manner of general medical and surgical contingencies, a large part of his time was devoted to cataract and other eye complaints so rife in those countries. He and his wife retired in 1987, and moved to Bournemouth the following year. He remained active in church work, kept an open house to foreign language students and was a member of a croquet club right to the end. His wife survives him – they had no children.



## **Alexander Howard Morison (1913–2008)**

*Grateful thanks to Toby Morison for the photo and following:*

Alec Morison was the eldest of the four Morison Brothers who attended The Perse. After leaving, he read Biology at Downing College but abandoned this to study horticulture at Reading University. He subsequently worked for the garden designer, Geoffrey Jellicoe, but had to abandon this career when he developed a skin allergy to plant-life.

Having always been creative, he gained a teaching qualification in drawing and

painting. Following the war, where he had been an interpreter of aerial photography, he joined Sunfield Children's Home for mentally handicapped children where he taught art classes. He began to develop therapies using music and colour and also undertook scientific research into colour.

On retirement he started work on a momentous series of watercolour paintings inspired by themes from classical mythology and eastern cultures. In 1996 fifty-six of these luminous paintings were shown at Wolverhampton Art Gallery to great acclaim. He was predeceased by his wife Gladys who collaborated with him on many paintings.

# Obituaries

## **Air-Vice Marshal Richard Trevor Morison CBE (1916–2008)**

*Grateful thanks to his son, Toby for the photo and following:*

Dick Morison was one of four brothers who all attended the Perse—collectively known as the Moss Bros. Whilst at the school he produced a rival magazine to The Pelican, The Hairbrush (an allusion to a popular form of chastisement for school boarders). There was only one issue.

After leaving he trained as an aeronautical engineer at The De Havilland Aircraft Company. At the onset of war he was commissioned into The RAF volunteer Reserve. Then a serendipitous meeting led to him working for the air advisor to Lord Beaverbrook, the Minister for Aircraft Production. Subsequently he was posted overseas, serving in Egypt, North Africa and Italy.

His RAF career continued in peacetime. He held posts at RAF Gaydon and Bomber

Command. In 1960 he embarked for Singapore as Senior Technical Staff Officer 224 Group. And then to New Zealand as Director of Technical Services to The Royal New Zealand Air Force. He returned to England three years later to serve as commanding engineering officer at various stations. His last post was as President of The Royal Ordnance Board, responsible for the nation's munitions and armaments. He was made an MBE in 1944 and a CBE in 1969.

He retired in 1972 to Norfolk where as well as gardening and cabinet-making, he was actively involved in the local church community and branch of The Royal British Legion, of which he was President for 26 years.

At the time of his death he was writing his life story in which he remembered The Perse with great affection. He was a loving husband to his wife Rosemary who survives him as do his two children and seven grandchildren.



## **David Nightingale (1937–2008)**

*Grateful thanks to Chris Emery for photo and the following:*

David was an extremely talented sportsman, being Captain of rugby, hockey and especially cricket. Wisden, the cricketers' almanac, describing the 1955 season stated, "D. E. Nightingale, the captain, enjoyed an exceptional season. He dominated the batting and on favourable pitches, proved an effective off-spin bowler". David finished that season with a batting average of 72.11 over 16 innings, comfortably ahead of the second placed batsman whose average was 19.71 over the same number of innings. He also took 37 wickets that season at an average of 9.89. He continued pursuing these sports, representing the R.A.F. during his National Service. He was also a keen swimmer and used to take part in the annual races from the Mill Pond to Jesus Green.

A successful career in the Insurance Industry saw David with the Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance Company. Starting in Luton, he moved to become Head of Life Assurance at Bedford then on to promotions at Preston and finally manager in the Birmingham Office until his early retirement in 1991. He continued with his sporting passion albeit as a spectator rather than as a participant. His funeral, held at Amersham, near to his home in Stoke Manderville was attended by many colleagues from his insurance days as well as his many friends and relatives.

David leaves a wife, Evie, and daughter, as well as a son and daughter from his first marriage to Margaret who sadly died some years earlier. His younger brother James (Jimmy) was also at the Perse but died of Motor Neurone Disease in 1985.



## Douglas Parmée (1914–2008)

*Grateful thanks to his son Nick for the photo and following:*

Douglas was born in West Dean in Sussex in 1914. He attended the Simon Langton Boys' School in Canterbury before his father, an Inspector of Schools, moved to Cambridge and his son entered the Perse School. There he thrived, leaving in 1933 to go up to Trinity College, Cambridge as a teacher training college student, a now non-existent category, spurning an exhibition offered by Downing College. At Trinity he took a first in both parts of the Modern and Medieval Languages Tripos – a starred first in Part II – becoming an exhibitor in 1934 and a senior scholar in 1935. He left in 1936 to do post-graduate work at the University of Bonn and a doctorate at the Sorbonne. During this time he received various scholarships and studentships from Trinity, including the Dunning in 1938 and the Rouse Ball in 1940.

Back in England, he became Secretary of the Students' Department in the London office of the British Council from 1939 to 1941. It was in this capacity that he found himself at a lunch for another symbolist poet, Paul Valéry, whose description of the inadequate wine he was offered – “Mais, c'est curieux” – he treasured.

In 1941 he was claimed by RAF Intelligence and then, very naturally, the Government Code & Cypher School at Bletchley Park, where he worked in Hut 3 as part of the team that translated, analysed and interpreted the decrypts from Hut 6. It was while there that he met and married in 1944 Gwen Hepworth (“Wendy” – he had a habit of using his own versions of names and places), on secondment to Hut 6 from the Foreign Office; his best man was the irascible Glaswegian John Cairncross, later exposed as a spy for the Soviet Union and dubbed the ‘Fifth Man’ by the press. After VE Day he was sent to Berlin; he was horrified not only by the condition of the defeated Germans, but by some of their conquerors' behaviour to them, in particular that of a brother officer who, having agreed



the price of a pleasure-boat with its owner's widow in cigarettes, paid her in Woodbines.

Once again back in England, in 1946 he joined the French department at Cambridge, not long thereafter becoming a fellow of Queens' College, where he remained until he retired. After the enormous success of his anthology *Twelve French Poets*, he turned to translation. He enjoyed giving lectures, despite modestly having described that activity as casting false pearls before real swine; his became very popular: perhaps the undergraduates who liked his irreverence and wit were hoping for a repeat of the legendary if not mythical occasion he lectured on Surrealism dressed only in cap, gown and black tights. He was also Steward of his college and on the wine committee, duties from which he derived much pleasure.

He was divorced from his first wife in the early Seventies, soon marrying Meg – Margaret Clarke, then a research student, with whom he went to live in Adelaide, South Australia, after his retirement in 1981, when he was made a life fellow of

Queens'. In retirement, with no academic distractions, he worked on his translations harder than ever; with no need for income from them, his tastes for the recondite or undervalued as well as for the classics could be expressed. The new selection from Chamfort gave him particular pleasure, with its uncynical and humorous appreciation of human nature comparable, he felt, with Montaigne; he also gained great satisfaction from *The Child* by Jules Vallès, an autobiographical novel dedicated to everyone who was bored at school.

Outside his pursuit of literature as a professional, he had an abiding interest in all the arts, being a keen concert-, gallery- and film-goer. In earlier days he had been fond of the company of convivial wits, having been well-acquainted with, among others, the belligerent critic and boozier John Davenport; Kingsley Amis's horror when told he would have to teach Conrad amused him particularly. His interest in wine has been mentioned; he had a good palate and was both knowledgeable and experienced. He was widely travelled, both in Europe and outside; in the Fifties and Sixties, the Long Vacation usually saw him crossing the Channel en famille, first in a Vauxhall Velox, then with a Berkeley Cavalier caravan behind his short wheelbase Land Rover or, later, his Austin Westminster. He was not a good driver and a worse back-seat driver: his adjurations to “keep the revs up” have passed into the family language. He had also been a reckonable tennis and squash player; at school, though not having an especially large or powerful physique, he had set a shot-putting record which stood for many years. The geographical position of Australia in the Far East led to the development of an interest in the Dao that reflected his own quietist and patient approach to life. As, though tended devotedly by Meg, his health began slowly to decline, this attitude allowed the departure of successive physical faculties to be met not with resignation but with resolution to make the best of what remained. He is survived by two sons and a daughter of his first marriage and by his second wife and their son.

# Obituaries



## David Perkins (1938–2007)

*Grateful thanks to Roy Perkins for the following:*

It is with great sadness that I report the death of David Perkins (Perse 1949–1956) while on holiday in this country. He had come over to England from Australia where he had lived since 1966, to attend the wedding of his nephew Jonathan on July 28th. He had had some chest pains during his stay, and on September 2nd he fell ill and was taken to hospital. He was diagnosed with bowel cancer and some bone cancer. After a successful operation to bypass the tumour, he failed to recover from the attendant infection and died on September 26th in the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Among the mourners at the funeral on October 3rd were Derek and Elizabeth Sederman at whose wedding David had been an usher in 1965.

At The Perse, he was a talented sportsman both on the rugby pitch and on the cricket field. He captained the school first cricket

team in 1956 for whom he opened the batting and was a superb slip fielder. At rugby, he played as fly-half for the first fifteen and the Old Perseans. He had University trials whilst at Cambridge and captained Selwyn College in his final year. He also played for Cambridgeshire as fly-half having the luxury of Dicky Jeeps as his scrum half.

He emigrated in 1966 and married the following year, settling permanently in Melbourne. He worked for Cooper and Lybrands as an accountant, first in England and then in Australia. He led an active life, being involved heavily with the Victorian Drama League for whom he was both Treasurer and Secretary. He acted in and produced many plays over a long period. He had many other interests, too, including cycling and his local church. Over 170 people attended the memorial service and celebration of his life in Melbourne in October. He leaves 2 children, Sarah and Nicholas both of whom were at his bedside when he passed away.

## Derrick W Smith (1924–2008)

*Grateful thanks to his wife, Margaret for the following:*

Derrick came to The Perse in 1935 as a 'scholarship boy' from Cottenham. During the war, his time with the army in the 'Signals' increased his interest in radio and electrical engineering. He later read Engineering at Christ's College. After two years as a research assistant with the Radio Astronomy Group at Cambridge led by Martin Ryle, his career took a different turn when he became a schoolmaster, teaching at King Edward VII School, Lytham for 36 years. Besides teaching maths, physics and religious studies, he also kept the school language laboratory working. He continued to do this long after he had officially retired. When it was decided to install an up-to-date language laboratory, the technicians who came to fit it could not believe that the old one was still in full working order! He was a member of the Old Perseans Society and always enjoyed reading about the happenings and new developments at the school.

## Sad losses



George Field (2008)

Peter G Hudson (2008)

Norman Smith (2008)

Frederic Kipping (2009)

Christopher Mills (2009)

Rev Peter Shepherd (2007)

Peter George (2008)

Ian Searle (2009)

Austin Finn (2009)

## Missing OPs



The last newsletter was returned from the following people:

Felix Barlow (1994)

David Birks (2001)

Robert Nettleton (2003)

Christopher Barnes (1975)

James Bruce (1974)

Maurice Nichols (1942)

Simon Barton (1977)

Benjamin Fountain (1991)

Owen Robinson (2003)

Richard Bennett (1985)

Mark Kreckler (1999)

Daniel J Ward (1985)

Robin Bennett (1967)

Richard Laws (1975)

Please could you advise the development office if you know their current address.