

# The Ampleforth Journal



2022 to 2023

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# EDITORIAL

OSB FR RICHARD FFIELD OSB

EDITOR OF THE AMPLEFORTH JOURNAL

The last five years have been ones of upheaval. It has been suggested that Turner's oak at Kew, which was uprooted in a storm but, far from dying, re-earthed its roots and flourished, is not a bad model for us.

St John Henry Newman wrote of the need for change for any community to thrive. One of the changes that Vatican II brought is the evolution of the Church from a clerical body to the whole People of God and Pope Francis has written in *Laudato Si* (expounded recently by Lord Deben in the first Catholic Union lecture at Ampleforth) of the interconnectedness, not just of all people, but of and with the whole of creation. The interdependence of monks and laity is one example of this, as is the growth of lay Oblates of the Community, of which Martha Byrne Hill writes.

By their fruits you will know them. A community has fruits and Mungo Birch, James Hart-Dyke and Robert Ward are examples, as also are so many of the obituaries of OAs, that many readers say are the first part of the Journal that they go to.

Richard ffield, OSB.

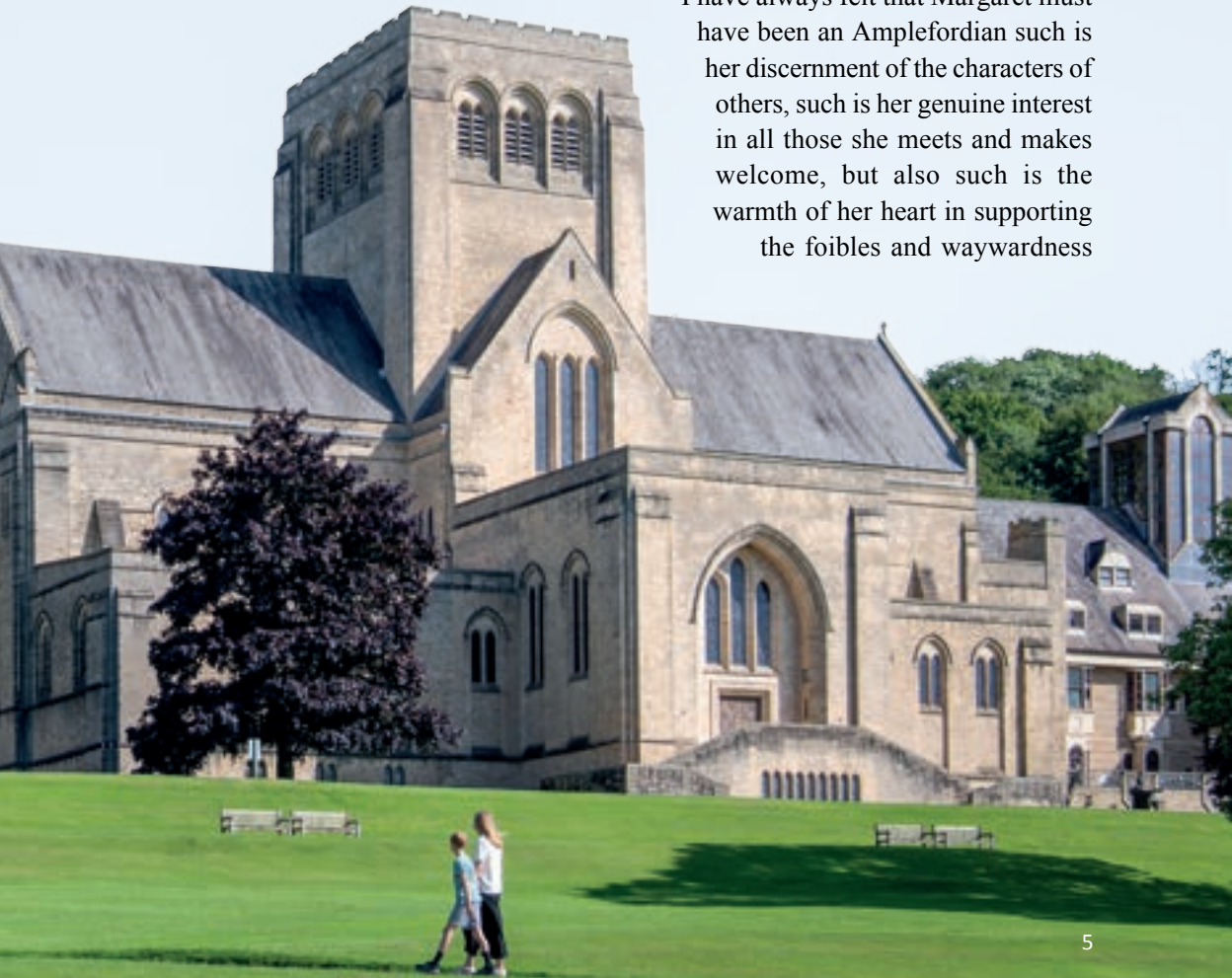


PETER ROBERTS  
THE HEADMASTER'S  
EXHIBITION SPEECH: 2023

‘Only connect’ is the epigraph of EM Forster’s famous novel ‘Howards End.’ If you have read this wonderful book or watched one of the beautiful adaptations of it for the cinema or television, you will know that its ebbs and flows are secondary to the central message that almost all the characters, whether they are from the Wilcox, Schlegel or Bast families, struggle to understand each other and the relationships break down between them.

The main character, Margaret, is interested in others, wants to reach out and engage, deepening her understanding, to reflect, ultimately showing the power of love, overcoming the barriers of class, nation and materialism that dogged Edwardian society, over a hundred years ago. Margaret is warm and caring, she is strong and yet honest about her failings, and she is always there to help, dependable and practical.

I have always felt that Margaret must have been an Amplefordian such is her discernment of the characters of others, such is her genuine interest in all those she meets and makes welcome, but also such is the warmth of her heart in supporting the foibles and waywardness



of many around her. The depth of Margaret's character deepens and is enhanced by the beauty and inspiration of the place Margaret comes to across the course of the novel: 'Howards End'.

The house and garden of Howard's End are more than a place of sanctuary and solace, they are the expression of a community which has the power to heal and love, to bring the other characters into harmony and to grow, based around the strength that comes of giving which Margaret ends up encapsulating. EM Forster was clear that Howard's End was not in itself beautiful as a place, but it was what it came to represent with the restored and healed relationships that counted.

Here, as our thoughts will go out of SAC to the beauties of the valley, its fields, its brooks and its trees, then we know how our search for depth of understanding of each other and how to approach life have been gained within the most beautiful of settings, one that inspires us to look up to the divine, but also down to steward the creation we have the privilege to live within, and have the invitation to come back to over our life to come.

Hence, the theme of this year's Exhibition which is not only to continue in our search to connect well and in depth with each other to grow our sense of community, but also to reconnect with all those aspects of the authentic Ampleforth life that the impact of the pandemic, the straightjacket of over-regulation, the wider context of economic and social challenge and the war in Ukraine, have all undermined and should be restored to our Benedictine way of life: our love of learning and books, our love of hospitality and welcoming people to the valley, our love of service and helping in the Diocese and neighbouring schools and our passion for music, sport and the arts. We are on Exhibition and we welcome you to the celebration of the gifts we want to share with you.

MUNGO BIRCH (T02)  
**MINE CLEARING IN GAZA**

After graduating from Exeter University and gaining an MA in Human Rights from the University of Essex, I worked in London as a kitchen porter, barman and waiter for a few years. In 2010 I moved to Egypt and found a job as assistant to a retired Egyptian Ambassador in Cairo. Through him I met the British Director of the largest Arab publishing house and went to work for him in Beirut, travelling extensively across the Middle East and to Kazakhstan, until losses caused by the Syrian Civil war resulted in my redundancy. I then took a short consultancy with a publishing company based in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. It was while I was there that I applied for the HALO trust (Hazardous Area Life-support Organization), which started my career in Mine Action.

I initially joined HALO in Somaliland, (an unrecognized independent state within the

borders of what used to be British Somaliland in 2013) as a programme officer, dealing with day-to-day administration and running two post clearance survey teams, a mine risk education team and a minefield completion team. HALO had a big programme in Somaliland with approximately 600 deminers and a significant fleet of vehicles. I worked closely with the survey teams to try and calculate the economic benefits of mine clearance on the Somaliland economy. Somaliland is a nomadic society, so wealth is primarily calculated in the size and species of the herd that a man owns. In my time there I met men who might own hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of livestock but live in a tent. Landmines kill livestock which resulted in a direct economic loss to the herdsman so clearance that removed the threat to livestock and opened up more pasture for the herds was clearly very beneficial. Tea in Somaliland is excellent and is served very sweet with camel milk, and drinking it with other HALO staff and the nomadic people is one of my most vivid memories of the country - along with travelling through a swarm of locusts. In 2014 I moved with HALO to Cambodia where I undertook mine field training and learnt about the various methods of clearance of mines. I also completed my first explosive ordnance disposal course. At the end of 2014 I left HALO with the notion that I wanted to live in London again.

In London I struggled to get a job and had to return to working as a barman. After a year of this I was thoroughly fed up so joined Danish Demining Group (DDG) in 2016 to be their liaison person and project manager in southern Turkey responding to the Syrian civil war. I arrived in Turkey shortly before the 2016 attempted coup against President Erdogan which was tense. Initially I was based between Urfa and Kilis in Sanliurfa province, running a small Mine Risk Education (MRE) project and establishing relations with the other NGOs, the UN and local government.



*Syrian Refugee children before a MRE session in Urfa, Turkey, 2016*

Following the Turkish government's crackdown on NGOs, DDG moved to Antakya in Hatay province and started to localize the programme. DDG MRE was targeted at children and families that crossed the border into Syria. I like to believe that we might have saved some people from injury and death.

At the start of 2018 I was promoted to the Head of Programmes (HOP), in charge of a large DDG programme in northeastern Nigeria, based in Maiduguri in Borno state. Borno state suffers from a serious insurgency, most infamously involving Boko Haram, but also ISIS. I arrived in Maiduguri during the Harmattan, a wind heavy with dust from the Sahara which can make life uncomfortable. To reach Maiduguri, I would take a United Nations flight from Abuja which took you from normality to a part of Nigeria blighted by war. DDG had 90 national staff and 5 international staff, focusing on three main areas of work. Firstly, non-technical survey (NTS), which is a method of survey to identify land that is contaminated by unexploded ordinance (UXO). Secondly, we trained the Nigerian police Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) officers on EOD. Thirdly, we conducted MRE on a large scale across Borno. Maiduguri was under the control of the Nigeria security forces but to get to field sites in the deep field we had to take UN helicopters. These trips to the deep field were very unnerving but were essential. Boko Haram fired at, and sometimes hit, UN helicopters. Once you arrived in the deep field, the situation was desperate, with enormous Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps where people lived in terrible conditions, always under the threat of attack from the insurgents. We conducted NTS and MRE operations in the deep field as well as assisting our sister agency, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), with food distribution due to a shortage of staff. The EOD training courses for the Nigerian Police were conducted in Maiduguri at the police training barracks with range days being held at the Nigerian army camp. Nigeria was in many ways one of the defining experiences of my life. I only spent 18 months there but it felt like a decade. Memories of that time are seared in my mind and I often think of the horrific nature of the conflict there.

In 2019 I left DDG to join Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA) as their project manager for Anbar Governorate in Iraq based out of Ramadi. NPA was engaged in large scale clearance of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) left behind by ISIS. We were working around Ramadi as well as further west in Haditha. NPA operated manual as well as mechanical and dog teams searching for IEDs. I was in charge of approximately 140 national staff and 11 international staff. NPA cleared thousands of IEDs per quarter. We had teams working directly in front of building crews: as we cleared the land the builders were following behind, putting up housing for people to return to. I was in Iraq when the US assassinated General Qasem Soleimani in Baghdad in 2020, which resulted in us being cut off in Ramadi, which was a stressful time. A year in this role before COVID resulted in me having to return to the UK.



*IED Clearance Officers taking a break Iraq*



*Clearance of Deep Buried Bomb, Gaza, March 2023*

Towards the end 2020 I undertook an Explosive Ordnance Disposal 3 course, which is run every year in Skiva in northern Denmark, through a co-operation between Danish Church Aid (DCA) and the Danish Army Engineers Regiment. The course lasts for just under six weeks and is regarded as the best EOD 3 course available to civilian mine action staff. I have also been trained by the Swedish Army and Folk Bernadotte Academy (FBA), a Swedish government humanitarian training institute in Disarmament Demobilization and

Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR), both of which have numerous cross-overs with mine action.

Following my time in the mine clearance NGOs, I was offered a job with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) at their headquarters in New York at the start of 2021. While at UNMAS HQ I was the desk officer for Iraq, Palestine and Western Sahra. I soon found that I didn't enjoy working in UNMAS HQ and, after 2 years, I managed to get a position as Chief of Mine Action Programme, Palestine, for UNMAS based in Gaza. Prior to October 7th 2023, UNMAS operations were focused on the clearance of Deep Buried Aircraft Bombs (DBB) in Gaza, which is both time consuming and complex, as well as MRE including an emergency mass media MRE campaign. In the West Bank UNMAS was at capacity, building the Palestinian Mine Action Centre (PMAC) the national authority and some MRE.

On the morning of October 7th, which was a Saturday, I was drinking a cup of coffee when the first large salvos of rockets were fired out of Gaza towards Israel. At first I thought it was noise from a construction site near my flat. In May 2023 there had been what the UN calls an escalation, which is in fact a war, which I had also been in Gaza for, but it soon became apparent from the weight of the rocket fire that this confrontation was on a completely different scale. All UN international staff were called to the main UN compounds in Gaza. I was based out of the UNRWA compound in the Rimmal area of northern Gaza with approximately 25 international staff. As the day progressed there were some Israeli airstrikes but nothing too alarming. We slept in the UNRWA bunker in cramped conditions on the floor on camp beds. It wasn't until the afternoon of the second day that the bombardment really started. I was working in my office in the compound when I got the call to run to the bunker. The Israelis had informed UNRWA

that they would be bombing the district around the compound. For the next several days the bombardment was heavy and large aircraft bombs that shook the foundations of the bunker causing dust to fall were frequent. Missiles were the most terrifying, as you could hear them coming as they ripped the sky travelling overhead towards targets that bordered the compound. On the 12 October there was a lull in the bombardment. I and the UNRWA head of security officer in Gaza conducted an explosive threat assessment of the UNRWA compound. The compound was not directly struck but was heavily damaged by blast and fragmentation.

In the early morning of 13th October we were told to evacuate from Northern Gaza. As we drove South in the dark, the sky was illuminated by large airstrikes in the middle area. These halted our convoy, which was also delayed by debris and craters. On arrival in the South we established living quarters in the office of a large UNRWA warehouse complex. The warehouses quickly filled up with over 10,000 IDPs. Living conditions were harsh and while the South had been declared a safe area by the IDF, there was still regular bombardment and law and order were collapsing. During this period, I conducted 3 further explosive threat assessments of UNRWA schools (which double as shelters during war time) which had been hit by explosive ordnance. We spent nineteen days at the warehouse before moving to a large house on the coast which was under construction. Away from the noise and chaos of the logistics base I was lulled into a false sense of security until, later that day, the house and surrounding area were struck by naval gunfire. On the 2nd November I was rotated out of Gaza across the Rafa crossing: the UNMAS Head of Operations, Paddy McCabe, rotated in to replace me. We then travelled across the Sinai to Cairo.

I continue to lead the programme, which currently has 4 EOD officers in Gaza conducting convoy escort. It is estimated that the amount of rubble generated in Gaza in 4 months of war is nearly on a par with all the rubble generated by the Ukraine war. UNMAS estimated that dealing with the problem will need in the region of 50 million USD and thousands of staff to make a dent in what is likely some of the very heaviest UXO contamination seen since the second world war. We will need the support of the international community to make this happen.

JAMES HART DYKE (C85)

## PAINTING ON THE SUMMIT OF MONT BLANC IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE ARTIST GABRIEL LOPPÉ

**M**y crampons crunched into the last few feet of snow before the summit. There below me, stretching along the Aosta valley and far into the distance, the exact same deep purple triangular shadow of Mont Blanc that the artist Gabriel Loppé depicted in his summit painting. I was sure Loppé had exaggerated it or even made it up, but there it was, almost 150 years later, a direct and powerful connection in time.

In 1873 the mountain artist Gabriel Loppé, together with his friend and writer Sir Leslie Stephen, father of Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf, climbed to the summit of Mont Blanc to witness and paint the panorama at sunset. At that time, climbing Mont Blanc was a highly risky activity, with little chance of rescue if difficulties were encountered. Only one other team had ever been on the summit at sunset, where the temperature quickly plummets to dangerous levels and the treacherous way back would have to be done in the dark, so to plan and execute a summit sunset painting trip was an audacious undertaking. I first saw one of Loppé's summit paintings at John Mitchell Fine Paintings, the gallery that has represented me for over 20 years. William Mitchell, who now runs the business together with his brother James, is an experienced climber and specialist in Alpine Paintings, in particular the work of Gabriel Loppé who lived in Chamonix. As I viewed the curious painting I had absolutely no idea that I too would climb Mont Blanc to witness and paint the sunset panorama.

As I understand it, it was James Mitchell who first came up with the idea of climbing Mont Blanc and inviting an artist to paint from the summit in honour of Loppé, possibly an incidental comment as the brothers inspected the old master paintings in their Mayfair Gallery. However, the idea rooted itself in William's mind and for the next two years he spent many hours formulating a plan and a climbing team.

Although I have been wandering around and painting mountains and landscapes for many years, really since my time at Gilling and then Ampleforth under the guidance and powerful enthusiasm of the art teacher Mr Bunting, I was somewhat taken aback when William rang me to explain the project and suggest that I might be the artist to paint from the summit of Mont Blanc. Although I have done a little bit of climbing in the Alps, I can in no way say I'm an experienced climber and also, from my many painting trips to the Himalayas, I have learnt that I am susceptible to altitude sickness. Even at a modest height of 3000m I have felt unpleasantly unwell. The summit of Mont Blanc is at 4,809m. I said an enthusiastic 'yes' to William and yet doubt and worry set in as to how realistic it was for me to get to the summit.

Gabriel Loppé and Sir Leslie Stephen climbed Mont Blanc using what is known as the l'ancien passage, essentially up the north face of the mountain. This was the route pioneered by Jacques Balmat and Dr. Michel Paccard when they made the first successful summit climb in 1786. It was William's firm wish that his climbing team would take the l'ancien passage in honour of Loppé, although it is now considered dangerous due to the effects of climate change which caused the glaciers to become heavily crevassed and have the likelihood of rock fall and avalanche has much increased. Most guides will now not attempt it and William was advised not to climb the route.

Sitting right next to the main square of Chamonix is Gabriel Loppé's house, one of the very few original buildings still standing. It is now lovingly cared for by Anne Friang, a member of Loppé's family, who own the building. It is almost untouched since Loppé's death in 1913, the walls cluttered with a mixture of rusty climbing equipment and aged paintings still in their original wooden frames. Bits of faded 19C furniture and now tatty lamps are pushed against the dark timber walls. Intense light blasts through the delicately mullioned windows. One can truly sense the spirit of Loppé. In the musty cellar lies a pile of empty old wine bottles, echoing the distant dinners, no doubt full of excited discussions for future plans of climbs and exhibitions. Loppé was indeed a highly energetic and social man.

Anne Friang became an important part of the project and introduced William to the climber and guide, Christophe Profit, a legend in the French mountaineering world and one of the most experienced Mont Blanc mountain guides. A bear of a man, now in his sixties and unbelievably fit, he passionately cares for the mountains in a profoundly spiritual and aesthetic way. The idea that a climbing team intended to summit Mont Blanc, not to 'bag the mountain' but to pay homage to Loppé and to have an artist to try to capture the beauty and spirit of the mountain was of great interest to him. He was eventually to agree to lead William's team up Mont Blanc via the ancient passage, a route he was familiar with.

The climbing team consisted of ten people : Pascal Tournaire (professional photographer), Charlie Buffet (publisher and author), Jeff Colegrave (climber and mountain painting collector), Armin Fisher (mountain guide), Anthony Franklin (mountain guide), Gabriel Bellenger (great-great-great grandson of Loppé), Gaeton Boulet (friend of Gabriel), Christophe Profit (lead mountain guide), William Mitchell and myself.

In 2021, a year before climbing Mont Blanc, the team met up in Chamonix to formally launch the project at the magnificent ball room of the Majestic Hotel. The following day the team set off to climb the 4,200m Barre des Ecrins situated in the Southern Alps, as a way of preparation for Mont Blanc. Somewhat thrown in at the deep end, I found myself scrambling along a seemingly never ending arête with stomach churning views down to glaciers and rock far below on either side. It's here that I learnt to fear the quietly spoken and completely unstated climbing expression 'it's a little exposed here'.

Most importantly for me I had the chance to try painting while climbing with the team. I learnt what worked and what didn't. Now with some kind of understanding I spent the next year developing a painting 'system' to use on the summit.

On the Thursday evening 23rd June 2022, I closed the boot of my car, now full of painting and climbing equipment, and hugged my wife and young children. With a last glimpse of my family in the mirror I pulled out of our quiet tree-lined Brighton street and began the journey, first to the Italian side of the Alps to the small town of Alagna, situated just below Mont Rosa. Here I was to work on a commissioned painting and at the same time I planned to start acclimatising by trekking on high routes. Then to Chamonix, the town situated below Mont Blanc.

On Tuesday 5th July we woke to crystal blue skies. With the summit of Mont Blanc way above us, illuminated with the early morning sun, the climbing team assembled in the garden outside Loppé's ivy covered house. A quick group photograph and then we were off, Christophe leading the way, walking briskly through the streets of Chamonix. At a concreted junction of road and stream we turned to face the mountain and began the trudge up through the pine forests, the soft path weaving its way up. In a small clearing we viewed the Bossons Glacier cascading down through green forests. I made my first tentative drawings here and then on up. At the treeline, we turned to contour the grass slopes until we met the dirty edge of the melting glacier. Here the ravages of climate change are sadly very clear.

With crampons strapped on and ropes trailing between us, we threaded our way around rock encrusted lumps of ice, some resembling Goya-like monsters, twisting and slumping as if in the last moments of an agonising death. We gingerly balanced along dirty ice ridges, often peering down into the deep chasms, occasionally glimpsing patches of the last of the pure blue ice which appears so liberally in Loppe's paintings. Gurgling streams echoed up from hidden channels. These are the images and sounds of a dying glacier. Just this year 4% of the total volume of glaciers in the Alps has melted and it is predicted that within 30 years most glaciers in the Alps will have gone.

In the early evening we arrived at the Grands Mulets mountain hut, after arduous hours of threading our way around and across the maze of endless crevasses. Only Christophe's many years of experience allowed us to navigate this alien landscape. We were to discover that our party was only the second that year to make it to the hut, such is the severity of the melting of the glaciers. This year I hear that the once thriving mountain hut, often bustling with 70 or so climbers at a time, is now completely quiet and empty. The custodian has gone and a history of use extending back to the time of Loppé and before has finished.

For two days we watched the powerful wind pour over the summit. I had time to test my painting kit by making studies of the dramatic views from the Grands Mulets hut and from nearby vantage points. In the evening of the second day Christophe stood up at dinner and briefed us that the wind was predicted to drop and we were to attempt the summit the following day. A quiet panic gripped me. Two years of preparation and the nine cheery climbers sitting around me, all there to get me to the summit so I could



paint. The thought of collapsing from the altitude half-way up, as I thought was quite possible, was just too terrible. My mind filled with the somewhat surreal image of Bugs Bunny tied to the front of a train hurtling along a train track, screaming with his eyes popping out of his head. It's how I felt.

We began early. The ritual of strapping on crampons and clipping into ropes now just part of everyday life. The slow plod of one foot in front of the other began. By noon we were level with the Aiguille du Midi, on top of which is a complex of tunnels and viewing terraces for the tourists to visit by way of a massive cable car. Soon we were looking down on the Aiguille du Midi. Then into what seemed to me a lost valley, just white with the summit towering above us and the void of the black sky above that.

By teatime we were on the summit ridge.

Amazingly still no sign of the dreaded symptoms of altitude sickness. On we went. A brief stop at an emergency metal refuge, and then up over the Arête des Bosses. We had seen nobody all day. With my head down I concentrated on putting one foot in front of the other.

At 8pm we arrived, the deep purple shadow that I had thought Loppé had constructed from his imagination stretching out in front of me. All around me the landscape floating out to a far horizon, the dark void of space above me.

Landscape and landscape painting has always been a spiritual undertaking for me, reminding me of the mystery of our existence and the celebration of our brief lives. Here, on the summit that feeling is magnified many times and becomes crystal clear, the everyday stuff of life unable to clutter one's thoughts. We all hugged and unexpected tears were shed.

My easel and paint box were quickly set up.

Every aspect of my life as an artist, from my first marks with a paint brush after seeing a small painting by John Constable at the age of eight, my days wandering the Ampleforth valley with my paint box, all the subsequent projects and commissions over the many years as a professional artist now came together to make sense of this moment. Time ceased to exist for me such was my focus on these two paintings. Every mix of colour,



every touch of the brush on the panel was done with a deep and intense concentration the like of which I have never experienced. First the shadow of Mont Blanc, a quick rest, and then I turned to paint the setting sun just as Loppé had done 150 years ago. I am told it was about 25 minutes for each painting.

Suddenly the sun had gone, the temperature began to plummet and there was an urgency to get down. Headlamps switched on, we began a careful descent, all of us acutely aware that the ‘going down’ is the dangerous bit. At 3a.m. after 20 hours of almost continuous climbing, we reappeared at the Grands Mulets, welcomed by the beaming smile of the custodian and a hearty hot meal.



The following day proved no easier, the journey from the Grands Mulets to Chamonix was long and contorted, having to navigate our way back through the melting glacier, in which we got stuck for two hours, and then back down the long path through the trees, which seemed as if it would never end, down to Chamonix. We arrived in the dark completely exhausted.

The two summit paintings now hang quietly, contained in their gilded box frames, in a gleaming white central London gallery. I peer through the glass at these static and rather innocent looking paintings, bits of dribbly paint stuck onto grey 30x42cm panels made of 3mm MDF. However, they are, for me, not just a physical embodiment of a journey to the top of a mountain, but in a way a celebration of life.

# THE ROAD TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

ROBERT R C WARD (H77)

**I**t was in August 2021 that my manager instructed me to devote myself to a new project for the remaining 11 months before my retirement. This was to establish Sustainable Procurement within NSG (Nippon Sheet Glass). I originally joined Pilkington, the world leading glass company (Purchased by NSG in 2006), in 1999 as an accountant and had spent most of my career working within NSG's Global Procurement team, devoted to Reporting, Policies and Systems.

Like all terms, Sustainability means different things to different people and develops over time and understanding. The UN definition of Sustainability is based on the idea of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is summarised in the UN Global Development Goals<sup>1</sup> which cover an extremely wide field and represent a daunting prospect for any organisation in terms of compliance and prioritisation. As a global company, NSG had already made significant progress in three areas: Corporate Governance/Ethics, Health and Safety and the Environmental impact of high Energy consumption in our manufacturing sites. But as yet, it had not focussed very much on the situation beyond its gates in its supply chain. The standards followed by our suppliers had been left up to the discretion of our Procurement teams who had typically considered this to be a supplementary due diligence requirement, rather than a strategic part of procurement.

As awareness of Sustainability grew, our Procurement team studied how to tackle this challenge in a more comprehensive way. Audits of our suppliers were expanded to include assessments of health and safety, corporate governance, and risk. We then signed up to EcoVadis<sup>2</sup>, which is a fast-growing global sustainability assessment process for private and public companies.

We initially attempted simply to get as many of our suppliers assessed under EcoVadis as possible. Later, we devised more sophisticated targets based on our spend with the supplier and the EcoVadis score. This was followed by a requirement for action plans from suppliers with low scores.

This work by Procurement contributed to positive evaluations of NSG itself, by external parties such as CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project), EcoVadis and the FTSE Blossom Japan Index.

Although the efforts of members of the Procurement team were beginning to show results, I had a growing sense that we were moving too slowly and in isolation. In a typical company, Procurement is not the most popular team. Their role, if they are to be strategic, is to challenge the status quo and to introduce innovation and this can be

unsettling and seem disruptive. All too often, I had experienced the failure to convert initiatives into comprehensive results, due to a lack of appreciation and support by the rest of the company. So when I started to get a fuller understanding of what my manager was asking me to do by implementing Sustainable Procurement, I recognised an all too familiar cycle from previous Procurement Projects that had failed to deliver their true potential.

I then had a eureka moment. Sustainable Procurement should not be the sole responsibility of Procurement, but of all those involved in the supply chain. And this meant practically everyone in the company and of course our suppliers. With a certain amount of trepidation, I came back to my manager and said something along the lines of: “I know that you described this to me as a Procurement Project, but I think if we are to do this properly, we are going to have to open it up to a wide range of key users across the company”. I was aware that this would make the project much harder to manage with a wider scope and possible loss of control. But, to his credit, my manager took this quite calmly - probably because he was already ahead of me and was just waiting for me to figure this out. At this point I took a deep breath as I realised how critical the first stage of wider communication was going to be. As I have already mentioned, Sustainability issues were generally understood to be the job of Procurement and part of the supplier evaluation process that continued after the award of a contract.

I summarised the challenge as follows:

- Who were the stakeholders for Sustainable Procurement in our company?
- How to make them understand that this was a challenge that affected most of the company and needed the buy-in and active participation of all management?
- The output of sustainable procurement was likely to mean that the criteria for choosing suppliers and awarding contracts would expand beyond price and quality. The test of success would come when we successfully moved away from short term cost to longer term sustainable values, meaning that some cherished suppliers would inevitably be substituted with others. This couldn't be a case of Procurement ordaining, “do this, because it is good for you and the company, even if you do not understand why”. This approach had usually failed in the past.
- How wide should the scope be? How can we make sure that all the vital issues are covered, but that real results are achievable within an acceptable time frame?
- I was also aware that time was running out fast, with pressures coming from legislation, customers and the constant reminder that I was due to retire within less than a year. I had until then to set up a model with sufficient structure so as to continue after my departure.

I set about immersing myself in the subject, to learn as much as I could in the fastest

time. I contacted the NSG Sustainability team, a small number of colleagues who were already working with Procurement on a number of issues such as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and sustainability assessments.

I also joined a professional working group made up of sustainability experts and people like me trying to implement Sustainable Procurement in their own companies. This helped me get a feel of how others were approaching the challenge. Slowly, I learnt that there was no definitive list of steps to follow, but that one had to start somewhere and each company had to prioritise, as their situation and business sector dictated.

I contacted several consultants to get a feel for what help was out there so we could make progress more quickly. Most advocated the traditional approach, often used by consultants. This typically means winning over the executive team with an aggressive pitch that lists some significant wonders that can be achieved in a short timeframe if only the executive team give them their mandate to implement their plan. Then the consultants, with this backing from the top, steamroll the implementation with little flexibility. I quickly dismissed this and concentrated my attention towards a small group that specialised on sustainability issues and who promoted a collaborative approach. This was Action Sustainability<sup>3</sup>, see more later.

I also took on a successor to myself so that the project would not grind to a halt when I left. I was fortunate to find the ideal candidate within Procurement who had a passion for the topic and was immediately available. From then onwards, Jarek and I worked side by side.

After 5 months I felt we were ready to start to talk to people within NSG. We started by individually interviewing 20 to 30 managers within the company. This included representatives from each business line and region. We outlined what we had been doing so far in the supply chain in response to:

- Measuring and reducing GHG emissions
- Meeting the Group's published sustainability targets<sup>4</sup>.
- Meeting the demands of legislation like the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act/UK Bribery Act/Conflict Minerals regulations
- Meeting the requests from our customers for information on our products
- Supply chain assessments from our banks
- Satisfying the expectations of our own employees

We explained that unless we undertook a more comprehensive approach as a company, we were in danger of failing to keep up, as more progress towards targets and greater due diligence was required. We were overwhelmed with the positive response that we received from managers usually known for their hard-nosed approaches. They told us we should be doing this not because it was being forced upon us, but because it was the right thing to do. We summarised these early responses and presented a proposal to the

NSG Executive for the formation of a Supply Chain Sustainability Committee made up of stakeholders from every business, function and region.

This proposal was accepted and the first meeting of the new committee met in April 2022. It soon became clear to the committee that we would make more progress if NSG followed an established process. After some initial hesitation, the committee agreed to engage Action Sustainability to help NSG to follow the ISO 204005. standard in Sustainable Procurement. Unlike most ISO standards this is not an assessment to be passed but it outlines a process for achieving Sustainable Procurement. Once the committee were reassured that this standard would be a useful guide rather than another rod for their backs, we began to move faster.

Action Sustainability set to work reviewing NSG's existing policies and performed a peer review against other similar companies. They interviewed 30 key stakeholders from all areas of the company and ran a number of workshops. One of the key factors in the success of this process was the careful preparation and repeated individual communication with all those involved. This meant that Jarek and I would cover the same presentation up to 30 times in a week. We made sure that we were not taking people for granted and that their ideas and concerns were genuinely considered.

As output from this first phase, we identified and agreed the following 8 key sustainability issues for the NSG supply chain and how the company intended to work with its suppliers to address them.

### **1. Reducing greenhouse gases (GHG)**

NSG has set targets to reduce GHG emissions by 30% by 2030 and be carbon neutral by 2050. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol<sup>6</sup>. has defined the Scoping designation<sup>7</sup>:

- Scope 1 – Direct emission by business operators (e.g. use of natural gas in glass furnaces)
- Scope 2 - Indirect emissions by consumption of energy sources (e.g. purchased electricity used in the manufacturing process)
- Scope 3 – supply chain emissions including both upstream and downstream i.e. what NSG suppliers and customers emit under Scopes 1,2 & 3 relating to NSG's supplies and sold products

In NSG's case the majority of the Scope 3 emissions are to be found in the upstream supply chain, i.e. with its suppliers and their suppliers.

The company is already focussing on Scope 1 and Scope 2, but it is clear that without an additional focus on Scope 3 the company cannot expect to meet its targets. NSG needs its suppliers to have a clear understanding of their Scope 1 and 2 emissions and to be working towards an understanding of their Scope 3 emissions.

## **2. Protecting the environment**

This concerns reducing pollution to the air, water and land, and protecting and improving biodiversity. This is to build on the work already being done by NSG to request suppliers to become certified under ISO 14001 (Environmental Management). For NSG this is not a tick box exercise to defend itself against litigation. NSG wants to understand the risks more clearly, proactively act in areas of concern and where possible, support suppliers to improve/avoid the impact on the environment.

## **3. Protecting labour and human rights**

NSG Procurement already lays out its values and the expectations from its suppliers in its Supplier Code of Conduct. Great concern was expressed in our workshops that there might be areas of violation passing unnoticed and that more work needed to be done to gain confidence that NSG was not inadvertently supporting oppression in its supply chain. As a result, suppliers in identified high risk areas will be required to report items such as: number of reported incidents, % of employees paid a living wage, % employees on zero-hour contracts, number of work accidents etc.

## **4. Reducing waste**

NSG strives to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and to recycle as much of its glass as possible. However, it was recognised that little has been done to study the waste generated in the supply chain. Therefore, NSG intends to work with its suppliers in the relevant high-risk areas to quantify such items as

- % reused and recycled content of goods and materials supplied.
- Tonnes of single use plastic supplied.
- Tonnes of waste generated.
- % waste diverted from landfill.

## **5. Conserving water**

NSG is committed to using water efficiently as possible, preserving water quality and ensuring water access to local communities. But like the other issues in this list, most attention has hitherto been directed to NSG's own production plants and the impact in the rest of the supply chain was largely unknown. Therefore, NSG would start asking its suppliers to report on certain items such as freshwater consumption, amount of water recycled, quality of wastewater produced and where water is extracted from high water stress areas.

## **6. Improving Supply Chain Transparency**

NSG has an established process for evaluating and monitoring its suppliers for all types of supply and reputational risk. However, there is recognition that this is limited in its efficacy since the process cannot handle quickly changing situations and does not include the second, third or all levels of the supply chain. We propose to tackle this with an enlightened approach, that recognises that supply chain transparency is the shared

concern of all companies involved, and to work with our suppliers towards a set of common goals. These include:

- Sharing of risk registers and risk mitigation plans.
- Spreading the take up of EcoVadis down the supply chain and sharing the results.
- Reporting the % visibility of tier 1 and high-risk tier 2 suppliers.

## **7. Supporting diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI)**

During the workshops we received a strong message from the participants that this was something of great importance. The desire is to move beyond generalised statements that promote good intentions but hold little substance. This is especially challenging when the scope and meaning of DEI is still only evolving. But as a start, NSG intends to ask its suppliers to report on items such as:

- % employees trained in diversity, equality and inclusion.
- Workforce satisfaction survey results.
- % of employees from under-represented backgrounds.
- Gender pay-gap.

## **8. Supporting communities**

All our sustainability policies and goals relate to being a responsible neighbour to the communities in which we operate. In some localities NSG Group represents the largest employer, giving it a significant opportunity to make a positive impact on people's lives and close gaps in support which may exist. Therefore, NSG intends to look at metrics such as % spend with small and medium enterprises, % spend with local suppliers and what impact supplying NSG has on local communities.

Before I could catch my breath, it was July 2022 and I exchanged my desk at NSG for a bicycle, touring the North of Ireland from Galway to Dublin. It would have been the ultimate irony if our project had turned out to be unsustainable, but I am delighted to watch from the side-lines, as Jarek is leading the project into its second phase. But that is his story to tell.

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FR WULSTAN PETERBURS OSB

## A MARIAN PRAYER GARDEN

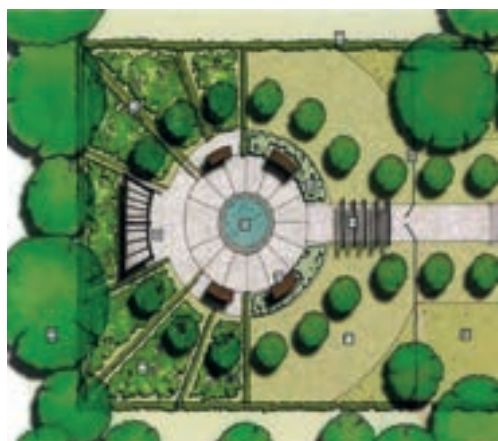
About two years ago, a great friend of the monastic community said that she would like to make it possible for Ampleforth to have a Marian Prayer Garden within its grounds. Inspired by a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which began whilst she was at school, this benefactor wanted to offer a place of prayer and devotion to Our Lady, accessible to all who come to Ampleforth — monks, visitors, retreat guests,



and students at the neighbouring College. So began a period of design and discernment to bring this project to fruition. It has been a delight to work in partnership to develop the ideas for this space, to see an idea discussed over lunch begin to turn into concrete plans and a final design. Our eyes have remained firmly fixed on Our Lady, never losing sight of how she leads us closer to her Son and how this garden can inspire others in this way. Once complete, the Marian Garden will provide a tranquil space for reflection and contemplation. Situated below the Memorial Garden, a central path, lined by an avenue of cherry trees, will lead visitors through an informal garden towards statue of the Virgin Mary that will come into view, located at the head of the garden. There will be a central courtyard, with seating, semi-enclosed for peace and privacy, orientated towards

the statue of Our Lady. We know that this will become a place of prayer, peace, and contemplation, inspiring a deeper devotion to Our Lady, Mother of Hope, to whom the garden will be dedicated.

We are extremely grateful for the support and vision of our benefactor in enabling this to be available to all who visit Ampleforth, and we look forward to welcoming you all here to enjoy and pray in this space once it is complete.



# AN AMPLEFORTH OBLATE

MARTHA BYRNE HILL

Oblates are little known outside monastic circles and even there, often little better. My own experience of a long association with Ampleforth since my mid-twenties only revealed their existence more than two decades later.

St Benedict makes provision for Oblates in Chapter 59 of the Rule of St Benedict (the Rule). These Oblates were boys offered to the monastery by their parents. This practice is defunct. Oblates are now adults, single, married or widowed, or secular priests, who offer themselves to a specific monastery. There is evidence, according to St Gregory, of St Benedict receiving people as early as his Subiaco days, before he founded his monastery at Monte Cassino in 530 A.D. By the 9th century people were seeking confraternity with monasteries and being called ‘confratres’. It was not until the 11th century that the term ‘Oblate’ became apparent as the classification for a lay man or woman, or diocesan priest, who, at its simplest, made a promise to a specific monastic community to live his or her life seeking Christ in the spirit and tradition of the Rule, so far as the circumstances of his or her life permitted. Oblates of the 21st century continue to seek Christ in the spirit and tradition of the Rule.

St William, Abbot of Hirschau, who died in 1091, established specific rules for Interns or Regular Oblates who lived in the monastery but not under vows, and Externs or Secular Oblates. These Externs, who are the forebears of most of today’s Oblates, promised obedience and sometimes perfect chastity, as well as making over a whole or part of their possessions either immediately or by way of legacy. The Interns have largely disappeared. In several respects the expectations of contemporary Oblates have become considerably less onerous. The centuries after St William saw a wide embrace of Benedictine spirituality regularised further by St Frances of Rome in the 15th century, and a succession of Popes in the late 19th and early 20th Century. Currently there are about 22,000 Benedictine Oblates worldwide. I and one other Oblate of Ampleforth met about 150 of those 22,000 in Rome at the 5th World Congress of Benedictine Oblates in September, 2023. They had come from 25 different countries across the Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe and 89 different monasteries. Whilst our formation varies, the essential characteristics are entirely recognisable, unsurprising given that we are all Benedictines. Notable was the fact that many Oblates of African monasteries are entitled after their Oblation to wear a habit anywhere, not simply within the confines of the Abbey. This is not a practice which I would welcome!

Formation is, I have been helped to see, a process of external input, which is the responsibility of one’s monastic community and given a relatively light touch at Ampleforth, and internal formation, which is one’s own responsibility. The aim of formation is to enable closer relationship with Jesus Christ with a view to becoming

more like Christ. Why? It is the essence of our human nature. Living in defiance of our nature will prevent development to our full potential for our own good and the good of all creation in thanksgiving to and praise of God. Abbot Robert Igo OSB has described the process of formation as one of transformation. And this transformation, a life's work, an Oblate hopes to achieve in 'the school of the Lord's Service' (Prologue to the Rule:45) - the monastery - through his or her association with that monastery.

Formation is, however, a difficult word for many with its implication of the external imposition of restriction that appears to limit freedom. It has a very different, even paradoxical sense for an Oblate, indeed any Christian. I understand the process of formation as the exercise of my free will, that great gift of a loving God, to choose transformation and ultimately conformation, by God's grace. It is the only path which will enable me to become the person I really am, the one I was created to be. It is in that wholeness or 'holiness' of being that I will not only experience a 'fulness of life in your (God's) presence' (Psalm 15:11) but also real, life-giving freedom. Is that not what each of us really seeks? It is the response to the question posed in the Prologue to the Rule: "Who here yearns for life?" I do. The second time I have made that declaration with a firm intention of lifelong commitment. The first was a vow, the second, a promise.

My own experience of becoming an Oblate, a protracted process over many years, stemmed from a growing sense of dissatisfaction, perhaps better, restlessness, despite great happiness in family life (I have now been married for 29 years and have four adult children). Simply put, a sense that something was missing. St Augustine famously writes in his Confessions, 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You'. Or, as T S Eliot puts it in Little Gidding: "We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time". That place is God as I am reminded every Sunday at Vespers in the words 'ex utero ante luciferum genui te' ('from the womb before the dawn I begot you') (Psalm 109:3b).

My restlessness coincided with moving to North Yorkshire, close to Ampleforth, 20 years into our marriage. Proximity enabled frequent attendance at Mass and a growing attraction to singing the Divine Office. I had been saying the Divine Office by then for more than two decades and my husband and I have prayed Compline every night we have been together since the beginning of our marriage. Singing with the monastic community was, and remains, a tremendous blessing. It is a phrase often used by Oblates about their monasteries and it is as true for me as for many others: I felt I had come home. And I long to be back when I am away. Bishop Erik Varden OCSO talked in a recent interview about the difference between desire and longing as he understands it from the teaching of St Athanasius; in summary, desire originates with us and longing externally, in this case, with God. My longing, manifested initially as restlessness, drew me to Ampleforth.

It is important to emphasise that Oblates are not monks (or nuns); we rightly have no place within the enclosure of the monastery, reserved for those who live within it, but we do have a place within the community more broadly. We are an external part of it but closely bound to it. When we make our Oblation during the celebration of a Conventual Mass, the document we sign, counter-signed by the Abbot and Oblate Director, is placed on the Altar. It remains with the documents of the monastery in perpetuity and upon my death, my copy of that document should be returned to Ampleforth. We are now, as Abbot Robert so beautifully suggested to the two of us who went to Rome, the hands of the monastery in the world.

If that is what we are, what is expected of us as Ampleforth Oblates? That question might usefully be answered in two distinct parts. These might be seen as the internal and external obligations and expectations or the private and public-facing obligations and expectations. The latter has a missionary dimension. I see the private or internal obligations as the ones which nourish the external or public-facing ones.

The internal or private obligations and expectations will, necessarily vary between Oblates depending upon the circumstances of their lives. However, regular prayer at points during the day, *Lectio Divina* and praying for the monastic community will be common to all of us on a consistent daily basis. Many of us will try to attend at least one annual retreat at Ampleforth to strengthen fraternity; like any relationship, some investment of time is required to build a fruitful relationship between the monastic community and other Oblates. Some Oblates will be able to offer some kind of service to the monastery which can take myriad forms. Many Oblates will be closely involved in the life of their parish.

The external or public-facing obligations are more challenging. Do Oblates have a mission aligned to or distinct from that of the monastic community at Ampleforth or a combination of both? I cannot answer that definitively and it has at least two parts for me. The Abbot Primate was emphatic at the Congress that the primary obligation or mission of Oblates is to be a local ministry of hospitality and reconciliation. Hospitality is of course a central Benedictine charism. This was echoed by the Pope in his audience with those Benedictine Oblates who were at the Congress when he spoke about Oblates being ‘models of welcome’. The Pope has also spoken during the pandemic of the Sacrament of Reconciliation – Confession – as the Sacrament of Joy. I was struck then by its description as such and remain so. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is to be once more ‘at one’ with God. More generally, reconciliation with another person is to be at one with each other. What can be more joyful than to be reconciled? Is it not when we are at one with each other and God that we flourish?

It seems to me that reconciliation is a central part of being hospitable; I do not welcome you, let alone God, if I am at odds with you, whether consciously – holding a grudge, say - or unconsciously by way of indifference or lack of attention. It is an interior disposition which leads to charity (love). It is a noble aspiration but somewhat problematic in the

execution for most of us, or at least on a consistent basis. St Paul writes: 'For though the will to do what is good is in me, the performance is not, with the result that instead of doing the good things I want to do, I carry out the sinful things I do not want'. (Romans 7:18-19). I am certain that a hospitable disposition leads to an expansion of the heart and both a desire, originating within us but prompted by God, and a longing, originating in God, to 'run the way of God's commandments in a sweetness of love' (Prologue to the Rule:49). Ultimately desire and longing become aligned so that the inclination (desire) to resist fracturing unity is strengthened and love (longing for God) can prompt our actions more easily, generously and regularly.

The second part of the answer to the external or public-facing obligations is I think more concerned with an Oblate's individual gifts, talents and/or charisms. If our primary mission or vocation is to seek God, then our approach should be dictated by the gifts, talents and/or charisms we have been given. We all have them whether we recognise and use them or not. St John Henry Newman wrote: 'God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next'. For some their mission is obvious, for most of us I suspect it is not. I have found that a good starting point in that search is to try to respond to the circumstances in which I find myself - being a wife, a mother, a parishioner, a governor of Ampleforth College, an Oblate, etc - as well as I can and be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. And to be patient and attentive. I am most likely to hear the Holy Spirit in the context of a phrase from a psalm during the Divine Office or Lectio but quite often too in wise counsel from those who know me well.

St Benedict's longest chapter in the Rule is concerned with humility. Whole books have been devoted to the subject - I recommend 'Truthful Living' by Michael Casey OCSO - and I cannot add meaningfully to the scholarship. At this point in my life, I understand humility as coming to a point of accepting and loving myself as I am, and others as they are, without ascribing a weighted - positive or negative - value to my own attributes or those of others. I have a long way to go.

That pattern of regularity of prayer set out in the Rule is as important for an Oblate as it is for the monastic. It orientates our focus to God in thanksgiving and praise. Furthermore, for me it straddles both the monastic vow of *conversatio morum* (perhaps most helpfully translated as conversion to monastic life) and stability. My life is primarily concerned with the community life of a family, not a monastic community, but I need the regularity of prayer both alone and in community, whether in person in the Abbey church or listening via live streaming, in both a physical place but also as a stabilising practice to become more attuned to Christ, the business of any Christian life whatever its particularities. Inscribed inside my wedding ring are the words 'Better two than one alone' (Ecclesiastes 4:9), cheekily re-interpreted by our best man on the Dualit toaster he gave us as a wedding present, still in use, as 'Better two slices than one alone'! Equally

true of people and toast. I know that I need the solidarity of praying with others at least some of the time as I lack the discipline to go it alone; not for me eremitic austerities.

Oblates do not make a promise of stability, *conversatio morum* and obedience directly echoing monastic vows but one of 'renewal of life'. However, I doubt the application of the three monastic vows in some form is far from the minds and hearts of many Oblates insofar as they translate into our individual lives. Obedience, the third monastic vow, deserves a few words from an Oblate perspective, or mine at least. Obedience is much less obvious for an Oblate than it is for the monastic community. Oblates cannot be accountable to an Abbot in the same way as a monk or nun must except in the listening and hearing dimension. 'Listen' is the first word of the Rule and in accepting the Abbot as representing Christ in the monastery, I would be errant not to listen to his advice; listening is the intentional part of hearing which can happen unintentionally, without either effort or inclination. The radio might be within earshot but I may not in fact choose to listen to it. It is simply aural wallpaper. As an Oblate and Christian my obligation is to be disciplined about listening primarily to Christ, being obedient to him in the sense of acting accordingly. Christian obedience prompts action. It is, as St James writes, about 'doing as the word tells you...not listening and then forgetting, but actively putting it into practice' (James 1:22, 25). Christ is revealed to me principally through Scripture but also in others. That obedience draws me closer into the formation/transformation process I spoke of earlier. St John writes that 'to love is to live according to his commandments: this is the commandment which you have heard since the beginning, to live a life of love' (2 John: 6). Learning to live that life of love is found in Christ, the living Word who is Love: 'If you make my word your home, then will you be my disciples, you will come to know the truth and the truth will set you free.' (John 8:31-32). I came upon these words in one of my earliest encounters with *Lectio Divina* in 1992. I return to them often.

To return very briefly to mission, a consequence of Oblation for me is that I am increasingly drawn to a wider involvement in the universal church. I expected to become more inward looking and monastery focused but quite the opposite has been the case. But it makes a sort of sense; Oblates are individually and collectively part of the Body of Christ, the Church, each and every one of whom has a part of equal value. St Paul writes: 'God put all the separate parts into the body on purpose. If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body?' (1 Cor 12:18-19). Perhaps it is just a case of growing older and realising that I am quite simply 'better together'. People and toast again. Where this realisation will lead me has yet to be revealed. I rejoiced in the universality of the church at the Congress as I unfailingly do on pilgrimage in Lourdes.

Another aspect of the Oblate mission is that of 'evangelical holiness', which is a phrase Pope John Paul II used to describe the small acts of kindness, thoughtfulness, selflessness and so forth that make holy the daily life of all people and which speaks the quiet language of God amidst the brazen dialect of individualism.

I have been given a life imbued with a clear sense of direction in which I fail often but get up again, sure of the promise that Christ is with me always, as he makes clear at the end of the Gospel of St Matthew. I can and do, mostly, ‘hope in him, hold firm and take heart’ (Psalm 26:14). It is a life in which I experience great joy even amidst periods of profound difficulty. This joy has been both a revelation of the Oblate life and a consolation of immeasurable worth. The Ampleforth Abbey website invites all to ‘come and see.’ (John 1:39). ‘Come and see’ so that he may ‘enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you’ (Eph.1:18).

REVIEW BY HUGH CODRINGTON OF  
**FORD OF THE SORREL BY LUCY SAGGERS**  
[BLUECOAT PRESS, 180PP. £32]

For most readers of *The Journal*, the word Ampleforth conjures up images of the Monastery and the College dominated by the Abbey Church and the sweeping vista across the valley towards and beyond the playing fields. Lucy Saggars' book is concerned with a much older Ampleforth, the village itself, mentioned in Domesday Book by its Anglo-Saxon name 'Ampreforde' – the Ford of the Sorrel. It is a coffee table book of evocative black and white photographs, beautifully bound and printed. The images range in scope from landscapes taken in all seasons, to informal portraits of villagers captured going about their daily lives and to close-ups of intriguing details.

Many of the landscapes are of the village itself captured from either the north or the west where the best views are to be had. The village is placed in the context of the hills and the fields that surround it. Three pictures are particularly noteworthy; the view from 'Knoll Hill over West End', 'Old Mill Dam' and 'Thorpe Lane by the southern parish boundary'. In these, Lucy's eye for composition is acute, the subtle expression of texture and her skilful contrast of light and shade are masterful.

There is a strong documentary feel to the photographs of the villagers. Typically, there is a series of images of a particular person or group going about their business. Lucy's neighbours, Herbert and Betty Fox, feature prominently in the early pages. Not surprisingly, there are illustrations of agricultural activity, among them haymaking, lambing, sheep shearing, mole catching and dry stone walling. There is a whimsical feel about the shots of Jeffrey Todd rearing poultry. In contrast, we see the almost industrial setting of the Wall family at work in their sawmill and, more intimately, John Thompson and his family preparing a coffin. The village children also have a place in the book: the very young in the day care centre, the older ones in the playground or performing in a nativity play. The series featuring Jean Thompson is, perhaps, a highlight given that she was born in the village in 1923 and, as I write, is still going strong.

These images illustrate three aspects of Lucy's skill as a photographer. First is her technical proficiency. She takes her photographs handheld – there's no tripod or additional lighting. She uses the available light and she does so with great competence, particularly when working indoors in houses with small windows. More importantly, she evidently has the knack of putting her subjects at ease, for there is an intimacy which can only be captured when there is genuine warmth between photographer and subject. Finally, she has a canny eye for detail. The book is punctuated with charming close ups; a vase of flowers, a teacup with a slice of cake, a handwritten recipe, an historic jug.

This is a book compiled with evident love for the village and its people. At its very heart is the ford of the title. Almost all the photographs are taken within a short walk of the

ford itself, which is hardly surprising when you know that Lucy herself lives at Ford End. In the foreword to the book Ian McMillan, the poet and broadcaster, says ‘In these photographs Ampleforth is a prism through which we can view many possibilities. Lucy has captured a place that moves to the ancient and unspoken rhythms of sunrise and sunset, of birth and death and the unending dance of seasons.’

For those of you who still prefer a view of the Abbey there is one in the book – it forms the backdrop of the Ampleforth Village cricket team playing on the Colts ground. Perhaps next time you visit, make your way from the Abbey to the White Swan for refreshment. Take a look at the pictures on the wall in the pub. Some of them are photos from this book, beautifully printed and framed. Then travel westwards down the hill to the lowest point – the Ford of the Sorrel, the ancient heart of Ampleforth.

*Hugh Codrington taught in the College from 1987 to 2015 and was Housemaster of St Hugh's from 2003 to 2012.*

REVIEW BY PHILIP MARSDEN (J74) OF  
**VALUE(S) BY MARK CARNEY**  
(WILLIAM COLLINS)

**M**ark Carney's *Value(s)* takes readers on a thoughtful journey that combines spiritual insights with a down-to-earth approach to address the pressing issues of our time. The book invites us to reflect on the values that underpin our economic and social systems, urging us to consider a more sustainable and inclusive approach to the future. Carney, known for his background in finance and economics, brings a unique perspective by intertwining spiritual and practical wisdom. He challenges the prevailing economic paradigms that prioritize short-term gains over long-term sustainability. Instead, he advocates a values-based system that considers the well-being of both people and the planet. At the heart of Carney's message is the recognition that our current economic models are insufficient for the challenges we face. He delves into the spiritual realm by questioning the values that guide our decisions and actions. Drawing from various spiritual traditions, he emphasizes the importance of interconnectedness, compassion, and a deeper understanding of our purpose in the world.

The book is a call to reassess our priorities and redefine success beyond mere financial metrics. Carney suggests that a shift in values is not only morally right but also economically beneficial. By incorporating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into decision-making, businesses can foster resilience and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable global economy. Carney doesn't shy away from addressing the systemic issues that perpetuate inequality and environmental degradation. His down-to-earth analysis dissects the flaws in our current systems, highlighting the need for systemic change. He argues that governments, businesses, and individuals must work collaboratively to create a future that prioritizes the well-being of people and the planet. The author draws inspiration from spiritual teachings to emphasize the interconnectedness of all living things. He argues that a values-driven approach is not just a moral imperative but a pragmatic necessity for the survival of our species. Carney's exploration of spiritual concepts provides a framework for understanding our place in the world and the responsibilities that come with it.

One of the strengths of *Value(s)* lies in Carney's ability to bridge the gap between the ethereal and the tangible. He provides concrete examples of companies and governments that have successfully integrated values into their decision-making processes. From sustainable business practices to innovative policies, Carney showcases real-world solutions that align with the principles he advocates. The book also serves as a guide for individuals seeking to align their personal values with their actions. Carney encourages readers to reflect on their own values and consider how they can contribute to positive change in their communities and beyond. This personal dimension adds depth to the narrative, making the book not just a theoretical exploration but a practical guide for transformation.

While Value(s) is a compelling read, it's not without its challenges. Some readers may find the blend of spirituality and economics unconventional, and the depth of spiritual exploration may vary based on individual beliefs. However, Carney's intention is not to prescribe a specific spiritual path but to highlight universal principles that can guide us towards a more sustainable and compassionate future. In conclusion, Mark Carney's Value(s) offers a refreshing perspective that combines spiritual wisdom with practical insights. It challenges us to re-evaluate the values that drive our decisions and advocates a more holistic approach to economics and life. By weaving together spirituality and down-to-earth pragmatism, Carney presents a compelling case for building a future that values the well-being of people and the planet above all else.

*Philip Marsden (J74) MBE was Chairman of the Board of Regents of St Benet's Hall and is a board member of the Cardinal Hume Centre as well as the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. He has just been appointed Chair of the MCC Foundation, the charitable arm of the MCC that makes cricket possible for young people all over the world. He founded Ridgeway Partners, a top-level board search firm, in 2004 and twelve years later funded the purchase of Ridgeway by his employees.*

# FR ADRIAN CONVERY OSB

BORN 16 AUG 1931, DIED 8 FEB 2024, AGED 92



Over the course of his 75 years as a monk, Fr Adrian fulfilled a host of positions in the monastery and beyond, which required kindness, sympathy and perception. He loved a good argument and his disclaimer, “I’m only a simple monk”, was his way of refusing to admit defeat as he clung obstinately to his own (usually conservative) point of view. Opponents were aware that they would soon be confronted with evidence culled from an armoury of reference works, stacked within reach of his desk and frequently consulted. His own assessments and opinions could be devastatingly sharp, seldom inaccurate, and never intended to harm. They were often backed up by a fund of stories, sayings and quotations, recounted with verve and laughter, and reinforced by a seemingly endless gallery of photographs.

Peter Convery, twinned with his beloved sister, Barbara, to whom he remained touchingly close all their lives, was born into a devoted Catholic family in Newcastle, and more particularly Gosforth, of which he remained a proud citizen till the end of his life. After preliminary schooling with the Sisters of La Sagesse he already felt drawn to the priesthood, and at the age of ten spent a year at the nearby priestly seminary of Ushaw before transferring to the Prep School of Gilling Castle. There was only one more wobble before Solemn Profession, in the direction of the Dominicans, steadied by another devoted Novocastrian, Basil Hume.

Throughout his life – for all his interests remained steady - many of his activities and interests were based on music. He was a competent fiddler, enjoying both orchestral and chamber music roles, either on violin or (later) on viola until he judged that age prevented him producing the quality of music he demanded. Then he took refuge in his vast library of tapes of classical music, perseveringly given to him by his many close friends and admirers, listening to them appreciatively and critically hour after hour, as many people read books, sharing favourite recordings with any who cared to share his enjoyment. For the community this bore fruit in his ten years of service as choirmaster in the decade when the Church and monastic liturgy was being transformed as a result of Vatican II, and by his sage advice, frequently sought thereafter. His music for the Vigils of the Dead is particularly well-loved and particularly prayerful.

The quality which is most missed by his own community and – to judge from a host of letters of condolence – by many others is companionship. Of course, he served in many roles in the school apostolate for well over thirty years, teaching French (the subject of his Oxford degree, though his preference for classical literature and etymology was more prominent), longtime housemaster of St Oswald's, eventually charged with moving from the gently undulating floors of Fr Bolton's Old House (propped up for its final quarter-century by a web of wooden buttresses) to the spanking new (but short-lived) quarters of Nevill House. Finally, he rose to be Headmaster of Gilling Castle, where for seven years as Chatelain he revelled in the tradition of the building and won the affection of so many pupils.

His departure from Gilling opened to him a new apostolate, as bishop's Vicar for Religious in the diocese of Middlesbrough, tirelessly driving round a host of religious communities to advise, consult with superiors and other individuals and hear Confessions. His last visit to Stanbrook, now only a few miles from the Abbey, occurred only a few days before his death. In his own monastery he twice fulfilled for a few years the duties of Junior Master, again accompanying younger monks during their period of formation. It amused him greatly that in this capacity he directed several monks who would later become his senior colleagues and even superiors. The same gift for companionship earned him for a number of years the posts of Guestmaster, first for the school and finally for the monastery. Between the two he played a somewhat similar and selfless role in Oxford as chaplain to St Benet's Hall during a slightly tense period of change.

Advancing into his tenth decade of life he suffered a minor stroke on 6th November, 2022, and moved patiently into the monastic infirmary, continuing to emerge whenever possible (latterly on a walking-frame) for any special event of liturgy or friendship. He never missed the opportunity to enliven a special meal, despite an increasing amount of pain from his legs. On 8th February, 2024, he had his normal cup of coffee at 6.55, but an hour later was found collapsed on the floor. He seems to have died while putting on his monastic habit to continue the monastic Office – just as he had often recently said he would prefer, causing the minimum of trouble and disturbance to others.

# FR JONATHAN COTTON OSB

BORN 9 MAY 1943, DIED 17 JAN 2024, AGED 80



Fr Jonathan was born in Simla in India and came to Ampleforth via St Martin's prep school in Nawton. He was a founder member of the new St Hugh's House which, for the first two years, was in a prefab wooden building within the classroom quadrangle, under Fr Benedict Webb. From an early age he had wanted to be a priest and he joined the monastery at the age of 18. He was one of five to join from his year in St Hugh's, in an unusually large entry of 16 novices. Fr William Morland and Fr Felix Stephens were the other two from St Hugh's among the eight who persevered.

He read History at St Benet's and taught it for ten years in the school and then left for the parishes only returning at the end of his life. He was ordained priest in 1971.

Fr Jonathan will be remembered as a great pastor serving at Ampleforth, Warrington and Bamber Bridge before going to Leyland where he was parish priest for 30 years.

Parish work was his priority but he took care to nourish it by all sorts of in-service training and involvement in different religious associations, both locally and abroad. In 1981, he was the National Co-ordinator for Youth at the International Eucharistic Congress in Lourdes.

He was also active in the Focolare movement, which he said enabled him to be a better monk. He served on its Council for many years attending events linked with the movement world-wide and the annual Mariapolis regularly which, in 2017, was at Ampleforth. He translated a number of their publications from Italian.

He was Dean of the Leyland Deanery in Liverpool Archdiocese for 21 years and also set up a group of about 20 male Religious in the North West who met every month or two for a meal and Lectio. For nine years he chaired the Association for Building Bridges Churches, helping local church communities engage productively within their local wider community. He was also very active in the ecumenical movement, both locally and internationally. And he was well-respected by all the local political parties.

He wanted others to encounter the living Lord. This was the energy that fuelled all his pastoral activity. He wanted the lost, the hopeless, the anxious and the weary to know that

God has a Word that can change everything. Fr Jonathan gave people the perspective to see God present, active and victorious, especially in situations that seemed life denying. He will be remembered as someone who was friendly to everyone. He had a great belief in the providence of God. 'God will provide' he used to say. He was very approachable and found time to listen to all who wished to talk to him.

In 2022, after 30 years as Parish Priest at Leyland he was recalled to the Abbey as the parish was handed over to the Archdiocese. He embarked on a sabbatical with the Focolare at their community in Loppiano in Italy where he made many new friends. But after ten months he fell ill and returned to the Monastery Infirmary and pancreatic cancer was diagnosed, from which he died six months later.

We shall all remember Fr Jonathan as a renowned pastor and teacher of the faith. We commend him into the hands of his loving Creator whom he served so well in this life and from whom he is not separated in the next.

May he indeed rest in peace and rise in glory.

# JEFF HALL 1940 – 2023

## HUNTSMAN OF THE AMPLEFORTH BEAGLES

Before Jeff came to Ampleforth in 1975 he was well known in the hunting world as an Otterhounds huntsman who had won the Horse and Hound horn blowing competition twice running - which perhaps led the foxhunting fraternity the following year to invite him to judge instead of competing.

Jeff was only the third full-time Huntsman at Ampleforth during what was to become a period of seventy-nine years. Continuity and stability had produced a pack of hounds that was universally admired. In his first season he won several prizes at Peterborough Hound Show including the Champion Doghound Redcap '73.

Jeff and Lyn had married in 1970 - so after twelve years of Jeff getting soaking wet with otterhounds, the prospect of hunting on predominantly dry land must have been a relief. They had a College house near Park House Farm and Lyn often invited boys in for a cup of tea and a chat if they were finding things a bit hard and needed some encouragement. She also produced the hunt stockings and sweaters for the boys who had earned them.

During his nineteen seasons at Ampleforth Jeff won eleven Doghound Championships and five Bitch Champions. He enhanced the reputation of the hunt and gave excellent sport mainly on the North York Moors. Hunting a pack in a monastic school brought new challenges for Jeff. The majority of those out hunting two days a week or walking out hounds daily were boys of varying ages, some from sporting families, others coming to it for the first time. Jeff was very approachable, but he was also a stickler for having things done properly. Having acquired some of Fr Walter's vast knowledge of the farmers and gamekeepers in the Hunt country he soon became well-liked among the farming and shooting community. He also built up contacts with other packs of beagles as it was widespread practice to borrow hounds to introduce new blood into the pack. He became particularly friendly with the Cheshire Beagles Huntsman and offered to give him a hound that he described as the best hound that he had ever known. The reason for this generosity was that Trueman was becoming independent as he got older, and he could lead the pack astray. However, he was still valuable as a stud dog. It was agreed that the handover would be done at the Peterborough Show, so Jeff entered Trueman and was astonished when Trueman became Champion Doghound and as he walked out of the ring he handed him over to the Cheshire Huntsman.

In March 1981 Jeff fell off a wall when hunting and landed on his head. He remembered that nobody took any notice of him with blood dripping down his face because hounds had caught their hare after a two-hour hunt. It led to Alexander Fitzalan-Howard, the then current Master, hunting hounds until he left in January 1983.

One time when Fr Walter was away, Jeff and Fr Charles set off to the meet in the hound van. "Where's the meet today?" said Fr Charles. "I thought you would know" said Jeff. "Didn't Fr Walter give you the details?" So they had to go to the newsagent in Helmsley to buy a copy of Horse and Hound to find out.

In 1988 Fr Walter went as Parish Priest to Easingwold after 47 years as Hunt Secretary. Fr Charles succeeded him for five years and then, after a period of decreasing interest in the school as the number of extra-curricular activities increased, Fr Hugh Lewis-Vivas, who had succeeded Fr Charles when he went to Leyland, had to write to all supporters to tell them that the College was giving up ownership of the Beagles. So, on 12 March 1994, Jeff blew for home for the last time and so ended his career as a professional Huntsman, though his presence in the area was an enormous help to the supporters and old boys who took over the ownership and management of the pack that still exists today.

He continued to be employed by the college as a minibus driver until his retirement when he and Lyn moved into a bungalow in Ampleforth village before eventually moving South to be closer to Lyn's family.

## OLD AMPLEFORDIAN OBITUARIES

**PETER JOHN PEENEY (D56) died 18 November 2020 aged 81** lived, worked and worshipped in the Birmingham area all his life. He started work as a Commercial Apprentice at GEC in Witton. Four years later, he joined Kalamazoo Business Systems and in 1981 became their highly esteemed and valued Company Secretary, remaining in post for the next 20 years retiring in 2001. At various times John played rugby and cricket at the Harborne Cricket Club, football for Kalamazoo and he was Fixtures Secretary of Kings Norton Amateur Football League. He loved anything to do with cars - racing, rallying, classic cars, touring in the UK and Europe. If it could be driven, he wanted to drive it! To him there was no such thing as a bad car, only bad drivers. In 1972 he married Diana, a senior nurse at The Royal London Hospital. He was much involved in the reinvigoration of the parish of Our Lady of Fatima in Quinton and was Chairman of the Hunnington Parish Council and Chairman of governors of Our Lady of Fatima Primary School and a Director of the St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company. He was most surprised and humbled when Archbishop Bernard Longley awarded him the Ubi Caritas medal. He will be remembered not only for his humour and quick wit but also for his care, concern and kindness to others.

**PATRICK MARTIN (E52) died 8 December 2021 aged 89**, was the oldest of four children, his brother Nic, following him to Gilling and then Ampleforth. With a keen intelligence and wide ranging interests, Patrick showed an extraordinary passion for literature and history from his earliest schooldays, and filled 'commonplace' books with handwritten extracts from his favourite poems, stories and plays, although he eventually read chemistry at Wadham College, Oxford. Before this he did his National Service as an officer with the Royal Fusiliers, first in Korea for the final weeks of the war there and then with his regiment to Egypt where, in the desert dunes, he discovered the magic of motorbikes. In later years Patrick roared all over the UK and Europe on his BMW motorcycle. Patrick's working life was largely with Shell, and it took him all over the world. He visited over 100 countries from Argentina to the former Yugoslavia. These long trips abroad were often gruelling, but he was enduringly fascinated by the culture and history of each place he visited.

While Patrick was still a student at Oxford he married Margaret, and over the next few years four children came along, followed a few years later by Spike, a fine Staffordshire bull terrier and then 13 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren – a wonderful legacy. Patrick passed away peacefully on their 65th wedding anniversary, in St Raphael's Hospice, Cheam. Besides being a gentleman and a scholar, he was also a masterful bridge player.

**Professor MATTHEW GAGE (J85) died 15 January, 2022 aged 55**, was a widely respected researcher in the field of evolutionary ecology. He was an effective and inspiring research leader, colleague and teacher. He had a unique brand of incisiveness, a keen mind, great wit and a seemingly bottomless generosity of spirit. His keen and diverse interests in the natural world were fostered from an early age by his immersion in the beauty and remoteness of the Gage family home on Rathlin Island in Northern Ireland. After his doctorate at Manchester and Fellowships at Liverpool and then Western Australia he was awarded a ten-year Research Fellowship by the Royal Society. In 2001 he moved to the University of East Anglia where he was professor for the rest of his life. He was an open, genuine, and funny person, whose interests stretched far beyond evolutionary biology; he was a family man, a cricket fan, a keen tinkerer, and fly-fisherman, but also a world-renowned falconer and falcon breeder. That he climbed to the very top of such disparate disciplines speaks to his great strength of character and gentle charisma.; He had a wide circle of friends and deeply profound family relationships. Talking to Matt was always life-affirming. He was funny, warm, irreverent and full of first-class academic gossip. Throughout his last illness, support from his wife Silvie and two daughters Lily and Tessa enabled Matt to keep working, and even shortly before he died, his insights, plans and vision were as cogent and sharp as ever.

**PETER RHYS-EVANS (H66) died 3 June, 2022 aged 74**, was a leading ENT Surgeon specialising in head and neck cancer which is increasing in incidence, particularly in younger people. At Ampleforth he developed a love for rugby, which probably helped him gain admission to Barts Medical School where he helped the rugby team regain the United Hospitals Cup. As a student he drove an early morning meat round from Smithfield market at 7s 6d an hour but earned more as a film extra, which meant he had an Equity card. He loved music, which he played in his operating theatres and organised concerts to raise money for the Oracle Cancer Charity that he had founded. His research work covered developing personalised treatments and new and less mutilating surgical techniques, which have helped to improve survival rates as well as minimising debilitating side-effects and improving the quality of life for survivors. He was fascinated by evolution and supported the hypothesis that modern humans had originally been aquatic animals. His 2000 book *The Waterside Ape* (noted in the *Ampleforth Journal* Vol 123) was praised by Sir David Attenbrough as an important contribution to the debate.

**JOHN H DARNTON (E68) died 5 August 2022, aged 71** was a natural for the cigar industry; he was a bon viveur who loved to be around people, and people loved to be around him. He was straight talking, witty and fun to work with: there was a wonderful sense of loyalty between John and his team and he was a very good advocate for the challenges of their roles and for their successes. He looked after them in the good times and the bad and they had fun together. John understood that the cigar industry was about having fun and caring about customers as well as doing business, not least on his frequent trips to Cuba. Many of his clients became lifelong friends. He was a beautiful caster of the dry fly and an expert entomologist. He leaves his beloved wife, Belinda.

**JOHN PONSONBY (H73) died 21 October 2022.** After Ampleforth, which he always regarded as his spiritual home, John followed family tradition into the Royal Green Jackets but dyslexia led to him failing the Sandhurst entry tests. He later said that his few months as a Rifleman, before officer selection, proved invaluable. After secondment to the Army Air Corps and qualifying as a helicopter pilot and winning the British Forces Helicopter Championship he transferred in 1983 to the RAF and, after the War in the Falklands, commanded 78 Squadron there as well as enjoying the fly fishing. In Bosnia he commanded the helicopter force and his former army colleagues appreciated his support from the cockpit. After a staff position with Sir Charles Guthrie he went on to be awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in Northern Ireland and was appointed ADC to the Queen before his last post commanding the Training Group where he flew a Typhoon and every other training aircraft as well as taking responsibility for the Red Arrows. Those who served under him appreciated his fair-mindedness and gracious care for them. He was a great sportsman and ran the London marathon twice, as well as taking his wife on the back of his motorbike for a battlefield tour of Northern France in aid of Help for Heroes (that his sister, Emma Parry, had founded with her husband). After retirement he worked for Leonardo's helicopters in Italy and Somerset and the Overwatch, a company making drones, who have set up an apprentice scheme in his name.

**JAMES NEW (E75) died 3 November 2022 aged 65.** His elder brother, Stephen (E73) wrote that 'thirty years as a Civil Servant doesn't even touch the surface of James' character, although may well support the notion of his endless patience' and goes on: 'Father, grandfather, brother-in-law and friend to us all, he would not have acknowledged the impact he had on our lives, instead he would have appreciated your part in his. Each of us represent aspects of different periods in his life - from the early years of the Vale of Health, Ampleforth, his Australian adventures, the evolution of Irish being and Edinburgh where he made his home. Throughout his working life and fatherhood, life evolved, touched and changed him. Through all of this, he was happy to remain on the sidelines, never seeking the limelight but happy to be a part of it.

He could be complex and was as stubborn as they come, but this was countered by boundless patience and benevolence. His gift was his affinity with children. They loved him, they looked up to him. I saw the way he was with our boys and the way he was with others. Quite the Piper.

To his everlasting regret he never charged with the Light Brigade, he never crossed the Bridge of Spies . . . but he did the next best thing, he could talk the talk, discuss the merits (or otherwise) of Raglan, Cardigan and the rest with those who might have been remotely interested.

There are lines of poetry which sum up how James thought about things, life and the past :  
This is the land of lost content  
I see it shining plain  
The happy highways where I went  
And cannot come again. (Houseman : Blue Remembered Hills).

These lines allowed James to believe in the possibility that he would one day come across that highway, travel and explore at leisure and find his way to those events that he never witnessed - or to meet again with those long gone now. A reflection of a small part of his life. He was a part of your lives - as you were a part of his. His friends, your friend, his life enriched us all.

No one could cut the grass quite like James - perhaps that should be his epitaph.'

**KEVIN KEARNEY (D57) died 20 Nov 2022**, was born in Singapore in 1940 and evacuated to Australia with his mother. His father's job as a Shell engineer took his parents all over the world so Kevin was based in Sussex with his aunt and came to Ampleforth where he enjoyed scrambling about on the North Yorkshire Moors; watercolour painting; fossil hunting; Japanese culture; and visiting art galleries. Studying chemistry at University College, Oxford, his enthusiasms increased to include brass rubbing, haiku's and the poetry of John Donne. His Irish heritage was surely responsible for his wit and charm, his mild eccentricities and gift of the gab, his sense of mischief, love of jokes & puns, always accompanied by his big booming laugh.

After Oxford he qualified as a Chartered Patent Agent, and joined the firm Kilburn & Strode. He became a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Patent Agents in 1966, and a Senior Partner in the firm from 1966 until he retired in 2001. He worked closely at national and international level with business men, scientists, lawyers, bankers and accountants, to meet the legal, technical and commercial needs of individuals and companies, from start-ups to multi-nationals.

On retirement he switched his amazing energy and enthusiasms into the Civic life of the City of London. He had been a Freeman and Liveryman of the Pewterers Company since 1965 (inspired by his wife Mary, who was a fourth generation Pewterer and Liveryman ) but in 2002/3 he moved up a gear to serve as Master, surprising the Clerk with his range of projects while in office. He then became Chairman and then Vice President of the Past Masters Association.

In 2005 he was elected High Sheriff for the City of London, thoroughly enjoying the huge range of commitments and activities, such as the Old Bailey lunches. One of the most memorable events for him was the Service, in an absolutely full, silent St Paul's, for the victims of the tragic bomb attack in London that July.

Kevin was also a devoted husband to his talented wife Mary, whom he married in 1964, and a hands-on, involved father to his three children Nick, Elly and Hally. All their married life they lived in Chobham, Surrey, and their garden at Broomacre was shared with bees, rabbits, and chickens as part of Kevin's love of organic gardening and sustainable life style. Sadly ill health meant that Kevin spent the last four years of his life in a Care Home, but even this could not diminish what his family described in his death announcement as a "Big Life".

**(JOHN) MICHAEL BURNFORD (J67) died 9 December, 2022 aged 73.** Together with his twin sister, he was the eldest of seven. His parents farmed in West Sussex, and from an early age he was interested in how things worked, a portent of his future as an engineer. He loved outdoor life, bicycles rather than his sister's ponies, and was taken sailing by his father in a variety of boats from a very young age. This is where he developed his love and skills of seamanship. After Ampleforth he read Engineering at Newcastle University followed by a graduate trainee scheme at Rolls Royce in Derby. During this time he continued his outdoor pursuits going trekking in Iceland and Norway, mountaineering and climbing. In the early 1970's he went to Houston, Texas, working with the Howard Hughes Tool Company developing Drill Bits for Oil Rigs. This role took him to Bahia in Brazil where he worked for ten years for the oil business during which time he continued to sail and learnt Portuguese. Whilst there he would helm yachts for regattas in the Caribbean and was very successful. He was a much sought-after helmsman and crew member. He returned to Sussex following his father's death and married Annie Carter in 1985. He took a career change into IT and programming, he was never a technophobe but was an early adopter of all things digital. After starting family life near Godalming he returned to Sussex 25 years ago where he made a lovely family home in Itchenor very close to the sea and the sailing club where he was a longstanding member and committee member. In retirement, when he was not renovating their home in Itchenor, he continued to sail, delivering yachts for their owners, helming for races and cruises, and crossing the Atlantic on many occasions. He was a beloved husband and devoted father of two daughters, Sarah and Kate, and had four grandchildren, including twins born just two months before his untimely death from Mesothelioma in December 2022.

**ADRIAN MYERS (A90) died 11 December, 2022, aged 50** was captain of athletics & cross country at Ampleforth and ran the old boys cross country team for many years. Skiing was also one of his absolute passions. He continued his love of sport and played rugby for the vets at Farnham Rugby Club. He also coached rugby for his boys in their respective age groups for the last 17 years. As Oliver moved to Ampleforth he went back to the under 5's again with Harry. Professionally Adrian was an internationally acclaimed photographer. His pictures are full of atmosphere and a sense of occasion, vividly evocative of the mood of the moment. A total professional with a superb eye, he was always skilful and insightful, exploring character with the camera lens and treating each assignment with absolute integrity. His warmth, generosity and sense of humour

were very much part of what made him so good at his work. In his prime, still full of energy, positivity and ideas, he has been taken from us. His work will keep many happy memories fresh. He has left behind a legacy and his company “The Ami Collection” aims to continue preserving not only his legacy but also other people’s. Adrian was passionate about the value of photographs and preserving a rich legacy for generations to come. His widow, Louise, has taken the reins and with a brilliant team the company continues to thrive. He leaves four children, Georgia, Oliver (H19), Eloise (M21) and Harry.

**GEOFFREY VAN CUTSEM (E62) died 30 December, 2022 aged 78.** His father Bernard van Cutsem was a celebrated Newmarket racehorse trainer and his mother was Mary Compton so much of his early life was spent at the races, always immaculately dressed in tweed suits and flat caps. He and his older brother Hugh were beautifully mannered and impressed all the mothers.

At Ampleforth he gained the reputation of being an expert on racing form and regularly gave tips and placed bets for the other boys in his house, which got him into trouble. A cheque was discovered for a large sum of money addressed to him from the bookmakers. Geoffrey was made to donate the full sum to the Abbey. Geoffrey also ran into trouble when doing a sponsored walk: it was a hot day so he had arranged to hire a pony and trap from the local farmer which would enable him to cover the ground and even stop at the local pub for a drink. Unfortunately a local newspaper reporter was there who decided to photograph the idyllic scene of the pony and trap at a beautiful Yorkshire pub with boys enjoying themselves in the sun. When it appeared in the local paper the housemaster was not happy.

After Ampleforth he joined the Blues in 1963 for five years and served in Germany and Singapore and ended up as Assistant Adjutant. He was reported on as being a very well organised, efficient and a reliable officer. After his army life he joined Hambro’s before training as a chartered surveyor joining Curtis and Henson which later became Savills. During his time at Savills friends recount the following:

*“Geoffrey was the most kind and generous leader. Almost single handedly he put Savills Country house business on the map, his many successes were securing the sale of Hever Castle, Belton, Kedleston, Daylesford, Littlecote and many others. Sometimes top market sales require a little networking. If Geoffrey was told that the sale was top- secret, just before he went to White’s for lunch, by teatime every potential buyer had heard about it.”*

*As chairman of Savills land and property business when he started, they had 5 offices outside London and when he retired there were over 40 and Savills were number 1 in the country house business.*

*Outside of Savills he was much in demand for his wise counsel, he was on the board of Cancer research from 1972 and chairman from 2001-2005.*

*Geoffrey was chairman of the governors at St Mary's Ascot from 1995-2002 and presided over a golden age for the school.*

*On the sporting front he and his brother Hugh were considered two of the best shots of their generation.*

*Geoffrey was a much-loved husband, father, step father and grandfather and will be remembered by all for his enthusiasm and wicked sense of humor. One of his last Christmas cards to a friend read "keep shooting straight like I always do."*

**WILLIAM (formerly Fr Miles) BELLASIS (W54) died 17 January, 2023** grew up on a coffee estate in Kenya in a Catholic family. Sent 'home' to England to go to school, first at All Hallows, then at Ampleforth where he had Fr Columba Cary-Elwes as his first Housemaster, who was later his superior at St Louis. He made friends easily and looked as if he would be a man about town but, after being Head Monitor of the school, he joined the monastery, taking the name Miles. He entered the community in a large class of novices. He stood out among his contemporaries for his dynamism and high spirits. After Oxford he was ordained as a priest in 1963 and taught in the school at Ampleforth until Abbot Basil Hume asked him to join the community at the Saint Louis Priory in the United States in 1965. The change of scene was dislocating for him but he quickly adapted and taught theology in the school and in 1969 succeeded Fr Ian Petit as director of the Junior School, a position in which he became well acquainted with the boys and their families. In the monastery Fr Miles acted as Master of Ceremonies and head of the Liturgy Committee. In 1981 he worked in the fundraising office and was part of the search committee that led to the hiring of a fulltime Director of Development. His close relationships with many of the Priory students and families led to his frequently being called on to perform weddings, baptisms and funerals. He was much loved and his infectious laugh enlivened every gathering. His family remember receiving cards with beautiful calligraphy and in many colours. In 1982 he became assistant pastor to Fr Timothy Horner in the parish of the monastery church. In 1987 he was appointed Director of Vocations. In 1990 he entered a yearlong program of recovery from alcoholism. On his return to the Abbey he gradually discerned that he had not entered monastic life and priesthood for healthy reasons and asked to be dispensed from these commitments. He remarked that being sent away from his family in Kenya to boarding school at a very early age had a marked psychological effect that prevented him from discovering his real self. He left the monastic community in June 1994. This was another dislocation but, with the help of his many friends he found employment and worked in a Catholic Charity before moving to France where he ran a hotel on the banks of the Seine and then, for ten years, teaching English to business men in Paris where he was a reader at La Madeleine and then at Sacre Coeur with its Benedictine connections. When he was 80 he returned to live in London with his sister, who looked after he had a stroke and get to Mass at the Oratory or watch the Ampleforth streamed Mass.

**JOHN BURLISON (C58), died 23 January 2023 aged 82** after a short illness. Soon after leaving school John served on a short service commission in the 2nd Green Jackets and in 1961 was granted a regular commission in the 2nd KEO Goorkhas. During his service with the Gurkhas he was frequently stationed in the Far East. Other parts of the world where he served included Northern Ireland, Belize, Gibraltar and Ghana.

After retiring from the Army in 1995 John was appointed as a Regional Director for British Executive Service Overseas and travelled extensively throughout parts of Asia and the South Pacific advising small businesses and charities.

John's life had strong foundations in his unswerving loyalty to his regiment, his charitable work and to his faith. Wherever he was on a Sunday he always made a great effort to attend Mass and would be rather downhearted when there was no church or priest to be found. A confirmed bachelor, and a private man, his modesty, generosity, kindness, and good humour won him many friends, and much affection from his fellow British officers, Gurkha soldiers and many others. His long career was an admirable demonstration of his undoubted virtues and he will be missed by us all.

**JOHN WILLIAM EDWARD LEVACK (E77) died 29 January 2023 aged 63** was born in Zambia, where he lived with his parents, George and Patricia, and his siblings, Corinna and David. The family moved back to the United Kingdom when John was seven years' old. At Ampleforth he was a keen sportsman and took the school's ethos to heart. After Business Administration – and much tennis - at Bath he joined the private equity company 3i that took him to Nottingham, Brighton, Jersey, Porto and then to India. In 1994, after five successful years in New Delhi, John and Dominique, his wife, and their family moved to Hong Kong where he took the position of Asia Managing Director for Electra Partners, specialising in India and South-East Asia. He became a key member of the Hong Kong Venture Capital & Private Equity Association for which he was the Vice Chairman from 2010 until 2021. John was also a member of the Hong Kong Government's Financial Services Development Council, which advises Hong Kong's Chief Executive on strategy to improve Hong Kong's financial sector.

John took great joy in mentoring young professionals. He was guest lecturer for HK University of Science & Technology's MBA programme and led the development of the HKVCA's Fundamentals of Private Equity Course.

Hong Kong was John's home for 26 years. He became the representative for Ampleforth parents in Hong Kong when his children, Sophie (B09) and Edward (EW12) attended Ampleforth College. An avid sportsman, he loved adventure, be it hiking in the Alps, cycling across Sardinia, or rafting in the Himalayas. John's lifelong passion, however, was tennis. As captain of tennis for the Hong Kong Country Club, he led the Men's A team to victory year after year, even into his 60s, and was nicknamed the 'Albatross' for his prowess at the net.

In 2021, John moved back to the UK and settled in Bath. He had reunited with his family and friends just before learning he had brain cancer. Always focusing on the silver lining, and strengthened by his faith, John accepted his illness with dignity. He focused on nurturing his relationship with his children who took great care of him. He relished life until the end.

**KENWORTHY-BROWNE, Dr MICHAEL (W54) died 9 February, 2023 aged 86.** His parents ran Wellbury Catholic Prep school and Michael and his elder brothers Peter (O48), John (W50) and Laurence (O51) all went through the school before coming to Ampleforth. On leaving, Michael joined the novitiate but realised after 9 months that he was not cut out for monastic life. He did his National Service in the KOYLI as a subaltern, serving in Cyprus during the EOKA emergency and then followed his brothers and sister, Mary, (who read classics before becoming a nun) to Oxford. He trained for five years as a general and cardiac physician at the Old Radcliffe before going into a busy General Practice in Oxford City. He looked after several colleges, was a GP trainer and worked for Oxfam and Blackwells. He was a Fellow of both the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Physicians. He went regularly to Lourdes with Ampleforth and Oxford and was a member of the Lourdes Hospitalité.

In July 1976 he was astonished to see a photograph, taken of his platoon during his time in Cyprus, on the BBC News. The news item concerned the conviction and sentencing of Donald Nielson, known as the Black Panther, who had committed a series of robberies and killings. He had served under Michael as his Lance-Corporal.

Michael retired from the NHS in 2001 but continued to work privately in Oxford at the Acland Hospital and later at the Manor Hospital.

Michael kept in touch with Ampleforth, going on Retreats when time allowed. Camping on the school fields during the Summer term Exhibition weekend, when his son, Nick (E90) was at the school, was a way of keeping in touch with many of those with whom he had been at school and who had also sent their sons to Ampleforth. He had a close connection to St. Benet's and Oriel College and wine tasted for the latter until the last three years of his life. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth and the four children of his first wife who had died of cancer.

**JAMES T MARSHALL (A50) died 10 February 2023, aged 89.** He was the twin brother of James (T50) who died in 1993. He did his National Service as a subaltern in the Worcestershire Regiment and was involved in close quarters fighting in the jungle in the Malayan Emergency. Afterwards he emigrated to Canada and later to New York where he developed a life that successfully combined entrepreneurship and professional golf management with product development. He developed a mechanical means of preventing articulated lorries from jack-knifing and, with a young designer called Mark Saunders, a folding bicycle, a folding chopping board, trombone golf trolley and an innovative pram

and later had great success with Metalwash, a lorry and heavy machinery parts washer. He enjoyed worldwide travel and fast cars combined with a wonderful marriage to his wife Lois, who had been his brother's PA. He was friendly and helpful to everyone and was always inquisitive as to how one was getting on and was very generous with his time. A larger than life person who died peacefully at his home in Hampshire.

**ANTHONY FAWCETT (C79) died 19 February 2023 aged 60** soon after his twin sister, Joanna, who was born five minutes before him. After a mischievous childhood and Ampleforth and Askham Bryan Agricultural College, he enthusiastically tackled a variety of projects: a mobile discotheque, farming, Studford Venison, pubs, hotels and a workplace supply company. He loved racehorses just like Anto and adored shooting. He owned many cars and crashed several of them, until he bought a Bentley. Later he moved to Scalby, near Scarborough and opened the Fawcett Arms pub there. An experiment in cider making after a glut of apples resulted in about six bottles of 20% alcohol fire water and gallons of vinegar the strength of sulphuric acid. When his final illness came, he battled on longer than even the most optimistic doctors predicted but eventually slipped away peacefully in his sleep.

**JONATHAN ELLIMAN (O51) died 1 March 2023 aged 89.** He enjoyed Ampleforth and went on to read History at Trinity College Cambridge. After unsatisfactory stints working for his father and undertaking training to be an accountant, he followed a peripatetic career path which amply suited his endless curiosity about people and the world. After travelling around Europe by motorcycle, he spent most of his working life teaching English in many countries; including Italy, Spain, Uganda, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, returning to England more or less permanently in the early 90s to look after his ailing mother. He worked in both the Open University and the University of Buckingham. In semi-retirement, Jonathan satiated his natural inquisitiveness by taking courses in Woodworking, Corden Bleu Cookery and undertook an Open University degree course in Renewable Energy. He was also very active in U3A. He was an avid reader and book collector in the subjects of Biography, History and Travel and had acquired a huge collection of artefacts from his travels, including a magnificent Doberman Pinscher, Isa, his guard dog in Uganda. His parents were perhaps not the most suitable guardians for such an energetic (and untrained) beast during his next foray abroad. Jonathan was a generous and thoughtful man with an impish sense of humour. His later years were hampered by decreasing mobility which affected his ability to manage his much-loved flower garden. The murder of a friend, Peter Farquhar, knocked his self-confidence. Nevertheless, he retained enough enthusiasm for several trips to Kenya, where he had many friends and supported various worthwhile projects and individuals through Action Aid, his favoured charity. He died having lived a rich and varied life much enhanced by his gift for friendship and his lifelong Catholic faith.

**Major General Sir SEBASTIAN ROBERTS, KCVO, OBE (J72) died 9 March 2023**

was the eldest of ten children and died just two months after his mother, Nicola. He read history at Balliol before joining the Irish Guards and serving with the 1st Battalion in Germany, Belize, Rhodesia, and Northern Ireland as well as in England, as a platoon and company commander, and then commanded the Battalion 1993-6. Later he was Colonel of the Irish Guards until 2011, when he handed over to HRH the Duke of Cambridge. Since retiring he has set up The Military Mutual, of which he is now Chairman, an insurance mutual for members of the Armed Forces, serving and retired, and their families. He was married to Elizabeth, had two sons and two daughters; both sons were in the Irish Guards, as were two of his 6 brothers.

Sir Chris Ghika (E88), who worked for Sebastian twice, and who saw the context which inspired him writes: ‘Following command of 1st Battalion Irish Guards, Sebastian became ‘Colonel Land Warfare’; a post where, as is common in the Army, the job description obscured the true purpose and content of the work. His intellect and charisma were well known to the Army by this stage, and so some of the most challenging cerebral issues facing the Army inevitably ended up on his desk. The contributions to tactics and battlefield manoeuvre have long been surpassed, but one item remains at the core of all three Armed Services to this day: his work on the military covenant. Famously, Sebastian remarked that when writing key works, it was good to have one’s guiding texts close at hand and he kept three volumes on his desk when completing this work. One of these was the Rule of St Benedict. Although some were surprised by this: how could the thinking of a sixth century saint influence the work of the twenty first century British Army they said? Sebastian knew better and was proved right. The doubters, of course, did not know the man. If they had done so, they would have seen that Christian morality and setting a clear and explicable moral context for everything the Army did was at the core of his service. His schooling and reflections on what he had experienced and witnessed at Ampleforth made a deep impression on him, and so it should have been no surprise that the Rule was so central to his thinking. That the military covenant has stood the test of turbulent times is probably the greatest accolade that should be paid by those who seek to place the actions of the Forces on a sound moral footing. That it is modelled on the thinking of St Benedict is one of the reasons it has proved timeless, because as Sebastian understood more clearly than most, decency and sound principled judgements, rather than pure force, are the guiderails of Christian soldiers.’

More recently he wrote the British Army’s soon to be published Leadership Doctrine and his RCDS paper on “Statesmanship” has just been published in the 2004 Seaford House Papers. But a more lasting legacy may be The Military Mutual that he set up to provide fair, competitive financial services to those serving, veterans, pensioners & supporters of our armed forces so that every member of the military family has the best financial services from a mutual they own and run through a board that they empower.

**PATRICK FRENCH (J84) died 16 March 2023, aged 56** was the eldest child of Major Maurice French (W48) and became fascinated with India, first travelling there at 19, and with Tibet, following the visit of the Dalai Lama to Ampleforth in 1982. After reading English and American Literature at Edinburgh he did a PhD in South Asian studies before setting off to retrace the steps of Francis Younghusband's 1903 expedition into Tibet. This led to his first book, *Younghusband: the Last Great Imperial Adventurer*, which won several literary awards. He became a director of the Free Tibet campaign and wrote *Tibet: A Personal History of a Lost land*. In 1992 he stood unsuccessfully as a Green Party candidate but spent most of his time in India where, in 2017, he was appointed Dean of Arts and Sciences at Ahmedabad University. More books on India and Tibet followed as well as his authorised biography of the novelist, V S Naipaul that won more awards. One reviewer wrote that "Mr French could not pen a boring passage if he tried". He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and politely declined the offer of an OBE. His authorised biography of Doris Lessing, *The Golden Woman*, is due to be published in 2024.

**RICHARD NEVILL (E66) died 15 April, 2023, aged 74**, the eldest son of Colonel Charles and Phillipa Nevill and brother of Henry (E68), was a kind and supportive elder brother. He boasted of passing his 'A' Levels with Ease (spelt E's) before going to study in Paris for a year, sharing a flat with his friend Sean Mooney (E65). After working for Delta Metals and then as an Estate Agent he joined Jardine Matheson but left when they sent him to Aberdeen instead of Hong Kong as he had hoped. He tried music promotion, selling motorcycles (which he loved) and won a dealership of the year award in 1982 and got a holiday in Thailand, tried the wine business and then set up his own property business in 1985 converting a building in Hammersmith into flats. At last he had found his feet. Throughout this period, he was part of the Chelsea Raiders Football team. He was a Trustee of the Berkshire Community Foundation for 10 years and raised considerable funds for the Give a Child a Chance Campaign and raised over £100k for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

He was a great entertainer. He was very good at maintaining friendships and always loyal to his friends both from school and business. Most important of all he was an optimist. He and his second wife, Louisa, had a large extended and supportive family and he adored his grandchildren. He had a great faith and was determined to maintain that through thick and thin.

**JESUS ALMOGUERA (C13) died 8 May 2023, aged 23**. He came to St Cuthbert's House in 2011, aged 13, for two years and is remembered as an exceptional individual with a vibrant spirit and contagious laughter and as being fiercely competitive but whose life came to an end after years of battling mental health.

**RICHARD COURTENAY KNOLLYS (C55) died 14 May 2023, aged 85**, the youngest son of Frederick Knollys and Margaret (née Leese) was born in the Bank of England building in Birmingham—in the upper floors flat that came with Fred’s job as Agent of the branch. His childhood was spent first in Worcestershire and then in villages on the Oxfordshire/Berkshire border.

After prep school at St Richard’s, he came to Ampleforth, following his brothers Christopher (C50), Geoffrey (C51) and John (C53, later a monk of Ampleforth as Fr Bonaventure), and his Leese uncles, Cecil (1915), Jack (1919) and Kenneth (W34). His time at Ampleforth left him with a lasting affection for the college, the abbey, and the North Yorkshire countryside.

After National Service with the Royal Engineers, serving mostly in Germany, Richard worked first for Heinz and then the packaging giant Metal Box. There he ran the international aerosols division, and also led the British, then European, aerosol trade associations. In those roles he was instrumental in securing unanimous consent to the 1987 Montreal Protocol for the fast phasing out of CFCs to protect the ozone layer.

Richard married Pauline Devas, sister of Tim (A67) in 1965—they had met at the League of Christ the King group at the Brompton Oratory. They lived first in Old Windsor, where their children Caroline, Thomas, and Benedict were born, and then, to look after Margaret, moved to the family home in Goring, Oxfordshire.

Richard was actively involved in the Catholic parish in Goring and with local ecumenical groups, and in retirement he served as a governor of Wallingford School. But his preference was for the company of friends and family, including six grandchildren, and following his own pursuits: gardening, woodworking, golf and tennis. An adventurous traveller, he made trips around the world—and a hot air balloon flight above the Chilterns for his 70th birthday.

Shortly before he turned 80, Richard was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s diseases. He bore his illness uncomplainingly, and charmed his carers and visitors with quiet and gentlemanly manners that he never forgot.

**MAJOR SIR SHANE BLEWITT, GCVO (A53) died 15 May 2022, aged 87** was the second of four children, surrounded by girls. After the Benedictine prep school, Alderwasley Hall, he arrived in St Aidan’s in 1948. Besides athletics and rugby he enjoyed boxing, practising on his unfortunate sisters during the school holidays. Basil Hume taught him French and many years later introduced him to Pope John Paul II on the 1982 Papal Visit. Arriving at Christ Church, Oxford, aged 17, to read Modern Languages he felt “greener than a blade of grass” amongst worldly men who had done National Service.

In the Irish Guards he served in Germany, Northern Ireland, Hong Kong and Aden, and in

1969 he married Julia Morrogh Bernard, widow of John who had been at Ampleforth and in the Irish Guards with him. He inherited two young stepchildren, Kate and Dominic, and he and Julia went on to have two more children, Davina and Piers. They settled close to Julia's family in West Sussex in 1972 and in 1974 he left the army to work briefly for Anthony Gibbs and Sons before joining the Royal Household in 1975 as Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse, progressing to Deputy and ultimately serving as Keeper of the Privy Purse and Receiver-General of the Duchy of Lancaster. He had a tremendous work ethic and was willing to say things even if they were things people did not want to hear, while remaining loyal and scrupulously discreet. In 1992, hard work and a smoking habit resulted in a heart attack, and this brought about a change of pace and regular dog walks with beloved spaniels on the South Downs (where he is now buried).

He retired in 1996, and, by now a keen walker, he and Julia walked in mountain ranges across Europe and also holidayed further afield in India, Sri Lanka, Jordan, Syria and Grenada.

But what he is most remembered for by his friends and family is his transformation of his Sussex garden over 50 years, which was annually opened to the public with the National Garden Scheme, and once featured in a French gardening magazine. Gardening was not a retirement job, it was a lifelong passion, and he happily swapped his pinstripe suit and starched collars for mud encrusted jeans at the weekends, hardly recognizable but given away by not a hair out of place. Family and friends who asked for advice received pages of detailed notes, and many of them could be found at his wake, held in the garden, busily taking cuttings.

After his wife died a week into Covid Lockdown there was the garden and ten growing grandchildren to lift his spirits. The day before he died he walked Davina around the garden, delighting in a vast flowering tulip tree he had planted, and she left him in a deckchair reading a dog-eared copy of the Ampleforth Journal.

**NICHOLAS HAWKIN (E62) died on 23 May, 2023, aged 79**, was born in the UK but was educated, lived and worked in a number of countries in Europe and South and North America. His mother was Peruvian and he was trilingual from childhood due to his upbringing and peripatetic young life. He studied languages at Yale in the US, and building on his talent for communication, he worked as a translator for the World Council of Churches in Geneva and then as a language teacher in various countries, always delighting his students, and in the later part of his life as a lecturer and Museum tour guide in the UK. Nick was very creative and enthusiastic in anything he undertook and was loved for his kindness and sense of humour and respected for his intellect and talents. He was both a film and a music buff and a keen photographer and tennis player. He met his wife, Helen, in Granada in the south of Spain, and they spent many happy years living and working there and in coastal Nerja, before moving back to the UK in 2007 for family reasons. He revisited Ampleforth before he died and has maintained strong bonds with

two of his fellow students throughout his life. Nick passed away peacefully at home after a long illness, with Helen at his side.

**FELIX STEWART (E89) died 19 June, 2023, aged 52**, was the youngest of four children of Adrian (C43) and Sue Stewart, brother to Jon (E79), Katie and Bass (E84). He grew up in North Yorkshire, with a love of nature passed down by Adrian, and a love of football grown as part of the local team. Keen support for Leeds United brought him to Leeds University as his first choice, and guided his first term's grant towards a season ticket. Football permitting, he left Leeds with a History degree.

Felix began exploring the world as soon as he was able. He started with a long trip to Australia during his gap year, and later spent a decade in Italy, based in Marche. With travelling and natural gregariousness, Felix grew into someone who could speak with anyone, meeting people with ready acceptance, appreciation and respect, whoever they were. He had a stubbornly independent integrity, and his priorities were based on what brought him joy rather than conventional success.

Felix's working life started with journalism. Then, on moving to Italy, he taught English whilst learning Italian. Fluency in Italian later allowed him to build a holiday business, connecting Italian property owners to visitors from the UK and other countries, sharing experiences of the land he loved and had made his home. He spent much of his free time exploring the Sibillini mountains with five large dogs, who were very much part of his family. Felix grew up with dogs and had a natural affinity for them. They were both intensely loyal to him, and intelligent enough to know that normal household rules no longer applied when only he was around.

It took love in New York to finally draw Felix away from Italy. Finding a partner at such a distance was by now quite natural, though in fact Shena Caine was also raised in the North York Moors. New York was a great place for the couple to build their relationship over two fabulous years, not to mention hosting the many friends and family members who fancied a trip to the U.S. Felix continued to run his Italian business over the web, while mountain walking was replaced by long distance cycling around New York.

When Felix and Shena came back to the UK, they lived initially in London for Shena's work, married, and finally settled in North Yorkshire. Torin was born in the summer of 2014, a star in their lives, combining the energy, vivaciousness and sharp intelligence of both his parents. Felix thrived on being a father, and on being Torin's primary carer when Shena was working.

Felix had been adopted within a few weeks of his birth, and during his late thirties he sought his birth family. His birth father, Anthony Knock (A65) had already died, and his obituary appeared in the same edition of this journal as Adrian's (Vol. 109). After recognising the name and connection, Felix tracked down Anthony's daughter

and Felix's sister, Lucy. In spite of advice that Lucy had to be very cautious about this unexpected contact from a stranger in Italy, she intuitively knew and felt from his voice that they were related. They clicked straight away and over time forged a special bond. Also from Anthony's side came new cousins, including Joe Cook (E96) with whom he got on particularly well.

Tracing his birth mother required more detective work but eventually he found Les Wilson who was and is alive and well. Both she and Felix were delighted to be reunited, indeed Les had been waiting and hoping for that contact. Through Les, Felix gained two more sisters, Beth and Daisy who had also been hoping that their brother would reach out. Getting to know them finally brought a sense of completeness to Felix's heritage. He had developed an almost Italian sense of family and quite naturally and gracefully brought five families together – Stewarts, Caines, both sides of his birth family and of course his own family with Shena.

In 2022, and into this thriving family mix, came news that Felix had a very aggressive brain cancer that he wasn't expected to survive. The family had a year's notice – time for everyone, including Torin then eight - to hope beyond hope for a cure, while also understanding that he would probably be leaving us. Felix did all he could to look after his fading health, and in parallel he approached the business of dying with impressive equanimity. He is survived by everyone mentioned here, except Adrian and Anthony. He leaves Shena, and he leaves Torin now aged nine to carry forward the light he brought into the world and shone into all our lives.

**MAJOR NIGEL OXLEY (B55) died 14 July 2023 aged 86** was born in a British Military Hospital in Trimulgherry, Secundrabad, India where his father, Colonel William Oxley, worked as a British Army doctor. He loved his time at Ampleforth, particularly boxing and fishing. After RMA Sandhurst he was commissioned into the Gordon Highlanders and spent time in Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar, Borneo, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, USA and Cyprus. Highlights included ADC to Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein and working alongside Colin Powell (future US Secretary of state) and he was also the first Catholic to take command of Her Majesty's Royal Guard at Balmoral in the summer of 1973. Whilst stationed in Edinburgh and Elgin he was heavily involved in organising events for the Old Amplefordians with other families such as the Scotts, Lorimers and the Lawsons.

Nigel met his future wife Easter, née Blake, of Galway, Ireland in Singapore in February 1966 and they were married in Dublin on 31 December 1966. They went on to have four children, Clare, James (A89), William (A92) and Andrew (A93). He was also a proud grandfather to nine grandchildren, brother to Huntly Oxley (J63) and uncle to Julian Murray (H76) and Angus Murray (B81). In his younger days he was a good all round sportsman enjoying squash, where he represented the British Army on the Rhine, boxing, hockey and running. He was particularly keen on field sports, there was not much he

would not shoot, and he loved to fish. His latter years were spent walking his dog and in more sedentary pursuits such as the Telegraph cryptic crossword and scrabble. His main loves, above all else, were for his family and friends. He was a true gentleman, full of kindness, humour and warmth. He was loved and will be sorely missed by his wife and children.

**SIMON MACGOWAN (T77), died suddenly and unexpectedly on 30 July 2023 aged 64.** Though a native of Dublin, Simon's mother was from Newcastle upon Tyne and with family roots in Yorkshire he loved his time at Ampleforth. He left with an English driver's licence and a life-long love of Theakston Old Peculiar to do Medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland where he particularly enjoyed the social benefits of being a medical student in Dublin of the 70s and 80s. He became lifelong friends with another Ampleforth alumnus Martin Holt (D75). Nonetheless, he qualified in 1983 and started work as a junior doctor. Following his father, he developed a love for surgery and in 1989 went to Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, USA to undertake a post-doctoral research fellowship into pancreatitis for which he received his Master's degree. He returned to Dublin 2 years later, which turned out to be a turning point on two fronts – he entered cardiac surgery training, but more importantly married Sandy in January 1992, who had grown up on the same road in Dublin. After more training between 1995-6 at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, he was appointed as a Consultant Cardiac Surgeon at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast in 1996. Specialising in adult cardiac coronary artery bypass and valvular heart surgery, Simon was known for his surgical technical skills and was a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, the European Board of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeons and the American College of Surgeons. His greatest legacy however was his trainees, who went on to have prestigious cardiothoracic surgical careers all over the world, but all remained tremendously loyal to him.

Eye problems stopped Simon from operating, so he had to retire earlier than planned, in 2018. He adapted to his new life and loved cycling, particularly in the Wicklow mountains, and moved back to Dublin. He was able continue teaching two days a week post-graduate students at his Medical School the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, which he loved. He died in his sleep after a cycling holiday in Switzerland and France. He is dearly missed by his wife Sandy, sons Jay and Taylor, father William, sister Amanda, and brothers Nicholas and Guy, nieces and nephews, many friends, and the medical communities in both Dublin and Belfast and beyond. He always retained a great affection for Ampleforth.

**RAY ALLISON (B53) died 6 August 2023, aged 88** was the elder brother of Robert (B61) was born in Newcastle as Raymond Zollner but changed his name to Allison soon after the war. He grew up in Bamburgh, playing golf and catching crabs and lobsters on the beach. After Gilling, he played in the Colts XV in the senior school and was Captain of Athletics and made some lifelong friends. At the end of his last year he went on the first

school Lourdes Pilgrimage led by Fr Basil Hume and Fr Martin Haigh. After National Service in the Royal Navy, mostly in Malta working for Lord Mountbatten whom he greatly admired (he remained in the RNVR for many years) he read law at Pembroke College, Cambridge. After a brief spell in industry with Pyrex he joined Ingledew in Newcastle where he later became a senior partner and President of the Newcastle Law Society as well as being Consul for Chile. He enjoyed golf, skiing and DIY as well as shooting, fishing and stalking and took up painting in his 80's. He relished the company of friends and teaching his grandchildren the pursuits that he had enjoyed. They, together with his Catholic faith, supported him after the death of his wife, Pauline, and as dementia gradually set in.

**ANTHONY WILLIAM JOHN (W60) died 11 August, 2023, aged 81**, elder brother of Simon (W63), broke the school records in the mile, cross country (captaining the team) and the point to point. He got up early one summer holiday morning and cycled 150 miles across the North Yorkshire moors in the day. After 2 years of accountancy training, realising that his real interest lay in science, he obtained an honours degree in botany and zoology and then became a member of the Continuous Plankton Recorder Survey (then in Edinburgh) the world's most geographically extensive marine monitoring programme. He became the principal trainer for new analysts and this role also took him to Australia, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. Anthony moved to Devon when The Survey moved to Plymouth in 1976 He authored more than 40 marine scientific publications, many of which dealt with the presence of plastics in the ocean. In his workplace he always fought for what was right for others.

His interest in birds, moths and lichen became a major part of his life. His contributions to the science of ornithology included several publications and a period as editor of "Devon Birds". His love of nature led him to return to Scotland often to walk in the Highlands. He climbed 241 of the 282 Scottish Munros including, on the occasion of his 60th birthday, the "Inaccessible Pinnacle" on Skye.

Among the many tributes received by his wife were "Inspirational, a good friend, kind, gentle, patient, a holy man, principled, spirited, determined, infectious enthusiasm, an honour and a privilege to know him, a sense of adventure, an encyclopaedic font of knowledge of all aspects of the natural world, and very generous in sharing it, left a positive mark on the hearts of every single one of us". He died peacefully at home surrounded by his wife Jane and two daughters Frances and Emily. He left two grandsons Toby and Reuben.

**ANTHONY NIGEL VERE SLINGER (A53) died in Grenada on 15 August 2023 aged 88**. Nigel lived a full life, surrounded by devoted family, wonderful friends, and his beloved wife, June. He was a devout Catholic and an enthusiastic Amplefordian. His involvement in sport at school showed effort, creativity and persistence. Later, Nigel became an international cricket player, selected by both Guyana and Trinidad as a leg-

break medium to fast pace bowler. He was Trinidad's golf champion in 1961, 1963 and 1975, and Captain of Trinidad's Caribbean Amateur Golf Championship squad. He also played for Trinidad's Northern Rugby club. In 1998, Trinidad and Tobago awarded Nigel the national Hummingbird Medal for his loyal service to the development of sport.

Nigel was also known as the first insurance broker in the Caribbean, conducting business primarily in Trinidad and Grenada, with interests in London. He encouraged many young aspiring business executives and was known to be ethical, knowledgeable, and generous. He was also an innovative farmer, pioneering creative solutions to the Caribbean's challenging farming environment.

Nigel and June hosted several memorable Old Amplefordian rugby and cricket tours to the Caribbean. Their hospitality was legendary, leaving scores of Old Amplefordians generously fed and full of colorful stories. Nigel was a colorful character, unafraid to speak his mind and his actions spoke as loud as his words. Often his colorful additions were either remarkably true or excusable enhancements to a memorable story. In his own words, Nigel felt he was the luckiest man in the world. He treasured his connections to Ampleforth, and he loved his family endlessly. He leaves behind June and their four children, Lisa, Peter (A86), Vanessa and Gina, as well as seven grandchildren.

**EMEKA ODNOZA (T13) died, 20 Aug 2023, aged 27,** in New York. He had come from America to do his Sixth Form at Ampleforth. His career was marked by consistent dedication to his craft, a vision for growth, and an unwavering commitment to the principles that underscore the world of finance. He spent his life cultivating relationships, pursuing passions, and leaving a lasting mark on those fortunate enough to have known him. Emeka was not only a beloved family member and friend, but he was also a distinguished member of the Blackstone community where his exceptional skills and commitment to his work made him a valued and respected colleague. He approached his responsibilities with unwavering dedication and a deep sense of integrity, leaving an indelible impression on all who had the privilege of working with him. Beyond his professional achievements, Emeka had a passion for life that was infectious. He had an insatiable curiosity and a thirst for knowledge, which led him to explore the world and engage in meaningful conversations with people from all walks of life. His ability to connect with others on a genuine level made him a true friend to many. He leaves behind a legacy of kindness, generosity, and a commitment to excellence.

**MARK HAVARD (A53) (FORMERLY FR. COLIN) died 9 October, 2023 aged 88.** After Gilling and JH, he joined St Aidan's and enjoyed cycling with friends to explore the countryside, the moors and stately homes around Ampleforth. He joined the monastery on leaving the school and read English at St Benet's. After some years teaching he was sent in 1964 to St Louis where he taught and was assistant procurator for ten years. After a period of leave of absence he received a dispensation from Rome and left the monastery, the priesthood and St Louis. He taught in New York and enjoyed acting

with an off-Broadway theatre group. He helped a friend of his from St Louis, a former Visitation nun, Mary Ellen McShane, to gain a post at the same school and they were later married in St Louis by Abbot Luke Rigby. Unable to have children, they adopted two boys as infants, Mark and then Michael (who later joined St Thomas's third year for a term). In 1979, after taking a main-frame computer course, he became a computer consultant on Wall Street until the family moved back to St Louis in 1988 where he worked for a single company until retirement in 2016. In 2011 he was asked to talk at St Louis university about his childhood recollections of Oxford and his father who had a medical practice a few doors along from St Benet's Hall and had been a friend of C S Lewis and J R R Tolkien and had been a member of their group, the Inklings. [The talk is available on the Internet.] He enjoyed helping and watching his two grandchildren grow and read, swam and walked and found peace and tranquillity in the habit of prayer and meditation that he had first learned as a monk.

**AMY LOUISE DAVIES ( née BUTLER ) (A04) died 24th October 2023, aged 37**, was among the second intake of Girls and very much enjoyed her two years at the College, making strong and lasting friendships. She went on to study Geography, gaining a 2:2 at Oxford Brookes.

Travel became Amy's passion, first to Australia and, in recent years, to most of South America. In between these adventures Amy financed her jaunts with a multiplicity of jobs and 'start-ups', which she later regretted not following through, including Cashmere Woolens, Vintage Clothing and Ethnic Products, sourced from her contacts from Columbia to Chile.

Triple Negative Breast Cancer was diagnosed in January of 2023 and Amy came home to the Cotswolds for care locally. This particular disease is rapid and terrifying in its spread and Amy bore her increasing pain and grim prospects with great bravery.

In September, just seven weeks before she died, Amy married the love of her life, Augusto, a wonderful Argentinian. The day was beautiful, happy and despite pain, Amy looked glorious. Augusto cared for his new wife with utmost dedication, along with their little dog in a country cottage - a situation that 'ticked all her boxes'.

With the rapid progression of the tumours, Amy spent time in hospitals before moving to the unsurpassable care of the Sue Ryder Hospice in Cheltenham for less than two days, dying peacefully, clutching a Crucifix her father had bought twenty years previously at Ampleforth.

Amy received The Anointing of the Sick during her incapacity and her Requiem Mass was in the church where she was baptised thirty seven years before, attended by many and indeed some lifelong friends from her Ampleforth 'Family'.

**CHRISTOPHER GAISFORD- ST LAWRENCE (C48) died 29 October, 2023, aged 93.** His father was a naval officer who served through both World Wars. He was brought up in Hampshire, but was always destined to inherit Howth Castle as his uncle was a bachelor. He went to Ladycross, and thence to wartime Ampleforth. He remembered his time at the school as particularly happy. He was assigned to St Cuthbert's where the housemaster, Fr Sebastian Lambert, presided over a house that valued country pursuits rather more highly than academic prowess. He preferred riding to hounds to beagling, and mixed beating for the shoot with ferreting for rabbits with which the cook, Fr Sebastian's sister-in-law doing her bit for the war effort, was on occasion able to feed the house, a welcome treat at a time when meat was rationed. After Ampleforth he completed the obligatory 14 weeks military training among the squaddies in Catterick Camp, an experience that enlarged his vocabulary, before going to Sandhurst. He was then commissioned into the Royal Scots Greys. He initially served with the regiment in Germany and Libya and finally ended his career on secondment in London. In 1955 his uncle Tom died and he inherited Howth, north of Dublin. It took him over a year to get out of the army, and before leaving London he married Penny Drew. They moved to Howth and four children followed over the next eight years. His two sons, Julian and Oliver both went to Ampleforth, and, at his insistence, to St Cuthbert's. The Gaisfords were Newmanite converts. Religion and Catholicism were always important to him. In 1973 he opened the first public golf course in Ireland and it was an instant success. To obtain a bar licence he built a small economy hotel. He devoted the next 25 years of his life to building this complex so that at its peak it generated the revenue needed to keep Howth going. Both Penny and he were heavy smokers. It never affected his health, a fact that he attributed to having started smoking a pipe, a privilege afforded the sixth form at Ampleforth on Wednesday nights after the weekly film. Penny developed chronic emphysema and died in 2010. He remarried Meryl Long, née Guinness in 2011. In 2019 the family sold the estate as following the recession in 2010 and a downturn in golf it was no longer viable. He was able to live on in the Castle till his death. Following an active day on 28th October he watched the World Cup Rugby and went to his bed. After midnight he died. The precise time is unclear- in more than one way the clocks changed.

**TIMOTHY HARMAN (A55) died on 2nd November 2023, aged 86,** was born in London just before the outbreak of the World War II. He often recalled his early life with memories of being rationed, and hearing air raid sirens. After the war, his family moved to Washington, USA with his father who was employed by the foreign office. After a five year stint in the USA, Timothy returned to the UK, coming to Ampleforth in 1950 and then reading law at Pembroke College, Cambridge. After graduating, he soon met his wife, Jane and quickly moved to the Bahamas, where they spent 10 years setting up, and running a successful law practice. Soon after their return to the UK, Jonathan, his son was born, and they moved to Kent where Timothy then began a career as a solicitor within the Civil Service. After retiring, he didn't use that as a chance to put his feet up, and instead he resumed work running a highly successful bed and breakfast business with

his wife. He had a magnetic personality that drew people to appreciate his integrity and balanced sense of justice as well as his storytelling and wit. He was a bibliophile with an encyclopaedic knowledge of history, literature and music, though technology was not a strong point and often led to comical grumbles as a result of his inability to turn on a computer, the dislike of the telephone and a distain for the “sat nav”. Timothy had an abiding, and deep faith, which acted as a rock throughout his life.

**Sir ERIC THOMAS (H70) died 10th November 2023, aged 70** was Bristol’s 12th Vice-Chancellor, and led the University for 14 years between 2001 and 2015 during a period of significant change in higher education. Born in Hartlepool he was a Geordie through-and-through. His grandfather was a miner who shaped his views and values - and his love of football in his early years. He initially took arts A-levels, in defiance of his father, a GP, who wanted him to become a doctor. After realising his mistake, he then took science A-levels in a year and graduated in medicine at Newcastle in 1976, and married his wife, Narell, the same year. He was appointed Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Southampton in 1991. In the same year, he became a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Southampton and became Head of the School of Medicine at 42 and Dean just three years later. From there, he went to Bristol as Vice-Chancellor in September 2001 with a vision of how he wanted it to be – academically excellent in teaching and research, attracting the best students and the best staff, and making an impact on the international stage. His establishment of clear career pathways for academics who wished to focus their efforts on teaching, was revolutionary for Bristol. He oversaw massive investment in people, buildings and the student experience based on a successful financial strategy; a leap forward in terms of philanthropic funding, an increase in student numbers and a new sense of partnership with the City of Bristol.

**PETER GRACE (A72) died 2nd December 2023, aged 70**, in a cycling accident, whilst riding with his cycling club, the San Francisco Randonneurs.

At school, Peter was a very independent spirit. He was academically gifted, specialising in science subjects, and was a passionate ornithologist. He represented the school in cross country and swimming and joined the High Atlas Mountains and Iceland expeditions. Later in his life he hiked through remote regions such as Patagonia and in Afghanistan. Finding Civil Engineering insufficiently fulfilling, he gained an MBA at Northwestern University in Illinois and was hired by the Bank of America as a corporate planner. He was skilled at squeezing incredible insights out of mind-numbing aggregations of data, but corporate life and its prospects for acquiring money and prestige carried little interest for him. So he began to focus his energies on finance for non-profits mainly in the education and health sectors, where he could use his skills in ways that made the world better. With his passion for the outdoors, he led groups rock climbing, hiking and skiing, often in the Yosemite National Park. His greatest achievement was the conquering of the

Half Dome, a 2,000 ft assault of its sheer granite face. Later he discovered his passion for long distance cycling.

He approached all these activities with vigour and enthusiasm, topped by a deep sense of empathy and inclusion towards others and this marked Peter out as a very special person. He married Connie in 1999; they adopted Anna from China, along with 11 other families adopting girls from an orphanage in a small city on the Yangtze River. This was a time of huge social disruption due to the flooding from the Three Gorges Dam. Throughout Anna's childhood up to today they met the families at least 3-4 times a year. Peter was instrumental in creating this valuable community.

In 2023, he and Roger Guthrie (A71) and Ben Osborne(A72) joined a cruise on a small expedition ship visiting the Falklands, South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula. Ben Osborne recalls: "I had the pleasure of introducing Peter to one of my favourite regions in the world. I saw him in his element, embracing new experiences, enthusing about everything he was seeing and firing insightful questions at the expedition staff. He joined the kayak group, which gave him many intimate encounters with whales, seals and penguins, and he was clearly moved by the icy beauty of the polar landscape and the variety and profusion of its wildlife. On the days at sea, he became a key member of a small group of naturalists, for whom his enthusiasm encouraged everyone around him to take an active interest in the seabirds and marine mammals that we encountered on our journey. His dedication was such that we had to drag him indoors for the various mandatory briefings! I got the impression that he enjoyed every single second of this adventure."

Peter will be missed by the many groups of people whose lives he enriched in many different ways.

**BERNARD FIELD (T50) died 7th January, 2024 aged 91**, was a founder member of St Thomas's House and was remembered by a later member of the house as "among the 'leaders' in Fr Denis' work developing the ethos of the new house. In a way, like Fr Denis himself, he was quietly there in the background, never pushing himself forward of causing ripples, or drawing attention to himself, but was not only fully supportive of the new ethos, but like Fr Dennis, was tolerant of our small group of non- conformists conducting our parallel lifestyle in the outhouse and garden beyond Matron's house [which] allowed a true family spirit to develop." He learnt to sail in the Sea Scouts and was a keen and proficient aero-modeller. He did his National Service in the RAF and was awarded his 'Wings' after training as a pilot in Canada. He joined his cousin, George Beale (D47) in Southern Rhodesia to start a mail-order business that came to nothing and then worked for Vacuum Oil, travelling for them in Southern Africa but being so impressed with the service he got from the Rover Company in Solihull with a pre-war Rover he was restoring that he returned to England to work for them, eventually in Fleet Sales. After successive take-overs by Standard-Triumph and BMC he became

disillusioned with their business ways and after one or two unsuccessful sales jobs retired to his bungalow to live a solitary and frugal life, walking miles each week to Mass in Lymington or New Milton until Covid immobilised him. Anybody who gave him a lift would be inveigled into his garden to pray the Rosary or engaged in theological conversation. He enjoyed observing insects and butterflies in his garden and generally had a passion for the glory of nature. He had bought a 4 tonner sloop but after sailing it from Dartmouth to Lymington, it remained propped by the side of his house until he died.

**CHRISTOPHER RANDAG (A60) died 8 February 2024 aged 62** after a tragic accident and is survived by his wife, Toki and their daughter, Helen.

**PETER McCANN (A58) died 4th March 2024, aged 83**, was the son of John McCann an ophthalmologist in Crosby. With Peter Burke (A57) on the last night of the Christmas term, 1957, he scaled the tower crane on the Abbey Church building site to hang a large sheet on the jib proclaiming Happy Christmas, visible to those in the school train from Gilling next morning, by which time both had been beaten by their housemaster, Fr Anthony Ainscough, who could not help himself laughing. He went to TCD to study medicine but switched to economics and experimental psychology as well as founding a drinking society called the Sons of Bacchus, which was also a swimming team. When he encountered two newspapermen trying to encourage the writer Brendan Behan, who had recently given up alcohol, to drink; Peter tipped a pint of Guinness over the photographer's head and was loudly applauded. Later, as a stockbroker, realising that he had become an alcoholic himself, he went into recovery with Alcoholics Anonymous and then, with his wife Margaret Ann, opened a treatment centre in Wiltshire for alcoholics called Clouds. The rules were strict, using the AA 12 Step programme and group therapy. Half the patients paid fees and half paid nothing, subsidised by the rich as well as social security payments and the charitable trust that ran Clouds. In 1985 it was featured in a television documentary. In 1988, having failed to persuade the trustees to back his plans for expansion, he left Clouds and opened Castle Craig near Edinburgh which became the largest residential alcoholic treatment centre in Europe and went on to open similar centres abroad. His family continue the work. He was a Knight of Malta and on his car number plate were the words 'Let Go and Let God'.





