

Famous RHS FP's

The Royal High has educated many who went on to become celebrities in many fields. This document is one of the resident PDF's on the RHS digital history, and is list of a small selection from early days through to the present – Wikipedia lists close on 150 in a wide range of categories. In addition to these, five further names are the subject of detailed biographies launched in early 2021 on the RHS London Club website. In total, they represent virtually everyone on the control document for the creation of extended biographies. Some readers will have other ideas for justifiable entries, and we are keen to hear from you – use the Contact Us facilities on the RHS Club or RHS London Club websites

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Sir Walter Scott

So much is written about this famous High Scholar that this history will leave the reader to investigate elsewhere until future editions. Wikipedia and a myriad of other websites have much information, and the High School histories, available elsewhere within this history, also have many articles and recollections. Among many fine websites are; [The Scottish Poetry Library](#) and the [Abbotsford home site](#)

Alexander Graham Bell



3rd March 1847 - 2nd August 1922

(This article has been retrieved from the RHS Club website, where it has resided for many years)

Alexander Graham Bell is undoubtedly the most famous scientific figure to emerge from the Royal High in the 19th Century, and vies with Sir Walter Scott for the title of our most famous son.

The following potted autobiography is an amalgam of articles in the public domain along with some photographs throughout his life.



A selection of photographs taken throughout his life

As a young child, Bell, like his brothers, received his early schooling at home from his father. The family home was at 16 South Charlotte Street, which now has a commemorative plaque marking it as Alexander Graham Bell's birthplace. He had two brothers: James Bell (1845-1870) and Edward Charles Bell (1848-1867), both of whom died of tuberculosis. His father was Professor Alexander Melville Bell, and his mother Eliza Grace (nee Symonds). Although he was born Alexander, at age 10 he pleaded to his father to have a middle name like his brothers. For his 11th birthday, his father acquiesced and allowed him to adopt the middle name Graham, chosen out of admiration for Alexander Graham, a Canadian being treated by his father, and a boarder who had become a family friend. To close relatives and friends he remained 'Aleck' which his father continued to call him in later life.

At the age of 11, he was enrolled at the Royal High School, Edinburgh, Scotland, which he left at age 15, completing only the first four forms. His school record was undistinguished, marked by absenteeism and lacklustre grades. His main interest remained in the sciences, especially biology, while he treated other school subjects with indifference, to the dismay of his demanding father. Upon leaving school, Bell travelled to London to live with his grandfather, Alexander Bell. During the year he spent with his grandfather, a love of learning was born, with long hours spent in serious discussion and study. The elder Bell took great efforts to have his young pupil learn to speak clearly and with conviction, the attributes that his pupil would need to become a teacher himself. At age 16, Bell secured a position as a "pupil-teacher" of elocution and music, in Weston House Academy, in Elgin. Although he was enrolled as a student in Latin and Greek, he instructed classes himself in return for board and £10 per session. The following year, he attended the University of Edinburgh, joining his older brother Melville who had enrolled there the previous year.

In 1870, Bell emigrated with his family to Canada, and the following year he moved to the United States to teach. There he pioneered a system called visible speech, developed by his father, to teach deaf-mute children. In 1872

Bell founded a school in Boston to train teachers of the deaf. The school subsequently became part of Boston University, where Bell was appointed professor of vocal physiology in 1873. He became a naturalised U.S. citizen in 1882.

Bell had long been fascinated by the idea of transmitting speech, and by 1875 had come up with a simple receiver that could turn electricity into sound. Others were working along the same lines, including an Italian-American Antonio Meucci, and debate continues as to who should be credited with inventing the telephone. However, Bell was granted a patent for the telephone on 7th March, 1876 and it developed quickly. Within a year, the first telephone exchange was built in Connecticut, and the Bell Telephone Company was created in 1877, with Bell the owner of a third of the shares, quickly making him a wealthy man.

In 1880, Bell was awarded the French Volta Prize for his invention and with the money, founded the Volta Laboratory in Washington, where he continued experiments in communication, in medical research, and in techniques for teaching speech to the deaf, working with Helen Keller among others. In 1885 he acquired land in Nova Scotia and established a summer home there where he continued experiments, particularly in the field of aviation.

In 1888, Bell was one of the founding members of the National Geographic Society, and served as its president from 1896 to 1904, also helping to establish its journal.

Bell died on 2nd August 1922 at his home in Nova Scotia.



Dr Bell visits the Royal High School for the last time on St Andrew's Day 1920



The Evening News carries the same story as shown on the left

We are indebted to Kenny Orr, Ronnie Tait and Jimmy Dignall for their contributions to this article.

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Captain Douglas Ford GC

(This article has been retrieved from the RHS Club website, where it has resided for many years)



Douglas in Junior school in 1929



Douglas in the 1st Cricket XI, 1936



In the uniform of a Captain in the Royal Scots in 1939

At the 2003 Remembrance Day service at the School, the Rector recounted a tale of valour involving a former pupil. The 1942 Easter edition of Schola Regia listed 'Capt. Douglas Ford (leaving year 1936), missing – Hong Kong'. Douglas had been taken prisoner by the Japanese on Christmas day 1941 when Hong Kong surrendered. In captivity, much against the rules, he organised the distribution of medical supplies and drugs which safeguarded the health of his fellow prisoners. Later, Douglas was involved in a mass plan of escape, but was arrested, tortured, and finally sentenced to death. On 19th December 1943, his captors led him to a beach overlooking the South China Sea. After Douglas had expertly dug his own grave in the true Homeric way, and those of two fellow prisoners who were too weak, he was shot. He was posthumously awarded the George Cross.

Several photographs showing some of Douglas's sporting life at school are shown below. Douglas was School Captain in 1935.



This is the Junior 3 (now 7th Junior) cricket team at Holyrood in 1929. Douglas Ford is front row extreme right. Sir Frederick O'Brien QC, who donated this picture, is extreme left in the rear row. Frederick, Club President in 1975 was, as he put it, (and can be seen) 'larking about'.



The 1st Rugby XV of 1935-36. Douglas is second from the left in the front seated row



The 1st Cricket XI of 1936. Douglas is second from the left in the front seated row

Three Schoolmates

The 1936 Annual Report (shown below) has, like all those until the late 1990's when the role became too large, a list of all pupils at the School. The one shown is remarkable in that three War Heroes are on the same page, two of them in the same fifth form class, and one a year ahead as Captain of School.

FORM V A.

Adam, Clifford Wallace James
 815 Anderson, Robert Sanders
 Baum, Dennis Jacob
 Beaton, James
 Brown, Eric Melrose
 Currie, Ian Stanley
 820 Donald, John Robert
 Fingland, Stanley James Gunn
 Gordon, Douglas Frederick Perry
 Jeffrey, Bruce Carstairs
 Judge, Thomas Douglas
 825 Lambert, Kenneth Henderson
 Lomax, Eric Sutherland
 M'Beath, James Ian
 Miller, David Fleming Smith
 Nelson, Charles Cannon
 830 Nicoll, Ian Alfred
 Patterson, George Gordon
 Pearce, William Cairns Vivian

FORM VI A

Barnetson, William
 Ewart, Roy Gibson
 Ford, Douglas
 Grant, Ian William Ballantyne
 865 King, Archibald David Morrison
 Kydd, Robert
 MacDonald, Stanley Kenneth
 Scott
 M'Gill, James
 Smith, Thomas Douglas
 870 Steljes, John Ferguson
 Wallace, Peter Rennie Graham
 Wiseman, Denis Buchanan
 Yuille, David Tulloch

Annual Report 1936. In form VA are pupils number 818 (Eric Melrose Brown) and 826 (Eric Sutherland Lomax), while in form VIA is pupil number 863 (Douglas Ford).

These three pupils made their mark on Humanity in different ways. The first two served in Europe and Singapore respectively, and lived into their mid 90's, while the latter was executed by the Japanese in Hong Kong at the age of 25 on 13th December 1943.



Douglas Ford as a Lieutenant in the Royal Scots in 1939



Eric Lomax as 2nd Lieutenant Royal Signals attached to the 5th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery



Eric Brown as an RNVR Pilot, probably in 1939

The stories of **Douglas Ford** and **Eric Brown** are told on the RHS Club website (and in this History in the 'Famous People' pages).

See http://archive.royalhigh.co.uk/a_tale_of_valour.htm and http://archive.royalhigh.co.uk/famous_people.htm

The story of **Eric Lomax** came into public notice when a film one of the books he had written about his wartime experiences was made into a film. 'Railway Man' recounted his life from his capture in Singapore to his reconciliation with one of his Japanese torturers while in captivity in Thailand.

The following account has been compiled from the account in Wikipedia

In 1939, aged 19, Lomax joined the Royal Corps of Signals before World War II broke out. Following time in the 152nd Officer Cadet Training Unit, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant on 28 December 1940. He was given the service number 165340. He was a Royal Signals officer attached to the 5th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery. As a lieutenant, he was captured by the Japanese following the surrender of Singapore in February 1942. He, along with the other Far East Prisoners Of War (FEPOW), undertook a forced march to Changi Prison. He was then taken to Kanchanaburi, Thailand and forced to build the Burma Railway. In 1943 he and five other prisoners were tortured by the Kempeitai and convicted of 'anti-Japanese activities' after a clandestine radio (which he had constructed) was found in the camp. He was transferred to Outram Road Prison in Singapore for the remainder of the war.

On 12 September 1946, it was gazetted that he had been mentioned in despatches "in recognition of gallant and distinguished services while (a Prisoner) of War". He was awarded the Efficiency Medal (Militia) in 1949 and was granted the honorary rank of captain. He retired from the Army in 1949. Lomax was the first patient of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture. His later life included reconciliation with one of his former torturers, interpreter Takashi Nagase of Kurashiki, Japan. Takashi had written a book on his own experiences during and after the war entitled Crosses and Tigers, and financed a Buddhist temple at the bridge to atone for his actions during the war.

The following Obituary in the Telegraph of 26th May 2017 is a flowing account of his life
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/military-obituaries/army-obituaries/9596599/Eric-Lomax.html>

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Captain Eric Brown

21st January 1919 - 21st February 2016

(This article has been retrieved from the RHS Club website, where it has resided for many years)

It was at the 2010 Prize-Giving that a remarkable nonagenarian delivered the FP address, and became better known to the School and FP Club. He had long been a member of and contributor to the life of the FP London Club, but had not (at least recently) graced Edinburgh with his presence. Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown, CBE, DSC, AFC, Hon FRAeS, RN to state his full title, was a wartime flying officer, engaging in many dangerous sorties, and post war became a test pilot.

Eric Melrose "Winkle" Brown, (born 21 January 1919) was a former Royal Navy officer and test pilot who flew more types of aircraft than anyone else in history. He is also the Fleet Air Arm's most decorated pilot and holds the world record for aircraft carrier landings.

Brown received the affectionate nickname "Winkle" from his Royal Navy colleagues. Short for "Periwinkle", a small mollusc, the name was given to Brown because of his short (5ft 7in) stature

Eric was awarded the title of *Greatest ever test pilot* by the Guild of Air Pilots and Air navigators in 2008.

In one of his several books, *Wings on my sleeve*, Eric takes the earliest opportunity to feature The Royal High School prominently in his recollections by quoting on page 1 of chapter 1.

"As a schoolboy I won a scholarship from my local primary school to Edinburgh's historic Royal High School, with its classical Greek temple buildings set in the heart of the Scottish capital. There I had a most happy schooling with academic honours (runner-up to Dux of School) and sporting successes in Rugby (1st XV) and Gymnastics (school champion)".

Eric is indeed shown sitting on the ground (right) in front of the 1935-36 1st XV.

An extract from his *Wikipedia* article reads: "After World War II, Brown commanded the Enemy Aircraft Flight, an elite group of pilots who test-flew captured German aircraft. That experience makes Brown one of the few men qualified to compare both Allied and Axis "warbirds" as they actually flew during the war. He flight-tested 53 German aircraft, including the Me 163. He tested this rocket plane in powered flight as apparently the only Allied pilot (having done that rather unofficially, as it was deemed more or less suicidal undertaking due to the notoriously dangerous propellants, C-Stoff and T-Stoff), and the Messerschmitt Me 262, Arado Ar 234 and Heinkel He 162 turbojet planes.

Fluent in German, he helped interview many Germans after World War II, including Wernher von Braun and Hermann Göring, Willy Messerschmitt, Dr. Ernst Heinkel., Kurt Tank and top Luftwaffe fighter ace with 352 victories, Erich Hartmann. In addition, Brown spoke to Heinrich Himmler. Coincidentally, Brown had himself been using Himmler's very own personal aircraft, a specially-converted Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor that had been captured and was being used by the RAE Flight based at the former Luftwaffe airfield at Schleswig. He was also able to renew acquaintances with German aviatrix Hanna Reitsch, whom he had met in Germany before the war. On 15th November 2014 he was the guest on 'Desert Island Discs' 3000th edition.

to hear the programme.

Eric has spoken at two recent Royal High functions, firstly at the 2011 School Prize-Giving, where he received a standing ovation, and secondly at the 2012 London Club dinner where he captivated the audience with tales of his meetings with Nazi leaders before and after the War.

Eric Brown passed away on 21st February 2016 aged 97.



Eric in his uniform as a Naval Captain



Eric pictured on his graduation day in 'Wings on my Sleeve. Halfway down page one he has already described his days as a Bursar at 'Edinburgh's historic Royal High School'



Eric delivers the address at the 2012 London Club dinner.
The top table: Captain Eric Brown RN, Rector Jane Frith, London Club President Valerie Peay, President Louise Stevenson and School Captain Craig Taylor



Eric flanked by two Royal High School prefects at the 2015 Mountbatten Address in Edinburgh

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John Cruikshank VC

John Alexander Cruikshank was a High Scholar from 1930 until 1933 or 1934, when he transferred for his last 2 or 3 senior years (for an unknown reason) to Daniel Stewarts. As a consequence, we share his allegiance. After leaving school, he was apprenticed to the Commercial Bank in Edinburgh. He initially joined the Army in 1939, but transferred to the RAF in 1942 where he underwent flight training in Canada and the United States, earning his wings in July 1942. After further training, he was assigned to No. 210 Squadron in March 1943, piloting Consolidated PBY Catalina flying boats, flying from RAF Sullom Voe in Shetland. Flying Officer Cruikshank was twenty-four years old when he piloted a Consolidated Catalina anti-submarine flying boat from Sullom Voe on 17 July 1944 on a patrol north into the Norwegian Sea. The objective was to protect the British Home Fleet as it returned from the unsuccessful Operation Mascot raid on the German battleship *Tirpitz*. There the "Cat" caught a German Type VIIC U-boat on the surface. The VC citation which follows explains what followed:

The King has been graciously pleased to confer the Victoria Cross on the undermentioned officer in recognition of most conspicuous bravery: —

Flying Officer John Alexander Cruikshank (126700), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. No. 210 Squadron.

This officer was the captain and pilot of a Catalina flying boat which was recently engaged on an anti-submarine patrol over northern waters. When a U-boat was sighted on the surface, Flying Officer Cruikshank at once turned to the attack. In the face of fierce anti-aircraft fire, he manoeuvred into position and ran in to release his depth charges. Unfortunately they failed to drop. Flying Officer Cruikshank knew that the failure of this attack had deprived him of the advantage of surprise and that his aircraft offered a good target to the enemy's determined and now heartened gunners.

Without hesitation, he climbed and turned to come in again. The Catalina was met by intense and accurate fire and was repeatedly hit. The navigator/bomb aimer, was killed. The second pilot and two other members of the crew were injured. Flying Officer Cruikshank was struck in seventy-two places, receiving two serious wounds in the lungs and ten penetrating wounds in the lower limbs. His aircraft was badly damaged and filled with the fumes of exploding shells. But he did not falter. He pressed home his attack, and released the depth charges himself, straddling the submarine perfectly. The U-boat was sunk. He then collapsed and the second pilot took over the controls. He recovered shortly afterwards and, though bleeding profusely, insisted on resuming command and retaining it until he was satisfied that the damaged aircraft was under control, that a course had been set for base and that all the necessary signals had been sent. Only then would he consent to receive medical aid and have his wounds attended to. He refused morphia in case it might prevent him from carrying on.

During the next five and a half hours of the return flight he several times lapsed into unconsciousness owing to loss of blood. When he came to his first thought on each occasion was for the safety of his aircraft and crew. The damaged aircraft eventually reached base but it was clear that an immediate landing would be a hazardous task for the wounded and less experienced second pilot. Although able to breathe only with the greatest difficulty, Flying Officer Cruikshank insisted on being carried forward and propped up in the second pilot's seat. For a full hour, in spite of his agony and ever-increasing weakness, he gave orders as necessary, refusing to allow the aircraft to be brought down until the conditions of light and sea made this possible without undue risk.

With his assistance the aircraft was safely landed on the water. He then directed the taxiing and beaching of the aircraft so that it could easily be salvaged. When the medical officer went on board, Flying Officer Cruickshank collapsed and he had to be given a blood transfusion before he could be removed to hospital.

By pressing home the second attack in his gravely wounded condition and continuing his exertions on the return journey with his strength failing all the time, he seriously prejudiced his chance of survival even if the aircraft safely reached its base. Throughout, he set an example of determination, fortitude and devotion to duty in keeping with the highest traditions of the Service

The BBC commissioned a documentary which recreated the events – watch it [here](#).

John never returned to active service, mainly due to his wounds, leaving the RAF in September 1946 to return to his career in banking, from which he retired in 1977. His story was told to RHS pupils at the Remembrance service on November 11th 2019. He is now the oldest surviving VC holder, and the first to reach the age of 100. The RHS Club recorded a video tribute to John which was viewed by him at his Aberdeen home on his birthday.



John Cruickshank wearing his Victoria Cross near the Cenotaph



John at his Aberdeen home on his 100th



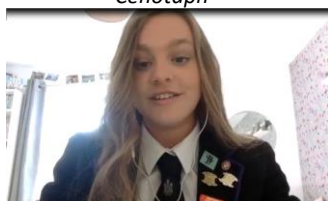
John's medal insignia



Flying Officer Cruickshank



RAF 210 Squadron Insignia



School Captain Lucy Krauth during the recording of the video tribute



John at his Aberdeen home on his 100th



Consolidated PBY Catalina Model 28



The Royal High School extends a tribute to John Alexander Cruickshank VC on the occasion of his birthday on 20th May 2020



The video tribute opening credit

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David Robb

(This article has been retrieved from the RHS Club website, where it has resided for many years)

David Robb delivered an impressive Former Pupil's address at the 2012 Prize-Giving. Recognised immediately as one of the stars of Downton Abbey, and accompanied by his wife, actress Briony McRoberts, he recollected his schooldays, and his experiences in acting and life. One story recalled an entry in the Funeral Order of service for the talented and famous English Rugby player, Andy Ripley. He had said "You can earn a living from what you get, but only get a life from what you give". David commended that approach to the students. He was in much demand after the event for autographs from parents and students.

David can be seen in the 1965-66 Prefects photograph.

David Robb has starred in various British films and television shows, including films such as *Swing Kids* and *Hellbound*. He is well known for playing Germanicus in the famous 1976 BBC production of *I, Claudius* and as Robin Grant, one of the principal character in Thames Television's 1981 series *The Flame Trees of Thika*. He has also performed as a voice actor for several *Star Wars* video games and had a recurring role in the fantasy television series *Highlander: The Series*. He has worked extensively on BBC radio drama including as Charles in the original radio series of *Up the Garden Path* opposite Imelda Staunton, as Captain Jack Aubrey in the BBC Radio 4 adaptations of the Patrick O'Brian "Aubrey" novels and as Richard Hannay in several adaptations of the John Buchan novels, including *Mr Standfast* in 2007.

David was born in London. Brought up in Edinburgh and educated at the Royal High School, since 2004 he and

his wife, the actress and activist Briony McRoberts, ran in the Edinburgh Marathon to raise money for leukemia research.

He also volunteers regularly for Samaritans duty, as reported in the London Evening Standard in November 2011. *'When someone calls the Samaritans, the last thing they expect is to speak to a star of Sunday night television. But the actor David Robb who plays Downton Abbey's Dr Clarkson, has volunteered at the charity's Soho branch for 24 years.* The Downton Abbey website describes his experience thus:

London born, and raised in Edinburgh, David Robb is a veteran MASTERPIECE actor. In addition to his portrayal of Germanicus in the iconic 1977 production *I, Claudius*, he has appeared in MASTERPIECE's *Flame Trees of Thika*, *Parnell and the Englishwoman* and *Sharpe's Peril*. His feature film work includes *Swing Kids*, *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* and *The Highlander*.

Robb has lent his voice to several *Star Wars* video games, and worked extensively for BBC radio on dramas and adaptations.



David Robb as Germanicus in the award-winning 1977 TV adaptation of 'I Claudius'

Being interviewed in 2010 about his long association with The Samaritans



As Dr Richard Clarkson in Downton Abbey



David and Neil Zeiger at the 2017 RHS London Club dinner

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Robin Cook

(This article has been retrieved from the RHS Club website, where it has resided for many years)

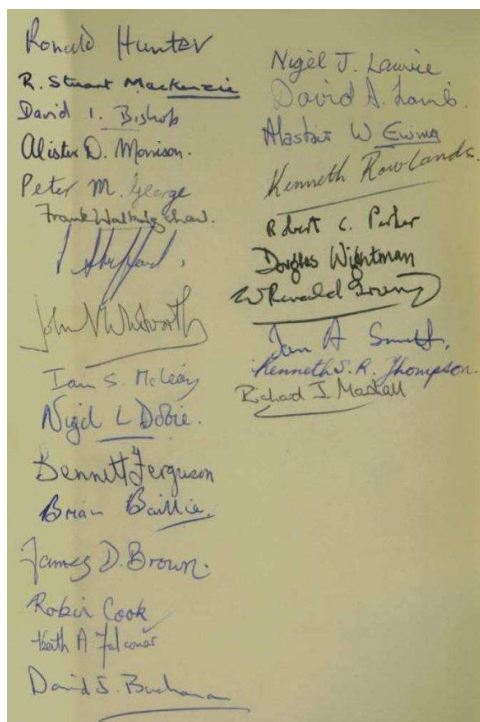
28th February 1946 - 6th August 2005



Former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook attended the Royal High for four years between 1961 to 1964, but was somewhat reticent about his RHS schooling and it failed to make his entry in Who's Who. He is however remembered by some of his schoolmates, two of whom provided the following anecdotes

Robin Boog (Former RHS Club President) wrote "Robin Cook was at Royal High from, I think, 1961 to 1964 when his father was one of the Science teachers. Around Easter 1964 his father moved on and Robin finished his sixth year in the Boarding House. I know this because I had to move to accommodate him!"

Peter Nisbet, who is now resident in Blaenavon, South Wales shared the same leaving ceremony as Robin in 1964, and his traditional RHS Club leaving gift - the History of the School by WCA Ross. The inside back cover shows Robin's signature among others in class 6X. The inside front cover was signed by teachers of the time and is also reproduced here.



Robin Cook's entry is third from the foot of the left column

Robin's teachers included many old favourites, including Jock Cunningham, Bill Bowie, Willie Cochrane, Tom Fairlie, Miss Whiteside and Nigel McIsaac

He was for some time a member of the RHS London Club

A detailed life history can be found in Wikipedia.

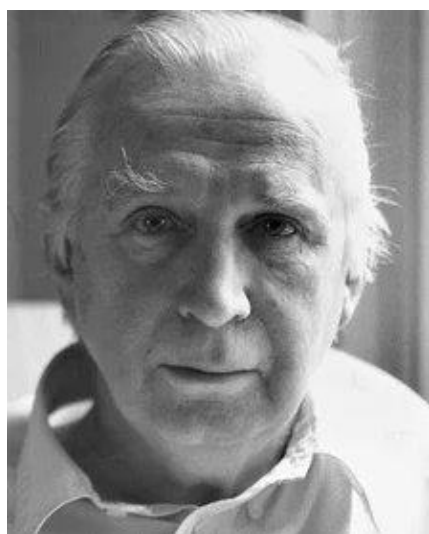
Robin Cook collapsed and died while climbing Ben Stack mountain in Scotland on 6 August 2005

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Karl Miller

Born August 2 1931, died September 24 2014

Karl Miller was a brilliant magazine editor who revitalised the Listener, co-founded the London Review of Books and for many years occupied the Lord Northcliffe Chair of Modern English Literature at University College London.



Like many of the best editors, he was not an easy or a natural writer. "I always wanted to be an editor," he wrote in Rebecca's Vest, the first of his two volumes of memoirs; and as a young man he made his mark as the literary editor of both The Spectator and the New Statesman. "I have done what I wanted to do, though I would have liked to be more a writer of books than I have succeeded in being," he continued.

His books were few and brief, and – like those of Cyril Connolly, another busy reviewer and editor – they often consisted of recycled pieces loosely stitched together. Though daunting when first encountered – he seemed the quintessence of the dour, laconic Scot – he was regarded by those who knew him well as witty and warm-hearted, always anxious to encourage young writers and helping them to do their best.

Karl Fergus Connor Miller was born at Straiton, Midlothian, on August 2 1931. His parents had split up before he was born: his father was an ineffectual would-be artist, with whom Miller enjoyed a sporadic and often embattled relationship; his mother was an ardent socialist, and Karl himself remained loyal to the faith.

He was brought up by his maternal grandmother on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The Connor family deeply disapproved of his father's bohemian ways, and Miller's sense of being torn between the Millers and the Connors prompted his lifelong fascination with doubles, doppelgangers and the holding of contradictory views. He was never "conscious of bearing my parents any ill will for not being around", but "an orphan self took hold: vulnerable and fierce, bereaved and aggrieved".

"He who is kept out tries both to stay out and to get in," he wrote, and the sense of being both an outsider and an insider was to remain with him.

At Edinburgh's Old Royal High School, Karl was an unabashed "swot", and the English master, Hector MacIver, encouraged his literary ambitions. MacIver was a friend of Dylan Thomas and Louis MacNeice, and he introduced his pupil to the poet Norman MacCaig; in later life Miller devoted much of his time to advancing the claims of Scottish writers, and he came to regret that he had not expended more energy on beating the drum on MacCaig's behalf.

"A hard-working scholarship boy", Miller left school as "Dux, a valedictory orator, a poet", resolved "in a Scottish way, to get on". He did his National Service with the Royal Engineers, but spent most of his time broadcasting on the British Forces Network in Germany.

In 1951 Miller took up a place at Downing College, Cambridge, under the aegis of F R Leavis. They might have seemed natural soul mates, but in a further manifestation of contradictory behaviour Miller was bowled over by the stylish ex-public schoolboys with whom Cambridge abounded, and – to Leavis's horror, no doubt – he quickly abandoned textual analysis for student journalism.

He was elected as an Apostle, and edited *Granta*, working closely with Nick Tomalin and Mark Boxer, the flamboyant epitome of "metropolitan" corruption, and publishing early work by Ted Hughes and Thom Gunn; his friends included Eric Hobsbawm and Neal Ascherson. Despite the time devoted to *Granta*, he took a first. He spent some months in Harvard, researching Scottish literature; he also met and married Jane Collet, whose sister married his Cambridge contemporary Jonathan Miller.

After spells at the Treasury and as a BBC producer, working on *Tonight and Monitor*, Miller found his true métier when, in 1958, he succeeded Robert Kee as literary editor of *The Spectator*, then owned by Ian Gilmour and edited by Brian Inglis; his colleagues included Katharine Whitehorn, Bernard Levin and Alan Brien. In 1961 he moved to the *New Statesman*, then edited by John Freeman. He published reviews by, among others, Frank Kermode and Christopher Ricks, as well as the early poems of Seamus Heaney. He had a soft spot for Eng Lit academics, and when the new editor, Paul Johnson, refused to print a review by William Empson on the ground that it was "incomprehensible", he resigned on the spot. Johnson handed him a compensatory cheque for £3,000 – a huge sum in those days – but he tore it into shreds.

Miller was appointed editor of the *Listener* in 1967. Under his predecessor, the historian Maurice Ashley, it had been a tedious BBC publication, dutifully reprinting Third Programme talks and little else. Miller revolutionised it, making it the liveliest of weekly magazines. He retained his liking for impenetrable Eng Lit dons, but he offset them with Mark Boxer's cultish comic strip, the *Stringalongs*, based on the doings of an ultra-trendy literary couple in Camden Town. He employed Clive James as the television critic and John Carey as the radio critic; among the authors who wrote for the paper were Dan Jacobson, V S Naipaul, Conor Cruise O'Brien, Ian Hamilton and Brigid Brophy.

In 1974 he was again at a loose end, and Noel Annan, a fellow-Apostle and the Provost of UCL, suggested that he should replace Frank Kermode as the Northcliffe Professor, despite the fact that he had no post-graduate degree and had yet to write his first book, a study of the Scottish judge and writer Henry Cockburn, for which he won the James Tait Black Prize. Miller made the UCL English department into one of the liveliest in the country, encouraging the likes of Dan Jacobson and Stephen Spender to work with his students.

Miller co-founded the *London Review of Books* in 1979 with Mary-Kay Wilmers and Susannah Clapp to plug the gap left by the *TLS*, which was hors de combat for a year thanks to a printers' strike. It soon declared its independence from the parental *New York Review of Books*, and its long, ruminative essays suited Miller perfectly both as an editor and as an essayist. He edited the journal from 1979 to 1989, and co-edited it until 1992, when he fell out with its proprietor, Mary-Kay Wilmers. That same year he also resigned from UCL.

Miller's books include *Cockburn's Millennium*, *Doubles*, *The Electric Shepherd* (a study of his fellow-Scot James Hogg, the author of *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, whose work he included in the UCL syllabus) and two volumes of memoirs, *Rebecca's Vest* and *Dark Horses*. He was a passionate and ferocious soccer player, usually in Battersea Park. "I have never been very keen on other people," he once wrote; but although he claimed that he

lost half his friends when he stopped being an editor, his antipathy was not reciprocated. Every now and then he would visit a chapel in the East End and “give thanks with all the religion that is left in me that I haven’t spent my life as a freelance journalist working for papers where no one minds about literature”. He minded more than most, and did much to shape the literary tastes of his generation.

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Sarah Boyack



2004 PG – Opening of the refurbished School, with George Smuga, Evelyn Small and others



1999 – Donald Dewar’s first Cabinet – as Minister for Environment, Planning & Transport (far right in photo)

Sarah Boyack

Sarah Boyack was brought up in Edinburgh where she was one of the first female entrants (1973) at the Royal High School. She went on to study at the University of Glasgow in 1979, gaining an MA Honours degree in Modern History and Politics. She became active in the Labour Club, where she was a protégé of Margaret Curran. She became chair of the Labour Club in 1981–82, and chair of the National Organisation of Labour Students in 1985–86. During her time at Glasgow University, she was involved in supporting the twinning with Bir Zeit University in the West Bank.

She then did a Diploma in Town and Country Planning at Heriot-Watt University.

She worked as a town planner in the London Borough of Brent then as a strategic planner in Central Regional Council in Stirling. She then became a lecturer at the School of Planning and Housing at Heriot Watt University and was Convener of the Scottish Branch of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 1997.

She was a member of Donald Dewar’s first Holyrood Cabinet in 1999, and currently (2017) is an MSP (Regional for Lothian).

Sarah gave the Former Pupils address at the 2004 Prize Giving, and unveiled the plaque commemorating the opening of the refurbished School. She was no stranger to the Memorial stage, having collected prizes for Debating and Public Speaking (no surprise there) and the Nicholson Prize for Music.

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David Ian Olive 16 April 1937 – 7 November 2012) CBE FRS FLSW, was a British theoretical physicist.



Olive made fundamental contributions to string theory and duality theory.

David was born in Middlesex in 1937 and educated at the Royal High School, Edinburgh and Edinburgh University. At the Royal High, he recorded the remarkable achievement of being Dux in each year of his education, finishing as Dux of School in 1955. He was an outstanding student, his only shortcoming being his notoriously illegible handwriting, reputedly the origin of an early Who’s Who entry listing his interests as ‘music and gold’. (David was a keen golfer.)

He moved to St John’s College, Cambridge, obtaining his PhD under the supervision of John Taylor in 1963. After a short postdoctoral appointment at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, David returned to Cambridge as a Fellow of Churchill College, becoming a Lecturer in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics in 1965.

In 1971, David made what he has described as a “momentous personal decision” to sacrifice his tenured position

in Cambridge and move to the Theory Division, CERN as a fixed-term staff member. In 1977, David returned to the U.K. to take up a lectureship at Imperial College, becoming Professor in 1984 and Head of the Theoretical Physics Group in 1988. In 1992 he moved to Swansea University to help set up the new theoretical physics group.

He was awarded the Dirac Prize and Medal of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in 1997. He was a Founding Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales, elected FRS 1987, and appointed CBE in 2002.

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Fraser Doherty

Fraser delivered FP address at the 2014 Prize Giving. In his 5th year (2005), Fraser won the fifth-year prizes for Accounting and Finance, and Economics, also Open Prizes, for Dux in Business Education and the Prize for Business Management. He obviously wasn't starting slowly, and surely was no stranger to the Memorial stage.

Fraser is a Scottish entrepreneur from Edinburgh, founder of SuperJam, Envelope Coffee, and co-founder of Beer52. He is also director of the registered Scottish charity, The SuperJam Tea Parties.

Fraser, through SuperJam, has invested in various charitable projects. The SuperJam Tea Parties, which runs tea parties for lonely elderly people who live alone or in care homes, was established by Doherty in 2008.

Fraser's website says;

Fraser Doherty is the founder of the 100% Fruit jam company, SuperJam. He started the company at the age of fourteen, using his Gran's recipes. Since then, SuperJam has grown to supply over 2,000 supermarkets around the world, selling millions of jars along the way.

SuperJam has been entered into the National Museum of Scotland as an 'Iconic Scottish Brand', has won over 20 innovation awards and launched in seven countries around the world.

As well as sharing his story at hundreds of speaking engagements, Fraser is a regular contributor to magazines and an author of two books; SuperBusiness and The SuperJam Cookbook. He has won numerous awards, and was made MBE in 2014 for services to Business.

In his Prize Giving address in 2014, he recounted how he had started selling eggs at the age of 11, before being taught how to make jam at his Granny's house in Glasgow. His parents soon found that there was no space in their kitchen for anything except jam making equipment, and Fraser recounted how he sold jam at School and via his parents' friends, and that a major influence at school was his Business Education teacher Anne Laing.



Fraser delivers the FP address at the 2014 Prize Giving (fourth left)



Fraser addressing the 'Young Developers' symposium



Fraser displaying his MBE in 2014

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Pete Clark's list of post-millennial FP's

Pete Clark, in sending an email to the School historian, thanking for the Gala Dinner organisation, but wishing that younger FP's had been mentioned – it was after all a celebration of 50 years at **BARNTON** !

"It's possible that some of the speakers had simply copied out the Wikipedia page about the RHS. I feel that there could be much more made of people of more recent vintage than Walter Scott and Alexander

Graham Bell. For example, there were about 5 recent (i.e. post-millennium) FPs who were involved in performances on the Fringe and the official Festival this year, including BBC Cardiff Singer of the Year Catriona Morison, whose Queens Hall concert sold out in a day; Olly Shaw is a regular for Hibs; Ben Cairns and Alan Macdonald have played rugby for Scotland; Dave Stewart has drummed for many artists, including Deacon Blue, Fish and Albert Hammond. I was pleased that Sarah Boyack and Ken Macintosh were namechecked on Friday, as they represent the 'post-Walter Scott' period”.

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Frankie Poullain

Leaving year 1985

Francis Gilles Poullain-Patterson (born 15 April 1967), better known as **Frankie Poullain**, is the bass player for rock band The Darkness. He was raised in Milnathort then Edinburgh, Scotland. He attended the Royal High School, leaving in 1985.

Poullain was the only original Darkness member not from the Lowestoft area. Before joining the Darkness, he worked as a tour guide in the Venezuelan mountains.



Poullain left the band on 23 May 2005, citing "musical differences" as the reason. He was replaced by Richie Edwards, a former guitar technician for the band. His departure caused quite a stir with the press, most notably in the *NME* magazine where he was reportedly regarded as their favourite member of the band.

However, in 2011 The Darkness officially announced that they were to reunite, with all 4 original members. Frankie described this as being "Just like old times". The band sub-headlined Download Festival at Donington Park, England in June 2011, playing under Def Leppard. They also played at

Hammersmith, with Queen guitarist Brian May joining the band. The band's third studio album *Hot Cakes* was released in early 2012, as the band embarked on the Hot Cakes tour.

Frankie's autobiography *Dancing in the Darkness* (John Blake Publishing), charting the ups and downs of life with the band, was released in November 2008.

His entry in the Royal High School Annual Report of 1985 shows him in Form 6b2, while his (presumably) younger brother is in form 5a4. It appears that there were three brothers in School at the same time.

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Phil Edgar-Jones

Leaving year 1984



Phil Edgar-Jones is responsible for driving the vision and strategy of the UK's only dedicated arts channels, broadcasting 48 hours of content a day across two channels. He joined Sky as Head of Entertainment in 2012 and was appointed the Director of Sky Arts in 2014. He oversees all entertainment series in production across Sky's channels – Sky 1 HD, Sky Living HD, Sky Atlantic, HD, Sky Arts HD and Sky Movies, and it was in this role that he commissioned a wealth of successful programmes for Sky Arts including Portrait Artist of the Year, Talks Music and Parkinson's Masterclasses.

Before Sky, Edgar-Jones worked as Creative Director of Running Bare, where he exec produced Very Important People with Morgana Robinson and Terry Mynott, as well as a host of other projects with talent in the John Noel stable.

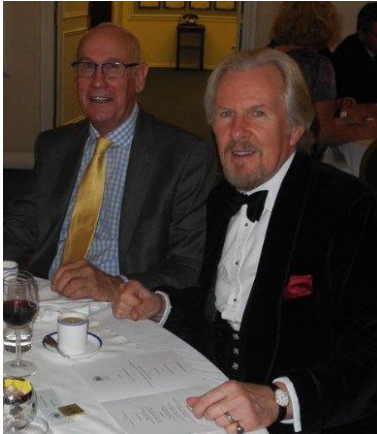
Prior to that, Edgar-Jones was Creative Director of Remarkable Pictures (part of Endemol UK) where he oversaw Big Brother and a number of entertainment projects including the first constructed reality show in the UK, The Salon, Space Cadets, Shattered and Seven Days on the Breadline.

Edgar-Jones' credits also include Ginger TV (Exec Producer, The Priory); Absolutely (exec Producing The Jack Docherty Show and working alongside writers such as Mitchell and Webb, Armstrong and Bain, Cecil and Riley); and before that on The Big Breakfast, The Word and The Sunday Show (where he first met Stuart Murphy). One of his first jobs was as a writer for a Sky 1 show called Barry's Joy Pad featuring a then unknown performer called David Walliams.

Phil spoke at the 2013 RHS London Club Dinner.

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Neil Zeiger



Neil Zeiger (left) with David Robb at the 2017 RHS London Club dinner



Neil in the 1966-67 pipe band, back row 3rd left sporting the splendid leopard skin

Neil Zeiger, a notable TV producer, produced 88 episodes of Ruth Rendell's Inspector Wexford mysteries between 1988 and 2000. Founding member of Nevison in 2013 – [click here](#) for details of that enterprise. At school, among his many talents were his membership of the pipe band. Neil spoke at the 2017 RHS London Club dinner

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Rosie Kay



Rosie with her 9-month-old son, and the cast of FIVE SOLDIERS, her production on tour in 2017



Rosie at the 2015 Prize Giving having just delivered the FP speech. She's in the company of three Rectors

Rosie Kay delivered the FP address to the 2015 Prize Giving. Rosie is the Principal of the **Rosie Kay Dance Company**. Her website says "Rosie Kay Dance Company have a reputation for making bold, original and exciting works that challenge perceptions and take on innovative subjects". Highly physical, with astute performances and intense athleticism, we make works that excite audiences with a visceral experience they feel in their bodies and minds. We aim to connect with our audience and are interested in building new audiences and attracting people who may have never seen first-rate contemporary dance before". Rosie formed her own company in 2004, and toured with 5 SOLDIERS, nationwide in 2016. Amongst extensive theatre credits as a performer and choreographer, she choreographed BAFTA nominated film **Sunshine on Leith (2013)**. Rosie was the first Leverhulme Artist in Residence to the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography,

University of Oxford, 2013-2014, and is currently Research Associate, as well as Associate Artist of DanceXchange, Birmingham

Tom Bacciarelli recalls Rosie's performance as a Minotaur (headless at one point) in the 1990 performance 'Theseus and the Minotaur', where she showed obvious promise of what was to come. Rosie (Rosalind in the Annual Report) won a Sibbald Bursary in her third year, was Dux in History and won the J W Loudon Prize for Public Speaking in her fifth year, and in her Final year once again won the Public Speaking Prize and the William Rutherford Bequest in Art. So, she is no stranger to the memorial stage, and her address to the Students in 2015 concentrated on explaining to them how they can achieve success if they try.

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Colin Todd MBE

Leaving year 1969

Colin was a 1969 school leaver, so spent his sixth form in Barnton. He was a Northfield Broadway boy, starting there in 1957. He went to Edinburgh University, where he graduated with a BSc 1974, and an MSc in 1975.

Alongside being Managing Director of his own fire safety consultancy practice (C.S. & Associates), Colin holds many positions to help improve the fire industry, including Board Member and Chair of the Fire Risk Assessment Council of the FIA Industry Association).

Since the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017, he has made a major contribution to the reviews and investigation into the circumstances and causes of the fire, which has been recognised with the award of the MBE.

Colin was named as one of the top 10 global influencers in security and fire for 2019 by IFSEC.

Colin S Todd has written many Fire Safety books and publications.



Todd
(Fire

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Ian Blackford

Born 14th May 1961



Ian was born and bred in Edinburgh and educated at the Royal High. Following his first job working at Bank of Scotland as a teller, life quickly took Ian to London. It's in this city that his career and expertise in finance began, working his way from the bottom all the way up the ladder, eventually culminating in him leading Deutsche Bank operations in both The Netherlands and Scotland.

Having first joined the Scottish National Party at the age of 16, the vast majority of Ian's life has been dedicated to the dream of Scottish Independence and bringing with it a fairer society. He has a love of football and more specifically Hibernian FC. For many years he was a season ticket holder at the famous Easter Road Stadium, enjoying many fine moments over that time. Ian also passionately follows the Scottish football team, a support which has seen him travel with the Tartan Army all over the globe.

Ian, along with his wife Ann, moved to the picturesque Isle of Skye in 2004, buying a croft that had previously been in Ann's family for hundreds of years. Here they raise livestock and participate in island life.

Blackford stood as the SNP candidate for the Ayr constituency at the 1997 general election, but was not elected.

Later in the year, he stood as the Scottish National Party (SNP) candidate in the Paisley 1997 by-election¹ but yet again, he was unsuccessful; with the contest having had the lowest turnout at a by-election in Scotland for thirty years.

In January 2015, it was announced that he would be the SNP candidate for Ross, Skye and Lochaber at the 2015 general election. He defeated the former Liberal Democrat party leader and incumbent MP, Charles Kennedy.

He was re-elected at the 2017 general election. On 14 June 2017, he was elected as leader of the SNP Westminster Group, succeeding Angus Robertson who had lost his seat. On 19 July he was appointed a member of the Privy Council.

Ian joined the school in the first form in 1973, and left in 1979. There was good political form in his classmates: Sarah Boyack and Ken McIntosh were in his form throughout his schooldays. Other classmates included Iwan Tukalo, the many times capped Scottish rugby international and Ken Thomson, founder of the KT Singers.

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Glen Chandler

Born 12th March 1949

(This article retrieved from Wikipedia)



Glenn Chandler was born in Edinburgh in 1949, and educated at the Royal High School in the city. He moved from Scotland to London and began writing for the Soho Poly, where his early plays were produced. He went on to write for BBC Television and Radio, and for Granada Television (including its series *Crown Court*) before creating and writing his own series *Taggart* for STV Productions (ITV Network).

Chandler created *Taggart* for STV's Controller of Drama, Robert Love, who wanted to set a police series in Glasgow. Chandler was inspired by true crime and real life, and even lifted the names of characters for the series from gravestones in Maryhill Cemetery in Glasgow. The series continued even after the death of the actor Mark McManus, who played the lead role of Jim Taggart, and became the longest-running police drama on British television. Chandler wrote the series from 1983 until 2010.

Chandler has continued to write for his first love, theatre, and has also begun a series of books featuring a Brighton detective, DI Madden. In 2008 Chandler took two plays to the Edinburgh Fringe as a producer: *Boys of the Empire*, a satirical play written by Chandler himself, and *What's Wrong With Angry?*, a drama set in 1992, when the age of consent for homosexuals was 21. Both shows were directed by Patrick Wilde, with whom Chandler shares a literary agency, MBA.

Since then, Chandler has worked almost exclusively in theatre. After transferring *Boys of the Empire* to the Kings Head in Islington, he wrote and produced *Scouts in Bondage* for the same theatre (2009). His next production was the sell-out *Cleveland Street: The Musical* (2010), which he wrote and produced for the Above The Stag Theatre in Victoria. He made his directing debut with the award-winning *The Custard Boys* which he adapted from the novel by John Rae, and this was produced at the Tabard Theatre (2011). He followed that up at the same theatre with *The Lamplighters* (2012), a murder thriller with a supernatural edge, which he wrote, produced and directed. In 2013 he took two productions to the Edinburgh Fringe, *Sandel* and *Killers*. *Sandel*, which he directed, was his controversial adaptation of Angus Stewart's novel of the same name, about a love affair between a student and a choirboy. *Killers* was a study of the correspondence of serial killers Dennis Nilsen, Peter Sutcliffe and Ian Brady, and was directed by Liam Rudden. In 2014, he transferred *Sandel* to the Above The Stag Theatre at its new premises in Vauxhall with a largely new cast.

His latest play is *Fanny and Stella The Shocking True Story*, based on the true tale of two Victorian transvestites, which is being produced by the Above the Stag Theatre and directed by Steven Dexter in May 2015.

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John Kay

John left School in 1965, after the completion of his fifth year, with the insignias of Dux of Classics, Maths and German, along with Dux of the 5th form.

John went on to study at, Edinburgh University, then Nuffield College, Oxford. He lectured in economics at Oxford from 1971 to 1978.

In 1979, He became Research Director and the Director of the independent think tank, the Institute for Fiscal Studies. In 1986 he became a professor at the London Business School and founded London Economics, a consultancy firm. He was the first director of Oxford's Said Business School from 1997 to 1999, and has written at some length as to why he chose to resign after only two years. He has served as a director of Halifax plc and of several investment companies

John gave the Former Pupil address at the 2009 Prize Giving, and also delivered a splendid address at the London dinner the same year, despite, it was only discovered quite some time later, fending off illness as he spoke.

John's website can be accessed [here](#). It contains a wealth of material about his career, and includes a 5-minute video on a specific economics subject.

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Ian Charleson

Ian entered the High School in 1962 on a Robertson Bursary from a City school. In his final year, he won a number of prizes, including one for Music, a gift he would retain throughout his life. He graduated from Edinburgh University in 1970, then won a place in the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA), where he studied for two years. Thereafter he quickly established himself on the London theatre scene, then films, where his appearances in *Chariots of Fire* and *Ghandi* in 1981 and 1982 respectively won huge plaudits and international fame. In his short acting life, he performed in no fewer than thirty films, and thirty stage plays. Ian was diagnosed with HIV in 1986, and died of AIDS-related causes in January 1990 at the age of 40. He died eight weeks after performing the title role in a run of *Hamlet*, in Richard Eyre's production at the Olivier Theatre. Fellow actor and friend Ian McKellen said that Charleson played Hamlet so well it was as if he had rehearsed the role all his life.



Click [here](#) to hear Ian singing 'Red Red Rose' at a Burns Supper in 1986.

The [Wikipedia entry](#) for Ian is a splendid record of his life.

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Anne Richards CVO, CBE, FRSE

Anne entered Royal High in her first senior year in 1977. A regular prize winner throughout her school life, she capped it in 1981 in her fifth form by being Dux of Physics and Chemistry, in addition to being Dux of her year, leaving immediately after for University. In later life, she credited physics teacher Archie Davidson with being her inspiration. He saw her problem-solving capabilities, and inspired her to follow a career in Engineering rather than in Maths, Law or Medicine, the traditional route.

She began her career with a research fellowship at CERN, after graduating from the University of Edinburgh with a First-Class Honours degree in Electronics and Electrical Engineering. She subsequently worked for Cambridge Consultants, before returning to study at Insead in Fontainebleau, France, for an MBA.

She switched careers into Financial Services, and after spells as CIO of Aberdeen Asset Management in 2003 and CEO of M&G Investments in 2016, she became CEO of Fidelity International in 2018.

Ann delivered the Former Pupil address to the Prize Giving in 2018, when her 'mentor' Archie Davidson (shown on right) was her guest of honour.

Read an excellent Financial Times article about Anne [here](#).



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Catriona Morison

Catriona Morison left school in 2003, having participated in many school musical events, and becoming Dux of Music in her final year. She formally studied music at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (now the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS)), and spent a year in Berlin on the Erasmus programme. In Berlin, at the Universität der Künste, began her professional singing career in Germany, initially with an opera studio in Weimar. She subsequently joined Oper Wuppertal as a company artist, and won a *Festengagement* (company principal singer) there. In the 2017 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition, Morison was the joint winner of the Song Prize and the winner of the Main Prize, the first British singer ever to win the Main Prize. She became a member of the BBC New Generation Artists scheme, for the scheduled period of 2017-2019. Her professional song recital debut was in January 2018, at the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh. In October 2017, she received an honorary professorship from the RCS. Her own website is at <https://www.catrionamorison.com/index.php/de/#home> and her Wikipedia entry is at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catriona_Morison

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Shona Thomson

Shona left school in 1995 as Captain, and at the 1996 RHS Club dinner had the unenviable distinction of sharing speaking duties with none other than Ronnie Corbett. She attended Liverpool John Moores University where she graduated with a degree in Film. She now an established film maker, and as she says on her website “With over 20 years’ professional experience in film, I create, plan and present live events and content for cinemas, festivals and communities - online and in person, in the UK and beyond - usually with blethers about our rich though sometimes not so diverse archive film heritage. I use the past to talk about the future”. The photo shown is of Shona as prize winner at the 2018 Focal International awards.



Shona’s website ‘A Kind of Seeing’ is at <https://www.akindofseeing.co.uk/>

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Entries which have appeared on the Royal High School website

Of all the celebrated former pupils who received their early education at The Royal High School, the two best remembered are **Sir Walter Scott** and **Alexander Graham Bell**, scientist and inventor of the telephone.

Literature

Sir Walter Scott is the best known in a long line of distinguished literary former pupils that includes poets **William Drummond** of Hawthornden and **Robert Fergusson** (Edinburgh's "most gifted but least recognised poet", died in an asylum aged 24; Robert Burns arranged for his headstone at Canongate Kirk), the authors **Henry Mackenzie**, **James Boswell** and **George Borrow** and, in more recent times, teacher and poet **Norman MacCaig** along with **Robert Garioch** and **Glen Chandler**.

Eric Lomax (at school 1931-1936) wrote a moving autobiography describing his survival after being taken prisoner and tortured by the Japanese on the Burma Siam Railway, and his subsequent meeting with one of his captors fifty years later. Extraordinarily, **Eric** was in the same form as aviator (and author) **Eric Brown** and a year below heroic soldier **Douglas Ford** – the '**Three Schoolmates**' article describes this phenomenon.

Deacon Brodie was a pupil between the ages of 9 and 11, before embarking on a twin career as a Town Councillor and notorious robber – allegedly inspiring R.L. Stevenson's "Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde".

William Smellie printed the first edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica. **John Menzies**, said to be a close friend of Charles Dickens later, opened a successful book selling business, and is buried in Warriston cemetery.

Lee Cockburn (1985) has written three gripping crime novels, utilising her career knowledge as an Inspector in the Edinburgh constabulary. Not for the faint hearted, *Demons Fire*, *Devil's Demise*, and *Porcelain, Flesh of Innocents* show Lee to be an author of substance

Arts & Music



Alexander Nasmyth (1758-1840) was a pupil of **Allan Ramsay** (portrait painter to British Royalty) and painted the only known authentic portrait of Robert Burns (left). His son, James Nasmyth, designed the steam hammer.

Former Pupil **John Thomson** became the first Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh, while the twentieth century's flourishing entertainment industry has given scope for the talents of actors **Ian Charleson** (*Chariots of Fire*), **David Robb** and **John McGlynn** and for Britain's favourite pocket size comedian, **Ronnie Corbett**. Thomas Alexander Erskine (1732 – 1781) was a musician & composer, and in more modern

times the bass player with rock band The Darkness, **Frankie Poullain**, was also a former pupil.

In the more modern era, **Catriona Morison** (2003) was 2017 Cardiff Singer of the World winner, and sell out performer at the last few Edinburgh Festivals. **Izuka Hoyle** (2014) has an impressive string of London stage performances, and played Mary Seton in the 2018 'Mary Queen of Scots' film. **Thomas Doherty** (2012) also has an impressive stage and film CV, is known for his roles as Sean Matthews on the Disney Channel musical series *The Lodge* and Harry Hook in the *Descendants* film franchise, and in 2021 he is set to star in the HBO Max reboot of *Gossip Girl*



Science



James Hutton's (left) 1785 "Theory of Earth" became the foundation of modern geology. It was another former pupil, **James Syme**, who discovered the solvent for rubber.

Dr Robert Knox (1791-1862) was Keeper of the Anatomy Museum, in which capacity he bought cadavers from murderers Burke & Hare, who exonerated him from criminal activity in their confessions.

James Braidwood was Edinburgh's first Firemaster (aged 24) in the early 19th century, and published a classic manual on firefighting. He was killed in 1861 (aged 61) by falling debris while fighting a fire near London Bridge. A statue in his memory was recently unveiled in Parliament Square Edinburgh.

David Olive (1955) made fundamental contributions to string theory and duality theory.

Advocacy, Finance & Government

Three former pupils became Lord Chancellor of England, **Lords Wedderburn, Erskine** and **Brougham**, another,



Archibald Campbell Tait, became Archbishop of Canterbury and a third, **William Dalrymple**, became Archbishop of York. **Lord Francis Jeffrey** (1773-1850) co-founded Edinburgh Academy, and was an advocate and co-founder of Edinburgh Review.

Sir John Law of Lauriston (left, 1671-1729) was the first millionaire in Britain. Having been imprisoned after a mysterious dispute over a lady resulted in the death of a man in a duel, he escaped and settled in France where he became the Controller General of French Finance, and was involved in the case of the "Mississippi Bubble".

Robin Cook, gifted debater and Foreign Secretary, was at the school from 1961-1964. Two of the MSPs in the first Scottish Parliament, **Sarah Boyack** and **Kenneth Macintosh**, are former pupils of the school. Sarah was one of the first females to be included in the school roll. Ken is son of Farquhar Macintosh, Rector from 1972-1989 has since 2016 been Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament. **Ken Thomson** (1980), founder of the

KT Singers, has since 2017 been Director General for Constitution and External Affairs in the Scottish Government.

Ian Blackford, contemporary of Ken Macintosh and Sarah Boyack, has since 2017 been leader of the SNP in the House of Commons.

Sport



Countless sportsmen have emerged from this ancient seminary across a wide range of sporting activities including James **Pringle Fisher**, Scottish Rugby captain on 9 occasions, with 25 caps in the Sixties (also Captain of winning RHS FP 7's at Melrose and Hawick), **Frank Dick**, who was from 1979 to 1994 the British Athletics Federation's Director of Coaching, and **Iwan Tukalo**, 37 caps at wing three quarter between 1985 and 1992. In 2008 **Ben Cairns** (pictured) added to this list, scoring his first try for Scotland against Canada in November that year. **Alan McDonald** followed suit, with 4 Scottish appearances between 2009 and 2012. Alan known as 'The Stomach' by his mates (we can only guess), has since completed a medical degree in Trinity College Dublin, and is

currently a junior doctor in London. **Charlie Shiel** (leaving year 2014) is the latest recruit to the professional rugby ranks, having played several matches for Edinburgh at scrum-half between 2018 and today). Charlie is the subject of an extensive biography on the London website. **Lee Cockburn** (1985) – also in the literature entry, represented Scottish rugby on no fewer than 77 occasions.

Footnotes

(Alastair Allanach has added a few notes about the numbers of potential biographies based on the number of School leavers since 1968 and 2000)

1. Some might question the choice of candidates for autobiographies. This document includes references to over 40 well-known names from the 1930's onward; one wonders how many former pupils there are in the 'modern' era?
2. How many pupils have left since 1968?
 - a. 1968 was 75 from the 6th form, and an undisclosed number from other years – say 100 maximum
 - b. 1980 – first girls started to leave
 - c. 1985 was 125 plus others – 15? 140
 - d. 2002 was 130 plus others
 - e. 2019 was 230 approx

Therefore:

- f. 1968 -1980 – 100 per year = 1200
- g. 1980 – 2005 – 140 per year = 3500
- h. 2005 – 2018 – 230 per year = 3000
- i. Total = **7700**
- j. Leavers since 2000 = $(5 \times 140) + (13 \times 230) = \mathbf{3700}$ approx – the numbers have exploded post-comprehensive education in 1968, albeit Girls didn't join the leavers until around 1979

Summarising that information, close to 8000 pupils have left in the Barnton era, with close to 4000 since 2000. Keeping up with that statistic is always going to be difficult, but is getting more so. The school basically loses interest with pupils as soon as they have walked through the Memorial Door. It falls to the historian to keep the records up to date

OAP's think of year 2000 leavers as children. They are now up to 38 years of age. Current first form pupils (aged 11) might see them as ancient. The fact that we have included a few post-2000 pupils in the recent biography section on the RHS London Club website (in different disciplines) is testament to that age group. Musicians tend to mature more quickly than brain surgeons and nuclear physicists, so will appear on the list sooner – and that's certainly not a reason to disregard them.

What will inspire current pupils, who are after all the target of the Rector's request for a refresh of the FP biographies? Tom Bacciarelli and I believe the youngsters have to be included in the School site – but perhaps not for London, or other older viewers.