

Remembering Ian Edmond

Ian Edmond (Wilson 1959-64) died on April 17, 2010.

This eulogy was given at Ian's funeral by John Fenton (Rosebery 1960-65)

My first recollection of meeting Ian was during a Biology practical in the labs at Epsom. We were both in Upper Biology Sixth B – the set for more *hopeful* future students of Medicine rather than those more *committed* students of medicine – and I was in the middle of a delicate dissection of the main blood vessels of a rat. Ian was 'operating' on the bench next to mine and during a momentary lapse of concentration on my part, he sliced the tail off my rat and threw it into a tank full of tadpoles.

I think it could be reasonably said that Ian was a 'naughty boy' at school, but he was also one of those extraordinary individuals who, whether by luck or chance, *almost always* seemed to get away with it because he had that ability – given to only a few of us – to talk his way out of almost any difficulty.

Away from the classroom he was rather accident prone, for he had little fear and was always ready to try something new, however hair-brained or foolhardy the scheme might seem to be. He was one of the boys who designed and built the first assault course beside the rifle range and of course had to have *his* accident – this time falling off the zip slide and ending up in the San.

In spite of his waywardness, Ian loved the CCF – its discipline and its tradition, and he was really thrilled when he was promoted to the rank Company Sergeant Major and was presented with the red

sash. Had he not been diagnosed as diabetic, I believe he would have made a career in the Army.

He was an enthusiastic rugby player (but not a cricketer) and his running action on the right wing always reminded me of one of the rugby Masters, Connie Berridge, exhorting his team to "run like tea trolleys".

Neither of us became doctors. I joined the Army and Ian went to the City where he became a very successful aviation broker at Lloyd's. He was a smooth operator who revelled in the freedom of the floor and the opportunities it gave him to talk the hind legs off donkeys and so close his deals.

Ian willingly embraced the traditions and special camaraderie of Lloyd's and the City itself and, dare I say it, he was well known in several of the trendy City bars where he lunched with his clients and entertained his friends.

His annual Christmas lunches at the Boot and Flogger were legend but one had to be very careful, as guests paid heavy forfeits in rather expensive bottles of port if they arrived late or made remarks deemed inappropriate by 'mine host'.

He was a stickler for correctness, be it of dress in the City or Ascot or just punting on the River Wey on a dreamy afternoon where male guests were expected to wear College blazers and boaters.

His culinary prowess – particularly for picnics – went before him, and not without reason, for he must have spent hours choosing the menus and attending to the >

detail of preparation and presentation. Not for Ian sausages on sticks. He had to have the Full Monty – home-made cucumber mousses, pastries and all sorts of exotic fare, and, of course, fine wines.

I think it can reasonably be said that Ian created a sometimes unusual but always rather expensive lifestyle for himself...

We lived through the 'Triumph TR6' experience – not one but several 'Ferrari Red' growling beasts over a period of what seemed like only a few years. An experimental brown model was a disaster – awful colour – and was quickly traded in for yet another red 'girl puller'.

We lived through the 'Second World War army vehicle experience', in which he owned and rallied jeeps and Scout cars – and had to be rescued more than once from Banstead Heath after bogging down in sand. And of course there was the skiing, the sailing and the horse racing, all of which made for an interesting life, but perhaps above all else – particularly in the latter years of his life – it was his involvement with the OE Rugby Club,

the OE Committee and the College itself that gave him a much-needed extra dimension and sense of fulfilment.

Ian was a fighter and a champion of the OE Rugby Club. He became involved at its inception at the Walton-on-Thames ground and saw it through to owning its own clubhouse and ground at Dorking, and he saw too its demise, but he never faltered when standing up for the club and its members in front of the OE Committee.

Finally, as you all know, Ian was a fighter of many other battles – not least his own battle with diabetes and its effects – and yet, while I can only surmise he was probably not a model patient while he was at home, there was *never* a time that I heard him complain about his circumstances and this alone is a lesson that I, for one, shall never forget.

I leave you with my memory of Ian, running the line like a tea trolley and scoring a most famous try for the OE 1st XV in the furthest corner of the Dorking pitch.
