

Murray Young *recollections*

Murray Young's death last April was greeted with sadness by the Epsom community. Here is a selection of memories of a much-loved schoolmaster who taught at the College from 1954 to 1990.

Roy Moody (former staff)

Murray was one of the truly great teachers and schoolmasters.

Russell Tillson (former staff)

When Murray and David (Young) lived at South Lodge, we often spent much of Sunday morning trying to solve the fiendish *Sunday Times* crossword before meeting up for lunch. Murray invariably completed it first – both the crossword and the lunch. At the bachelor Guest Nights held twice a term in the 1970s, members of the Common Room frequently took turns to host private drinks parties both before and after the dinner. Having ignored his protests, my abiding memory of Murray, the priest of high culture, is of his singing along to the Flanagan and Allen recordings I insisted on playing.

Richard Lendrum (G 1957-61)

Mr Young's mischievous sense of humour could make even benzene rings seem interesting.

John McLannahan (H 1958-62)

Back in 2014, I attended a (Holman) House Reunion. I didn't notice that Mr Young was sitting right behind me at the Chapel Service – until I received a huge slap on my back. I turned round to discover who had given me this hearty thump, and I was delighted to see Murray Young. Beaming with his instantly familiar smile, he almost bellowed, "Don't you recognise me, BOY?"

The Reunion was a special day for me – but one of the very fond memories that I have of that day was, at the age of 69, being called "BOY" by a Master who I had a great deal of respect for. Murray was one of the truly great teachers and schoolmasters. RIP, Sir.

David Woodward (former staff)

Murray was a true schoolmaster and an inspiration to me as a young teacher starting out on my career back in the mid-80s.

Simon Johnson (P 1981-86)

He had a face that could change from frown to anger to boyish grin, and back again, in a split second! He was one of those teachers who had almost a supernatural knowledge of what was going on: tell the truth, or lie at your peril! An old school type of teacher who would not suffer fools, but I am sure will be hugely missed by the vast majority of former pupils who could not help but love his unique style.

Bill Hutchings (R 1981-1986)

During one lesson the class was gathered around the front workbench as Murray carried out an experiment. He was trying to get some powdered compound onto a spatula to put it into a test-tube and was struggling somewhat. I turned to my classmate beside me and whispered that the poor old chap was going senile. As quick as a flash, Murray commented that it might be the case, but his hearing was still in perfect working order! I didn't need a punishment, he knew he had got me hook, line and sinker! A true 'master of the old school'.

Jeremy Bolton (Cr 1956-62)

Murray successfully guided me to a high grade Chemistry S-level which greatly helped my admission to Cambridge and a subsequent successful medical career. More importantly, he led me, and many others, to a love of Opera. His termly outings to Sadler's Wells, preceded the week before by a talk on whichever opera we were about to see, were inspirational.

About twenty years ago, I was seated opposite him at a Livery Company dinner to which he had been invited as a guest. I explained to our immediate neighbours that while also teaching me Chemistry, Murray had introduced me to Opera. He immediately raised his arms triumphantly into the air and exclaimed "another one!" Was the love of Opera even more

important to him than teaching Chemistry A-level? Later, when I joined the council of the Royal Medical Foundation and then the School Governors, I saw him frequently at Epsom College social events and was greatly pleased to renew our friendship.

I am sure he will be greatly missed by his family but I will always think of him when I settle into my theatre seat and the overture begins.

James Cunliffe (Cr 1973-77)

Mr Young was a big presence at the school in my time, and quite a formidable disciplinarian. I sensed significant competition between Carr (where he was Housemaster) and next door Propert (where Mr Squibbs was Housemaster). Carr always seemed to win the Choral Competition with Murray (or Jinky as he was known to the boys) leading the musical charge and playing the piano.

Liz Kerr, née Grimshaw (Wh 1988-90)

The image of Mr Young that springs to mind is him walking with purpose down the main corridor, his robes billowing out behind him. He had a memorable smile. I suspect he was a cheeky child and you could see that childhood twinkle when something had amused him.

Chris Fussell (C 1988-93)

Another Epsom legend lost...

Andrew Vallance-Owen (Fa 1965-70)

Murray was a brilliant teacher of Chemistry, firm but fair and hugely respected. It was my Chemistry A-level that got me into Birmingham University Medical School, so I almost certainly owe him my medical career. He was also a lifelong supporter of the College. He always, I suspect to our surprise, remembered OEs and their names. A good man and a key player in the 20th Century history of Epsom College.



Norman Colyer and Murray



1954 Mr Young's Chemistry Class



Toy Symphony with Owen Rowe and Murray, 1973



Fi Drinkall and Murray

Peter Robinson (Fa 1958-63)

My memories of Gobby Young are probably not printable but I remember when he insisted that David Bannerman give him the penny he had heated up with acid. Bannerman tried to tell him but Gobby insisted and, when the red hot penny was dropped into his hand, there was a decided hiss of burning skin!

The other event I remember was when he gave an organ recital in the Chapel. He expected 20-30 to come but about half the school went to listen – he was chuffed to bits!

Steve McCubbin (C 1969-73)

Murray Young was a master in the art of conversation – without uttering a word. A well-timed clearing of the throat, or raised eyebrows, could convey his surprise or displeasure in an instant, and these theatrical tics were in full flow at reviews of my academic progress, as his pen patrolled down a ledger, pausing pointedly at low scores in subjects like Physics and Chemistry. The ‘could do better’ message came through loud and clear. I may never have grasped the Sciences at Epsom but my cultural horizons in music, theatre and TV were widened enormously, and that was thanks to Mr Young.

Dej Mahoney (Fa 1977-82)

Murray Young and I got off to an inauspicious start. This was largely because of his justifiable concern about my academic seriousness and discipline. The low point was when my ‘experiment partner’ and I appeared to be playing the fool while heating copper chippings in sulphuric acid. The test-tube accidentally boiled over, sending a jet of burning acid onto the back of my sweater, which had to be furiously patted out! Miraculously, we produced the most perfect of copper sulphate crystals as a result of that escapade, which happened to coincide approximately with my gaining a grasp

and lifelong appreciation of the ‘magic’ of the Periodic Table.

Things then began to look up between Murray and myself and although I did not pursue Chemistry at A-level, we had a very good relationship in my latter years at Epsom, when I was Head of School and he was my Second Master. I remember him with respect and affection – may his soul rest in peace.

Iain Henderson (Cr 1961-65)

He taught me A-level Chemistry in the Upper Sixth and was an excellent teacher. I particularly enjoyed organic Chemistry which had something to do with the real world. I do recall a couple of contemporaries making nitrogen triiodide, which went off with an almighty bang! ‘Strang’ Young was less than impressed.

David Gunnell (P 1973-78)

I’ve fond memories of a trip to the Julian Alps (in the former Yugoslavia) Murray organised with John Potter and David Young, just after A-levels in 1978. When my head for heights let me down on one of the more taxing climbs, and I rather bashfully escaped back down the mountainside, he was there at the bottom to raise spirits and share a glass of slivovic – the local brew. Most importantly he was also a dear friend and colleague of my father, John Gunnell, throughout his teaching career at Epsom. He was best man at my parents’ wedding back in 1959 and a longstanding friend and support ever afterwards. He visited Mum and Dad during their retirement until his health made this impossible.

Nick Dickenson (Cr 1959-64)

I seem to remember a time when Mr Young had parked his car in front of the main College buildings and hadn’t secured the brake. The car rolled gently down the road towards the Chapel and veered off into the side of the building,

Raj Mody (Rn 1985-90)

I recall Mr Young as a seasoned professional and brilliant teacher. He, along with John Potter, was instrumental in convincing me – upon entry to Sixth Form – to switch an A-level choice of Economics to Chemistry. That significantly increased my workload for the next two years! But, of course, they spotted I might be taking the easier path by bolting Economics onto Maths, Further Maths and Physics – whereas Chemistry would broaden my horizons and future choices. I’m sure it did give me a more rounded learning experience in the end. Certainly, having the continued opportunity to be taught by Mr Young was a bonus.

I do also remember him sending me a personal, handwritten note of congratulations when I received my University Finals result. It’s another example of the class of the man, and I still have the postcard.

Bill Gibson (C 1958-62)

Mr Young was my Housemaster in 1960-1962. He was very generous with his time and advice. In particular, he kindled my interest in classical music. He used to lend me some of his records and took Fred Peall and me to The Royal Festival Hall for a concert. I remember him more clearly than any other master at Epsom College. I also remember him driving me somewhere but forget where we were heading! He has a special place in my memories.

David Bannerman (P 1957-63)

I was saddened to hear that Murray Young had died. I remember him with much affection and gratitude. Gratitude because he was one of the team of Chemistry masters who fired me with the enthusiasm to achieve the A and S-levels that got me a place at Durham, from which many good things have sprung. A Science degree was a

vital first step towards my career as a Patent Attorney and if I hadn’t gone to Durham, I wouldn’t have met my wife – we celebrated our golden wedding anniversary in January 2020!

I also remember Mr Young on the rugby pitch – running Second Side and thus the 3rd XV – a team of sweaty triers of which I was a part. I can see him now, running about, whistle in hand, always a big grin and much dry humour.

Requiescat in pace, as Abbie Nash might have said.

Gavin Lane (P 1961-65)

Although I was in Propert, I knew Mr Young through my friendship with Jan Luitsz (C). As a result of this friendship, the two of us were invited to spend part of our school holiday with him on the Norfolk Broads – we had a great time.

John Birkhead (Fa 1956-61)

Mr Young taught me before the Cambridge entrance exams, and was an excellent teacher.

Richard Mungavin (C 1969-74)

Murray Young was an exceptional man: I just didn’t appreciate it at that time! By my own admission, I was not the most conforming pupil he ever had in Carr, but there isn’t a shadow of doubt he played a huge part in shaping my successful business life. He was also motivational and truly got the best out of me. Whenever I represented the house, I always gave 100% – because Murray expected that. Nothing else would do.

Richard Paice (Cr 1954-61)

When I entered the Sixth Form, Murray announced he would address us all by our first names, and sat us around a table for discussions; these changes transformed the atmosphere. Not coming from a musical family, he lent me classical long-playing records in the holidays

and he took David James (C) and I for an unforgettable week, sailing on the Broads.

Murray and John Facer persevered to get me into Oxford. Eventually, their efforts were rewarded when I received a Welsh scholarship to Jesus College, Oxford. Thanks to them, my life was transformed. No doubt a degree from Oxford helped my successful application to the new international business school, INSEAD, in Fontainebleau.

Epsom College and Murray Young are inseparable in my memory.

Jonathan Berry (F 1961-66)

I remember Murray Young teaching Chemistry. He also organised the opera trips with a preparatory session or two, where he talked us through what we were going to hear. My first opera was *Peter Grimes* at the old Sadler’s Wells – a great eye-opener. We also heard that Kennedy had been assassinated during the journey to London.

I recall a group of us listening to the newly issued complete Bartok string quartets on the Saga label, in his rooms after chapel, on several consecutive Sunday mornings – much more challenging. He shared his love of classical music with us.

Paddy Carmody (C 1955-59)

Murray never taught me in any formal setting, but he did contribute, in a significant and lasting way, to my love and appreciation of music. Specifically, he introduced me to Michael Tippett’s *A Child of our Time*, which I still get lost in. On a lighter note (no pun intended), he took me and a few other lucky students along to the Kingston Madrigal Society where I entered an other-worldly bubble, as far removed from my 1950s rural Irish roots as Neil Armstrong landing on the moon.



Murray and Dej Mahoney (Fa 1977-82)



Murray, Hugh Carson and Canon Paul Thompson

Ross McMillan (F 1965-69)

I was a youngster in the Upper Fourth in 1965 and was taught Chemistry by Murray Young to O-level. Right from the first day, he had a clear, concise and consistent teaching manner, which was very reassuring. He logically explained everything and I still have the thick notebook in which all the lessons were recorded. This actually led me to score a high grade at O-level, which surprised all, including myself – so his methods definitely worked.

He had a relaxed, dry sense of humour, which encouraged attentive listening, as we waited for the next subtle ‘funny’ to be dropped. In the summer, when I was walking past Carr on the way down to Forest, he was often seen outside ‘holding court’ among a group of Carr students.

I remember him as an excellent teacher who taught his subject without fuss.

John Thompson (Fa 1951-57)

Mr Young was a very nice man; a very kind man. He was keen to share his love of classical music with Peter Woods and me. One day, we thought it would be amusing to play him some more modern music and we introduced him to a new group called The Platters: he was not amused.

John Moore (R 1952-57)

I was among his first cohort of Sixth Form Chemistry students. I am forever grateful for the S-level that I was awarded. His precision was remarkable.

Chris Ellis (H 1957-62)

Murray Young was our Chemistry master for our A-level course. However, most of us were not particularly interested in Chemistry, viewing it as a hurdle we had to overcome in order to get into medical school. Mr Young would leap into the classroom – with that jaunty step of his

and a twinkle in his eyes – and inspire us with his enthusiasm. He persuaded us that we should not only take the standard two A-level papers, but also sit the S-level scholarship paper. He then set us an exam question each week in our Friday lesson.

At the end of the year we sat the A-level papers. When it came to the S-level, I realised that Mr Young had spotted every question that we had answered during the year. He was not only an inspiration, but a truly great teacher. I shall forever be in his debt.

Anthony Todd (R 1973-78)

Murray was an inspirational and influential figure at the school during my time there and will be sorely missed.

Ian Tinsley (H-S/Fa 1957-63)

Mr Young will be remembered with much affection and respect. I consider myself fortunate to have known him as a pupil and, subsequently as an OE.

Philip Roussel (F 1959-64)

I remember Murray well as he taught me Chemistry in the Upper Fourth and Fifth Form, helping me pass O-level. I also remember that he was a fixture, with his stopwatch, at the finish line on the athletics track. I always liked him, especially his dry humour.

David Ogilvie (F 1954-59)

As well as Murray’s excellent teaching, he had an unusual talent for detecting the personal interests of his students. He often acted on his observations in a considerate and generous manner.

For example, he had noticed my interest in classical music – I am not sure how from Chemistry lessons; maybe he’d seen me with my cello in the school orchestra. In any event, he took me and two other boys to the Royal Festival Hall where we

heard Annie Fischer play the Schumann piano concerto. It was a thrilling experience, quite unexpected, and entirely due to Mr Young’s generosity. Without any doubt whatsoever, it was one of my most memorable days at the school.

William Tam (C 1953-58)

Murray Young was an amicable teacher who spoke politely to his pupils as equals. The legacy that he left me was the habit of weighing ingredients for cooking and washing-up, with the same clinical precision that he taught us to weigh chemicals, and wash test-tubes and beakers in the Chemistry Lab.

It is hard to imagine that he was only 10 years older than I am.

Ian Cunliffe (Cr 1970-74)

Murray taught me A-level Chemistry. He became a friend in later years and was always a loyal servant of the College.

Ken Merron (H 1957-62)

I have excellent memories of Murray Young and his enthusiastic teaching style. He was an inspiration and helped me decide to read Chemistry for my degree. His determination got both me and my contemporary, the late Julian Nott, to work hard enough to gain scholarships at Oxford.

Ravinder Sehmi (Fa 1982-87)

Murray was my Chemistry master and I do have fond memories. In fact, of late, I have been reflecting on my time at Epsom and how the College, the masters and the friends, have shaped the person I am today.

Clive Juster (C 1957-61)

An abiding memory I have of Murray was the day I was taking part in a CCF training exercise somewhere in the College grounds. Ropes had been rigged up between some big trees and the

cadets had to climb up one tree and then go from one to another, making their way along a suspended rope, by straddling and gripping it and pulling themselves across. Naturally, most of us made a complete fist of it and I somehow managed to fall off, headfirst, from quite a height, landing heavily on outstretched arms and in complete agony.

Murray, being my Housemaster, was sent for. He was none too pleased as he was in the middle of a game of tennis with one of the other masters. However, he got me into his car and drove me to the A&E department at Epsom Hospital where we sat along with all the other unfortunates waiting to be seen. My abiding memory is the thought of how comical this scene must have seemed to all the onlookers – me, in my muddied CCF uniform, and Murray, looking rather fed up, in his gleaming white tennis gear. What an odd couple!

It transpired that I had split the ends of bones in both arms but luckily I was fitted up with slings and didn’t need to have plaster casts. I was told that the bones would heal naturally, which they did. I’m pleased to say that they have given me no further trouble and I didn’t have any further accidents during my time at the College. Whether or not Murray was able to resume his game of tennis, we shall never know!

Mike Clugston (R 1964-68)

Murray Young was a member of the excellent Chemistry department which played such a big role in my subsequent career, my interest in the subject having been sparked initially by John Potter. Sometime in the 2000s, my attention was drawn in the Wadham Gazette to the fact that the main Prelims Science Prize was named the Derek John Collington Prize. I had been recommended to apply to Wadham College, Oxford, by DJC or ‘Gnome’. In order to be sure that it

was the same person, I waited until the next Epsom Oxbridge evening. Murray was the first former teacher I saw. When I asked Murray what the initials ‘DJ’ represented, he replied instantly ‘Derek John’, so confirming the identification.

Richard Wells (H 1963-67)

I am grateful that Murray enabled me to achieve a B Grade in Chemistry A-level, thereby opening up admission to St Bartholomew’s Hospital and a fulfilling medical career from which I retired in 2008. As a Sixth Former, his encouragement was amazing, bearing in mind that my strength was in Classics!

Michael Illing (Cr 1969-73)

Nearly half a century ago, Murray taught me for my Chemistry A-level, and I also remember him from a CCF trip in North Wales. I recall several encounters soon after I left the College. These are happy memories of a much respected individual, who combined dignity with an ever-present sense of humour.

John Ford (Fa 1950-55)

I always struggled with A-level Chemistry, which I needed to get into medical school. Thankfully, in my final year, Murray arrived straight from Oxford along with Colin Dowrick; both fresh new brooms compared with those who had taught before. They both reduced the subject, one organic and the other inorganic Chemistry, to a couple of diagrams which were quite adequate for me to pass the exam. I am eternally grateful to them both.

Neil Porter (C 1973-78)

Murray was my Housemaster in Carr and did an excellent job, in loco parentis, keeping me on the straight and narrow. He also led many cultural trips. For example, we went to the English National Opera at the Coliseum, in London, sparking an interest in opera that has lasted a lifetime.

Russell Tillson also reminded me that Murray led a holiday in the Loire Valley; driving in a minibus around the French chateaux, learning about the wine industry. I remember buying fresh baguettes and cheese in the morning wherever we were staying and then, after our tour of a chateau, sitting on the grass under the trees and having our picnic. On the last day, we had a long drive to the ferry port and we just made the boat. It was then that I learnt how good Murray was at swearing!

Nick Wells (H 1963-68)

Mr Young was my Chemistry teacher when I was at Epsom and very good he was too.

One thing I particularly remember about him was his ability to write rapidly on a blackboard, exclusively in capital letters. This usually arose when we had double Chemistry. We had to plough through a lot of fairly mundane stuff and write it in our exercise books – for the full one and a half hours. Murray managed to write the whole lesson in capitals on the blackboard for us to copy: line after line, after line. It amazed me then and still does now.

If I remember correctly, one of his nicknames was ‘Strang’, for reasons I never learned. Perhaps somebody can enlighten me?

Christopher Martin (C 1967-71)

I remember Murray very well and with affection; he was a huge inspiration to me musically and in many other ways. I remember him tutoring a group of us, including some rugby ‘heavies’, in a Schubert song for an inter-house music competition (incidentally one with a very difficult piano accompaniment, which he pulled off with aplomb). He took groups of us to London and I owe my first visits to The Royal Festival Hall and Covent Garden to him. He encouraged those

who wanted, to watch classic films fairly late into the night – there was no ‘catch-up’ then – and I have been watching them ever since. I remember once, as I went in to collect my weekly pocket money, having just had an illegal cigarette somewhere, he asked me whether I had been smoking. I knew he knew: I lied, and he understood. A gentleman. However, his inorganic Chemistry lessons left me flummoxed.

For me, he enjoyed a life well-lived. Thank you Mr Young.

Peter Swiss (R 1956-61)

My main recollection is of Mr Young’s support for the tennis teams. He assisted John Gunnell, the master in charge of the 1st and 2nd VI, during the years I played and captained (1960 and 1961).

Tony Buley (R 1953-58)

Murray arrived at Epsom the year after I did and he became my model of an ideal schoolmaster. I truly came under his influence in my scholarship year (as it was then) in the Upper Science Sixth, long before he became a Housemaster. His tutorials were as influential as anything I subsequently experienced at

university, not only in Chemistry but also in other topics, especially music. I rapidly embraced his enthusiasm for (among other composers) Gustav Mahler, when this was still a very niche taste. I will always remember listening in his rooms to Kathleen Ferrier’s iconic performance (on vinyl, of course) of “*Das Lied von der Erde*”. There were many other instances of his mentorship that provided happy memories up to, and including, our last telephone conversation, only a few months before his death.

John West (Cr 1972-76)

Mr Young was a huge influence and a brilliant teacher.

James Knowles (H-S/Fa 1949-55)

Mr Young was one of the best teachers I had at Epsom, and certainly the most approachable: he was someone who treated you as an intelligent human being! He arrived at the start of my last year at Epsom. He must have been considered good, as he was assigned the third year Sixth Formers, destined for medical school and Oxbridge entry. Chemistry was my best subject, so I got on well with him. Murray managed to demystify Organic Chemistry and so

made it my favourite part of the subject, enabling me to pass Part 4 of Cambridge 1st MB. I think I was the only one of us to do so, which gave me some confidence as I had come to see myself as something of an ‘also-ran’!

Murray was assistant Housemaster of Fayer, so we sometimes went to his room for cocoa and conversation. Mr Young was also an opera buff. Many of us had what was probably our first experience of opera with a visit to *Il Seraglio* by the ENO. I have only positive memories of him: may he rest in peace.

Sandy Gujral (Fa 1981-85)

I remember doing the S-level practical in Chemistry in 1985 and getting an error in the final calculations. This worried me. Mr Murray subsequently repeated the experiment three times, in his own time. Fortunately, I was correct and the examining board was informed about the inherent error. Suffice to say, he always had faith in his students and got the best out of them. I will remember him with the fondest memories as a top master.

Happily, I did receive a distinction in the Chemistry S-level, which made my year!

Remembering *good friends*

Paying tribute to Robert Chenciner, Matthew Sutherland, David Taylor, Digby Hulme, Eric Thurston and Graham Milne

Robert Chenciner

Proper 1959-63



Robert Chenciner, who has died aged 76, was a scholar and writer on the ethnographic and material cultures of the Caucasus and former Soviet states, *writes his daughter, Louisa*.

He first obtained permission to visit Dagestan in 1986. Through years of ethnographic fieldwork, and with the help of Dr Magomedkhan Magomedkhanov, the late Dr Ramazan Happoulaev and local scholars, Robert – known to many as Bob or Chence – visited hundreds of Dagestani villages. He became a senior associate member of St Antony’s College, Oxford, in 1987, and an honorary member of the Dagestan Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1990.

Robert would talk of how his heart should return to the Dagestan mountains as he loved them so dearly, and wrote definitively on the region in *Daghestan Today* (1989), *Daghestan: Tradition and Survival* (1997), *Tattooed Mountain Women and Spoonboxes of Daghestan* (2006). This last was shortlisted for The Bookseller’s

Diagram Prize for Oddest Title of the Year.

For more than two decades he also worked as an immigration expert, championing people fleeing former Soviet states. To meetings at Chatham House and St Antony’s College he brought his characteristic energy and a healthy distrust of authority. As part of this commitment, he worked for OSCE – the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – as an election monitor in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

Born in London, Robert was the son of Ellen (née Perls) and Mark Chenciner, a lawyer. He and his mother joined relatives in Canada after his father’s death, but he returned to Britain to attend Epsom College after his mother’s death. He would write about his early esoteric interests in *Dragons, Padlocks and Tamerlane’s Balls* in 2012, citing the essay he had written age 18 on Swedish padlock keyhole covers, for which he was awarded a Trevelyan scholarship to read mechanical sciences at Pembroke College, Cambridge.

Robert had an original perception of textiles, objects and people. His understanding of natural dyes and colour was manifest in *Madder Red: A History of Luxury and Trade* (2000). His collection of Kaitag textiles formed the basis of the books *Kaitag: Textile Art from Daghestan* (1993) and *Kaitag: Daghestani Silk Embroidery, An Italian Collection* (2007). Robert lectured widely on these interests, and tickled controversy with

papers including *The Bayeux Tapestry Shish Kebab Mystery*, delivered at the Oxford Food Symposium in 1990, which appeared to call the tapestry’s authenticity into question. He would happily accept compensation for lectures in the form of salt-cured sturgeon, Caspian caviar or well-hung horsemeat, depending on the location.

Despite the early loss of his parents, Robert had a great sense of generosity, home and food; his infamous lunches were a delight, and such was his warmth that his former home in Shepherd Market, London, was “borrowed” as a fictional safe-house in John le Carré’s *Our Game*, set amid the first Russian-Chechen war.

Robert is survived by his wife, Marian Ellingworth, whom he married in 1993, his two daughters, Louisa and Isabel, and collections spanning 50 years. His last academic text on Dagestan will be published posthumously this summer, with a celebration of Bob’s life.

Fellow Epsomian, Richard Paice (Cr 1954-61) recalls fondly: “At Epsom, Roger, my younger brother, and Bob were in the same form competing in the Mathematics department. Later, Roger joined me at Oxford, while Bob went to Cambridge. In 1985, having spent time myself in Iran at the time of the Shah, I was intrigued to see a show on Baku architecture at RIBA in Portland Place and I spotted Bob’s name. An invitation from him to a sumptuous fish dinner, in his Shepherd Market hideaway, was irresistible. I quickly discovered a shared

