

## **Clifford Ashby**

**17/10/1925 - 28/10/2020**

Clifford's early years were happily spent in East London with his parents and older sister. He was awarded a place at the Coopers' Company School in the Mile End and travelled daily by bus along the A11. The entire school was relocated to Frome, Somerset during the war and he flourished in the unfamiliar environment adding fencing, rugby and cricket to his academic studies.

After leaving school with good results in his Higher School Certificate in 1943, Clifford won a place at Jesus College, Cambridge to study Physics. This was interrupted after one year with a work placement to Henry Hughes (later Kelvin Hughes) in London developing teledeltos paper for the ECG.

He completed his masters at Jesus before National Service with the Royal Signals which took him to Egypt, Palestine and Cyprus.

Following National Service he joined Lord Wandsworth College in 1950 as a junior member of staff, making lifelong friends with the likes of Brown, George Warner, Roger Smith, David Howarth and Bill Fryer. He fully embraced life in Long Sutton and at the school, forming the Wayfarers Cricket team - a social team that included staff and older pupils (but not first XI) at the school and seemingly all games played in very close proximity to a pub - and enthusiastic participation in school reviews. He was made house master of School House and it was here that he met his future wife, Elizabeth Thomas who was the house matron. After 10 years at LWC, Clifford moved to Gloucester with Elizabeth, now as a married couple, to take a position as head of Science at the King's School. He quickly added the responsibilities of Housemaster of School House and Careers Master from 1963. In 1969, Clifford was promoted to Second Master. There he, along with the new headmaster and bursar, were instrumental in turning around the fortunes of an ailing school.

Working with prodigious energy in this role from 1969 until 1990, Clifford was at the centre of most developments that took place at King's in these years of rapid development. Between 1971 and 1976 he took on the additional role of Housemaster of Wardle House and lived on the school site with his family; in 1979 he was Acting Head during the Headmaster's sabbatical term.

A hugely respected teacher of Physics, he had a love of sport, in particular rugby and cricket, both of which he coached at Colts level and his fairness and sense of understanding were generally acknowledged. He was a great promoter of the concept of the school as a community and used his regular Thursday Chapel talks to emphasise the mutual bonds and standards of courtesy that held members of the school together. He also acted as examinations officer and supervised all the arrangements for O levels and A levels in person. He particularly enjoyed his chairmanship of the School Council and his work as Secretary of the Old Boys' Society organising a number of hugely successful reunions for former pupils.

He retired in 1990 and was commended by former King's head Pat David in the School Magazine of that year as having had 'a greater influence on the school during the post-war years than anyone else, with the possible exception of Tom Brown'.

In retirement Clifford and Elizabeth travelled widely, including a 6 month trip around the world visiting his 3 sons in Australia (coinciding with the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne), America and closer to home in Portugal. He never lost a love of learning and tackled Latin, French and, reluctantly, computer use (but only to stay in touch with friends and family far and wide; he preferred type-written letters for official business).

Although an exceptionally modest man, he could be persuaded to relate his part in England's victorious World Cup Campaign of 2003 - he introduced rugby to the LWC sports offering and was thus directly responsible for Jonny Wilkinson's rugby prowess! He is survived by Elizabeth, his 3 sons and 2 grandchildren.

