

John Revell: Family Eulogy read by Rev Helen Kendrick

John was born at Wolvercote, Oxford, in June 1939. He had a very happy childhood on the farm until his father died suddenly when John was only 9 years old.

His mother carried on with the farm with his brother Tony, aged 14 years at the time. John went to Oxford High School for boys in New Inn Hall Street.

He missed Wednesday sports afternoons to help his mother on the farm. On other occasion he often played truant from school to go to the Ritz cinema next door.

He decided he wanted to join the Army and started training at home. At 17 ½ he joined the Grenadier Guards and after his initial training at Catterick Garrison and on the Yorkshire moors, he began duties from Wellington Barracks in London, including guard duties at the Bank of England.

A year after joining-up he was posted to Cyprus for two years. This was a very troubled time with EOKA terrorists carrying out bombings and attacks on British forces. When he returned to the UK in 1959 he tried his hand at various jobs, including helping on the farm, until 1961 when he joined Robert Moss Plastic Injection Mouldings in Kidlington, where he worked in sales for the next 30 years.

In 1964 he married Jennie and moved to Appleton, next-door to her parents. He had worked on building their bungalow with Jennie's father, since 1963.

Mark was born in 1966 and Jonathan in '69.

He enjoyed many good holidays over the years; in Devon when the boys were young, and later took them to Cyprus. John & Jennie went back several times and made many friends in Pissouri on the South West of the island.

In 1985 John was sent to South Africa to set up a unit for Robert Moss. They were asked to move out as a family, but a state of emergency was declared, and they were somewhat relieved that they were no longer under obligation to go.

John and Jennie had trips to Canada and the United States; went on safari in Zimbabwe and Kenya and enjoyed the relaxation of boating on the canals in France.

In later years, they enjoyed various cruises to the Mediterranean, Baltic, Norway, Adriatic, Canaries and around Scotland and Ireland. When John became ill, they were due to go on a trip to Iceland, but lockdown and his illness prevented that from happening.

John loved children and was very proud of his four lovely grandchildren; Rosie, James, Matthew and Stanley.

In the recession in the late 80s he left Robert Moss, taking an early pension, and turned his hand to gardening. He was a skilled gardener and worked on some lovely gardens until he retired aged 75.

John loved sport and was active in village cricket, first in Wolvercote and then Appleton. He was village captain for some years and also worked hard as groundsman at the sports field. He loved most sport but cricket, horse racing and golf were his favourites.

John coped with his illness very bravely and thankfully only went into hospital for his last three days.

We are very grateful to the staff at the Churchill hospital who cared for him with such skill and compassion. They were able to relax the Covid rules to allow the family to be with John at the end.

He was a much-loved husband, father, grandfather and friend and will be greatly missed by us all.

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John Revell: Memories from the cricket field by Graham Rose

John was involved in the reformation of the Appleton Cricket Club in 1968 under the chairmanship of Stan Oswin and as recoded on the 2020 ACC Fixture card 52 years later, John was still involved as a Life Vice President. He tended the cricket square for many years – and spent so much time there I am sure Jennie would have declared the Sportsfield to be his second home.

Many recall his hunched body at first slip and I was reminded by Adrian (Adi) Haggett that if John and I were in the slips and a cricket ball slipped past us, we did not chase the ball. Instead we would shout out that someone – often Adi – should go and collect! Adi claims that he might have been the opposite side of the field! If a catch came his way, John had bucket hands and he would grab the ball easily! He batted solidly and occasionally bowled.

When asked for a Griffiths family recollection about John, Teresa Griffiths responded: “Appleton Cricket Club was more than just a club...highly eclectic in its make up; members coming from professions, trades and classes. But the love of playing cricket was as powerful as the bond of friendship that they all shared, creating a ‘band of brothers’ and camaraderie that is as strong today as it was then.

“John was the voice of calm when some of the younger players (and my Dad, Jim) got over excited and emotional. He treated everyone with respect and kindness. He cared and was genuinely interested in the whole team and the extended club family.

“Andmost importantly he always stayed back after every tea ensuring that he personally thanked whoever had taken the time to make the sandwiches and cakes that afternoon.”

One notable player for Appleton was, at that time, Nick Wright a pathologist, now ennobled Sir Nicholas Wright for his work in the medical profession. Nick played for Appleton, together with his son Graham, for many years and in 1978 composed an Ode mentioning each member of the team. I will read you the verse the relates to John and the final verse: -

If you would be the ever-faithful groundsman,
And prepare a velvet strip for every game,
I don't know if you've ever thought about it,
But to you we owe old Appleton's nascent fame.
From the Nursery end I cherish every shooter,
While the Bottom end gives Nicholls cause to gloat,
But what puts you on a plane above all other,
Is the good length ball that hits 'em in the throat?

And when John was captain

‘For it’s you that hands us down the batting order,
And tells us how each game is to be fought,
But it’s also you we blame when we get beaten,
Although we know it’s always Rose’s fault!’

And now if I could crave a moments silence,
I’d like to stand up and propose a toast,
To Summer, and to Cricket and to Appleton,
And to the people whom we have to thank the most.
The skipper, secretaries, groundsman and tea-ladies,
On whose services we all presume to lean,
But the toast to which we all should raise our glasses,
Is Appleton, and it’s splendid cricket team!

Most other verses could not be repeated in such surroundings as we find ourselves in today!
Appleton Cricket Club was a lot of fun on and off the field of play! John loved his game of
darts before and after a match in The Plough. Micky Mouse was the game we played!

Nick also reflected: “I think one of the best times I recall was the first of the annual dinners in
the late 1970s – John had arranged it at the Doghouse. Vera was sat between John and Dicky
Luff - Dicky exclaimed loudly – ‘My dear, you are sat between two Grenadiers’. She was
most impressed!”

I can do no better than to reflect on the comments of Trevor James and Gary Nicholls. Trevor
said, “John was one of those people who always had time for anyone and made everyone
welcome into the Appleton team even the young players. Lovely man and a great man to have
around.” And Gary: “I remember John as one of the most self-deprecating and humorous
gentlemen I have ever met and times spent with him on the cricket field and my memories of
chatting over a pint of Speckled Hen after a match will be much cherished.”

So John: we salute you and your days as Club President, Vice President, Captain and
groundsman which are now over. Rest in peace. Your innings is finally over.