

Philip Dale, Manor 1928-1932 (March 2015)

Philip Dale, who died aged 99 on 30 March 2015, shortly before the Royal Letter, was a distinguished old boy of Lancing College.



Robin Birts with Philip Dale (right)

Philip was born and brought up in Wimbledon, where he attended Rokeby Junior School before progressing to Lancing. At Lancing, he excelled at sports, notably swimming (in which he was a powerful short distance competitor), athletics and pole vaulting, a relatively new activity using the most primitive of equipment! Although not a highly academic student, Philip enjoyed his time at Lancing and was especially proud of his membership of Manor House, which was set apart from the main school buildings. He liked to recount school incidents and adventures, notably the time he and his friend Roy walked home from Lancing to Wimbledon at the end of one term, sleeping one night in a forest on the way back. Quite an accomplishment and one that remained vivid for him.



Philip Dale (front left) with the Lancing College Swimming Team

Before the start of the Second World War, Philip learnt to fly. He joined the RAF and spent his early war years in Canada, as a flying instructor. On his return to England he was promoted to Squadron Leader of 620 Bomber Squadron, flying Stirling bombers. He and his devoted crew proved to be a brave and successful unit. They took part in D-Day and Philip was awarded the Croix de Guerre for assisting the French guerrilla resistance movement by dropping supplies and weaponry amidst anti-aircraft fire. By all accounts he was something of a daredevil pilot and he recounts several hair-raising stories, including a forced flat-landing on Greenham Common Golf Course!



After the war he married, and joined his father's building company in Clapham, remaining there as a director until his retirement. He developed a long-held passion for sailing and could regularly be seen on the River Alde in Aldeburgh, Suffolk, with friends and family in his 23 foot ketch, 'Thea'. One

of his proudest achievements was sailing Thea down the east coast accompanied by one of his great friends, navigating around the mud flats, crossing the Channel and cruising triumphantly into Calais Harbour.

Very sociable, he never turned down the offer of a party or a pub visit with friends.

Right up until last year Philip enjoyed taking part in the annual Lancing luncheons for old boys, held in London or sometimes at Lancing itself. He found it amusing to discover, in latter years, that he was oldest old boy!

He married twice, to Susan who was killed in a car crash in 1971 and to Pat who died in 2002. He is survived by his four children and 14 grandchildren from his first marriage. He and his family were close and all were truly thankful for his impeccable health and magnificent age.