

Club Dinner 2010-11

Tribute to Peter Higgs

Looking around the club I can see that there are many members here that either didn't know Pete or know little about him while there are others who are long lasting friends of his. It is Pete and members like him that helped make the Old Laurentian Rugby Football Club the great club it is today.

Peter went to Lawrence Sheriff School and so was a genuine Old Laurentian, which he had to be when he joined the club in 1953. That was the year of the Queen's coronation and TV screens and you were considered rich if you owned a TV with a 10" screen. The mathematically minded among you will have worked out that he was a member for 58 years when he died. He was a hooker, mainly in the seconds. He joined the committee in 1958-59 season and was still a member of the committee when he died, a period of 53 years. That's twice as long as many members here today have lived!!

He became treasure in 1971-72 season, a post he made his own until 1999-2000 when he became Membership Treasurer. Pete was a very popular administrator, which may largely be down to the fact that he was in charge of International tickets to Twickenham. Tickets were always oversubscribed but Pete was adept at making sure that 'deserving causes', such as me, got the tickets and during that time Pete was never short of a drink or two.

But Pete was more than an administrator. He was a passionate supporter of OLs players. Somewhere around the club you will find a horn hanging up, which belonged to Pete's dad Rowley, who was a member in the 1930's along with his brother Tom. As a player you always knew when Rowley was around as he often made more noise than the referee's whistle. Pete was no less an avid supporter but he never needed the horn. With his extremely loud voice he could be heard miles away as he supported the team or berated the referee. His voice from the touchline will be sorely missed.

As I said Pete was a genuine Old Laurentian and he supported the Old Boys Society as much as the rugby club. He was elected President in 1977-78 in recognition of his work.

Peter never sought anything from the game or the club. However his efforts did not go unnoticed and when the Warwickshire Rugby Football Union introduced their Valued Volunteer scheme Peter was one of the first to be put forward by the club. And finally he received the accolade of which he was very proud when he became only the 7th Life Vice-President of the rugby club. This was a worthy reward for someone who had given a lifetime service to the OLs.

Pete is survived by his lovely wife Joyce, who has spent as much time at the club as he did, daughters Julie and Melanie and their families. It is to those that the thoughts of the club go to in this trying time.

I would like you stand and join me in a toast to Pete Higgs, a wonderful Old Laurentian.

Mike Lewis.