

Obituary:

Hugh Shirley (OE1959–66)



Hugh was a long serving secretary of the OE Luncheon Club and was renowned for his choice of venue for the quarterly meeting including trips to France. At school he was a member of Lyons and became a house prefect and then a sub prefect. He was also an enthusiastic Sergeant Armourer in the Combined Cadet Force.

Not renowned for his sporting prowess he nevertheless, on entering the 6th form, ran the touchline for the school's first XV and after leaving school was a regular member of the OE's 3rd XV. He then went on to become a well-respected referee on the London and South East circuit before concentrating full-time on his career as a quantity surveyor.

During his career, Hugh worked on prestigious projects in the City of London including Barings Bank and Banque Belge as well as on a number of BUPA hospitals. He was also involved in the redevelopment of the stands at Ascot Race Course and counted the Sultan of Brunei among his well-known clients.

He retired early to support his wife, Janet, in her career as a consultant haematologist and concentrated on improving the family home almost single-handedly, including extending and completely reconfiguring the rear of the house. He had honed his DIY skills by improving the other houses he and Janet had lived in.

Even so that did not stop him taking an active part in the local community. He was elected to Woking Council as a LibDem councillor and was leader of the council for two years before stepping down.

Sadly, Hugh suffered ill health for the last nine years of his life, suffering from peripheral vascular disease leading to a total of 15 operations between 2014 and 2020. More recently, he suffered chest problems but bore it all with stoicism and good humour. Sadly, he had a double amputation of his right leg but was in rehabilitation learning to walk again when one final illness struck him from which he was unable to recover.

By Paul Quade (OE1958-66)

