

**MICHAEL VIPOND (Hon. O.F.) 1941-2025** died on Friday 25 July. He was born in Chepstow on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1941 (therefore sharing a birthday with both Elvis Presley and David Bowie, something that O.F. sons Andrew and Dominic were rather proud of!). Following school attendance at Paston Boys Grammar School, North Walsham, in Norfolk. Mike's youthful years were somewhat London-centric. A calling to pursue a career in teaching saw him, as a student, take up a place at Trent Park College (now Middlesex University) and, as a young man, he played rugby for Saracens and in later years, Upper Clapton RUFC. Postings at various London Primary Schools led to a Headship at St. Patrick's Catholic Primary, Walthamstow.



Mike devoted the greater part of his teaching career to Brandeston Hall, Framlingham College Prep School. During his long years of service, from the mid-1970s through to the late 1990s, Mike was Head of Wolsey (Green) House and undertook multiple responsibilities that, at one time or another, included Director of Studies, Head of Boarding and Drama. Between 1980 and the year 2000, Mike directed some ten successful annual productions. This undoubtedly love for drama led to his also taking a memorable rôle in a staging of *Peter Pan*, in the Athlone Hall, Framlingham, when he actually took to the boards himself and 'doubled' as a splendid and sinister Captain Hook and Mr. Darling! No surprise therefore that he invariably enjoyed performing to an appreciative young audience in the Staff Panto in the days when they were de rigueur, following the annual Christmas Lunch.

On the sporting front he enjoyed coaching the throwing events in the athletics season and, of course, also enjoyed considerable success as a rugby coach, the pinnacle of achievement perhaps being with his 1981-82 1<sup>st</sup> XV who recorded a 100% record of seven out of seven matches won.

Mike was always willing to involve himself in extra-curricular activities further afield. For a number of years, in the 1980s, together with wife Ann, he took novice ski groups to the Italian resort of Aprica in northern Italy. Then, closer to home, he was a regular (invariably attired as Sir Walter Raleigh!) accompanying the annual Y.6 pupils' visit to Kentwell Hall. Effectively transporting the transfixed youngsters back to the 1580s, Mike would wax lyrical in appropriate Shakespearean English, which came so easily to him. He was also a published poet and, from time to time, over the years he and I would amuse ourselves with an exchange of newly penned verse! He had that gift of being able to dash off a poem, to suit the occasion, at the drop of a hat.

Mike was also integral to the religious life of the school, on the rota for taking Morning Assemblies and fronting appropriate Remembrance observations on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November each year. He was, himself, also an ordained Deacon in the Catholic Church and had been "running" St. Clares, Framlingham, for many years. Mike's funeral, attended by many with College/Brandeston Hall and town connections, took place in the church on Monday 11th August, with the burial being preceded by a Requiem Massed by burial.

In his retirement he and his wife Ann, had continued to reside in Framlingham where they were very much part of the local community. Less widely known perhaps was Mike's involvement as a governor of

the Robert Hitcham Primary School, a trustee of the Mills Charity, a pivotal member of Framlingham Churches Together and responsibility for running the Food Bank in the town. Across the county he had, over the years, acted as Chaplain and prison visitor at Hollesley Bay and, together with Ann, operated a soup kitchen for the needy, in Ipswich. Appointed an Honorary OF in 1991, Mike was always keen to support SOF events on offer at the College.

We extend our very sincere condolences to Ann and sons, Andrew and Dominic.

*Bob Williams (Hon O.F.)*