

## P J C Murray 1960 - 1997



Carl, to the boys 'Chum' or 'Percy', Murray arrived in 1960, fresh from Brasenose College, Oxford, to teach Classics and to do what all young masters in those days did, fill gaps in vital areas. The School in 1960 had 375 boys, 100 of whom were boarders and only 20 masters, many of an older generation who no longer contributed to extra-curricular activities.

Throughout his career his contribution to Classics was outstanding, replacing traditional, dull and uninspiring, methods of teaching and text books. Co-education brought a more engaging approach to the teaching of Latin through the adoption of a modern course. Bancroft was a pioneer in Classics teaching and in the early 1970s was one of the first Schools to teach Classical Civilisation. He was determined to make Classics accessible to every pupil and Bancroft's exceptional strength in the subject owes much to his initiatives.

He contributed to all major Sports, especially Cricket and Rugby. A highly proficient Cricketer himself, he took responsibility for running the sport, and in later years his patience and skill, coaching at junior level, formed the basis of many a boy's cricketing success. He was instrumental in re-establishing the staff Cricket team, the Evening Stars, founded in the 1930s, but which had lapsed during the war. He helped establish the tradition, still strong in 2015, of the Evening Stars playing local villages and the parents. Later, he developed School golf, which proved a very popular option, with the team enjoying considerable success. Winning the HMC National Foursomes in 1995 was the pinnacle.

The CCF was also in desperate need of Officers and he answered the call, serving for 21 years. Through the CCF he was christened Captain Tunes and Major Murraymint,

nicknames given to him because of a fondness for sucking sweets to help his vocal chords! He commanded the Army section and between 1978 and 1981 was Contingent Commander, helping develop the CCF from a regimented military organisation into an activity based on enjoyment, rather than obligation. His advice to Officers attending their first Army Camp was, 'Carry a clipboard, then at least you will look as if you know what you are doing!'

His contribution to Bancroft's Music was significant. A professional singer himself, he was a regular soloist in School concerts and it was a matter of some regret to him that he had to withdraw from the concert honouring Head Master Richardson's retirement, because of ill-health. In his weekly Singers' Workshop he fostered the musical talents of many Bancroftians and played an important role in the development of School Music.

He was twice a Housemaster. He described being boarding Housemaster as being a tough baptism, but one which helped develop in him an understanding of the pupils and what helped them make the most of their talents. As Housemaster of School House (1978 - 97), he worked hard at making individuals see the error of their ways or helping them through problems by giving appropriate support. It was also important to him to ensure that all pupils were stretched to fulfil their potential.

He was a stalwart of the Staff Common Room and a tireless worker on behalf of its members, acting as President (the senior member) from 1978 to 97. Much of the success of the Common Room, as it grew in number, has been due to its friendly nature and unity, qualities which Carl Murray worked hard to encourage.

Few can have made as varied or successful a contribution to Bancroft's during their career, and Bancroftians of many ages have fond memories of a respected master. Bancroft's owes him much, and it was a measure of the respect and affection in which he is held by Old Bancroftians that the OBA elected him an Honorary Member on his retirement.