

**SHEFFIELD SPORTING MEMORIES**

**MJ HALL**

**BORN 29 05 1935 IN WORKSOP**

Chris - See the likeness?



John B Hall - Chris' Grandpa



**ONLY SON OF J B HALL (NOTTS C C C AND SIR JULIAN CAHN X1)**

**FIRST CLASS PRO CRICKETER 1953 TO 1959 (17 APPEARANCES)**

**MINOR COUNTIES FROM 1953 TO 1979 FOR NOTTS (63 APPEARANCES )**

**INCLUDING AS CAPTAIN IN THE 1970'S**

**DISCOVERED , MENTORED AND MANAGED DEREK RANDALL FROM AGED NINE**

**AWARDED THE "OSCA" FOR SERVICES TO CRICKET" IN 2003 BY THE ECB**

**RETFORD'S CAPTAIN OF 5 CHAMPIONSHIP TEAMS ( 1968, 69, 76, 77 AND 78 )**

**DID NOT MISS A LEAGUE FIXTURE FOR OVER 14 SEASONS**

**PLAYED AGAINST SOME OF THE GREATS OF THE GAME IN THE 1950'S**

**"CRICKET WAS MY DAD'S LIFE"**

**MIKE DIED IN RETFORD 10.08.2019, AT THE AGE OF 84.**

# "TIMES, HAPPENINGS AND SPORTING MEMORIES OF MY LIFETIME"

## THE UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MICHAEL HALL

### CRICKET, CRICKET, CRICKET and MY BREAKTHROUGH WEEK

1945 - 1953

*"In 1945, I started my Secondary education at the Retford Grammar School at the age of 9 and I was blessed with the attention of a fine set of schoolmasters.*

*It was, however, Mr "Coke" Charlton - a Geordie and fanatical Newcastle United fan - who had the most influence on my entire school life. Mr Charlton and my second Head Master, Mr John Gover, soon recognised that my interests laid more in cricket than in academic matters.*

*My association with Mr Charlton, officially my history master, was firmly founded on cricket. His commitment and total love of the game of cricket meant that with the exception of my father, JB, it was Mr Charlton who nurtured my early curiosity in the game & taught me the ethics and the meaning behind the sport.*

*I passed through all the stages of (Edward) House cricket, the School Second X1; the First X1 - Debut at just 13 in 1948; the Notts Junior X1 and the Notts County Grammar Schools X1, becoming Captain of several of these teams which would serve me well in my future career.*

**PICTURES - King Edward V1 Grammar School First X1 in 1948, aged 13 and in 1950, aged 15**

**Michael J Hall - at 13**



**Michael J Hall - at 13?**



*I formed what would become lifelong friendships with my closest pals and team mates, the outstanding Ted Waterfield & John Fawkes. The three of us also formed a formidable junior and eventually senior table tennis trio known as "Alpha".*

**PICTURES PROMPT - King Edward V1 Grammar School First X1 in 1952 aged 17 with Ted and John ( Fred Self, back, would also become an outstanding local player)**

## Michael J Hall - at 17



## Michael J Hall - at 17



*I made the first century in the history of the school (109) against Barnby Moor and I went on to represent the Notts County Grammar Schools against other School Associations and then - at Trent Bridge in 1952 - I played twice against Notts Second X1 in the same week.*

*This was the opportunity I was seeking and I made the most of it with two successive scores in the eighties.*



**PICTURE - M J (AGED 17) LEAVING THE FIELD AT TRENT BRIDGE IN 1952 AFTER A MATCH WINNING SCORE IN THE 80'S FOR THE NOTTS COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS X1 AGAINST THE NOTTS SECOND X1**

*It was these innings under watchful eyes - including those of the great Bill Voce - my father JB's team mate in the Notts First X1 back in the 1930's, who now as the County Coach was fielding at first slip for Notts in the matches, that were then*

*responsible for Notts then offering me my first professional playing contract commencing in April 1953.*

## LEAVING SCHOOL AND ENTERING THE WORLD OF PROFESSIONAL CRICKET -

1953

*"Cricket had moved on at a rare pace after I left school in July 1952. For the next six months, (Sept to March), I worked as an apprentice at the "Retford & Gainsborough Times", becoming almost entirely responsible for all the sports pages from my first day of instruction.*

*My weekly wage was £1-16-10d and when the offer of an £8 per week contract with Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club came my way it took me all of one second to make up my mind.*

*So in April 1953, I found my way to Trent Bridge on the 07.40am bus to Nottingham, which seemed to travel to every village in the County before finding a route to the Test Match ground. I decided to shorten these indiscernibly boring daily return journeys with a combination of hitch hiking, various lifts or in back of a "Clarkes of Retford" laundry van. This also helped me make a profit on my daily subsistence allowance of 6/6d.*

*Professional cricket - seemingly glamorous - was an exhausting, daunting even frightening experience for a 17 year old; I was tall, physically not over strong although quite fit, but basically in those early weeks, rather overawed by being involved with & against the famous names of the game.*

*I suddenly found myself amongst the elite on a Notts staff numbering at least 30 players with a new coach, (J H Parks); the arrival of the World's greatest leg spinner, Australian Bruce Dooland; R T Simpson, Notts Captain and the current England opening batsman; Harold Butler - do quick bowlers come much better (?); Joe - the truly great - Joe Hardstaff and Jonnie Clay & Eric Martin, both gentlemen, batsmen of talent and friends of mine for life - there were many more characters whilst I was at the 'Bridge'.*

*Bruce Dooland lifted the whole spectre of the County's thinking - in five seasons he took over 700 wickets and scored 5000 runs. He had more girlfriends than anyone since Henry VIII, possessed superb motor cars, was extremely modest & charming, helpful to young players and his attire was always immaculate. I admired him greatly and so too did everybody at Trent Bridge.*

*When Bruce returned to Australia, a man was killed fielding at short leg off his leg spin bowling and he retired instantly.*

*When he passed away, his death was a source of sincere regret to every person with whom he had been in contact with at Trent Bridge "*

**PICTURE - MJ HALL NOTTS C C C PROFESSIONAL AS A PROUD YOUNG MEMBER OF A TALENTED SQUAD IN THE EARLY FIFTIES**

**NEXT INSTALMENT .... BORIS KARLOFF ... INJURIES ... and MY DEBUT AND IN FIRST CLASS CRICKET .**

"TIMES , HAPPENINGS AND SPORTING MEMORIES OF MY LIFETIME."

THE UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF M J HALL

"MINOR COUNTIES CRICKET FOR NOTTS AND MY EARLY EXPERIENCES "

## **PART TWO - 1953 - 1958**

*"The 1953 Season (aged 18) was my professional start at Trent Bridge - I had a big advantage because I was a natural catcher of a cricket ball which meant I was frequently wanted as 12th man for the First X1 in these formative years on the Staff .*

*However, my free scoring batting became badly stifled under the restraining influence of Coach Jim Parks, the Sussex stalwart who has been brought in to replace Bill Voce - Parks harmed my style markedly and I was overawed by "Mr Parks", as all the younger players were advised to address him.*

*Minor Counties Cricket in the fifties was undoubtedly a high standard because all the First Class Counties has a Second X1 team in this competition. Every opponent possessed top quality players including on the majority of occasions, Test Match cricketers' and Yorkshire & Lancashire in particular usually provided the most problems for Notts.*

*I first stepped onto a First Class scene in my first season in 1953 after being appointed 12th man for Notts against Northants at Trent Bridge - I was instructed to come onto the field for the Opposition after an injury to their wicketkeeper and then during the Notts first innings, I caught our star player Bruce Dooland, shin high to my left .*

*I also fielded at second slip for Northants and witnessed from this position the speed of the legendary fast bowler Frank Tyson on his First Class debut!*

*In May 1955 - we enjoyed - for a change - an exceptional first day against Yorkshire Seconds at Shaw Lane, Barnsley - I scored 39 in difficult conditions (caught by H D Bird) and then we also captured six cheap Yorkshire wickets for just 59. Unfortunately, when we woke the following day there had been over 6 inches of overnight snow and so we just went back to the ground to collect our gear and went home!*

*Another incredible story concerns not one, but two Film Stars. It was a 1950's tradition for Notts to play an annual Benefit game at Catford in Kent. I was named 12th man for the 1955 match and Notts were swiftly 83 for 8, with our last man Eddie Rowe in the dressing room, very merry on the complimentary "Blue Bass" beer that had been supplied by our hosts. Our Captain, Bruce Dooland, suggested that I should go in at number 11 instead of Eddie and when I did, the Catford supporters were confident of a famous victory over a County side.*

*I arrived at the wicket and I took my "guard" from one of the two famous British film stars who had agreed to officiate - This umpire was Boris Karloff ("Frankenstein" no less!) and his partner at square leg was Trevor Howard (of "Brief Encounter" fame). Arthur Jepson was my last wicket partner and we both made 80 to ensure Notts would eventually win to quieten the locals down !*

*Mr. Karloff and Mr. Howard both came into our dressing room after the match and shook hands with myself - I was "aghast" and managed to mutter something that resembled a humble "thank you, Sirs."*

*Also in 1955 , I managed another memorable appearance as the Notts 12th man against Middlesex at Trent Bridge. Bruce Dooland had made 77 and took 10 wickets. It was in the capturing of one of these wickets that I became involved and the batsman concerned was none other than the England super star Denis Compton, who had injured his hand in his car door and came into bat in Middlesex's second innings at number eight (Wisden 1956 page 519).*

*When Middlesex lost their 6th Second innings wicket to Bruce Dooland (Don Bennett was caught at short gully by Freddie Stocks) my Notts colleague, Johnny Clay had to go off the field for a toilet break and so I walked on as 12th man alongside the legendary Denis Compton, who was batting lower down the order because of a hand injury - this cricket superstar never stopped talking to me, a newcomer, all the way to the wicket.*

*I went to first slip replacing Johnny and Denis, pushing forward at his first ball, got a wafer thin edge through to me for a straightforward catch . (Compton caught Sub (MJ Hall) bowled Dooland 0 (first ball).)*

*Johnny Clay was then ready to return, so within literally less than a minute of having arrived at the crease with Denis, I was now walking off with him. I had not fielded as the 12th man before this incident and was not needed again in the match.*

*I thus became probably the only cricketer to have been on the field of play in a First Class match for only one ball and caught a catch!*

**FOOTNOTE: Twenty one years later in 1976, the cricket commentator and writer Christopher Martin-Jenkins, after guest speaking at a Retford CC annual dinner, telephoned me to repeat the details of this incident which then appeared as a question in his "Christmas Bumper Quiz Book" that year.**

### **The 1957 SEASON AND THE SHOCKING INJURY THAT SET ME BACK**

*At the start of the 1957 Season, I had shaken off Coach Parks's ill conceived ideas and had begun to display the kind of batting form that I knew I was capable of - With two scores of 70 and a 60 in the Second X1 , it looked like I might now be selected for the First team, but alas, a tragedy struck me down and the rest of the season was almost finished for me.*

*During a catching practice session at Trent Bridge, my eyes were firmly fixed on a ball hit deep into the outfield when I collided with the white line marker that the Notts grounds man had deserted, to stupidly go for the catch alongside myself!*

*I was taken to hospital for treatment to a badly injured knee & shinbone but much worse, a broken collar bone.*

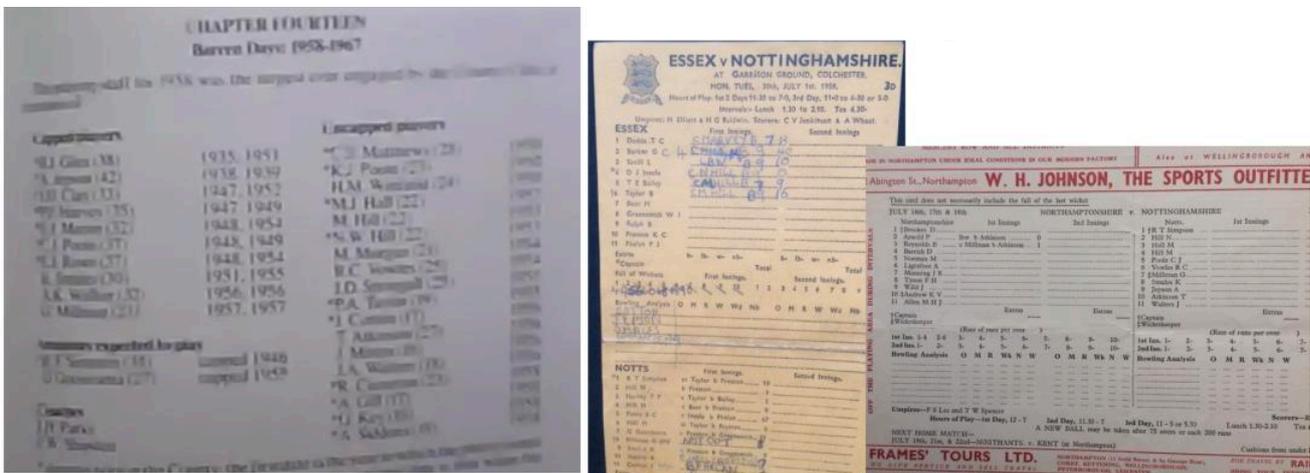
## MY FIRST CLASS DEBUT FOR NOTTS - 1958

*I recovered well to start the 1958 season and with a growing confidence I knew this was going to be a big year for my career.*

*On June 4th I think I played my best - though not my highest innings - with 52 at Worksoop against Lancashire Second X1, who included three England bowlers in their ranks. It was especially memorable for me because my dad, JB, was proudly present on his old home ground to see me succeed in these challenging conditions & against the very quick Colin Hilton and the Cambridge Blue, CS Smith, who had opened the attack for Lancashire.*

*I eventually realised my dream of making my First Class debut later in the same month on June 30th 1958 against Essex at Colchester, in a game restricted to 2 days by heavy pre-match rain.*

### ORIGINAL SCORECARD ESSEX V NOTTS - DEBUT OF M J HALL



*I scored a "duck" on my debut, given out stumped by umpire Harry Baldwin who was standing some 35 yards back at square leg and paying no particular attention - his decision brought howls of derision from the spectators behind him. I was saddened by this experience because I had worked hard at my game and waited 5 years and over 50 Second team games for my chance.*

*A disappointing feature of this drawn match was the superior attitude of former England player, Trevor Bailey, who never deigned to speak to any of us at any stage of the match.*

*I received my first ball in First Class cricket from him and I middled it with a stern defensive stroke. In the future, I could compare this snobbish behaviour with the sporting & generous attitudes of the likes of Tom Graveney, Colin Cowdrey, Peter May and Denis Compton all of whom always greeted me with a firm hand shake and a ' Good Luck ' whenever I played against any of these fine sportsmen."*

**(MIKE GOT MARRIED TO MARY COOKE ON DECEMBER 22 ND 1955 - "OUT OF SEASON" OF COURSE )!**

**NEXT INSTALMENT - MY HIGHEST FIRST CLASS SCORE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH A "GIANT OF THE GAME" !**

"TIMES , HAPPENINGS AND SPORTING MEMORIES OF MY LIFETIME."

THE UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF M J HALL

"MY HIGHEST SCORE AND MY MAGICAL MATCH WITH A LEGEND"

**PART THREE - 1958 AND 1959 at Trent Bridge.**

***" After my First Class debut for Notts in 1958, I continued to have a successful season and I was given several more opportunities to play in the First X1. In fact I made eight consecutive appearances against Essex, Northants (twice) Kent, Gloucestershire, Hampshire & Derbyshire (twice) between late June to the end of July 1958.***

***After my debut against Essex, I was selected for the County Championship match against Northants at Trent Bridge and I had to play well in a crisis situation against (possibly) the fastest bowler of all time - Frank Tyson. In fact I scored my first ever run at First Class level in this game and off the bowling of Frank when we were 53 for 4 and struggling. I finished on 10 not out with Cyril Poole of Notts & England as my partner and we actually won the match!***

***I was duly promoted up the order to No.3 for our next game against Kent which I considered to be an unbelievable honour and I went to the wicket to face only the second ball of the game. (RT Simpson having been caught by the great England wicket keeper, Godfrey Evans off the first ball.)***

***I made 34 in a stand of 90 over the next two hours before being run out on the stroke of lunch. Kent's Godfrey Evans and Colin Cowdrey had both wished me well before the start of play - this was the calibre of sportsmanship of these two great England cricketers.***

***In our next County match I made 39 in the first innings against Gloucestershire but then I had some indifferent scores as I continued to learn about the game at such a high level.***

***However, at Bournemouth in late July 1958 against Hampshire, I not only hit my highest score in the County Championship (53) but I did it facing the bowling of Derek Shackleton who took 7 wickets in the match - I was pleased with my performance against such a fine bowler and the man who has taken the most first class wickets of any player since the War.***

## 1959 AND MY MAGICAL PARTNERSHIP WITH A LEGEND

*In 1959, I had scored 387 runs batting for the Second X1 in the Minor Counties Competition at an average of over 32 and my cricket was progressing despite the poor quality of some of the pitches.*

*I knew I was playing well and all I needed was the correct amount of advice & assistance.*

*My significant scores were 60 & 29\* against Warwickshire Seconds; 50 v Staffordshire (ct. & bowled by David Steele); 96 against Derbyshire and 67 when we played Lincolnshire.*

*Aged 24, my confidence rocketed in mid-June 1959 when I was then re-selected for the First team against Cambridge University at Trent Bridge. Notts had succeeded in recruiting one of the all time greatest & most charismatic cricketers that the game had ever seen - Keith Miller, widely regarded as Australia's greatest ever all rounder and a 3 times "Ashes" winner.*

*The date was Saturday June 13th, with a noon start, but Keith had still not arrived by the time our innings was about to commence and when he did arrive it was minus any equipment which he then proceeded to borrow from everybody in the dressing room !*

*There were around 6,000 people in the ground - the size of the crowd gives an indication of the aura surrounding this man. When he entered the Notts dressing room he chatted with everyone as if he were a mere mortal, which in my eyes he certainly was not!*

*'Fancy me', I thought, now playing with one of the games greats, a man I had watched in awe as a youngster, aged just 13, playing against England in the First Test of the 1948 "Invincibles" Ashes Series at Trent Bridge, bowling fast bouncers at Hutton and Compton. Keith's image was as big as any film star and he had of course not forgotten to bring along " Miss Australia" with him to the match!*

*This huge crowd all saw him shortly because we were soon 23 for 3 when I joined him in the middle with the thought in my head 'What the hell am I doing here with this genius of the game!'*

*It would be impossible to translate my feelings as I saw Miller as my batting partner, but with many an encouraging word in my ear at the end of every over from Keith, I prospered to score 72, my highest First Class score for Notts.*

*Our 4th wicket partnership of 128 was made in two and a quarter hours and my illustrious partner made 62. In the evening, Keith then opened the bowling and took 2 wickets for 9 runs and scored 102 not out in the second innings with two sixes and 13 fours in just 125 minutes of brilliance.*

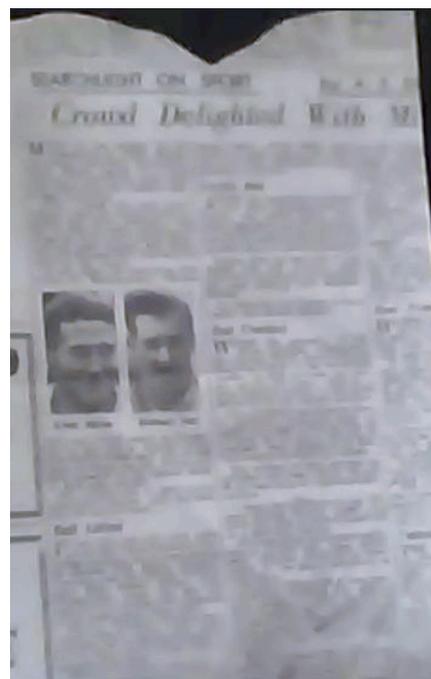
*I also caught three fabulous catches in the game, one head high at first slip off a vicious bouncer from Keith and another, diving horizontally to my left, one handed.*

*Notts eventually won the match by 179 runs*

*It was a memorable match and one of my happiest cricketing memories - in my own mind, I knew I had grown in character through these experiences.*

**ORIGINAL PRESS CUTTING - NCCC V CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY with HENRY BLOEFELD OPENING THE BATTING FOR THE UNIVERSITY.**

**FOOTNOTE : MIKE'S INNINGS OF 72 INCLUDED ONE SIX AND ELEVEN FOURS AND WAS DESCRIBED IN THE NOTTINGHAM PRESS AS A "PARTICULARLY IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY ... AND AN IDEAL PARTNER... FOR MILLER "**



*I played in the next seven First Class games for Notts but the match with Keith Miller was my greatest individual achievement.*

*I met Keith twice more after our respective retirements - both times at Epsom Races for the "Derby" and we chatted about these events on my magical day in cricket with him. "*

*Chris Hall - June 7 th 2020*

**PHOTO - KEITH MILLER'S STATUE OUTSIDE THE MCG ,MELBOURNE**



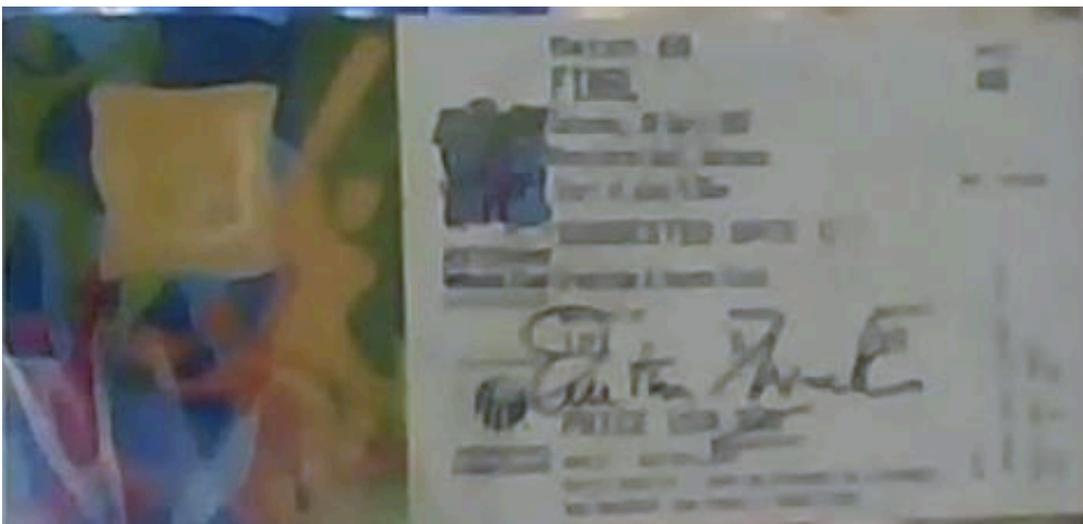
**THREE TIMES ASHES WINNER and INAUGURAL MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN CRICKET "HALL OF FAME"**

**THIS MATCH PROVED TO BE THE FINAL FIRST CLASS MATCH OF KEITH MILLER'S DISTINGUISHED CAREER.**

**KEITH DIED IN 2004 AGED , 84. HE WAS HONOURED WITH A STATE FUNERAL BY THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT.**

**HE PLAYED 55 TESTS FOR AUSTRALIA AND WON THE "ASHES" IN 1946/47 in Australia ; 1948 in England AND 1950/51 in Australia .**

**KEITH MILLER ACHIEVED 170 TEST WICKETS AND 2,958 RUNS FOR HIS COUNTRY AND HIS FINAL TEST MATCH IN ENGLAND WAS IN THE 1956 ASHES SERIES, JUST THREE YEARS BEFORE THIS PARTNERSHIP WITH MIKE AT TRENT BRIDGE.**



**NEXT INSTALMENT - PART FOUR - MOVING ON FROM FIRST CLASS, MY CAREER IN THE LEAGUES ...AND THEN CAME RANDALL !**

"TIMES , HAPPENINGS AND SPORTING MEMORIES OF MY LIFETIME."

THE UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF M J HALL

" MOVING ON "

#### PART FOUR

LEAVING FIRST CLASS CRICKET - RE STARTING MY LEAGUE CAREER... AND THEN  
CAME RANDALL ! LEAVING NOTTS

*"Just three months following my partnership with Keith Miller at Trent Bridge in 1959, I decided to ask for my release from what was a two year contract with Notts. (17 First class matches 1958 - 59)*

**SILVER TANKARD PRESENTED BY MY TEAM MATES AT NOTTS**



*Possibly looking back, it was the offer of more security and less financial worries in the world of bookmaking with "Geoff Osticks" in Retford that caused me to make the decision.*

**MJ'S NOTTS SECOND X1 BLAZER WHICH HE WORE WITH SUCH PRIDE ON A TOTAL OF 63 OCCASIONS 1953- 1979**



*I had no proper job in the long winter months, just trying to earn a few pounds from helping at the "Pheasant Hotel" which my mother and father, JB, were now managing in Retford or by delivering bags of potatoes to local Fish & Chip shops.*

*In 1960, I had the responsibility of my young wife, Mary and my four year old son, Chris to consider, but whatever caused me to make my decision was regretted bitterly .*

*When April 1960 dawned and I knew the lads were reporting back for training, I was virtually a mental wreck. Exactly why I did what I did, I will never know and I was so saddened by my action that for nearly three years - I didn't even play League cricket for Retford.*

*I worked very hard for Osticks, learning a lot about horse racing and I worked many night meetings on my own, with Mr.Ostick often busy with his Council duties.*

#### **RETURNING TO LEAGUE CRICKET WITH RCC**

*I confined myself to the Sunday X1 cricket - but I returned eventually, all guns blazing, playing for the Notts' Second X1 as an amateur between 1960 - 1979 (24 additional matches) and going on to enjoy a very long career as the Captain of Retford, the Notts Cricket Association, the Sheffield Cricket Lover's Society and in 1970 the Captain of the Notts Second X1.*

*These teams took me to Barbados, St Vincent, St Lucia, Gibraltar, France and many other cricket venues, including Old Trafford and Bramall Lane.*

**NCA TOUR 1979 BARBADOS - MJH CAPTAIN at the KENSINGTON OVAL**



*When I first returned to League cricket I was quite nervous despite all my experience, I made 50 in a tough League match and from that moment I knew my appetite for the game was then fully restored.*

*I played for RCC in 1966 & 1967 and realised we had the foundations of a very good League team.*

*I won the League's batting averages in 1967 with over 600 runs at an average of 52.6 and embarked on a fourteen and a half year spell in which I never missed a game of any description available to me (total of 635 consecutive appearances).*

**TROPHY FROM  
RCC TO  
COMMEMORATE  
300  
CONSECUTIVE  
LEAGUE  
APPEARANCES,  
THEN A LEAGUE  
RECORD**



*I was asked to become Retford's Captain for 1968 and there followed four incredibly successful years with two record breaking Bassetlaw Championship Titles in 1968 & 1969 - both being achieved with 14 point margins and losing only twice in two seasons of hard league cricket.*

*A certain teenage Derek Randall was a member of these talented teams and the 1968 Championship was the first achieved by RCC since my dad, JB, had been Captain back in 1949. Derek had started showing up at the Retford ground as a nine year old with incredible speed and reflexes and by 17 he was in the First X1 with myself - we all called him "Arkle" after the Champion racehorse. (More about DWR later and in Part Five)*

*John Coddington and Keith Jackson formed our spearhead opening attack - they were both quick, accurate, determined and consistent - our opposition were often 10 for 3 or the like and not destined to recover! Keith took 36 wickets at only 13.6 whilst John achieved 51 wkts., at just 10.7*

**RCC CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM 1968 with MJH top run scorer, Derek Randall , John Coddington and Keith Jackson**



**SIGNED CHAMPIONSHIPS DINNER MENU 1968**



*I gave total commitment to RCC.*

Mary would often pick me up on a Saturday lunchtime from the offices of "Geoff Osticks" and we would rush to wherever Retford - or Sheffield United were playing - usually not for the start of either!

*My intention was for Retford to become the dominant team in the League.*

### **BASSETLAW LEAGUE X1**

*On my return to playing serious League cricket, I was honoured to be selected to represent the Bassetlaw League - something which my father, JB had achieved in his own colourful career.*

*I played 35 consecutive cup ties for the League side and we won the National "Cricket Conference Trophy" on three tremendous occasions, firstly in 1971 then in 1976 & 1978 and were runners up in 1973.*

*In 1971, we played the powerful Yorkshire League at Bramall Lane in the Quarter Final, winning by just 4 runs and then played the Birmingham League in the Final at Solihull, our opposition including a certain young Pakistani bowler called Imran Khan, who was then qualifying for Worcestershire.*



*We overcame his fine efforts and I contributed a valuable mid-innings 31 and then caught Imran to help my League secure its first ever National title by 12 runs .*

*My dad, JB, was present at the final in his capacity as the Chairman of the Bassetlaw League and he cried with joy - that in itself was an everlasting memory.*

**MJH TAKING A VITAL CATCH IN THE 1971 FINAL V THE BIRMINGHAM LEAGUE and batting in the quarter final at Bramall Lane**

**THE 1970'S - A HATRICK OF CHAMPIONSHIPS WITH RCC**

*In the mid seventies, I recruited several key players for RCC, including the South African Kenny Watson and Peter Hacker, both on the staff at Notts, as our Club professionals and we recorded a "hat trick" of League Championships under my Captaincy in 1976, 1977 & 1978*

*My eldest son, Chris (C J) made his start in the First X1 in the first of these Championship successes and was joined by his brother Nigel (NJ) from 1979.*

**RCC CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM 1976/ 1977**



**RCC CHAMPIONS 1977 WITH HAROLD LARWOOD**



**JB HALL WITH MJ HALL 1976**



**MJ WITH CHRIS HALL AND NIGEL HALL 1979**



### **... AND THEN CAME RANDALL**

*Another era eventually dawned at Trent Bridge, after my own First Class career had ended, which in my younger days I could never had envisaged - I refer to the rise of Derek Randall of Retford CC, eventually climbing to the heights of the professional game to become one of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club's greatest batsmen, the finest fielder in the history of the game, with a brilliant Test Career of four Ashes series wins and seven Test centuries, - a "superstar" of the English cricket scene.*

*In the early Sixties I had spent literally thousands of hours with Derek, coaching, teaching, encouraging and instructing - often just him and me.*

*When he left the Sir Frederick Milner school, which was located at the bottom of my garden in Retford, he would implore me to go with him to the West Retford ground to practice. This was entirely possible around 1960 - 1965 when I was working at "Geoff Osticks", as I could take the afternoon off with Derek before returning to run the evening telephone lines at the Osticks bookmaking offices.*

*Derek's appetite for the game was insatiable and of all the cricketers I had seen by that time and all the ones I saw in later years, he was the one who possessed the natural ability & talent to go to the top of a professional cricket career.*

*I took him everywhere and Derek often played truant from school! On one occasion there was a mix up between Retford's Alan Bull & myself about collecting Derek to go to the 1963 Test match at TB - Alan agreed to go back to collect him in Retford and Derek was still there patiently waiting for his lift!*

*With his team mates at Retford, we practised and played cricket and football at the ground for many years, every Sunday for example throughout the Winter whatever the weather at 6, 7, or 8 a side. Derek was a brilliant footballer who just wanted to dribble around people and then do it again! "*

**NEXT INSTALMENT - PART FIVE - MY CRICKET LIFE WITH DEREK RANDALL, RETFORD, NOTTS & ENGLAND.**

TIMES , HAPPENINGS AND SPORTING MEMORIES OF MY LIFETIME."

THE UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF M J HALL

"MY GREATEST CONTRIBUTION TO CRICKET"

## PART FIVE - AND THEN CAME RANDALL !

### EARLY DAYS AT RETFORD C C

*"Derek was a teenager in the Retford Cricket Club First X1 under my Captaincy in 1968 when I wrote as the 'Retford Times' reporter, that 'Retford possessed the fastest mover to a cricket ball in the entire world of cricket.'*

*RCC won the League Championship that year with Derek batting, catching and running opposition players out - he was simply brilliant. (In Derek's autobiography he describes myself as someone that all the young players looked up to - a wonderful complement )*

### RCC CHAMPIONS OF THE B&DCL 1968 WITH MJ, DWR AND KEITH JACKSON



*I also wrote that he was the best fielder in the game ... I was heavily accused of bias & received written and verbal abuse, but even in an era with the likes of Colin Bland & Clive Lloyd I knew I was right about Derek's fielding capabilities.*

*I was proved correct on many occasions and his fielding for Notts then eventually for England, would gain him universal cricketing fame as the best fielder the game had ever seen.*

*Derek would run out the fabulously talented Gordon Greenidge at the non-striker's end in the 1979 World Cup Final at Lord's; he would run out Rick McCosker at Headingley in the 1977 "Ashes" and an early scare given to Geoff Boycott at Abbeydale ( Yorks v Notts ) would mean that Geoff could be heard shouting for the next 10 - 15 years, " No , not One to him!"*

### **NOTTS 2NDS**

*Notts considered Derek an eccentric and didn't show any positive interest in him as a batsman. In 1969, I was Captaining the Notts Second X1 and the night before a match against Worcestershire, a player dropped out - I contacted my old Skipper, RT Simpson, the senior representative of Selection at Notts - who warned me not to take Randall - " Michael, he can't bloody play !"*

*But I took Derek that following morning, he batted against some hostile fast bowling and scored runs in both innings. RT, who had been watching from the sidelines, came up to myself and declared, "Michael, the boy can bloody play! "*

*I had the delight of playing with Derek in Notts Seconds on several more occasions, including Lancashire at Old Trafford in 1971.*

*I continued with my advice and coaching of this incredible individual and pushed him forward to the Notts hierarchy at every opportunity in these formative years.*

### **ORIGINAL SCORECARD FROM OLD TRAFFORD WITH MYSELF , DEREK AND KEITH JACKSON**

*In 1971 Derek won himself his first one year contact with Notts and in May 1972 made his First Team debut against Essex at Newark. Coming in at 126 for six - and with Garry Sobers already dismissed - he found himself coming to the wicket to join his Captain, Brian Bolus, in a mid innings crisis.*

*Chris and myself attended this game along with some of the Retford team and we saw Derek score a magnificent 78, including five sixes, with an 80 run partnership with Brian against a first class Essex attack of Keith Boyce, John Lever, Robin Hobbs and Ray East. The umpire was HD Bird.*

*What a debut, for which Derek was given a "Man of the Match" award of £30 in front of only a handful of spectators at the end of game!*

### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CCC**

*Throughout his early career at Nottingham, no matter whether he was in the pavilion, fielding or quite uncannily, even when he was batting, he sensed I had arrived and automatically & quietly waved to me in acknowledgement - we were so close in mind & thought.*

*In 1973, I shall never forget seeing him winning his first ever Gold Medal award for his MOTM performance against Lancashire at Trent Bridge when he ran out Farokh Engingeer & Clive Lloyd in consecutive and identical manner, with both batsmen wandering about their crease trying to look innocent after ferocious lbw appeals. Derek had previously scored 56 in just 70 minutes and also flung himself goalkeeper style at extra cover to take a brilliant catch off Sobers to help Notts secure victory by 22 runs.*

*Derek was capped by Notts in September 1973 on the final day of season and prospered to become one of the leading English batsmen in County cricket, establishing several batting records that still stand to this day.*

*Derek's appearances for Retford were now limited by his developing professional career but at the start of the 1974 season he played at Retford and opened the batting with myself, playing an amazing innings of 94 and sharing in a first wicket stand 116. Another proud day spent with Derek.*

**RCC CENTURY PARTNERSHIP WITH MJ IN APRIL 1974  
PRIOR TO DEREK'S SELECTION FOR THE MCC V  
HAMPSHIRE AT LORD'S**



## **THE CENTENARY TEST**

*" ... and then, in my story of DWR, only three years since our Century partnership for RCC, was the small matter of the March 1977 Centenary Test staged in Australia, the 800th Test match ever played .*

## **CENTENARY TEST PROGRAMME SIGNED BY DWR**

*Derek sensationally scored 174 (off 353 balls in 446 minutes) for England in the Second innings of his First Test against the Australians at the MCG - Chasing an almost impossible target of 463, England lost by just 45 runs, which was the same margin as in the First Test in 1877.*

*Derek took on the Legendary Dennis Lillee and everything that the Aussies could hurl at him but with 21 fours, his innings of 174 was judged to be the "Man of the Match" performance, despite Australia winning the Test.*

*And all this in front of Her Majesty the Queen on Day Five!*

## **DWR HOOKING LILLEE FOR FOUR**

## **RECEIVING THE "MAN OF THE MATCH" AWARD MCG ( Award \$1,500 Australian )**

*I was in Colchester that day on business - my hotel had no radio in the bedroom so I got up in the middle of the night and I went to sit in my car in my pyjamas & wrapped in two rugs to listen to every ball! Later I saw most of the play on video - Fancy, "little" Derek Randall from Retford squaring up to the might of Dennis Lillee!*

## **MJ'S CENTENARY TEST DVD - converted from old VHS video tape**

## **SIGNED COPY OF THE MCC'S "CENTENARY TEST BOOK"**

*When I returned to Retford and Derek arrived back in the UK there followed a triumphant journey for Derek from his family "home" near the Retford ground to the Retford Town Hall for a Civic Reception in an open top sports car that I had the honour of driving.*

*The Town turned out in their thousands and the Market Square was packed to capacity when we arrived, - DWR appeared on the balcony with a "News at Ten" crew and the event was a happy & memorable occasion.*

**OPEN TOP CAR ARRIVES AT TOWN HALL  
1977 DRIVEN BY MJ**

*I became Derek's Commercial Manager after he arrived home from Melbourne and we arranged for all his mail to be re-directed to my home - Derek had become a national hero and was inundated with fan mail & invitations to attend functions and open anything that needed opening.*

**A PIECE OF SURVIVING ' FAN MAIL' ,  
NEVER PREVIOUSLY SEEN BEFORE.**

*I became his letter writer, agent, advisor, driver and a father like figure to him. I secured Derek television appearances on*

*"A Question of Sport", "Desert Island Discs" and "Calendar News" - the world was literally at his feet and he was quite simply the most popular sports personality in Britain.*

*Derek was a character popular with every member of the public and a much in demand young man.*

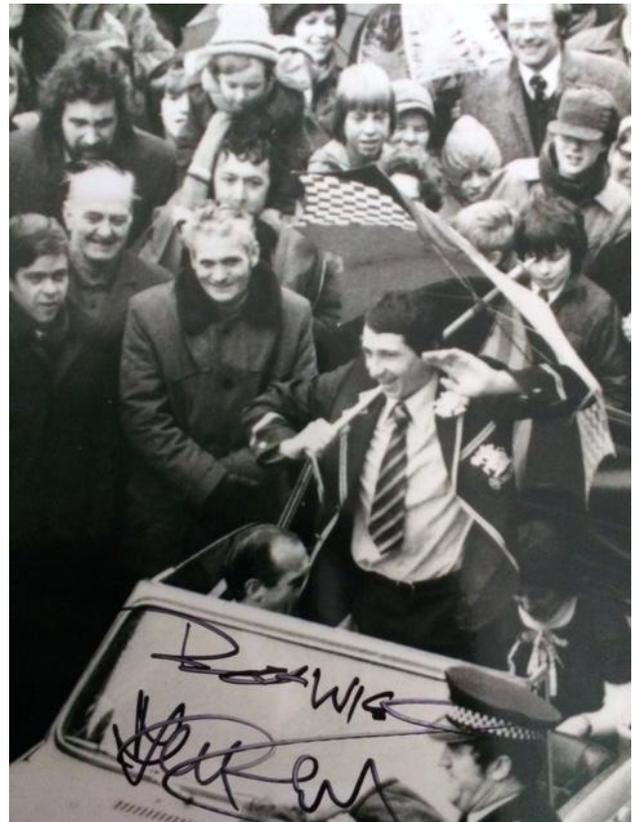
**THE CLOUGH INCIDENT**

*Then there was THE incident with Brian Clough at the Notts CA celebratory dinner in Nottingham in 1977 held after our 1976 National success in winning the Cup at Old Trafford by 10 wickets against the Middlesex CA.*

*Our victorious team were seated in front of the top table, which included Sir Patrick Moore as a guest. Clough - ignorant & swollen headed - arrived late as the main speaker and made the most dreadful speech during which he addressed Derek and referred to his recent innings in the Centenary Test.*

*Clough asked "124 was it young man?"*

*Derek unaware of Clough's attempt to win back the popularity stakes in Nottingham ventured a hesitant "Er, no Mr Clough I think it a few more than that."*



*After more stupid & facetious comments, the red faced Clough asked DWR, "How many was it then, son?", which much to his credit and to unstinting applause Derek replied "174, I think it was Mr Clough".*

*"Huh," replied the Forest fool, "I knew they drank a lot in Australia, but they must all have been drunk that day."*

*Sir Patrick was indignant and I was utterly furious - my dear friend and the NCA Captain Eric Martin restrained me to avoid a real incident.*

*Patrick kindly agreed to attend the Retford Championship Dinner in 1978 - his admiration for Retford Cricket Club and Derek never waned. Sir Patrick was a lovely man, totally eccentric and an absolute delight and honour to have met and known.*

*There are thousands of other anecdotes about DWR and myself - I played, for example, a major part in compiling his 1984 autobiography, "The Sun Has Got His Hat On" and I remember correcting many errors in the draft with Derek at his Nottingham home. It took all of one whole day!*

**MJ'S COPY OF DEREK'S SIGNED BOOK - The Sun Has Got Its Hat On**

*One escapade with Randall was followed by another, leading me through Derek and my success as his Manager, to become the commercial representative of my great friends at Notts, Clive Rice & his wife Sue and Richard Hadlee and his wife Karen no less!*

### **1978 DISASTER AT RCC - DWR LENDS HIS SUPPORT**

*On Sept 15th 1978 , a disaster happened at RCC , when following an arsonist attack, the Club's Pavilion was burnt to the ground. That very same week Derek, now an established England player and an 'Ashes' winner , visited the ground with the Press and lent his name to the publicity campaign for the Appeal Fund for the rebuild - this was hugely influential.*

*On Sunday morning July 13th 1980, Derek opened the new Pavilion with myself and then saw me score 93 in the afternoon match, before I was "adjudged" lbw - but that's another story to recount !*

**DWR OPENS THE RCC PAVILION 13 07 198**

**ASHES HEROES RE UNITED ... IN 2008 AT  
RETFORD**

*Derek's former England Captain, the great Michael Brearley, agreed to attend the Club's 150th Anniversary Dinner in 2008 as guest speaker and Derek, by now a Life Member of RCC, also confirmed he would be there to celebrate this historic event.*

**MJ WITH DEREK AND MICHAEL BREARLEY AT THE  
RCC 150th ANNIVERSARY DINNER IN 2008**

*I remember collecting Michael from the Station and bringing him to the ground where he met with Derek for the first time in over 10 years. It was an emotional reunion and the two men spoke together about the many Ashes victories and incidents that are well documented in the history of cricket.*

*I was immensely proud of Derek that evening - helping him in his earliest days was probably my greatest contribution to a game that I had loved ever since my own dad, JB , took me to see my first match with him in the 1940's.*

*If anyone had told me back in 1960 , that Derek Randall's name would be plastered in his honour over the doors of the Banqueting Suite on one of the world's greatest Test grounds or that roads in Retford would be named by the local Council in his name - or if anyone had told me that he would achieve such distinction and create so many records - then I would have suggested psychiatric treatment ! "*

---



## **THE PARTNERSHIP - my summary by Chris Hall**

**In the "Cricketer" magazine in November 2016, an article was published called "Partnerships" - the story of my dad's relationship with Derek and how he had helped Derek breakthrough into the professional game.**

**Derek closes the article with these words:**

**"Mike was 'Mr.Retford Cricket Club' ... being Captain of Retford & the Notts Second X1 was very handy for me because it gave me a way into the system ... I was lucky to have someone like Mike there at the start to help me."**

## **FINAL PART SIX - CRICKET HONOURS AND LATER LIFE - "MY DAD" BY CHRIS HALL**

### **FOOTNOTES FOR DEREK WILLIAM RANDALL**

**BORN 24 02 1951 ; RETFORD , NOTTS ; R/H BATSMAN**

#### **TEST CAREER FOR ENGLAND**

**47 TESTS - 2,470 RUNS @ 33.37; 7 CENTURIES ; TOP SCORE 174 ; 31 CATCHES ;**

**These are ALL RECORDS FOR ANY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BATSMAN**

**AND AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF RUN OUTS AND RUNS SAVED IN THE FIELD !**

**1977 ASHES WINNER IN ENGLAND - AT HEADINGLEY V AUSTRALIA - CAUGHT THE FINAL CATCH TO SECURE THE ASHES**

**1978/79 ASHES WINNER IN AUSTRALIA - 150 AT THE SCG - His Century was the then slowest ever in England v Australia matches ( 406 MINUTES) ; TWO MAN OF THE MATCH AWARDS ; SERIES WON 5-1**

**1977 - DEREK'S 174 V AUSTRALIA WAS THE HIGHEST TEST MATCH SCORE BY ANY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PLAYER IN HISTORY.**

#### **ODI**

**49 MATCHES ; 1,067 RUNS @ 26.67 ;TOP SCORE 88 V WI'S 1976 and England's Man of the Series v WI ODI 1976**

**\*BATTED FOR ENGLAND FROM NUMBER 1 TO NUMBER 7 in his international career**

#### **COUNTY CRICKET FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE C C C**

**DEBUT FOR NOTTS SECOND X1 1969 ; DEBUT FOR NOTTS FIRST X1 MAY 1972 ( 78 AT NUMBER EIGHT)**

**464 matches ; FIRST CLASS RUNS 27,294 @38.44 ; 51 CENTURIES ; 344 catches**

**1979 V MIDDLESEX AT TRENT BRIDGE - SCORED A DOUBLE CENTURY 209 AND A CENTURY 146 ,  
A FEAT UNEQUALLED BY ANY BATSMAN IN CRICKET HISTORY**

**1981 COUNTY CHAMPIONS TEAM MEMBER**

**1985 NAT WEST TROPHY V ESSEX - FINAL OVER 18 TO WIN - DWR SCORED 16 OFF FIRST 5 BALLS  
AND WAS THEN CAUGHT OFF LAST BALL GOING FOR THE WINNING SHOT !**

**1985 County Championship "Player of the Season" with 2,151 first class runs**

**1987 COUNTY CHAMPIONS TEAM MEMBER**

**1988 HIGHEST SCORE OF HIS CAREER 237 V DERBYSHIRE**

**1989 BENSON & HEDGES TROPHY**

**1991 SUNDAY LEAGUE CHAMPIONS- DEREK INVOLVED IN THREE CENTURY OPENING STANDS**

**1991 DEREK FINISHED TOP OF NOTTS AVERAGES FOR THE 6 TH TIME**

**NAT WEST TROPHY WINNERS**

**1,000 FIRST CLASS RUNS IN A SEASON - 13 TIMES**

**THREE DOUBLE CENTURIES FOR NOTTS IN HIS CAREER**

**UNKNOWN NUMBER OF RUNS OUTS AND RUNS SAVED !**

**Wisden "Cricketer of the Year" 1980**

**THE "RANDALL SUITE" AT TRENT BRIDGE IS NAMED IN HIS HONOUR**

**"RANDALL WAY" IN RETFORD IS NAMED IN HIS HONOUR BY THE BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL**



## **"TIMES, HAPPENINGS AND SPORTING MEMORIES OF MY LIFE"**

### **THE UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF M J HALL**

#### **PART SIX - "MJ's sporting times 1980's - 2019"**

**CHRIS HALL concludes his late father's sporting highlights from the 1980's to his passing in August 2019 at the age of 84 following a lifetime in sport.**

---

*"I thought long & hard about how could I select those events that I know my dad would cherish if he could chat to you all here today - so I chose a straightforward chronological order of some of his most significant & memorable happenings since the 1980's - with perhaps a surprise or two along the way!"*

#### **1983 - 1989 THE OPENING OF "VIDEO HALL"**

*MJ jointly owned a successful business with his youngest son Nigel in the 1980's, being at the forefront of the Video rentals business in Retford. Dad enjoyed being his own boss after previously working for a large corporation and "Video Hall" became a popular local store serving both VHS and Betamax customers - I was the one who went for the Betamax system!*

---

#### **RACE HORSE OWNER**

*From his early days spent with owners, trainers and jockeys and then working for 'Osticks' bookmakers in the 1960's, Mike had a tremendous passion and interest in Horse racing .*

*Mike realised a long held personal ambition to become an owner when he became involved with a local trainer and had his own winners firstly at Uttoxeter ( in1985 ) & then at Pontefract both with "Taristeac" and then at Leicester with "Master Tyke" in 1988.*

*My dad loved - and knew everything about - the 'Sport of Kings', an interest I did not share with him but I respected just what an expert he was in this particular sport.*

*My mum and dad both enjoyed their exciting victories and many racing days together in the "Winners" enclosure with several famous jockeys of the day!*

**MIKE WITH ONE OF HIS WINNERS - " Master Tyke" and his Taristeaac Trophy 24 10 1985**



---

### **1992 "LIFE MEMBERSHIP OF RCC"**

*At the 1992 AGM, the Membership of RCC unanimously agreed to bestow "Life Membership" upon MJ as a fitting tribute and reward for his massive contribution to the Club as a player, Captain and Administrator. He joined a list that to this day still includes Derek Randall, Mary Hall, Nigel Hall and myself.*

*JB Hall had also been a Life Member up to his death in 1979.*

*Mike's award was actually made by Dickie Bird and Tim Robinson of Notts, who were both guests at the Club's Annual Dinner that year*



**MJ'S FRAMED LIFE MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE AND PHOTO OF HIS PRESENTATION at the Ye Olde Bell Hotel**

## 1995 - SURPRISE 60th BIRTHDAY PARTY

*In 1995, MJ received a surprise 60th Diamond Birthday party staged at the Retford cricket ground when his family held a "This is Your Life" style celebration, MC'd by myself & my brother, Nigel .*

*Over 60 guests attended including several of his former Notts team mates and video messages were played on large screens from friends far and wide.*

*It was the most memorable of nights for MJ.*

*Mike's "This is Your Life" big red book became a treasured possession and a comfort during his illness in later life.*

## **SECRET INVITATION CARD FOR SATURDAY 27 TH MAY 1995**

---

## 1996 - RCC WIN THE BASSETLAW LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

*In 1996 under the Captaincy of Mike's son Nigel, Retford went the whole League season unbeaten and also had 10 outright home victories. Not even the presence of the Notts Second X1 could prevent the Club winning the Bassetlaw League Championship for the 8th time.*

*Mike was the Club's Cricket Secretary in this special year which evoked memories of when he and JB before him, had secured this same title as Club Captains. Now his son, my brother, had emulated their past successes in some style !*

*On a personal note, this was my 4th Championship success, three under my dad in the 1970's and now this honour under the brilliant leadership of my brother.*



## **PHOTO of CJ, NJ AND MJ AT BLYTH 1996**

**2001- RCC WINS THE BASSETLAW LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP.**

*Mike was a proud Cricket Secretary again, when in 2001 RCC won the Bassetlaw League Championship for the 9th time also under my brothers astute Captaincy and were then invited into the 'Nottinghamshire Premier League' for the first time in the Club's history.*

.....

**2003 - "LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT IN SPORT" AWARD**

*At a ceremony staged by the Bassetlaw District Council's in 2003, MJ was the recipient of the prestigious "Life Time Achievement in Sport" award for his contributions in our Region. This was a richly deserved honour and public recognition of Mike's unstinting work as a coach, leader, player, selector, committee man, fund raiser, sports reporter, grounds man & administrator .*

**"LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT IN SPORT " TROPHY**

.....

**2003 - AWARDED THE CRICKET "OSCA" at Lord's for "Outstanding Contribution to Cricket ."**

*Also in 2003 , MJ was invited at National level by the ECB to attend a luncheon at the Lord's cricket ground at which the first Cricket OSCAS would be presented to nominated volunteers from around the Counties.*

*Mike was amongst this very special band of hard working volunteers and received his award for an "Outstanding Contribution to Cricket", with much gratitude and pleasure.*

*After a day touring the Stadium and the world famous Lord's museum we both returned home with our valued OSCA awards and ECB volunteer badges.*

**MJ's FRAMED OSCA CERT.,**

**PHOTO FRAME PROMT / ECB "V" LAPEL PIN**

=====

## APRIL 2004 - BASSETLAW LEAGUE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

*At the commencement of the 2004 season , the Bassetlaw League celebrated its Centenary and requested Whitwell and RCC to re stage the first ever League encounter which had taken place between the two Club's back in 1904.*

*As Retford's Cricket Secretary, MJ helped arrange the 2004 game and enjoyed a repeat result - RCC won the match again!*

### **THE 2004 RCC TEAM WITH MIKE CELEBRATE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST EVER LEAGUE MATCH 1904**



**"SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD" PRESENTED BY THE CLUB TO MJ - RETFORD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL BASSETLAW LEAGUE CAPTAIN WITH 5 CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES (1968, '69 , '76 , '77 AND '78 )**

**2001 AND 2015 - BARBADOS TOURISM AWARDS**

*Mike fell in love with Barbados back in 1978 on his first 'NCA Cricket Tour ' and in the years that followed became great friends with many, many islanders including the Late, great Sir Everton Weekes.*

*In 2001, Mike and Mary were honoured by the Barbados Tourism Authority for achieving over 25 visits each with a luncheon & commemorative scrolls .*

*MJ encouraged others to visit either in families , groups or sports teams and in 2015 the Board of Tourism presented himself and Mary with a Barbados mahogany plaque for over 50 personal visits to the Island and their highly valued contribution to Barbadian tourism .*

**PLAQUE FROM THE BARBADOS TOURISM AUTHORITY**

---

**2008 - AWARDED THE RCC "MEMBER OF THE YEAR "**

*At the RCC 150th Anniversary Dinner in 2008 , attended by both Derek Randall and the former Captain of England and MCC President Michael Brearley, MJ was presented with the RCC 'Member of the Year Award' for services to the Club during a momentous season of activity & preparation.*

**TROPHY  
PRESENTED TO MJ  
BY THE CLUB  
PHOTO OF MJ with  
Derek Randall &  
Michael Brearley at  
the 2008  
Anniversary Dinner**



*MJ also received this honour again in 2013, becoming one of only a handful of Club members to ever receive this award twice.*

---

## 2009 - PRESIDENT OF THE BASSETLAW AND DISTRICT CRICKET LEAGUE

*In 2009, MJ was appointed the President of the Bassetlaw League, a position that he own father, JB, had held back in 1958 . Having played for the League X1 on so many occasions in the 1970's , Mike considered this a tremendous honour. He did not, however, serve a full term because on a matter of principle he resigned over a disciplinary issue involving the inaccurate reporting of incidents during a Second team match at RCC that year.*

.....

## 2010 - MEETING LESTER PIGGOTT

*In 2010, Mike had the opportunity to visit his greatest sporting hero, Lester Piggott at his home in Newmarket to obtain Lester's signatures on a number of high quality photographs.*

*No one could have been made more welcome than my dad was on this day to remember.*

*MJ relived many glorious moments spent on the race courses of England watching Lester, who actually took most of the day to complete the signing task.*

*Mike spoke to Lester about how he had once backed five of his winning rides on a single evening at Pontefract Races, which meant he had then been able to afford the deposit on his second home for Mary, Nigel and myself. Happy Days indeed!*



## **PHOTO WITH LESTER AT NEWMARKET**

.....

## 2013 - FA CUP SEMI FINAL , WEMBLEY STADIUM

*Mike attended many , many domestic and International football matches at Wembley, including the famous "Matthews Final" in 1953 , as well as several of the very painful SUFC play off finals in more recent times!*

***In 2013, we were all at the tremendous FA Cup Semi Final when United - then a Division One Club - twice took the lead against Premiership Hull City, before eventually losing 3-5 . This was the last occasion MJ was at Wembley.***

***Mike was also present when United lost in Cup Semi Finals to Leicester, Wednesday, Newcastle, Arsenal ( Thank you GRAHAM POLL , "Man of the Match") and Liverpool over two legs in 2003.***

***My sincerest regret is that my dad never got to see a Wembley Final contested by "his" United - he would have loved that so much, but it was not to be.***



**PHOTO MJ AND MARY AT CARDIFF FOR THE PLAY OFF FINAL 2003**

---

### **2015 - MJ's 80th BIRTHDAY**

***Our family could not think of a more appropriate venue for MJ's 80th Birthday celebrations than Trent Bridge, a place where he had played so determinedly for Notts as a young professional; then enjoyed his magical First Class partnership with Keith Miller and witnessed so many incredible matches, from the 1948 Ashes Test with Bradman, to the explosive batting of Sir Everton Weekes in the 1950's and the Boycott 'run out' of Derek Randall in the 1977 Ashes Test.***

*We hired a private box for a Notts County Championship match with close family and friends, who were all able to toast Mike's landmark day at this historic ground.*

*My favourite moment was at the tea interval when I took my dad into the famous old pavilion and took his picture entering the field of play through the players gate that he had previously graced as a First Class cricketer in his twenties.*



**PICTURE OF MJ AT THE PLAYER'S GATE , TRENT BRIDGE PAVILION 30.05.2015**

---

### 2015 60th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

*Mike and Mary celebrated their 60th Diamond Wedding anniversary in December 2015 and received a framed letter of congratulations from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.*

*Mum & Dad first met at Retford Cricket Ground in 1949 and had previously celebrated their "Golden Wedding" anniversary at the Pavilion .*



**"MALLEN TROPHY" - RCC WINNERS 2000 AT KIVETON WITH MARY**

*Without the love & support of Mary, MJ could never had achieved so much in sport and in life. She "joined in", becoming a stalwart of the Club in her own right and from the 'boundary line' provided Mike and us two boys with the platform that allowed us all to play the game we loved for so long.*

## 2019 - RE UNION WITH DEREK RANDALL

*After a somewhat strained and distant relationship with Derek from the mid 1980's, MJ enjoyed a great "re union" with his former protégé at a cricket meeting in January 2019 .*

*Derek spoke at this gathering and described Mike as the best and hardest Club Captain he had ever played with. Derek gave my dad full credit for helping him become a successful professional cricketer.*



*It was a special moment and I'm glad both my brother and myself were there to see and feel the genuine warmth between these two fine men of cricket.*

## **PICTURE OF THE HALL'S WITH DEREK RANDALL AT CUCKNEY CC**

---

## 2018 - NOTTS FORMER PLAYERS REUNION

*MJ was always a loyal supporter of the Annual Former Notts players reunions held at Trent Bridge as guests of the Club. He and Mary would encourage other players to be there as well.*

*My dad attended his last event in 2018 at the age of 83, being one of the oldest former players to be there. He simply loved cricket and the company of his cricketing peers.*

*I took my mum and dad to Nottingham on this day and I was immensely proud and pleased to see MJ being asked for his autograph in books and on photographs by the "professional" signature hunters invited into the hospitality suite to meet their 'heroes' from another era.*



**PHOTO - 1991 "TEAM" PHOTO OF FORMER NOTTS PLAYERS WITH TIM ROBINSON, NCCC CAPTAIN.**

.....  
The above presentation was made on August 4th 2020 by CJ Hall  
.....

The following presentation is planned for August 11th 2010  
.....

**APRIL 2019 - MJ'S LAST VISIT TO TRENT BRIDGE AS A GUEST OF THE NOTTS COMMITTEE.**

*MJ was the invited guest of the Notts Committee at Trent Bridge for the match against Somerset in April 2019.*

*Committee Member and former Retford professional, Peter Hacker spoke on behalf of the Club and gave MJ the full acknowledgement for discovering and mentoring Derek Randall, who became such a legend in Notts and English cricket history.*

*I took my dad to this day and it was the final occasion that he visited his beloved Trent Bridge .*

*He enjoyed the day enormously and I was very proud of all his achievements, which meant so much to him.*



### **PHOTO OF MJ IN THE NCCC COMMITTEE ROOMS 2019**

---

### **THURSDAY AUGUST 29th 2019 - BABWORTH CREMATORIUM**

*My dad's funeral in Retford was attended by nearly 200 family, friends & former team mates.*

*Mike was given a formal "Guard of Honour" by significant people that he had been close to during his quite extraordinary life - these good friends in life and in sport stood in silence with bats aloft as Mike passed to his final resting place.*

*His 'Guard' included:*

- *his heroes and friends from Sheffield United's wonderfully entertaining 1970's team - Tony Currie, Ted Hemsley and Len Badger, supported in person by Skipper Eddie Colquhoun;*
- *Mike's former Retford Cricket Club team mates Alan Bull, Terry Johnson John Brown, Keith Jackson and Keith Bacon;*
- *Former Notts & Retford professionals Peter Hacker & Jamie Hart and Rob Condy - direct from Australia - all raised their bats in deep affection;*

*whilst his oldest Grammar School cricket friend , John Fawkes held up his bat to salute his partner one last time.*

*... And leading this respectful "Guard" was a certain Derek William Randall of Retford, Notts and England - Mike would have been pleased to see him again for one last chat at the wicket.*

### **MJ's "ORDER OF SERVICE"**

*Mike's pre-ordained music included ;-*

*"You Can Do Magic" and "Rose Garden"*

*and concluded with "Dreadlock Holiday" by 10CC*

## LUKE FLETCHER NOTTS C C C

Mike's good friend in cricket, Luke Fletcher - opening bowler in the Notts First X1 and a former opponent of Retford with the Papplewick & Linby Club - donated his personal 'Gunn & Moore' bat to be used in this "Guard of Honour" out of his respect for my dad as a gentleman of Nottinghamshire cricket.

**LUKE'S "G&M" BAT AS USED IN MIKE'S "GUARD OF HONOUR" 29.08.2019**

## WEST RETFORD HOTEL

*After the Civil Service, our guests were invited to attend a celebration of MJ's life at the West Retford Hotel in Retford where amongst a display of MJ's 'greatest treasures' was included his*

*cricket career caps ;*

*racing colours ( red and white stripes of course )*

*and his Nottinghamshire C C C Second X1 blazer*

*A stunning floral display from the Directors and Staff of his beloved Sheffield United was also received by our family at the Hotel*

## UNITED

*At the Premier League match against Southampton at Bramall Lane on Sat ..14th September 2019, Tony Currie invited and hosted our family in his suite on behalf of the Club and Mr McCabe, the then Club owner, greeted this gathering in the Board Room at the game's conclusion.*

*Mr. McCabe had also organised a message of condolence in the match programme & on the stadiums PA & video screen at the half time interval.*



*Another touching tribute to a lifelong 'Blade' whose first match at Bramall Lane was with his dad, JB, back in 1947.*

**PHOTO OF THE UNITED PREMIER LEAGUE MATCH PROGRAMME TRIBUTE V SOUTHAMPTON**

**and finally ... SPRING 2020**



*The 'Nottinghamshire Cricket Annual' published this Spring includes an obituary of Mike as a very proud, former Nottinghamshire player.*

*My dad is described by his friend and Club historian, Peter Wynne - Thomas , as " a specialist batsman and talented close fielder ...appearing in 63 minor Counties matches and 17 First Class games over 7 seasons at Trent Bridge ... devoted to Retford CC and Bassetlaw cricket and a man who was responsible for a number of young players that came to the fore through his help and guidance, the best known of which is Derek William Randall. "*

*A fair summary of a good innings by my dad's cricket friend at the 'Bridge "*

**THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CRICKET ANNUAL** - published by the Notts Cricket Lover's Society.

**THE RETFORD TIMES**

*MJ had reported on Retford C C and related matters for the 'Retford Times' for over 40 years at the time of his death and to my knowledge never missed a deadline with his handwritten copy .*

*It was therefore a fitting tribute that his passing was reported on the front and inside*

*pages of the 'Retford Times' the week after his funeral*

*with the headline "*

**TRIBUTES PAID TO CRICKETER 'MR. RETFORD' "**



**RETFORD TIMES - THURSDAY 12 TH SEPTEMBER 2019 EDITION**

**Michael John Hall**

**29 05 1935 - 10 08 2019**

**KING EDWARD V1 GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

**NOTTS COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS X1**

**WORKSOP C C , RETFORD C C and MILTON C C**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB**

**THE NOTTS CRICKET ASSOCIATION X1**

**THE SHEFFIELD CRICKET LOVER'S SOCIETY X1**

**and the BASSETLAW LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE X1**



**BACK**

2008 RCC Member of the Year award

1992 RCC Life Membership certificate (centre)

2003 Bassetlaw District Council "Lifetime Achievement in Sport  
award" (centre)

2013 RCC Member of the Year award

**FRONT**

2003 ECB "OSCA" VOLUNTEERS PIN BADGE

2004 RCC SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - MOST SUCCESSFUL  
LEAGUE CAPTAIN (FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES )

RACE HORSE OWNERS TROPHY - " TARISTEAC" WINNER 1985

**Chris Hall**

**August 4th & 11th 2020**

**Acknowledged source material**

**MJ Hall's Autobiography abridged by CJH ; The Retford Times; Trent Bridge by Peter Wynne - Thomas; The Nottinghamshire Cricket Annual 2020; "The Sun has Got Its Hat On", Autobiography of DW Randall**

# TRIBUTE TO EVERTON WEEKES

