

The David Bland Memorial⁷ Basketball Match 2007

Remembering David...

The David Bland Memorial Basketball Match was held on November, 20th 2007. We commemorate the life of David who died early last year. The 8A Wadhurst team played against ex-Wadhurst 9A Basketballers, who were well organised by Rod McLeod. The year 9's wore golden yellow tops as David was a Caffin House boy. What Wadhurst lacked in height, we made up for in numbers!

This is the second Memorial game we have played and all boys saw it as a great honour to play and have the Bland family attend the match. Boys from all year levels were also present as spectators and players recognise the wonderful, albeit short life of David.

David excelled at all he did. At Wadhurst he was the Vice Captain of 8A Basketball and he worked in harmony with his best friend Tom Chambers. There was no need for them to speak as they worked the court, like unspoken poetry in motion and this year we were once again fortunate to have Tom as referee. David was fit and fast and also played basketball with the Waverley Falcons U/16 and the Timberwolves.

Whilst at Wadhurst, David joined the MGS Symphony Orchestra and played the oboe and we remember his brilliant rendition of *Italian Dance* by Madeline Dring at the Wadhurst Solos' Concert. He was also an accomplished pianist and his love of music awarded him a Certificate of Distinction in Music. David also excelled academically and his Latin book and knowledge served as a good reference source when others had 'forgotten' to do their homework!

David proudly wore Caffin colours and was looking forward to entering Senior School. On the weekend before school commenced in 2006, he sadly collapsed before a Basketball game and in spite of the best medical attention; David was placed on life support and died a few days later. David suffered a cerebral oedema (swelling of the brain), but the cause of this is still a mystery and tests only revealed a drop on sodium levels. Throughout this ordeal the Bland family remained strong and were generous in providing life to five other people through the Organ Donor programme. Finally the boy who could give no more was farewelled at a funeral attended by family, friends and students from no less than six schools and later at a Memorial Service in a crowded Memorial Hall.

David's most enduring and endearing quality was his support of others. Quietly and without obvious recognition he would always chat to other people and at his funeral we heard of his kindness to Year 7 students. As a member of the 13th Malvern Scouts, David always made a wonderful contribution at the Woodend camp and his bush skills were eagerly sought by others. He certainly deserved his Certificate of Distinction in Personal Development. For such a young person, David was most wise and it seems that a day didn't go by without him helping others – whether it was a kind word or showing them how to improve their game. His family is to be commended for raising such a fine person and pictures of David on holiday show that his extended family of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins all nurtured a sense of belonging and community



Thank you once again to Margaret, Jim, Emma & James for attending the game. We wish Emma all success as she awaits her Year 12 results and hopes that she enjoys once again touring with the MGS Symphony Orchestra and playing the bassoon.

By the way, the score was 46-36 in favour of Senior School but as Mr. Bland said, Wadhurst really did win the second half of the match! There were so many spectators that next year we might have to consider a larger venue! Of course, David would be very pleased to know that Basketball was gaining such momentum! Congratulations this year to Simon Clark for receiving the David Bland Memorial Cup for 8A Basketball.

DAVID: Determined, Dutiful, Devoted – and smiling...that's how we remember him.

Fiona Mackenzie, Head of Caffin House

