

David Summerfield (46-56) died 23rd August 2020, aged 81

Some people have outrageous or eye-catching party tricks. David Summerfield occasionally performed a highly unusual stunt in front of his family. He would recite from memory the names of his Royal Grammar School class of 1946-47. Standing up and with a cheeky grin, David would recite alphabetically all 31 boys in his form.

David talked affectionately about the period he attended school, which began in the academic year 1946-47 and ended in 1956-57. Fifty years later, in 2008, a nostalgic trip to Newcastle upon Tyne was organised by his eldest son, so David could show two of his three grandchildren around the city. The tour included visits to the school, his childhood home in Jesmond and a tour of St James' Park.

The family visit to the RGS was for one sole reason. To locate and view a state scholarship board which carried an inscription for 1957 'Summerfield D.M. Merton, Oxon.' As David explained to the members of his family, this scholarship changed his life as it provided him with the means to study law at Oxford University. From that time, David left Newcastle and made his life in the South of England. He was proud of his Geordie roots and claimed never to be happier when NUFC won on the same day that SAFC lost.

He graduated in 1960 and relocated to London, where he married Ruth (a nurse) in 1962 and started a family in 1963. He began work as a solicitor, his specialty being family law, the majority of his clients dependent on legal aid. He worked long hours, including Saturday mornings and many weekday evenings. As a volunteer, he lent his legal expertise to the local Citizens Advice Bureau.

In the early 80s, for health reasons, David ended his legal career. The family made a big decision to sell the London home and move to rural Sussex to start a new life. Within a short period, David realised there was an opportunity to develop a business based on his lifelong passion for cricket and books. He established and entered partnerships with several second-hand bookshops in London and Sussex, including a cricket bookshop close to Lord's, international home of cricket. At the same time, working with his younger son Keith, David was well known on the cricket circuit for his book stalls at the County Cricket grounds at Kent, Sussex and Essex and on occasion, around the country. In later years, the bookshops had to be closed and the business became home-based, focussed on memorabilia.

For many years, David enjoyed reading books and newspapers, particularly sports reports. He watched cricket, listened to Test Match Special on the radio and laughed loudly when watching episodes of Bilko, Everybody Loves Raymond, Yes Minister and Frasier. In early 2020, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer and he died, peacefully in hospital, on 16th August 2020 at the age of 81. At the funeral in Eastbourne, many friends from the cricket and cricket book community, as well as his oldest friend from Newcastle, Len Osterman, came to pay their respects. He leaves his wife, Ruth, eldest son Paul, who works for a think tank in Whitehall and younger son, Keith, who continues the book business. David had three grandchildren, Joshua who works in the hospitality sector, Gideon, an artist and Miriam, who works for the Royal Society of Medicine as an events executive.