

The Grange Club



Dear Member,

It is with great sadness that I advise of the passing of longstanding member David Dix-Perkin (Dixie) at the weekend, a few weeks before his 95th birthday.

Dixie joined the club in 1951 having been awarded a Hockey 'Blue' from Edinburgh University an astonishing three years in a row from 1947-1950. Having attended Charterhouse school during the early 40's Dixie went on to serve on the mine sweeper HMS Fairy. His stories from school and on-board HMS Fairy have kept thousands happy during the many, many dinners that Dixie was asked to speak at. I remember at the first Grange Hockey dinner I attended where Dixie was speaking, there was an extraordinary amount of heckling which bemused me. I soon learnt that this was typical, due to a sweep stake on how long he could be kept talking for. Caterers soon learnt to just carry on around him.

Being a member for 70 years, Dixie gave so much to our club, including,

- Setting up the Easter Hockey Festival that brought hockey teams from around the country to Grange.
- Attending many Grange hockey tours around the World.
- He was the Club Secretary for 16 years.
- He was a founding member and secretary of the Dining Club for 25 years.
- David was a Grange Trustee for over 15 years.
- Dixie won the Freddie Whitelaw Trophy for outstanding service to the club in 1990.

Dixie was a huge supporter of hockey throughout his life and indeed continued to attend the Grange 1's games well into his 90's. There is a lovely tribute, on the following pages, from hockey member Colin Pretty that sums up what Dixie meant to generations of hockey players alike.



Photo of Dixie sheltering from the water spraying at half time at a 1XI match we went to in 2018, and with Dougie Green in 2017 after Dixie had broken his hip when jumping for joy at a Grange 1st XI score.

Even though David's mobility became a problem latterly, he still regularly attended the 5 o'clock club gathering (thankfully having given up driving a few years ago). Also, the Tuesday coffee mornings and boozy Christmas lunches. Dixie will be deeply missed by past and current members alike. A true one off.

Our thoughts and wishes are with David's family and we will of course pass on any information regarding funeral arrangements in due course. The Grange Club flag is flying at half mast.

Ali Ross
Chairman

The Grange Club



David Dix Perkin – The Hockey Man

I joined Grange in 1981. At that time Grange like many other clubs was a very different beast. Youth sections and the high numbers of 14-18yo players we see now coming through all our sections had not yet materialised. I was the 'youth' at Grange, a solitary 17-year-old trying to establish himself in a club full of grown men.

When I first met DDP I was struck by his engaging and exuberant personality. In truth I could not quite work him out at first. Who was this eccentric yet charming character? Was he to be taken seriously? What did he do? What was his role? I soon learned that he was the very lifeblood of the club and the hockey section. He was ever present. Anytime you went to Grange he was there. In the bar, in the committee room, after matches on a Saturday, in the car park after fitness training to see smile, wave and chat with everyone. Dixie took his role as President of the Hockey club very seriously. He genuinely cared, he knew everybody, and he was prepared to do all the jobs that nobody else wanted to do. He was our President, he fought our corner, he sat on the General Committee year after year defending and promoting our interests. As I grew into the club and became surer of myself and my place within it I began to appreciate that he was a terrific ambassador for us and Scottish Hockey.



Four of the last six club Secretaries. From L-R, Leonard Harper-Gow: 1991 – 1996; Gordon Tolland 2000 – present; David Dix-Perkin (Dixie): 1972 – 1988; Rawdon Hesketh: 1996 - 2000



*1953 - 1st Home Scots XI v Ulster 1-4
Back row (l to r) - H. MacDonald, H.A.B. Boden, C.Stewart, H.G. McIntosh,
W.M. Milton, D.J.L. Dix Perkin, E.D. Watt
Front row (l to r) - G.M. Black, D.B. Ross, C.A. Crole, G. Hopkins,*

*David playing for 1st Home Scots XI v Ulster in 1953.
Kindly provided by David's daughter Emma*

David was the Scottish Hockey Umpires Convener for many years and worked hard for Scottish Hockey representing Grange on East District and National forums. He was an established figure within the EHF (European Hockey Federation). He was our 'go to man' and everyone knew Dix-P.

When I was captain of Grange in the early to mid 1990's I really began to appreciate how deep down he so longed for us to be successful. He was overjoyed when we won the league and Scottish Cup and he burst with pride at the Scottish Hockey Union dinner when he was able to present Grange, his club, with the Isabella Dix-Perkin trophy, a lovely large Quaich given to the league champions and named after his departed mother. David knew everyone at Grange, and he loved to follow the exploits of the 1st XI. He wanted us to be the best we could be, and his support was unconditional. Win, lose or draw every 1st XI captain and coach has always received David's full backing and from the heart support.

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Dixie loved to tour and travel with us whenever we went abroad to contest the European Cup or European Cup Winners Cup. He was an ever presence in, Vienna twice, Sardinia twice, Barcelona, Rome and Paris. He was our ambassador and he thrived in that role. His engaging and friendly personality crossed divides and broke down language barriers. I remember him sitting at a table during the tournament dinner at one European Cup with the Russian team from Ekaterinburg. They spoke no English and we spoke no Russian but that did not matter. Dix P did not need to speak their language to engage and become friends. They marvelled at his ability to fill his wine glass so that the red wine rested like a mill pond at the top of his glass and then he would lift it, drink it, laugh, and speak without ever spilling a drop. David would make friends with everyone and treat them the same. The purser on the aeroplane to the President of the FIH - David had time and a smile for all.

As I write this and reflect what strikes me most is that here was a man who crossed generations. He was engaging and empathetic. He loved the younger players in the club and particularly in the 1st XI. He cared about them and in turn they loved David. He supported the younger men, would help new players to be part of our great club and his charm, wit and love spans those generations. Like many when they stop playing there is a tendency to drift away from the club a little. I retired as a player in 2004/05. 23 years of playing for Grange had tired me out and I needed a break. Dix P never forgot you though. He was always genuinely thrilled to see you on any occasion when paths crossed. He loved to reminisce, to have a drink and share a joke. Yet Dix P evolved as the team did. Dix P did not live in the past he supported the next captain, the next coach, the next group coming through. His love of Grange and his desire to see the club succeed just went on and on.

On an occasional Saturday over the past 10-12 years, I might go along and watch the 1st XI. Rain, hail, or shine David would always be there. I love how recent coaches Colin Clarke, David Knipe, and the 1st XI captains would have David sit in the dugout in these later years. He was part of the group. We were his beloved club, and he will always be our figurehead.
We will miss him.

Colin Pretty

Many of us have stories and anecdotes for David, and we will gather when rules allow, to remember and toast David's life. To finish off though, I think these two stories from his good friend and fellow Grange member Dougie Green, capture the essence of what David was to those that knew him.

'The first time we went to play in The Kings tournament at the Polo club in Barcelona, David had preceded our arrival by informing and liaising with the British Consul who met us off the plane, whisked us through customs as if it did not exist, and then the Consul felt it was his duty to attend all our matches. He had also invited the whole team to the British Embassy on the Saturday night for a cocktail party. All down to David's charm and social ability to make things happen'.

'...the one very special thing David did for me was when my father was very ill with cancer and had just come out of hospital. I was playing in the Cup Final in Aberdeen and unbeknown to me David had arranged to collect him and bring him up to see me play. As I ran onto the pitch I turned to see the crowd and there was my father standing with David on the touchline. David was a very special person'.