

Member Profile – 1st XV's Man for All Jobs – Peter Kirkup
(George Brown Cup for contribution on/off the field 2019)

EDUCATION;

Hebburn Comprehensive, Hebburn Tech

EMPLOYMENT;

Toolmaker

Sales Engineer

Owner of a Precision Engineering Company

Recovery driver for Northumbria Police

FAVOURITE BAND/S;

Cold Play

Queen

U2

Phil Collins.

Fleetwood Mac

Just about anything that gets me up to dance.

BEST MUSICAL EVENT/S ATTENDED;

Cold Play Manchester, Phil Collins Newcastle, Rumours of Fleetwood Mac Sage Gateshead

FAVOURITE FILM/S;

Gladiator

Shaw Shank Redemption

Zulu

Sound of Music

Straw Dogs

PETER'S RUGBY JOURNEY;

I was first invited down to Morpeth RFC by George Brown my new neighbour and Club President at the time 1992-1994. I had never been to a game before in my life. Within months I was going to every game home and away drinks before, during and after the game. Between George and I we started to look after the kit and the physio duties, well a bucket of water and a sponge, then I took over on my own allowing George more drinking time. 1st XV Team Manager, water boy, kit man, kicking tee etc. One of my most important rolls, apart from holding the kitty for Staff and Hutt, is on an away trip to make sure every player and supporter gets back on the bus at the end of a very enjoyable evening win or lose – Andy Duggan is the only player in my time to miss the bus, on a long away trip, as he fell asleep on a bench in Harrogate but I wasn't on the bus that night!

I have had lots of very proud moments during my time at Morpeth RFC the best was the honour of being presented, in 2018, with my 1st XV Tie by Club Captain Carl Hill currently I am only the second non-player to receive the tie. This was closely followed by the George Brown Cup, in 2019, for work done on and off the pitch and at this point it was worked out I had followed the 1st XV for approx. 600 games.

MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT/S ENCOUNTERED;

The guy who ran the line for Dinington RUFC...

BEST MORPETH PLAYER/S SEEN;

So many fantastic players and now good friends to mention but probably Andy Clark, John Goodfellow and Duncan Clark who just about destroyed every front row they played against season after season ably supported by the pack behind them of John Stafford, Richie Young, Duncan Hutton, Gus Nelles and Ben Dale.

I must also mention Matty Jinks – his goal kicking won us so many games over the years and a lot of this credit must surely go to the person who carried the tee...

BEST MORPETH RUGBY MATCH/MATCHES;

County Cup final against Tynedale at Kingston Park in 2003 - we somehow lost 6-7 - I was so proud and emotional after the game as everyone gave 100%, and we were not aided in this game by some poor officiating...

The first County Cup final we won in 1998 against Tynedale - we were very much the under dogs that day also.

Every game in our last promotion season, 2018-19, with Carl Hill and the boys.

MEMORABLE EPISODES;

1993 – October – My first away bus trip - Doncaster – John Price wasn't initially selected but Richie Young was a late call off so he came and played and then got in the middle of a flare up and lost some teeth – he may well have regretted his late call up that day...

1996-1997 Promotion Season:

Pontefract away I was sent off from the side lines after telling the referee what I thought - it showed I was still a novice to the game (and I still am now!) as the crowd were loud until that moment and the referee heard all of my comments. After the game our Captain, Richie Young, then persuaded the referee to award me our "tit of the day cup", rather than reporting me, and the cup was a good talking point, especially as I wasn't a player, as we frequented the Newcastle Quayside bars that night.

We would often stop at the Quayside on the way home from away games and we have had some unforgettable nights including me introducing Martin "The Rev" Evans to his future wife and she actually turned up at his Morpeth Parrish Church the morning after to see him conducting mass as I don't think she actually believed what he did!

We also met the stunning Gaby Roslin (TV Presenter) one night on the Quayside – for all she was impressed with us all wearing our blazers and ties I doubt she would remember meeting us 25 years on...

2000 – February – Lymm away – I was very upset when Gus Nelles received a nasty kick to the eye and I was convinced it had come from one of their players who had just come on, who was prone to that type of act, however when we got back to the changing rooms Hutt, our Captain, said it was him and he was just rucking...

Gus did need several stitches, but he waited till he got home to have it sorted as he didn't want to spoil anyone's night...

2002 – November – Sheffield away – as mentioned above I always pride myself on making sure everyone gets on and off the bus – this day was Stu Hills debut and I did promise his Mum I would look after him. We were ahead of time on the journey down, so we stopped at Sheffield Wednesday’s ground, Hillsborough, for a stretch of the legs and then back on the bus and then we were nearly at Sheffield’s ground when we realised that Stu and Paul Scott weren’t on the bus so we had to turn around and were subsequently nearly late. Then on the way back Stu had to go through his initiation drinks and followed by a fish supper from the Wetherby Whaler, at our stop at Wetherby, he was duly ill on the bus but we did get him back to Morpeth...

BEST RUGBY TRIPS;

1995 – May – Chris Lishman’s Stag Do to Amsterdam 7s.

1996 – May – Amsterdam 7s.

1997 – March – I went to Twickenham with the front row union of Clark, Goodfellow, Clark to see France beat England 23-20 – the result however didn’t spoil the day and it was notably a good trip for John Goodfellow to wear in his new cowboy boots...

1997 – May – Duncan Clark and Duncan Nelles’s Stag Do to Edinburgh – 1 game was played v a Uni team.

1997 – August – 1st XV pre-season weekend to Stockwood Park RFC, Luton – good fun capped off by Neil “Chippa” Phillips having to drive the bus for the first stint on the way back as the bus driver was a bit rough from the night before...

1999 – May – John Goodfellow’s Stag Do to Edinburgh – no rugby but an excellent trip!

2000 – May – Gus Nelles’s Stag Do to Edinburgh – no rugby but an excellent trip!

2000 – June – Benidorm 7s – memorable for how well Keith Dungait played till he had a hangover...

2006, 2007, 2008 – May – Scarborough 7s – good trips with the next group of players.

2007 – August – Jacko’s Stag Do to Prague – no rugby but an excellent trip!

Toby Flood came with us after he was left out of the England World Cup squad however, he was later called up, due to injury, and then appeared in the Final in their loss to South Africa.

2019 – March – There have been a lot of very good bus trips over the years but after Pocklington away we stopped at Yarm and the realisation that promotion was in sight lead to an excellent night with the lads in fancy dress, and Staff and I just looked on, as they “danced” and “sang” with the locals – it was like the Village People had reformed...

PETER’S 2 x MORPETH CLUB QUIZ QUESTIONS;

Q. Who won Young Player of The Season 1992-1993?

A. John Goodfellow.

Q. Who won the first Aztec Cup for 1st XV Player of The Season in 1995-1996?

A. Gus Nelles.