



MILTON ABBEY ASSOCIATION



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The Milton Abbey Association (MAA) exists to maintain strong contact with, and provide support for, existing and future members, including pupils, alumni and former staff.

With a current membership of nearly 4,000 in more than 58 countries, the Association runs an engaging programme of well-organised and entertaining activities that aim to appeal to the widest spectrum of members. These include careers advice; networking opportunities and sporting and social events. There are also opportunities for members to benefit from support in the form of various grants and bursaries, and in turn to offer mentoring and careers advice to other members.

We are delighted to share in this brochure the stories of a number of our alumni who have chosen very different paths to follow, and have achieved great success in their chosen fields. All those featured here have kindly agreed to provide advice, support and inspiration to other members who may wish to follow similar career paths.



Benefits for our Members

The MAA offers a range of opportunities to connect with and support its members. These include **Career Development/Networking; The MAA Hub; Business Start-up Bursaries; Gap Year Grants** and **Sport and Social Events**.

Career Development/Networking

The MAA can provide support to current and former pupils via its members who are willing to act as mentors – individuals who are prepared to assist aspiring pupils and recent leavers to enter the world of work. Throughout their time in the Sixth Form, pupils are helped to find work-experience and are introduced through careers talks to the wide range of opportunities open to them. There are also a number of occasions organised in the years after leaving school, for alumni to meet up and share their working knowledge and expertise or seek advice about the next steps in their chosen career.

The MAA Hub

Members are encouraged to join The MAA Hub, a secure online global community that offers networking opportunities and resources, as well as news relating to members and information regarding sporting and social events. Here members can contact fellow alumni, catch up on news from the School and Association, join the MAA Business Directory and much more. Registration is easy: simply go to www.miltonabbeyassociation.org.uk and log-in with your name, date of birth and your year of leaving Milton Abbey.

(Current pupils are registered during the Summer Term of their M6 year; whilst former staff need to contact the MAA Manager to register via The MAA Hub.)

Business Start-up Bursaries

As part of the MAA Careers Pathway, pupils in the Sixth Form – and those who have left Milton Abbey – can apply for a Bursary to help with their business start-up costs. In addition, they can get help from a Mentor and link into the advice of many hundreds of alumni who are happy to help through the Association's online community, the MAA Hub.

Gap Year Grants

Each year the MAA offers grants of £1,000 to pupils in their last year of the Sixth Form to help towards the costs of a Gap Year experience where they plan to be involved in an educational, vocational, adventurous or charitable project during the year. The grants must be used within a calendar year of being awarded. Examples of projects that have been supported in the past include a journey along the Silk Road to Beijing; working as a street pastor in Hong Kong, and an Antarctic expedition.

MAA Special Project Grants

These are small discretionary grants which are available to pupils or former pupils to assist with one-off educational or professional projects. Last year, for example, a Fourth Form girl was given support by the MAA to help facilitate her Round Square exchange trip to Peru.

(For Start-up Bursaries and both Grant awards, please contact the MAA Manager in the first instance, for further info.)

Sport

Many pupils stop playing sport after leaving school. However, the MAA actively encourages participation by organising matches for alumni in a range of sports (including hockey, cricket, golf and shooting), which are not only enjoyable in themselves but are also a great way to get together with friends, meet other former pupils, and develop a wide range of contacts.

Social Events

During the year, there are a number of opportunities for alumni to get together either at Milton Abbey or at alternative venues. These include reunion lunches, dinners or drinks for year or 'generation' groups; lectures, recitals and drama productions held at Milton Abbey and elsewhere; and the annual Remembrance Day service in the Abbey itself. The AGM is held at Milton Abbey each Summer Term and offers the perfect opportunity for former pupils to come back with their families to reminisce and meet old friends. There are also three other MAA Committee meetings each year, which alternate between London and the School. Interest is also maintained both at home and abroad through vibrant social media sites *and regular e-newsletters.

**Facebook: The Milton Abbey Association (official page) or Milton Abbey Association (unofficial group)*

**Twitter: @The OfficialMAA*

(For further information on how to get involved in the MAA, including the Committee, please contact the MAA Manager, by email on maa@miltonabbey.co.uk, or by 'phone on 01258 882232.)

Rupert Evans

(Hambro 1989-94)

Actor



Rupert has appeared in numerous TV, film and theatre productions, with projects including ‘The Village’ on BBC One and ‘The Man In The High Castle’, which he has been filming for TV in the US. He has worked with a range of film directors, and has appeared in films including ‘Hellboy’; ‘Agora’; ‘The Boy’; and in Ewan McGregor’s 2017 directorial debut

‘American Pastoral’. In the theatre, Rupert has performed with the Royal Shakespeare Company in the title role of Romeo, as well as in London’s West End, The Donmar Warehouse and The Royal Court. He has also performed in numerous radio plays for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio 3.

During his time at Milton Abbey, Rupert became heavily involved in drama. The New Barn Theatre caught his imagination and he spent many happy hours there alone, practicing monologues and improving scenes. He found he had the time and space to experiment and to nurture his imagination. He was inspired by the encouragement of three of his schoolmasters, and it was one of these teachers – Charles Cowling – who encouraged Rupert to apply to the National Youth Theatre, where his acting career took off. Rupert acknowledges that being a self-employed actor isn’t easy and requires motivation and self-belief, in particular when working in live theatre. He believes that Milton Abbey helped him to develop these qualities, as well as an ability to work alongside others. The key idea he would share is to have a passion for an idea or business, and to follow it through with enjoyment. In his experience, the journey is as important as the destination and he says: ‘Believe in yourself’ and your ideas and others will too.’

Connie Wookey

(Middleton 2007-09)

Actor

Connie trained under scholarship on a two-year conservatory program at the prestigious American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, where the likes of Grace Kelly, Kim Cattrall and Anne Hathaway had trained before her. In 2017, she was invited to perform on Broadway at the Sir Peter Shaffer Memorial Service hosted by Alec Baldwin, and she won Best Cast Award for the Off-Broadway production of ‘Wilde at Home’. She is now represented in TV, Film, Theatre, and Commercials with a New York agency, and she has been published in ‘UK Equity’ magazine, and New York’s ‘Backstage’ magazine. She has been granted her ‘O-1 Artists Visa: Individuals with Extraordinary Ability or Achievement’, which will allow her to stay for three more years in the USA.



Whilst at Milton Abbey, Connie took a keen interest in both drama and music. She performed lead roles in school productions and was awarded a music scholarship. Connie loved the flexibility offered at school, and whilst here she successfully auditioned for the Rose Bruford Drama School. From there, she went on to study at Hull University, gaining a BA (Hons) Degree in Drama and Theatre Practice. As a member of the National Youth Theatre, Connie also trained with Natasha Nixon, a staff director at the National Theatre, and Alison Bomber, former Associate Artist of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Connie knows it has been a huge task to get where she is – and it is not even close to where she wants to be! It has taken many auditions and much getting used to rejection, and Connie believes that having realistic goals and taking things one step at a time are key. Acting is a tough business, and Connie’s advice is to trust your instincts. Connie would be more than happy to help by acting as a mentor to current pupils and recent leavers who are interested in an acting career, and she kindly returned to school for a morning in 2017 to encourage a new generation of Milton Abbey pupils.

Harry Dunlop

(Hambro 1989-94)

Racehorse Trainer



Harry has racing in his blood. He is the son of Champion Trainer John Dunlop and completed his apprenticeship under three of Britain's leading trainers, Nicky Henderson, Henry Cecil and his own father, John. Harry spent some of this time learning his trade abroad in the USA, Australia and New Zealand, and made his training debut in October 2006. Recently, he has focussed on running horses in France as well as England and won his first Group 1 race in 2017 with a horse called Robin of Navan.

Harry is having a successful career, but is keen to point out that training racehorses is not the most profitable business – it takes a lot of people to ride and look after the horses, which means considerable overheads. Success in the business comes from winning good races with big prize money, along with the commission made on the sale of horses in training. To get a racing licence requires attendance at a number of courses run by the British Racing School followed by an interview with the ruling body, the British Horseracing Association. The BHA will assess any applicant's future strategy and require a business plan before they grant a licence.

When starting in the business, Harry would advise forming a limited company – rather than a partnership as he did – as this can provide more protection. He also puts a great deal of store on the importance of PR when starting out, to attract owners who are generally keen on new trainers and new ideas. For anyone who wants to get into training, Harry would advise gaining as much experience in the industry as possible. With other Milton Abbey friends, Harry is also setting up an exciting new venture: the Old Miltonians Racing Club.

Annie Bacon

(Middleton 2009-12)

Point-to-point Trainer

Annie trains point-to-point horses at her yard in Milborne Port, and last season she achieved three winners, plus one second place and one third place. While she was still at school, she started riding out for neighbouring trainer, Colin Tizard. When she left school she went to Ireland, where she spent three years working for various trainers before returning to Dorset to set up on her own. She now has six horses in training and makes a living by charging owners a training-fee.



When Annie joined Milton Abbey in 2009, she was the first non-Sixth Form girl and the first ever Fifth Form girl. This could have been difficult for a lesser character, but she describes the boys as being 'lovely – like elder brothers'. She spent three happy years here, achieving a BTEC in Equine Studies and two 'A' Levels. She says that Milton Abbey gave her 'encouragement; the freedom to do something different; companionship and friendship'.

Annie says that to succeed in her world, you need good people skills, plus loads of determination and hard work. She is not intimidated by this prospect. She would love to be a National Hunt trainer one day ('perhaps in about ten years') but she realises that she still has a long way to go!

Harry Hook

(Hambro 1972-76)

Film-maker and Photographer



From Milton Abbey, Harry went straight to the London College of Printing for a three-year photography and film-making course, and then studied as a postgraduate at the National Film School. His very first feature film ‘Kitchen Toto’ was a huge success and won many awards. The success led him to Hollywood, where he made two more feature-films (including ‘Lord of the Flies’) before returning to the UK to concentrate on making TV films. He has now made twelve of them. His latest TV film ‘Photographing Africa’ was made for BBC 4 and is based on his own photographic tour of Africa, in which he showed ‘the changing face of rural

Africa’. In 2017, Harry was awarded the Royal Geographical Society’s prestigious Cherry Kearton Medal for “original documentation of Africa through photography”. As a photographer for Getty Images, his work has been published by newspapers and magazines around the world.

Harry says that Milton Abbey was ‘where the spark was lit’ in terms of his enthusiasm for photography and film. He also uses the word ‘alchemy’ in connection with the inspiration gained by being here. He pays tribute to his versatile art-teacher at the time, Nick Richardson-White, who taught him in three ‘A’ Level subjects at once, and gave him confidence in his own photographic ability.

Harry stresses the importance of having ‘energy, endurance and, above all, good collaborators’ in a film-making career. He says that you need to know what the ‘technical rules’ are, in order to know when and how to depart from them. Above all, he says, film-makers need to be resilient, because ‘they spend a lot of time being out of work!’.

Harry Jarman

(Hambro 2002-07)

Magazine Editor

Harry is the editor of ‘The Gentleman’s Journal’, a glossy, twice-monthly publication for 25-35 year olds, which contains ‘aspirational’ high-end advertising. Harry’s magazine prints 40,000 copies per edition, and its advertising and marketing revenue is growing by 35% a year. It now employs 23 people. Having founded the magazine as a student with another MA friend, Harry used the £10,000 which he had saved whilst working for a clothing company, to make the initial investment. The original concept was developed on his laptop whilst living in Battersea. He describes his role as editor as: ‘taking an overview of the tone, whilst wearing a commercial hat and working with potential advertisers.’



Harry regards Milton Abbey as the place where he developed his ‘people skills’ with friends who were ‘people people’ and who would go on and do ‘a million and one things’. He regards the ability to work together, something he developed whilst at school, as crucial to the effective management of ‘the good team’ which he has built up at his magazine.

As to the future, he will continue to work in the ‘media space’. The magazine is still only five years old, and Harry sees a big digital and print future for it, as well as the possibility of developing other magazines. There is still a lot to do, but he has already learnt a lot, he says - since ‘wisdom comes with age’.

Paul Farrer

(Hambro 1977-81)

Recruitment Agency Founder and CEO



Paul is the Founder and CEO of the Aspire recruitment agency. On leaving Milton Abbey in 1981, he started as a commission-only vacuum-cleaner salesman in the Home Counties, before doing a series of temporary jobs, which included being ski-season barman. When his wife insisted that he get a ‘proper’ job, he obtained a post as a self-employed recruitment consultant in an agency run by a Milton Abbey friend. He then set up his own recruitment agency, Phee Farrer Jones, in 1992. Having acquired several other businesses in the meantime, this agency was relaunched as Aspire in 2014.

Paul says that his time at Milton Abbey gave him self-sufficiency, partly because at that time ‘there was not a lot to do at the weekends’. He also made lots of friends, whom he still sees.

Paul ‘loves’ recruitment. He says that to succeed in the business, you don’t need to be ‘super-intelligent’. However, you do need to be relentless and inquisitive, whilst being a good listener and negotiator. Above all, you have to convince prospective customers to have confidence in you, and to entrust the recruitment needs of their company to you. He says that he meets a lot of people who are ‘stuck’ in jobs which they don’t really enjoy, because they can’t afford to leave them. His role as a recruiter is to give people ideas and options about different possible career paths. He can also give general advice about how to run a very successful business – like the one he runs himself.

Jenny Laarberg

(Middleton 2007-08)

HR Manager

Jenny is the HR manager for Chewton Glen, a five-star hotel and spa in Hampshire. Within the food and drink side of the hotel, she is responsible for the recruitment, training, welfare and discipline of the staff, and has additional responsibility for staff in two other hotels in the same group. She previously worked for the Mandarin Oriental hotel group, which was her first full-time role after graduating from the Glion hospitality school in Switzerland, where she studied International Hospitality Management with Sales and Marketing.

At Milton Abbey, Jenny studied for the BTEC in Hospitality Management, which gave her important practical grounding for her later career. She says that she also gained from the ‘atmosphere and general confidence’ which the School gave her. Above all, she says, she learned to get along with others, and work with others from many different nationalities: ‘in this respect, a boarding-school can be very like a hotel’.

Jenny is convinced that, to succeed in the hotel world, you need to be inspired by ‘passion’. She says that she gets a ‘high from service to others’. Stamina whilst working for very long hours is all-important too, but the work is incredibly rewarding. Even when you sometimes miss out on your day off!



Barnaby Gray

(Hambro 1983-87)

Triathlete / Company Founder and Director
Director of Sport at Milton Abbey, 1995-99



Barney runs Tri-High Multisports Ltd, which supports individuals, groups, organisations and communities to develop Triathlon opportunities. Barney co-ordinates a community triathlon club; supports The British Triathlon Federation as Young Persons Co-ordinator, and acts as School Support for the Sweet Chariot, The Tri-Life and The Castle Triathlon race series.

After school, Barney played rugby for Harlequins and England Colleges before focussing on a career inspiring children as a schoolmaster. After returning to Milton Abbey as Director of Sport (1995-99), and

Head of Boarding at Highfield School, but still found time to develop a career as an international Triathlete, which included representing Great Britain at a number of World and European Championships. Barney is still competing for Great Britain as an Age Group Triathlete, and is also competing worldwide as an Ironman.

Barney learned the value of fitness and sport whilst at Milton Abbey and spends his professional life passing on his enthusiasm, since he believes: 'Children are the future, and exercise is so important for all individuals. Swimming, cycling and running are life-skills and all children (and adults) should enjoy splashing around in the water, playing on their bikes and running around.' Barney has enjoyed working with individual Association members on their personal development, and is delighted to support individuals, families or schools further.

Colin Pink

(Damer 1982-87)

Sound Engineer

Colin is one of the country's leading sound engineers and, in 2017, he won the TPI award as 'Live Sound Engineer of the Year'. He has regularly been the chief sound engineer at the Brit Awards and the BBC Music Awards. He was in charge of the sound at the Diamond Jubilee concert and – perhaps most notably – he was the live sound 'supremo' for the 37 venues at the 2012 London Olympics. More recently, he has been the chief sound engineer on Hans Zimmer's World and European tours, filling 20,000-seat arenas with sound.



After leaving Milton Abbey, Colin attended the Guildhall School in the Barbican, where he did a two-year HND in Technical Theatre. This was followed by five years of 'real grounding' at the Redgrave Theatre in Farnham, where he became Chief Electrician. His real breakthrough came at the National Theatre, where he was employed at the tender age of 25 and left ten years later as Head of Sound. He regards his time at Milton Abbey as vital grounding for his future career: not only did he end up 'running the NBT' whilst here, but he gained the confidence to follow his interests. He vividly remembers being asked 'Oy, Pink, can you make a phone ring?' as he passed the NBT one day, and – when he found he could – a spark was lit, which ultimately turned him away from his former intended career as an airline pilot.

Colin puts his success down to 'having a good pair of ears' as well as the ability to work well as a member of a team, and to 'see the bigger picture'. He also cites calmness under pressure and being very organised as vital skills. He regards the ability to manage people as even more important than technical skill – and he says that life at Milton Abbey taught him a lot in that regard.

Jonathan Longhurst

(Bancks 1994-98)

Company Director



Jonathan set up Jon Longhurst Heating and Plumbing in 1998 and describes it as doing 'exactly what it says on the tin'. He founded the company on three fundamental principles: only selecting the highest quality materials; always working to the highest of standards; and always keeping good communication with the customer. The company was started in Bournemouth and now has additional offices in Dorchester and London.

When he joined Milton Abbey, Jonathan found the step up from prep school was noticeable, and he thrived on being given more responsibility for his own well-being. He remembers his time at school as a unique experience that was often difficult, but where there was a great sense of being 'all in it together'. The friends he made here have stood the test of time and are still with him today.

Jonathan believes the single most important thing needed to run a successful business is to ask on a daily basis 'am I actually making a profit?'. He says what most people do, as he did initially, is to work hard all year with money going in and out, not realising until going through the books a year later that the business has made a fraction of what had been expected. So making a regular check is crucial for keeping things on track. He learned a number of lessons the hard way in starting up his own business. However, he says that things usually turn out all right in the end!

Oliver Gladwin

(Hambro 2003-05)

Restaurateur



Ollie and his two brothers run a number of restaurants and catering enterprises in London. He describes his business as 'sustainable, British, seasonal, farm to table, and family run'. In September 2012, Ollie and his brothers opened The Shed in London; within a month they were full, and by 2014 The Shed cookbook was on sale. The same year the brothers opened a second restaurant, Rabbit, on the King's Road, which promotes the wild food of Britain. In 2017, they opened a third restaurant in Battersea: an all-day brasserie called Nutbourne.

Ollie's interests have always been in tastes and flavours and he spent many school holidays working in restaurant kitchens. Following Milton Abbey, his energy became focussed by working 90 hour weeks in London kitchens, which quickly made him 'a confident thick-skinned young man'. Having worked for a number of years in London, he decided to go back to the countryside and enrolled at Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's cookery school at River Cottage. He left two years later as the lead Master Class teacher in all categories.

Food is a challenging business. Ollie found the cooking was easy, but things such as attending to the legal side of the business were hard. He recalls that it took a year after The Shed opened for him to stop being too protective and to start relying on the systems and staff put in place. He describes it as 'the most clouded year of my life' but at the end of it he had something that he wanted more than anything – a successful, cool restaurant that showed his family's 'Gladwin British pride'. Ollie believes that to succeed, the product should be unique and robust. He feels if it is not completely 'true to you', it won't survive.

Mentorship

The Milton Abbey Association is lucky enough to have former pupils who are happy to act as Mentors to former or current pupils in many different areas of work, for example:

- Wholesale Banking
- Internet Security
- Chip Design
- Commercial Strategy
- Environmental Consulting
- Triathlon Organisation
- Sports Coaching
- Wealth Management
- Waste Management
- Haute Cuisine
- Insurance Broking
- Photography
- Racehorse Training





Business Directory

The Milton Abbey Association Business Directory helps members to promote their business to the MAA community and to offer their services to other members. Currently, the Directory features members who offer services ranging from Advertising to Agriculture; from Banking to Building Construction; and from Health to Hospitality.

To access information on both the Mentorship programme and the Business Directory, simply go to the MAA Hub at: www.miltonabbeyassociation.org.uk and look under the 'Business and Careers' tab. To register on the MAA Hub, all you will need is your name, date of birth and year of leaving Milton Abbey.



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