

David Hannay Sampson (Upper 1934 - 1939)

One of College's most distinguished old boys, David Sampson (1938 Rhodes Scholar, and Headboy), died on Christmas morning in 2011. He was OA President in 2000.

David was in Upper and was Headboy in 1939. He had colours for rugby, cricket, shooting and athletics and was both captain of the SAC XI and of the EP Nuffield side in 1939. He was the 1940 Rhodes Scholar. He was the son of Harold Sampson OA (Rhodes Scholar 1910) and the grandson of the famous Judge Victor Sampson of the EC Bench. His father, Harold, was also Headboy and during WWI was recommended for the VC.

David, like his father and his grandfather, studied Law although he went to the Side-Bar rather than the Bar. David was, for many years (1957-1984), a partner at Shepstone and Wylie in Durban and was elected President of the Natal Law Society (1980-81) and President of the SA Association of Law Societies in 1981. He was Chairman of Lawyers for Human Rights in Natal (1985-1986) and a Trustee and Patron of the Legal Resources Trust. He was also a trustee of the Durban Light Infantry Headquarters Board and Chairman of the Durban Branch of the OA Club for 4 years. Both he and his father were at Trinity College Oxford during their tenure as Rhodes Scholars and both were Oxford rugby blues. They were both hugely talented sportsmen. During WWII David Sampson was a POW in Italy and Germany, having been captured at Tobruk. He escaped from prison and spent many weeks on the run with companions in Italy, being assisted by the partisans. He wrote a stirring memoir 'After Tobruk: The Conducted Tour' (1986) which described his exploits. He also wrote 'South African Attorneys Handbook' (3rd edition 1983).

David Sampson loved College deeply and was a very loyal OA. He never missed a gathering in Durban, was immensely proud of his association with the school – and the school is proud of its association with him. He was a distinguished attorney, a superb sportsman, a talented writer and the epitome of an Andean gentleman – modest, generous, courteous and charming.

He leaves his wife Diane, his sons Denoon (OA) and Rowan and daughter, Jane.

Personally, he was a very great help and inspiration to me in the writing of both 'Iron Love' and 'The Boy in You' and gave me generous help and time in recalling his school days and allowing me access to his father's private papers. I mourn the passing of a wonderful man and a loyal friend.

Marguerite Poland