

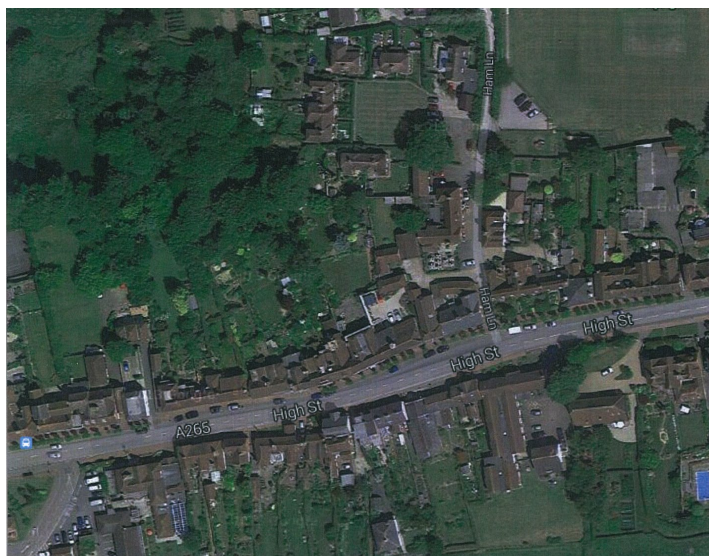
A HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL IN 100 OBJECTS

THE HIMALAYAN TROPHY

Size: Case: 17in x 13in x 10in / 430mm x 330mm x 250mm

Description: A rugby ball in a case.

Discussion: On 5 April 2008 the following letter was sent to the Headmaster from Albertian RC Tucker of Oak Beam Cottage, High Street, Burwash, Etchingam, East Sussex, TN197EH.



Burwash High Street

“The Headmaster
Mount Albert Grammar School

Dear Headmaster

I attended your School from 1941 to 1944 and, as a member of the New Zealand Insurance Co. Ltd. Staff spent my career in various Commonwealth Countries.

I inclose a synopsis of the creation of the Himalayan Trophy and wonder, as a matter of interest, whether it is still in use.

I came to meet Sir Edmund on various occasions and was invited by the New Zealand High Commission to attend the Memorial Service for Sir Edmund in St George’s Chapel, Windsor, in the presence of the Queen, hence this reference to you on the existence of the trophy.

I would very much appreciate your interest.

Yours Sincerely
(signed)
R.C. TUCKER”

The letter above was hand written. The following account was typed.

“Himalayan Trophy

In late 1952/early 1953, now Sir Edmund Hillary and George Lowe, came through Singapore by ship on their way to join Sir John Hunt’s expedition in Nepal to attempt the climbing of Mount Everest.

The members of the New Zealand Insurance Company expatriate staff invited them to their Mess for supper, in the course of which a Rugby ball was thrown about in the garden. The ball was secreted by our guests who took it on board with them after a kicking match using the Harbour Board’s gates as goal posts!

It is well recorded that Everest was climbed by Sir Edmund and Sherpa Tensing.

Subsequently Sir Edmund and George Lowe visited Singapore on a lecture tour. They made contact with us and returned the remains of the ball, i.e. the leather casing and the laces, but sadly no bladder, with the news that the ball had been played with by the Sherpas, principally, at around 21,000 feet on Everest, and they thought we might like it back!

The following year I brought it back to New Zealand and decided it would make a suitable trophy for competition within the Rugby playing teams of the Mount Albert Grammar School with the virtues of team spirit as the theme.

Sir Edmund, despite having been educated at the Auckland Grammar School, graciously agreed to make the presentation to the School for the team who in the preceding season had the best record for:

Playing success

Clean turn out

Punctuality at practice sessions

Attendance at practice sessions

Sportsmanship including acceptance of umpiring decisions

i.e. the best fifteen in the School of all the fifteens whether the First or the Eighth.

Accordingly the case was treated and filled with Plaster of Paris and placed in a glass cabinet and presented by Sir Edmund Hilary to Mr Murray Nairn, Headmaster of the Mount Albert Grammar School, with myself in attendance in 1954.



The presentation case was made specially by the leading cabinet-maker in Auckland, a Mr Neary.

(signed)

R.C TUCKER”

Within the trophy case there is a silver plaque pinned to an oak backing.
It reads:



THE HIMALAYAN TROPHY
FOR THE SCHOOL RUGBY XV WITH THE BEST ALL ROUND PERFORMANCE
PRESENTED BY
R.C. TUCKER, ESQ.

1954

This ball was played with at 20,000ft, by members of Sir Edmund Hillary's N.Z.
Expedition to the Himalayas.

1953

In 2013 the winning team was the seventh grade team seen here with the Trophy and a certificate for each member of the team.



The Himalayan Trophy is one of our more singular awards and, as such, has a special cachet.

Brian Murphy