

LIBRARY REPORT : TERM 1

We celebrated Founders' Day on 13 March. Every year on Founders' Day our boys write a quiz and every year the question arises, "What is the name of the library?" The answer is **The Guest Library** but few people know about the family after whom the library was named. Sir Ernest Lucas Guest of what was then known as Rhodesia donated a large collection of very valuable books to the Prep in honour of his twin sons, John and Ernest Melville (known as Melville) who attended Bishops in the 1930s.

John was head boy of School House and second prefect of the school. He was captain of cricket and vice-captain of the First XV. He was a fine boxer and athlete, was sergeant of the school band and a keen history scholar. Throughout his time at College he was known for his interest in the Prep. He joined the Post Matric class in 1939 and won a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford. When World War II broke out he signed up with the King's Royal Rifle Corp but sadly was killed in action leading his platoon in an attack at Sidi Resekh in Egypt in 1941. He was only twenty one. Just before his death he sent a Christmas card to the secretary of the OD Union. In it he wrote, "Spent a wonderful day with Pieter van der Byl in his dug-out. Saw George Crighton, Peter Cloete, Alex Georgeu, Duggie Ovenstone, George Hyde, William Liversidge and others. You can't imagine my feelings when I saw them all again – it was too wonderful for words. Love to all at Bishops and may next Christmas be celebrated under happier circumstances." This arrived after his death.

Melville too was a prefect and excelled at sport. He and John opened the batting for Bishops and were both held in very high regard by their fellow pupils. Like his brother, he was passionate about Bishops and was a life member of the OD Union. After leaving Bishops, he joined the RAF doing duty mainly along the coast of Britain. He was awarded the DFC. The citation read, "This officer has now completed over a thousand hours of operational flying. His qualities of endurance are phenomenal, his ability as a pilot is exceptional and his devotion to duty is of the highest order. All his work has been done quietly and efficiently. He has set an example to the younger pilots in his Squadron." He was not yet twenty two. He then returned to South Africa to spend a year on the staff of the George Air School before rejoining RAF operations. His plane went down in the Bay of Biscay in October 1943. His son was born a month after his death.

We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful library named after two such inspiring individuals.

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