

# You've received a new message from Ethel Utting

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**Name:** Ethel Utting

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**Message:**

John Utting: His dates were 56 /57 to 1964/5. He played football in goal both at school and afterwards for the old boys. When he left college, he was then articled to a solicitor, an old boy called Badwin who had , he offices in Bermondsey and the in the . He practised Norfolk, Suffolk and then latterly in Essex. He married and had four sons. He remarried after divorce and retired to his beloved Pyrenees.

John died of pancreatic cancer in late December 2016.

Hi Scotty,

Thanks for letting us know about John Utting. Always so sad to hear these things. I spoke with my brother last night, he was in the same class and year and remembers him well. Funnily enough we both remember the same sort of things about him, so it must have been true!

We both jotted down a few sentences, and shared a thought for John's family, and indeed for the impact it has on both if us. As Chris was in his year I'll go with his words first (you have to know Chris was never a sportsman, just a pretender, and certainly not a goalie!).

"John and I had a love/hate relationship. I loved the guy he was - laid back, chilled and always a comic-strip type of grin on his face, even first thing in the morning in the playground. The hate? Schoolboy expression only. I hated the fact that he was a better goalie than me and far too reliable for me to ever cover for him more than the once. And, (Okay John [Gibb] - I remember!!) I

hated that he was better at exams than me. I hated the grin that he alone out of 30-odd of us in Alpha-of-'58 managed to put on every morning as though he hadn't seen you all summer holiday. I really really hate the regret that, living in Turkey, I may have missed the opportunity to shake his hand one last time and see that grin at some of those '58 reunions I had to miss."

(Chris) Salmon '58 Alpha and Honorary A

John and I often played at the same pitches, both in goal, throughout my years at Clapham, and I always looked to him to try and improve my game. He always had a very pleasant, smiley approach to everything, and I don't think I ever saw him angry. I often played for the Old Boys whilst still at school and assumed John was too busy elsewhere learning. The best lesson I took from him was diving at forwards' feet to stop them shooting, and when I asked if he wasn't afraid of being kicked he merely responded that the sight of a 'keeper rushing out and diving at them was often enough to scare them into not shooting. I heeded this lemming-type advice, and only once suffered concussion for the sake of the team! In fact I developed John's idea into not just diving at their feet but sliding feet first into them and grabbing the ball. The huge benefit was that, if you felt you'd miss the ball you almost certainly wiped out the player (or could with the raise of a leg) or at least slowed them down for a few minutes, if not for the season. Thank you John.

Gerry Salmon ('61 - '68).

Thanks Scotty, hope these pearls show the impact that John very quietly had on two fellow students. It's often with death that we appreciate the person more, as Joni Mitchell sang ' .you don't know what you got till it's gone'.

Regards,  
Gerry