

**“Well I never knew that.....”**

Into the spotlight steps Paul Martin. My thanks to him.

*How long have you been playing bowls?*

Five years.

*Your favourite piece of music?*

Hotel California by The Eagles.

*What did you do in your working life?*

I left school at 16 and after a cadet apprenticeship as a marine engineer went to sea for seven years in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as a junior engineer. I then went to work at Whites in Cowes. I worked in the plant making machinery and materials for use in the oil fields of the North Sea. I was responsible for testing our products under the most severe of conditions. The firm had a workforce of 800, a full order book and a rich heritage of innovation and quality products when it was taken over by an American company which within a short time closed the plant and moved production to Continental Europe.

I was lucky enough to get a job working at Vosper Thornycroft's shipyard in Southampton, and worked on Type 21 Destroyers which have only just gone out of service with the Royal Navy. After the birth of our first child I went to work at Bembridge Down making agricultural machinery for Jim McMahon who had made his name in crop spraying. We progressed to developing early wind turbines including making a model of a prototype turbine 95 metres high. I moved on to work for Gault Glass in Cowes which made body armour for bomb disposal officers and bullet proof glass for use in bank counters. I worked on the development of Ribs for use by the United States Seal units and designed to be deployed by being dropped into the sea by helicopters. They saw service in the United States invasion of Grenada.

I then got a job with Souters boat yard in Cowes working on private yachts. From there I had a spell working at Britten Normans including work on the Laurel Planes. I finished my working life at GKN fitting dashboards for Turbo Prop aircraft. I also worked on components for Boeing 777 aircraft and Lynx helicopters.

I retired at 60. Having failed my 11 plus and left school at 16, I consider myself lucky to have had such a varied and interesting working life which has taken me all over the world. I always enjoyed working on a project and seeing it through to a successful conclusion.

*Which living person do you most admire?*

Although a flawed individual, I have a sneaky admiration for Boris Johnson for putting his head above the parapet to lead the country through a unique set of circumstances.

*Favourite meal?*

Cauliflower cheese, Stir Fry or Sea Food.

*Favourite holiday destination?*

Having seen a lot of the world through my work, New Zealand would be my favourite outside this country. I think there are many places in the UK I would love to visit and I am also aware that we are fortunate to live where we do on an island which offers so much.

*Favourite book?*

The Last Lighthouse Keeper by Alan Titchmarsh.

*Proudest moment?*

Our son's wedding and the births of our two grandchildren. I am also proud of doing the work on our house to make it as green as possible and also doing my bit to support trading apprenticeships at Seatec.

*Favourite place to play bowls other than Bembridge?*

I like Totland but to be honest I enjoy playing at all the greens on the Island as I seem to bump into old work colleagues at them all.

*Favourite Film?*

War films such as Reach for the Sky, James Bond films or Carry On films.