

## John Done biography

Born 8<sup>th</sup> June 1942

John had two siblings, one brother and one sister, Anne, five years John's elder, who died in February 2026. Ann was never been married (except to Education), but they visited others of John's friends. His father had a senior banking position, (and was a lay Methodist minister at the Upholland Chapel): his mother was a part-time French teacher. A little-known fact about John's cultural background is that he had a piano grade qualification, and played the organ in Upholland Parish Church, and occasionally at his father's chapel when required

John attended Upholland Grammar School, Wigan followed by Kings College London, where he took a BSC degree in Chemistry. During those undergraduate years (the early 1960's), he learned to play squash in the Grafton Club in South London. He followed that up with a PhD in a subject which is best described as 'related to Grignard's Reactions'. Victor Grignard shared the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1912, so the subject was evidently of importance (if you would like more information, check with Google). During work for his PhD, he developed extensive experience with the analysis of organic compounds. John worked with Bob Hider in the same laboratory, but on different projects. During that time, both John and Bob developed a strong interest in ornithology. Bob went on holiday with John in the Lake District in 1964, and it was during that time that they both became interested in bird watching and hill walking.

In Easter 1965 they went climbing in Scotland in Glencoe, climbing around twenty Munros in a week. This led to a regular Easter party from Kings College, which ran for over 40 years. Pete Flowerday and Mike Moore joined some ten years later, an event initially involving camping, then cottages followed by larger houses as the complement grew. The Hibbert's became involved later.

John became a 'Munroist' by his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, but continued mentoring many other hill walkers by continuing to climb well into his 70's.

John met Lorna at the Grafton, and married her 1966, with Bob as best man (an honour which he reciprocated). Lorna came to Edinburgh with John, and they stayed in a number of houses in Edinburgh (one a cottage near Ninemileburn) and further afield.

John joined ESC around 1969, and as can be seen from his list of Squash honours below, obviously made a big impression.

Who were his biggest squash influences?

While working at BP in Sunbury, he got a two-year research assignment to Edinburgh University (Kings Buildings) under Professor Knox. The Knox laboratory led the world in utilising a new analytical technique (HPLC) High Pressure Liquid Chromatography. John was hired by Knox because of his experience in analysing oil for BP. When that finished, BP were expecting him back, but he decided to stay in Edinburgh, a secured a further three-year grant for another research project at KB. He later worked at DCL, who were looking at trying to develop quality control on whisky blending, then at 'Menstrie Analytics (now described as Diageo's Global Technical Centre) testing whisky (someone has to do it). See <https://www.alloaadvertiser.com/news/19204913.trailblazing-whisky-blender-based-menstrie-announces-retirement/> for a connected story.


In Edinburgh Sports Club, for several years John ran the computer side of the membership system, utilising complex computer software including Microsoft Access database.

One feels that his highly skilled chemistry background, and potentially his career prospects were at least partially eclipsed by a love of the Scottish hills, squash and bird-watching

In recent years, John's partner has been Yvonne Dalziel (sometimes referred to by George Preston as 'Yvonne con Done').

Photographs from John's life at ESC can be seen at [https://eschistory.org/interviews/#John\\_Done](https://eschistory.org/interviews/#John_Done)

The following table is composed of extracts from a Club newsletter of the 1990's, and the Club's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary booklet.

<p><b>MEMBER PROFILE</b> <b>Dr John Done</b></p> <p>John Done started playing squash in 1963 while a student in London. A Lancashire lad from St Helen's young John took up a position at Edinburgh University after graduating with a PhD in Chemistry. This move launched a career playing for the ESC and his adopted country that is still active today. He has represented Scotland at every level and has an impressive playing resume.</p> <p><b>Scottish Caps</b></p> <p>5 Full Caps 74/76 2 Time Winner East of Scotland 15 Over 45 Caps 89/94 3 Time Winner West of Scotland 2 Over 50 Caps 2 Time R/Up Scottish Closed Scottish Vets Winner 5 Time Winner Scottish Closed Over 50s 3 Time Winner Scottish Open Over 50s</p> <p><b>Tournament Achievements</b></p> <p>During the 1970s John took some famous scalps including the highly rated New Zealand International Trevor Colyer and England's Clive Francis. John has represented the Edinburgh Sports Club in National and Local leagues for nearly 26 years, Winning the Club Championships 4 times. He was the Semi-Finalist in the 1993 World Masters winning the player of the tournament award.</p> <p>Outside playing John has been the Manager of the Scottish Senior Team (81/83) and is currently Manager of the Scottish Vets Team. Hobbies include Birdwatching and Hill Walking having climbed all 277 Munros by his 40th Birthday.</p> <p>John's talent and attitude on and off court make him an ideal role model for any aspiring Junior member.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>Edinburgh Sports Club</b></p> <p><b>Champions—Men</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>1937</td><td>E. G. McPherson-Grant</td><td>1965</td><td>O. L. Balfour</td></tr> <tr><td>1938</td><td>E. G. McPherson-Grant</td><td>1966</td><td>O. L. Balfour</td></tr> <tr><td>1939</td><td>D. S. Clark</td><td>1967</td><td>O. L. 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John was an ESC Board member from 1980-1985, under the Chairmanship of Terry Doherty and Hugh Young. He was made an honorary member in 1998

Aside squash, John also graced the tennis courts, and while not featuring in any of the club competitions, was a long-term member of the Tuesday Tennis Group ([link](#)), and the Geriatrics for tennis and doubles Squash ([link](#)).

*This biography has been constructed with input from John Done, Bob Hider, Mike Moore, Yvonne Dalziel, Alastair Allanach and the ESC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary history booklet.*