

Huntly Taylor: Master Spectacle Maker

2 October 2019 – 30 September 2020



Huntly James Russell Taylor FBD0 was born in Brighton. A lover of all sports, his ambition to play cricket for Sussex nearly came to fruition when he was offered a contract to join the ground staff - but recognising that his time would be spent mowing, rolling and painting white lines rather than actually putting on whites himself, he made the reluctant decision to leave professional cricket behind and pursue an optical career instead. That decision proved to be the correct one.

Qualifying as a Dispensing Optician in 1971, he managed several practices in London and the South East before buying his own practice in Brighton in 1993. As it was the very practice where he had started out and trained, things had come full circle. The practice was sold in 2017 as retirement beckoned, after a very successful and happy time.

Huntly's daughter, Louise, showed no inclination to follow him into Optics but still lives in Hove and works in another area of the health industry.

Huntly was a founder director of the Eyecare Information Service (now the Eyecare Trust), which leads the National Eye Health Week campaign every September. For many years, he served on the Council of the Association of British Dispensing Opticians and was for five years Chairman of the Board of Trustees of ABDO College at Godmersham in Kent, which trains dispensing opticians. The College was the home of Jane Austen's brother Edward and the property is believed by many to be the inspiration for her novel Mansfield Park. It features on the back of the current £10 note.

Very proud to be clothed as of the Livery in 1996, Huntly has served on the Spectacle Makers' Court since 2010. He is a Trustee of the WCSM Education Trust, which funds bursaries for new students starting optical diploma and degree courses in the UK.

Huntly played good club cricket all over the South East until his knees, back and eyesight told him to try golf instead. Since retirement, living in Newmarket has given him yet another good reason to leave the house and yet another sporting interest. Having a share in half a leg of a horse has provided much enjoyment – one 2nd place in a low-key race at Yarmouth providing almost the same excitement as a Derby winner.

In 2014, Huntly married Gaynor, also a Dispensing Optician and a Liveryman of the Spectacle Makers' Company. Together, they enjoy travel, theatre, good wine and, of course, the horses.