



Q&A with Drummond Kerr

Drummond is a Partner at Meridian Private Client and is founder of the firm.

What was the inspiration for establishing Meridian in 2005?

The legal marketplace changed considerably in the 1980s and 1990s and it was clear to me that there was a need to rethink the traditional approach to private client work. By 2000, the general practitioner had all but disappeared. Larger legal practices became global in scale and, within ten years, the firm I joined in 1989 had grown from a headcount of 500 to over 5,000 through mergers and acquisitions.

By 2005, larger commercial firms were investing in other areas of law and the smaller general practices could not offer the depth of technical expertise needed. The answer seemed to be a specialist practice, dedicated to offering private client advice only – and so Meridian was born.

How has the firm changed over the last 16 years?

Meridian Private Client LLP was formed on my dining room table and the initial registered office was my home address. We did, of course, have office premises when we opened for business and we began with four specialist private client lawyers and an office manager. We quickly learned that there was more to running a small office than just advising on legal matters (and it does indeed take four lawyers to change a lightbulb). Fast forward 16 years and we have a team of 35 with a mixture of lawyers and other pure tax specialists from a range of different backgrounds.

What has been your career highlight so far?

There are two highlights for me. The first was simply qualifying as a solicitor (which was far from simple). From a young age I had wanted to be a solicitor – something to do with the fact that they seemed 'important' – and to achieve that goal, coming from a humble 'Brummie' background, was quite an achievement for me.

The second is to see the development of Meridian and to have been part of that growth. We have a fantastic team, of which I am immensely proud, and I am pleased to have played my part in creating that.

How do you switch off from the day job?

My wife's response to this was: "you don't". I do find it difficult to switch off, but I also have many interests outside of the day job.

I am fortunate to have a very close and supportive family and that has been a real anchor for me over the years and I enjoy spending time with my wife and family.

I love watching rugby, supporting my local club and following the internationals. My wife is also a keen supporter and we combine holidays with Rugby World Cup tournaments – which have taken us to places such as New Zealand and Japan. We have already purchased tickets for the next World Cup in 2023 to be held in France.

Scouting gave me an interest in outdoor activities, and I was a venture scout leader until my late 20s. I still enjoy camping, cycling and canoeing and a few years ago my wife and I did a five-day canoe trip in Canada where we did not see a house or road for the entire journey, camping and cooking on open fires. It was great!


If you could choose anyone, who would be your mentor?

I have two quite different individuals. Ranulph Fiennes, for his indomitable spirit and sheer will power to get through the most difficult of challenges, and Nelson Mandela (another lawyer). I still marvel at his ability to bring together a nation that was completely divided and to bring an end to apartheid peaceably. I also think that he was the inspiration behind South Africa winning the Rugby World Cup in 1995!

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