

ROBIN COOPER

Robin Cooper, a citizen of Uruguay, was born and raised in Montevideo, where he attended The British Schools. After graduating in 1974, he completed a BSc in zoology and chemistry from the University of Rhode Island, where he graduated with a Phi Beta Kappa distinction in 1979. He then went on to obtain a PhD in molecular and cell biology from the University of Texas, in 1986. Dr Cooper's academic experience includes working for seven years as a research associate at the Rockefeller University in New York, teaching at the Universidad de la República in Uruguay, and publishing nine scientific papers in peer reviewed journals.

For the past 15 years, Dr Cooper has gained ample experience in the corporate world, as general manager of Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance plc. agency, general manager and then executive director of guardian insurance, S.A., and director of Caledonia Argentina Compañía de Seguros, S.A. He has been director of Montecon, S.A., a leader in Montevideo's port development, since 2002, and of S.A.F. & C. J.R. Williams, one of Uruguay's leading shipping agencies, since 2000.

Throughout his career, Dr Cooper has served the British community in Uruguay, as treasurer of the Sir Winston Churchill fund and director of the English club, for example. He has been particularly involved in the British Schools Society, serving twice as hon. treasurer (1998-2002 and 2004-2006) and twice as chairman (2002-2003 and 2006-2008). The British schools society, whose honorary president is the British ambassador to Uruguay, elects the Board of Governors of the British schools, one of Uruguay's oldest bilingual schools. The school was founded in 1908 with the aim of establishing long-lasting "bonds of understanding and friendship" between British and Uruguayan students. In 1971, it became one of the first schools in the world to implement the IB Diploma Programme. Today, this private, non-denominational school serves over 700 students in the junior school and almost 600 in the senior school, combining the Uruguayan national curriculum with a rigorous English language programme.

In 2003, Dr Cooper was appointed Member of the order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to the British community in Uruguay. He is married to Mónica Bastarrica and has two daughters, currently 13 and 16 years of age.