



# *Mark Belcher, 1999*

## **What Career are you in, and what sort of things does this entail?**

I work as a conference interpreter - this means I do live spoken word translation at conferences and meetings where different languages are spoken. It often means travelling to work in different places, and the subject matter changes all the time from client to client so that keeps things interesting. I've also lived abroad for the past fifteen years or so, in Berlin, Brussels, New York and now Madrid.

## **What inspired you to go into your chosen career?**

I always really enjoyed learning languages since with French and German at Malbank. I studied history and languages at university, then went to live in Germany. After I'd been there for a couple of years I did an interpreting job for a friend who was making a documentary film - it was really more to help out as they didn't have enough money to pay a real interpreter - but I loved it. You get to hear about things and go to places you'd never see otherwise, plus the job is always done in the moment and that's it, you can't really take your work home with you.

## **What advice would you give to anyone interested in working in your career area?**

A lot of potential interpreters think the job is all about liking languages - far from it. The real challenge is understanding the subject matter of each meeting, and that is more about being able to cultivate an interest in anything, more or less. I also contacted members of AIIC, the professional association for conference interpreters, to find out where they studied and what the job prospects were like for the languages I spoke.

## **What do you know now, that you wish you'd known when you were leaving Malbank?**

You have so much time! Try to speak to people about what they do, or do even very short internships - you can learn a lot even if you spend a day with someone at their job. Find out about different jobs for yourself rather than relying on what people say from outside: when I was at school I thought interpreting was only for people who grew up in different countries, but that is not the case.

***If you would like to get in touch with Matt to find out more about careers like this, please contact Mr Batty in the Sixth Form Office, or via Teams***