

OLD MAIDSTONIAN SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

18:15, 28 March 2014

MINUTES

1. Present

- Frederick Barker; Graham Belson; Tony Bishop; John Clayton; Samuel Coppard; Gardner Crawley; Anthony Hayward; Malcolm MacCallum; Ron McCormick; Richard Ratcliffe; Alex Rolfe; Mark Tomkins; Hugo Van Mol; Peter Weaver; Brian White

2. Apologies for absence

- Peter Sampson

3. Minutes of AGM 2013

- The minutes were accepted by the meeting, following some minor corrections, and signed by the President.

4. Matters arising

- None

5. President's Report.

- Ron McCormick had enjoyed his year of office, and had been at MGS a good deal, both covering lessons and attending events. He had supported various sports matches, and attended evening functions.
- Ron thanked everyone for their support.

6. Chairman's Report.

- a) Richard thanked the President for all of his work and support, and also all members of the committee.
- b) We have a problem in gaining support for social events, but the 'Muskrats' concert did make a small profit.
- c) OMS now has a website of which it can be proud, and Malcolm was thanked for his hard work.

7. Secretary's Report.

- a) Tony Webb had resigned as archivist, and as a member of the committee. A vote of thanks was recorded by the meeting, and the Chairman will write a letter to him.
- b) There is not yet a new location for the archives, but the Headmaster reported that a room may become available in the gatehouse, when repair work has been completed.
- c) The Treasurer commented that about 95% of the archival material belongs to MGS.
- d) The Secretary is holding a complete set of *The Maidstonian*, which duplicates at least one other set in the archives. The meeting agreed that this set should always be kept separate, for security reasons. The Secretary is attempting to digitise all old copies.

8. Treasurer's Report

Year ended 31st December 2013

General Revenue Account

- a) The main source of income for 2013 was receipts from the annual supper. After deducting the related costs, including the cost of the prizes, the event made a profit of almost £600, which was almost entirely due to the raffle which was introduced in 2013.
- b) The Muskrats performance made a profit of almost £200.
- c) Donations from members, mainly to cover the costs of producing and posting the Newsletter and Membership Register, totalled nearly £500.
- d) The sale of scarves, ties the OMS badge and publications achieved a profit of £240. The scarves proved to be extremely popular, but because of the purchase cost the Society can only afford 20 at a time.
- e) The main item of expenditure, as last year, was printing, postage, and stationery which totalled £900, mainly for the Newsletter and Membership Register.
- f) The surplus of income over expenditure for the year to 31st December 2013 was almost £600.

- g) As at 31st December 2013, the balance in the General Reserve Fund was almost £2,000 which included cash in hand of £1,000 and the stock of scarves, ties, and badges which was valued at cost at £1,000.
- h) All figures are approximate and the accounts are independently verified by Magee Gammon Ltd. annually, and who have to date, very kindly assessed them free of charge, although they will charge a nominal fee at the end of 2014 for the service.

Trust Fund Account

- a) Donations of £1,600 were received in the year to 31st December 2013. The Trust Fund account stood at just under £11,000 at the end of 2013.
- b) Awards were made in 2013 to two students who were considered by the trust fund committee to be worthy recipients, the first in the sum of £600 and the second of £400, both to assist them with their further education.
- c) During 2014 to date two awards have been made, one of £500 to support the MGS 2014 World Challenge in their forthcoming expedition to Central Asia, and the Silk Route [viz Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan]. Traditionally, the Old Maidstonians' money has been used to pay for extra materials, sourced locally in-country, to develop the Community Project which will be in Uzbekistan.
- d) The second award, also in the sum of £500 was made to the school senior rugby squad, who are embarking on a tour to Portugal between 11th and 14th April 2014) to compete in an international tournament (www.portugalrugbyfestival.com). The tour company offered the opportunity to go on an open-top bus tour of Lisbon plus a stadium tour at the home of Sporting Lisbon. It was felt that this would be a rewarding educational opportunity and the Society contributed towards the cost of the excursion. The Society contributed the same amount to the MGS rugby tour to Italy in 2012.
- e) There has been very little recent take-up of funds by students, and it will be necessary to ensure that awards are publicised fully by the school.

Membership

- a) Membership currently stands at 1150 at the time of writing, an increase of almost 40 members during 2014 from leaving years 1945 to 2007. With the assistance of Lois Birrell we anticipate that we will capture the majority of the 2014 leavers, which will increase the membership significantly more.
- b) Mrs Birrell is also researching school records, to which the Society does not have access, with the intention of increasing the membership and thus the scope for increased funding for the school in the future.

9. OMS News

- The Chairman will send a message of goodwill to past President David Leeke, who was unable to attend the Annual Supper as a result of illness.

10. OM Trust

- a) Graham Belson retired as a trustee by rotation, and offered himself for re-election. He was proposed, seconded and confirmed by the meeting. The terms of office of all trustees last for three years and are now as follows:
 - Graham Belson: retires March 2017
 - John Clayton: retires March 2015
 - Gardner Crawley: retires March 2016
 - Richard Ratcliffe: retires March 2015.
- b) If any other members wish to become trustees, they should apply to the secretary with a brief CV of their skills, knowledge, and experience of charitable trusts.

11. OMS Website

- a) The site seems to be more used and the changes detailed below seem to have been welcomed. Suggestions for further improvements would be most welcome.
- b) The main lack is in postings by OM members outside the Committee. Any OM (or indeed any person) can make a contribution: so please do write a post or a comment if you have something to say!
- c) The main steps taken since the last AGM have been as follows.

- Regular backups have been instituted
 - Malcolm has been made a manager of the Old Maidstonians group on LinkedIn, and its owner is happy for the Society to run it in future. He has used this sparingly but it provides a good way to contact some OMs, especially those overseas.
 - The Wordpress software has been updated in several steps, from version 3.5 to 3.8.1. The plugins have also been updated several times, and added to improve functionality.
 - In December, Malcolm revamped much of the site, changing the hierarchy of pages, removing duplications and dummy pages, and adding lots of links within and outside the site itself.
 - Membership and Annual Supper forms that can be filled in online have been created, and seem to be working well. Malcolm will extend this to other forms on the site.
 - Malcolm has posted past AGM minutes.
 - Many posts have been added, including Newsletters, information on events, and appeals for fundraising.
 - Malcolm has updated his personal copy of the website, which is held on his laptop. Having this enables him to try tweaks without the risk of upsetting the actual site.
- d) Some things still to be done:
- Liaise further with Stephen Moores about links with the School's site, etc.
 - Look into hosts for a photo collection
 - Add any digitised *Maidstonian* issues.
 - Add a counter of site accesses, to see if we are gaining readers
 - Reopen the possibility of transfer of material from the previous site.
- e) The meeting recorded a vote of thanks to Malcolm, for all of his hard work.
- f) Sam Coppard and Alex Rolfe were thanked for their efforts with the Facebook page, and for encouraging younger members to join the Society. Sam reported that the Facebook page is moderated, and that he is working with Graham on the issue of postings.

12. Election of New Committee

- a) The meeting endorsed the existing membership of the committee (including the retiring President, Ron McCormick), and expressed the view that it could co-opt new members, as necessary. (One potential new member was mentioned as having been approached by the Chairman.)
- b) The Headmaster asked whether the current school captain and vice-captain could attend the committee meetings as observers, and this was thought to be a very good idea, and agreed by the meeting, subject to them needing to withdraw if certain confidential issues are discussed.

13. AOB

- a) In response to a question from Anthony Hayward, it was confirmed that Neil Turrell may be the next President, but that this will depend upon when he returns from Singapore.
- b) It was confirmed that the new CCF boards are in place in the entrance foyer, and that a form of words has been agreed for adding to the old military honours boards, to explain their closure. (The Chairman and Headmaster will look at this issue.)
- c) Anthony asked about the current situation with regard to music at MGS. It was explained that a new initiative by David Martin (Head of Science) will be covered in the forthcoming *Newsletter*, and that Head of Music is fully supportive of this.

14. Date of next AGM.

- The committee will look at whether this should be kept on the same day as the Annual Supper. In addition, it will consider whether the Supper should be on the equivalent date next year (Friday 27 March), or whether it might be better during the first week of Term 5. As always, trying to coincide with university holidays may be a challenge.

15. Adjourn to Supper!