A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OLD MAIDSTONIANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

FROM THE PRESIDENT / CHAIRMAN

It was a great pleasure to represent the Society at Senior Speech Day and to have the opportunity of saying a few nice things about former Headmaster Neil Turrell, who was the guest of honour presenting the prizes. It does not seem possible that he retired (for the first time) six years ago, nor that it was way back in 1992 that I had the privilege of chairing the Governors’ panel at which he was appointed. The weather was kind to us, and for the first time in many years, both Junior and Senior Speech Days were able to be held outside in the Quad. Neil clearly thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. Having parked in the Headmaster’s parking spot, he regaled the leavers with wise words for nearly 25 minutes – someone picked up good winnings from the sweepstake! (See page 12 for some photographs.)

Mid-term we held another very successful Quiz Evening. It was kindly organised for us by the Maidstone Supper at Seven Club, and Graeme Wiles in particular and raised nearly £700 for the OMS Trust Fund: money which will enable us to continue offering financial support to boys and recent leavers wishing to pursue community and other projects without much money behind them. Many thanks too to Mark Williams for organising an excellent Ploughman’s Supper.

May I again draw your attention to an item elsewhere in this edition about the Mentoring Scheme and also the MGS Development Fund? Please have a think about how you can help regarding these key actions that we can take as Old Maidstonians to support the School.

Thanks go to the many Old Maidstonians who have already made generous gifts to the Development Fund. This will support on-going building projects which will enhance the School’s learning environment for both students and staff. It relies on the generosity and commitment of the community, comprising staff, governors, current and former parents, former students and other friends of the School. Its other main aim is to establish, nurture and maintain relationships with Old Maidstonians, whether they left in 1950 or in June this year. Mark Tomkins, the Headmaster, will update us all on how the Fund is progressing at the Annual Supper in April next year and share with us some exciting news about the School’s vision for the future.

Can I also ask you to put the date of the 2016 Old Maidstonian Supper in your diaries? It will be held on Friday 15th April – a little later than usual due to the timing of Easter and our desire to attract younger OMs who are on their University courses. I am delighted to tell you that my guest speaker is to be Roger Crittenden, former Director of the National Film and Television School at Beaconsfield and still active as a world-renowned expert on film editing and a visiting lecturer at NFTS. Roger started his career at the BBC after graduating from Exeter University and worked on programmes such as Civilisation and Omnibus. Roger is my cousin and an Old Maidstonian (1957) and I am sure he will have much of interest to say. He would like to see some of his fellow 1957 leavers at the supper!

We are approaching Christmas; the clocks have
A few months ago, John Clayton organised a charity evening (in support of Hi Kent) with Ann Widdecombe, at the Tenterden London Beach Hotel. In view of the attendance of two of our committee members and our President-Elect, we felt that readers would appreciate a photograph! The happy group includes (from left to right) Liz Clayton, Alex Belson, John Clayton, Patricia Belson, Graham Belson, Trish Turrell and Neil Turrell.

**OUR PRESIDENT-ELECT AND SOME FRIENDS**

Warm wishes to you all.

Richard Ratcliffe

(Ed: We are trying to get this issue out early in December, but please accept our apologies if Richard’s reminder about the play reaches you too late.)

**SCHOOL EVENTS**

The Parents’ Association will be holding two events in December. The ‘Christmas Shopping and Pamper’ evening will take place on Thursday, 3rd December from 18:00 to 21:00, and there will be more than 30 stalls selling unique and interesting Christmas gifts ideas. Also, beauty therapists will offer pampering, including hand massages, aromatherapy, mini facials and manicures. Entry will cost £3, which will include a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine.

The ‘Christmas Wreath Making’ evening will be on Monday, 7th December at 19:00, and the price will be £25.

Tickets for both events are available from the Bursary.

A Grand Christmas Draw will take place on Monday, 14th December, and tickets are on sale now, from the School Office.

The School Carol Service will be held in All Saints’ Church AT 19:30 on Wednesday, 16th December. All OMs will be very welcome at this event. The Headmaster and your Committee want to see the church full! (Remember the end of term services and how we all squashed in? Well let’s fill the old place up and relive that experience!) Each year the numbers attending increase and last Christmas there were estimated to be well over 500, many of them OMs. It is a very enjoyable event with mulled wine and mince pies afterwards, and an opportunity to meet staff and other OMs.

The school can be contacted on 01622 752101, or by e-mail to school@mgs-kent.org.uk. Further details of all events are available on the school website [http://www.mgs.kent.sch.uk](http://www.mgs.kent.sch.uk).

**A MESSAGE FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

In mid-November there were exactly 1500 active members of the Society, which is an increase during the course of 2015 of just over 200. Of those, 150 were 2015 school leavers, but 50 were from previous years, and as far back as 1945, which is very encouraging. Our efforts to attract more members through the social media, and by the Development Fund of the school, are achieving results.

Of those who have provided a hometown, a surprising 900 still live in Kent, and 100 in the adjacent counties. 14 live in Australia, 11 in Canada, and 13 in the USA. There are members in Belgium, Bermuda, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ireland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, UAE, and the USSR. But of course, the database is only as good as the information in it and if you have changed your address then please do let us know.
The 2016 Membership Register will be produced at the beginning of January. There are several members for whom we do not have the dates of joining or leaving the school. The Membership Secretary has started e-mailing those members to ask them to furnish the details in order that they can be placed in the Register in the correct year. Please respond if you receive such a message, and thanks to all those who have done so already.

Each time the Newsletter or other communication is sent, several ‘undeliverable’ replies are received because the recipient has changed his or her e-mail address. If we have your contact telephone number then we can telephone and obtain an update. If we do not have that contact information then we have no choice but to assume that we have lost contact. So if you are considering changing your e-mail address, please let us know.

OMS Quiz Night

The OMS Quiz Night was held on 14th November. It was the second such event, supported by Supper At Seven. Fifteen teams were competing for this year’s trophy, and thanks to ICT equipment arranged by Steve Moores from MGS, scores were projected on a giant screen, which seemed to intensify the competition. Mark Williams once again organised a delicious ploughman’s supper, and this year’s winning team was 4WM, pictured receiving the Cup from President Richard Ratcliffe. The evening raised a total of £698.61 for the Society.

From left to right: Colm Walls; Raymond Haque (1990), Damon Lambert (1990) and Andrew Riedl (1990)

Social Media and Website Report

Sam Coppard and Alex Rolfe continue to look after our Facebook and Twitter accounts, and publicise news and messages from the OMS, in addition to moderating the pages. Currently, over 470 OMs are part of the OMS Facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/OldMaidstonianSociety), an increase of over 50 since publication of the Summer edition of The Old Maidstonian. The group promoted events like the OMS Quiz Night, and has continued to upload recent copies of The Old Maidstonian in pdf format. The group has
also liaised with a number of OMs who are keen to play in the Annual OM Rugby match.

The OMS twitter account (www.twitter.com/oldmaidstonians) is increasing in ‘followers’. Notifications and links for the OMS Quiz Night and other events have been promoted and posted.

There is an Old Maidstonian group on LinkedIn, with over 300 members. It was founded by Tom Lovering but management is now by the Society. So far there is relatively light traffic but it can provide a good way for alumni who may be spread widely geographically to get in touch. The Society intends to circulate more information by this means in the future.

The Society’s webmaster, Malcolm MacCallum, currently maintains our website, and deals with any problems related to the mailing lists for members and committee. A recent issue showed that this arrangement has a ‘single point of failure’ weakness, and so the Society would like to find a joint webmaster to share responsibility with Malcolm. Experience with Wordpress and Mailman would be useful but is not essential: a member used to dealing with software and systems problems would easily be able to pick up what they need to know. If you think that you could help, please contact Malcolm (webmaster@oldmaidstonians.org.uk).

Malcolm has reported that someone has been spoofing e-mails from the OMS web address, and he asks whether any members have expertise in sorting out this kind of problem, and might be able to advise him about how to deal with it.

**Charitable Donations the Easy Way**

The OM Society is registered with Easyfundraising, which enables supporters to donate, at no cost to themselves, when doing online shopping. All money received will go the OM charitable trust (for details of this see our website). We hope that OMs will join Easyfundraising: amounts raised per transaction are small, but the cumulative value could be considerable. Many major online retailers participate: for example, Argos, Amazon, Apple Store, John Lewis, M&S...

The effort required after initial signup can be minimised by downloading a toolbar for your browser which automatically tells you when you are accessing a retailer which participates in the scheme and enables you to make your donation, once you have logged into your Easyfundraising account. You can find the download at http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/raise-more/find-and-remind/

For some fuller information see the following page of the OM website:

http://www.oldmaidstonians.co.uk/fundraising/

**Musings from the Penthouse**

When one thinks about a penthouse, one imagines a luxury apartment with large glazed windows overlooking some magnificent view, set out with soft luxurious furniture and all mod-cons. I wonder how many of you realise that MGS has its own penthouse, tucked away from the view of the staff and pupils. Regrettably it is not suited out in the same manner as the ideal penthouse and neither does it have magnificent views across Maidstone; in fact, it has no windows at all. Hidden away above the toilets next to the gymnasium, up in the sloping roof space, lies the MGS penthouse. I am unaware who named it as such, but it is definitely not ‘a house or flat on the top floor or roof of a tall building’, and neither is it ‘a sloping roof, especially of an outhouse built on to another building’, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the word. However I suppose that it does fall somewhere between the two.

The important thing about the MGS Penthouse is that it holds the school archive. You may think that to be no more than a store of past pupils’ records and dusty books thrown out of the Library. Yes, those are there, but so are many more items which tell the rich history of the school right back to its formation as Maidstone’s Free School. We have a virtually full set of *Maidstonian* magazines and those famous school journals, as well as many photographs of numerous events.

I hadn’t been back to the school for over 50 years and then I came to the WWI commemoration, and following a request from the Archivist for assistance with conserving books, etc. in the archive in the Old Maidstonian Summer
2014 newsletter, I offered my services and those of a close friend. Roger Birchall and I had worked together on the preparation of the newspapers at the Kent Messenger offices for digitisation. Spurred on by the enthusiasm of Lois Birrell, with her drive to establish a usable archive in the school, we made a start in October last year. Regrettably Lois has now left and as Roger has undergone a serious operation in hospital, I seem to have been adopted into the role of Assistant Archivist. We miss Lois and her organisation, and I would like to thank her for the sterling work that she has done. Visit the Archive and see what I mean.

What I would like to do in this and future ‘Musings from the Penthouse’, is to bring to life some items from the past and seek your help with identification of people and of items that have been tucked since goodness knows when. My first request is for help in identifying this object (shown against a door for scale). There are two virtually identical items, both stored in felt-lined wooden boxes secured by metal clasps. They would appear to be wavy fluorescent lamps, possibly homemade at the school, and possibly for use in drama presentations. They consist of open-ended 6mm glass tubes enclosing a randomly curved, white opaque closed tube with a clear glass bulb about 75mm long at one end and sundry lengths of wiring. If anyone can recall them or when and where they were used, please email me at archivist@mgskent.org.uk.

The Archives are there for reference and research, for the school, the Old Maidstonians and the public at large. If you want a photograph of someone for your family tree, a record of your time at MGS, or, even to try on a school cap to show your grandchild (as long as you are size 6 ¾), then we may be able to help you. Just ask and we will do our best, but please don’t expect miracles – and remember, school records cannot be changed!

Also if you could help in anyway, on a voluntary basis with the Archive, I know that the school would be thrilled to hear from you, especially if you would be prepared to take on the role of Archivist.

‘Icarus’

NEWS OF OLD MAIDSTONIANS

Firstly, some corrections to information in the last edition. Our apologies!

- Jack Fisher’s nickname was ‘Jumbo’, rather than ‘Jambs’.
- The MGGS girl who was referred to as Christine ‘Crrush’ was actually Christine Cornish.

Brian Clark (1982 to 1987) told us about his support for the nomination of Graham Walker (staff from 1981), the current Head of History at MGS, for a UK National Honour such as an OBE.

‘For my part, I arrived at Maidstone Grammar School, from Oldborough Manor, in 1982, without any great interest in History. I was aware of the typical facts that a schoolboy would learn: the battle of Hastings, the Romans, Ancient Greece and Egypt, for example, but History took on a whole new perspective at MGS with Mr Walker during the next three years.
‘His teaching on the Enclosures, and Jethro Tull and the Agricultural Revolution, followed by the Industrial Revolution, really helped to frame the real world around me. I remember signing up to Springfield library and spending many Saturdays there with my father collecting information for homework projects on these and other topics. I look back at these times with great fondness.

‘Progressing to the 21st century and Modern World History we learned about the lead up to the Russian Revolution and the aftermath, the rise of the USA, China from Sun Yat-Sen’s foundation of the Republic to the Mao Tse Tung’s cultural revolution, WWI, the treaty of Versailles and reparations, the rise of Adolf Hitler, and the post-war world. Little by little the building blocks of the 21st century world became much clearer.

‘I can still remember so much of what was taught in those classes, and often find myself drawing from this in helping my children, currently at primary school, to understand about the world. These were not the usual dry facts and dates: we had thought-provoking discussions and open debate. When we responded to a question, Mr Walker would take on the role of Devil’s advocate - in responding to a suggestion that the answer was white he would make a case for why it could be black, and vice-versa, encouraging us to see things from all sides.

‘Without this I could have been forgiven for thinking that the German population must have been collectively evil to have brought Hitler to power but Mr Walker taught us just how much more complicated things were, and how people could be attracted. We learnt about poverty and inflation, the cost of reparation payments, the currency with no foundation, all compared to the lure of stability brought about through policies such as the ending of crippling reparations, the adoption of a land-based Renten Mark to end hyper-inflation and the reduction of unemployment through re-arming.

‘We were learning a cautionary tale of the rise in extreme politics in a time of austerity, which is as relevant in debate today as it was at the time. This was teaching us how to think about the world - how to analyse what has come before and how to predict what may happen in the future from past clues. For someone with an engineering mind I found this very thought-provoking.

‘Beyond MGS, I went on to gain a Masters Degree in Electronic Systems Engineering at Kingston University and spent a number of years in San Francisco, working in Silicon Valley, all the time taking an interest in the history, politics and factors that shape the way things are, both locally and nationally.

‘Today I live with my family in the south of Maidstone and I represent my area as both Kent County Councillor (Maidstone South) and Maidstone Borough Councillor (Maidstone South Ward). As an elected representative, I often use the Kent Archive Centre close to Springfield and, each time I visit I am reminded of good times with my father seeking out material for Mr Walker’s latest history assignment (which we would have fun debating all the way home).’

Jacqueline Davies (staff 1983 to 2003) enjoys reading all the news, old and recent. ‘I loved teaching at MGS, and was sad to retire. Both of my children attended the school. Toby is a script writer for film and TV, and we have already walked up the red carpet at his first film premiere in Leicester Square!

‘Tansy was at Invicta, but attended one A Level at MGS. She is now one of the country’s leading composers, and had an opera, Between Worlds, at The Barbican, in April, and a Prom for The National Youth Orchestra, entitled Re-greening, this year too.’

Andy Hosking (1955 to 1963) asked for his condolences to be passed on to John Skinner’s son, Richard Skinner. He writes: ‘John never actually taught me, but he came for one day to the Senior Scout Trek in 1960 at Torridon. He asked if anyone would like to go up a Munro with him. “What is a Munro?” we asked. “It is a Scottish mountain over 3000 ft – there are about 280,” he replied. He took four of us up Ben Alligin.

‘John effectively set me on a path (well lots of them really) which exactly 50 years later took me to the top of my final Munro - Ben Lomond. I met John at our year’s 50th anniversary of starting at MGS in 2005 and told him that I would be completing the Munros fairly soon and that he had started me off.

‘In 2010 I emailed an invite to my final Munro - I thought that he’d like an invite even though I was certain he wouldn’t be able to come…’

Philip Legg (1965 to 1972) retired last year from his administrative position at the University of the West of England. While there he completed a part-time MA in History, and went on this year to complete his PhD. The title of his thesis
Steve Marketis (1970) contacted us with the following information. ‘Yesterday being exactly 45 years since I last set foot in MGS, I wondered if it was a good time to tell you a little about what I’ve been up to since. I’m now in Plymouth via Ramsgate, a long way from Maidstone, my birthplace, Camberwell SE 5 and where I passed the eleven-plus, Greenwich SE 10.

‘I went back on 11th November 970 after leaving that July, to receive my half-share in the Monckton Prize for English. Undeserving was the best way to describe my half-share, as I merely got an A2 in the English Literature/Special Paper, unlike my fellow recipient, with an A1.

‘I was pleasantly surprised to see that person looks very much the same as he did that day, apart from a little greying at the temples. Previous issues of the Newsletter show he remains the same modest person as ever, and if you google Dean of Worcester Cathedral, you’ll see the same wonderful smile on Peter Atkinson’s (1963 to 1971) face today.

‘Well, my own career of being paid money for old rope (yes, a Civil Servant) was ended by early retirement (my choice, not theirs) in 2008, but my hair had gone well before that. But the beard that replaced the sideboards that were the scourge of B.J. Moody remains. I spent four or five years in the middle managing a chain of record shops (gives the age away again), before the proprietors sold them off and emigrated to Spain - overnight.

‘I’m pleased to hear that Alan Coulson (1963 to 1970) has done so well, too. Alan, as with Peter, began learning Maths in 1C: Alan, we know that the person who taught you means you had nothing to do with the banking crisis, apart from your inherent sense of character by virtue of being an OM anyway. I’ll pass on to that person forthwith, but first, to confirm your query, yes, J S Tresilian was indeed your Tutor/Form Master in U6, along with me, and here is the journal page to prove it.

“Jake” was from St John’s, Oxford and the sole reason I passed French A level, as he raised my language work from the truly abysmal to the merely shoddy, so ensuring that my literature abilities helped towards a Grade D. And, he spent a considerable time acting as an interface between me and Moody in school year 1969 to 1970.’

(Ed: Mr Tresiian taught me as well, and I was told a few years ago that he was then still spoken of at St John’s, because of his brilliance.)

‘I can assure you that I frequently and deservedly got both barrels from Jake, and if you wonder where Lord Sugar got his quote about “spraying” his money up the wall, Jake rightly accused me of doing that with my abilities years before The Apprentice. And I found out from other sources in later years that he also fought my corner with Bern [Bernard Moody] more than once. You couldn’t ask for more than that and I wish I’d been able to say thanks to JST again, as I did on the last day of term.

‘Forthwith, then, 1C had Maths with H P MacCallum, who achieved something that beats solving Fermat’s Last Theorem into a cocked hat. Coming up to O Level, I’d averaged 35% in five exams on SMP Maths and reckoned I had zero chance of passing that, ditto Physics. I can still remember just what I said when I saw 4 against me for Maths. Naturally, I shan’t repeat it, but you can rest assured it was ‘Merc’ [Mr MacCallum] who had somehow drummed into me enough knowledge to ensure that I’d not only passed, but had enhanced my previous best-ever examination score. I’d actually performed to a significantly higher standard than ever before on the big day - and done so twice [in two papers]. No other explanation fits the known facts, as the only mathematician involved in my
passing the O level was ‘Merc’. Talk about devotion above and beyond the call of duty, especially given the composition of Maths set 3 for the two years that we had him. The least I could do in tribute was to marry Sarah, who has a Maths degree, and that’s now 27 years of happiness with her!

‘Peter and Alan might like to know that one of their fellow form-members in 1C, Rob Bartholomew (1968), still lives in Snodland and is now happily retired from a variety of jobs and merrily quizzing away at a very high standard - he was one of the “stars” of Maths set 3. Neil Channon (1970) is another 1C man still thriving, now living in Maidstone and retired last August from an excellent career in psychiatric nursing.’

Richard McBride (1966 to 1970) thanked OMS for keeping everyone in touch. He went on to say, ‘I joined the school in 1966 into the 4th Form, having moved from Belfast, and went on to complete my A-Levels before going to study Chemistry at Queen’s, Oxford in 1970.

‘Perhaps memory is a selective editor, but I do have mainly fond recollections of my time at MGS. Some of the teachers had attitudes to discipline that would probably not be tolerated today, and I’m guessing that many of the teaching methods wouldn’t be fashionable now either. I remember Mr Keast (an unconventional teacher of maths), who, as did many other teachers, taught me how to think, rather than what to think. Harry Steels (physics) was quite a character.

‘I was very keen on photography, and this led to becoming an editor of the School Magazine. I still have some copies of the magazine, from 1966 to 1971. I also have some colour slides taken during the making of a short film, (though the film itself is probably long gone).’ (Ed: It may be on YouTube: please check, as at least one MGS film has appeared there.

‘Classmates I remember include Fred Pearce (also a keen photographer and an editor of the Magazine), and Nigel Wills (with whom I travelled to the Austrian Alps on a field trip in 1969). Peter Baylis, Ray Dawkins, Colin Wicks, and Jeremy Maris.

‘Following a career in business (engineering mainly, in the UK and Australia), I’m semi-retired now, living in Haslemere, Surrey. I’m still involved with one or two businesses in an advisory role, and teach science and maths as a private tutor. My art teachers at MGS would perhaps be surprised to learn that I have also taken up landscape painting!’

Dan McLean (1995 to 2002) thought that he would reply to our request for contributions as he moved to his new job on the day that the last copy of The Old Maidstonian arrived. ‘After leaving MGS in 2002, I joined the Royal Navy and, after serving for five years (with fellow OMs David Drennan and Aaron Revell), I left the RN to read theology at Oriel College, Oxford. I then started teaching, which was something I never could have imagined (as I’m sure Ron McCormick wouldn’t either: I was in his form for two years), and had four very enjoyable years at Ardingly College in Sussex. I left there last term and I have just arrived as Head of Philosophy and Theology at Rugby School in Warwickshire. As the Rugby World Cup starts in three weeks’ time, I think that I’ve chosen a good time to come here!’

Canon Michael Moore (1946 to 1954) wrote, ‘Today is the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity. Inevitably and pleasantly I am remembering Mr C.S. ("Joey") Cocker, a senior French master in the 1940s, who used to ride to MGS on an elderly motorbike and sidecar. In those days we had House Prayers, I think on a Thursday morning. West Borough met in the Art Room, the domain of Mr Fawcett. When Mr Cocker led our prayers there, he always included the Collect for today, which begins, “O God forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee.” So whenever I come to that prayer I always think of him, gladly. Maybe other contemporaries do as well. The staff room in the 1940s housed many memorable characters. Perhaps it still does…”

(Ed: I too remember Joey Cocker well. I remember one of our first French lessons in which we were told to bring in a mirror with which to practice sounding the French “R”. He spoke French like a native, complete with a very convincing accent. I try to imitate it when visiting France each year!)

Keith Mitchell (1939 to 1946) said that memories were stirred by the report of the death of Maurice Fenner, as they played cricket together in the MGS 1st XI in 1945 and 1946. 1946 was notable because there were up to seven left-handers in the team, including himself, Maurice, Graham Cannell and Brian Mitchell (Keith’s brother). He
says that Maurice went on to captain the RAF team, and, he believes, Combined Services team. They bumped into each other when an RAF team played Joint Services Singapore in 1969. Keith was secretary of Joint Services and captain of the army teams.

The pilot of the last Vulcan flight was OM Bill Ramsey, who joined the RAF after leaving MGS. Would an aircraft buff like to contribute an article for the next edition about the history of the Vulcan and its final flight?

C.J.ayner (1946 to 1952) wrote as follows: ‘Many thanks for the newsletter. I must say that it goes from strength to strength and as always, I have enjoyed reading it - although as I creak onwards (80 next week), I do find that the memories are increasingly hazy! I am very sorry that as I was away, I missed the summer opportunity to visit the school. This seems an excellent idea and I hope to be there next year.’

**Obituaries**

**It is with much regret that the Society records the deaths of Old Maidstonians. We extend our deepest sympathy to their families and friends**

Mike Swaffer (1945 to 1950)

David Pope (1945 to 1950) has told us that Mike Swaffer died on 20 June 2015, and he hopes to provide further information for the next edition.

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Ivor Wilson (1968 to 1975)

James Wilson (1968 to 1975) wrote to inform us of the death of his dear friend and fellow Old Maidstonian, Ivor Wilson. His funeral was held at Vinters Crematorium on 16 October.

James says that Ivor retained a good knowledge of the school and its activities and was quite active with the OM Society. He organised a ‘class of 1975’ reunion at the OM Annual Supper a couple of years ago, and those shown in the photograph below included Peter Gross-Niklaus, Nick Russell, Dave Bryan, Paul Belcher, James Wilson, Bob Simms, Ron McCormick, Simon Robinson, Steve Smith, Martin Steele, Gary Cook, Steve Coates, Ian McAthy, Kevin Hennessy, Derek Gibson, Andy Bell and Nigel White. Also present, but apparently not in the photograph, were Russell Booker, Alan Brice, Martin Rugman, Ian Stallion and Neil Sutherland.

James says that Ivor will be greatly missed by his many friends. Mrs Josephine Jones, Ivor’s cousin, took the funeral service, and has sent us a copy of the eulogy, which we can send to anyone who would like a copy.
**DID YOU KNOW?**

Corpus Christ Hall in Earl Street, where our illustrious school had its foundations, is now being run as a function and event centre. After many years, it will be possible for members of the public to view at least part of this important building.

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**ON THE LIGHTER SIDE**

Common-Room Conduct

The origin and author of this interesting staff document are unknown, but if any reader can identify the supposed writer, ‘D.A.A.’, or the unfortunate ‘G.E.R.’, please notify the editor. It appears to exist in only a well-worn type-script, and is transcribed here. Of course, it may be a spoof: does anyone know? Does it even refer to MGS?

Several colleagues have mentioned to me their feelings that the general level of conduct in the Common Room is lower than one would wish it to be in a School of this nature. I feel, therefore, that it might be helpful if I put down a few thoughts regarding what I would consider to be the *sine qua non* of Common-Room Conduct.

1. Masters should feel free to express strong opinions but care must be taken not to say anything “hurtful”, as distinct from “stimulating”, to colleagues. “You’re an idiot” or “You came here from a Secondary Mod., didn’t you?” is better thought than written on paper.

2. Nothing should be said to imply that a Master nurses a grudge against a colleague. The tone should be one of wise and lofty judgement rather than anger. “I’ve done sixty-three free periods for you” strikes too personal a note.

3. Nothing should be said which may reflect on the work of one’s colleagues in the past, e.g. “What exactly did you do with that class last year?”

4. Nothing should be said which might seem to glorify one’s own work, e.g. “My department has never had less than 95% G.C.E. successes.” A difficult colleague might well reply “What about the other 5%?” or “Anyone can pass in ———.”

5. “Clot” ought not to be used for “I am forced to disagree with your opinions on this undoubtedly controversial subject.”

6. It is important, in my opinion, that the standard of English used in the Common Room should be reasonably high. As “all teachers are teachers of English” expressions such as “Ain’t nobody got no fags?” or “There are some nice bits of stuff next door” tend, I feel, to lower our “tone” to an unjustifiable degree.

7. Reference to absence can be dangerous. “Your class was making a hell of a noise while you were having a smoke” can prove extremely embarrassing if said in the presence of the Headmaster.

8. Reference to past indiscretions can also be dangerous – “that was the night you were thrown out of the Olton Hall”* or “Did your wife ever find out about the Spanish girl?” are likely to be misinterpreted.

9. Conversation should bear some relation to the interests of the Staff in general. Television, School Matches, Pools – all these, I feel, are matters in which we all can take an intelligent interest. World affairs, Education and so-called “cultural” topics should be avoided.

10. Some Masters’ conversation is occasionally quite obscene!

11. The chief thing to bear in mind is that every colleague is *somebody’s* son. (Even G.E.R.)
I hope that nothing I have said will suggest that I wish to eliminate individuality in the expression of opinions, or to curb a Master’s freedom to express his views on a colleague, except where this is absolutely necessary. I do feel, however, that the atmosphere in the Common Room ought to be the best we can make it, and the tone, style and conduct in it be such as to reflect credit on us corporately, pro bono publico and omnibus prodesse+ (caeteris paribus) rather than the reverse.

*D.D.A. (i/c Admin.)*

*Might this refer to Oulton Hall, near Leeds? If so, why?*

+Means ‘To be of service to all’, but has often been translated as ‘Move down the bus please’.

~~~+++~~~~~

**REQUESTS FROM A CO-EDITOR**

**Contributions to The Old Maidstonian**

While we are in the mood to be told about our conduct, may I make one or two points about your much-valued contributions to The Old Maidstonian?

1. First and foremost, a big thank you to everyone who has contributed their memories and information. Judging from the number of notes of thanks which we receive, they are clearly read and enjoyed by many OMs. Thanks too, to those who have written to tell us about other OMs - meetings, births, marriages and (sadly) deaths. We print what we can, we hope without embarrassment to anyone concerned.

Please keep the information coming.

2. Please note the copy dates for each subsequent issue. They are usually printed at the end of the magazine section. (i.e. Before the sales page.) The copy date for the next edition is 1st March 2016.

3. Please remember that the Editors’ decisions must be the final word on what is printed. Please do not feel offended if your piece gets the ‘red pencil’ treatment. Sometimes we have to trim the length to fit the available space, and sometimes we do a little editing to “protect the innocent”! Corrections to the occasional slip in grammar are not unknown too!

4. We are particularly pleased to receive items complete with illustrations and photographs. They liven up the printed page no end. However please make sure that they are of reasonable quality (resolution). Pictures of groups of people who cannot be recognised are not usually of much interest to our readers. (800 x 800 pixels are reasonable minima.) I do my best with Photoshop, but sometimes there is just not enough detail to print effectively.

5. If you have asked for a hard copy of The Old Maidstonian, please remember to send the Treasurer a contribution to the cost. It costs about £5 per copy to print, package and post it. We want to ensure that members receive The Old Maidstonian in a form which suits them, but the Society cannot afford to lose money on it.

**The Mentor Scheme**

My other ‘pet project’ is the Mentor Scheme, in which we are trying to put current students in touch with OMs, working in fields which may be of interest to them in selecting or training for their careers. We have a good selection of mentors, but can always do with more. The success of the scheme depends upon being able to offer each student a mentor with directly relevant experience. So, please send me a mentor form as soon as possible. (You should receive one with this magazine.) It will take up very little of your time, and you do not have to live near Maidstone. If you would like to discuss this, please feel free to telephone me.

Our aim is to supplement, not duplicate, the advice which is available from the School’s careers department. It is the sort of contact and opportunities which can only be offered by those in current practice which can be so valuable.

To the existing team of mentors, may I take this opportunity of thanking you very much for volunteering. If you have been called to service, I hope you found it a rewarding experience. If you are still waiting, please remember that “he also serves who only stands and waits”. A student may be just about to request help from someone with exactly your range of experience.

Kind regards and many thanks,

Peter Weaver
**Senior Speech Day Photographs**

A small selection of the many photos taken on Speech Day - a wonderful day to remember.

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We Would Like to Hear From You  Copy date for next edition: 1st March, 2016
The Society is always very pleased to hear from its members. Please update us as to your post-school history, and we will publish it in The Old Maidstonian and on the website. If you would like to share with us some anecdotes about your time at the school then please do contact us. E-mail is a particularly convenient method of reaching us and is preferred.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
9th to 12th December  (7:30 pm)  The School Play
16th December (7:30 pm)  Carol Service - All Saints’
15th April, 2016  AGM and Annual Supper
OLD MAIDSTONIAN SOCIETY SALES

The Society has ties, blazer badges, scarves for sale. All the proceeds go to the Society Awards Fund to support the students. The items should be ordered using the attached Order Form, and payment may be made either by forwarding a completed form and cheque to the Society at the School, or by internet transfer and sending an electronic copy of the form to oms@oldmaidstonians.org.uk

Ties
The striped tie is the original Old Maidstonian Society tie with bands of navy blue, white, purple and old gold. The stock of these ties has been recently replenished, and the new ties are polyester and slightly larger than the original at 58" in length, and 3½" wide.
The crested tie is a Jacquard Woven Tie with all-over motifs of the crest in gold, red and blue on a navy background.

Both ties are £8.50 each including post and packing.

Scarves
A completely new design is now available based upon the Society colours of navy blue, white, purple and old gold. The scarves are of pure wool or acrylic fibre and are 70" in length and 10" wide.

Cost including post and packing: £30 wool or £18 acrylic.

Blazer Badges
The Old Maidstonian Society woven badge is approximately 5" x 3" and is designed to be sewn onto a blazer.

The badges are for sale at £15 including post and packing.

Payment
Facilities are available to make payment using the internet.
The Natwest Bank account details are:
Maidstone Branch, 3 High Street, Maidstone, ME14 1XU
Account: Old Maidstonian Society
Account no: 00051802
Sort Code: 60-60-08

Please use your surname and initials to assist us in identifying who the payment is from. Would you please also advise the Membership Secretary either by post, e-mail or letter if you have taken advantage of this facility and forward a completed order form. Alternatively payment may be made by cheque to: “The Old Maidstonian Society” and sent to the school.
Order Form

GARMENTS

[ ] I enclose £________________ for the purchase of _______ Crested Ties at £8.50

[ ] I enclose £________________ for the purchase of _______ Striped Ties at £8.50

[ ] I enclose £________________ for the purchase of _______ Blazer Badges at £16.50

[ ] I enclose £________________ for the purchase of _______ Woollen Scarves at £30.00

[ ] I enclose £________________ for the purchase of _______ Acrylic Scarves at £18.00

All prices include postage and packing

YOUR DETAILS

Name: __________________________________________

Year of Joining: _______ Year of Leaving: _______

Address: _________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

E-mail: __________________________________________ Telephone: __________________ Mobile:____________________

Please return the form with payment to:

The Old Maidstonian Society, Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 7BT,

Please make cheques payable to 'Old Maidstonian Society'

Or by internet bank transfer to:

The NatWest Bank

Maidstone Branch: 3 High Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XJ

Account: Old Maidstonian Society

Account no: 00051802

Sort Code: 60-60-08

IBAN: G331NWBK 606008 00051802

BIC (Swift): NWBKGB2L