

# Old Maidstonian Society

The Association of Former Pupils and Staff of Maidstone Grammar School



## Statement to Members in Lieu of AGM: March 2021

*Due to the continued restrictions on physical meetings during the ongoing Co-Vid pandemic it will not be lawful to hold an AGM for an Unincorporated Body such as this Society at the end of March 2021. The Committee have decided that the Society should circulate a statement covering the agenda items which would normally be covered at an AGM. In view of the lack of activity between March 2020 and the present date the matters reported in the Officer Report attachments are much briefer than would normally be expected.*

*If any members have any comment, adverse or otherwise, would they please respond to the secretary by e-mail. This Statement together with the lieu Agenda presented in respect of the 2020 AGM will be placed before the next physical General Meeting of the Society for formal ratification when this is possible.*

*Members will recall that in 2020 a Proposal for a Temporary Suspension of the Rules of the Society in so far as they apply to the physical attendance or presence of all or any members of the existing committee and the current officers thereof, received no objections. Viz:*

"Rules 4 & 6 shall be suspended for a period of 18 months from the date hereof or until an Annual General Meeting of the Society shall take place whichever of them shall occur first in time and in so far as the Rules require the committee and officers to physically meet together in a designated place and in lieu thereof the committee and officers shall be hereby authorised to carry out the functions, services, decisions and appointments as it or they shall see fit and in accordance with the non-conflicting Rules of the Society, but with the substitution of all forms of communication, notice, vote or requirement as may be relevant and appropriate by email or other electronic means that shall in all other respects comply with the existing Rules of the Society."

*The Committee propose that this suspension be extended for a further period which should be no longer than necessary whilst pandemic restrictions are in force. On the basis of this suspension the following matters are submitted to the membership of the Society.*

1. The President's Report - attached
2. The Chairman's Report - attached
3. The Secretary's Report - attached
4. To note the resignation of Graham Belson as Treasurer and further to note the appointment by the Committee of Graham Walker as his successor. (Sean Scurr having already taken over the position of Membership Secretary during the year 2020 - 2021.)
5. The Accounts to 31 December 2020 - attached
6. The Membership Secretary's Report - attached.
7. The Webmaster's Report - attached
8. The Social Media Report - attached
9. In view of the lack of activity in 2020 and the likelihood of a slow return to normality in 2021 the Committee agreed that Nancy Powell should continue as President for a further year until the 2022 AGM with Graham Walker continuing as Vice-President.
10. OM Trust: To note the reappointment of John Clayton and Richard Ratcliffe for a further period of office. To note the appointment of Graham Walker as a Trustee (Approved at a Trustee meeting held on 11 March 2021)  
The terms of office of the trustees will then be as follows:
  - John Clayton: retires March 2024
  - Gardner Crawley: retires March 2022
  - Richard Ratcliffe: retires March 2024
  - Graham Walker: retires March 2024
10. The Committee deemed to be reappointed en bloc (see list below)
11. Rule Change: Tony Bishop has kindly suggested a form of words for an additional Rule to allow the Society to conduct business by electronic means in the future in the event of any further pandemic-type situations occurring. Wording for this new Rule and for a Rule Change to allow for the dropping of the link between the date of the AGM and the Annual Supper will be circulated with the due notice period in advance of the next General Meeting of the Society.
12. The Date of a General Meeting to formally ratify the foregoing (be that an EGM or the 2022 AGM) will be arranged by the Committee in due course.

## Committee members (with 2021 - 2022 roles shown)

- Tony Bishop, TB (Corresponding member of the Committee)
- John Clayton, JC (Current Chairman, OMS Trustee)
- Graham Walker, GW (Vice-President, ex-officio, Treasurer)
- Gardner Crawley, GC (OMS Trustee)
- Malcolm MacCallum, MM (Webmaster)
- Ron McCormick, RM (Sports)
- Richard Ratcliffe, RR (Secretary; OMS Trustee)
- Sam Coppard, SC (Social Media)
- Sean Scurr, SS (Membership Secretary.)
- Nancy Powell, NP (President: The Old Maidstonian Co-Editor)
- Mark Tomkins MT (ex-officio, as Headmaster)
- Robbie Ferguson, RF (Vice Chairman)
- Paul Smith, PS (Immediate Past President)
- Neil Turrell, NT
- Brian White, BW (The Old Maidstonian Co-Editor)
- The Archivist (ex-officio) (currently Jeff Wilkinson), JW

R B Ratcliffe

Secretary

[rbr1@btconnect.com](mailto:rbr1@btconnect.com)

22 March 2021

# Old Maidstonian Society

The Association of Former Pupils and Staff of Maidstone Grammar School



## 2020 - 2021 REPORTS

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been a highly memorable year, not just for OMS, but for society at large. As a result of Covid-19 social activity within the society has been dormant. From before the AGM and Annual Dinner slated for March 2020, through to the Annual Dinner and AGM in 2021 the Society calendar has dropped all social occasions. As we approach the virtual AGM in March 2021 it is with the hope that in the course of the coming months we can look to resume activity where possible and assemble again as a full OMS by the Annual Dinner in 2022. Whilst social activity has been out of bounds the committee has continued to regularly meet via virtually, the newsletter has continued to be written and circulated, committee roles have changed and new members joined. I took up office as President of OMS in April 2019 and, with agreement from the OMS committee, will remain in that role until March/April 2022. Extraordinary to serve a 3 year term but an opportunity I am happy to have been offered. Congratulations to the Committee for maintaining business as usual during this highly unusual time. May it not be long before we can all meet up once more and reflect on what a time it has been.

**Nancy Powell** President

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Looking back on a year we shall surely never forget, I would like to thank the members of the committee for the readiness with which they have adapted to working in new ways. Our meetings have continued to take place by Zoom, which has brought the added benefit of enabling those who live far from Maidstone, such as Tony Bishop, and others whose work commitments make it difficult to attend meetings in person, such as Sam Coppard, to play a fuller part.

Despite the frustrations of not being able to hold our usual events, work has continued behind the scenes looking ahead to when we can resume those much-loved staples in our calendar, and what venues can safely be used. Planning for specific dates is still problematic, but we are ready to proceed once clarity emerges.

Sean Scurr has stepped seamlessly into the role of Membership Secretary and earned the admiration of all for bringing his skills, and knowledge of more recent age groups, to this important role. Graham Walker has also recently

taken on the role of Treasurer, and Treasurer to the Old Maidstonian Trust, and I must thank both Sean and Graham for their willingness to serve the Society in these posts.

Thanks are due to the former Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Graham Belson, for his past service on the committee.

I must reserve special thanks for Richard Ratcliffe, who - as always - has offered his vast knowledge and experience in what, for him, is the new role of Secretary.

We are all volunteers, united by our love of Maidstone Grammar School. It is an honour to be Chairman of the Society, and I look forward to being able to represent the OMS at as many events as possible as life begins to return to how it was before March 2020.

**John Clayton** Chairman

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

As noted by the two writers above this has been an extraordinary year as it has been for all Clubs and Societies. Having changed hats at the beginning of the "year" to become Secretary it has been a case of juggling communications with the Committee (mainly) such that they have been able to carry out the functions required with minimum disruption. I am grateful to all the "team" for dealing with many unpredicted inputs such as arranging Zoom meetings (Sean Scurr, Malcolm MacCallum), providing legal advice (Tony Bishop) on where we stood (stand!) with regard to carrying out business virtually and for school matters (Headmaster and his valliant PA!). If we think that we've had a difficult year as a Society then think for a moment about the challenges in providing a Grammar School education for 1300 plus students. I raise a glass to everyone involved with MGS and the OMS. May it get easier from here on!

**Richard Ratcliffe** Secretary

# Old Maidstonian Society - Accounts up to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021

## General Account

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total in a/c at the end of year	2,205.23	1,630.87	2,191.01	2,513.41	2,444.59
Donations into account	565.75	432.75	313.25	215.75	255.75
Easyfundraising / Amazon Smile	-	-	-	-	22.28
Profit from Annual Supper	839.01	623.32	546.74	699.94	-
Profit from 'George' event	-	-	110.30	-	-

## General Account Expenditure

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Royal British Legion	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00
Information Commissioner	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00
Postage/Envelopes/Labels	-	-	8.20	26.46	25.48
Hostpapa/Namesco	26.38	11.99	241.95	14.29	14.39
Annual Membership Register	110.00	126.67	95.00	135.00	186.00
Presidents Chain engraving	-	-	-	60.00	-
Newsletter printing	126.14	210.42	-	-	-
Account charge	20.00	-	-	-	-
Facebook / Twitter social sites	120.00	-	-	-	-
Sports equipment	-	964.35	-	-	-
'George' London get-together	-	297.00	-	105.00	-
Annual Supper bar licence	-	-	-	-	21.00
Alec Stewart Award	-	-	-	-	34.98
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>545.88</b>	<b>1,675.43</b>	<b>410.15</b>	<b>405.85</b>	<b>346.85</b>

*The Alec Stewart Award is normally included in the Annual Supper accounting, but could not be in 2020.*

*There were 4 fraudulent transactions on the account in 2020, all of which have been recovered.*

*The accounts are audited by an independent accountant every year after they have been submitted to the committee.*

## Trust Fund

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total in fund at the end of year	11,405.20	12,057.96	12,684.55	3,674.18	3,183.39
Donations from Trust Fund	500.00	-	-	10,000.00	500.00
Donations into Trust Fund	60.00	60.00	60.00	40.00	-
Interest	5.40	2.09	12.03	45.62	9.21
Profit from Quiz Night	824.13	590.78	554.56	713.00	-

*The Trust Fund consists of £1 in each of the GB Phillips, Dicker, JF Payne and TP Gutteridge funds, and the remainder in the Old Maidstonian Award fund.*

*There was one award of £500 approved by the Trust Fund trustees and paid to a student.*

*In accordance with the committee's previous decision that any excess above £2,000 in the General Account should be transferred to the Trust Fund, **£444.59** will be transferred and the Trust Fund will then stand at **£3627.98**.*

## Library Project 2019

Total members donations.	39,265.00
Donation from OMS Trust Fund	10,000.00
Gift Aid	7,785.00
Paul Oldham match funding	<u>60,000.00</u>
	<b><u>117,050.00</u></b>

## **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT**

During the past 12 months a lot has changed, not only in the world but within our society as well, yet so much has remained the same. The interactions I get to see first-hand between members is all the encouragement I need to give me hope between now and when our new normal just becomes plain old normality again. The whole ethos of the society is to see members engage with each other, to stay in touch with one another, to help one another when we put a request out there to the wider society, to tell stories of the past; all of this should give us cause to look to the future with hope.

It has been a challenging year for most as COVID has affected so many of us in differing ways and certainly for myself personally having had the virus in June of last year, my wife is still feeling the effects of it nine months later. But the highlights in my year would of course be being elected into the role as Membership Secretary in September of last year, carrying on the great work that my predecessor Graham Belson had carried out for our society for over a decade.

Only a moderate growth in our society member numbers over the last twelve months, mainly down to not getting many new members from the last year of leavers. Understandably, their departures have been VERY different to anything any of us would have had to have dealt with when we left MGS, and we will endeavour to make contact with as many of the class of 2020 as possible through Social Media and the other usual channels.

**Sean Scurr Membership Secretary**

## **WEBMASTER'S REPORT**

The usual routine updating activities to our website have continued but at a diminished level due to the absence of the usual social events during the pandemic. There have also been a reduced number of hacking attempts (or an increased number of undetected attempts?) this year. There was an interesting phishing attack in the form of emails purporting to be from the government's Insolvency Service and using their real postal address and phone number but seeking replies to fake email addresses hidden under an apparently innocuous link.

A few non-routine changes have been made to the website. The online membership register was removed following a GDPR compliance complaint. The Home Page was updated to include a "Join Now" button for potential members, and the online membership form reworded. New user registrations for the site itself now only get contributor status if they ask the webmaster. Such requests would then be checked against the OMS register. This has reduced the number of pointless registrations by hackers. A new page was created to cover the historical material including new material from Graham Walker on OM's who fell in the Boer War. The "slider" used to provide the slideshow at the top of our pages was changed following problems with the previous slider, and the slides themselves were updated with Nancy Powell's help.

Early in 2021 there was a fresh problem of the type seen before, where the site broke the hosting service's limits on resources used. One aspect was that large files of old emails had been retained: the Membership Secretary and Treasurer quickly fixed that. The other was traced to large number of entry processes within two specific one or two minute periods, but the origin and purpose of these processes could not be determined. There was good cooperation with the host service's technical support in adding new potentially mitigating measures against future such issues.

A report setting out the details of website administration was prepared in collaboration with the then Treasurer, Graham Belson. This will be of use if and when a new or additional webmaster is identified.

As of today the Old Maidstonian LinkedIn group, which has been slowly but steadily growing, has 498 members.

**Malcolm MacCallum 5 March 2021**

## **SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT**

**Facebook** - there are currently 1149 members of the Facebook page - an addition of 200 from last year. Over the course of the year we have promoted all editions of the newsletter, any and all OMS news and details of events going forwards.

**Twitter** - again, there are a handful of 'followers' on the Twitter page. As always, Twitter is not used as much as Facebook, but all updates that are posted on the Facebook page are also mirrored on the Twitter account.

**LinkedIn** - we have also promoted the newsletters on LinkedIn, including incorporating photos to ensure the post reaches a good audience.

**S. Coppard Social Media Co-ordinator 26.02.21**