



# THE OLD MAIDSTONIAN

The Newsletter of the Old Maidstonian Society

Issue No. 45: Winter 2024



## From the President

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I hope everyone had a great summer - I felt a bit like a school student this year, having a long summer break between jobs. And whilst I was definitely not 'mucking about', scrumping from the local fruit farms and fishing in favourite local pools,

the Headmaster's report of 'A' level and 'GCSE' results (very well done on this years positive results) took me straight back to those two summers, where with a dread feeling in the pit of my stomach, I made my way to the school to review the results



posted on the (very public) school board the morning of results day. The outcome of which would make or break the rest of the summer and beyond....

Not for us the privacy of an email or letter but the potential whole school humiliation of a grade posted on a board for all and sundry to know and see. Whilst I had a couple of shockers (Maths O level and German A level) the rest were good enough. Good enough to get on to the next rung and only worry about the clocks going back and the misery of going to and from school on the Number 28 bus from Marden in the dark rather than anything more fundamental.

Looking at this year's results it looks like very many students also enjoyed their summer having received their results (hopefully in private and a time and place of their choosing).

Well done MGS. Nichts ändert sich.

Jason Tarry  
President



## Your Committee 2024/25

- President - Jason Tarry 1980 to 1985
- Chairman and President Elect - John Clayton 1961 to 1968
- Secretary - Richard Ratcliffe 1956 to 1964
- Treasurer - Chris Hipkins 1961 to 1969
- Co-Editor OMS - Brian White 1962 to 1969
- Co-Editor OMS - Nancy Powell 1993 to 1995
- Co-Editor OMS - James Hanratty Staff
- Membership Secretary - Sean Scurr 1997 to 2004
- Webmaster Malcolm MacCallum 1957 to 1963
- Archivist - Graham Walker Staff 1981 - 2018
- Headteachers - Mark Tomkins
- Neil Turrell - Staff 1992 to 2009
- Tony Bishop 1955 to 1962
- Ron McCormick Staff 1966 to 2004
- Gardner Crawley 1955 to 1962
- Martin Holmes - Staff
- Chris Boobier 1998 to 2005
- Past President - Dan Abnett 1979 to 1984



# From the Chairman

The year 2024 has given all Old Maidstonians who engaged with our school's 475th anniversary much to remember. The magnificent marquee that sprang up in the Quad played host to a series of events including our Annual Supper, and the whole school service that brought the week to a conclusion. Another very enjoyable event was the Cream Tea on 13th July which saw over one hundred members of the school community filling the Hall and no doubt discussing at some point whether the clotted cream or the strawberry jam should be applied first to the delicious scones. This was a lovely way of spending a summer afternoon with many OMs present.

Every time I pass through Reception at school I continue to be impressed by the ever-changing content on the video wall, which manages to blend the new and the old in such vibrant ways.

The School has found it necessary to increase the size of its Governing Body and as part of that process invited the Society to nominate a second Foundation Governor (I am the existing one). This meant that we had to hold an Extraordinary General Meeting to amend our own rules, which took place in September, and duly appointed former school vice-captain Hugo Van Mol to fill this important role.

I would like to thank our Treasurer, Chris Hipkins, for the very considerable efforts he has been making 'behind the scenes' in reviewing the Society's banking arrangements and protocols, as well as tackling the requirements of the Charities Commission which have become more detailed.

As Vice-Chair of the Governing Body I took part in the recent Ofsted inspection and the report is awaited.

As I write this, the date of our London Get-Together at The George in Southwark is fast approaching and I look forward to meeting many OMs in what has become a very enjoyable annual event..

John Clayton  
Chairman



# Reflections from the Headteacher

I am now in my 13th year as headteacher, and I am hoping that this year is not an unlucky one for me or the school - but we are due an Ofsted inspection at any moment!

Following last year's 475 celebrations we can now look forward to a more normal year when our focus returns to the experiences Maidstonians get in the classroom. This year we have three main priorities: our new behaviour policy; introducing devices to the classroom; and the concept of 'Teaching Tuesday'.

Our new behaviour policy is in response to some significant work last year looking at how behaviours in schools have changed, particularly over the last few years since Covid. This is not to say that MGS has lowered its expectations over recent years, it is more about how young people have changed with regards to how best they learn, and how we now need to adapt to meet their needs.

The introduction of devices into the classroom is going to be a significant change to MGS. Starting with Year 7, students will slowly be shown how they can use a device to support their learning. But, in order to do this, the teachers are going to have to adapt themselves to a more digital way of teaching. It will be a steep learning curve for everyone, but the desire for public examinations to be online in the near future is fast approaching. Electronic devices and the development of AI will never replace the human touch that is seen right across every school, but with a more digital world that young people are living in, it is right that we make this step forward to address what is inevitably going to happen. So with the introduction of devices and of

our new behaviour policy, as well as the many other developments we are working on in school, the third priority of the year is the learning of the staff and of the staff's continuous professional development. And this is what I mean when I say 'Teaching Tuesdays'.

Every Tuesday the school day now finishes at 2.45pm instead of the usual 3.20pm, and that extra time, along with other training time in the calendar, has now allowed us to create proper staff development time that enhances the staff's skills and abilities to develop in their roles. Time in many walks of life is at a premium, and so this extra time we have been able to create has allowed us to do what we have always wanted to do: to develop a bespoke and fit-for-purpose continuous professional development programme that supports the needs of the staff. The feedback I have received so far from staff has been extremely positive, and of course, going home early has been well-received from the students! Sorry to the many Old Maidstonians who weren't able to go home early when they were students of MGS!!

OM Headteacher's Report September 2024

- 60% A\*-B at A level, 45% 7-9 at GCSE in the summer.
- 17 new members of staff joined the MGS community in September.
- The gym project to convert the old gym to a fully resourced fitness gym has begun.
- The William and Edith Oldham trustees visited MGS in July to see the new video wall. They were delighted. They now wish to support another project.
- The MGS 475 Garden Party was

a success with 120+ people in attendance from across the wider MGS community.

- Heather Cook and Denise Friend retire at Christmas. Collectively they have given 55 years' service to MGS. We will be saying goodbye to them at an event nearer the time of them leaving.

Mark Tomkins  
Headteacher



# Your Committee Members Get Around!



Treasurer Chris Hipkins, Gardner Crawley and Chris' husband Michael Norton (all Liverymen) attending preparations for The Lord Mayor's Show with Gog and Magog on 9 November.



Worshipful Company of Engineers - Middle Warden Andrew McNaughton, Master Engineer Dolores Byrne, Liveryman Gardner Crawley by London Routemaster Bus (RM1933) at the start of the Lord Mayor's Show.

# MGS & OMS Events

By John Clayton

## Golf Day!

The Bursar, Heather Cook, who is retiring at the end of the current term, has offered to run a Golf Day for the Society. The outline proposal which has been developed is to hold this at Kings Hill Golf Club on a Saturday in May or June, and to start by offering places for 15 teams of 4 with the possibility to increase this number depending on demand. Heather will negotiate an attractive price to include food, and there will be a trophy for the winning team plus ancillary prizes e.g. longest drive, nearest the pin and so on, plus a raffle with good prizes.

Our hope is to start advertising this event in the coming weeks, which of course means more work for our indefatigable Membership Secretary Sean, whose efforts are much appreciated.

## OMS Supper 2025

Much planning has been going on to ensure that our Annual Supper in 2025 builds on the success of the 2024 event. We shall be reverting to a partial buffet style service with a starter of a generous sharing board on each table, followed by three main course options for which diners will help themselves from buffet stations, followed by a choice of three desserts plus fruit salad. Breads, vegetables, salads and steamed rice are included, along with a selection of teas and coffees. Gypsy Tart devotees – of whom there are many – can be reassured that this staple will be on the menu!

Supper 2025 will see us back in the Hall which means that the caterers will not have to bring food all the way from the restaurant, through the Hall and then into the marquee as

they did last year. There will also be a wider selection of wines and beers available.

We have been able to hold prices to the same level as in 2024, which I think is quite an achievement given the escalating costs of food items.

Please note the date - Saturday 29 March - and look out for Sean's emails with full details in the near

future, including our Early Bird discount which proved very popular last year.

# London Get-Together 2024

By John Clayton  
(photos by Richard Ratcliffe, Chris Hipkins and John Clayton)

Some of the OMs who attended another good evening at The George Inn, Southwark, on 7 November, with an age range of 65 years between our youngest and eldest attendees:



Chairman John Clayton welcomed everyone after the buffet had been devoured and gave a brief update on MGS matters and OMS events in 2025.

Sam Coppard (2012) and Secretary Richard Ratcliffe (1964)

Sam shared this amusing incident from his years at MGS: 'When Jean-Marie Sanfourche in total silence emptied a fellow classmate's pencil case onto the desk, then proceeded to turn the pencil case inside out and refill the pencil case - safe to say the student didn't misbehave again!'



David East (1959) attends Annual Suppers when he can.



Richard Blunden (1973) and Philippa. Richard recalled how Norman (Froggy) Newcombe gently corrected him when he confused *semper* with *saepe* in Latin.



Christian Leigh and Mark Reynolds (1967) commended the committee for another enjoyable London event.



Anurag Poudel and Niraj Gautam (both 2018) had vivid memories of playing for the Seconds Football team at MGS. The Games Teacher who ran the team always confused who was who, so when Niraj played well he'd be told "well played Anurag" and vice-versa, a source of much amusement among the team. Niraj told me that when he was in the 6th form, a classmate fainted and fell down the stairs at school, which made Niraj decide to become a doctor. He is now on the brink of completing his medical training.

Anurag needed to wear something to go with his attire at a recent wedding in Nepal, and found that his OMS tie worked perfectly!



Malcolm MacCallum (1963) and Richard Ratcliffe (1964 - who was taking this photo) were talking about their regular table tennis matches in the prefects' room. Richard recalled that Malcolm could usually beat him, even when he had his arm in plaster, while Malcolm generously felt that this was because, with the extra weight of the plaster cast behind his left handed volleying, nobody even saw the ball after he'd hit it! Gardner Crawley (1962) and John Clayton (1968) (umpires) agreed they "could not be serious!"



Ayush Gurung, Ellie Smith and Ben Newfield (all 2018) chatted about their studies since leaving MGS. Ellie is at BPP Law School prior to joining a London Law firm, whilst Ben is pursuing a career in heritage organisations.



Michael Horton (Chris Hipkins' husband) and Kye De Friend (2024)

# The Old Maidstonian

By Brian White

It was Lois Birrell, a former OMS archivist, who suggested that the newsletter should be called The Old Maidstonian, and the first edition which bore that title officially was number 15 (Autumn 2014). At that time, Peter Weaver was the Co-editor, and it was he who turned my basic Word documents into formatted pdf versions which could be sent to the membership. In recent years, that role has been taken on by Nancy Powell, and I want to thank Peter and Nancy for all of their expertise and hard work, without which, everyone would have been looking at text with a very boring appearance!

I have been inspired by the vast numbers of newsletter contributions from members of the society, and I have read with admiration about successful careers in business, central and local government, the military, the church, academia, and so on; in fact, to quote a well-used strapline, 'all human life is here'. Some contributions have been so lengthy that they have been published over several editions, and many have been beautifully formatted, thus saving me a great deal of time. The wielding of a blue pencil has always been necessary, of course, but I hope that I have not disappointed too many people by editing what they have written.

It is difficult for me to pick out 'favourite' pieces, as I have enjoyed so much of what we have published, but special thanks must go to Icarus (Jeff Wilkinson) for his 'Musings from the penthouse' column, which has been a mainstay of so many editions. His ability to find and collate all kinds of fascinating information has been astounding, and he has an unrivalled knowledge of the MGS and OMS archival materials.

As I wrote in a previous edition, I think that after well over a decade, it is time for me to hand over the reins as Co-editor, in order to 'ring the changes' and get a different perspective on things. The committee is now adopting a more collaborative approach to the production of The Old Maidstonian, which I believe to be a very exciting development, and I am looking forward to this new chapter in its life.



# Musings from the Penthouse #28

By Icarus

School Anniversary year over, general elections passed, new government formed, new monarch, etc., I think it is time we looked back and delve into our memories. At least with memories there is some kind of firmness – depending on our ability to recall them that is!

Some of you more senior gentlemen (we don't have lady OMs of that generation) may recall the folk song made popular by Nina & Frederik and Nana Mouskouri in 1965 'Try to Remember the Kind of September' when one was asked to recall a time 'when life was slow and oh, so mellow' and we were tender and callow fellows. Looking back as the song encourages does tend to make us view life through rose-tinted glasses, that's where archive records become so important. Continuing on the musical theme there was another popular song, sung by perhaps a more news-worthy singer, Marianne Faithfull, 'What have they done to the rain?' which lists through its verses the increasing extent of rainfall. Those of us living in The Garden of England will be fully aware that this September was the wettest since the early 1800s with over 250% of the normal September rainfall recorded. Perhaps those of you who live further afield might be looking for rainfall or may have had greater records set. Sorry, being an Englishman one does tend to talk about the weather too much – now back to the archives.



Most enquiries for archival information relate to achievements and relationships, but there is one section in The Maidstonian that seldom receives requests, in fact this was the first one in over 8 years. That is the 'Original Contributions' section. This section started off as just an odd item buried in the main body, before developing into a multi-page section of its own in the centre of the magazine. Regrettably, due to editor's whims or possibly public demand, 'Original Contributions' spread to make a large part of The Maidstonian almost comic like. All original contributions are preserved in the hard copies of the magazine but many have not been digitalised as it was considered that reference to them would be very rare.

It was therefore quite a surprise when O.M. Graham Shaw asked if we had a copy of an item he had contributed as a 'tender and callow fellow' back in 1959 and even more so that a digital copy of it had been made. I have asked Graham's permission and he has agreed to me including it here.

## MY IDEAL HOUSE

As you come into view of the house, the location seems very desolate. The ground around is barren, consisting of chalk cliffs, with tufts of short grass here and there, where it is sheltered from the biting wind.

The house, set into the rock, appears small, damp and dreary to other people, but to me it is the best abode imaginable. A small door, made of driftwood, leads into the solid rock itself. Hewn out of the rock are several small windows, and a larger one further up

the cliff. The door and windows give light to the main room. In one corner there is an old oil-stove which serves as the main source of heat, and which I use for cooking my meals of fish and other sea-foods taken from the bay, far, far below. The room, being small, does not seem really cold. On a rock shelf set in the far wall are two old lanterns which serve as light during the long winter evening, when I sit alone with my thoughts.

Further into the rock there is a small flight of steps which leads into the other, smaller room. There is no door, but there is a window in the wall opposite, which looks out over the bay. Here, on summer evenings, I sometimes sit and watch the sun setting over the blue water.

My bed is a raised piece of stone with plenty of woollen blankets to keep me warm and take away the hard feeling of the rock. On one side of the entrance is a strong wooden chest which I had before I settled here. In it I keep my few precious belongings. Propped up against one wall are a fishing-rod, home-made, but very efficient, a couple of lobster pots and an old fishing net, long past repair.

This is my house I have always wanted to live in, and, whatever happens, nothing could change that desire.

G.SHAW (4L)

Graham was obviously a young man who thought 'outside of the box', considering that everybody else in the class, when set the task of writing about their 'Ideal House', would probably describe multiple garages, tennis courts, swimming pool, stables, etc. He just wanted to take an alternative 'minimalist' approach. I did ask him whether he had changed his mind about that easy lifestyle over the 65 years and he has agreed that his suburban flat is more comfortable than the cave. How many more of us have lifestyles which are completely different from the ideas of our youth? Cue for contributions!

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I suggested to Graham that he could perhaps send memories of his time at MGS and he has sent in memoirs and opinions which will be included in later editions of the newsletter space permitting.

The U.K. has recently witnessed the presence of Comet C/2023 A3 (Tsuchinshan-ATLAS) streaking across our western skies. An imagined archivist on the comet last time it graced our skies would have recorded a small intelligent group of two-legged occupants in Africa that were developing tools and their skills at using them, and a similar, but more rugged creature with deep furrowed brows who seemed unable to make more sophisticated tools as those of the Africans. When the imagined fellow returned this year he would have noticed that the Neanderthals had vanished and that Homo Sapiens had learned to excel in making sophisticated tools which could be used, and are being used, to annihilate each other, or to investigate other heavenly bodies which they hoped might accommodate mankind when mankind had poisoned this Blue Planet into a Grey-green toxic mass, more barren than the archivists own home. One wonders what he will find when he returns in 80,000 years' time. (Apologies to all Historians for errata).

At the time when A3 was making its most recent approach to earth another heavenly body appeared, referred to as a 'star' which illuminated a small area in a small town, causing some astronomers to seek its purpose and reason. What they found was the birthplace of a young boy, who would be named 'The Light of the World'. In a couple of weeks' time, many of us will be celebrating the birth of that child and wishing each other 'A Joyous Christmas' and I would like to wish all my readers a rich blessing for the season and that the forthcoming year will be a fruitful and happy one.

Post Script –

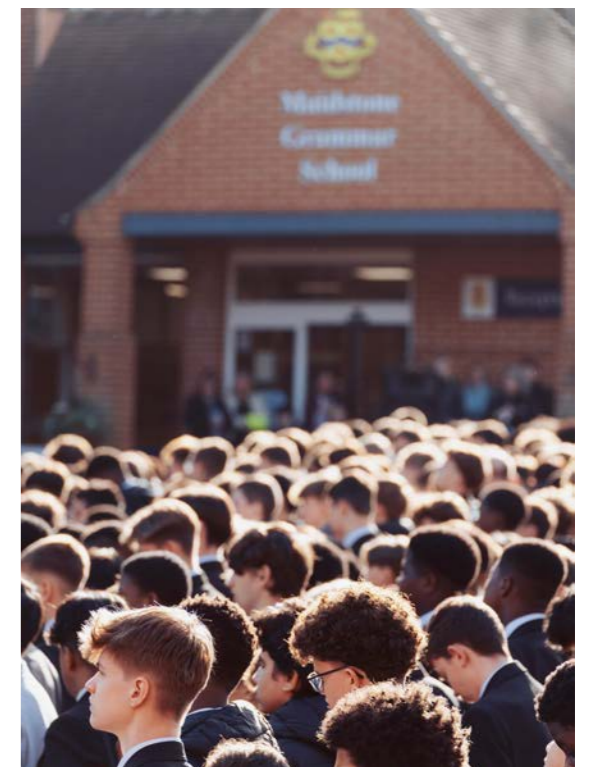
It is with great sadness that I have to say farewell to Mrs. Denise Friend (Head-Teacher's P.A.) and Mrs. Heather Cook (School Bursar) who are each taking well-earned retirements at the end of this term, Both of these ladies have been of invaluable help to the Archives and the various archivists, to myself, and, of course to the school over decades of time (yes, I do mean decades!). Thank you, ladies.

*Icarus*



# MGS Remembrance Service

Monday 11 November 2024



# My Inconvenient Parasite

By Les Broad

Cancer - it's a word that's supposed to strike fear into the breast of man (or, I imagine, woman).

It wasn't my reaction to the doctor's revelation, but then I'd been tutored at MGS and consequently am made of sterner stuff and don't take things at face value: I thought it was going to prove to be a nuisance that would waste far too much of my limited life expectancy at somewhere north of seventy years of age. So I had a cancerous growth in the oesophagus; now we knew what was causing my swallowing difficulties that issue could be tackled, couldn't it?

It was indeed tackled, but not before conversations with serious-faced nurses and equally serious oncologists. I don't enjoy dealing with serious people and I had them all laughing quickly enough. I had a variety of scans too, and not all were in hospital buildings: the Welsh NHS does things differently and several were in truck trailers in car parks.

At last I was given a schedule of treatment. I was to receive radiotherapy on 23 consecutive working days with weekly chemotherapy sessions over the same period. The radiotherapy was unremarkable, but truly restful, (apparently the patient isn't supposed to fall asleep while being treated...) the only memorable point being that on each of those 23 occasions I repeated my name and address, and up to the present have received no communication from any of the radiographers who noted the address so carefully every day. I'm most hurt by that.

My first chemotherapy session deserves to be dwelt on, briefly. The

cancer centre at Glan Clwyd Hospital in North Wales is notable, besides having cheerful, positive, professional and dedicated staff, because it offers fine views of the local Welsh hills through vast picture windows. I was relaxed and taking in the view while the chemotherapy liquid flowed into me when the woman next to me decided to get up and have a wander. She overlooked the inconvenience of a drip running into her own arm, which suddenly detached itself, spreading fluid in a puddle on the floor. The staff flew into a serious panic, a dozen or more of them appearing from I know not where. They flapped and jabbered and finally toggled up one of their number in a full nuclear emergency suit so that she could clear up the mess on the floor in safety. Thanks for arranging the floor show, I thought, but what on Earth is in the stuff you're pumping into my arm if it's so dangerous?

After a second chemotherapy session, dull by comparison with the first, my blood failed to pass its regular test, so the final two were cancelled. It made no difference: the oesophageal growth disappeared anyway.

Once a scan had proved that I met the surgeon who intended to operate on me. His ambition was to remove the oesophagus completely then relocate my stomach into my chest. This was to be a six hour operation involving collapsing a lung and breaking a couple of ribs. Now hold on a minute, I told myself, you're over seventy years old with high blood pressure, and you might have been pretty fit years ago but you're deluding yourself if you think you are now. Think about this carefully.

So I did.

An image appeared in the depths of my mind: that of an inert, unbreathing body on an operating table while the post-mortem me floated skyward powered by a pair of gossamer wings growing out of my back. As there seemed to be no future in allowing that to happen, and anyway I'd had a post-treatment scan that showed no cancer at all, I said 'thanks but no thanks' to the surgeon. His rather disappointed response was that it represented a 'sub-optimal outcome', although that might have been because I'd previously told him that, as I've got a play being staged in November, if I didn't survive the operation I'd come back and haunt him.

There was one little thing that I'd forgotten: I also had a spot on my left lung which needed to be tackled. This was to be done by what I understand to be a sub-branch of radiotherapy referred to by those who know as SABRE - no, I don't know what it means, but apparently it's very aggressive.

I had just five sessions, all in Liverpool at Clatterbridge Hospital. That hospital is newish, shiny and architecturally interesting; the 'hospital transport' I used, rather than driving myself and having to find somewhere to park in the city centre, was, on the other hand, best forgotten.

After those five sessions I discovered something that I had avoided after the first batch: side effects. Before treatment started I'd read through the list of possible side effects - it ended with 'death' - and decided I didn't want any. I'd recklessly assumed I wouldn't get any after the SABRE course too, unfortunately wrongly. I

suffered a cough, which is common enough, and an 'inflamed rib', where the radiotherapy has affected the bone adversely. It's painful, but manageable, so isn't anything to get excited about when others have suffered from the most horrific side effects.

In summary, it's all been a nuisance, and has wasted far too much time, but hasn't stopped me doing anything at all even if my theatre finance work has proceeded rather slower than would have been ideal. The medical profession still has its claws in me and shows no sign of letting go, which I suppose I should welcome as a responsible course to adopt, just in case the blasted parasite decides to come back.

Words like 'frightening' or 'life-threatening' have never formed any part of my 'cancer vocabulary'; I really don't think I could go much further than 'inconvenient'.



# Memories of Michael Tillett

By Brian White

I took over as the co-editor of the OMS newsletter in the Autumn of 2011. We numbered that edition 6, in order to follow on from the immediately preceding edition. However, I have a run of editions dating from 1969, so I think that renumbering must have started in 2009, but this is not clear to me. The last edition which I co-edited was number 44, in the summer of 2024, so that was my 39th attempt at the task.

The other day, whilst browsing through the editions from 2010, just before my takeover, I found the report of the death of Michael Tillett, a fine musician and musical editor, whom I knew well. He was also the subject of an obituary in The Guardian.

Michael left MGS in 1940, and is commemorated on an honours board in the Big Hall. An interesting claim to fame is that he always said that he was taught music at MGS by the novelist William Golding. After a distinguished teaching career, he became amanuensis to the famous composer and near namesake, Michael Tippett. The story is told about how they sent musical scores to each other by simply altering the two crucial letters in their names on the envelopes.

Michael had a quick brain, great wit, and a wonderful sense of humour, but I witnessed one occasion when this caught him out. In 1994, I was due to appear in a concert with Michael; he was to

accompany a clarinettist, and I was to be accompanied by a young woman pianist. Michael asked me to visit his house with my accompanist, supposedly for them to get acquainted, but soon after we arrived, it became clear that this was an 'audition', so that Michael could check that her playing was up to scratch.

After some general chat, Michael said, 'Do you like playing duets, my dear?' When my accompanist said that she did, he ushered her towards a grand piano, and with a flourish, produced a score which just happened to be lying on a nearby table. It turned out to be an extremely difficult duet by Brahms, as I discovered when I acted as the page turner.

With a wicked glint in his eye, he asked, 'Have you ever played this?' The young woman said that she hadn't, and that she had never even heard the piece. 'Well, let's see what we can do with it, shall we?' Michael asked, and sitting at another piano, he launched into his part with great energy and enthusiasm. I hadn't told him that my accompanist could sight read and play almost anything flawlessly, without even glancing through a score in advance, and when the rendition finished, he was visibly shaken.

'Oh?' he said. 'Oh! Splendid! Well done, my dear; that was wonderful!' So, she passed the 'Tillett test', and the concert went ahead as planned.

Michael's piano duet partner for a number of years was Richard Kemp, with whom I have subsequently performed numerous concerts. During a chance conversation, I discovered that Richard is the nephew of Ralph 'Killer' Kemp, who was my form master for one year at MGS. Killer was a great raconteur, and we boys held on to every word of the stories that he told us about his life; whether they were all true, I can't say, but he certainly kept us entertained.

# 'Something for nothing' donations to our charity

If you buy goods or services online, many retailers will make donations to charity. This costs the buyer nothing, while the charity gets income. The Society and its registered charity, the Old Maidstonian Trust, has for some time participated in 'Easyfundraising', a scheme which is used by many retailers. Please help us by using this scheme. Funds donated go to support the school and its current and immediate past pupils, including through the Society's Awards. (For details, see the Society's website, <http://www.oldmaidstonians.org.uk>.)

'Easyfundraising' is the UK's largest charity shopping fundraising site. About 7,000 retailers participate and to date they have donated over £31 million. In our first year in the scheme, with only six OMs signed up, we raised over £120. Note that as well as making donations on your normal purchases, 'Easyfundraising' circulates special offers on goods, and opportunities for enhanced donations.

To join 'Easyfundraising' is (unsurprisingly) easy. Visit <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>, and click on 'Find a cause'. Type 'Old Maidstonian Society' into the dialog box. We should come up as the first choice: click 'Support this cause' for us. Then fill in the form to create an account. It's very simple to complete. Make sure that you can remember your password! To help you to remember to use the scheme whenever you buy from participating retailers, you can download Easyfundraising's 'Donation Reminder'.

(The Amazon Smile scheme has been discontinued.)

For additional information, contact the Society's webmaster, Malcolm MacCallum, at [webmaster@oldmaidstonians.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@oldmaidstonians.org.uk) or visit the Society's website's Fundraising page.



Open Evening, October 2024

# Obituaries

The society offers its condolences to the families and friends of all of those Old Maidstonians who have died recently.

## Brian Fridd

By Graham Walker, OMS Co-Archivist

Brian Fridd. 10th June 1934 - 26th July 2024.

Brian was born on the 10th June 1934 in Tovil. He went to school in Maidstone and having passed his 11 plus he went on to attend Maidstone Boys Grammar School staying on to gain A levels in Maths and Pure Maths. During his time at the Grammar school Brian played rugby and cricket for the school. He continued to play both sports during his National Service in Egypt for the RAF. This stood him in good stead as he went on to represent Kent and the Southern Counties at rugby.

He worked at Reeds Paper Mill initially in accounts and then moving to the newly formed computing department working in Aylesford as a programmer. He continued to work within computing at a number of other businesses finally retiring from Quest in 1999 which allowed him to tell anyone who asked he had never worked this century!

He married Mary Jenner on the 16th May 1959 - the only weekend in the year he reportedly didn't have a rugby or cricket match. They had 3 children and 7 grandchildren and celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary earlier this year.

Brian had a very active retirement, umpiring club cricket, doing the accounts for Penenden Heath Social club and subsequently Hamlet Wood Scout campsite. He was also a long term member of the maintenance crew at the wood and received a Chief Scout award for his input.

Brian and Mary were members of the Bearsted Active Retirement Association, playing short mat bowls and enjoying recent holidays with them.

Brian passed away at home and will be greatly missed by his wife, family and friends.



Brian Fridd 1934-2024  
Brian Fridd entered MGS in September 1945 joining Form IIIa and representing College House.

### Key Maidstonian Magazine References

The 1947 Maidstonian cricket section shows he is representing the U14 XI: *"it has been a team of all-rounders: Elswood, Fridd, Lambert, Leigh all promise well with both bat & ball"*.

In the Junior Inter-House cricket matches he took 8 wickets for 19 runs to help College House win by 2 wickets and an even more impressive 7 wickets for 6 runs in a 15 run victory over West Borough House. College House won all 3 games to win the competition.

He also played for the Schools U14 Rugby Team: *"The team has played with spirit, and the forwards in particular have been very prominent with Beach, Burnes, Gilbert, Fridd and Swaffer always to the fore in attack"*.

In the next Maidstonian he was still representing the U14 Cricket XI: *"B. Fridd bowled throughout with praiseworthy accuracy, never seeming to tire and taking an average of nearly 4 wickets a match with his left-arm leg-breaks"*. He also represented the Colts XI Cricket Team.

In the Intermediate Inter-House cricket matches he took 5 wickets for 11 runs in an 8 wicket win against Corpus Christi. He also represented the Colts XV at rugby, and in the swimming sports he came 3rd in the Individual Diving competition.

The 1949 Maidstonian acknowledges his award of Colts XI Colours with the Colts cricket report stating *"Fridd has been the most consistent and*

*successful of the spin bowlers with his left-arm deliveries ... Fridd has developed into a very sound opening batting partner for Humphrey and filled a position which was a real weakness at the start of the season"*. He took 5 wickets for 9 runs against Judd and 7 for 20 in a victory against Kings Rochester.

He represented the 2nd XV and made his debut for the 1st XV on 12.11.1949 in an 8-3 victory against Colfes.

He was awarded his Life-Saving Bronze Medallion.

The 1950 Maidstonian highlights him as one of 6 students awarded 2nd XV Colours. The rugby 1st XV states *"Fridd: His unusually long legs have been the cause of his continual changes of position in the scrum. As a wing-forward, he must learn to go for the opposing fly-half. Must rid himself of the habit of slowing down when about to be tackled. Falling, tackling and kicking are very sound"*. He played every game for the 1st XV in a successful season, winning 9 out of their 10 matches. In a 11-6 victory against Skinners the report states *"Fridd was able to score for the School in the opening minutes of the game"*.

He passed his General Schools Certificate in Midsummer 1950 and qualified for London Matriculation.

The 1951 Maidstonian highlights him as one of the 3 players being awarded 1st XV Colours, and one of the 7 attaining 2nd XI Cricket Colours.

The 1st XI Cricket report states *"B. Fridd - coming into real form rather late in the season, his slow left-arm bowling reached its peak against the Masters and Sevenoaks. Batting shows signs of improvement; he has a sound defence when called upon. Fielding inclined to be weak and lazy"*.

He took 3 wickets for 32 in an exciting tied match against Sevenoaks and against Bromley *"an eight wicket partnership of 30 minutes duration between Fridd + Farmer saved the day."*

*Fridd's defensive batting amazed even himself, although his methods were at times unorthodox"*.

B. Fridd, M.J. Salter and P.G. Griggs were congratulated on being chosen to represent Kent in a Public Schools rugby match against Middlesex.

He was congratulated on becoming a new School Praefect.

The 1st XV Rugby report states *"Individuals, notably Fridd + Salter, added to their reputations and gained in skill ... Fridd improves in every match: his line-out work is first-class, and he is always at hand with his crash tackle to break up opponents' attacking movements. He has a football brain and knows where to go and to get there with the minimum of effort"*.

He scored in a 6-6 draw against Aylesford Paper Mills 1st XV, and again in a 14-0 victory against Colfes. The rugby report states *"B. Fridd: As a wing-forward he has rendered valuable service to the side. He is an opportunist ubiquitous in attack, and by breaking quickly from both tight and loose scrums, has been very effective in defence"*.

The 1952 Maidstonian shows him as one of 4 players awarded his 1st XI Cricket Colours. *"Fridd has at last fulfilled his early promise as a bowler. He has developed length without sacrificing spin, and even on the most unresponsive wickets can now keep batsmen tied down"*.

In an 8 wicket victory against Gillingham Grammar *"Evensden + Fridd bowled superbly"*, and against the Police 'A' Division *"Fridd should be congratulated for his 3 fine catches, which made it possible for the Police to be skittled out for 63"*. He took 3 wickets for 33 in a convincing victory against the Old Maidstonians and 4 for 25 in a victory against Borden GS. Overall, he came 4th in the bowling averages taking 23 wickets at an average of 11.26.

The RAF Section Report states *"Three members of the section: B. Fridd, D.L.*

*Taylor and P. Griggs represented England vs Wales in the International ATC Rugby Match"*.

He left the school in the Summer of 1952 achieving A-Level passes in Pure Mathematics, Applied Mathematics and Physics.

His Valete reads: *"B.Fridd (Coll. H): School Praefect '51-'52; Cpl RAF Section, CCF; Cert 'A' Part I '49; Proficiency '50; 1st XV '50-'52; England + Kent ATC XV's; London + Home Counties XV; South of Thames XV; 1st XI '51-'52; Bronze Medallion for Life Saving; Scout '47-'50; P.L. '49-'50; General Schools and Matric '50; GCE A-Level (3) '52"*.

On 29 September 1952 he played for the Recent Old Maidstonians in a rugby match against the School 1st XV; he scored the penalty (3 points) in a 14-3 defeat.

He played in the School vs OM rugby match on 18th December 1954 helping the OMs to a 9-3 victory and also represented the OMs vs the 1st XI cricket team, taking 2-31 in a drawn match.

The 1956 magazine's Old Maidstonian notes states *"C.G.L. Hitchcock (1950) has been playing regularly for Kent in the County Rugby Championships. In addition B. Fridd, B. Lovelidge and J.V. Harrison took part in the County Trials early in the season"*.

The 1959 magazine shows him representing the OMs against the 1st XI cricket team; he took 3-31 + 2 catches in a comfortable 55 run victory. 2 years later he took 6-30 in an even more convincing victory of 126 runs. In 1963 he was at it again, taking 4-26, but in a losing cause by 30 runs.

This was the final reference found.

# Obituaries continued

The society offers its condolences to the families and friends of all of those Old Maidstonians who have died recently.

## David Thomas Goodwin

By Graham Walker, OMS Co-Archivist



David Thomas Goodwin 1937-2024  
Maidstone Grammar School 1948-1956

The family of David Goodwin wrote to us to confirm his passing recently. A funeral was held on Thursday 12th September 2024.

David asked for anyone who wants to donate to give to Alzheimer's Society: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/donate>

David Thomas Goodwin joined MGS in September 1948, being in form IIIa and representing West Borough House. He gained a reputation as a top academic as the following indicates.

### Key Maidstonian Magazine References

The 1950 Maidstonian states he won the IVI Form Prize which he would have received from the Guest of Honour Mr. R. Birley, Headmaster of Eton College.

The following year he was awarded the UVI Form Prize, on this occasion receiving it from Mr. J.F. Wolfenden, Vice-Chancellor of Reading University. He also performed in the Winter Music Concert playing the Trio Sonata in G by Pergolesi. "Miss White played the cello, D. Goodwin (violin) and R.M Wickenden (piano); the ensemble gave a most accomplished performance".

The 1953 Maidstonian states he was awarded the R1 Form Prize, this time shaking the hand of the Guest of Honour, Sir John Slessor, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, GCB, DSO, MC, Chief of Air Staff.

The 1954 Maidstonian sees him maintaining his tradition of a Form Prize, this time for VI, receiving it from Sir Charles Morris MA, LLD, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds. Also, on June 10th 1954 he was made a Prefect.

The report of the School Orchestra's Concert 21.5.1954 states "The second item, the Stanley Concerto Grosso, gave us

the opportunity of hearing solo violinists: competent playing from Wakefield and very strong playing from Goodwin".

The 1955-56 Maidstonians congratulated him on being appointed one of the two Deputy School Captains and also being awarded a State Scholarship. In December 1955 he achieved an Open Exhibition at Pembroke College, Cambridge. His achievement is commemorated on the boards in the Big Hall.

**DAVID T. GOODWIN**  
State Scholar and Open Exhibitioner,  
Pembroke College, Cambridge, 1955

The Combined Cadet Force, Army Section Report notes "CSM D.T. Goodwin has had to miss many parades through illness and the demands of exams". It goes on to state "We are about to lose CSM Goodwin. We thank him for his services to the CCF, and particularly for his efficiency as CSM of the Basic Section, and we wish him every success in his chosen career in the Army".

At the Senior Chamber Music Societies 21st Concert "Mr. Cutforth, in a brief speech of welcome, expressed his gratitude to those who were taking part for the last time as members of the School Chamber Music Society. In thanking John O'Kill, David Goodwin and Robert Wood for all that they had done, he recalled the various ways in which they had given service to the music of the School – as leader of rehearsals, soloist, and performer".

"The evening was now drawing to its close and it was fitting that an attempt



should be made by two of our senior boys to present a movement from an admittedly difficult sonata. To say that David Goodwin and John O'Kill made a valiant effort at the first movement of the Cesar Franck Sonata for violin and piano is perhaps not praise enough. The work demands maturity and can only be given a completely satisfying performance by those who are themselves mature. What we had was quite beautiful violin tone, a sympathetic contribution from the piano, and from both a performance of absolute sincerity".

His Valet reads: "Goodwin D.T. (WBH). Deputy School Captain '55-'56; School Praefect '54-'56; CSM Army CCF; Cert 'A' Part I '53; Signals Classification '54; 1st Orchestra; Choral Society; GCE 'O' (5) '53; GCE 'A' (3) '55; State Scholarship '55; Open Exhibition, Pembroke College, Cambridge '55".

The Old Maidstonian Notes Section of the 1958 magazine states: "R.G.E. Wood (1956) is serving with the Royal Signals in Germany. He has written to us giving valuable information about some of his contemporaries. The following is a quotation from his letter: 'Quite a few of us are in Germany: Tom Goodwin is with 19 Army Group Signal Regiment at Munchen-Gladbach (HQ Northern Army Group) and appears to have built up quite a reputation on fiddling". The magazine later states: "D.T. Goodwin (1956) has been serving in Germany and is now in Cambridge".

The Cambridge letter in the 1959 magazine cites "Tom Goodwin, our new Secretary (of the OM Cantab Club – 14 members) appears to combine Maths and Music with equal facility and pleasure, yet still finds time to rouse the Society here to new life". [interesting to note that John O'Kill was also at Cambridge, St Johns College and the OM Cantab Society's

President].

The 1960 Maidstonian Library Report acknowledges many gifts of books and states "Mr D.T. Goodwin's gift of a large number of volumes, mostly fiction, has been of very great use".

The 1961 magazine highlights that D.T. Goodwin is now President of the OM Cambridge Society and the report states "Tom Goodwin is busy computing but to what end is not quite clear".

The 1966 Maidstonian reports that "D.T. Goodwin (1948-56) is working with English Electric at Stoke-on-Trent. He is married and has a young son".

This was the final Maidstonian reference found.

# Obituaries continued

The society offers its condolences to the families and friends of all of those Old Maidstonians who have died recently.

## Ken C Dulson



Ken C Dulson 1941-47

One of our oldest OMs passed away on July 1st, Ken Dulson, after a short illness. He was very pleased to have been able to attend so many of the OMS dinners, including the recent '475' Supper. Details of his funeral are provided by his daughter below:

*"Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the wonderful messages in response to our very sad news. They have been so comforting and attesting to the regard in which Dad was held."*

Ken joined Form IIIc (College House) in September 1941.

In 1943 he is listed as donating 21 copies of Boys Own Papers to the School Library.

He joined the Junior Training Corps and in 1945 he was one of 33 students who passed the Cert A (Individual) examination.

The 1946 Maidstonian included a report on the Young Farmers' Club: *"During the Easter holidays seven of our number – Hayes, Payne, Saunders, Bray, Dulson, Tucker and Leggett – took a short course in tractor driving at Thurnham"*.

He also was awarded his Royal Life-Saving Society Bronze Medallion and Intermediate Certificate.

In his final year he achieved his General Schools Certificate. His Valet reads "K.C. Dulson (Coll. H): L/Cpl JTC; Cert 'A' '46; RLSS Bronze Medallion '46; Intermediate Certificate '46; General Schools, June '47".

He is among the list of OMs who visited the School in 1949 "K Dulson (1947) who is in the Life Guards".

# Mike Day (student 1969 - 1976)

By Peter Inwood

It is with great sadness that I let you know of the death of my good friend Mike Day. Mike collapsed and died very suddenly on 22nd April 2017 at his home near Bath.

Some of you will remember that he played for the 1st XI cricket team during his time at MGS - one of that unusual breed who bowl left handed but bat right handed. Following his time at the school, he spent a year working in the Maidstone area before university, as he was a year younger than his peers, a testament to his quick and clever brain. He gained his degree from Bath before embarking on various careers including teaching, software and sales and marketing. Mike also set up and ran his own successful company specialising in education software. We remained good friends after school and I will be forever grateful for the help, support and advice he gave me at a very low point in my life.

He leaves a wife (whom he met while at Bath) and two fine boys.

## Graham Bennett-Kingston,

Graham Bennett-Kingston, (who some may remember him by his nickname of Plod) who lived in Bearstead, a member of The Old Maidstonian Society, and therefore an ex-pupil of Maidstone Grammar School, passed peacefully away on the 23rd August 2024 at the age of 73. A pupil between 1962 -1967ish.



# Join the School's Governing Body

The Old Maidstonian Society is seeking to recruit Old Maidstonians to join the school's governing body. This is an excellent opportunity to give back to the school community, share your skills and experience, and help shape the future of the school.

If you are interested in contributing as a governor, please do not hesitate to contact John Clayton via [oms@oldmaidstonians.org.uk](mailto:oms@oldmaidstonians.org.uk)

# Help needed with the Society's website and IT

At present I am sole webmaster. This reliance on my availability means the Society has a single point of failure, and sometimes leads to delays in dealing with problems. I hope that an OM with appropriate IT background would be willing to be co-webmaster. Even better if it were somebody with a deeper knowledge of networking than I have.

We also have a specific problem yet to fully materialise. Our website uses the Wordpress content management system. The software supporting this in particular uses the scripting language PHP. Our present site was set up more than a decade ago and is not compatible with the latest PHP version, 8.1. Fortunately our hosting service has not yet started to use that version, but we need to update in readiness. An OM with experience with PHP and Wordpress willing to help make our site compatible with PHP 8 would be very welcome! Alternatively, a contact with a professional able to do that would be useful.

Malcolm MacCallum as [webmaster@oldmaidstonians.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@oldmaidstonians.org.uk)



