

OLD MAIDSTONIAN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER - JULY 1983

HON SECRETARY:

Bernard Mee
51 Spot Lane
Bearsted
MAIDSTONE Kent

Tel: (0622) 30716

PRESIDENT:

Bryan Welcome
2, Greystones Road
Bearsted
MAIDSTONE Kent

HON TREASURER:

Roger Brown
7 Greenfields
Willington Street
MAIDSTONE Kent

Tel: (0622) 57508

JOHN WINCH - M. G. S. 1946 to 1954

It is with sadness in my Presidential year that I report the death of a contemporary of mine, John Winch. He drowned on Thursday 12th May whilst working on his boat in the Swale off the Isle of Sheppey.

Many of us will remember John as a schoolboy who was a good all-rounder. He played both cricket and rugby for the school and represented Kent in the mile. He was captain of his House, a scout and a warrant officer in the R. A. F. section of the Combined Cadet Force.

Upon leaving the school he had to make the choice between a career in athletics or medicine and he chose to be a doctor. After qualifying he worked on research into transplant surgery and eventually came back to work in his home town at the West Kent General Hospital. He had been a consultant to Maidstone Health District since 1974 and was a former chairman of the Consultants Council.

John lived at Biddenden with his wife, Elizabeth, and his four children. With a lot of hard work they had restored their Tudor house where in 1981, when he was President of the Society, they entertained members to a wonderful evening of food and music.

John was, of course, very involved in the new Maidstone Hospital and was, I am sure, looking forward to its' opening later this year. A fund has been launched in John's memory to buy equipment for the new building. If any Old Maidstonian would like to make a donation, please send it to either myself or to the treasurer.

Bryan Welcome - President 1983

SCHOOL NEWS (by David Wilson - Deputy Headmaster)

The editor has asked me for a brief article on how the day-to-day running of the school differs from that familiar to most G. M.'s. Working in the school, of course, changes that are made over the years become second nature and no longer seem worthy of comment. However, some things that come to mind are:-

(i) Pattern of the school day:

A few years ago it became increasingly apparent that the amount of choice given to the various years in the school made the 5 morning/3 afternoon lesson split unworkable. The modern fashion is for more choice (a good thing in my opinion) and with intake at 13, rather than 11, a greater proportion of classes are specialising. However, the timetable blocks created to deal with this must include double periods (to allow science practicals), and more doubles dictate even numbers of lessons in any session. The school more or less unanimously decided that a long morning of six lessons, with two breaks of 20 and 10 minutes, and a short afternoon was better than a four/four split. This system is now worked. (Periods last 35 minutes each - ed.)
Because of the requirements of the bus service we cannot start earlier

than 9 o'clock and because of the canteen hours, not finish later than 1 o'clock. Assembly, therefore, has moved to the beginning of the afternoon - this being the least popular part of the scheme.

(ii) Canteen

This is now self-service with a cafeteria selection of items. Even bags of chips can be bought to eat by themselves. This has not made the canteen any more popular and of the 980 boys in the school only 180 have lunch here. Many of the sixth form exercise their privilege of going down into the town. The rest bring their own packed lunch.

(iii) Lady Teachers

I am not sure how frequent these were many years ago, but the presence of half a dozen is now well established and much appreciated. At the present time we have Mme Sanfourche (French); Dr Parkinson (Physics); Mrs Townend (History); Mrs Mead (Physics); Mrs Wilding (French) plus two language assistants. Dr Parkinson has only been on part time whilst Mrs Townend is on maternity leave. Mrs Wilding will be leaving us shortly but will be replaced by Miss Garrett who will teach maths. Mrs Elphick who also taught maths left at Easter. This clearly illustrates one problem associated with the woman - they do more with their husbands or take.....maternity leave. Although we do not begrudge them this, the statutory requirements for this 'vacation' are not designed to fit the rhythm of the school. For instance, it would be very convenient to grant leave September to July and employ a replacement for a full year: but the statutory period is only eight months and often awkward expedients have to be adopted. So far M. G. S. has been lucky in finding good replacements for the appropriate times.

(iv) Bells

The electric bell system is no more: we now have synthetic pips intruding over the tannoy system - itself an intruding menace - in every classroom. The tannoy system is a challenge to the self discipline of the staff - it is so easy to ask the Head (or myself) to make an announcement instead of chasing up individual boys. The more teachers that do this the more annoying it becomes for everybody.

FIVES TROPHY

The school has very kindly been presented with a long missing trophy inscribed "Maidstone Grammar School - Fives Trophy - 1906". It was found and bought at Ashford Market. Can anybody throw some light on its' history? It is about six inches high, hallmarked silver, traditional egg-cup shaped but there are no names of the winners on it.

RUGBY MATCH - SCHOOL (6) 25 OLD MAIDSTONIANS (7) 24

The Old Boys side comprised of many leavers from recent years. With the wind behind them in the first half, the Old Boy's problem of not having played together was evident. However, they gained a 7-6 interval lead. A good move by the school backs brought them a try early in the second half. This was converted from the touchline and quickly followed up by a penalty goal.

An error by the school fullback allowed their guests back into the game with a try. By converting the kick and scoring again five minutes later the Old Boys went ahead again, 17-15. The game became very open with many good movements by both sides. Another try reestablished the school's lead, but this was quickly wiped out by a penalty goal - 20 to 19. With six minutes remaining a good forward move ended with the winger scoring a try near the corner flag. This was converted and the school lead 25-20. In the dying moments the Old

Boys produced another try but the conversion, from near the touchline, was wide.

An excellent game to round off the school's 1982/83 rugby programme.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 28th JANUARY, 1983 (report by the secretary)

In the January newsletter notice was given of the Society's Annual General Meeting at which an amendment to the rules was to be discussed.

Prior to this, last summer's newsletter had a request from the committee for comments on the same matter. It was disappointing to note that only one member out of approximately 400 considered it important enough to write - he also thought that a postal vote of the membership would be more appropriate.

The committee considered that the cost of doing this in both time and money could not be justified. It was thought that most, if not all, O. M.s could afford the 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ p cost of a second class stamp in order to express their views. However, that obviously was not the case.

Unfortunately, the A. G. M. also produced its usual poor turnout. This year nine members were present of which three were officers of the Society and three were on the committee. Thus the remaining three represented the views of 400.

At the Annual Supper, Martin Passmore, the outgoing President told the members present how disappointed he was that such decisions were being left to a small number of members. In fact the voting had ended 4 in favour and 4 against the motion to accept women members to the Society. The President had cast his deciding vote against the proposal saying that he hoped the matter was not finished and would be discussed again.

The committee would, therefore, welcome further comments on the matter. In any event we would welcome more Old Boys coming to the Annual Meeting which is always on the fourth Friday of January - rules!

LETTER CONCERNING THE PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION

"In September 1980, six girls from the Maidstone Grammar School for Girls joined M. G. S. in order to study Maths and Further Maths at 'A' level, while remaining at M. G. G. S. to study Physics. In fact, studying Maths, Further Maths and their General Studies subjects took up about three-quarters of their week, leaving only about one quarter spent at M. G. G. S. studying Physics.

"At the present time there is one girl who joined the school in September who is studying all three of her 'A' levels, as well as all her General Study subjects, at M. G. S. She returns to the other school on Wednesday afternoons in order to perpetuate the myth that she actually attends M. G. G. S.

"Some of these girls have expressed a wish to join the Society since they have gained a lot from the school and, in my opinion, contributed to school life. They now wish to keep some contact with the school in the same way that we all do.

"The present constitution admits "all boys..." who have attended. I propose an amendment to read "all pupils...".

"Further to this, the girls concerned were not listed on the role of M. G. S. although they have spent more time here than at the Girl's Grammar School during their sixth form careers. Therefore, there is the question should these pupils who were not on the school's roll, be admitted to the Society. I propose that they should.

"I invite any member to express his views on this matter in the January newsletter for which all items should be sent to the Secretary by the 15th November. There will be a postal ballot on the motion and voting slips will be included in the next newsletter.

"I thank you for your interest and hope that you will support my proposal."

Julian Burton (1980)

OLD MAIDSTONIAN SOCIETY AWARDS

Members may not be aware that the Society has an Award Account and the committee administers it on behalf of the membership. There are three awards:

(i) OLD BOYS AWARD

The rules allow that an award may be made to a present or former scholar of the school to enable him to take up a place or continue at a recognised institution of higher education. The tenure of the award is for one year and takes effect from the beginning of the academic year. The value of the award is £25 per annum but may be augmented by the income from the investment of the G. B. Phillips Bequest.

(ii) G. B. PHILLIPS BEQUEST 1983

Used to provide additional funds for the Old Boys Award.

(iii) T. P. GUTTERIDGE GIFT 1974

The income from this investment shall be awarded to assist sixth form science students to pursue courses or activities designed to broaden their cultural horizons. In the past few years awards have been made to boys for expeditions to Canada, Greenland, for studies of archiology in Greece, a study tour of Australia.

If any member of the Society knows of a present or former scholar of the school who might qualify for and benefit from an award, please write to the Secretary who will be delighted to consider the application.

FORTHCOMING EVENT

The Old Maidstonians vs School cricket match will take place on Wednesday 20th July with play commencing at 2.30p.m. Any person interested in playing should contact Mr Ron McCormick at the school as soon as possible.

NEWS OF OLD MAIDSTONIANS

BRIAN BEAVES (1962) is serving with the R. A. F. as a training design consultant having returned from Nigeria where he was on loan to that country's Air Force.

MIKE BEAVES (1958) is the General Manager of Securicor in Lusaka, Zambia where he has lived since 1959.

PETER BEAVES (1965) lives in Einsworth and works for I. B. M. in Portsmouth.

ALAN BLAKE (former member of staff) is back teaching part time at the school. He is to receive the highest award in scouting for his 34 years' service as a Scout Leader. He will be presented with the Silver Wolf Award.

DAVID BROOKS (1961) joined the Royal Navy as an Artificer Apprentice after leaving the school and left the services in the rank of Lieutenant Commander in May after 21 years service.

CRISTOPHER CLINCH (1979) married Suzanne Davidson at St. Nicholas Church, Cramlington on April 9th. He is teaching music at Cramlington High School (Northumberland) two days a week.

Major JOHN HAMILTON CRANMER (1959) died suddenly at Wokingham on Friday 30th July, 1982.

- JOHN FRANCIS CHAPMAN (1976) was awarded his Ph. D. on the 15th December, 1982 from Wye College, University of London. He studied Chemical Growth Regulator on Oilseed Rape. John is now working for I. C. I. at Jealotts Hill, Bracknell, Berks.
- ROGER CRITTENDEN (1957) is Assistant Director of the National Film School at Beaconsfield and has recently published a definitive reference work on film editing. Post university he worked as a film editor at the B. B. C. and worked with notable film directors including Ken Russell.
- LIONEL CROSS (1935) is, regrettably, seriously ill in hospital at Sutton, Surrey.
- ROBERT EDWARDS (1980) was awarded a T. E. C. Higher Diploma in civil engineering and DOUGLAS BIRT (1978) a 2I B. A. (HONS) in economics, both from Kingston Polytechnic last year.
- ANDREW FERRY (1971) passed a P. G. C. E. course in 1978 having taught Liberal Studies briefly at the Medway & Maidstone College of Technology. In 1980 he worked at a "Fun Centre for Kids" in Woodstock, Virginia during the summer months.
- PETER GOW (1973) and his wife, Jane, announce the arrival of Elinor Margaret and send the following specifications:
 Born: 20th February, 1983 Time: 10.40a.m.
 Weight: 6lbs 14ozs Length: 19 inches
 Hair: Brown
- The Rev. MICHAEL WILCOCK was appointed vicar of St. Nicholas' Church, Durham on 21st December, 1982.
- TONY JEPSON (1970) has a daughter, born 1982.
- SIMON JONES (1970) lives in Essex and works in Insurance Brokerage.
- ANDREW LARMAN (1970) has recently moved from Salisbury and is a solicitor in Bristol's Shirehampton District.
- JONATHAN LEE (1976) is engaged to be married.
- C. ERIC LINGHAM (1922) formally of West Malling died on 29th June, 1982.
- FRED PEARCE (1970) was spotted being interviewed on "Nationwide" recently following publication of his book "Watershed" which apparently is a criticism of water authorities.
- RON PRIOR (1970) has recently set up in practice as a solicitor in Gravesend.
- ARTHUR RATCLIFFE (1928) is now retired in Maidstone after a career in Birmingham in an executive position with that city's Chamber of Trade.
- ERIC RATCLIFFE (1930) is retired from his career in Maidstone with the Building Society movement but occupies his time as a part-time Director of Maidstone's Chamber of Commerce.
- GUY RATCLIFFE (1961) is now a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He is currently serving in the Falkland Islands and was seen in the B. B. C.'s "Songs of Praise" from the Islands at Christmas. He is due back in the country later this month where he lives in Woolwich. He has also served in Nepal with the Gurkhas and featured in a "Woman's Hour" programme on the radio.
- RICHARD RATCLIFFE (1964) is now working for Tate and Lyle in Plaistow E16 heading up the Product Applications Department. His work involves commercialising new sweeteners and food ingredients to customers in the food industry.

MICHAEL REYNOLDS (1966) now has a second son and lives in Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Essex.

KIM SLATER (1968) is currently in charge of Market Development with Cadbury Schweppes (U.K.) Drinks Division.

MIKE STEVENS (1962) is serving with an R.A.F. Regiment

PETER WHISEHEAD (1970) is still at the British Embassy in Rangoon, Burma.

The Rev. CHARLES HUTCHINS (1956) is now Principle of the Church Army Training College, Blackheath.

Dr. CHRISTOPHER WOOD (1964) took up the post of Scientific Liason Officer at the National Vegetable Research Station at Wellesbourne, Warwick, at the start of the year. He and his wife, Christine, moved into the area from Scotland with their two children Jenny (6) and Graeme (4).

ANNUAL SUPPER 1984

Notice is hereby given that the above event will be held in the Main Hall of the school on Friday 6th April, 1984. Further details and slips for tickets will be issued with the newsletter in January.

GENERAL ELECTION 1983

Mr Gordon Carey who teaches politics at the school stood as the Labour candidate in the recent General Election for the Maidstone ward. He was not elected to the House of Commons.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

There is no subscription form enclosed with this newsletter. Those members who feel that they may be 'owing' should let the treasurer have their monies as soon as possible. Please use the form attached to the last edition or send it with a covering letter.

RECENT LEAVERS FUNCTION

The committee are organising the annual function for those boys who have recently left the school, or are doing so this summer. Unfortunately, the date and venue have not been fixed at the date of publication of this newsletter. Any member interest in coming should contact either the treasurer or secretary who will be pleased to give the relevant details.