



# Old Maidstonian Society

## Newsletter No.7 - Spring 2012

President:  
**David Leeke**

Chairman:  
**Richard Ratcliffe**

Secretary:  
**Brian White**

## New faces at MGS



**Mark  
Tomkins**

## New Headmaster and new OM President take up office



**David  
Leeke**

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An article in the *Kent Messenger* on 16<sup>th</sup> March explained that almost 50 Kent schools are struggling to recruit head teachers. This is part of a worrying national trend which is having a major impact on many schools, as strong leadership usually determines how well they will perform. However, on the same page was a feature about Maidstone Grammar School's new Headmaster, Mark Tomkins, who will take up his post in September.

Mark is currently Deputy Head Teacher at The Judd School in Tonbridge, having taught in two other Kent schools. He studied at the University of Birmingham, and is a mathematician with a personal interest in boats and rowing. The Chairman of Governors at MGS, Lindsey Evans, said, 'Mr Tomkins has a good mixture of experiences and abilities to lead Maidstone Grammar School in the next phase of its life. We look forward to working with him and the whole school community to develop our outstanding school.'

The current Headmaster, Dr Nick Argent, explained at the recent Annual Supper that his decision to resign was influenced partly by what he sees as Michael Gove's adverse impact on schools like MGS. He pointed out that something of a trend is developing, as he has been head-hunted to run a prestigious British school in India, whilst his predecessor, Neil Turrell, is now the Head Teacher of a top British school in Singapore. He feels that this indicates how highly-regarded British grammar schools are in other parts of the world, especially in Asia. Perhaps more members of the British political establishment will begin to open their eyes to this fact, and the announcement that a new 'satellite' grammar school will be opened in Sevenoaks is a very interesting development.

### ... And not quite such a new face ....

Our new President, David Leeke, grew up in Shrewsbury where he was educated at the local grammar school. After studying at the Royal College of Music he moved

to Kent and lived for eleven years in Folkestone, where he was Organist of the Parish Church and taught in two independent schools. In 1990 he moved to Maidstone to take up the post of Director of Music at Maidstone Grammar School. During his time at MGS he relished the opportunities to take musicians to play in many venues including, on a number of occasions in the Bournemouth Festival. A CD of the school's music was produced, and many of the musicians of those days have gone on to pursue successful careers in differing branches of the profession. One of the highlights of his time at MGS was a host of celebrations in 1999 to mark the school's 450th anniversary, which included hosting a dinner at which OM Philip Langridge was guest of honour, and directing the music at a celebratory service in Canterbury Cathedral. During his time at MGS David was also heavily involved in the wider Kent music scene, and was for ten years Music Adviser for the Diocese of Canterbury, which afforded him lots of opportunities to conduct major events (some of which were televised) in Canterbury Cathedral. He was also heavily involved in the musical provision for the 1998 Lambeth Conference, held in Canterbury.

David left MGS after just over ten years in post to pursue his first love, which is church music, and other freelance



David at Salisbury Cathedral

activities. In the years since he left the school he has travelled throughout the world as an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and has pursued several conducting opportunities both

in the UK and Europe. He has also returned to his native Shrewsbury where he is Director of Music and Liturgy at St Chad's Church. As there is no cathedral in the county of Shropshire many of the major civic and military services are held at St Chad's and music plays an important role in the life of the church. As well as hosting many concerts by local, national and international artistes, there is a weekly lunchtime concert in the church on almost every Friday of the year. David is responsible for the direction of the church's four choirs, is Artistic Director of the annual St Chad's Music Festival and Director of The Sam Baker Trust which supports music (especially musical education) in St Chad's and throughout the area. He is also conductor of one of the town's choral societies, The Shrewsbury Cantata Choir. St Chad's is a member of the Greater Churches Network, an organisation of around 30 churches throughout the country who have a cathedral-style

ministry within the general structures of a parish church. Unusually for a church music post, that at St Chad's is largely full-time and in his musical and liturgical capacity, David heads a team of five others.

David has written to us as follows: 'On Saturday 7th April I was delighted and privileged to play the organ for the wedding of James Baker, to whom I taught music at MGS in the 1990s. James now works in Dorchester as Director of Music at The Thomas Hardy School and lives with his new wife Rosie in Bournemouth where Rosie works as a town planner. Their wedding was in St John's Church Boldre near Lymington and the reception was held at Rosie's parents' house in Boldre. Although it was not the best day for any church musician to take on extra work (sandwiched as it was between Good Friday and Easter Day!), it was a really wonderful occasion and has produced some thoughts on just what an influence those of us who teach or have taught can have on those who learn. The best man was James's close friend from his MGS days, Sam Dwinell. Both these boys have gone on to have distinguished careers in the music profession; James read music at Kings College, London while Sam studied music at Oxford. They then shared a flat together for a year when James did a PGCE at the London Institute and Sam did post graduate studies on the bassoon at a London Conservatoire. Sam has subsequently undertaken doctoral studies and is now a research fellow at Cornell University in the US.

'Pupils of James's from his current school were heavily involved in the musical provision for the wedding as singers and brass players, and it was extremely gratifying to see the high standard of music achieved in a state comprehensive school led by an obviously much-loved and very able Director of Music. It would certainly have given anything we did in my time at MGS a run for its money! It was very encouraging to see and hear just what it is possible to achieve, given the right emphasis, regardless of circumstances.

'Comments made on that day have left me marvelling at the role of teachers. I wondered if I might recognise James's parents again, the last time I saw them being almost certainly at an MGS parents evening! James's father, himself a Cambridge graduate and a retired high-ranking police officer came over to me and after the usual pleasantries said quite matter-of-factly, "you're the man who changed my son's life". Could this be a wonderful compliment or could it be a parent who wished his son had not been affected by music and could have gone on to pursue a different occupation, perhaps more preferred by his father? This I will never know, but the comment is, I think, profound.

'Unsurprisingly, both the bridegroom and best man made references in their speeches to MGS, and both

alluded to life in the music department. It was both heartening and humbling in that both said that “they wouldn’t be doing what they were doing now if it hadn’t been for the inspiration of MGS music and David Leeke”. I don’t say this to blow my own trumpet in any way, but want to reflect on what makes MGS a great school. Those of you who know me and who were friends, colleagues or pupils during all my years at MGS will know that I never managed to live within the music department budget, rarely dealt with the ever-increasing amounts of administration piled on all members of staff by those bureaucrats in Whitehall, and often failed to stick to the syllabus (or the specification as I think we were supposed to call it) or cope with the straight-jacketing of the National Curriculum! But, I feel vindicated by a comment made many years ago by Philip Pettit. Surely there are many who would regard Dr Pettit as one of the great Headmasters of MGS, and in a staff meeting in the early days of the National Curriculum he said to those who were increasingly anxious about what they had to teach: “it doesn’t matter what you teach these boys... in twenty or thirty years’ time they will have forgotten it, but they will remember you.” These were profound words which were proved entirely true last Saturday and on countless other occasions too. My philosophy of the work that I did at MGS was based around drawing out of boys (and girls when they arrived) what they had to offer, rather than filling empty heads with potentially irrelevant knowledge! Respect must be imparted to be earned; I found the greatest rewards and pleasures from teaching were forthcoming by being a facilitator, and inspirer, an encourager. These are strengths that many of my friends and colleagues will identify with. I have always believed that it is so important to give those over whom you have charge, the space to be themselves; to build true and lasting relationships which make the words of Dr Pettit echo true.

‘In my current job at St Chad’s, Shrewsbury, I have a budget which is more than five times what I am told the current Director of Music at MGS receives; I still deal with all aspects of education specifically through choirs and practical music-making with both adults and children; I still manage to overdraw the budget, fail to complete the admin. (which, even in this job comes by the bucket-load) and still attempt to stretch them beyond their wildest dreams in what they think they can achieve. In my other role as an examiner I see adults and children throughout the world, and here too in those few minutes spent together it is so important to make a relationship and draw from them what they can offer in such a short space of time.

‘I say all this, not to apologise for my inadequacies or to blow my trumpet about my successes (if there have been any!), but, thanks to James and Sam and many others with whom I still have close contact, the spirit

and strengths of MGS are manifest for all to see. At this wedding, these two young men gave wonderful and erudite speeches which would not have been possible without what they received in their formative years from so many of the staff at MGS (about which we talked a lot) and this is a reason for rejoicing in the school at large and amongst the entire OM population. Long may it continue! *Sempiterna floreat!*’

Since he moved on from MGS, David has been delighted to retain close links with this great school, and is thrilled and excited to hold the role of OM President for 2012-2013. Several musically-flavoured events are planned, so watch this space!

## THE CHAIRMAN’S THOUGHTS



This year’s supper is now behind us and I think that most of us who were there felt it was one of the most memorable in recent years. For the third year running, the buffet format and slightly more international menu went down well, and numbers attending showed a small increase over 2011.

For any members who were at the school in the 1955 to 1960 period, to hear Nigel Dodd reminiscing about his time at the school was an enormous pleasure. He was my form master for two consecutive years in U4L and RL 1958 to 1960 and the impact of one’s mentor in those most formative of formative years cannot be underestimated. His memory and affection for his time at MGS were a joy to behold: to share a decent malt with him at bedtime would have exceeded the wildest imagination of an impressionable 14-year-old. I suggested to him that when we were told we would have him for a second year as form master there was some concern in the ranks. To which he replied ‘Well Claydon took me by surprise there too – and I wasn’t too joyful I can tell you!’

Looking back with affection (*remembering with joy even these things*) is the prime role of our Society. Assisting the school and its present cohort of boys is a close second. Our incoming President, David Leeke, made a plea at the end of the evening for donations to the Trust Fund so that we can be more effective in helping the upcoming generation, I wish David well in his year in the Presidency and echo his appeal for funds – you will find more information about how to do this painlessly elsewhere in this edition.

I thank John Clayton (incidentally our OM nominated Governor) for his efforts in making the supper run so smoothly and all the committee for the work they put in.

I draw attention to the delightful piece by the new President (above). As Chairman of Governors at the time, I can testify to the accuracy of his attitude (and that of Philip Pettit) to the National Curriculum and all that stuff. As a staff Governor, his contributions to meetings were always extremely valuable, and I look forward to working with him closely during the coming year.

## THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Anthony Hayward** handed over to **David Leeke** at the



Annual Supper. Anthony spent four years at university and three years teaching at secondary level in Dundee, returning to Kent in 1966. He did not join the OMS until attending a music department event comparatively recently, which was organised by David Leeke, and at which his school-

friend, **Philip Langridge** (1954-1958) was guest of honour. He acted as Secretary and then took up the post of President one year early due to the death of **Tony Butler** (1956-1963). Anthony reports as follows:-

'My intention was to focus on those extra-curricular activities that I had attended whilst at school, to see if the OMs could be of any assistance. The junior Christian Union is taken by outside youth workers, while the senior is run by the pupils themselves, in each case there being a staff member as mentor. In the autumn term I spoke on "What is a Christian?" and in the spring term I spoke on "The Christian Church today". Two OMs have also offered to speak, and *any others should make contact via the OM Secretary.*

'The CCF is short of staff due to the withdrawal of funding. I visited the contingent in March with **David Haylor** (1994-1998), the son of Past-President **Colin Haylor** (1951-1958), one of my form-mates. David entered the Army, after University, through Sandhurst and is to join the contingent as a Civilian Instructor. Committee member **John Caley** (staff: 1955-1988, and ex-commanding officer of the CCF) is trying to update the board which records OMs who have joined the Services. This has not been maintained for various reasons, and John asks OMs who have joined the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, the Army or the Royal Air Force

since 1979, *to contact the Secretary with appropriate details.* If you are aware of others who have joined, please let us know.

'I attended a concert which was organised by the music department, and can report that musicians from the school performed at the Nine Lessons and Carols service in December, and that the previous Director of Music played the organ. David Leeke comments that there is currently a shortage of string players, but that this is being addressed. He says that the concert band is in fine form as is the choir and a number of chamber groups.'

Philip Langridge was a contemporary of Anthony's and they studied music together. Philip is considered by David Leeke as arguably the most famous and successful musician ever to have come from MGS, and two bursaries have been set up in his memory, in order to support young singers. A number of generous donations have been collected by the '51 intake lunch group and also at the OM Annual Supper; *others wishing to donate can send cheques to the Secretary.*



Anthony was proud to wear the OM chain of office at the Senior and Junior Speech Days, and the other functions that he attended. The chain has recently been re-furbished, cleaned and hung on a new ribbon by Cornell's who probably supplied it in the first place.

Anthony thanks the OM Committee, the Headmaster and his staff for their support during this year, and also **Nigel Dodd** (staff: 1955-1960), his guest speaker at the Annual Supper, (who steered him through 'O' Level music, together with **Giles Foster**, Philip Langridge and **Stuart Partis** ).

## THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Magee Gammon Ltd have taken over Geoffrey Marchant's accountancy company in Staplehurst. Geoffrey will continue as a consultant with them for a time, and then intends to retire. We have been very grateful to him for assessing the Society accounts for so many years. The 2010 and 2011 accounts were independently assessed by Magee Gammon and were presented to the AGM, preceding the Annual Supper on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

The General Reserve Account has been depleted by the refurbishment of the President's Chain, the purchase of a new stock of striped ties, the payment for the bar at the Annual Supper, and the costs of the development of

the OMS website. However, the account remains in healthy credit.

## Accounts Summary - Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 2011

### **General Revenue Account**

There was an increase in income received during the year, to £2,412. Again, the main source of income was receipts for the annual supper. After taking off the related costs, including the cost of the awards, this event made a profit of £147. Donations from members, including what had previously been classified as subscriptions totalled £505.

The sale of garments, after taking off the associated costs, and the sale of books, following any reimbursement to authors, totalled £51. Printing, postage and stationery costs, which relate mainly to the production and distribution of the newsletter, totalled £947. In previous years this expenditure has not been included in the accounts as members have not sought reimbursement.

A donation was made in the year to the Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance of £30 and a subscription paid for registration with the Information Commissioner of £35. As a result of the increased expenditure there was a deficit of income over expenditure for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 of £309.

Therefore, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, the balance on the General Reserve Fund fell to £3,184. This is made up of the balance of cash at the bank £2,301 and the stock of garments valued at cost of £882. The Presidential Chain is included at a nominal value of £1.

### **Awards Account**

Income received in the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, was interest on the NatWest Business Reserve Account totalling £6, plus a donation from of £30. The only expenditure related to the Annual Supper, including allocating the cost of the E F Clifford award directly to that fund. As a result there was a small deficit of income over expenditure for the year of £9.

A small surplus of £17 was allocated to the General Award Fund which increased to £2,731. The E F Clifford Bequest was reduced to £1,724, all other award funds remained unchanged. The total of all funds was £12,875 represented by the balance of cash held in the NatWest Reserve Account.

### **The Awards Scheme**

The Awards account has been depleted by the various donations and funding this year. The Awards Scheme Guidance Notes allows for £2,500 to be released each

year, and to date £2,000 has been allocated to worthy causes.

Keith Derrett, Head of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, requested a contribution towards the funding of decorating equipment for use during the 'Community Project' phase of a World Challenge trip to Outer Mongolia, where students will assist with the renovation of schools. The Society has now donated £250.

Sharon Kennedy, Deputy Head of the 6<sup>th</sup> form, has asked the Society to promote sponsorship opportunities for a rugby tour in the Lake Garda area. The students have undertaken fund-raising activities themselves, and sponsorship packages are available to individuals, organisations and businesses. Various packages are available and if any readers would like more details about these they can contact Ed Seymour ([edward.seymour@mgs-kent.org.uk](mailto:edward.seymour@mgs-kent.org.uk)) or Ollie Rogers ([oliver.rogers@mgs-kent.org.uk](mailto:oliver.rogers@mgs-kent.org.uk)). The last tour's playing shirt was sponsored by six companies, including Autocar Magazine and Fat Lip Mouthguards. The Society has donated £500.

A £500 donation was approved by the Committee for a Year 13 student to allow him to remain at the school and complete his studies. The donation is being managed by the school and weekly allowances are made to provide him with travel and subsistence.

Sam Coppard, the School Captain, has asked the Society to contribute some money towards a new 6<sup>th</sup> Form 'Outside Area' for the summer. Plans have been drawn up to purchase around 10 'pub-like' benches and some blankets, and the estimated cost of this project is around £2,000. Students have been undertaking fund-raising, and the Society has made a £200 donation to the project.

A request for support was made by a Year 13 Pupil, who wishes to play professional football. Currently, he plays for Ashford United, and travels to Fulham to train. The Head of PE stated that he had been 'An outstanding ambassador for the school, has an excellent attitude and is a model student'. The funding was for assistance with travel costs and a one-off payment of £300 has been approved by the Committee.

We would like to remind members that the ability to offer this sort of assistance to groups and individuals is funded entirely from donations and contributions from members. Your generosity, particularly in respect of those who suffer financial hardship or require assistance to further their careers, is vital.

### **Donations and Legacies**

In addition to £1,000, which was left in Colin Standen's will, several members have made donations to the

Society, in total over £300. We are very grateful for such donations, as they assist with the running costs of the Society. A float will be maintained in the General Reserve account to cover costs, and any excess at the end of each year will be transferred to the Awards Account and distributed proportionally between the various awards.

## THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY WRITES...

Following the publication of the Membership Register, the number of members wishing to contact one another has increased dramatically. This has resulted in a significant increase in the amount of work required to first contact one member to obtain permission to release their contact details, then pass the information on. In view of the fact that members invariably agree, a proposal was accepted by the committee that members' contact details could be released to *bona fide* OMs without approaching them for their permission. The committee members feel that this is an appropriate action, as the society exists partly to enable members to network with each other and maintain friendships.

**If a member does not wish his or her details to be released, he or she should contact the Society. In order to give members sufficient time to review and accept or reject this approach, it will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 and contact details will not be released until after that date.**

The membership continues to grow, currently exceeds 900 members, and is expected to pass the 1,000 mark this year. Our grateful thanks go to Keith Derrett, Head of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, Sarah Kennedy, Deputy Head of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, and not least to Sam Coppard, School Captain, who have assisted us in promoting both the Society and the Awards Scheme.

I attended a 6<sup>th</sup> Form Assembly in March, and it was a fairly daunting task, standing before 450 6<sup>th</sup> Formers, particularly as it came to me as I was standing on the stage that it was almost 50 years since I myself finished at the school. But on the afternoon of the Annual Supper, talking to the 6<sup>th</sup> Formers who were kindly assisting in arranging the tables, I asked one if he had joined the Society. The response: 'Of course I have, I am very proud to have been to MGS.' Enough said!



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## THE OLD MAIDSTONIAN WEBSITE

A new website has been created by **Benjamin White** (1994-1999), son of the Secretary, who is a professional graphic designer. This should be operational very soon, at [www.oldmaidstonians.org.uk](http://www.oldmaidstonians.org.uk), and members will be notified by e-mail when it is available. Benjamin lived and worked in Australia for some years, where he married Cludia in 2011. At present, they are back in the UK, and running their own graphic design company: [www.thewhitesite.co.uk](http://www.thewhitesite.co.uk).

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE NEWSLETTER

The *Newsletter* is published during Spring, Summer and Autumn. Those who have e-mail receive the *Newsletter* by this route, which reduces costs. Many members either do not have e-mail, or for other reasons prefer to receive a printed version of it. The Society is pleased to oblige; however, it costs about £5 to produce, print and post, and the Society would appreciate any donations towards those costs. However you like to receive it, your contributions are vital. Please keep them coming in and **note that the copy date for the next edition is 1st July, 2012.**

## ARCHIVE MATERIALS

The job which started out as **Dr Tony Webb** (staff: 1975-2000) taking charge of a large amount of boxed materials, and being co-opted to the committee as the OMS Archivist, has ended up, perhaps predictably and without much resistance on his part, with him becoming MGS Archivist as well. The original boxes amount to a dwindling proportion of the whole as the school turns out its attics and lumber-rooms. Tony writes as follows:-

'I am just beginning to get my head round the process of cataloguing and the task is truly overwhelming. Leaving aside the facts that I cannot always be cataloguing if I am attending to queries, and that I cannot give as much time as I would like to the job, there is work for years to come.

'Let us however deal with the positives of progress. We have a permanent archive base, which is now wired for electricity (yes, that had to be done), and I have an old computer, an old scanner and an old printer (all turned out from my home as surplus to requirements) and now sufficient organisation to handle simple queries – that is 90% of them – within the framework of a week. [He handled 22 between September and December last year.] A few queries, particularly if people require photographs, take longer, sometimes a lot longer. I am (normally) regularly at the archive on a Tuesday. I hope to make faster progress this term, with occasional support from my wife, a retired professional historian.

'As a consequence of becoming the school archivist, I have access to the school's computer system, with my own archive e-mail, access to the internet and photocopying account. The e-mail is now becoming well used by OMs, so clearly the publicity is getting through, and I would want to encourage people to use this for archive purposes rather than to clog up my e-mail at home. The part of the message which hasn't completely got through, however, concerns money, and I would be grateful for continued publicity on this subject. If people wish to buy from me, cheques etc. must be made out to 'Maidstone Grammar School' and not to the OMS – the archive account is managed through the school and what I have to sell, e.g. old copies of *The Maidstonian*, 450th anniversary ties, etc. – is school property and the proceeds go to finance the archives.

'Financial statement as at 10 January 2012:

Income	£160.61
Expenditure	£ 20.66
Credit balance	£139.95

'I stress again that this account is managed wholly through the Bursary, which means that I am relieved of

all responsibility, thank the Lord, for any action other than paying or drawing out.'

Tony has now embarked on the daunting task of merging the MGS and OMS archives, and he apologises for the fact that this will slow down his responses to queries in the short term.

The Society is always pleased to receive any MGS or OMS material. If you have any copies of *The Maidstonian*, *Journals*, or any other items that we can archive, we would appreciate it being sent for the attention of Dr Tony Webb at the MGS Barton Road address.

The Secretary has scanned the signed committee minutes from 1995 to 2011, and both the originals and a CD-ROM of the digital versions are now in the Archive. Also, he found copies of five editions of the MGS Natural History Society magazine (*The Wasp*) from 1959 to 1966, and those have also been scanned for the Archive. Much other historical documentation is now in digital format, and some of it will be available soon on the new website.

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## NEWS OF OLD MAIDSTONIANS

**Jonathan Benison** (1967-1971) left at the end of the fourth year to move to City of Norwich (Eaton) School, where he took more 'O' and 'A' Levels. His great friends in class were **Christopher Dawkins** and **Paul Crocker**, amongst others, and he would very much like to know if they or anyone else in his class (top stream, but he forgets the exact name) can be contacted. He went on to study at Sussex University (BA in English in 1978 after switching from Social Psychology) then an MA and PhD at Essex in Sociology of Literature. He taught for many years at the University of Padua, Italy, and is currently IB Diploma Co-ordinator at EAB International - The Victor Hugo School in Paris, teaching English. Jonathan has a Facebook page, and the Society can provide his other contact details.

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**Tony Bishop** (1955-1962) wrote as follows: 'I was delighted to see that Nigel Dodd is attending the Supper. He was my Form Master in my second year - I think his first year. What a character he was and very much loved. He gave me the only detention I acquired in school. He instructed Richard Tyrer, another miscreant, and me to scrub the rear wall in one of the "New Huts" that was our form room. Armed with buckets and mops Dick and I attempted to do this, only to discover that it had been whitewashed! Poor Charles Holyman was attempting to give a music lesson at the piano in the room on that Saturday morning - it might even have been with Philip Langridge! He looked horrified as Dick and I piled up desks to get to the height of the apex of the wall. No Health & Safety there then! We were sent home after half an hour of ruining the whitewash!'

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**Jerry Bloomfield** (1959-1962) thinks that he came to Maidstone in November 1959. He spent a relatively short time at MGS but has very happy memories of the school, and writes as follows. 'We moved down from London where I attended Raines Foundation Grammar School, so I had to cope with a totally new syllabus for 'O' Levels, which I took in 1960. Somehow '**Slim**' Page eventually got me through French. After 'A' Levels in 1962 I worked in the laboratories of Medway Water Board (Chatham) and Novadel (manufacturers of organic peroxides). I remember that my supervisor, Dr Sagg, smoked incessantly through an extremely long cigarette holder in the laboratories!

I then went up late to Reading (Agricultural Botany; a decision influenced by the enthusiasm of '**Tash**' Palmer) from 1964 to 1968, and I have worked in the Agrochemical Industry ever since, with a stint in Saudi Arabia with ODM/Bangor UCNW on weed control in arid land reclamation and agriculture. I did register for an MSc but never got

around to writing it up, as I came straight back to work in the UK. In 1978 I joined May and Baker/Rhone Poulenc and worked in International Marketing and International Product Management (HBN and Asulam product groups), especially in the Tropics and especially on sugar cane. In 1989 I joined Penwalt/ Elf Atochem and worked out of Paris as International Product Manager for EBDC fungicides, both worldwide and marketing in Anglophone Africa. I think that I have visited and worked in about 50 countries, including Cuba, the USSR and the Eastern Bloc under the old regimes.

In 1993, I returned to work for a private agrochemical company in the UK, and I am currently working for UPL, an Indian company, now of world stature, who bought up the product group with which I was involved: CIPC in potato storage. Now I think that retirement beckons, which will give me a chance to pursue my many interests: fishing, painting, gardening, perhaps even golf, and of course travelling, safaris and especially tigers.

'I am in constant touch with **Peter Lampard** (?-1964), who was also at Reading with me, and I have some contact with **Roger Amess**. My friends and contemporaries, **David Pugh** and **Bomber Andrews** are sadly no longer with us.'

*Ed: The Society can provide Jerry with contact details for **Dick Bourne** (1955-1963), but does anyone know the whereabouts of **Steve Manchi**? Jerry thinks that both Dick and Steve lived in Park Avenue.*

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**Alisdair Buchanan** (1986-1991) is in line for a top award in the National Optician Awards. He runs Buchanan Optometrists in Snodland, which is the only Kent practice to have been listed for the 'Premium Lens Practice' and 'Vision for Life' awards, and the only practice in the county to have been shortlisted each year since 2008. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

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**Norman Butcher** (?-1946) confirms that his entry to the University of Sheffield in 1948 was delayed by a late 'demob.' as a result of the Palestine conflict, rather than the Korean War.

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**Mike Clark** (1956-1963) was really encouraged by the piece in the last *Newsletter* on 'What is a Christian?' He became a Christian in his first term at the University of Birmingham, where he stayed for eight years, before working as an accountant in local government and the NHS from 1971 to 1988. He has worked with Operation Mobilisation in the UK for nearly 23 years. The organisation works in 110 countries around the world and has about 400 British staff. He has also been a lay reader for some 30 years, preaching regularly, and he would like to visit the Christian Union at MGS. He hasn't been to the school for a considerable number of years but has happy memories of his time there, when he lived in Lenham.

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**Barry Evans** (1953-1960) wrote a reply to a piece in the last *Newsletter* by **Peter Sampson** (1950-1955), whom he suddenly remembered, and whom he hopes is well, active and happy. He says, 'Even though you were three years ahead of me, our paths crossed in the Scouts. I was in "B" troop (Friday evenings) and later in the Senior Scouts (and a Queen's Scout). This was absolutely the very best part of my childhood! I doubt that I'd be the hiker/ cyclist/ kayaker, etc. now if it hadn't been for scouts, with Eric Newman, "Froggie" Newcombe, and "Tiddles" Blake. Also, I think that I'm right in saying that you were a Crusader with me on Sunday afternoons, at the Technical School.

'I went on to Queen Mary College to study civil engineering. My (American) wife and I base ourselves on the coast of northern California (Eureka), but have a home in the central highlands of Mexico. We have just returned from the UK where we hiked the "Wainwright Path" across northern England, to celebrate my wife's 60th birthday. So I still have ties with the UK, although haven't been in Maidstone for 10 years or so now.'

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Louise Houldsworth wrote to tell us about her grandfather, **Eric Haslam** (?-1935) OBE QPM, who at the age of 94 is our second-oldest member. She wondered if he might be able to have a guided tour of the school, especially as his great grandson, James Houldsworth, is now in Year 7, and this has rekindled his interest in the school. Louise thinks that he visited the school in the 1970s or 80s as it appears that he gave a talk at a Speech Day when he was Head of British Transport Police. Eric lives in Folkestone and is happy to receive his *Newsletter* by e-mail as he is very adept at using his computer and keen to save paper!



**Antony Heard** (?-1938) is unable to write because of arthritis in his hands, but one of his daughters kindly wrote to the Society on his behalf.

'I lost touch with my long-time friend **E.C.Clifford**, whom I knew as "Teddy", during the war years, but he wrote to me in 2003 enclosing an extract of the school *Journal* from 1930 [see below]. Teddy and I started our school days together at Miss Doret's Prep School, from where we both went up to MGS. My father **Mr J.F.L.Heard M.B.E.** was a master there for all of his professional life. I recall many of the masters during my time at school, particularly **J.C.B. Carter** (English), who always produced the annual Shakespearean play, with the exception of one year when he departed from this practice in the late 1930s and produced *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*: I played the part of Jasper Merrythought.

'Another master whom I recall was **C.W.R. Hodges** (geography), who was a member of the Magic Circle and always performed a wonderful magic item in the annual Christmas concert! He also did shows in various villages at which I often assisted.

'On leaving MGS I joined the RAFVR in 1940 and served overseas in the Middle East and North Africa from 1942 to 1946. During this time I married a Scots WAAF wireless operator in October 1945, in Alexandria, Egypt. On my demobilisation in 1946, I joined my wife in Rothesay, Isle of Bute, Scotland, where we were lucky enough to have four wonderful daughters, all of

Lower II			I		
Mr. J. F. L. HEARD			Mr. C. W. HUNTER		
Age on 81/7/30		Junior House	Age on 81/7/30		Junior House
10. 5	Applewhite, John R. ... ..	C.C.	*10.4	C Brittin, John B. ... ..	S.
9. 9	C Baker, William H. ... ..	S.	8.10	C Clifford, Edwin F. ... ..	W.
9. 5	Cois, Robert A. ... ..	S.	8.11	C Finch, Ronald A. ... ..	S.
8. 8	C Collins, Rodney R. R. ... ..	W.	*9. 4	Gracie, Reginald L. ... ..	S.
8.11	C Cox, John C. ... ..	W.	9. 8	Grant, Bruce A. ... ..	S.
10. 2	C Crowley, Ernest G. H. ... ..	C.C.	8. 6	C Heard, Antony J. C. ... ..	W.
9. 5	C Darling, Larratt C. ... ..	C.C.	8. 3	C Haish, Peter J. ... ..	Coll.
*9.10	C Emsie, Harold J. ... ..	S.	8. 0	C Lewis, William O. ... ..	W.
10. 1	C Gooch, Harry V. ... ..	W.	8. 7	C Liell, Lawrence J. ... ..	C.C.
10.10	C Gosby, Leslie F. ... ..	S.	9. 6	Lurcock, John ... ..	S.
*10. 0	C Graver, Ronald G. ... ..	S.	7.11	C Manning, Norman W. E. ... ..	Coll.
9. 3	Grummitt, Peter C. ... ..	Coll.	8.10	C Martin William W. ... ..	Coll.
10. 9	C Hall, Charles D. ... ..	Coll.	8. 1	C Matthews Bruce B. ... ..	Coll.
10. 1	C Hepburn, Richard J. ... ..	W.	7.10	C Mercer, Geoffrey C. ... ..	Coll.
9.11	C Hills, Arthur A. ... ..	C.C.	8. 0	Nichols, Brian K. ... ..	C.C.
9. 3	C Homan, Thomas B. ... ..	S.	9. 3	C Page, Keithley ... ..	C.C.
10. 0	C Johnson, Stanley W. ... ..	S.	8.10	C Reeves, Victor R. ... ..	Coll.
9. 1	C Kettle, Hugh E. ... ..	Coll.	7.11	C Rely, Robert A. ... ..	Coll.
9.11	C Marcor, Keith ... ..	Coll.	8. 4	C Simmonds, Derek A. ... ..	Coll.
*10. 5	C Ottehill, Frank W. ... ..	C.C.	9. 1	Smith, Raymond A. ... ..	C.C.
9. 8	C Roberts, Kenneth A. ... ..	Coll.	9. 3	C Stillman, Keith E. ... ..	Coll.
10.11	Sendles, Stanley D. ... ..	S.	8. 7	C Stoor, Charles H. ... ..	C.C.
10. 1	C Sloman, Robert G. ... ..	S.	7. 4	Stroud, John A. ... ..	Coll.
9.10	C Thomas, Charles ... ..	S.	8. 1	Tillett, Michael S. ... ..	Coll.
10. 0	Valent, Carmine A. ... ..	S.			
10. 8	S Wakefield, John D. ... ..	W.	8. 7		24
9. 1	C Walker, David F. ... ..	C.C.			
9. 2	C Waters, George A. ... ..	Coll.			
10. 0	C West, Hugh P. H. ... ..	C.C.			
10. 0	Yusill, Roger ... ..	C.C.			
9.10					

whom were educated at Rothesay Academy. Three became teachers and one a nurse, and they are now all married with families of their own.

'My wife and I celebrated our Diamond Wedding in 2005, but sadly she died in 2009. Since then I have travelled the length and breadth of the country, visiting my daughters. A family party was organised for my 90th Birthday in January, which included all my ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren - quite an occasion!

'During my working life on the Island of Bute, I held various administrative positions and served as a town councillor on Rothesay Town Council. For many years my wife and I played contract bridge as members of various bridge clubs affiliated to the Scottish Bridge Union, and played in tournaments and congresses in this country and abroad and achieved the rank of Scottish Masters.

'In conclusion I would like to say how much I enjoy your various *Newsletters*, particularly in the new format. With kind regards and best wishes to all Old Maidstonians.'

The *Journal* pages (above) which Antony has provided show both his father's form, and his own class, which also included Michael Tillett, a distinguished musician, and amanuensis to the composer Sir Michael Tippett.

**Vernon Hill** (1970-1977) is living in Norfolk and running his own business. He came to a couple of Annual Suppers about fifteen years ago, but none of his contemporaries was present. Vernon writes as follows:-

'Reading the latest *Newsletter* made me wonder if I'm ageing prematurely as several of the updates from old boys came from chaps of an earlier vintage than myself. However, it did bring a certain feeling of warmth about the old school, even though by the time I left I had definitely had enough and couldn't wait to leave, which is probably why I distinguished myself with my 'A' Levels for the wrong reason.

'It is pleasing to see that John Caley is doing well and has been recognised for his work. I was in the army section of the CCF and 'Chocs' was the man who made the CCF happen, aided by a number of other staff, notably **Bob Rylands, Nogger Knight, Benny Britten** and **Chief**. In the *Newsletter* one of the other old boys made a reference to Nogger's style of maintaining discipline. I can remember one "boy" getting on the wrong end of a piece of 2" x 1", expertly wielded by Nogger. It didn't do any of us any harm... Amongst the CCF boys Nogger's phrases were affectionately known as "Noggerisms".'

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**Captain Tom Hughes** was paralysed whilst playing rugby for Maidstone, shortly after returning from active service in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, with the 9<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Royal Lancers. He is determined to walk again, and he is regaining some sensation and movement. We wish him well, and hope for a successful recovery.

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**Russell Longmuir** (1979-1984) captained the MGS cricket team to its only Lemon Cup victory (he thinks) before going to Warwick University. He has just returned from Australia and now lives in London.

On 24<sup>th</sup> February, the *Kent Messenger* reported that **Rod Moodley** (1962-1967), who is a paramedic working for the South East Kent Ambulance Service, delivered a baby at a house in Larkfield following an emergency call. As he had already delivered about 40 babies, the mother and infant were in safe hands!

Unfortunately, we have heard from his wife that **Robin Murray** (?-1962) is very ill at the moment.

The *Kent Messenger* has reported that **George Oram**, who plays rugby for Aylesford Bulls, has won a rugby scholarship in New Zealand. The 18-year-old will join the Inside Running Academy from March to August, having been First XV skipper at MGS and playing for Kent. The Academy's website can be consulted for more information about its activities.

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**Dr David Parker** (1951- 1959) was a guest at a reception at Buckingham Palace on 14<sup>th</sup> February. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh greeted eminent Dickensians, as a way of marking the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Dickens. Guests included members of the Dickens family, Dickens scholars, writers and actors. Now an honorary research fellow at Kingston University, David was the Curator of London's Charles Dickens Museum for more than twenty years, and is the author of many publications on Dickens. His most recent book was *Christmas and Charles Dickens* (2005).

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**Stuart Partis (1951-1958)**, a regular correspondent from Australia, continues to write large-scale musical works, his latest being *Shipwrecked off Kangaroo Island*, which followed *Gospel Rain* and *Polly in the Outback*, the story of John McDouall Stuart, Australia's most successful inland explorer. Also, he continues his USA Civil War research, and is hoping to arrange a visit to the Little Big Horn, where he intends to sing his *Little Big Horn* song! He will also be passing through the UK briefly, and staying in Folkestone during May. Stuart has sent a score of *The Maidstonaise*, a version of the School Song that he played at a previous Annual Supper: *if anyone would like a copy, they should contact the Secretary*.

Stuart also wrote a tribute to Nigel Dodd, who set him on his course in life, by transforming music from his 'worst' O Level to being his 'best' A level. Stuart was fortunate to catch up with Philip Langridge for reminiscences each time he performed in the Sydney Opera House, most notably in *Death in Venice*.

**Christopher Ratcliffe** (1988-1993) was inspired by economics teacher, Andy Moth, and studied economics at Birmingham University where he obtained a 2:1, and then took a year out to travel/party before joining Sainsbury's on their graduate recruitment scheme, gaining a CIMA accountancy qualification. With itchy feet he then took another year out to travel Africa and South America with his girlfriend/ future wife. Currently, he lives in Hornchurch, Essex 'with his wife and two beautiful children aged 6 and 3'.

'Realising that accountancy was not for me, I self-trained myself as a photographer and started shooting premiership football and other sports at weekends and evenings, making myself exceptionally busy. The arrival of our first child forced a decision and I quit the accountancy to concentrate on the photography. This was almost seven years ago at the beginning of 2005 and since then I have not looked back. I have shot football world cups, champions league finals, open golf tournaments, and Wimbledon to name but a few. More recently I have moved away from sport and on to the world of business and I have a four-day a week contract with Bloomberg News in London, covering breaking political and business news and obtaining strong company stock imagery. This has included helicopter trips over the city of London, portraits of the country's top CEOs, politicians including Gordon Brown in his last throes, and chasing Rupert Murdoch down... All good fun!

'MGS provided me with a hard work ethos and a realisation that provided you have ability and show commitment and desire to succeed then you can do almost anything you want. It also provided me with my 'base' group of friends that I still socialise with, although not as much as I would like, given time/ work/ family commitments. I would echo a previous post that I would be happy to come and talk to pupils regarding possible future careers. If I'm honest, during my time at MGS I think that the careers advice was somewhat limited to large companies/ public sector roles and there was not enough about alternative/ entrepreneurial careers.'

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**Eric Robinson** (1951-1957) sends kind regards to all OMs, and says that he was sorry to be unable to get to the Annual Supper, especially as he would have liked to have seen Mr Dodd again, who taught him music. 'I did not sit the examination, but attained the dizzy heights of Grade 5 Higher in the trumpet through Mr Howard, the then teacher of such fine instruments!' He remembers also being taught music by Mr Julier and Mr Long.

Eric was in 6a1, 'rather strangely studying maths and English, but had to leave due to family problems. When I was in Buckingham in the 1970s, running several building companies, I was amazed to literally bump into Mr Blake, my maths teacher and form tutor, who was on the way to the funeral of Mr Claydon, the Headmaster during my time at the school! Mr Blake immediately said 'Robinson! How are you?' Some memory! I still view with a certain nostalgia my time at the school, as a great deal of turbulent water has flowed under the bridge since those long-ago days.'

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**Dr Tim Sharrock** (1949-1956) writes to say that he studied at the University of Southampton, and has returned to Kent only a few times in the past 56 years, since his parents moved to Berkshire and he now lives in Bedfordshire.

Tim says, 'My excellent Biology master was D.W. Pratt. When he died a few years ago, his son sent me three items in case they were of interest to me:

- 'Book of minutes of the MGS Natural History Society meetings from 1958 to 1968
- 'Book of minutes of the MGS Natural History Society meetings from 1969 to 1974
- 'Photograph album with photographs of the MGSNHS field trips and visits during 1957 to 1960'

As these items do not relate to Tim's time at the school, he has kindly donated them to our archive.

Tim was in the MGS Scouts with **Joe Cloke** (?-1956), with whom he has just resumed contact, and has photographs of him at camps in, he thinks, Somerset and Yorkshire. He is still in touch with **Ken Sharp**, who joined the Navy in 1954, but has often wondered about four others of his contemporaries. Did **Ray Stillwell** ever become a surgeon, as he wanted; and did **Roger Marston** become a GP as he wanted? Did **Collis Clements** progress with his swimming achievements? Did **Johnny Ring** fulfil his promise as a wheeler-dealer? Tim will be very pleased to hear from any OMs who know anything about them. *Please send any information directly to the Secretary.*

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**Christopher Turner** (1994) has provided an annual school award related to the study of French, in recognition for the kind assistance of Jeremy Hickson and Jean-Marie Sanfourche. He says that the last half of his life, since leaving

MGS, has been spent in France, and without the help of his teachers, he would never have enjoyed his life as fully as he has done. The award will have these conditions: 'An award of £200 per year be given to student(s) who are pursuing French Language studies post-GCSE level, and whose economic situations might limit their abilities to pursue any aspect of their studies.' This will be known as 'The Turner Prize for French'.

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Congratulations to **Neil Turrell** (ex-Headmaster 1992-2009) and his family on the birth in early March of his grandson, Stanley Jack Powell.

Stanley is Neil's second grandson and their mother Nancy (née Turrell), attended MGS. Nancy works in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility and is currently on maternity leave from her company, Tulchan, a London-based financial firm which has just opened an office in Singapore, where Nancy and her husband Richard are based.

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**Richard Tyrer** (1955-1962, and a fellow 'miscreant' of Tony Bishop's – see above) responded as follows to Alastair Macfadyen's query about Alec Stewart, which appeared in the last *Newsletter*:

'Yes, Alec Stewart was known by the inmates in my last years at MGS as "Tish". [This name was still being used at the end of the decade.] Amongst those in the year above me, like 'Hairy' Halton, Harry Hunter, Roger King, Nigel Grant, Michael Stevens (all now dead or missing), Alec, hitherto known as "Alex", was named differently. His title "Mister Stewart" went through a triple transformation. Firstly as pronounced by a rustic person: "Mish Toor" (try this and see). Secondly a reversal: "Tisher Moor", and then truncated to "Tish". I heard all these forms used concurrently but developing in that order and settling on that one coinage.'



**Proud Granddad!**

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**Roger Lee Richard Wood** (1957-1963) played rugby for the school and took part in county level school field events, and brief but eventful periods with the sailing club, orchestra and drama club. He has quite a long association with the CCF, finishing as the Signals sergeant. Froggy Newcombe wouldn't let him join the Scouts, but much to his surprise he was appointed a praefect. Some of his contemporaries were: **Tony Butler**, **Ian Docherty**, **Paul East**, the **Cliff** brothers, **Mike Rand**, **Chris Wood** and **George Granycombe**. His late brother, **Robert Joseph Ralph Wood**, left the school in 1948. Roger says, 'I was never much of a student and passing the 11-plus to gain admittance to Dover Grammar School before transferring to Maidstone Grammar School after a year may well have been when I peaked. However, I was very sorry when the time came to leave and join the wage slaves.'

'My life has been spent in several countries under various regimes but always civil/ military engineering or building construction feature large, often with a firearm attached. By and large it has been a rewarding life, sometimes more in a sense of achievement than wealth, but always with lighter moments. One such incident occurred in Gibraltar, I was the engineer in charge of a road widening scheme on the Rock and was at Gibraltar Airport to meet folk when out of the customs hall bowled George Granycombe (Lieutenant Commander RN) and knocked me flat on my back in the car park. He then looked down at me and said "Hello Tiny, we must have a drink together soon," - this being some 15 years after we and MGS parted company. Similarly, when standing on Cannon Street Station, in rolled a train, and looking at me after 22 years was Chris Wood. I walked over and enquired where he was going, The reply was "To a party in Camden. Where are you going?" My reply was not an attempt at one-upmanship but must have sounded so, "Heathrow to fly back to my job in Muscat".'

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The **Reverend John Woodger** (1949-1953) was pleased to read that the Christian Union still exists at MGS. When he joined the school, the SCM was the only Christian organisation, and the Headmaster was not keen to have another. However, there was a new member of staff that year (O.R. Johnston, who taught French and Divinity), who started a CU in his flat, not far from the school. Eventually they were allowed to meet in the school. Several boys went each year on ISCF camps, with which Raymond Johnston was involved. John gave his first talk or Bible study at the CU on 'Grace' and has never looked back since.

## 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.*



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We have received news of the death of **Henry Clout** (left about 1936?), but we have no further details at present.

We have received news of the death of **Mick Jenner** (left 1960 or 1962?), but we have no further details at present.

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Air Vice-Marshall **Don Hills** (dates uncertain) died on 27<sup>th</sup> January, one day after his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday. He rose through the ranks after joining the RAF in 1938, was mentioned in despatches and was a very young recipient of an MBE. He was an equipment officer, and organised important supply routes in North Africa during the war which were crucial for victory. Many important posts followed, and he retired in 1973. A major obituary was published in *The Daily Telegraph* on 17<sup>th</sup> February.

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The death has been announced of **Laurence Shea**, known as 'Lo!', who had a varied career as a DJ and in concert security, then spending 15 years as a business development manager in the local offices of haulage firm, Fowler Welch. Laurence's son, Oliver, followed his father by gaining a place at MGS.

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### **Chips Melly**

Our Archivist, **Dr Tony Webb**, a former Deputy Headmaster, has written the following obituary of his former colleague, **Edward Travers Melly** (staff: 1960-1985), who died on 3<sup>rd</sup> January. His funeral took place at Otham church on 27<sup>th</sup> January, and was very well attended, with strong representation from the school and the society. Unfortunately, he died before he could be offered a position as an Honorary Vice President of the Society, an honour which had been planned by the committee.

'Chips', as he was known to colleagues, friends, students and all at Maidstone Grammar School, where he strode the scene for twenty-five years, was a true schoolmaster, a true friend, but perhaps above all else a true gentleman. His was an unobtrusive personality, always believing the best about other people, always kind, rarely cross; nothing too extreme, a smile rather than a belly laugh. He had the priceless gift of making one feel good about oneself, and inspired when leaving his presence to do better and not to feel too bad about what could not be altered. I came to prize those qualities greatly when I became his head of department in 1976, and even more when, as Deputy Head pastoral, I worked through him as year head. His willingness to have a quiet word in my ear when he felt I was going wrong, and then to help me constructively and creatively to get things right, was for me a professional father-son relationship I simply could not have managed without.

Educated at Rugby and Trinity College Oxford, he served during the war in the RNVR and witnessed action, amongst other exploits, in the Arctic convoys - which was only for 'the toughest of the tough and the bravest of the brave'. After early teaching experience in Liverpool he spent eight years in Canada, where he married Ruth and had his two sons Paul and Mark. Soon after his return to England he settled in Bearsted and joined the staff at Maidstone Grammar School to teach history, his degree subject, and, more often than not, English up to what was then GCE 'O' Level.

He brought to his teaching a thoroughness as well as a flexibility of mind which was able and willing to encompass change, to ride it and master it with never a whinge about the good old days. In the sixties Maidstone Grammar School had been the first school in the country to introduce Mode III history syllabuses at 'O' Level - coursework long before GCSE, national curriculum and the Internet had been thought of. These courses reached their heyday in the seventies, when no fewer than three different 'O' Level courses were operating. There was Chips, surrounded but never swamped by projects, giving his attention to everyone, discussing problems with an individual student who at that moment was the only person in the world who mattered - schoolmastering at its most positive, education at its most valuable. If his English teaching was of a more traditional kind, it was because English was more traditionally taught in the school - what he did was of no less high a standard.

There was much more to Chips (or 'Chip', as Ruth called him, having the wife's prerogative of dropping the 's') than teaching in the classroom. Simply to catalogue what he did would fill a room. He was housemaster of School House in the sixties, which involved leading assemblies – no problem for someone of his Christian background - and trying to breathe life into house competitions, which was increasingly flogging a dead horse. That he tried so hard, as the testimony of contemporaries indicates that he did, and then, when the writing was on the wall and the house system was suspended and the year head organisation adopted, moved on without demur, is the mark of his ability to adjust and look forward. His prescience appears notably in the comment he made to me, without heat or rancour, soon after my arrival at the school: 'Education is linked to generations – they will probably be experimenting with houses again in thirty years' time.' Q.E.D.

His role as year head I have touched on. This was a role he retained for fourteen years until his retirement. His courtesy and regard for the individual student won over some of the most hardened, so that even his nickname among the boys, 'Mungo', had an affectionate ring to it. His discipline was sound, because there was no point in baiting somebody who simply did not rise and whose dogged pursuit of the miscreant would ultimately bring justice down upon him. To those genuinely in trouble he was priceless.

At school Chips had been a keen sportsman, representing Rugby school at rugger, cricket and hockey. He was a central, not to say pivotal, figure in sport at MGS. He coached the colts teams at rugby and cricket, and on numberless cold Saturdays turned out to referee, often with Ruth on the touchline, particularly when the two boys became involved in school sport in the 1970s. Staff matches also saw him heftily involved. His excellent co-ordination ensured that a cricket ball, once hit, stayed hit – a quick-fire 44 scored after the staff were reduced to 12 for 3 sticks in the mind. It was regrettable that a serious back injury in a staff hockey match left him with a limp and put an end to his sporting activities. Despite the discomfort he often experienced one never heard him complain.

He served on the school's prize committee, he was liaison man with the canteen, he was involved with the library and many more what might be termed 'peripheral' activities. Above all, he managed the book room. In these days of computerised teaching, the Internet, etc. etc., it is perhaps impossible for the modern generation to imagine the central role of the textbook in school life. There was Chips managing the issue of textbooks for the whole school; a bureaucratic nightmare, you might think, but he never made it so. It did not take over his life – again, all was managed unobtrusively and efficiently. He would have asserted that if you saw him doing the job he wasn't doing it properly, and he rarely lost books. One feels that if he had been twenty years longer in post he would have had no difficulty in teaching and managing with a computer.

This was a man, and, I repeat, the true gentleman, so ably supported in all aspects of school life by his wife, the complete helpmate, who survives him. His two sons, journalist Paul and farmer Mark, are two chips off the old gentlemanly block. To them we extend our condolences and deepest sympathy in their great loss.

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## Leon Shaw

Barry Kingsman, the father of a current MGS pupil, and a fellow Mason, wrote to tell us about **Leon Paul Shaw** (1941-1947), who died on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2011, after a brave fight against cancer of the oesophagus. His funeral was held at Thanet Crematorium on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012, officiated by Rabbi Clifford Cohen of the Reform Synagogue Ramsgate, and it was attended by at least 150 family members and friends.

Leon was born on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1933 in Broadstairs; his family was evacuated to Maidstone in about 1940, but eventually returned to Thanet. Whilst at MGS, Leon attended the 'junior school' at Brunswick House, which was founded in 1922 and acted like a feeder school for the senior department.

Leon was aged 8 years 5 months when he joined MGS: his group (and there was only one per year) contained children aged from 7 years 10 months to 10 years 10 months. He left MGS aged 14 years 4 months, having been in the following classes:

- September 1942: Class III
- September 1942: Class IIIb
- September 1944: Class IVa
- September 1945: Upper IVa
- September 1946: Remove L (Latin)

Readers may be interested to learn that the 1944 Education Act really established what we now understand as infant (5 to 7 years of age), junior/ primary (8 to 11 years of age) and senior/ secondary (11 years upwards) schools. Prior to this, the arrangements were somewhat random, but 'good' schools, such as the grammars, would take in children from about 7½ years of age if they showed potential. The Act introduced the 11+ examination, which directed children to grammar, secondary technical or secondary modern schools, and allowed for the creation of comprehensive schools. In order for MGS to get in line with the new age range, there was no intake in September 1944 or September 1945. Children could leave school at age 14, but the Act hoped to extend this, voluntarily, to age 15. Pupils intending to go to university (effectively only those at grammar schools) would stay to age 18, meaning that they could have been at schools like MGS for 11 years!

Leon then attended Sir Roger Manwood's School, as a boarder from 1947-50, and achieved first class results. He did National Service in the RAF, where his education was put to good use as he kept the books for the officers' mess. The scene was set and he was articled to a firm of London accountants and when qualified he eventually became a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Leon joined Shan-Kyd Polycell at their London office as a corporate accountant, rising quickly to Chief Accountant. However, in 1960 he gave up this promising career and returned to Margate to support his father in the family business of Shaw's Hotel Service as Financial Director. As a chartered accountant he was in great demand and freely gave of his time and expertise, holding at least seven posts as an honorary treasurer at the onset of his illness.

## HEADMASTERS OF MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

By Roger Brown (1977)

Number 7: WILLIAM BRIGHT (1647 – 1648)

Monarch(s) on the throne of England:

1625 – onwards Charles I

Prime Minister(s):

*The first PM was not appointed until 1721*

Notable events during the HM's tenure:

1647 (26 May) Alse Young becomes the first person to be executed as a witch in the American colonies

1647 (04 Jun) British Army seizes King Charles I as a prisoner

Location of School: Corpus Christi Hall

Apart from succeeding Thomas Lambe in the October, the only known fact about Bright is that he had one year in Maidstone before being 'displaced' in the summer of 1648.

Number 8: RICHARD THOMAS (1648 – 1650)

Monarch(s) on the throne of England:

1625 - 1649 Charles I

1649 onwards Oliver Cromwell

Prime Minister(s):

*The first PM was not appointed until 1721*

Notable events during the HM's tenure:

1648 (09 Aug) Birth of Johan Michael Bach – German composer

1649 (30 Jan) King Charles I found guilty at trial and executed

1649 (05 Feb) Prince of Wales takes title of King Charles II

Location of School: Corpus Christi Hall

Richard Thomas had entered Jesus College, Oxford, in 1638 but there is no record as to what he studied or whether he completed any degree course. Whilst his contribution to the School is not known it certainly coincided with the serious business of monarchy changes: on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1649, the king, Charles I, had been found guilty and duly executed. As was the custom at the time the staff and students attended the main Sunday service at All Saints' Church. Following the monarch's demise they witnessed a scene that would make a Shakespearian play seem tame.

The Reverend Thomas Wilson (vicar of All Saints'), a known Roundhead supporter, in spite of his Puritan sympathies, thoroughly detested the revenge taken out on Charles, and used his sermon to verbally attack the town's Mayor, Andrew Broughton, himself an attorney and, who as Clerk of the Court, had read the sentence to the king. He spoke as follows: *'David's heart smote him when he cut off the skirt of Saul's raiment, but nowadays men cut off a king's head and think nothing of it.'* (See 1 Samuel Chapter 24) The Mayor immediately left his seat and walked out of the church, duly pursued by Wilson who shouted: *'When the Word of God comes home to a man, it makes him flee from it.'* The result was that Broughton never set foot in that church again but used his influence to procure Joseph Whiston to take future religious services in the School. The Headmaster was angered by this move and in challenging the mayor's decision found his tenure of MGS at an end.

It is a pity that other relevant information about Thomas cannot be traced: his date of birth, thus giving his age when taking on the headship, his career pre- and post-MGS, and the date of his own demise.

Almost 300 years after his death, the town recognised its former mayor when a road (Andrew Broughton Way) was dedicated to his name.

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## ANNUAL SUPPER ATTENDEES, 2012

Ambrose, Robin, 1958  
 Ashbee, Nick, 1990-1995  
 Atkinson, Alan, 1959  
 Badcock, Chris, 1964  
 Bailey, Pat, 1946  
 Banks, Mike, 1948  
 Bardsley, Jon, 2009  
 Bartle, Ian, 1960  
 Belson, Graham, 1960-1965  
 Blackman, Don, 1956  
 Bloomfield, Jeremy, 1962  
 Bowes, Graham, 1956  
 Brice, Martin, 1972  
 Browse, Graeme, 1989  
 Caley, John, 1955-1988  
 Chrystal, Elisabeth, —  
 Chrystal, John, 1961  
 Clayton, John, 1961-1968  
 Crawley, Gardner, 1962  
 Darley, Henry, 1957  
 Delo, Steve, 1986  
 Dent, Chris, 1957  
 Dillon, Ron, 1958  
 Doran, Richard, 1970  
 Dulson, Ken, 1947  
 East, David, 1959  
 Elks, Justin, 1989  
 Ellis, Michael, 1972  
 Ewing, Peter, 1950  
 Franks, Ian, 1993  
 Fridd, Brian, 1952  
 Fullager, Bill, 1958  
 Fuller, Dennis, 1968  
 Gammon, Tony, 1957

Garner, John, 1956  
 Gibson, Michael, 1954  
 Goddard, Nick, 1968  
 Goodsall, Adrian, 1972  
 Gosby, Denis, 1945  
 Hampstead, Martin, 1959  
 Hart, Clifford, 1986  
 Hill, Colin, 1962  
 Hipkins, Chris, 1969  
 Hitchcock, Charlie, 1950  
 Hollamby, Robert, 1978  
 Hooker, Simon, 1983  
 Jeffrey, Peter, 1957  
 Jones, Murray, 1958  
 Laker, Ian, 1962  
 Lampard, Peter, 1964  
 Leeke, David, staff: 1990-2000  
 Legg, Philip, 1972  
 Long, Chris, 1999  
 Ludgate, Roger, 1956  
 MacCallum, Malcolm, 1957-1963  
 Marriott, Michael, 1968  
 Mayger, Colin, 1983  
 McCormick, Ron, 2004  
 Meigh, Chris, 2010  
 Milstead, Ian, 1950  
 Mitchell, Keith, 1946  
 Naughton, Tony, 1957  
 Nicholl, Ian, 1993  
 Parker, David, 1959  
 Parkins, Rodney, 1958  
 Porter, Richard, 1993  
 Ratcliffe, Chris, 1993

Ratcliffe, Richard, 1956-1964  
 Richardson, Keith, 1960  
 Robbins, Colin, 1958  
 Samme, Geoffrey, 1986  
 Sampson, Peter, 1955  
 Selby, Matt, 1993  
 Sharpe, Steven, ?  
 Smith, Paul, Staff  
 Smith, Tony, 1958  
 Sutherland, Hugh, 1983  
 Tester, Keith, 1969  
 Tyrer, Richard, 1962  
 Walker, William, 1972  
 Weaver, Peter, 1950-1958  
 White, Brian, 1962-1969  
 Williams, Matt, 2010  
 Wood, Bob, 1956  
 Wood, Chris, 1964  
 Wood, Roger, 1963  
 Woods, Tom, 2011  
 Wooler, Jordan, 2011

### Guests

Mayor: Cllr Brian Mortimer  
 Headmaster: Dr Nick Argent  
 Vicar: Christopher Morgan-Jones  
 President: Anthony Hayward, 1951-1958  
 President's Guest: Nigel Dodd  
 Guest's wife: Mrs Dodd  
 School Captain: Sam Coppard  
 Alec Stewart Prize: Sean Quinn  
 Clifford Prize: John Haines



## A NOTABLE CONCERT

One of our distinguished Old Maidstonians, **Philip Moore** (1954-?), gave an organ recital at Boxley church on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April.

Philip was born in 1943 in London, but within a few years the family moved to Maidstone, where he joined the choir at Boxley Church. He was very keen on the organ and probably played his first services there at around the age of 10 years. He subsequently moved his allegiance to All Saints', Maidstone. Philip is now an internationally-known figure, having been assistant organist at Canterbury Cathedral, and organist and choirmaster at York Minster, from where he retired about two years ago after 25 years in the post. He is a major composer who wrote a piece for the school for the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1999.

## AND ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

**Prawn Crackers** (From **Keith Hearnden**, ?-1957)

Two prawns struck up a close friendship. Christian was a loving soul, but Jeremiah always found something to lament about: in particular, he lived in fear of a shark attack.

One day, Jeremiah complained to Christian, 'I'm fed up with being chased by these pesky sharks. I wish that I could somehow become a shark, so that I could do some chasing for a change.'

'Well,' said Christian, 'If it's what you really want, you need to find that Icelandic Cod. It is said that he possesses magical powers and he might be able to help.'

Jeremiah managed to find the Icelandic Cod, told him his story and asked if he could be transmuted into a shark. The Cod puffed out his cheeks, blew gently at Jeremiah, chanted, 'Obra-cod-obra! Obra-cod-obra!'... and there, suddenly, was Jeremiah, the Great White Shark.

Jeremiah chased everything that moved in the water, but after a month or two of this, he missed all his prawn friends, especially Christian: in a nutshell, he was lonely. In desperation, he went to see the Cod again, pleaded his case, and the Cod agreed to change him back into a prawn. He was delighted, and his first act was to swim back to his old haunts. He called out, 'Christian, I'm back. Come out and bring me up to date with all that's happened since I went away.'

'No!' said Christian. 'You'll chase me and eat me for a snack.'

'No I won't', Jeremiah replied. 'I've seen Cod. I'm a prawn again, Christian.'

~~~~~

This story reminded the Secretary of one which is told by a retired Maidstone clergyman (who is an Old Maidstonian). He would sometimes have lunch with another clergyman (recently retired and a noted wit) at 'The Redstart' in Barming. On one occasion, they were trying to decide what to eat, and the young waitress asked them if they had made up their minds. She was completely baffled when his friend replied, 'Oh, I think that I'll have the piece of cod which passeth all understanding.' (See Philippians 4, verse 7, in the King James version.)

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## NEWSLETTER FONTS

Our regular readers will have noticed that this Newsletter uses a different font from that in previous issues. The new font is "Futura Light" and I have chosen this to add some variety and give us a more modern look, hopefully improving legibility along the way. Traditional "Times New Roman" has become rather hackneyed: familiarity has bred contempt. It would be good to know what you think. Please send me an email: [p.weaver@iee.org](mailto:p.weaver@iee.org)

- Peter Weaver, Co-editor

## YOUR COMMITTEE 2012-13

**David Leeke** (Staff 1990 to 2000)

[david@leeke.org.uk](mailto:david@leeke.org.uk)

**Richard Ratcliffe** (1956-1964) – **Chairman**

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

**Dr. Brian White** – **Secretary; Co-Editor** (1962-1969)

[drbdwhite@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:drbdwhite@yahoo.co.uk). Telephone 01622 756660 or 07828 925609, or write to 26 Little Buckland Avenue, Allington, Maidstone, ME16 0BG

**Nick Ashbee** (1990-1995)

[nickashbee@btopenworld.com](mailto:nickashbee@btopenworld.com)

**Graham Belson** (1960-1965) **Membership Secretary, Treasurer**

[oms@oldmaidstonians.org.uk](mailto:oms@oldmaidstonians.org.uk), Tel: 01622 730514 or 07770 738041, or write to 22 Plantation Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME14 4BH.

**John Caley** (Staff 1955 to 1998)

Tel: 01622 751801

**John Clayton** (1961-1968)

[j.clayton@hikent.org.uk](mailto:j.clayton@hikent.org.uk)

**Gardner Crawley** (1962)

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**Anthony Hayward** (1951-1958)

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**James Kinsman** (2005)

[james@macrolevel.co.uk](mailto:james@macrolevel.co.uk)

**Prof. Malcolm McCallum** (1957-1963) – **Webmaster**

[m.a.h.maccallum@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:m.a.h.maccallum@qmul.ac.uk)

**Simon Pain** (2005)

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**Peter Weaver** (1958) **Co-Editor**

[p.weaver@iee.org](mailto:p.weaver@iee.org)

**Dr. Tony Webb** (Staff: 1971-2000)

[dmwaww@gmail.com](mailto:dmwaww@gmail.com)

## OMS ARTICLES FOR SALE



### Books

There are several books which have been produced by former teaching staff and which can be obtained through the Society.

#### **WAC: Trials and Triumphs of a Grammar School Headmaster**

A history of Maidstone Grammar School from 1925 – 1941 through the final reports of Headmaster Alfred John Woolgar, MA, and from 1942 – 1966 in the Speech Day Reports of Headmaster William Arthur Claydon, CBE, MA.

The book was researched and compiled by James Clinch (OM 1936 - 46, staff 1974 - 91)  
ISBN-10: 0-9552145-0-5 ISBN-13: 978-0-9552145-0-9

#### **Gaudeamus: An account of Music at Maidstone Grammar School**

Published in 1997, this book is the definitive history of music at the School from the early-1900s with a prelude by Michael Tillet (Old Maidstonian) and postlude by David Leeke (staff 1989 - 2000)

The book was researched and compiled by James Clinch (Staff 1974 - 1991)  
ISBN-10: 0-9530861-0-0

#### **A History of Maidstone Grammar School Combined Cadet Force (1906 – 2006)**

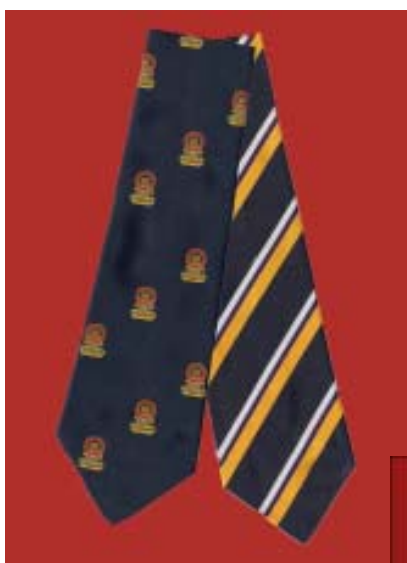
Researched and compiled by John and Diana Caley (Staff 1955-1998), the book was produced to commemorate the centenary of the Cadet Force at the School. It brought up to date the original history that the authors had written in 1981 at the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It contains many pictures along with thirteen appendices of useful data and information. (Not published with an ISBN.)

#### **MGS 1549 to 1965 – A Record**

**32 Pages, 6" x 9"**

There are a limited number of hard-back versions of this publication, which is a revised and enlarged version of G.B.Philips's short history of the School produced in 1949, the quatercentenary year. G B Philips undertook the task in his retirement and the work was completed by N W Newcombe. The foreword was written by R R Rylands and notes that the publication, originally produced in 1965, also brings to an end the era of WA Claydon. (Please note that most have some sort of marking on the covers, and although in good condition, are not perfect.)

### Garments



#### **Ties**

There is a supply of both styles of the Old Maidstonian tie and these can be ordered using the return sheet of this Newsletter or by e-mail.

The **Crested** version is a Jacquard Woven Tie with all-over motifs of the crest in gold, red and blue on a navy background. It was introduced in the 1970's additional to the OMS Striped tie

The **Striped** version is also a Jacquard Woven Tie in navy blue with angled stripes of gold, purple and white. The tie was the original OMS tie and predates the Crested version by several decades. The design was later used on the ties for the School Captain and Deputy School Captain from about 1994 and continues to this day, although the direction of the stripes is reversed.

There is evidence that the OMS tie may have been black, not navy blue, around the Second World War years, but there is no information as to when it changed to blue.

Both ties are of polyester and are 54" x 3 1/8" in size.



#### **Blazer Badge**

The OM's blazer badge is approximately 5" x 3" in size.

## CD's of Past Annual Supper Speeches

2011 Annual Supper Andrew Dilnot - Guest Speaker  
Paul Clifford – President  
Nick Argent – Headmaster  
Tom Woods – School Captain

1975 Annual Supper SW Johnson – guest speaker. Erudite and witty

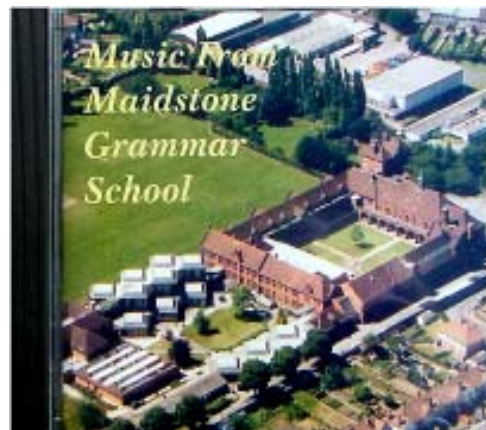
## Payment

The Society has established internet banking, and the facility is 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.



CD

## MGS Archives

Original spare copies of The Maidstonian for most, but not all years, from the beginning are available. First come, first served - when they are gone, they are gone.

450<sup>th</sup> anniversary memorabilia is also available:

Ties: Plain navy blue with a 450<sup>th</sup> Anniversary crest at the bottom;  
Sets of notelet cards, four different designs,  
with envelopes, packs of four;  
10 notelet cards, single design;  
CD of school music.

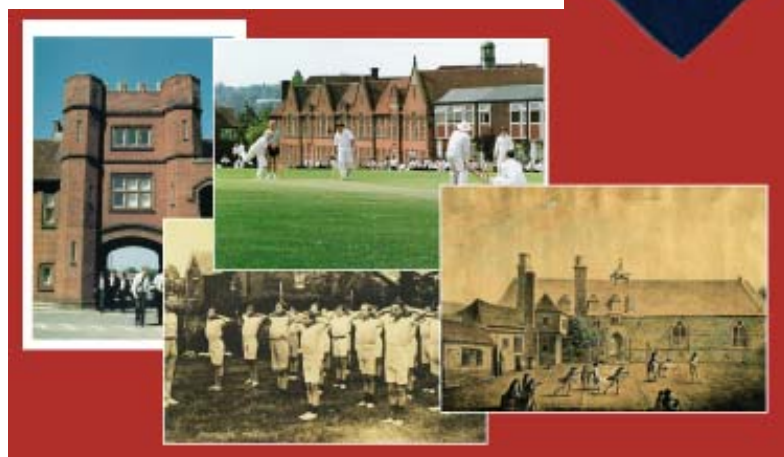
Tie



## N.B. Payment

Payment for archive items should be made by cheque to: **Maidstonian Grammar School** and sent to the school (not as for OMS articles which should be paid for as indicated above).

*The order forms are attached as separate documents.*



Notelets



# The Old Maidstonian Society Newsletter

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**We Would Like to Hear From You** Copy date for next edition: **1st July 2012**

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 Newsletter 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.

