



The Old Mancunian

September 2004

Dr Martin Stephen

My heart sank when Don Isherwood asked me to do a farewell piece. I simply do not have any Final Grand Words, and anything I would like to say is actually very small and insignificant. So what can I say? It's been a wonderful ten years. I leave with considerable reluctance and for quite complex reasons. Meeting so many Old Manes has not only been a real privilege, but a real pleasure, and their kindness has been quite extraordinary.

All of us who work in and for this very great school are mere stewards, and know that in the great scheme of things (and a proud history that goes back 500 years) any contribution we make is a drop in the ocean. That doesn't stop the stewardship being a wonderful experience, and the happiest and most fulfilling ten years of my professional life. Thank you for helping to make it so.

I know that Frederick William Walker made the same transition to London in Victorian times. It is less widely recorded that he was both an extremely large man and (I choose my words carefully and in line with modern usage) somewhat challenged in the visual attractiveness department. It's good to know that certain traditions at least live on

Presentation

On Wednesday 6th July the Chairman of the OMA David Walton presented Martin Stephen with an inscribed cut glass and silver claret jug with grateful thanks for his very considerable contribution to the School on behalf of the OMA and other Old Boys. David was particularly appreciative of the commitment the HM had shown in maintaining and strengthening links with Old Mancunians over the years.

The High Master in his response said he was very

grateful for the present. He went on to say that the Foundation Appeal had helped to re-found the School and it would be interesting to see the financial position of the School in say twenty years' time, when the Bursary fund might have reached £30,000,000. This would give it independence of any Government of the day.

We wish him every success and happiness in his new position.

The Gala 200th Old Boys Dinner & OMA Century

The Recorder of the Old Boys Dinner Committee, Paul Rose, has attended recent meetings of the OMA Executive and plans are proceeding to jointly celebrate the 200th Old Boys Dinner and the 100th year since the foundation of the Old Mancunians Association. This historic special event will be staged at the Freemasons Hall, Bridge Street, Manchester on Saturday 13th November 2004.

This will be an early opportunity to meet the new High Master, Dr Christopher Ray. It is hoped to provide more time for attendees to meet socially in the bar area after the dinner.

The Senior Steward will be Sir Howard Davies, Director, London School of Economics with Michael Crick the well-known News Correspondent in support as Junior Steward. Although there will be more accommodation than in recent years, it is anticipated that there will be a record demand for seats, with the opportunity to meet our new High Master. For more details please contact **Paul M A Rose Esq. 63 Moss Lane, Sale Cheshire M33 5AP**

Dr Christopher Ray

Welcome to Dr Christopher Ray who will take up his post as the 42nd High Master this month.

MGS Angels

Even today it is 'abnormal' for an MGS boy not to seek a top university place and a sensible sharp suited job somewhere in the professions. I would absolutely loathe and detest that. I dislike studying. This is not to say I dislike work - I love running our companies and I get a massive adrenaline rush every time I walk into our office in Manchester city centre.

Angels allowed us to buck the trend. It is little known within MGS itself, but hopefully that will change as it develops over the years. I know I am not alone in feeling that Angels is one of the best things to have ever come out of the school. It is easy to forget that, just because it has never been actively promoted, MGS will have some of the best business brains in the world coming through it, just like it has some of the best lawyers, doctors etc. How many people have gone through life and not actually achieved their potential because there was no opportunity for them to do so? How many people have unfulfilled dreams that could, with the right support, so easily have become a reality. Angels gives people that support and the opportunities that the daily life of the school simply cannot offer.

Sixty young people work at our companies. Sixty people from all over the North of England have had the opportunity to get involved in 'real' companies because of Angels. One girl travels all the way from Cardiff each week just to be a part of it. She gets up at 4am every Saturday to travel to Manchester in time for the 9am start. For me that speaks volumes. Yes business is

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a hard nosed, tough environment and I love that game more than anything. But people like Natasha, the girl from Cardiff, give a human side to it all. No other school anywhere, to the best of my knowledge has something like Angels. It needs to be something that is there to stay like the much publicised Bursary Fund. This is one of those pioneering concepts that gives MGS pupils the greatest opportunities available anywhere. This can only happen with the support of Old Mancunians.

Angels doesn't just offer financial support either. They pool all their expertise in their various fields to help us on this very steep learning curve. This has been as valuable as their financial support and shows the depth to the group. It isn't just a charity dishing out thousands of pounds to any unrealistic teenager that asks. It is the full package, and for people like us, without sounding too melodramatic, it has changed the course of our lives. With the support of Old Mancunians, I hope we are just the first of many to be allowed to excel in the field where their ability lies. As I said in an article referring to something completely different in the New Mancunian last year, nowadays at MGS, you do not have to conform to achieve. Even 500 year old institutions have to move on. It is 2004, the world has changed. What Angels offers is a breath of fresh air for the school: the chance to throw away out dated idealisms and embrace the future. No one will convince me that is a bad thing.

Chris Tunnicliffe (MGS Year 7)
Chis@www.ignitemagazine.co.uk

2005 Reunion

We are looking for volunteers to help organise the Reunion for the 1950s and before. This will be held on Saturday 14th May. Please contact **Carole Pemberton 0161 224 7201**

Mrs Whittle

I was at MGS from 1948-56 and School captain in 1955/56. I worked in the Dept of Experimental Psychology at Cambridge from 1965-2000. I now live at the addresses below in France and Belgium. If I have to give an occupation I say 'independent scholar'.

My mother Dolores MS Whittle (Academic Staff 1939-55) taught maths at MGS during WW2. After the war she was asked by Eric James to come back and do some more, I think because MGS was finding it hard to recruit enough good staff in Maths. I don't remember exactly for which years she taught there. She certainly taught me in my first year there 1948/49. For most of the year I kept it quiet that she was my mother. But towards the end I decided she did me credit, and started to tell people.

They wouldn't believe me!

Paul Whittle

Les Jonquets

84750 Caseneuve, France

0033 (0)490 040328

Ave de Tervueren 161

1150 Bruxelles, Belgium

0032 (0)2 7423002

Thank you Paul you have solved the mystery. We have made the necessary entries for you and your Mother in the data base. Thank you also to David Murray, for making contact with you.

More Memories

My experience of MGS does not go back beyond 1953. I gathered that Mrs Whittle was invited to do part time teaching when required. The recent letter confirms that she was there in 1948. She told me that she was allocated to the bottom first form set where she found herself teaching her own son! The relationship was kept from the class for some time. I think she stopped teaching in 1955. Paul was School Captain in his final year.

Gordon S. Harris (1953 /58)

gharris11@cwctv.net

Missing Staff

As a journalist for 40 years I realise that space is limited, but I was disappointed that there wasn't room for the plea for information about Father Ambrose. I was in 1 alpha and had him for biology, an odd choice for an RC priest even in extremis. But he doesn't appear in the Blue Book like, apparently, several teachers brought in during the War to help out temporarily.

Mike Broadbent (1944-50)

mike_broadbent@yahoo.com

You made it this time! Ed

Mr Saunders

I take issue with your Easter correspondent Mr. Bryan Hopton concerning MGS's former gym master M. Saunders. I, as a very diffident gym pupil, always found Mr. Saunders to be a perfect gentleman. Indeed, I remember him well as such, as I also remember his inability to elevate his arms above the level of his shoulders, probably on account of a cardiovascular condition. It was in fact Mr. Saunderson's Assistant and successor, the ex-army PT instructor Mr. Cuggie, (a man who spent much of his time merely walking on his hands), who was the unmitigated sadist. Mr. Cuggie's habitual sadistic practice was to throw non-swimmers into the deep end of the swimming pool, and to abandon them there to be rescued, it was hoped by some pupil who was able to swim. "This would be unacceptable today, to say the least", to quote from Mr. Hopton's letter.

George Allen (1948/54)

Pall mall House

Galachlawside

Edinburgh

Bryan Hopton writes that the practice indulged in by gym teachers (two I remember) in the 40's, of making wet naked boys run round the swimming pool while striking with a gym shoe at their bottoms, would be unacceptable today. It would have been unacceptable then if the News of the World had got hold of the story. It caused widespread resentment and the

School management must, or should, have known. What does the present management think?

Stan Clough (1943-9)

stan_clough@yahoo.co.uk

(They totally agree with you.)

Young OMs

Thank you very much for the copy of *The Old Mancunian*, which I have sent to Sylvia, John's Bairstow's wife. I will mention the *OM* to my friends. The thing is, there is very little of significance to other people that happens in young people's lives. None of us are yet likely to be appointed managing director of some household name company. We are all probably just past the age where we might conceivably win Pop Idol or Fame Academy (I suppose there are benefits to growing older!). We're a bit young to feature in the obituaries. However, some of my friends are starting to think about marriage, so possibly that may feature in future *OMs*.

I do agree with you about the need to get younger people involved, however. We managed to get Michael Walker from the same vintage as me (1990-1997) onto the dinner committee for the Old Boy's Dinner, which is quite promising.

Bryan Shacklady

brshacklady@yahoo.co.uk

Table Tennis

Anyone in the area of Bramhall Recreation Centre Seal Road Bramhall, would be made most welcome. Mondays 7to 9pm (learners), Tuesday 7.30 to 9pm (intermediates) or Fridays 6.30 to 8pm (advanced)

Contact: Alan Blairs

(1952/59)

36 Urwick Road, Romiley

SK6 3JS 0161 494 1623

'Capital Disasters'

John Withington (1958-65) wrote to advise me that his new book is now in the shops. It is the first ever comprehensive history of two thousand years of London disasters from Boudicca's destruction of the City in Roman times, to the Ladbroke Grove train crash.

John.Withington@btinternet.com

Apologia

The editor misunderstood what was meant by a 'clerihew' in the Easter edition 16. By introducing a comma and capitals for 'A Clerihew' it looks as though it/he was a contemporary of the contributor Geoffrey Stone (1929-36).

A clerihew is a short comic or nonsensical verse in two rhyming couplets with lines of unequal length. It was:

"Mr Scarr, cannot run very far.
You can see he's had plenty,
when he's done two-twenty!"

Cross Channel Swim

Congratulations to Lennard Lee for his excellent performance in swimming the Channel in 9hrs 45 mins. This was a sponsored swim to raise money for both the Fund Raising Campaign for the Cambridge University New Sports Complex and Christie Hospital. Former friends and graduates may like to send a contribution. For details go to:

www.oldmancunians.org.

MGS Parents Society

The MGS Parents Society invite you to join them at an evening function to welcome Dr and Mrs Ray to the School on Saturday 18th September 7.30pm to 11pm.

The evening will include a drinks reception, hot buffet and licensed bar together with a jazz band and disco. Tickets cost £15 each. Please make cheques payable to MGS Parents Society. Dress lounge suits. Please apply by September 10th at the latest to:

Fiona Lloyd, 10 Greenway, Wilmslow, Cheshire

SK9 1LU. Tel 01625 524019

London Golf Event

The 29th July saw six keen golfers of assorted abilities meet at Knole Park, Sevenoaks for the Annual Golf Event. A close competition ensued but the highlight of the afternoon was an "eagle" on the 15th, par 5, by a newcomer to the meetings. It was a glorious afternoon and thoroughly enjoyed by all participants, so if you have a handicap, 1-28, come and join us next July to catch up with old friends or to make new ones.

Alec Elmer

alecelmer@supanet.com

OMA AGM

The 100th AGM will be held in the School library on Tuesday 30th November. The meeting last year was a happy informal occasion with much more time to meet other Old Mancunians. It is proposed to repeat that format this year. The new High Master Dr Christopher Ray will be invited to be President.

OMA Executive

The Executive is examining a revision to the Constitution to bring it up to date with current thinking and practice. The final wording of the changes will be finalised at the next meeting of the Executive and will be submitted to the membership at the AGM for approval.

It was also agreed that the current partial duplication of the notices of death in the OMA Annual Report and Ulula would be eliminated. The full reports will be printed in Ulula and as part of the current news reporting, brief notices will be printed in *The Old Mancunian*.

London Section

Congratulations and best wishes for their future happiness to Nick Gartside (1986-93), Secretary of OM London Section and Sophie Andrews who were married on 16th July in Guildford.

At the end of April, The Lamb at Holborn was the venue of another of our "Pub" evenings which seem set to become twice yearly events. It was good to welcome several new faces and we hope that more OM's working in London will find this an opportunity to meet up with old friends. The next is planned for Thursday, 23 September, details later.

On the third of June a party of forty members, their families and friends enjoyed the spectacular Beating The Retreat by the Massed Bands of the Household Division at Horse Guards Parade. Despite a light drizzle we were rewarded with a fine display of the pomp and ceremony which the British do so superbly. Following the event many of those attending repaired to The Commonwealth Club in Northumberland Avenue for an excellent supper.

Alec Elmer

alecelmer@supanet.com

Direct Debits

Ernest Fuller says "Thank you" to all who completed the BACS transfer form. It is hoped to process these new outstanding direct debits in October.

South East Section

At the Sectional AGM in May the members voted to merge the South East Section with London. This decision is due to be ratified by London at the AGM in November. If agreed, it is planned to hold at least one official activity in the Sussex area. No doubt other members will continue to hold informal gatherings. Thank you to John Shippen, who has held this Section together for so long and to Christ's Hospital who have permitted the Section to use its lovely buildings for the Annual Dinner and AGM.

Happy retirement John in the Lake District. Ed

Midlands Section

The Annual Summer Luncheon was held at the Anchor Inn Eckington on Saturday 12th June. Chris Diggins gave an entertaining account of the Old Mancunians who had followed the route from Fallowfield to St James's Palace. In concluding, Chris produced a genuine MGS poker and also his OBE.

The Annual Luncheon and Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 20th November this year at the Forest Hotel in Solihull, when the new High Master Dr Christopher Ray will be the principal guest. Further details will be sent to members of the Section well before 20th November.

Dan Binnion, Hon Secretary
(Please note my new telephone number: 01902 756894.)

South West

The 38th Annual Hugh Oldham Commemoration Service was held in Exeter Cathedral. 40 members and guests attended including the MGS Director of Development and School Captain.

We proceeded into the choir for Matins. Following the service we gathered outside Hugh Oldham's Chantry. The Acting Dean of Exeter, Canon Neil Collings, conducted our Commemoration Service and in conclusion the OMA Senior Vice-President Tim Hall laid a wreath on the tomb.

All then adjourned to the Southgate Hotel where aperitifs were purchased prior to lunch. The Chairman, Richard Hall, formally welcomed Canon Collings and other attendees and read a letter from the High Master detailing the reasons for his absence.

After the meal the Chairman proposed the loyal toast before inviting Ian Thorpe to tell the audience about life at MGS. He did this in an entertaining way that included a talk by James Corke-Webster, the School Captain, who had been given 2 hours notice by Ian to prepare! There was a request to Ian Thorpe to relay the Section's best wishes to the High Master. The luncheon was ended by Tim Hall proposing the toast to the "pious memory".

Some twenty members adjourned to the Southgate Room for the AGM whilst members' guests retired to other parts of the hotel. The chairman paid tribute to the late Frank Oliver for his contribution to the Section and his generosity to the Association. He reported that the Autumn event had been a resounding success although the actual number of members attending was disappointing. He thanked the Committee for their efforts, in particular the Secretary, Treasurer and Chris Burd. He also thanked Jim Brookes, who was retiring from the Committee, for his input and assistance during the 7 years he had served on the Committee.

The accounts were presented to the members and showed a bank balance of £655 at the end of the year compared with £496 the previous year. The increase in funds was made despite making a £250 donation to the Romeo and Juliet drama project at the school.

Following the success of the 2003 Autumn (cultural) Lunch it has been decided to visit the Bishop's Palace in Wells on Sunday 7th November Contact Hon. Secretary **Ed Bridge** 01934 834521.

Tim Hall

Tim as Senior Vice President attends many OMA functions around the country. At the last Executive meeting on 6th July he presented a verbal report on the health of the Sections most of which was very encouraging news. Tim also said that there will be at least one official London & SE meeting each year in the Sussex area and that a number of local members are proposing to continue to meet informally.

Staff Nicknames

Thank you for the latest copy of Old Mancunian. OM is always a good read, because it invariably brings such memories with it.

For once, I can offer an answer to a question. 'Harpic'

was Mr. Copley, whose son was in my year of Maths VI. One of them was David, the other John, but I've forgotten which was which. I do remember Harpic's little catch-phrase - if we failed to work hard enough he would shrug and say "Oh, well, I got my Schol." He had an aged Ford, registration PNF9 (so my memory isn't too bad, after all). Another of my contemporaries was "Blanche" Whiteley, who I gather is still well known at MGS!

In those days, there was a sad snobbery connected with Maths VI. When I announced that I wanted to read electrical engineering at a redbrick university - shock, horror! - I was disowned, especially by "Arnold" Ashbrook, who tried hard never to speak to me again. But my knowledge of mathematics made many of my courses a breeze, and the same was true when I did a PhD, so thanks to those who stuck with me!

Incidentally, I have fond memories of Billy Hulme, who took us at the time the (then) "New Physics Block" was built. Billy's room overlooked the building site and lessons were often disrupted by the noise. One day, in a rage, he exploded "That Stone, he's a yes man! He gets that damned great physics block and I can't get a stick of chalk to write on the blackboard!"

Keep up the good work!

John Pearson (1955-63)

Southwood Holywood Dumfries DG2 0RW

<mailto:johnp@dumgal.gov.uk>

In my second year at MGS (1943) the school began to feel the pinch as masters were called up. We had a replacement teacher, Miss Brassington, who was nicknamed 'Ma Brassknobs'; being the unruly class that we were, I think she could only live with us for about six weeks. Eventually the school found a male to teach us (French, I believe).

I well remember Sol Clynes having little sympathy for anyone coming late to class. The penalty was a 200-word essay entitled "Punctuality is the Privilege of Princes" I don't recall that he ever read one of the essays. He would fold the paper in quarters and tear it in such a way that it ended up with a hole in the middle, rendering it useless for a second offence!
Cedric Chernick (1942-50)
Chicago, IL USA

President BDA

Dr Anthony S Kravitz OBE became this year's President of the British Dental Association. Anthony has worked in general practice in North Manchester since 1968 and is an Honorary Research Fellow in the University of Wales.

Deaths

Anthony Patrick Barnett (1945/50), died on the 5th August after a long illness cheerfully borne. Tony was a regular at the Old Boys Dinners for many years until prevented by his illness.

William Hubert Dickenson (1930/32) on the 12th April 2004. A Chartered Accountant he had a lifelong interest in music as a choirmaster and church organist.

Maurice Diner (1943-49) on the 11th March 2004. Maurice will be remembered by regulars of the Old Boys Dinners, which he attended for many years until prevented by ill-health.

Samuel Johan Hardhill aged 21, (1993/96) on the 24th December 2003 as a result of a road accident.

Lionel George Hockney (1936-38) Lionel died on 26th March 2004 after a long illness. He leaves a widow Blanche, who said he was always very proud of MGS and that he got his colours for football at School.

Sir Jan Alfred Lewando CBE (1923-26) a prominent industrialist with a wide range of interests, Jan was an active member of the London Section

Sir Geoffrey Masterson Wilson (1922-28) a

distinguished Civil Servant, former Vice-President of the World Bank and Chairman of the Race Relations Board.

Gerard Joseph Moxon (1933-37) on Wednesday 25th February 2004. Gerard was proud to have been an Old Boy of MGS. He was born in Singapore and was a Japanese prisoner of war from 1942-45. A charter member of the

Colwyn Bay Lyons Club he gave enormous personal contribution to the community.

Peter Wadsworth (1940-44)

died on the 5th April 2004, after an illness bravely borne. He had been active in retirement holding honorary officer roles with the local British Legion, his Masonic Lodge and his great love, The Poynton Players, a local amateur dramatic group. He leaves Marjorie his wife and sons Paul and me, Martin. I too am an Old Mancunian 1963/70. I am still on the staff at Bolton School of Economics & Business Studies.

Flying Bombs

Re the flying bomb piece from Peter Stewart, who was at school when I was (41 - 48): I lived in Oldham, and was one of those often asked to stay behind in hall after assembly, with all the others on the Oldham train. The enquiries usually involved girls from the High School, although we thought those from Adelphi House were more friendly.

When the bomb landed it was only about 400 yards from our house, and it woke us and shook the whole district. Tony and I, both OMs as you know, went later in the day to see the devastation from the nearby hill, Glodwick Lows. Had the V1 gone only a few yards farther the only casualties would have been windows and a few chickens. Our father, J K Bowker, also an OM, was in the Civil Defence, and worked all day helping to rescue the trapped survivors and removing bodies. 24 houses were either demolished by the bomb or irreparably damaged. Many of the dead were from one family as there had been a wedding earlier, and people were camped out in one of the houses. When the couple returned from their honeymoon they had very little close family left. Best wishes - Mike
Michael K Bowker (1941-48)
The Skerries, Holywell Road, Malvern, WR14 4LF
Tel/FAX 01684 574079

Peter Stewart's account of the German V 1 attack on Manchester on Christmas Eve 1944 evokes some grim memories. Mine are of renewed

fear after we thought we'd finally left the things behind after moving from the Isle of Wight to Cheadle in September 1944; but we'd had the first flying bomb on 13th June 1944 - a diabolical noise and a red flame rocketing across the night sky several days before the government had even told us what they were; and which, when seen by my ashen-faced father off-duty from the Royal Observer Corps, prompted the words "My God! What's that?" And we'd then had our heaviest attack on the 25th June when an ARP warden friend, regularly at the cafe table where I lunched (out of school) in Newport, was blown through an advertising hoarding and became our first fatality.

David Green (1946/52)
[david.green@fish.co.uk]

The Jane Austen Society

Bryan Nagle wrote to say he was very sorry to be missing the Troop 2 re-union in May and went on to say 'As Programme Secretary for the Hampshire branch of **The Jane Austen Society**, I have arranged for the Historian Irene Collins to stay with us, from Manchester, so that she can talk to us at our meeting on the day in question.

There does not appear to be a branch nearer to you than the Midlands or the Northern Branch (meet in Yorkshire). Are you or other OMs in the M/c area interested in forming a North Western Branch? The Main Jane Austen Society is looking to set up new branches. Just a thought - if so contact www.janeaustensociety.org.uk

There could be a real spin off for the School as it could lead to collaboration with the newly opened Chawton House Library, which is also connected with Southampton University. Their website is www.chawton.org Schools will be encouraged to visit on site and online I believe.

I have just recalled that I attended the first meeting with Brian Royle. He has moved and I will endeavour to contact him.' **Bryan R Nagle**

brnfrsh@tiscali.co.uk>
**Dalegarth, Cranes Rd,
Sherborne St John,
Hampshire
RG24 9JD.
Tel. 01256 850917.**

Can You Help?

Dan Binnion Midlands Section Secretary writes that many years ago in 2A, we had a maths teacher - one Mr Griffiths (1915-49) who in one lesson wrote a verse of poetry on the blackboard and then said "solve!" One bright young lad quickly gave the solution!

Now I can remember the first two lines and the last line, but I cannot remember the third line. The verse runs as follows:-
'Sir, I send a rhyme excelling
In rigid truth and sacred
spelling

- - - the third line

Lest Dr. Johnson fulminate.'

I wonder if any of your readers can remember the third line. I have no doubt that many of the mathematically minded OMs will be able to solve the problem if you decide to raise it I shall be pleased to give the solution in due course!

Dan Binnion

Trek Centenary Reunion 2004

The reunion will be held on the 25th of September. The main exhibition of photographs will be held in the Memorial Hall. **Contact Carole Pemberton at MGS.**

Editorial

Please address all correspondence to
Mrs Carole Pemberton
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or to The Editor
'*The Old Mancunian*'

To register on internet go to
www.Oldmancunians.org
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