

London & South East Section

The London & South East Section has two events left this year. A pub evening on Thursday 15 October at The Anchor, nr. Southwark Bridge from 6:00pm and the AGM on Thursday 12 November at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, Fleet Street, drinks from 6:30pm, dinner from 7.00pm. All OMs are very welcome at all events, further details from the Secretary Nick Gartside (nicholas.gartside@schroders.com)

South West Section

Following another successful Commemoration Service and Lunch in Exeter on Sunday 21 June, our next event is a visit to Tyntesfield, a National Trust property near Bristol, followed by lunch at the nearby Failand Inn. This will be on Saturday 17 October. Next year's Commemoration Service in Exeter will be on Sunday 27 June 2010.

All Old Mancunians are most welcome to attend either of the above events and should contact John Smith, the SW Section Secretary, for more details. Tel: 01275 843349 or email: johningsmith@chyanmor.wanadoo.co.uk

20/30 Club

One of the Club's highlights is the annual lunch at School in June, with super food and great company. This year, the High Master introduced Nick Munday, who talked about his school career and then outlined his future plans. We will miss him after he leaves at the end of the summer term. Dr Ray then asked James Campbell, the 2009-2010 School Captain, to say a few words, and so he fulfilled his first task as Captain within about 2 hours of his appointment.

Our regular Friday lunches in Bridge Street continue each month except for October, when we will hold the Ladies Lunch at Stanneylands, Wilmslow.

Please contact the Secretary Alex Wells (0129 881 2886) if you would like more information.

BURIAL OF IAN BAILEY'S ASHES

Following the morning service at St George's Church in the middle of Poynton on Sunday 22 November a short service will take place at 12:30pm.

Since the last TOM we have been advised of the recent deaths of the following OMs:

M C Barber* (85-92) C L Chernick* (42-50)
G Martin* (39-46) P G Herrod* (38-44)
J N Kay (38-40) J D Overens (51-56)
J R Wilson* (36-42) P Rhodes* (38-45)
C W Swales (27-33) J W Armstrong (35-40)
L E Chadderton (41-44) J B Gibson (23-28)
R M Robson* (22-26) D Williams (42-47)
F Smith* (29-34) A H Lenton* (25-33)
D Franks (42-45) N England (32-36)
M D Whitesmith (00-07) G Gross* (50-55)
A Etchells (23-27) P H Pimblett (38-40)
J Galloway (25-31) D L Smart (23-33)

We have also been informed of the deaths of the following members of staff:

I Leverton* (1968-2006)
R Martin* (1977-2009)
P G Mason* (HM 62-78)
A J V Roberts (50-64)

We would welcome offers to supply brief obituaries for *Ulula*. The asterisk shows that an obituary is already in preparation. Contact Jane Graham at j.graham@mgs.org or 0161 224 1746

Correspondence to Julie Wright at MGS, Old Hall Lane, Manchester M13 0XT (j.wright@mgs.org) 0161 224 1746 or to John Horsfield at School. Closing date for the January edition is 18 December 2009.



September 2009

The Old Mancunian

Edition 32

EDITOR'S NOTES

It is always pleasing to come across the contributions of OMs in a wide variety of cultural activities. Joan Littlewood, the left-wing theatrical director, memorable above all for 'Oh What a Lovely War', thanks in her autobiography, 'Joan's Book', a number of OMs who helped or encouraged her in her career. As she tried to make a name for herself, John Coatman (1903-07), a luminary of the Indian Empire Civil Service, then of the BBC and finally as an MGS governor, heartened her. There was Gerry Raffles (1933-39) a lifetime collaborator as well as Graham Banks (1933-38) who died in an aircraft raid over Hanover in 1943. Finally, Harold Lever (1928-31), the Labour politician, helped her Theatre Workshop to stay afloat.

To move to another form of cultural activity, Manchester City. Colin Shindler has published 'The worst of friends: Malcolm Allison, Joe Mercer and Manchester City'. In the book, OMs Sidney Rose (1929-35), Michael Horwich (1933-39) and Howard Davies (1961-68) are all mentioned in various capacities. This is a very good read if you want more detail.

To turn to correspondence, Jon Beasley-Murray (1979-86) an OM, now resident in British Columbia, expresses his concerns about the direction of the 'Old Mancunian'. I would assure you all that we naturally have the good fortune of MGS close to our heart. We peddle no official line, though we must naturally bear in mind the personal sensitivities of surviving OMs and MGS staff. Apparently impervious to MGS sensitivities was the polymath, astrologer and wizard, John Dee who lived from 1527-1608. During his time as Warden of Manchester College (1595-1604) he inspected MGS, found it

wanting, and at the end of his unfavourable visit tried to borrow money from the Highmaster!

Now to conclude with the present and the future. The Head of the new MGS Junior Section, Linda Hamilton, gave me and my wife a most welcoming tour earlier this year of its premises, Bexwyke Lodge. The entrance hall of Bexwyke Lodge is redolent of a capacious and superior Alpine Swiss Chalet, yet the atmosphere exudes traditional MGS industriousness. The Junior Section is the hub of a great range of activities including the teaching of Arabic and Italian. All augurs well. Devotees of MGS history will be pleased to hear that the Section has three houses, 'Plumtree', 'Bradshaw' and 'Hinde', being the names of former highmasters.

John Horsfield

FROM THE HIGH MASTER**Dr Christopher Ray**

MGS received the judgement of the Charity Commission in July and I am delighted to report that the school satisfies the requirements of public benefit as defined by the Commission. In the formal language of the Commission: "The Manchester Grammar School Foundation is a charity and is operating for the public benefit. There are no required or recommended actions for the governors (of the school) to take."

The object of our charity is to advance the education of boys by the provision of a day or day and boarding school or schools in or near the City of Manchester. Examples of educational benefits provided at MGS for its own boys and for students and others in the wider community cited by the Commission included:

- Access to lessons or other educational events, such as the annual Hugh Oldham Lecture.
- Support for A-level students at state schools to help them prepare for entry to Oxford, Cambridge and other leading universities: we currently work with three Sixth Form Colleges assisting over one hundred students every year.
- Collaborative working with state schools: we enjoy increasingly productive relationships with Manchester Academy and with many local junior schools.
- Work with schools overseas, including our long-term support for schools in Uganda.

In 2008/09 the school provided 203 means-tested bursaries. Of these, 120 bursaries cover the entire cost of the fees during their time in the school. In addition 45 families received shorter-term support to help them deal with financial hardship.

We are very proud of our record on bursaries. However, we believe that it would be quite wrong for MGS to be regarded as providing any kind of bursarial benchmark for other schools. In this respect it is important to note the guidelines published by the Commission which state that there are many ways for a school to provide public benefit other than through the provision of means-tested bursaries.

MGS is fortunate: we have steadily accumulated the funds necessary to ensure that we are able to provide means-tested places for over two hundred pupils from poorer families. Also important for us is the extent to which we have engaged with the wider community in Manchester and beyond. The School's ethos of social diversity and social action goes back several hundred years. But this ethos is under-pinned by our equally

long-standing commitments to educational excellence and to academic selection. These elements together define the school.

High Masters from Walker to James and from Paton to Stephen shared these deep commitments. We owe a particular debt to Peter G Mason whose tireless work and vision enabled the School to make the difficult transition to independence without losing its essential character. My wife and I were very proud indeed to stand alongside many others in August, hearing moving tributes from his family and friends at his funeral.

The Sutton Trust has discerned a confusion of the concepts of excellence and elitism in the minds of many state-school teachers, so that they are reluctant to recommend Oxbridge to their brightest and best. Teachers in independent schools like MGS tend not to suffer from such confusion: they know how to give even the most disadvantaged but able student the self-belief needed to succeed at the highest levels.

The continuing existence of a group of independent schools, educating some half a million pupils with conspicuous success (and incidentally saving the exchequer some £3-billion per annum), demonstrates the strength of independence – and perhaps provides one reason why Lord Adonis asked the independent sector two years ago, apparently without irony, to share its DNA with the state-maintained sector. But at such times he and others wilfully ignore the fact that the strength of very many independent schools is founded upon academic selection.

The Commission has accepted MGS as a charity without reservation. But another important truth emerges here. The reason why very many of our old boys, parents and friends tell us that they make donations to our bursary scheme, is the determination to ensure that disadvantaged but able pupils may benefit from our commitment to the educational excellence which academic se-

Report, as well as support various projects at School. Membership is just £12 per year.

You can download the membership forms from www.oldmancunians.org. Paper copies are available: contact Julie Wright at school.

EXISTING OMA MEMBERS

Thank you to all members who have paid their annual subscription due 1 May 2009. We look forward to receiving outstanding subscriptions as soon as possible please. As previously advised we regret that we will be unable to send a copy of *Ulula* 2009 whilst subscriptions remain outstanding.

Whilst all donations are gratefully received, we are receiving duplicate subscription payments in some cases by both standing order and direct debit. If it is not your intention to donate the additional £12 please contact your bank to cancel your standing order payment. Many thanks.

VISIT US

The tours organised for OMs have been very successful. We suggest you book a tour during term time when boys are at work and play! You will be delighted to see the diverse and stimulating activities boys enjoy. OMs have enjoyed reminiscing over a free School lunch in the refectory. Telephone or email Jane Graham in the Development Office to reserve your place.

SECTION EVENTS

FOOTBALL SECTION

The 2008/9 season proved to be a successful one for Old Mancunian Football Club in the Lancashire Amateur league. The second and third teams gained promotion from their respective divisions whilst the fourth team finished a creditable fifth. The first team, however, had a somewhat disappointing season finishing mid table in the premier division.

We have strengthened the first team squad in the summer with some graduates from the University and have made a promising start to the new season with two wins following

un-beaten pre-season programme of friendlies.

We continue to enjoy the superb facilities and pitches at the University's Armitage Centre in Fallowfield and will offer a warm welcome to any Old Boys who would like to join us at training at the school gym on Tuesdays from 6:30pm-8:00pm. For more information about Old Mancunians AFC, please visit the website at www.omaafc.co.uk or the Lancashire Amateur League website at www.lancsam.fsnet.

Midlands Section

At the Committee meeting on 17 March, Dan Binnion was re-elected as Chairman and the other members retained their responsibilities. The Midland Section is becoming increasingly concerned about our dwindling membership and should any Old Mancunian in the area be interested in joining us please get in touch.

This year we had a departure from our usual summer event in that Susan and David Franks kindly offered to host a Summer Luncheon Garden Party at their home. This duly took place on the 13 June – a hot sunny day. 15 members and guests attended and were provided with a splendid buffet lunch by Susan and David accompanied by lively discussions on a range of topics among the guests. John Wilson, standing in for the Chairman who had sent apologies for non attendance, gave our hosts a hearty vote of thanks and a bouquet of flowers to Susan. The opinion was that this event had been a great success and we hope to repeat it next year.

Informal lunches take place on the first Tuesday of the month at The Old Joint Stock, Temple Row, Birmingham. Any OM and guest(s) are welcome but please contact me (0121 475 3700) first to ensure that someone else will be there. Secretary, John Wilson john@wilson7743.fsnet.co.uk

their late coach, Ian “Iggy” Leverton, whose obituary will appear in this autumn’s *Ulula*. Before the match the players presented Ian’s family with The Ian Leverton Memorial Trophy to be presented annually to the top scoring player in the School football squad.

From the U13 football squad photograph, ten of the thirteen boys pictured turned out on the day, though it has to be said, not all for the football. Si Griffiths sent a note from his mum saying he was in Singapore for the foreseeable future so we let him off. The teams for the day were augmented by a couple of guest OMs and a scattering of junior Newsholmes to get to seven a side across the First Team pitch at Old Hall Lane.

Scrap Metal Select: S Brown (c), M Carr, S Crummett, T Drabu, D James, D Newton, P Robinson

Young Guns: I Gazidis (c), P Hayes, L Newsholme, M, Newsholme (Jnr), M Newsholme (Snr), G Peters, J Whitfield

As always the Development Team, in the guise of Ian Thorpe and Jane Graham, were on hand to assist, we were very grateful for their supply of half time orange slices, drinking water and of course, Jane’s magic sponge.

After the game (SMS 7, YGs 3) the tour moved onto Didsbury for post match refreshment where man-in-a-suitcase Paul Cowan jetted in and talked a very good match. Great credit must go to so many people for putting themselves out & for making efforts such as this to attend from great distances. The full match report (76 Trim Bones) can be seen at www.oldmancunians.org.

John Whitfield (1976-83)

OLD BOYS’ GOLF DAY

I have recently heard about an Annual Golf Day in which teams of Old Boys from the independent schools in the South Manchester area compete. At the present time there are six of them - schools that is! - and OMs do not take part and seem never to have done

so.

I feel I should try to put this regrettable situation right, honour of the School etc.!

Next year’s date is Wednesday 7 July and the venue is Bramhall Golf Club. Would any golfing OMs living in the area who would like to take part please contact me in the next few weeks on DandMRavenscroft@aol.com so that I can make the necessary arrangements with the organiser. We need about a dozen, so please do not all rush at once!

David Ravenscroft (1948-55)

NEW YORK SECTION

Ben Larah (at MGS 1996-2003) is now working in New York and is interested in hearing from fellow OMs based there who might like to meet up. Perhaps this could lead to a new regional section of The Old Mancunians’ Association? Ben’s email address is benlarah@gmail.com.

OLD BOYS WEBSITE

To make the OM website (www.oldmancunians.org) a place that you are more likely to include in your internet “Favourites” we’d like some feedback on what you would like to see included in it. Some thoughts we have had are including scanned articles from *Ulula* or “The Old Mancunian” relevant to particular interest groups or eras, mini historic exhibitions if you like. Or perhaps you would like some more contemporary information about what’s happening in the School these days, “Meet the Head Boy” type of thing. Before you respond, we might get arty but not that arty.

Both Ian Thorpe (i.thorpe@mgs.org) and I (Johnny.whit@hotmail.com) would greatly appreciate any input or offers of assistance in making the site more reflective of what being an OM is all about.

John Whitfield (1976-83)

OMA MEMBERSHIP

Why not join the Old Mancunians’ Association? You will receive *Ulula* and the *Annual*

lection brings.

I am glad that the Commission has been brave enough to recognise that MGS deserves its charitable status, knowing that within our DNA is not just a commitment to social diversity but also an equally strong commitment to academically selective education as a proven vehicle of social mobility. Later this term, the Annual Report for 2008/09 will be published (the second edition) – I was delighted to receive many messages from OMs asking me to continue with this initiative. If I may anticipate just one item: our examination results at A-level have improved yet again, and once more ahead of the national trend. Even if there is a degree of ‘grade inflation’ generally, our boys are continuing to make genuine improvements: 96% of the grades awarded this year have been A (over 70%) and B. We continue to stand alongside the very best academic schools in the UK and we continue to demonstrate a firm commitment to educating the ‘whole person’ whilst we do so. I hope that Peter Mason would have been proud of MGS thirty-odd years on.

OM LETTERS:

Ian W Manson 1942-50 writes:

From time to time The Old Mancunian has a comment from an OM about ‘punishments’ from their various Masters. I suppose the most commonly mentioned, and dare I say it, the one who seems to be most remembered with fondness is dear old Billy Hulme – I too felt it from him.

Billy Hulme has been of course well recorded; his famous wooden spoons based on size, Grandad and Grandpa (the biggest), Pip, Squeak and Wilfred (smaller). These latter were only ‘available’ to his own class (1B)! Otherwise you were allowed to select which ‘item’ was for you! You may also remember his marking system for the fortnightly French vocabulary tests (usually 15-

25 words per test). One was allowed the following mistakes before punishment was administered – 2 wrong for every ten words, 1 for every five and one for good luck – i.e. in a 20 word test one was allowed 6 mistakes before the spoon was brought out – quite a good marking method I thought. Then Billy gave you a choice of ‘one mighty wallop or two lighter ones’!

The cane was surprisingly seldom used in any of my classes though Billy would for more serious disciplinary needs. Then one of my friends who brought a crib into Billy’s vocabulary test had a letter sent to his father about this. Next day the lad told Billy that he had handed it over to his father. When Billy found out that he hadn’t he was summoned before the whole school in the Memorial Hall where the Chief gave him six of the best up on the platform – the only time I saw this happen.

Don Montague 1946-53 writes: The MGS Tour du Mont Blanc

In 1950, one July evening, I and 39 other lads turned up at school, with our army surplus rucksacks full, our new walking boots, our £5 spending money and Huge Excitement. For we were off to the Alps, most of us for the first time, to walk and camp round Mont Blanc in 23 days. That night we loaded the kit, tents, shovels and hessian “lat screens” for digging and shielding our field toilets, cooking pots including a pressure cooker known as The Bomb, big enough for stew for 50 hungry louts, into Robinson’s Removals van, and set off for London Road Station, to catch the midnight train to London. Johnnie Lingard, aka JL, was our leader, assisted by nine masters and Old Boys of the school, and this was “Trek”, the long awaited adventure!

After 24 hours in Paris and another night in the train we tumbled ourselves and our kit out into the bright sunlight at St Gervais-le-Fayet, to take a French breakfast in the open

air and then ride up on the rack railway to the Col de Voza. Wild raspberries grew by the trackside, and someone held my legs as I leaned out of the train window to pick some. We came to the deserted Col at about 1600m and pitched our tents and dozed in the sun, too tired to walk up the ridge on either side. After our first camp supper I lay on the soft turf and gazed, amazed, at the chain of Mont Blanc laid out before us, the nearby snow of the Dôme du Gouter, the distant, sharp rocks of the Chamonix Aiguilles, changing colour as the sun set.

We walked for three weeks, carrying our packs and all that miserably heavy, old-fashioned camping equipment between sites, making day expeditions from where we stopped. The sun shone, every day but one. Names which are still magic to me, 50 years later, Les Contamines and Mont Joly, the Col de la Croix du Bonhomme, its refuge then still roofless from the war, Les Chapieux, aka Les Crapieux - it tends to rain there. The Col de la Seigne into Italy, Le Fauteuil des Allemands, a hanging valley above the Val Veni, Entrèves, where at 108°F in the shade Ian Bailey treated our blisters with cigarette ash and iodine and our constipation with small white bombs, and the wasps in our hand-dug latrines were horrendous. The Montagne de la Saxe with its cows, their bells clunking tunelessly, the tinkle of a chapel bell heard across a valley. The early morning tramp up to the Col Ferret - no ferrets up there at 2536m - the Italian Customs men whom we'd sneaked past before they awoke shaking their fists from hundreds of metres below. Our first Swiss villages, La Fouly and Issert, wooden houses with roofs overhanging their balconies were stairways to the ground where the winter's firewood sheltered from the rain.

Up through a hot pinewood, with its aphrodisiac smell of resin, to Lac Champex and a magic camping ground, on soft peat which

seemed to float on a hidden sea beneath our feet. My socks, when I took them off for the first time for three days, stood there vertical and stank at me. In a shop Swiss chocolate in 500g blocks, something never seen in England in those days of post-war rationing. 2 August was the Swiss national day, and we fit youngsters took too many of the prizes in their village sports. After Trient, a miserable struggle up a blindingly steep trail, in pouring rain, brushed by wet bushes on each side, to Bovine, nothing but a large cowshed and a *fromagerie*, where the milk was made into cheese, nothing else but rain. The cowherds took pity on us, and we slept, warm and drying, in the loft above the cows, their soft voices comforting our slumber. The Cols de la Forclaz and de Balme, and we were back in France, coming out of the mountains singing, down to Chamonix for several days of expeditions before our return to Manchester. "*Oh the great days in the distance enchanted, days of fresh air in the rain and the sun*" - we'd sung as we walked. Unforgettable. Unforgotten. The 1950 "Gruppo del Monte Bianco" map on which I marked our path and camp sites is still a treasured memento. Mountains became a part of my life. P.S. Health and Safety note! What happened on the 1951 Austrian Trek when some bright lad had left his passport under a rock, hoping thus to press some edelweiss he'd found, and only discovered this when we'd walked half way down the Öztal?

Johnny L told him he was a silly ass, and to go back and get it, and rejoin us in the Stubaital a couple of days later!

David Holloway 1935-40 writes:

Warm thanks to Peter Dutton for the photograph of the 1945/46 1st XV in Edition 31. What memories it evoked. Names such as Meakins, Jensen, Greedy, Poynton, Statham and Kershaw sprang to mind. Then there is my late younger brother Michael, (the one holding the ball). Despite the drubbing by

1970s REUNION DINNER

For inspiration I read the last TOM Reunion Dinner Review, the one before and the one before that and guess what? They all say the same. We too toured the School and thought how little it had physically changed. We too considered the Refectory, the lumpy mash and custard whose DNA similarities could only be split by the hint of vanilla essence and ground yellow poster paint. We too sat through the amusing speeches & wines, the chicken and the cheeses. In fact it was all so *samey* that we could have spent our money on any sportsman's dinner with posh nosh and had done with it.

But that would miss the point. We didn't go to be wined, dined and entertained but to revisit and refresh relationships from three decades ago. We went to see people who were our friends and, let's be honest, maybe adversaries from a time gone by, a time gone by but not lost. I am no intellectual snob, imagine(!), but the true wonder of the MGS Reunion Dinner isn't in the menu or the wine list but in the company you keep. And in the company of Owl'ed Mancs, you can't go too far wrong. You cannot buy the memories we all share anywhere else, the witty intelligent conversation - is that taking it too far - the sharpness and sarcasm that return, the degeneration to the scurrilous and the downright rude. I did not meet a single person there who hadn't thoroughly enjoyed the evening and any of the subsequent spin off gatherings that it subsequently spawned.

My only disappointment is that the next Reunion for my era is not until 2015 - let me be the first to breathe the word and look clever for once, the year of the *quincentenary*. We will have to keep ourselves amused, if not out of mischief, until then. I can only urge all who read this to sign up to the OM Association, to get to the Reunion Dinner when you get the chance and to make contact with

some of your old school friends.

Thanks as usual must go to the HM for allowing us to use the School, to the Development Team for their endless endeavours, the speakers, the Committee, the prefects and waiters. Most of my thanks though are saved for you who made the effort and showed up to make it a very special evening indeed and to those who couldn't be there but still bothered to correspond. I've enjoyed many a good catch up, an incident forgotten, an embarrassment reminded, too many to recount, too incriminating to share.

Don't dare to be wise, dare to be first, dare to get in touch.

John Whitfield (1976-83)
johnny.whit@hotmail.com

PRE 1950s REUNION

A reunion for all those boys who joined the School before 1950 will be held on 8 May 2010. For further details contact Jane Graham in the Development Office.

SCOUT REUNION

Plans are now being made for a Scout Reunion to be held at lunch time in school on Saturday 8 May 2010. If you are interested in this event please contact Jane Graham at school.

OLD BOYS' DINNER

To be held at School on Saturday 21 November. The Senior Steward will be Andrew Sparkes (1974-78) who is the British Ambassador to Kosovo and the Junior Steward will be Anthony Taylor (1988-95) who last year rowed solo across the Atlantic. For further details please contact Paul Rose, Recorder. E-mail Paul.Rose@halliwells.com; Birchdale Mews, 3 Birchdale, St Mary's Road, Bowdon, Cheshire, WA14 2PW; 0870 365 8678.

1976 FOOTBALL REUNION

The 2009 School Reunion inspired Simon Brown to pick up the phone to the once dubbed "The Bionic Babes" of 1976 to bring together the squad for a match in memory of

and I am very grateful for the opportunity that I have.

Jonathan Hunt (2002-09)

Jeremy Gilmour (2002-09) is also beginning an under graduate course at Harvard in the autumn.

We wish them every success.



Construction work started in earnest in July on the Lecture Theatre and surrounding rooms, including the old Prefects' Common Room. The old seating, floor and stage have been removed, together with significant sections of the roofing. The work will continue throughout the Michaelmas term and we hope to see completion early in 2010. The final stages of fundraising will concentrate on naming opportunities for the new, comfortable seats and other equipment. Please contact Ian Thorpe, Director of Development, for details, or consult the Drama Centre Campaign section of 'The Future' at www.mgs.org.

DOES MGS CHANGE?

Nick Munday, who taught Classics at MGS for 30 years and became Head of Classics, Head of Arts Side and then Surmaster, left this summer to train for ordination in the Church of England at Ripon College Cuddesdon, Oxford. John Horsfield asked him to describe the changes he had seen during his time at MGS. He writes:

My first impression is of continuity. MGS still has the same fundamental values it had

when I joined in 1979 – high academic standards, a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, cultural diversity and a good social mix. The boys have always been for the most part a joy to teach – bright, cheerful, good-humoured and keen to take shortcuts in usually fairly predictable ways... though the best excuse for not handing in homework ('Sorry I haven't done your Greek, Sir, but my pet snake went missing and we had to take up the floorboards') was a one-off and was duly verified at parents' evening the following week.

Some things have changed a bit. I think modern MGS boys are politer than their forebears – it's only in the last few years that pupils have started to say 'thank you' at the end of lessons, and they are often praised by visitors for the way they hold open doors or help them if they are lost. In general, they are kinder to each other and behaviour in form rooms at lunchtime is better than it used to be.

One of the welcome changes brought in by the current High Master has been the emphasis on the individual needs of the individual pupil. The curriculum is now very much more flexible than it used to be. For example, pupils can choose a vast array of languages – and they are doing so. It is a particular joy to me that 34 boys are starting Greek this year – the highest number, certainly, since I started at MGS. There is also a larger range of subjects in the sixth form, including economics and philosophy, and drama and electronics further down the school.

Nick Munday (1979-09)

FOUNDERS' DAY

This year the event will take place on Friday 13 November. The format of the day will be similar to that of previous years, and invitations to the lunch at School will be sent to Benefactors as before.

the much older 'Paras' from Ringway, it should perhaps be remembered that this was one of the most successful school first fifteens of all times. Why else would they have been matched against a services team and have such a vociferous band of supporters who followed them around, home or away? Many parents were amongst this group and I remember that whenever I was home on leave from the RAF, attending these matches was *compulsory* despite the travelling difficulties of wartime Britain. I wonder if Peter or any other survivors of that team remember those loud voices shouting encouragement from the touchline throughout that season. These memories are particularly treasured by me since in 1950 Lieutenant Michael Holloway was killed whilst serving his country in Berlin.

SALE HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS (1908-1949)

Continued from Edition 31.....

It was in the early twenties that negotiations were first opened with Cheshire C.C about a possible purchase of the school. This was connected with the county's plan to open new schools in Sale and for fifteen years the county was in the background as a possible buyer of the school.

Under Mr Green the staff was strengthened and the buildings improved and the pupil numbers established at around 150. In 1924 when Mr Green left the school to take up a headship in Widnes, Mr William King was appointed to replace him. The new head was an Old Mancunian himself who had taught at the main school for 20 years.

The school premises in Poplar Grove were still below standard and in the early 1930s there were plans to extend the buildings on the same site. However in 1934 an alternative plan was adopted to build a completely new school on land at Woodbourne Road, Brooklands. This would see classrooms and

an assembly hall and would house up to 250 boys. The estimated cost was £8,900 plus the cost of furniture. The construction went smoothly and the new school opened in September 1936 with 204 boys enrolled.

The school prospectus at this date showed that Mr King had built up a good team of young teachers, almost all graduates, who remained in place for over ten years and who are recalled with affection by many old Sale boys. They will remember Lynton Smith ("Smuts"), Tom Griggs, Jimmy Latham, Jack Bull and Harold Cresswell with his soft Dublin accent. Bill Saunders, the P.E. master before 1940, had a long career with MGS, having taught at all three prep schools as well as at the main school after the war. Eric Peet was the Latin teacher, choirmaster and speedy right winger whose two sons attended Sale High and MGS.

Head Master King retired in 1939 and was replaced by another master from the main school. Tommy Smith had seen war service in Mesopotamia in the first war and had taught maths at MGS since 1917.

As war approached boys brought their gas masks to school and air raid shelters were built. The first air raid trenches were most unsatisfactory but these were replaced by more substantial brick buildings. A few boys were evacuated by their parents but soon most returned home. In September 1939 there were 220 boys at the school and by 1945 the numbers had risen to 328. Only two members of staff, Mr Wright and Mr Saunders, were called up into the forces and they were replaced by Miss Clegg and the athletic Mrs Bannister. Two other ladies, Mrs Aked and Miss Viney, looked after the under sevens in the two preparatory forms.

Both the other Prep schools closed in July 1940 but Sale High School prospered – apart from teaching a wide curriculum including French and Latin the school organised soccer and skittleball in the winter and cricket and

rounders in the summer. The summer sports day included the usual track and field events as well as some non-Olympic events like throwing the cricket ball and the slow bicycle race. All boys were allocated to one of four "houses" (Atkinson, Eason, Sandbach and New) which competed in all sports. Those of us who were at the school in those war years look back with gratitude to happy times largely insulated from war-time problems.

Most boys transferred to MGS at the age of 13 and rapidly integrated into the various third forms. Unfortunately it is difficult to identify which OMs attended the prep schools as the three editions of the Biographical Register give scant information on this matter.

In 1944 the last link with 1908 was lost with the death of Sir Arthur Haworth, who had been on Sale High School's management committee since 1908 and for most of that time had been chairman. A member of a prominent cotton family, he had been a Liberal MP for South Manchester before the first war.

Immediately after the end of the war the 1944 Education Act provisions began to take effect and this quickly changed the character of the school. In 1946 the Eleven Plus system was introduced and that year MGS sent sixty of the boys who had passed the entrance examination to Sale for their first two years before joining the main school.

The MGS governors realised that the whole nature of Sale High was changing and secret talks took place with Cheshire County about a possible sale of the school. Rumours were rife in the school and the community and finally in 1948 it was announced that negotiations with Cheshire were taking place. A group of parents offered to put in a bid for the school but this came to nothing and in 1949 it was agreed to sell the school buildings to Cheshire at a valuation of £33,500.

The last sports day was held on 25 June 1949 and in the September the school reopened as Brooklands Primary School. It was agreed that three of the staff would be taken on by Cheshire as well as the remaining pupils who had not transferred to MGS or gone to other schools. About sixty of the boys remaining in Forms 4 and 5 moved to MGS. The younger ones were transferred into a new form called Two Gamma while the older boys were absorbed in the usual way into the various MGS third forms.

So ended the forty year history of Sale High School as MGS prep. The impression has arisen over the years that the prep schools were abandoned as a matter of policy by High Master James. Certainly the idea of prep schools did not fit in with his educational philosophy. However two of the schools had closed five years before his appointment and the transfer of Sale to Cheshire County Council had been a possibility for nearly thirty years and the final transfer was eventually made inevitable by changes in the national education system.

Since 1949 Brooklands Junior School has prospered and is now one of the leading junior schools in the area with an excellent academic record and an emphasis on music and sport. The name "Sale High School" lives on as this is the title of the old Sale Moor Secondary Modern School on Norris Road. Then in 2008 the new Junior Section of MGS was opened thus reviving the prep school tradition which ended in 1949 with the closure of Sale.

Stewart Platts

SHS (1940-46) MGS (1946-51)

SALE HIGH SCHOOL REUNION

A reunion for all those who attended Sale High School, which closed its doors 60 years ago this year, will be held at school on Thursday 15 October. A buffet lunch will be available at school and then there will be an opportunity to visit what is now Brooklands

Primary School and reminisce with old friends. For further details contact Jane Graham in the Development Office.

OMs JOIN HARVARD AS UNDERGRADUATES

I am fortunate enough to be attending Harvard University, starting in September. The application procedure was not that complicated but the terminology used could sometimes be confusing and some of it was irrelevant to the British education system. However, this was easily overcome. The application was done entirely over the internet which was especially helpful for me as an international student as it meant I didn't have to spend vast amounts of time sending letters to America. I also had to sit the American SATs. To sit these I had to travel around England a bit to go to the exam centres. It turns out that for me the effort was worth it though. During the application process I also had to have an interview.

My interview took place at school and was with two Harvard alumni. It lasted for about an hour and was not at all like the interviews that take place at Oxford or Cambridge. Instead of the interview being of a purely academic nature, especially about an area of academia that the person wishes to study at the university, I was asked about my extra-curricular activities and about many different fields of academics. For example, I was asked about sciences which were my speciality but I was also asked about subjects as varied as the class system that exists in the UK and also about the financial crisis the world is gripped in now. Whilst the interview may have been tough, it was by no means an unpleasant experience. The interviewers were extremely pleasant and the atmosphere was fairly relaxed. From the interview I gained an insight to the sort of place Harvard would be.

My first impression is that this is a place where all channels are explored, where you

receive an excellent, all round education and yet a place where the people are affable. My term will start properly on 2 September but before this there are many other things to be done. There are the pre-orientation activities which can involve many things, but for me involves working briefly so that I will have a bit of money to spend over there and also an international program which aims to help international students make the transition to America as smooth and easy as possible. This entails help setting up bank accounts and obtaining an American 'cell phone'. After this comes a week where all freshmen move in to their dorms and there are a series of events that explain to everyone how everything will work there and how to adjust to college life. There is also what is known as a 'shopping period' where you can go to as many different lectures as you wish before finally deciding on which subjects you want to study. This is pretty unique and it enables you to pick the courses that feel right for you. So as of yet I do not actually know what I will be studying there.

What I do know is that I have to go to certain classes that enable me to reach certain criteria so that I can get the degree. This involves having to do a writing course as well as mathematics and it also means I am required to study a language. There are then also the general education requirements that have to be met. These involve topics such as 'America in the World', 'Culture and Belief' and 'Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding', something which I must admit I am intrigued to discover about. A 'concentration' is also chosen. This is a commitment made to a particular area of study. Your concentration, however, does not have to be decided until the end of the third term when in sophomore year (second year). This will then take up a lot of the work load, maybe even up to a half of the overall College program. I am thoroughly looking forward to the experience