

London & South East Section

The London & SE Section held its AGM on 11 November 2009 and Frederick Wheeler (1987-94) was elected as Chairman.

Frederick outlined a comprehensive programme of events for 2010. The Section will hold a pub evening on Thursday 28 January in the upstairs bar, Crown & Anchor, Neal Street, Covent Garden from 18:30 onwards. The Annual Dinner will take place on Wednesday 21 April at the Oxford and Cambridge Club and Robert Powell will be the guest speaker. All OMs are very welcome to join the Section and attend events and should contact the Secretary Nick Gartside at Nicholas.gartside@Schrodgers.com to be added to the mailing list.

South West Section

Our Autumn event in October was enjoyed by 22 members and partners and consisted of a very successful visit on a fine day to Tyntesfield, a National Trust property near Bristol, followed by lunch at the nearby Failand Inn. Next year's Commemoration Service in Exeter Cathedral will be on Sunday 27 June and the service is followed by lunch at the nearby Southgate Hotel. All Old Mancunians are most welcome to attend this event 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

Our regular Friday lunches (usually on the 3rd Friday of the month) in the Freemasons Hall, Bridge Street continue except for April, June and October - see below. We expect The High Master to be our special guest on Wednesday 15 January. Our next visit to School will be on Wednesday 14 April. Various activities will be arranged, and the evening will close with a light supper. Last year, some of us were treated to a fascinating tour of the Junior School. The annual lunch at

School will be on Monday 14 June and is usually our most popular event of the year - there are often over 50 members and staff present in the library. The Ladies Lunch takes place on 8 October at Stanneylands, Wilmslow. Please contact the Secretary Alex Wells (0129 881 2886) if you would like more information.

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

G Gross (50-55) D Roberts (57-64)
P Turnbull (55-63) F Sibley (45-49)
D H Casson (74-81) S B Downs (40-46)
A B Shelmerdine (41-52) S Patel (96-03)
E Greenhalgh (30-34) B V Slater (36-42)
D A Harris (51-58) M Sanders (38-45)
P Whittle (48-56) R Fletcher (26-31)
M Barber (39-43) A J Bowne (39-43)
R F M Jones (34-37) G A Mitchell (34-41)
A W Cowgill (33-34) G Mason (34-40)
A Unwin (31-34) J A Coulson (47-53)
R Winterbottom (48-54) D A Jones (39-44)
H Bretherton (28-35) J R Leech (43-52)
R M W Simpson (43-47) C G Taylor (46-51)

We would welcome offers to supply brief obituaries or memories for *Ulula*.

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 next edition is 26 March 2010.

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January 2010

The Old Mancunian

Edition 33

EDITOR'S NOTES

Each generation of OMs seems to produce theatrical luminaries so it was interesting to see one such, George Coulouris (1916-21), the film actor, portrayed by Ben Chaplin in the recently released film 'Me and Orson Welles'.

Inevitably not all MGS boys who make a mark in School Dramatic Society productions go on to flourish in the wider theatre. Keith Goddard and I were looking the other month at a programme of Ben Jonson's 'Bartholomew Fair', a Dramatic Society production of the early 1950s. We caught the names of Alan Garner, W.C. Stevenson and Harold Rottesman in the cast list. Stevenson's career after MGS was blighted by his association with the Jehovah's Witnesses. Harold Rottesman was superbly talented in so many artistic directions. His Claudius dominated a Dramatic Society 'Hamlet'. Alas, his life was all too short. But what about 'Bartholomew Fair' itself? I must admit it seemed interminable to watch and I envied the way in which Bob and Bridget Bunn slipped out at the interval, never to return!

More on City. A hot topic of course these days. Geoff Watts (1958-66) genially chides me for missing his name in Colin Shindler's book on City. And I taught Geoff history too! Geoff points out that Colin Shindler mentions in his book on United that he, Colin, failed to get into MGS. Geoff and I hope that the reference to Colin and his books in these pages will help in alleviating any pain Colin still suffers. Someday, perhaps, there will be a seminal study on the subsequent success of those who have failed to get into MGS.

The term 'airbrushed' is more often applied

to Soviet doctoring of photographs e.g. the elimination of Trotsky showing him with Lenin. Seemingly airbrushed from official MGS memory is Arthur Booth who was MGS groundsman and I think occasional cricket coach, from the 1940s into the 1960s. Before the 1939-45 War, Booth understudied for Hedley Verity in the Yorkshire team. Then, after the War, in which Verity lost his life, Arthur Booth headed the national bowling averages in 1946 with 111 wickets at an average 11.61 to be precise, impressive figures. No doubt OMs have their own memories of his days with MGS.

Sir Ernest Barker, who was at MGS from 1886-93, was a leading writer on politics and government in the 1940s and before. Barker is mentioned in Anthony Powell's Journals 1982-86. Reflecting on the genesis of Sillery, the schoolmaster character in Powell's novel sequence 'A Dance to the Music of Time', Powell thinks that a lot of Sillery came from Barker who liked to be seen as the poor-boy-who-made-good. Barker's memoir 'Father of the man' portrays MGS in the days of three Highmasters, Sir Samuel Dill, Glazebrook and King. Barker mentions the use of late passes in his day. Glazebrook introduced items of school uniform and prefects, also encouraging songs, including one about Hugh Oldham. Was this 'Hugh of the Owl' which at one time was regarded as the MGS school song?

John Horsfield

FROM THE HIGH MASTER**Dr Christopher Ray**

We opened Bexwyke Lodge, our Junior Section for boys aged 9 to 11, in September 2008. Last year over 90 joined the Section in its first year. We now have over 100 boys in the Section.

We have received very many enquiries from parents asking whether or not MGS will provide places for younger boys, just as the High School and Withington have classes for younger girls. Our governors have decided that MGS will admit boys into Years 3 and 4 (i.e. at ages 7 and 8) as from September 2011. This is the youngest age that we believe will still allow us to guarantee progress to the senior sections on the basis of our assessment of academic potential. There is therefore no intention to admit pupils younger than seven.

One of the great joys of the Junior Section has been to see the enthusiasm of many of our older pupils: over 70 sixth-form students work regularly in the Junior Section, as prefects, mentors, big brothers and friends, organising activities and assisting our teachers. We very much hope that our senior pupils will continue to use the opportunities to develop their own strengths provided by working with our younger boys.

On a quite different note, Old Mancunians may have noticed the serious and increasing concerns of many heads, in both the state-maintained and independent sectors, about the rising tide of bureaucratic regulation which is threatening to stifle genuine education in this country. A year or two ago, teachers were talking anxiously about a 'creeping tide of regulation': compared with the present flood, that seems to have been a golden age.

Although independent schools are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate, this is now very much under the control of Ofsted which seems to be a political adjunct of the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). There is now a distinct focus upon 'box-ticking' rather than school improvement and a celebration of pupils' and teachers' achievements.

A new inspection regime for independent schools comes into effect in January 2010,

reflecting changes already apparent across the state sector. Independent schools will be required to comply with 128 different regulations. Failure to comply with any critical regulation may well lead to the conclusion that the school, found wanting on that single regulation, is overall a failing school.

A climate of fear has been created across the state-maintained and independent sectors, fuelled in part by 'horror' stories of pedantic and officious inspectors displaying little common sense: as a result many schools are likely to be over-zealous in trying to ensure compliance because they are fearful of the consequences of 'failure' during a spot inspection.

Even so, some outstanding schools will probably be judged 'failures', perhaps because they have put rather more energy into teaching children than to ensuring that their policies are strictly compliant. Indeed, Ofsted is now referred to as the 'children's services watchdog' rather than as an educational inspectorate.

The situation has been exacerbated by (what appears to have been ill-considered) 'vetting and barring' proposals of another governmental agency, the Independent (sic) Safeguarding Authority, which has tried to use very large sledge-hammers to crack relatively small nuts. The Secretary of State and the DCSF appear to have recognised at a late stage that the ISA proposals have gone too far, but it is unlikely fully to employ the 'common-sense' approach now promised.

Whilst there is much to commend in the greater focus upon protecting children, the sense shared by many heads of independent schools is that the DCSF and its inspectorate in its day-to-day practice cares little for the primary purpose of schools: teaching and learning.

I am tempted to conclude that what we now see is simply a terrible mess. But that might be rather too kind and altogether too gener-

by Shirom Chabra, Jules Jackson, and Oliver Kingsley for their spectacular historical projects. Alex Race won the Lower and Middle School prize for his outstanding contribution to the J&MS History Society, and Jonny Senior won the Sixth Form prize in recognition of his excellent historical writing.

MARATHON DES SABLES CHALLENGE 2010

Dubbed the 'toughest footrace on earth', the Marathon Des Sables comprises six marathons run over seven days across the Sahara Desert. As well as having to contend with extreme temperatures, arduous terrain and navigating across a featureless landscape, competitors have to carry all their own food, water and personal equipment.

Surgeon Lieutenant Vijay Ahuja RN (1993-2000) will be running this race in April 2010 in aid of Help for Heroes and Facing Africa. If you would like to support Vijay in raising his target of £10,000 for his two charities visit www.mdschallenge2010.co.uk

OM PUBLICATIONS

David Waller 1973-81

The Magnificent Mrs Tennant

John Gillibrand 1971-79

Disabled Church - Disabled Society: The Implications of Autism for Philosophy, Theology and Politics

Michael Welland 1962-65

Sand: A Journey Through Science and the Imagination

OMA MEMBERSHIP

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

The 2009 edition of *Ulula* is now available. To receive your copy please bring your subscription up to date as soon as possible.

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

Midlands Section

The AGM of the Section was held at the Forest Hotel, Dorridge on 14 November 2009. The luncheon, under the chairmanship of Dan Binnion, was attended by 17 members and guests who were joined by The High Master and Mrs Ray and Oliver Williams the School Vice-Captain. Following the usual excellent meal, the High Master brought us up to date with activities at the School and Oliver Williams provided us with an accomplished presentation on the International Baccalaureate and described the breadth of experience that could be enjoyed in community activities and sport as well as a wide range of academic subjects. Following the luncheon the AGM was held. The Chairman gave a report on the Section's activities during the past year. The accounts were approved and it was agreed to send £150.00 to the School to once again support the Year 8 Shakespeare Festival. The Committee was re-elected en bloc with Chris Diggins and Michael Kennedy also joining with special interest in recruiting new members. Future dates have yet to be confirmed but will appear in a future edition of TOM. A small number of us still meet at the Old Joint Stock, Temple Row, Birmingham on the first Tuesday of the month. Any OM is welcome but it is suggested that a call to John Wilson on 0121 475 3700 would be advisable to ensure that others will be present or contact john@wilson7743.fsnet.co.uk

days of enthusiasms, endless house matches, kindly teachers, just a bike ride from home, though you might stop off at Clegg & Pearsons, the newsagents near Brooklands Station, for a quick Dandelion and Burdock. Everything was somehow very manageable; you knew most people and they knew you. Geoff Fox, SHS 1946-49, MGS 1949-56, Staff 1961-69

SLEUTH



In the above photograph, the plinth of the MGS Book of Remembrance has two metallic features at the front, top right and left. Apparently these features are long gone. But where did they go and where are they now? The help of OMs is solicited. In appropriate circumstances a reward for their return will be given under the usual conditions.

The Editor

MUSIC AT MGS

Does anyone remember in the early post-war years two musicians named Dobson and Young coming into school to give music lectures? There is no record of these visits in the *Ulula* of the era but the Development Office have received an enquiry concerning these musicians and would like to know more. Please contact Jane Graham if you have any further details.

THE HANDBOOK OF LIFE

I have been working with a few friends on a charity project in which we've asked 'the great and the good' about their advice on life. We have approached them through the idea that a friend of a friend (and so on) knows such people personally. Using this

method, we've obtained quotes from people as varied as Michelle Obama, Alex Ferguson and Terry Wogan and produced a unique book which is well worth a read.

It is selling for £4.99 (including UK postage & packaging) in the MGS school bookshop, with all profits going to four charities (Children in Need, Francis House, Claire House and Beechwood cancer care centre). Further more, for every book sold in the MGS bookshop, 80p per book will go directly to the MGS bursary fund. Finally, I'd like to give a very big thank you to Ian Thorpe, Fiona Forsyth and OM Michael Atherton for all their help with the book.

Email: raph.sheridan@hotmail.co.uk to order your copy from the bookshop.
Raphael Sheridan (2002-09)
www.thehandbookoflife.com

PRE-1951 REUNION DINNER – SATURDAY 8 MAY 2010

The Reunion Dinner this year is for all OMs who started school before 1951. Invitations will be sent out in February but if you are in touch with any OMs who are not currently receiving TOM, they are "lost owls" and we would love to get back in touch with them and invite them to the dinner. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in May when there will be an opportunity to watch First team cricket in the afternoon, have a guided tour of the school and join old friends for the dinner. Contact Jane Graham at j.graham@mgs.org or telephone 0161 224 7201 Ext 243.

TROOP 2 OLD SCOUTS (2nd MGS AND MGS VENTURERS) REUNION

A reunion lunch will be held on Saturday 8 May in school. For further details contact Julie Wright in the Development Office or John Stewart doc@gordon3.freemove.co.uk.

IAN BAILEY ESSAY PRIZE

The first annual prizes have been awarded in The Ian Bailey Essay Prize, supported by the OMA. The Junior Section prizes were won

ous.

Even so, we will do all we can to ensure that MGS complies with the regulations and ensure that we continue to maintain and improve the safe environment and pastoral support for our boys acknowledged as outstanding when we were inspected in 2008. Most Old Mancunians will be aware that MGS prize-givings are now largely internal affairs. The last 'public' speech day was some forty years ago. The Governors have decided that this tradition will be revived, with the first twenty-first century Speech Day being held towards the end of the academic year 2010/11, providing an opportunity for the wider MGS community to celebrate the success of our boys. Perhaps some readers have memories of past Speech Days which they would like to share with other TOM readers?

Finally, MGS wishes to appoint a Director of Development to succeed Ian Thorpe, who established our Development Office in 2003, having served as Director of the Foundation Bursary Appeal from 1997. Ian will continue in a part-time capacity from September. If you know anyone who might be interested in this post, please encourage them to contact us so that details of the post may be provided in due course. The person appointed will be responsible, with others, for planning and executing an extensive programme of events and activities to celebrate the 500th anniversary of MGS in 2015.

OM LETTERS:

Gary Beckett 1969-76 writes:

I was sorry to read about the passing of both Ian Leverton and Peter Mason.

Peter Mason was High Master during my time at school and I was lucky enough to meet him on stage for collection of half and full colours: Peter also took a close interest in school sports and often shared his observations of First XI Cricket when I was captain in 1976 under the management of John

Shoard. However my abiding memory of Peter was when he questioned Jon Aisbitt's captaincy of the First XI Soccer team for allowing one of his players to grow a moustache - namely me - for those around at the time it paled into insignificance against the zapata of the coach, Roger Handley. I was lucky enough to enjoy a "free place" at school courtesy of the then Manchester Education Committee, the last year they gave them was 1969, my year of entry and have since wondered whether I am indebted to Peter Mason or not!

Ian Leverton was the Under 13s Soccer coach in my time, taking over the Babes which had been nurtured under Bert Newsome. Ian was unlike Bert but both were avid, well-intended football coaches with Bert more studied in his delivery of tips or support. Ian was total enthusiasm and as passionate for success for MGS soccer as for his team, Liverpool - few will forget Ian turning out to coach without exception in the red shorts of his team. I have tried to retain my relationship with the school, making regular, albeit infrequent, visits to Old Hall Lane during my last visit I was speaking to another member of the staff when Ian came into the Staff Common Room and before I could say hello, Ian said "you're Gary Beckett - you had a great left foot" - given that this was 2006 and I would have been 48 it was wonderful to hear, particularly as we grow a fondness for nostalgia as we get older! I like to think I took some of Ian's enthusiasm with me as I coached Northampton Town Girls and Ladies teams for some twelve years until recently.

As an aside the mention of cultural activities and theatre would not have generated special interest had I not seen the name "Gerry Raffles" - I have recently secured a contract for my company's premium ice cream to be sold in the Theatre Royal Stratford East: this theatre, close to the home of the London Olymp-

pics site, is housed in Gerry Raffles Square! The successful story of many Old Mancunians making their way in life owes a lot to the likes of Gerry Raffles, Peter Mason and Ian Leverton via their inspiration, motivation and support.

David Broadhurst 1956-66 writes:

A view from Tanera Beag,

in memoriam John Hamilton Scobell
Armstrong

15 August 1927 - 25 May 2001

We were, as I recall, a gilded bunch, born to the flowering of a long sought peace, brought up on powdered egg and orange juice, to graze on Eliot, Einstein, Goedel, Ayer. Makin and Barker, Oakes and Robinson, were peers enough to burnish Milton's spur; what need of mentors, masters, staid or wise, to what my relish for an oystered world?

John saw this clearly, and forbore to preach; rather, he sought to open up a view, then left each wanderer to choose a track as steep or gentle as might please or ease. (1) Not strongly armed, nor over holy, he had found that special gift to tempt young minds in sideways gambits, parabolic paths, from Sophocles to Jung, by way of Hume. Thus aesthetes fed on Scots enlightenment and analysts on Theban trilogy, in merry earnest, fruitful puzzlement, intensified by Berkeley, Locke and Hobbes.

"Is a synthetic sponge a sponge?" he asked, re Aristotle's view of tragedy, and praised the Lord Chief Justice, ruling on Regina versus Declon Sponges' trial. (2) How differs it, when we say how we feel, from when our words those feelings plainly show?

His answer was oblique, reserving right

to hedge his words, in censure and in love. (3)

And he would show, by careful chosen words, a fellow feeling, at my mother's death; I keep his gentle counsel with me yet, it having served these five and forty years.

In Wester Ross, beside the Summer Isles, near Ben Mor Coigach and the Polbain shore,

he hinted at another, magic world, beyond the sunsets of our Occident. The tale of Paradise to him was myth, yet potent, numinous, and passing wise, known to the bards and seers of countless folk

who fuel imagination's earthly powers. (4) Loch fish, potatoes, whisky and log fires - "The Torpor of the West", he liked to say - refined his writing to a thoughtful sheen, desecrating Edens fading in the East.

With panoramic view from Tanera Beag, of Harris to my West, across the Minch, Stac Pollaidh, Suilven, Canisp and Cul Mor, four sunlight lizards, basking to my North, I scan, above the silver of Loch Broom, An Teallach, hazing south to Torridon, and sense the presence of a good diffused: a teacher who set store by truth and lore.

David Broadhurst, Polbain, August 2009

(1) "We are well justified in thinking both that we know things and can be certain that we know them and should continue to do so with a good courage. "J.H. Scobell Armstrong, "Knowledge and belief", *Analysis*, Vol.13, No.5(April, 1953), 111-117, <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3326375>

(2) "An enlightened decision about future use is inseparable from an estimate as to what part of the meaning of a word

row of nine year olds to clatter at the feet of the startled rear rankers.

Such memories punctuated a reunion day which may well never be repeated. Readers of Stewart Platts' informative articles in recent TOMs will know that Sale ran as a prep to MGS from 1908 to 1949. Since I transferred to Fallowfield when the school closed, I suppose I was one of the youngest among the 25 or so who gathered at MGS – supplemented by the welcome presence of five or six partners. We were a hearty, if venerable crew.

The day had been deftly organised by Stewart with the ever-efficient support of Ian Thorpe, Jane Graham and the Development Office. We began with drinks and a lavish buffet in the archive room, warmly greeted there by the Deputy High Master, Stuart Leeming. Our organiser had suggested I might share brief reminiscences with everyone over the desserts, perhaps to trigger other memories as we prepared for our visit to the school site in Brooklands. This I did, though it was hardly necessary since conversation had not exactly flagged. I'd start an anecdote only to be kindly interrupted with a 'Yes, but haven't you forgotten...?' After lunch, we were briskly shepherded into one of the MGS fleet of coaches which, with a good inch to spare on either side, had reversed through the main arch into the front quad, presumably to preserve our failing energies. We were transported to Woodbourne Road to find the facade of our building little changed from the day it opened in 1934. In 1949, MGS sold the buildings to Cheshire County Council and they became the home of Brooklands Primary School. The Headteacher, Mrs Barbara Riley, her staff and pupils, had laid excellent plans for our visit. We were divided, with primary school efficiency, into groups of five or six and allocated to the care of a similar number of 10 or 11 year olds. Despite our inclination to wan

der ('Wasn't the Science Lab up *these* stairs?'), our youthful escorts kept rounding us up firmly, and providing us with well-rehearsed commentaries at points of interest or lively replies to our questions. The local press showed up to photograph the visiting dignitaries alongside their guides.

The school was so cheerfully busy with real teachers and children not too concerned with these old blokes peering round their school that it wasn't all that easy to sense the ghosts of our awe-inspiring Headmaster, Tommy Smith, his deputy Lynton Smith, the twinkling-eyed Eric Peet (though his older son was happily one of our party), Jimmy Laytham, John Bull, Harold Cresswell, Miss Clegg or the redoubtable Mrs Bannister, the PE teacher. Or even the spectres of our own small selves crowding the corridors. The hall, which doubled as a gym in our time, has been subdivided, but perhaps you could just hear the echo of a skittleball house match after school; and rather more readily, of other sporting encounters out on the field at the back, which seemed little changed.

Our visit closed with tea and cakes to the accompaniment of some live classical music, in which the school excels; things have moved on since the day of those aerial false teeth. Stewart thanked Mrs Riley for an excellent visit and announced that a House Cup would be presented on our behalf to mark the Sixtieth Anniversary of the closure of the old school. We climbed back onto the bus and returned to MGS and, aptly enough, a tour of the impressive Junior section in the new primary block with its Head, Mrs Linda Hamilton. Here too, the anniversary will be marked by the donation of a cup, this time for Sportsmanship.

A fine day out, then. Perhaps most of us had made the trip because our memories of Sale were good ones. Maybe less daunting than MGS in those days, less edgily competitive. For me they were my happiest school-days –

In the old Prefects' Common Room an upper gallery has been installed to provide all the technical support for studio performances. The space below will be reconfigured to suit each production.

We have already raised more than £1.7 million from generous donations to pay for all this work. We still need to raise another £250,000 to cover the cost of final fittings and equipment. If you have been thinking about making a gift but not yet got round to it, please take action. This development will benefit all MGS pupils, who will use the facilities to improve their presentational skills. Actors and musicians will benefit tremendously, too. The names of all donors will be permanently displayed within the building, and, as we are a charity, all gifts can be made tax-efficient. Further details from www.mgs.org (The Future) or direct from the Development Office (0161 224 1746).

Ian Thorpe, Director of Development

DRAMA MEMORABILIA

As 2010 will see the re-opening of the MGS Theatre in all its remodelled glory, the Archivists would like to appeal for missing programmes, photographs, tickets etc, and or copies thereof. David Jennings collected many items when he was on the staff but there is little material from pre-1951 with the exception of "Pedagogues" programmes. If you can help please contact Jeremy Ward at jeremyward18@aol.com or the Development Office.

AN UPDATE FROM HARVARD

My first Harvard semester has been both great fun and a significant challenge. The people are fantastic and of course are part of the experience of attending Harvard. I have met great people who are very easy to get along with, two of them being my roommates. As a Freshman I live in Harvard Yard, only five minutes from anywhere I need to be and surrounded by amazing build-

ings.

The pace picked up rapidly and I was quickly faced with midterm examinations and papers to write. There were a few nights when I did not sleep at all in an attempt to finish writing papers – all a part of the college experience I guess. Having only studied sciences at A-level I also had the shock of having to do a lot of reading for my courses, especially my history class and my writing class. I did have the relief of studying mathematics and life sciences too. The wonderful thing about studying in America though is that I get to study a great breadth of classes, and that I get to take new classes each semester so the course is always engaging. The chance to be taught by professors who are leaders in their respective fields is also very exciting, and we get the opportunity to meet the professors on an individual basis too.

There are a very great number of extra-curricular activities available. So far I have only been involved with the rugby team, playing a few matches, but will look further into other activities to take part in once I have settled with the academic side. Whilst the work is hard, and knowing that I will have a few sleepless nights ahead, I'm looking forward to a new semester, hoping it is as good as my first one has been.

Jonathan Hunt (2002-09)

SALE HIGH SCHOOL REUNION

15 OCTOBER 2009

Ted Wright was in charge of the workshop (with its bubbling, reeking pot of glue) and also taught geography and Music at Sale High School. One day, we'd been struggling – though not hard enough – with a top note from 'The Ash Grove', or was it 'David of the White Rock'? His patience exhausted, Ted decided on a whole-hearted demonstration. Face pink with effort, mouth wide, he gave it everything; and as he did so, his false teeth described a soaring arc over the front

has previously counted for most.

"J.H.Scobell Armstrong, A note on 'persuasive definitions'", *Essays in Criticism*, Vol. VI (1956), 111-113, <http://eic.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/citation/VI/1/111>

(3) "It is sometimes useful, particularly in censure and Love-making, to keep open the possibility that our words are Symptomatic and inadvertent in order to reserve the right to Hedge." J.H. Scobell Armstrong, "What is the difference. Between saying how you feel and showing by your words how You feel?" *Analysis*, Vol.13, No.3 (January, 1953), 49-51, <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3326502>

(4) "Although the alternative myth realized in these poetic Structures does not offer peace or reassurance, it is yet necessary and profoundly satisfying; for it is central to that imaginative life which sets before us and reconciles the contrary modes of fulfilment we seek: to frequent the region of the infinitely various, to stand rooted in a continuing order". John Armstrong, "The Paradise Myth", Oxford University Press, 1969, ISBN 0192121758,

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Paradise-Myth-John-Armstrong/dp/0192121758>

Ian Thornton 1944-51 writes:

Trek, Health and Safety, Freedom and Common Sense

I am a "veteran" of 3 treks – one in my first year at university when in addition to carrying the tent and personal kit I was deputed to carry the not inconsiderable weight of Mr M P Smith's camera and of course we had to get ahead to take those memorable shots of the boys "broaching" another col or snow ridge complete with all the paraphernalia which Vic recalls so accurately. Could it be that today the load to be carried may contravene some regulation? I still own the excavating tool which so nobly dug the "loos" – much more hygienic in our opinion than the "lycee" alternatives in Paris – and I recall an

absolute beauty outside Chamonix in the roots of a tree complete with footrests, headrest, armrests and a stunning view of the Brevent. How did we get away with catering on the overnight trains? – I have no memory of infectious plague but I do recall good personal hygiene and a healthy respect for the mythical collection of different sized corks kept by our "Medical Officer Ian Bailey". Can we ever forget the saga of Barry Ridings pressing edelweiss in his passport and leaving it under a rock in a dried out stream at Solden – MGS has always been good at producing eccentrics.

We all arrived home safely – heavily muscled from some dodgy scree runs but beautifully tanned and eager to show off our new style physiques to all and sundry – it may explain why I tried to resume my pursuit of a most comely School Secretary which came to a lovelorn end when I cycled at speed into a tree outside John Lingard's house in Old Hall Lane. We also managed to put up with smogs, overturning buses at Chadderton and 16 mile bike rides to get to school – then 16 miles back again – but it was all very character building and showed a marvellous freedom which was available to us all, basically because the school trusted us and we knew we had the support of the staff and each other.

They were the best days of my young life then and remain as a beacon in the memory when I have one of these self indulgent moments.

Barrie Quilliam 1947-52 writes:

Memories of Sale High 1940-46

Readers of *The Old Mancunian* might be interested in some of my memories of Sale High from 1940/46.

Miss Viney mystified the infants by hanging a chart of phonetic symbols on the wall and having us pronounce them.

Mr Cresswell would while away lessons describing the joys of skiing and mountaineer-

ing. Mr Latham in science taught us such sophisticated concepts as hydraulics, gears, levers, how to avoid a pot belly in middle age and the impossibility of perpetual motion. Mr Lynton Smith (Smuts) did not have much idea of discipline, but was well liked. A boy wrote on the blackboard near Christmas "Who comes down the chimney – Father Christmas. What goes up the chimney Smuts". Mrs Bannister the gym teacher introduced scottish country dancing to the gym lessons, much to the boys' dismay. The headmaster later decreed that we should address her as "Sir" instead of "Miss", as if we met her outside school and said "Hello Miss", then this would put doubts in the minds of bystanders about her marital status. "Prince" the school caretaker was given the title Mr., only when the school became a state primary. A friend and I had the idea of leaving a window open overnight so that we could climb in and so miss morning assembly. We had a few successes, but one morning we found Prince waiting for us on the inside. He did not report us to the head. The "cane" was the ultimate disciplinary sanction and it was said that if you put a horse hair across your hand then the cane would snap. We never discovered the truth of this as we did not know from where we could obtain a horse hair and in any case nobody ever seemed to be caned. We used to annoy the pupils of the local Sale Preparatory School, who had SPS on their blazers, by calling out "Sale Pig Sty" About 25 years later my daughter attended the re-named Brooklands County Primary and found my name carved on her desk.

Jeff Eastwood 1938-45 writes:
Thoughts and Memories Triggered by the April TOM
 The first thought is, in a way, sad to read that Sir Geoffrey Jefferson showed a visceral

dislike of Paton. In the 1930s at the age of five after a horrific fall into broken glass, Manchester Royal Infirmary saved my life and Jefferson, the pre-eminent neurosurgeon of the time and later a v-p (possibly President?) of the College of Surgeons made my useless left arm work again a couple of years later. It is good to read of his contribution to the School's life in 1945, the year I left MGS and 1947. This is surely a happier ending. I, too, remember pretty vividly the 1938-39 war years, again with a sad note. I remember the Robinson family house opposite the main gate: the house survived a very near bomb miss on the edge of our playing field and later, I think, was the Chief's home for some time. There are two aspects to the sadness: Ian Robinson was an absolute contemporary in Mod 6 Div 1 under Albert Hyslop and other great teachers along with others such as me and John Battersby. Ian, I remember well, shared with me an enthusiasm for tennis which, at the time, took a rather distant place behind cricket. (These were many years before Mike Atherton was born, I judge!) The deep sadness of Ian's death far too young was made even greater that we, his contemporaries, had just learned of open scholarships to Cambridge and Oxford first met again at Ian's funeral at a time when many of us had hoped to receive congratulations from Hyslop who, like the rest of us, was a bit too moved to talk. My memories associated with Birchfields Park seem to recall an Ack Ack rocket defence unit stationed there, few of us will forget the GI's there preparing for D Day. Another memory is of said GI's learning to speak elementary German: "Wo ist der Bahnhofbitte?" (In Mod 6 at the time we sometimes wondered whether an answer in German might have really been understood or of the first importance for the job ahead.) Lacrosse! Shades of Haffie! It is a great

game and its reintroduction into the School deserves support: after all, one of the School and Cambridge teams played in the Olympic Demonstration team in 1948! Most OMs and the 20/30 Club members are aware of the Chief's support for the role of the education international qualification to align with or possibly replace our older and perhaps constantly rewritten certificates. I recently had the opportunity, as a guest, to hear the Chief again air his thoughts on education and to hear Nick Hytner's views on the Theatre at the London OM section annual dinner. It was rewarding to listen and perhaps question.

Philip Dinnage 1948-53 writes:

I have enjoyed Stewart Platts' articles about Sale High School. I passed the entrance exam for MGS in 1946. I had been well prepared for this (with others) as a pupil of Altrincham Preparatory School a school sneered at by Mike Atherton in his autobiography. For some unknown reason, a number of us and boys from Warrington, Flixton, Urmston and Stretford were allocated to Sale High School, where we were to spend two years rather than the first and second forms at MGS.

So at the age of 10, I became a commuter. I lived in Hale. I ran down Ashley Road to catch the Cheshire Lines Committee Chester to Manchester steam train to the next station which was Altrincham, which was usually hauled by an LNER 0-6-0 J10 "Bucket". I then ran over the bridge, sliding on my steel studded soles to join the MSJ&A electric to Brooklands.

Sale High was a happy school. Stewart mentions the House system. I can add to that. Eason was green (mine). Atkinson blue, Sandbach red and New yellow. Does anyone know where the names came from? We wore sashes of our house colours for games. Two masters stand out in my memory.

Tommy Smith (The Beak) gave me my love of geometry. He taught us from a text book which he had written.

Mr Peet gave me Latin, a subject I found easy ever afterwards.

Messrs Cresswell and Wright I remember well. Mr Wright said to us that while standing up, he hadn't seen his feet for years.

I have recently sent copies of diaries of school trips to the Norfolk Broads to the MGS Development Office just in time for the SHS reunion. We also went to Wilderswil in Switzerland in 1948. I have a few pictures of that: all wearing grey shorts and school caps.

I was a good boy at Sale, usually in the top three. Then I went to MGS in 3 alpha and found out what real life was like with R T Moore and Killer Maugham.



Our builders have made tremendous progress in the last 3 months, and we now expect the theatre, studio theatre and support areas to be completed in mid-summer. We have a viewing window from the cloister corridor through the back wall of the theatre and can see the new, raised stage area (there is an orchestra pit below it) and the steeply raked terracing on which comfortable seats will be installed (no more wooden benches!). Above the stage the steelwork for the tall new flytower is in place and we can begin to imagine the scenery which will be flown up and down to enliven future performances.