



The Old Mancunian

December 2001

Edition 9

New OMA Executive To Meet 21st Century

At the AGM held at School 27th November 2001 it was agreed to change from an Executive Council with a largely advisory role, to that of an Executive body. Each Member will carry the responsibility for overseeing specific functions, to be reported on, at regular Board Meetings during the year.

This is seen as a first step to spread the workload into more manageable sections, covering the functions of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Liaison with Regions, Re unions, Membership, Social Functions, Internet, School Co-ordination (Staff Member), and Publications.

Dr Martin Stephen was unanimously elected President of the new organisation. In the interregnum before the new Executive was elected, he took the opportunity to thank all those Members of the former Executive Council for their dedication, energy and love for the School, which they had projected into the former organisation. Tim was elected by acclaim Senior Vice President

The High Master then went on to thank the former Working Party for all the work which had gone in to preparing for the changes in the organisation. Then finally, and by no means least, Martin Stephen went on to praise Tim Hall for his tireless energy over 40 years as General Secretary. He also commended him for his attention to detail and the friendship that Tim had extended to him personally, both on the OMA and also in his work as a Member of the Governing Body.

He then made a presentation of an engraved cut glass ships decanter and some spirit glasses. These were a gift from members

of the OMA, as a gesture of sincere appreciation to Tim.

The High Master also recorded a sincere vote of appreciation to Mrs Hall for all her support of Tim and the OMA. This was unanimously approved.

David Walton was elected the first Chairman.

Philip Johnson was re-elected Hon Treasurer.

Ian Thorpe said that the School would be prepared to provide considerable support for the role of Secretary and proposed that this work be undertaken by Sally Williams, who could become a staff Member of the OMA.

Four more Members offered their services and were elected Brian Kitson - offered his help with Reunions and Membership, Don Isherwood - Publications, John Horsfield - Liaison & Membership, Lawrence Copitch - Reunions and helping with publications.

The High Master proposed, and the Meeting unanimously agreed, that Ian Thorpe would be the Staff Representative on the Executive, leaving six possible vacancies to be filled subsequent to the AGM.

DIRECT DEBITS 2002

Thank you to all those members old and new, who completed and returned the direct debit form enclosed with the last edition of The Old Mancunian. We are in the process of entering the details and plan to collect next year's subscriptions using the new system.

You will receive advice in advance of the amount and planned date of collection. Could I remind members to cancel your old standing order arrangement for the payment of general OMA subscriptions. Remember that if you are a Member of the London Section paying by standing order to check that you cancel the correct one.

The Blue Book

The third edition of *A Biographical Register of Old Mancunians* finally made its appearance in mid-October and has received much favourable comment (see page 3). I would like to thank Allan Whittaker, Geoffrey Morton and Alan Pickwick, for their very considerable support in the production of this book.

I also want to thank those who volunteered their own assistance, or in one case, his wife's assistance, with editing and input. The limiting factor was entering the data into the School database. Editing requirement for most entries was minimal, although we did receive a few examples of the complete curriculum vitae variety.

Several overseas old boys have asked for the OMA to provide Visa, or Mastercard facilities, as more convenient methods of payment. Sadly this is not possible because of the cost entailed.

Don Isherwood.

'Exam is looking a bit like a beached whale'

'Top schools are poised to ditch the GCSE exam' Dr Martin Stephen was quoted as saying in an article in the Manchester Metro News. He said 'They were no longer of benefit to high achievers who go on to take A-levels.'

'The new-style AS-levels -- halfway to an A-level -- means that for those who stay on after 16, GCSEs have been made redundant. The result of changing A-levels has given students three years of major public exams, which is a bit like being on a treadmill.'

'We have given in to the present political opinion, that if you cannot measure it, it doesn't exist.'

MGS gained 85.3% A* or A grades in this year's GCSE results.

16th Century MGS

I did some researching on the Web, with little resulting satisfaction, trying to determine what prevailed in the School immediately following the founding through the religious strife and ambiguities of the sixteenth century. I became interested in this after doing some amateurish searches relating to Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and sometime Chancellor to Henry VIII - not a relative, or at least not through a line I can trace!

I wondered which 'side' Hugh Oldham was on, and how the School managed to avoid being 'purged' by one side or the other. I failed to find anything, but then I'm no historian and I was fascinated to read about fellow alumnus John Bradford. Incidentally, he sounds like a man after my own heart, but decidedly more determined. I suspect I'm too pragmatic for a fate like that!

I would be very interested to read more about life, conditions and politics that were affecting the School in the founding years and subsequently.

Keith Gardiner (1944-50) Lehigh University, Center for Manufacturing Systems Engineering, USA.
kg03@lehigh.edu

Perhaps some of the following dates from a leaflet produced by MGS this summer might be of some assistance. Ed.

1515 Founded as Manchester Free Grammar School by Hugh Oldham, William Plessyngton was the first High Master.

1518 Move to new building at Long Millgate.

1519 Named Manchester School.

1520 John Bradford burnt as Protestant martyr.

(Cont. Page 3 Col 4)

HEARING A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

Part 1

Henry David Thoreau is described in my antique version of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* as 'a revolutionary and something of a wild man'. He was, then, perhaps well qualified to write that 'if a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away'. I am beginning to wonder if those of us managing the 'wild' men and women, who exist in the world of education as elsewhere, would not do well to heed those words a little more carefully than we appear to be doing.

Now let's get this straight. I am not against efficient and effective management in education. Some of my best friends are efficient and effective managers. What I am arguing, however, is that really efficient and effective management can not only cope with, but actually allow to flourish within their organisations, the maverick, the unusual and even the occasional truly eccentric individual. For when I now look back through the mists of time (but not nostalgia) to my own schooling as a pupil, I doubt very much if I am being exceptional when I state that the teachers I remember most vividly as having had a lasting effect on me and my subsequent career are those who certainly appeared to be hearing a different drummer from most of the other teachers. In particular I will never forget a teacher by the name of B A Giles (whose initials could have been designed for schoolboy jokes) who was the first teacher of English I encountered at sixth form level.

We had the kind of 'posh' sixth form where they started marking essays on the alpha, beta, gamma system and I well remember being very surprised

indeed to receive my first sixth form essay back marked as gamma. This was not what I was used to, and furthermore there were various red biro annotations in the margin which said: 'Ugh!' This was not an expression I had come across in written form before and it was some time before I realised it was not pronounced: 'Ugg'. It was a good few ughs further on before I realised that what B A Giles (I never knew his first name) was signifying by this annotation was that he considered my essays to be liberally peppered with the kind of sentimental clichés up with which he would not put.

Most of us never aspire to great literary peaks, but even toiling in the foothills we need an inner voice which tells us when we're writing badly. B A Giles certainly fixed me up with a rudimentary prototype whose present efficacy only you, dear reader, can judge. He was a great teacher of a kind I had never experienced before, because he conveyed world-weariness rather than enthusiasm, but it was a weariness with the dross in life, and that was something worth conveying. (He probably had every right to be world weary because we picked up on the grape vine during the course of the year that he had some kind of incurable illness and he did indeed leave the school at the end of that year.) He was also a poet, and he was certainly the first person I had ever encountered who I was aware had actually had his work published. I strongly suspect, however, that his languid approach to teaching English literature would not have scored highly on any Ofsted tick list.

I fully accept that no educational organisation could function effectively if all the staff were of the B A Giles variety, but the odd creative nonconformist has enlivened many a generation of school pupils.

The problem with the notion of the standard delivery of a standard curriculum is that it lacks the human element which can transform teaching into that something special which stays with people over the years. I can

still remember the enthusiasm with which one exiled Scot (**Ian Bailey**) taught us to appreciate the writing of another of his compatriots (who also spent much of his life in England) through a reading over weeks of James Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. (Not the most easily accessible of books for 14 year olds, but by heavens he made it come to life for us. A strong desire to visit Scotland and to find out more about Sam Johnson were other lasting spin-offs as far as I was concerned.) I keep wondering whether he would now have found the opportunity or the space inside or outside the National Curriculum to teach about something so clearly close to his heart?

David Hellowell (1949-55) (Sadly Brian Giles MGS Staff 1951-55 died in 1960 aged 39.

This is the first part of two edited extracts, from an anthology of humorous articles by David Hellowell on management in education. Ed.)

Sportsmen's Dinner

Jack Charlton will be at Manchester United, Old Trafford on Saturday 2nd February to support Cricket and Rugby Club tours. Last year several OMs attended a similar event and had a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

For details contact **David Moss at the Common Room MGS** (D.Moss@mgs.org)

Auction of Promises, Services and Goods

The Rugby Club is holding an auction with about 100 lots including a VIP Tour of the Lowry Centre (with complimentary show tickets), a day shooting or fishing; the use of holiday homes, or drawing up a Will etc.

If you have a service you would like to offer, or if you would like to receive an auction

catalogue, please contact Gareth Johnson at MGS

g.r.johnson@mgs.org

Rugby Club

Dinner

The Annual Rugby Club Dinner will be held on Saturday 16th March. The event has moved to a Saturday in response to requests from far-flung OMs.

For details of the Dinner contact Neil Matthews at MGS n.j.matthews@mgs.org

1971/72 Rugby Reunion

Robert Fort (1964-72) is trying to contact players from 1971/2 for a 30 year reunion. Please contact Sally Williams for further details.

Editor's Reference

I had to accept that I was the accused, in response to the first letter which arrived asking 'Was I the Donald Isherwood, that dreadful little pest? I am glad to see he is doing something useful at last!' I replied politely that it was true. Such is the power of the press that I quickly received a second letter stating 'Actually, you were not dreadful at all, rather an amusing, good-natured little boy - but still a pest!'

I will leave my correspondent to wonder when his name might be revealed!

London Section

Following a successful social evening (Bitter at £1.60!) at Ye Olde Cittie of Yorke in October, The London Section returned to The Cheshire Cheese for its AGM in November. Edmund Wilkinson, 1949-54, was elected as Chairman and Ian Shepherd, 1939-47, as Vice-Chairman. It was pleasing to note the presence of new members Messts Annear, Goodall, Lee & Rudman, all 1990-97. It is likely that our New Year Gathering will take place at the British Library, and our Annual Dinner will take place on 7th March 2002 at the Chemistry Society, Belgrave Square, SW1.

New Members are especially welcome and should contact our Secretary **Nick Gartside** <nicholas_gartside@ml.com> or Telephone 020 7743 4614

Midlands OMA

The Annual General Meeting and Luncheon were held at the White Inn, Hampton-in-Arden, on Saturday, 17 November. The High Master, Tim Hall, Mrs Hall and Ian Bailey were the guests. After luncheon the High Master gave members and their wives news of the School including its success in the Times School newspaper competition. He also outlined proposed changes to the organisation and management of the Old Mancunians Association and referred to the regeneration and vitality now evident in Manchester.

At the Annual General Meeting which followed the Chairman reported on a satisfactory year for the Section. The Section's sound financial position was set out and the meeting agreed to send a donation to the School. The Committee and Hon Auditor were then re-elected to serve for 2000-2001.

Dan Binnion, Membership Secretary, 01902 758447

South West OMA

We held a small but very successful Autumn Luncheon on the 3rd November 2001. The venue was the Devon Hotel, Matford with 31 souls including two new members and several guests. There was a good selection on the menu and drinks which the assembled consumed with gusto, before departing 3.30'ish to distant parts including Bournemouth, Cornwall, Chippenham, Cardiff, Bristol and South Devon. (Just to show we are prepared to travel).

Sadly we had to report the death of Marjorie Tomlinson (widow of Geoffrey) and on my return to Bristol, there was a letter advising the death of our own centenarian Heric Kenyon who would have been 101 in December.

The Section is in good shape looking for a new Secretary in June 2002 when my term of office must cease. The next extravaganza is the Annual Committee Meeting to be held 9th March 2002 at the home of Jim Brookes. We have new members of the Committee of whom great things are expected and there are rumblings of organising more, smaller meetings of a more 'rustic' nature around the Region.

The new Biography has been received by some and it is a considerable work - there are errors of dates occasionally, but we hope it will encourage members to make contact with long lost friends and bring them along.
Ian Thornton Hon Sec.
Tel 01454 632137

Sussex & SE Section

For details please contact:
John Shippen at 4 Graftons, Christ's Hospital, Horsham, West Sussex. RH13 7LU

The 'Blue Book'

I recently received my copy of the Blue Book and am writing to say how interesting

and informative I have found it. I should like to thank all those involved with the completion and production of this fascinating book. It will provide me and I am sure, many others with hours of pleasurable reading, bringing back many happy memories of MGS.

**H R Henshaw (1949-57)
42 Slayleigh Avenue
Sheffield S10 3RB**

I am reluctant to criticise because so many people have put in an enormous amount of work. However, there are some changes and omissions that baffle me. No longer do Foundation Scholars get an indication alongside their entry. I hasten to add because I never sat the exam. One of my classmates has had the explanation of his wartime death omitted from his details. In another, there is no indication of his death, but his home details have disappeared.

In my own case I have a feeling that the typist has left out a couple of words in my CV and this has altered the meaning. In this instance I am quite willing to concede that the mistake might be mine. I am sorry if I sound churlish, but you did ask for my comments.

**John Wightman (1933)
johnw@enternet.co.nz**

(This letter was e-mailed to Ian Thorpe, I can only say sorry, if the mistake was made at this end. With regard to the address not being shown, we did have quite a number who did not want their address published. MGS will always try to forward any messages in these circumstances. Ed.)

I wish to point out a typographical error on page 225 of the new 'Blue Book'. Ironically, this is in my own biographical details. Immediately following 1972-80 the career details have been rather mixed up. What should follow is Matthew Hall Engineering, Senior Mechanical Engineer 1980-87, Kellogg Co of GB Ltd, Standards Engineer 1987-91. Retired 1991, Keep Fit, Hiking, Gardening and Philately.

Despite the above comment, I consider this 'Blue Book' to be a marvellous piece of work which I shall enjoy reading over the coming years.

**John Hydes
28 Carlton Crescent, Urmston,
Manchester M41 9HZ
Tel 0161-748 5222**

'I have just received 'the book' and it is wonderful!'

**Dr Vincent Jones (1923-31)
Tel 0165 525441**

(This was a phone message taken by Sally Williams.)
Just received my copy of the biographical register. A most professional exercise giving hours of fascinating reading. Congratulations to all concerned.

**David Rogers (1938-45)
d-rogers@supernet.com**

BBC

Appointment

The new head of Religious Broadcasting at the BBC is an Old Mancunian **Alan P Bookbinder (1967-74)**
Martin Stephen

16th Century MGS Cont.

- 1642-47 School supports Royalists in the Civil War.
- 1647 School closed briefly by Puritans, but re-opens with new Governors favourable to Presbyterianism.
- 1648-60 School flourishes under HM Wickens & sends 66 scholars to Oxbridge.
- 1660 Royalists replace Presbyterians as Governors, but Wickens remains as High Master until his death in 1675.

(To be continued at Easter)

Photographs

Thank you to Michael Cohen, Stephen Tillyard, Len 'T' (who presumably knows who he is!) and Ernest Fox who all sent in photographs for inclusion in this document. Unfortunately, space precludes this at present, the photographs are being held pending the development of the electronic systems. I have also promised myself to change the computer which is used to produce this document in February next year. The new system will include a photo quality scanner.

Michael Cohen sent in a photograph of 2A in 1958, with **Freddy Hyslop**. Michael names **Haydn Gott** who is now a District Judge in Inner London, **Peter Oldham** and **John Finch** who he recalls were often to be found with him on the golf course during the long summer holidays.

Stephen Tillyard (Staff 1949-54) Stephen sent an Ernest Hollowell high quality photograph labelled in Ernest's inimitable handwriting that it was Buildwas Abbey in June 1953. Stephen believes that the two boys in the picture may have been from S4F. Perhaps a reader can supply the answer?

Len 'T' submitted a form photograph which may have become separated from the correspondence with the names of the master **Mr Bowden** and all the boys on the back.

Ernest Fox wrote from West Ridge, Harepath Hill, Seaton Devon EX12 2TA with photographs of a recent gathering of History & Classical Sixth leavers 1951 which they held at the Combe House Hotel, Honiton, Devon on 2nd September 2001. For completeness he included a picture of R Alpha in 1948 and History sixth Divs. I & II in 1950, together with details of who is in each photograph. Ernest sent a long letter with a footnote that his brother **Geoff Fox** was on the teaching staff from 1961-69.

Lost Contacts

I attended MGS from 1953-1960 and I have retired after working as a Primary Head Teacher in Sheffield. I would love to hear from any of my contemporaries, especially those who lived in Oldham. **Ken Firth, 11 Bromwich Road, Sheffield S8 0GF**
Firthfirth@kenandann.fsnet.co.uk

John (Jack) Kahane

I should be interested to know if the John Kahane listed as a Foundation Scholar (1900-03) is the same Kahane whose colourful career is described in the autobiography of his son Maurice Girodias.

Kahane was active on the Manchester arts scene before the WW1. He was a founder of the Musical Society and leader of the anti-Richter movement at the Halle. Later he married a French woman and lived near Paris where he ran the Obelisk Press which published the early works of Henry Miller. His son who took his mother's maiden name as a nom-de-plume became more famous (notorious?) than his father as a publisher.

Any information would be welcome. I hope this interesting cosmopolitan figure turns out to be an Old Manc.

Stewart Platts (1946-51)

Disley

I wonder whether anyone at the School can help me with the (erstwhile?) camp at Disley at either Easter, or Whit, 1944. My memory is that we slept in a hut which belonged to Toc h, the 'Owls Nest' having been destroyed earlier in the war. Can anyone confirm this and give me a location, a grid reference would be wonderful, because I suspect that it was within a fairly short distance of where my Great Grandfather was born - at Lyme Handley. Thank you in advance. No elaborate response is needed - a brief e-mail would suffice.

Prof. Brian G Palmer

18 Stevens Lane
Rotherfield Peppard
Henley-on-Thames
RG9 5RG
Tel 01481 628008
Brianpalmer@llwaitrose.com

John Bradford

I was disappointed to read Ben Whitworths comments about John Bradford, the Old Mancunian martyr in edition 7.

I had hoped that Roman Catholics and Christians of the Reformation traditions could now recognise that each 'side' had been responsible for the execution of those who were not prepared to go against their conscience in the years of the English Reformation - and that we rightly and equally regard Catholics & Protestants executed for their Christian faith during those years as martyrs.

Tim Barker (1967-75)
trbarker@cwcom.net
The Rev Tim Barker,
The Parsonage, 8 Church Street
Spalding, PE11 2PB
Tel 01775 722772

South School

P C Bowker wrote about North in the January edition and spoke of boys joining MGS in the 3rd year. I was at South from 1936-39. Form 1 with Mr Smyth, Shell with Vera Robins and finishing in form 5 with Mr Montgomery. The School was in Central Road off Palatine Road West, as you have probably been told. Those of appropriate age took the MGS entrance exam.

I passed the entrance, but not a scholarship starting in September 1939. We started in the first year not the third year. South was known as the Preparatory Department. In 1937 together with Michael Nutter (The Receiver's son) and Tony O'Grady, we put on a puppet show for the Bangola at Old Hall Lane. I never knew where the title Bangola originated, but we did enjoy our participation with our elder brethren.

I do enjoy reading 'TOM' and will be registering separately for electronic transmission.

Tom Dooley

northwest1@brscc.co.uk

We received several letters on this subject Including :-

Ken Whittaker. 'South was in West Didsbury, the tram/bus terminus was almost next to the School. I was eight years old in July 1940 and transferred to one of two Preparatory classes in September in the main School Building. After the 1940 Blitz the building was used by Manchester High School for Girls. I think I would be under the age he mentions, that of 72. I am for example a mere youngster of 69.'

Errata

The email address on page 3 Edition 8 for the Rev John Hartley contained a spelling mistake '@hotmaol' the address should be <johnpeterhartley@hotmail.com>

Gordon Stead (1939-44)

Editorial Committee

The next Editorial Meeting will be held in February and the date will be advised to members.

Rodger Alderson
Ian Bailey
Ian Thorpe
Lawrence Copitch

work 0161-223 5484
home 0161-491 3371
Don Isherwood Editor
home 0161-483 7214

All correspondence should be addressed for the attention of Mrs Sally Williams in the School Appeal Office

s.e.williams@mgs.org

or to The Editor

'The Old Mancunian'

To register on internet go to

www.mgs.org

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