



The Old Mancunian

Easter 2003

London OMA Concert 2003

Over 300 Old Boys and parents attended a marvellous concert given by over 50 MGS musicians at St John's, Smith Square, London on Friday 21st February. Hosted by the London Section of the Old Mancunians Association, this showcase concert provided an excellent opportunity for the world premiere performance of a new composition by MGS student James Drinkwater.

This had been the winner of the London Section's 2002 Composition Prize, for which they had offered a prize of £500. The competition was judged at MGS by composer/conductor James MacMillan.

The performers travelled to London on the day by coach and minibus, and rehearsed hard all afternoon. As the High Master and the audience took their seats, excitement mounted. A number of OMs had admitted that they were attending out of a sense of loyalty and had quite low musical expectations of the evening. But what a surprise they received. The standard of performance by orchestra, choir and jazz groups was exceptional. The acoustic of St John's is remarkably clear, and the audience soon warmed to how well the musicians were playing. Applause was generous for each performance. The Director of Music, Robert Carey, together with two other members of staff, Ruth Aldred and Helen Butchart, conducted.

At the end of the evening, James Drinkwater received his cheque from Robert Powell, who told us that he had thoroughly enjoyed his first evening as a member of a

St John's audience, having performed on its stage on a few occasions during his career. The High Master expressed his confidence that, with the promised support of the London Section, this concert in the capital would become a biennial tradition to be added to the School's achievements.

Ian Thorpe What Do You Think?

I wonder how many Old Mancunians smiled a wry smile when the recent heated debate over university entry and low-grade offers being made to disadvantaged candidates hit the headlines? I ought to make my position clear. The place to address disadvantage is in primary and secondary schools. 18 years of age is too late, and instead of spending millions on trying to let candidates with poor A-levels in to university we ought to be creating a society where candidates do not have to apologise for their grades and universities do not have to make excuses for them. I also think it is immoral for any candidate to be discriminated against on the grounds of the school they attended—they do not choose the school they go to; their parents or geography make the choice for them. As ever with discrimination, the price is too high. What bright, hard-working and well taught young person from a good state or independent school should be turned down to make room for a poorly-qualified young person from a school perceived as 'Bad'? Is it fair to say to a young person that their achievement is valueless because they have been insufficiently disadvantaged?

So why the wry smile? At Sol Clynes's Memorial event here at MGS a comment was read out from an Old Mancunian. "If I was taught by a teacher of genius such as Sol Clynes, it said in effect, I had

no excuses. Anything less than a top grade and the very best mark was inexcusable." So it is with us. We expect our boys to have to jump through some extra hoops, and always have. They are intelligent. They are very well taught. They usually have supportive homes. We tell them that there are no excuses for an MGS boy; do well enough so that no-one can argue your claim for a place, which in turn means doing better than nearly everyone else. You will be pleased to know that we are not aware of any new or special discrimination against our boys. By and large our boys get where and what they deserve.

Dr Martin Stephen GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP AT WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD

This award, restricted to graduates who are ex-pupils of MGS, offers a substantial maintenance grant as well as the payment of fees. Full details are available at

www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/student/scholarships/philipwright

CALLING ALL LAWYERS!!!

December 2002

My wife and I have just returned from a two-week visit to Sierra Leone. After 10 years of civil war the country is greatly benefiting from the fragile peace being maintained by United Nations' UNAMSIL peace-keepers. The main purpose of our visit was to help a friend to set up and raise funds for a small NGO called Children's Learning Services - Sierra Leone. This organisation aims to provide teaching resources in basic literacy and numeracy, and to help children aged 4-10 develop peace-building skills. All children have been affected by the war and some are still badly traumatised. We also met some very impressive people who are

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working at the sharp end of Sierra Leone's reconstruction programme.

One such person is the Inspector-General of the Sierra Leone Police Force, a Mancunian called Keith Biddle. He has done a first-rate job re-organising and training the force, raising its morale, and, wherever possible, providing up-to-date facilities and equipment.

We went to see him and asked if there was anything we could do to help after we returned to the UK. He said he urgently needed police training materials, particularly criminal law books written before the Theft Acts 1968. Sierra Leonean Law is, I understand, all based on pre-1968 English Law, some of it very old indeed.

Keith Biddle would like books on the following:

**Larceny Act 1916, 1861
Malicious Damage Act 1861
Forgery Act 1913
Offences Against the Person Act 1861
English Criminal Law and Evidence of Procedure
Application of Judge Rules
British Colonial Police Instructions**

He thought that police stations would have discarded all their old law books, but he suggested that solicitors and magistrates courts might still have some unwanted copies tucked away somewhere.

If you can donate any of these books or if you can suggest where they might be obtained or downloaded from reference libraries/internet etc. please get in touch with me: **Keith Neal, 3 Carlton Road, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 8RH**
Tel: 0161 980 3343 Fax: 0161 903 8486
email: keith@kneal.u-net.com
(Keith was Head of Biology 1976-99).

I must admit I hadn't even had a look at the website proper when I decided to write. I found your site giving in to a sudden burst of nostalgia. I was the German assistant at MGS in the academic year of 1987/88. That year Liverpool equalled the Leeds United. record of unbeaten matches in the top English football division, (losing to Everton, of all sides!) and I became the first ever foreigner, (or so I was told) to win the Gately.

On my 25th birthday I was allowed to give a speech to the middle school assembly. The Hacienda was legendary and the Smiths were very trendy. Property prices were soaring. I first lived in Levenshulme, then in Heaton Moor. I had the time of my life. MGS and Ian Leverton, the head of the German and Russian department, finally gave me the confidence that teaching was the right thing for me. I went to Grasmere, and I got my first taste of cricket.

Today I am an English and sports teacher in Tegernsee, 50 kms south of Munich. I have played international cricket for Germany and currently hold the post of the youth officer of the German cricket federation. I have extremely fond memories of my time in Manchester at MGS. I thought it was about time I got this off my chest. Cheers!

wolfmanjack@t-online.de

**Wolfgang Albert Gasse 22
83703 Gmund**

Please let the memories of MGS South linger a little longer in your columns for those who were in the presence of Smiggy (Mr Smyth of the trailing gown), Piggy (Mr Erskine of the rotund girth) and the redoubtable Miss Hardisty of cricketing renown.

I am only seventy seven, so maybe there are a few of us still around who progressed to MGS Old Hall Lane in 1935. Compliments on TOM, it does keep one in touch.

**Leon Brown.(1935-38)
24 Longton Ave M20 3JN**

Easter 2003

The South Manchester School was a preparatory school. Its boys were aged between 8 and 11. In 1933 I was required to sit the Entrance exam for MGS and on passing it, I was admitted into the first form.

The South School cap was distinguished by red rings on a navy back ground. In those days, form mistresses had charge of the two lower forms. The Second Master, Mr Erskine, presided over the 3rd year, and his specialism was nature study. A highlight of the School year were the field trips by train to Delamere Forest and its pools.

The fourth year included French, which was taught by the Head Master, W S Montgomerie; this was an excellent preparation for MGS. **Warren Higham (1933-39)
39 Pinewood Avenue,
Bolton-le-Sands, Carnforth
Lancs LA5 8AR**

Reading Alan Sutton's reminiscences of the war period at School (I started in the same form as his brother John) reminded me of the anti-aircraft precautions that were taken on the other side of the School.

It caused quite a stir when WAAFS and RAF vehicles appeared in Birchfields Park. Soon after, Barrage Balloon equipment was installed, and we saw this elephantine creation firmly tethered. It hadn't been installed more than a few months, when on one occasion it was being hauled in during a strong wind and it was bouncing from side to side quite frighteningly, until the ground staff could hold and ancor the triling ropes which were fitted for that purpose.

It occurred to me that when it still required 70 to 100 yards of winding in it could possibly have endangered traffic on Birchfields Road. Goodness knows what the result of contact with the overhead wires would have been either.

After that equipment disappeared, I think in 1943, its place was taken by khaki clad soldiers and a battery of anti-aircraft rocket launchers. I think

this was after the flying bomb had landed in Oldham. I don't believe the rockets were ever fired, the shrapnel outfall would have been considerable, and the subject of avid collection by pupils who delighted in collecting shell and bomb shrapnel.

**Dennis Bottomley (1940-46)
14 Meadway, Mottram Rise
Stalybridge Ches. SK15 2TY** "Although you may have no reminiscences of extraordinary female teachers", and although MGS was a "single sex secondary boys' school" in the 1930s, it was not a single sex school of teachers in my time there. Although it would be unseemly to set forth any detailed reminiscences here, I am sure that other nonagenarians must have been just as terrified of the late Gertie Elsdon as I was.

**Robert Moss (1924-31)
Lieut. Commander RN (Retd)
MA BSc FRCD**

The reflections on curriculum flexibility and lack of music teaching in recent issues of The Old Mancunian have prompted me to recount my experiences. My best subject was music. In Classical VI I was allowed to drop Ancient history and to study music at the northern School of Music (subsequently a partner in the RNCM). Thus it was that I successfully obtained my HSC in Latin, Greek and Music.

K B Winpenny (1944-50)

Keithwinpenny@aol.com

The Blue Book

I see from the Autumn issue of The Old Mancunian, which I have just read having been away in the UK for a couple of months, that you are asking id there is any interest in a reprint of this book. Do you think it would be possible to issue this book as a CD ROM? This would be easier to 'reprint' and to correct; and at a lower price could give more sales.

John Whitelock (1945-49)

Johnfw@netspace.net.au

Ulula 2002

The latest Ulula form the pen, or should I say the keyboard of its new editor Patrick Thom, fully maintains the standards set by Nigel Reynolds.

The report of so many overseas camps and treks from the old favourites in areas such as The Pyrenees, Bassenthwaite, Borrowdale, Grasmere and Lucton, to the Sahara, Scotland, Mallorca, Berlin, Egypt, Blencathra, Madrid, Paris, Russia, Ski Canada and Augsburg is impressive just as a list. It is even more fascinating to read the individual experiences of both teachers and pupils, visiting these locations and in some attending schools.

Dominie Dobbs in his 'Ex Cathedra' article covering the visit of the Independent Schools Inspector left me literally in tears of laughter having experienced inspection at two Primary Schools where I was an unpaid classroom assistant I know what teachers go through to achieve a good rating. His style reminds me of the humour of 'Haffie' Field, albeit without the poetry.

There is so much to read in this magazine, which could not be published economically in its present form without the support of the Old Mancunians Association. (The OMA takes 2800 copies of the 4300 published.)

Why not enrich your life today? Phone or write to School for a direct debit form. Join the OMA and receive the 2003 edition of Ulula post free. We have a few spare copies of Ulula 2002, £8:00 inc post. Ed.

Feminine Rites

This is a limited edition book, which I am assured by the author is "too witty to be true", in two years time "it will be worth twice as much" Priced at £30:00 for each signed copy. Apply to

Bernard Tomlinson (1939-44)

**The Rectory Stables, Holford
Bridgewater Somerset**

TA15 1RY Tel 01278 741 318

Golf Day

Gareth Roberts has kindly invited us to hold our Golf Day at Disley Golf Club on Tuesday 20th May.

For further details please contact Don Isherwood 0161 483 7214 or Isherwood.don@tesco.net

London Region

One major event recently was the Concert at St Johns, Smith Square London reported on page one. This was a spectacular success and will be repeated in two years time. The Dinner at the House of Lords on March 7th was attended by 63 people. There was a wide range of ages from mid 20s, to near 90. Geoffrey, Lord Tordoff was our sponsor; unfortunately Lady Tordoff was unable to accompany him on this occasion. The meal and service were excellent as one would expect in such a venue. We assembled in the conservatory adjoining the Cholmondley Room for pre-prandial drinks and a chat before sitting down to dinner in these splendid surroundings. We retired afterwards for more drinks and discussions to the conservatory with its marvellous views of the Thames and the London Eye.

The next event on the 7th June will be a visit to the River and Rowing Museum, a fascinating place to meet your friends old and new.

For more details contact:

Ian Shepherd 01491 572393 or ian.shepherd@soci.org

For other activities or general enquiries contact:

Nicholas.gartside@schroders.com

Flat 16

**69/71 St. George's Drive
LONDON SW1V 4DB**

Midlands

The Annual Luncheon and the Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 15th November this year at the Forest Hotel in Dorridge, Solihull.

Arrangements are also in hand for the Summer Luncheon to be held at the Anchor Inn Eckington near Pershore, on Saturday June 21st. Members will be notified well in advance

of the details of these functions. New members and their ladies will be most welcome.

For further information please contact:

**Dan Binnion, Membership Secretary,
Tel 01902 758447**

South West Region

Although Frances Annear was appointed as Secretary at the AGM in 2002, she found that her personal situation, including promotion to Head of Geography at Badminton School, prevented her from fulfilling the duties. Her position has been taken by Ed Bridge.

The Section sadly records the death of Peter Saunders who was a South West stalwart and son of ex MGS gym teacher Jack. A recent committee meeting confirmed that the Hugh Oldham Commemoration Service, followed by lunch, will be held at Exeter Cathedral on 22nd June. All OMAs are welcome and can receive details from Ed on 01934 834521. The latest information about the Section's activities can now be found on its new website www.oldmancs.org.uk.

Sussex & SE

The AGM and Buffet Supper will be held at Christ's Hospital on Saturday 10th May. Reception is 6:30 for 7:00, anybody in the area is welcome to join us, we look forward to meeting you. For details and reservation please contact **John Shippen 01403 247533**.

Old Mancunians AFC

It has been a difficult season for Old Mancunians Football club from a playing perspective. After winning promotion to the Lancashire Amateur League First Division in 2000/01, last season was one of consolidation for the first XI with great hopes of further success this year.

Unfortunately, the loss of four first team regulars at the start of the season was

compounded by a number of serious injuries to key players resulting in a disappointing season in the league. We welcomed back some ex MGS quality players in Danny Walmsley, Rob Salisbury and Ben Coggan during the course of the season and hope that they will make a big impact next term.

The second and third teams have had moderately successful seasons, although the knock-on effect of player losses to the first team has taken its toll on promotion aspirations.

All 3 teams have League Cup competitions to look forward to in the next few weeks as well as the annual tour to Harrogate which will be attended by over 30 players, officials and 'supporters' next month.

We had an extremely enjoyable and successful Sportsman's Dinner in November 2002 at Stockport County Football Club. The event was attended by nearly 200 people with a strong contingent of ex-Old Mancs players. We intend to hold a further dinner in Autumn 2003 and would welcome interest from Old Mancunians who have had previous connections with the club.

Finally, we are very keen to attract new players to the club for next season, particularly at first team level. Any Old Mancunians who would be interested in playing good standard amateur football on Saturday afternoon, on excellent pitches (we use Manchester University pitches at Northenden), would be made very welcome.

We aim to start training early this year in order to bring in new faces and prepare well for the start of the season in August. Training sessions, run by a qualified coach, will be held opposite the school's main gates at Fallowfield from 6.30 - 8.00pm on Tuesday evenings, commencing on the 17th June 2003. Anyone interested in joining us should telephone:- **Mike Richards (first XI captain) on 01706 840980 or mobile 0777 9807236**

or **Harry Hinchcliffe (Club Secretary) on 0161 432 0265** or myself **Geoff Loughlin (Vice Chairman) on 0161 320 5992 or mobile 07713 085013**. We look forward to seeing you!

Author Hopes For Repeat Success

Following up on his successful first historical novel, *'The Desperate Remedy'* (which is now also available in paperback), Dr Martin Stephen has advised me of his second novel due out in September. It's called *'The Conscience of the King'*.

Martin tells me that it's a thriller about the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, the authorship of the King James Bible and whether Christopher Marlowe was murdered or not.

The hardback price is around £16.00.

If OM's want to order a signed copy, Martin would be delighted to arrange it; they just need to drop him a line with a mailing address c/o MGS, or email to

g.m.stephen@mgs.org

Publications

At a recent meeting with Patrick Thom the new Editor of *Ulula* and Ian Thorpe, we were looking at the future shape of publications, including *Ulula*, *The OMA Annual Report and The Old Mancunian*. Have you any suggestions for improvements?

Both Patrick and I would make a very strong appeal for news, particularly of our younger readers. It would appear that Old Boys in general are busy getting on with their lives and perhaps a bit shy to furnish news about themselves. If you can provide some information we would be delighted to publish it.

As you leave University, you normally need to advise MGS of your change of address, please let us know what you are going to do next! **Ed.**

Obituaries

Sol Clynes

I was sorry that the death of Sol Clynes on September 2nd 2002 was not reported in the December edition of *TOM*. It was reported in *Ulula*. Sol came to MGS in 1938 with a first class degree in Chemistry at Manchester University to do his teaching practice. 'Gadro' Newbold, Head of Chemistry, was ill, so Sol was given his timetable. He always said that the Division I boys were only about three years younger than he! He never left except for War service, when he was a Major in REME.

More than 150 family and friends attended the memorial gathering for Sol Clynes at School on Sunday 23rd March, following the unveiling of Sol's headstone at Dunham Massey cemetery. Peter Laycock (Second Master) and Darryl Lee (grandson-in-law) gave addresses, and music was provided by MGS vocalists and the Concert Band, conducted by Helen Butchart. A permanent memorial to Sol will be placed in the Chemistry Department.

Frank Allaun

Frank left School to go into engineering. He qualified extramurally with a B.Com and became an ACA. Allaun fought his first seat at Moss Side in 1951 and four years later was elected to Salford East. He was opposed to the use of force in the Suez dispute, as a Jew he resented being called a 'Nasserite'. In 1957 Allaun with other MPs formed the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

In 1964 he was appointed PPS to the Colonial Secretary, Anthony Greenwood. In 1978 he was appointed Party Secretary during the 'winter of discontent'. He retired from Parliament at the 1983 election.

He married first in 1941 Lillian ball who died in 1986, their son and daughter survive him. He married again in 1989 Millie Bobker.

Extracted from his obituary in *The Daily Telegraph* Nov 29 2002.

The MGS Credit Card

We have enclosed the latest version of the application form for the MGS Visa Card. This offers a very good deal for you and makes a contribution to the School. The card is very attractive, with the School coat of arms on the front. MBNA pays a lump sum for every card taken out and makes a small contribution based on the value of purchases at no cost to you. It offers up to 59 days free credit.

MBNA contributed more than £1500 to the School in its first year of operation. Your co-operation is requested.

The Blue Book

I have arranged for £130 to be paid to the Appeal Fund – this represents various 'Blue Book' sales made since the last payment. This will be a final payment as there are now no remaining copies.

Judy Robinson Finance Manager

Regrettably it is not economic to produce a short run reprint at this time. The minimum print run would be 200 and we have received requests for about 30. The question is often raised why not produce an electronic version. This is very feasible, but would land us in trouble with Data Protection Registrar.

Bert Parnaby

I did enjoy the note about Bert Parnaby. I never had him as a teacher, but did see him in his element in '*The Pedagogues*'. By that time I had left School for an apprenticeship on the Manchester Evening Chronicle and persuaded my news editor to let me review the show two years running at half a guinea a time, good pay when my starting salary was £2.3.6d a week.

Bert was in his element the first time "selling" the stage curtain and the second a dining chair. Thirty years later I met him at the BBC Club bar at TV Centre dressed as a Roundhead officer after he had achieved his ambition in later life as a much sought after character actor. A lovely man.

Mike Broadbent (1944-50)

mike_broadbent@yahoo.com

Sally Williams

Hello Don,

Even though I am no longer at MGS you cannot get rid of me that quickly! I think before I left I asked that I might write an article for TOM saying goodbye and thanks to all my friends at MGS who I did not get a chance to beforehand.

So here goes:

"By the time this article goes to print I will be nearly 4 months into my new Job as Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive of the Boys and Girls Welfare Society in Cheadle. I am settling in but, of course, still miss my friends at MGS. I spent nearly 10 very very happy years with the School and loved every minute of my time there especially meeting you all at reunions and Benefactors' and Founders' day. However, it was time to move on and I am enjoying my new post - certainly a challenge!. I hope that whilst I was there I played my part in building up the relationships with the School and the various sections of the OMA.

I was very honoured to be asked to be Secretary of the Working Party Group and then Secretary to the OMA.

Working on the Foundation Bursary Appeal with Ian Thorpe was not only great fun, but also very satisfying and I know that the target of £10m will soon be reached. Thank you also to all the members of the non-teaching staff, the teaching staff, members of OMA Executive and all the Section Secretaries who were always very helpful to me and made my job a lot easier.

I am, of course, still in touch with my 'Mr Chips' - Mr Bailey - and John Dickinson as well as Eileen Fraser on reception. With best wishes to you all,
Sally Williams."

Editorial

Farewell ...

I would like to say thank you to Sally Williams who was

Secretary to the Bursary Appeal, Secretary of The Old Mancunians Association and a person who also made a big impact on a wide range of old boys and staff. I wish her well in her personal life as well as her new position as PA to the Chief Executive Officer of the Boys and Girls Welfare Society based at Cheadle.

... and Hello

I am pleased to welcome Carole Pemberton, who will operate in the Appeal Office in her new position of Development Secretary. It is proposed that Carole will also be co-opted by the OMA Executive to act as Secretary to The Association and will be the initial contact at School for the Bursary Appeal Fund and this newsletter. Carole is not a total stranger to MGS with a son in the fourth year.

Don Isherwood

Please address all correspondence to Mrs Carole Pemberton c.m.pemberton@mgs.org or, to The Editor '*The Old Mancunian*'

To register on internet go to www.Oldmancunians.org
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Ulula 2003

The closing date for Ulula is Friday 5th September. Please address your entry to Patrick Thom, The Common Room, MGS or preferably submit your text by email to c.p.thom@mgs.org