



MAIDSTONE  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
FOUNDED 1549

# MGS Newsletter

Spring 2023



## From the Headmaster

Looking back on the last three months at MGS I continue to be incredibly proud of what I see on a daily basis. How students engage with their learning, how they contribute to the wider life of the school, and how staff work hard to support the students, are all things that are a delight to be associated with. However, I cannot reflect on the last term without acknowledging the recent and very sad news of the tragic death of a fellow Maidstonian. The sudden death of a student is going to affect the entire school community, and at times, the last three weeks have been incredibly difficult, but despite what happened, what we have seen following the tragedy has been an example of how we all feel about this school and of each other. The response from staff and students has been amazing, and has reminded us all of how much good and kindness there still is in the world. I have always known Maidstone Grammar School is a kind and supportive school, but what we witnessed on the days after the tragedy was truly wonderful. The power of humanity, and of being a Maidstonian, has been truly phenomenal.

Throughout the term we have seen many successes and news stories that we wish to share with you, and so this newsletter will pick out a few that you maybe interested in reading about. For example, back in January we served up nearly 400 Christmas meals to hungry Maidstonians after we had to postpone Christmas lunch due to the snow and freezing conditions in school in December; 24 students flew to the States to attend the Harvard Model United Nations Conference (the first time since 2020); Mr Hughes, head of College House, ran 30 miles in school to support his house's charity day, raising over £2600 for the British Heart Foundation; senior football squad won the East Kent Premier League without losing a match all season; the rainbow flag flew once more on top of the gatehouse to acknowledge LGBTQ+ History Month; competitive hockey returned to MGS after nearly 15 years with a so far 100% winning performance after the squad's first four matches; Maidstonians rallied together to put on an additional charity day to raise

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money for the people of Turkey and Syria after the dreadful earthquake in February; and a large number of the students, accompanied by many members of staff, staged three wonderful performances of this year's production of Shrek: The Musical. Do read on if you would like to know more on these and other stories.

At the end of a term I always acknowledge the members of staff who are leaving, or who have already left the MGS community, and on this occasion we are saying goodbye to four. Mrs Barty and Mr Affleck, who joined us in February last year to work in the Learning Support Department, are leaving to take up new roles. They have both been integral to the workings of the school and we wish them well with their future pursuits. Mr Cairney, who joined the Physics Department in 2020, is leaving us after three years to join another school to oversee their cadet force. Mr Cairney has not only shared his passion for physics with his students, he has also lead the army contingent within our CCF. Good luck Mr Cairney. Finally, we said goodbye to Mrs Harriss in January after serving 17 years as a cover supervisor. During her time she was not only a popular face in the school, amongst both the staff and students, she brought a smile to MGS each and every day. Thank you Mrs Harriss.

Finally, I wish to thank the staff and my close colleagues for their collective and significant efforts during what has been another challenging term. There have

been overwhelming moments for us during the term, but once again we pulled together to support each other and our students when it was required. I know I can speak for all the staff at MGS when I say we all need a holiday! Finally, I turn to the students and say thank you. They, this term, have illustrated what the MGS community is all about. Their support for each other has been truly wonderful, and once again, it has been an absolute pleasure being in their company.

Do ensure you keep well; you remain safe; and you get a restful holiday.

Mr M Tomkins  
Headmaster



# BoE Talk



The MGS Economics Society spent Friday 24 March in an informative and engaging talk with James Bell, Communications Director of the Bank of England. The 50 Year 12 and 13 students were given an insight into how the Bank are using monetary policy and other financial instruments to tackle inflation.

# Pieces of Us

On Friday 10 March our Performing Arts Department welcomed the Hazlitt Theatre who performed their incredibly powerful play "Pieces of Us". This play was originally devised by three of our own sixth form students in their Hazlitt Youth Theatre classes. It was an amazing play with a very powerful message and our GCSE Drama students gained a lot from seeing it.



# RN Trip



Our Royal Navy Cadets and staff had a wonderful time at Britannia Royal Naval College, in Dartmouth, earlier this month.

They were trained to run the Field Gun and our cadets absolutely smashed the previously set record of 3 minutes 47 seconds and set a new record of 3 minutes and 16 seconds for the activity.

They also took small boats (Champs and Whalers) out onto the River Dart, learnt life-saving and man over board techniques in the pool, played water polo and performed PLT's on the low rope course; while spending quality time in the Royal Navy's training establishment.





Nine months... seventy students... seven staff... more staff to support... countless people who have contributed to the superb spectacle that is Shrek the Musical!

What a privilege it has been to work on this musical that is based on the original animation about everyone's favourite ogre. So much love, laughter, to say nothing of bodily odour and flatulence, has resulted in such an intense and incredible experience, but with such a caring company of people who have worked tirelessly to create something great.

## CAST

Our cast have been incredible. A huge group of students who have been so supportive and warm to each other, and to the staff. So many rehearsals after school. So many lunch time practices. Learning lyrics and dances (choreographed so carefully by the lovely Miss McKelvey). So many messages and reminders of so many things to do and to remember. And all while coming to school, doing their homework, completing assessments, playing sports, taking music lessons, going to a host of other activities. I

am so very proud of them all. There are too many different characters to comment individually, but a special shout out to our incredible leads for their energy and dedication: Connor V Y12 (Shrek), Joseph H Y12 (Donkey), Catherine D Y12 (Princess Fiona), Poppy H Y12 (Dragon, Mama Ogre, Young Fiona), Robert A Y12 (Pinocchio) and Judah M Y12 (Lord Farquaad) It has been a delight to work with you all.

## BAND

What can I say? Our band are unique. Not only are they incredibly talented, but with the exception of brilliant Mr. Bourne as our conductor and musical director, and fabulous Mrs. Fowler our cellist, it is entirely comprised of our own MGS students. Months of practice, then rehearsals as a band, then with the cast. This is how we arrive at the amazing music you hear as you watch the show. Thank you to them all.

## CREW

Our backstage crew, be it part of the stage team, or the sound and light team, is large. It has to be. Set

has to be moved. Props need to be managed. Microphones have to be prepped and checked. Costumes need to be researched, ordered, tailored and cleaned. It is a huge amount of work, and the crew can be the unsung heroes of a show – not these. Thank you all.

Thank you to Mrs. Edwards who did the most marvellous job arranging and creating the costumes and make-up for our host of weird and wonderful fairy tale creatures.

Thank you to Mrs. Morton, our superb set designer and prop curator. Once again, we have a splendid set that draws us into Shrek's fairy tale world.

As always, I look forward to the next production, the next range of characters, stories and adventures. Bring it on!

It is a Big, Bright Beautiful World and This is Our Story.

Mrs. Brooks  
Head of Performing Arts





# A Message from our School Captain

The focus for both Sam and I starting the spring term was definitely on mocks, as the majority of events had already been held in previous terms. While these mock exams are forcing us to realise how close our final A-Levels are, something else this term has really driven home the reality of how close the end of our school experience really is. And that was selecting the next school and vice-captain to take over our roles for the next year.

Going through the selection process on the other side of the interviewing table was an interesting experience for us. Watching all the candidates go through similar situations as we had brought back some memories and I'd be lying if I said I wasn't nervous for them. In the end, two candidates managed to come out successful, those being Rafe L Y12 Tonbridge and Jess R Y12 College.

Our first task together, was a charity day for Children in Need. Rafe and Jess have started off strong, with a successful all day rowing challenge, rowing a combined 300km over the day, whilst managing to co-ordinate cake sales at break and lunch. The Old Maidstonian Supper, followed by the Old Maidstonian Super Sports Saturday have been two recent highlights of the year. Having the opportunity to talk with former students returning to the school after their time in the 1950's was an incredibly interesting eye-opener into how

the school has evolved over time. While the sports on Saturday allowed us to test our football and rugby skills against leavers from years previous. Our 2003 leavers, clad in a full custom kit being crowned victorious in the football was a great moment. Equally, playing last year's leavers at football was an awesome match full of laughter and memories, ending in hard fought victory for us current maidstonians. These events really epitomise what it means to be a maidstonians, and what is so special about our school.

As our time as leaders of the school is drawing to a close, our final weeks have become extra busy, fitting in the last preparations for leaver's hoodies, prom, and a couple of final speeches, whilst finishing the final lessons of our subject courses has proven tough, however, with the support from our teams, especially Rafe and Jess, we are managing the final push to the end strongly.

Sam and I are both ready to crack on with the daunting summit of A-level exams, and to move into our futures, but, leaving MGS is bittersweet. There are many moments we will reminisce about in the future, especially when we return in the years to come to see how the school has continued to change.

Olim Meminisse Juvabit

Ethan Y, Year 13 Barton House  
School Captain



## From the Archive

The following text is copied in its original format and spelling from Frank Strearfield's book entitled "An Account of the Grammar School In the King's Town and Parish of Maidstone in Kent", published by Rogers and Broome at The Cowley St. John Press, Oxford, 1915.

*"The first Master appointed under the Charter was the Rev. Thomas Cole, M. A.; he was a native of Lincolnshire, and was educated at King's College, Cambridge, where he graduated B. A. in 1546, and M. A. in 1550.*

*On his arrival in this town he earned an unenviable notoriety by taking advantage of the unsettled state of the newly-reformed Church to preach doctrines widely variant from the prevalent Genevan Theology, and little more in harmony with the dogmas of the Catholic Church. Among his statements we find the assertion that 'children were not born in original sin,' and that Adam was elected to be saved and that all men then being in Adam's loins were predestinate to be saved. Other people advanced the same opinion, in consequence of which a commission was directed to enquire into the matter. The accused, however, endeavoured to justify themselves by referring to 'Cole of Maidstone,' and the affair was allowed to drop.*

*The Schoolmaster seems to have been more interested in preaching than in teaching, for we find 'Cole of Maidstone' before the Privy Council, 3rd February 1551, with sundry others, accused of having held conventicles at Bocking, Essex, and of having 'refused the Communion above ij yeres upon verie superstitious and erronyose purposes, withe divers other evill oppnyons worthie of great punyshement. ' They were released upon bail of £40 each on condition 'tappeare whan thei shalbe called upon, and to resorte to their Ordinarie for resolucion of their oppnyons in cace thei have any doubte in religion. '*

*Cole apparently availed himself so*

*well of this latter provision that only a year later we find him preaching before Archbishop Cranmer in All Saints' Church on occasion of one of the frequent visits of the Primate to this town. The sermon was printed in octavo and copies of it are now extremely rare. It is entitled 'A Godly and Fruitful Sermon made at Maydstone in the County of Kent the First Sunday in Lent 1552 in the presence of the Most Reverend Father in God, Thomas, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, etc., by M. Thomas Cole there. Prynted by Reginald Wolfe 1553.'*

*Towards the end of 1552 he was made Dean of Salisbury, but fled to Frankfort at the accession of Queen Mary. There he made the acquaintance of John Knox, and accompanied him to Geneva. On the death of the Queen he returned to England and became Rector of High Ongar, Essex, and Archdeacon of Essex, with the prebend of Rugmere in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1560. He was present at the Convocation of 1562, and subscribed the original Thirty-nine Articles. In 1564 he was made D.D., and was presented to the Rectory of Stanford Rivers, Essex. He preached before Queen Elizabeth at Windsor in the same year, and published the sermon. He preached the Spital Sermon in 1560, 1561 and 1563, but was inhibited by Archbishop Parker for his unorthodox teaching. He died in 1571.*

*The luckless revolt (1554) of Sir Thomas Wyatt marked out Maidstone for the signal vengeance of the Government; and full requital was paid to all who had shared in the spoliation of All Saints' Church. The Charter of the Town was forfeited, and the School founded under it came to an untimely end, while the members of the*

*'Spoliation Committee' either fled or paid the penalty at the stake. But the new reign was not of long duration, and after the death of the Queen the arrangements of the reign of Edward VI were in most cases reinstated: this was the case with Maidstone, as will be seen later.*

*With the new regime Maidstone once more was in favour with the Government. Whatever her doubts and difficulties in la haute politique the Queen soon granted a new Charter to the Borough, and in it a clause re-establishing the School; the twonsfolk were not slow to act upon this permission, and the new Mayor and Corporation drew up (a) deed of foundation in pursuance of the Royal Letters Patent, the terms of which are practically identical with those of 1549, except that the grant of Mortmain was extended to £20."*

*By this deed the Corporation appointed as Master of the School the Rev. Ralph Moore, who graduated at Oxford, 19th June 1540.*



# Pompeii Trip

On Friday 17th of February, 40 lucky students in Years 7 and 8 set off from school to Heathrow Airport. We were going to Italy, to visit Naples, Pompeii and Herculaneum, furthering our knowledge of Roman civilisation and seeing some Italian culture as well. We were all so grateful for the opportunity and had an amazing time.

On Saturday morning, we travelled to the other side of the bay, with our eyes set on the towering Mt Vesuvius. First on the itinerary was walking up to the crater, because only then could we understand the area that Vesuvius destroyed and would destroy if such a violent eruption occurred today. I think it made us realise the magnitude of the impact if the volcano erupted in such a way again and helped us in understanding what the residents of Pompeii and Herculaneum

experienced in 79 AD.

In the afternoon, after Vesuvius, we entered the ancient town of Pompeii. We had all studied this in Latin lessons, but although we had seen the photos it was so interesting to see everything in real life. As close to what those in Pompeii would have seen, as possible. We saw some amazingly preserved buildings, including the house of Caecilius (who the first Latin textbook follows), an amazingly well preserved house known as the house of the faun and many others. However, some of the most impressive things we saw were structures like the theatre and the temple of Isis because it gives so much more of an insight into the lives of Romans 2000 years ago. We all really enjoyed Pompeii because it felt like a moment of history that was frozen when the volcano erupted.

The next day we visited Herculaneum. Herculaneum was a more residential town compared to the industrial, busy Pompeii. It was affected by the volcano, however it was impacted in a very different way. Pompeii was crushed by the ash and pumice, whereas Herculaneum was destroyed by the lava. The lava cooled off very quickly and as a result some wood was left charred instead of totally destroyed. There were also more wall paintings - depicting Roman and Greek myths, the theatre or simply floral and decorative patterns - which really characterised some of the houses. We got to see amazing statues and also saw and discussed the remnants of those who tried to shelter from the volcano in the boathouse as it was an important part of history. We all really enjoyed Herculaneum as we got to see how houses and homes would have looked like 1,944 years ago.

Another amazing experience we had was visiting a virtual reality museum. None of the staff had visited before so it was new to all of us, however we would all recommend it. Firstly, we were plunged into 79AD when the volcano was erupting. The film took us to through the streets and up to the volcano when lava was bubbling in the crater and a large cloud of ash started to emerge. Many of us in Year 8 (who had translated the story when Vesuvius erupted) were taken aback at how violent the eruption was and how distressing it must have been having nowhere to go, where you could truly be safe. It was eye-opening, because you thought of the real people who had died praying to the Gods, instead of characters in a story. We also got to see an amazing exhibition, which had many videos to watch, QR codes to scan and information to read. We found out about how the

architects excavated Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as some of the finds that have been most influential in our perception of Roman culture. One of these finds was the "House of the Tragic Poet". It was one of the most richly decorated houses in Pompeii. Its name originated from a mosaic of a theatre rehearsal by a choir of satyrs, and it also had many frescos (wall paintings) depicting scenes like Ariadne being abandoned by Theseus.

On the Monday morning, before we travelled back to England in the afternoon, we visited many amazing places. We went down an ancient tunnel that was considered as an entrance way to the underworld. We discussed many Roman Myths about the heroes who had entered the underworld, including Heracles/Hercules, Theseus and the man who Romulus and Remus (the founders of Rome) descended

from, Aeneas. We also got to visit one of the best preserved amphitheatres in the area, which was in Cuma. We got to go below the amphitheater, into where wild beasts and gladiators were kept before a fight. Our last event of the trip was visiting the Naples National Archaeological Museum. We saw amazing wall paintings, mosaics and statues, many of which were from Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Thank you so much to all the staff, tour guides and hotel staff. We had such a brilliant time and are so lucky to have the opportunity of such an experience.

Henry M  
Year 8 College House





# DofE Volunteering

The DofE (Duke of Edinburgh award) is a great way to develop essential skills for future life and work. There are three sections to the award that each help to build these skills and these consist of volunteering, a skill and a physical activity. Each of these work on different parts of the essential skills. Specifically, for my volunteering activity I decided to do litter picking in my local community. My aim was to pick up 50kg of litter, to make a contribution to my community, and to make the area cleaner for all those living in it. I believe that clearing the litter will have a big impact on my community and litter picking in general would give you a sense of pride in making a difference to the world. The amount that you are picking up gives you a sense of achievement every time you complete a litter pick.

For my litter picking section of DofE I have been supported by a member of Maidstone Borough Council who agreed to be my assessor and supplied me with all the resources necessary to go out on the litter picks, including a litter picker and volunteer rubbish bags. I have so far been able to pick up 63.4kg of litter and I am nearly finished with my Bronze DofE volunteering section. I am really pleased with all the litter that I have picked up and happy I have exceeded my goal already but sad at the amount of litter that there actually is in my area.

I have picked in areas such as around my local supermarket and along roads around Maidstone and have noticed a cleaner area

with less litter then previously, which makes me happy that I have made a difference to the world. Furthermore, I feel a sense of pride in caring for the planet and knowing that I have done something to help against what is happening to it right now.

My time as a litter picker has been great and has inspired me to be kinder to the planet and to think more about my actions, which I think is useful and instrumental to the protection of our planet. I highly recommend litter picking as it is a great way to make a difference even if it is just something small. Thank you to Maidstone Borough Council for helping me with my DofE volunteering section.

Jonathon B  
Year 9 College House



Theo R Year 10 Corpus Christi House competed in the English Schools Athletics Association Cross Country race in Nottingham on Saturday 18 March.

The Kent intermediate boys team he ran for came 2nd. Massive congratulations Theo.

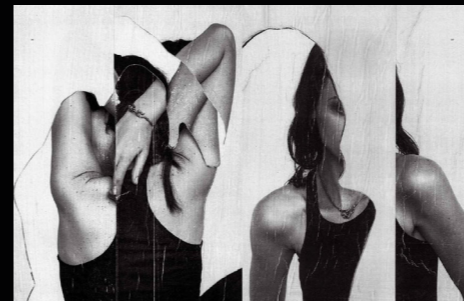
# Art Gallery



Eliza F, Year 13 Corpus Christi  
Acrylic Work in Progress, 2023



Bea R, Year 13 Corpus Christi  
Digital photograph printed on paper, 2023



Nico R, Year 13 Barton House  
Collage on paper, 2023

# DEC Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal

Our Non-uniform Day on 6 March raised

## £2121.03

for the DEC Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal.

Dear Maidstone Grammar School,

Thank you for donating to the DEC Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal. Thanks to your generosity, DEC charities and their local partners are responding, working with locally-led relief efforts in Turkey and Syria. Your support is helping provide emergency aid such as shelter, food, clean water and medical care.

You can stay updated with all the life-saving work DEC charities and their local partners are doing in Turkey and Syria by visiting our website ([www.dec.org.uk](http://www.dec.org.uk)) or following us on Facebook and Twitter.

Like us on Facebook - [www.facebook.com/DisastersEmergencyCommittee](http://www.facebook.com/DisastersEmergencyCommittee)

Follow us on Twitter - [www.twitter.com/DECappeal](http://www.twitter.com/DECappeal)

Your gift will make a real difference, providing urgently needed aid to help those devastated by the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. DEC charities continue to assess the ever-changing situation to ensure aid gets to the people who need it the most.

Your donations are enabling DEC charities to respond rapidly as well as support families affected in the months and years to come as the lasting impact of the crisis continues.

On behalf of all those your donation will support, we want to say thank you once again.

Yours sincerely,

Saleh Saeed  
DEC Chief Executive



Enrico A, Year 13 Barton House  
Digital photographs of 120 Daily Posters printed on paper, 2023



# HMUN January 2023

In late January, 23 students and I from year 12 and 13 attended the Harvard Model UN Conference in Boston. We spent a few days sightseeing in New York, visiting various places – including Liberty Island, the Empire State building and the UN Headquarters. We then travelled to the conference centre – attended by over 4,000 students from across the world. From Thursday evening, we attended committee sessions which ranged in size from around 30 to 400 people. This involved representing our designated country, Ukraine (and one representing Indonesia), through formal debates and discussions about a certain topic. A key aspect of the committee sessions was working collaboratively with delegates from different countries and forming blocs to draft papers, that you would present to your director and fellow delegates. We soon realised that were working in a high-pressure environment, especially when you were given a short amount of time to gain useful insight from as many people as you could talk to. A particularly unique aspect to the committees were the ‘crisis situations’, that the committee I was on (UN Human Rights Council) received twice in one session. This is where you were proposed with an emergency relevant to current global politics, that you and your bloc needed to present and try to pass solutions for; for our committee’s topic on digital human rights, we had to deal with a situation involving cybercrime that had affected many countries’ databases and systems. The conference was an entirely

new experience that I am very grateful for – it pushed us out of our comfort zone and allowed us to meet and form friendships with students from many different countries. It incorporated skills of collaboration, negotiation and self-confidence which, having now developed further, we will carry with us throughout the sixth form and into the wider world.

Lottie H  
Year 12, College House

The 2023 Harvard Model United Nations trip was perhaps one of the greatest weeks of my entire life. As a school, we had 23 students representing Ukraine, and 1 student representing Indonesia. Staying at the Sheraton hotel in Boston was a surreal experience, and I will never forget when myself and all 23 other students walked into the lobby for the first time with our suitcases. Both nervousness and excitement flooded the air, and not a single one of us was backing down from the atmosphere. We all made friends with students from all over the planet and a lot of us are still in contact with many of these students. There are a plethora of great memories from the trip, such as running around finding a bite to eat in the food court, meeting foreign students on the first night, and (for me) eating a steak on the last day of the trip. The experience that comes above it all was the committee sessions and the powerful debating about real life issues that occurred.

Entering committee for the first time was terrifying. I personally faced a general assembly of 126

people, and while I’m normally a confident individual, facing so many academics in one room made me feel momentarily out of my depth. However, I very quickly realised after making a speech close to the start of this session, that I was just as intelligent and skilled as anyone else in the room. The British accent of course helped in a room full of Americans, but many people I interacted with assumed that I had been practicing model United Nations for years, and were shocked to know it was my first time. I went on to speak 6 more times during committee in the following days, and I was praised heavily by many delegates because of my excellent representation of Ukraine.

The experience was so rewarding because it feels so easy to doubt yourself sometimes, and although we failed to take home any awards from the competition, myself and the others took away something greater than any piece of paper. For the first time, we knew that we were capable of so much more than all previous limitations we had ever put ourselves under. We returned home, limitless.

Joseph H  
Year 12, Tonbridge House

As I walked into my hotel room in Boston, where I would be staying during the Harvard Model United Nations (HMUN), the gravity of what was about to happen finally set in. I was one of 24 students from year 12 and 13 representing Ukraine and Indonesia, among over 4,000 students from around the world representing their

respective countries.

One thing that stood out for me during the event was the diversity of people. On the first night, I had the opportunity to socialise with students from Peru, Texas, California, Tunisia, Japan and Australia. It was amazing to be surrounded by such a vast sea of students from different countries.

As the first committee session began, I started to feel nervous, but I knew that the training we had received for months was finally coming into fruition. The committee session was stressful as messages were constantly being passed around, and alliances were being made and broken by a simple word muttered in a speech. My responsibility during this session was to form alliances and figure out which countries were on our side, while my partner Jack K (Year 12) wrote down speeches related to the topics being discussed.

The first time I spoke was near the end of the first session. With almost 150 countries represented, it was challenging to get my word in. However, when I finally did, the rush and excitement I felt when about 30 letters were sent to me discussing alliances was unmatched.

One of the best parts of the trip was the time between sessions, which allowed for a couple of hours of discussions with other delegates on certain topics. The time I spent with roughly 134 delegates representing 67 countries was an eye-opener. It was amazing to see how people from different backgrounds could

come together and share their viewpoints on the same topic, the nuclear proliferation treaty. The teamwork I had developed in school was easily transferable to these sessions and it allowed me to achieve what I wanted in the resolution.

After we finished our resolution, a vote occurred with three resolutions. The voting process was probably the most stressful part of the trip. Several days of work and late-night research had all come down to 20 minutes of voting and amending parts of certain resolutions. Thankfully, when it came to our resolution, we had 82 votes, and it had passed by 7 votes. Cheers erupted from all of us.

Although MGS did not win any awards at the end, we all returned with our heads held high. The trip was a success in everyone’s eyes and it was an experience that none of us will forget.

Jack B  
Year 12, Corpus Christi House





# Oxford Explored

St Hugh's College, Oxford University was founded in 1886 and is one of the largest colleges in Oxford.

On the 21st of March, a group of student from Year 11 visited the college, university campus and city as part of the ASPIRE programme at MGS.

When we first arrived at the college, we were greeted by the outreach officer at the college who then led a presentation giving information on the university as a whole, the applications process and advice on how to be a strong candidate for Oxbridge. Shortly after, a 4th Year Chemistry student hosted a Q & A, giving us the opportunity to ask questions ranging from 'a day in the life' to what the food is like at the university.

This led into a tour of the college, its facilities and accommodation, giving us a real sense of what university life would be like, despite being out of term time. We visited the Junior Common Room (JCR), a communal space to relax with friends, conveying the key message that Oxbridge is not just about work, but about socialising and making the most of the over 400 clubs and societies the university has to offer.

One of the most interesting parts of the campus was the Howard Piper Library. Hushed inside we browsed the multitudes of volumes on offer, from topic areas we didn't even know existed, and this fascinated everyone. We were then served a complimentary lunch in the dining hall, eating

with current students and staff, which allowed us to appreciate what mealtimes were like there, again widening our understanding of university life.

A walk through the city was next on the agenda - led by the outreach officer. We saw many of the university playing fields, the local park and some of the other college's accommodation and campuses. We even managed to stay dry, almost. On our journey through the city centre we passed parts of the picturesque Bodleian Library, exclusive to Oxford students, and featured in many films and TV shows such as Harry Potter and His Dark Materials.

We were then given a bit of freedom to explore within the city and most ended up in perhaps the largest bookshop we had ever seen, Blackwells. The rows of books stretched on and on, ranging from Nordic history to modern politics, there was simply too much to see in one trip. After returning to St Hugh's, completing our walking loop of the city, we said our goodbyes and returned back to MGS on the minibus. The trip concluded with a somewhat shaky rendition of the school song and good spirits.

Overall, it was a fantastic trip with a long highlight reel. Everyone learned a lot, got a taste of university, and had a great time while doing it.

Benjamin B  
Year 11, College House



# Year 9 Team Building



## Mr Highway's Lands' End to Maidstone fundraiser for Mid Kent Mind

To commemorate the 475th anniversary of the founding of MGS I wanted to raise money for Mid Kent Mind, to support the work they do with young people suffering with their mental health. This takes on an extra special meaning now, following the tragic loss of our fellow Maidstonian, Harrison.

Over the course of the next 13 months I am going to walk from Lands' End to MGS. I will follow the South West Coastal Path to Poole. From there the route will continue to Southampton, then up to Winchester. From there I will follow the North Downs Way to MGS.

I am hoping that friends, family and colleagues will join me for some of the legs. I will use free weekends and holidays to complete the walk. Hopefully arriving at MGS on the day MGS celebrate the founding of our school.

I completed the first 18.5 mile leg from Lands' End to Penzance a few weekends ago. A rugged piece of coast with dramatic views.

Donating through JustGiving is simple, fast and totally secure. Once you donate, they'll send your money directly to Mid Kent Mind, so it's the most efficient way to give - saving time and cutting costs for the charity.

You can donate to their JustGiving page by clicking here: [https://www.justgiving.com/page/paul-highway-1674849766522?utm\\_source=Sharethis&utm\\_medium=one\\_page&utm\\_content=page/paul-highway-1674849766522&utm\\_campaign=pfp-email&utm\\_term=04264e2aa1d24398ae05fe91ce041834](https://www.justgiving.com/page/paul-highway-1674849766522?utm_source=Sharethis&utm_medium=one_page&utm_content=page/paul-highway-1674849766522&utm_campaign=pfp-email&utm_term=04264e2aa1d24398ae05fe91ce041834)

JustGiving sends your donation straight to Mid Kent Mind and automatically reclaims Gift Aid if you are a UK taxpayer, so your donation is worth even more.

Thank you for your support!

Mr Highway





# Barton Spring News

As members of Barton House, we are proud to say that our house has been actively involved in a range of initiatives and activities since the Christmas break. We have been dedicated to making a positive impact within our school community and beyond.

One of our biggest accomplishments has been our fundraising efforts for Sports Relief. We were a part of organising the several events our school took part in, including an all-day rowing event, a bake sale, and a non-uniform day, raising a significant amount of money for this important charity. It was fantastic to see our fellow students and teachers come together to support this cause despite the unfortunate late notice and effect of strikes.

Our house council has also been meeting regularly, discussing and planning various initiatives. We have been involved in campaigns to raise awareness of bullying and equality for all, regardless of gender, sexuality and more. Our recent meeting on the 7th of March having almost the entire council coming together to go over the issues our school faces. With our focus on both big and small issues such as racks for bags, issues with toilets and more. We hope to have a smaller group within the council to really prioritise those issues to discuss the best solutions.

Barton House prefects also came together to create posters and a display to promote anti-bullying measures and to show what as

a school community what our values and beliefs must be. It's essential to create an inclusive and accepting environment where everyone feels valued and respected, and we're proud to be a part of making that happen.

In addition to promoting awareness of important issues, we have also been active within organising activities to increase integration between different year groups within our Tutor programme. We have introduced games and activities that allow students from different year groups to interact and build relationships with each other. We have also encouraged tutors through activities like our quizzes where we can engage in team building within that range of year groups.

One of the highlights of the past few months has been the videos shown in form that educate us on important issues such as gender equality. These videos have sparked interesting discussions amongst our peers, leading to greater awareness and understanding of these issues. It's great to see our house actively engaging in important conversations that affect us all.

Overall, we are proud to be members of Barton House. We have demonstrated a strong sense of community and social responsibility, and we are setting an excellent example for our peers. We can't wait to see what we achieve next!

Barton House Prefect Team

# Super Saturday



On Saturday 25 March MGS hosted its second ever Old Maidstonians Super Saturday of Rugby and Football. We had OMs who left in 2003 all the way up to current Sixth Formers fiercely compete against each other. Great fun was had by all!

# UKLO



A number of our students took part in the UK Linguistics Olympiad in early February. This was a great competition that really tested our students' logic and problem-solving skills.

# College House Update

Since Christmas, the college community has been working incessantly towards some amazing achievements whether that be in the outstandingly successful Charity Day or the Gender Equality awareness month in March which is currently on going.

Firstly, back in January we had our College Charity Day in aid of British Heart Foundation, with many members of our prefect team on the Harvard Model UN Trip, it meant that the rest of the team worked tirelessly in order to put on an incredibly memorable and lucrative day - in a plethora of ways. Not only did we make money in the usual ways with bake sales, sweet stalls and non-uniform (with a red theme in support of the charity) but we also had many other entertaining events and opportunities to get involved with. This included some impressive teacher involvement whether that was found in the hall at break with Mr Knight's rendition of a Britney Spears classic, or in Piccadilly where Mr Hughes ran an incredible distance on the treadmill in order to further train for his upcoming London marathon. The day in total raised £2700 which is a real testament to the hard work, dedication and commitment of the whole team that truly paid off!

Additionally, we also led our House Council Meeting in preparation for the whole School Council before the end of this term. It was an incredible opportunity to hear from College voices across all year groups

of the student body - this collaborative effort brought some incredibly unique and actionable ideas to the forefront which we hope to bring up so that they can gain traction and make amazing changes to the whole school. It's these that can then snowball into radical changes within our day-to-day school lives with ideas ranging from watching nature documentaries or taking in the fresh air as part of form times or even having more inter-form competitions in activities such as cake decorating!

We also have built on the prior incredible achievements of past prefects as we were given our Gender Equality focus in the month of March once more. Beginning to brainstorm, we eventually can up with a plethora of engaging and educational resources such as videos, quizzes, timelines and even a gender stereotype bingo. We hope to continually open the minds of students to new ideas in different formats in order to really capture the attention of the student body. The Feminist Society have also been working towards sharing their ideas with the whole school in a video format. With their gender initiative of 'Equity and Equality', they are aiming for it to act as an informative guide on the definitions and differences between them in an accessible and educational manner for all year groups.

It would be impossible to write this update without also sadly acknowledging how we tragically lost a member of College House

earlier in the term. All our thoughts remain with Harrison's family and friends at this difficult time, as we all grieve the unfathomable loss of a fellow form mate, classmate, friend, a member of College and the wider MGS community.

And finally, as we look forward, we are approaching the completion of the application process for the next College Senior Prefects, following the application letters and interviews. We recognise the boundless potential in the next team and we can't wait to see how they lead as they take on the challenge. We can't wait for their leadership with the many exciting events left in the academic year (such as sports day) and beyond as they continue building on the initiatives and charity work while also incorporating their fresh ideas.

Lucy S  
Year 13  
College House Captain



## Corpus Christi News

This year, Corpus Christi has focused a lot on student welfare. We have done this through help sessions to assist students in years 7 through 11 in their daily school life, with a focus on how to help them practice for exams, particularly for those who are facing GCSEs and mocks this academic year. These help sessions have been run by students, giving our prefects a closer link to the students in the house and allowing them to feel more comfortable bringing up any issues they may be facing within school or their personal lives. The feedback students give us can then be shared with members of staff in all the houses to provide a better and more enriching learning experience for all students. The use of these help sessions is also to give students a space where they know they won't be judged on anything they say, which helps them feel more confident in the school environment.

This year, our charity's day was for Children in Need, which allowed students from across the school to donate £1 at the gates and have fun through the day by throwing sponges at teachers and taking part in activities around the school with the end goal of raising money for charity. This enabled students to help those who are less advantaged than many at our school, and for us as a house and a wider school community to shed light on the issues faced by people who aren't as fortunate as us. We saw people from across the school come

together to help set this up, from baking cakes to negotiating with teachers on a price to get a wet sponge thrown at them. This day brought people together to raise money for a good cause.

This February, we celebrated LGBTQ+ History Month by showcasing the hardships many people in the LGBTQ+ community have faced, as well as their achievements and dedication to the advancement of technology and other fields, which have been hidden due to their sexuality. We also highlighted key members of the LGBTQ+ community who campaigned for their rights and freedoms, displaying their contributions on the TVs around the school to show students what they have achieved. We also spoke directly to LGBTQ+ students on how we can address issues they may face and make the school environment a better place for everyone.

Looking forward, we aim to build upon the foundations set out over the past 7 months and work together to create a better house for all.

Corpus Christi House Prefect Team

## Tonbridge Spring News

Since Christmas, Tonbridge has been involved in a range of activities and accomplishments that have strengthened both the internal and external community of MGS, as well as keeping students consistently motivated.

Starting in December, Tonbridge helped host a Christmas Charity day that allowed students to sport Christmas jumpers and purchase goods from the school's very own Christmas market. The donations went to local homeless charities, aiding those particularly vulnerable in the colder season.

We kicked off the new term with an Interhouse Netball Tournament, and although we didn't win this time, it was exciting to compete against the other houses. Despite the number of students who had never played netball before, it was amazing to see how fast people picked up on it and were trying their best to compete for their house. Events like this really serve to grow the community within our house, as is evident with the encouragement given by many students who came to support us.

During Post-16 Open Evening, Tonbridge's Amelia L in Year 12 gave a speech in front of all the students and parents, making Tonbridge proud with her cleverly articulated view of the school and her confidence in expressing her thoughts and views.

Next, four Year 12 students of

Tonbridge had the privilege to join eighteen other Maidstonians on a trip to the US to compete in Harvard Model United Nations 2023, where MGS was the only school from the UK. Taking on the challenge of representing Ukraine, they had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet with the Ukrainian Ambassador whilst in New York and discuss the perspective of Ukraine regarding the current yet ever-changing social, political, and economic climate. This was certainly a transformative experience, debating and public speaking in front of hundreds of other students from across the globe and immersing themselves in a huge variety of cultures.

Following on from Harvard, School Captain applications opened, with the headmaster receiving 25 applications. Tonbridge's very own Rafe L Y12 had the honour of taking on this position and, along with Jess R Y12 of College House as Vice-Captain, they have already been very dedicated and successful with their duties.

In March, once again Comic Relief allowed Tonbridge and the other houses to work together in a joint effort to raise money for both Comic Relief and Maidstone Mind. The day included Prefects competing in a 300km Rowing Competition, a bake sale that very quickly sold out – handmade by students themselves – and students in their own clothes. Billy L in Year 12 set up Mental Health Society, which

has been met with a positive response and engagement to develop better understanding and awareness for such a significant topic, setting up the correct and necessary environment for these big discussions to take place on a wider level.

Finally, to conclude Term 4, Tonbridge began the process for selecting student leadership for the next academic year, with the students entering a competitive process of applications and interviews.

Tonbridge House Prefect Team



## Upper School Spelling Bee

We are proud to announce the results of the 2022-2023 Upper School Spelling Bee. The competition was fierce and all participants did exceptionally well to cope under pressure.

Our winner this year is Joseph H from Corpus Christi House, in Year 12. He emerged victorious after a grueling final round where he showcased his excellent spelling skills. He received 125 points for his house and a well-deserved win.

Charlie F from Barton House, in Year 11, came in second place with 100 points for his house. Benjamin B from College House, in Year 11, followed closely behind with 75 points for his house. Sindre A from Corpus Christi House, in Year 12, came in fourth place with 50 points for his house.

We also had three participants who tied for fifth place with 25 points each for their house. These are Zain B from Year 12 Barton House, Lucas W Year 10 and Henry A Year 11 from Tonbridge House.

All finalists deserve special recognition for their outstanding performance in the competition. They each received 25 points for their house for reaching the final round. The words selected for the Spelling Bee were challenging, but our participants rose to the occasion and did an excellent job.

We would like to congratulate Joseph H once again for his impressive victory in the Upper School Spelling Bee. His achievement is a testament to his hard work and dedication, and we wish him continued success in his academic pursuits.

Miss Wilson



# Sport Review

Despite a term that has seen snow, hail, wind and rain MGS Sport has continued to spread sunshine amongst the dreary winter months. The fact that we have managed to play over one hundred fixtures this term is a testament to the hard work of the pupils, staff and ground staff!!!

January is always an exciting time for Sport at MGS as we begin our Football programme which is a real hit with the boys across the school. At Junior level it has been fantastic to see so many numbers attending extra-curricular club afterschool on the AWP. At MGS we place a real focus on participation and ensuring our pupils have positive memories of School Sport, and this has been seen with the huge demand from pupils to represent their school in inter-school fixtures, showcasing the boy's sense of belonging to MGS. At KS3 our teams have played numerous fixtures, despite the weathers best efforts, our Year 7s often playing U12 A to F fixtures, whilst our Year 8s had their first taste of both the County and District Tournaments, narrowly missing out on a place in the District Final. At KS4 our programme continues to go from strength to strength with the Year 9 making the District Final to be played in Term 5, our Year 10s getting to both the County and District Semi-Finals whilst our Year 11s have gone one step further and made it to the Kent County Final to be played in April. Well done to all the boys who have represented MGS in Football this term.

At Senior level we have had our most successful season at MGS for many a year. Our 1stXI winning the East Kent Premier League title with an unbeaten season, winning nine and drawing one game. The season culminated in a thrilling 3-2 win against Norton Natchbull in a winner takes all decider on the AWP, it was a fantastic occasion, with the side line full of younger Maidstonians looking up to their school heroes!!

As mentioned earlier our primary focus is on engagement and memories, therefore it was fantastic to have three league teams at Senior level for the first time, ensuring many of our Year 11s and Year 12s have a smooth transition into Senior Football. Our 2ndXI also had success qualifying for the 2ndXI Kent Cup Final against Beths Grammar at Herne Bay FC, unfortunately they could not emulate the trophy winning success of the 1stXI as they came up against an excellent Beths side, nevertheless nothing should be taken away from this fine achievement where the boys gave an excellent account of themselves. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the boys who have represented MGS Senior Football and particularly Mr Hughes, Mr Saunderson and Mr Smith for all their efforts with this group.

## Rugby 7s

After the excitement of the 15s season, many of the boys were keen to get fully involved in 7s this term with training starting the first week back in January for Years 9-13. All the boys



worked incredibly hard across the programme for the season to be unfortunately punctuated by weather and industrial action. Nevertheless, there were some real highlights along the way, the 1stVII achieving a memorable victory against Whitgift, our U15VII winning the Kent Shield at Eltham and our U14VII performing very well in their first Kent sevens tournament at Dartford. Many thanks to the hard work of all the players and Mr Brown, Mr Seymour and Mr Smith who coached them this term.

## Hockey

January 2023 marked the return of Hockey at MGS after a 16 year hiatus. It left many members of the PE staff scrambling for the Hockey rulebook to brush up on their knowledge, but step forward Mrs Cook who has led the team. This group of Maidstonians Hockey players have been fine ambassadors of MGS, what originally started as a three game season grew as time went on, and at the time of writing sees the team with five wins from five!! MGS Hockey is certainly back on the map.

## Basketball

Basketball has seen huge demand at MGS and this term we decided to finally take the jump into the County competitions, and our boys have delivered. With our U13,14,15 and 16 teams all qualifying for their respective county semi-finals at the first time of asking. Our U15 and 16 sides have gone one step further and have qualified for the County finals that take place later

this Academic year. It has been brilliant to diversify our competitive option at MGS and provide opportunities for our pupils outside of our core Games offering, I know the pupils have certainly enjoyed it. A huge part of this has been down to the selfless coaching of Mr Ashenfelter who has given so much to Basketball this term, his effervescent nature has ensured boys are inspired to play!! Long may this continue.

## 6th Form mixed Netball and Volleyball

It is important that there is more than just a competitive pathway for our Senior pupils, and that there is the opportunity to compete in recreational sport. It has been brilliant to see both boys and girls from across the Sixth Form take part in Netball and Volleyball clubs, taking time to hone their skills whilst also enjoying the social nature of sport. Thank you to Mrs Coveney, Miss Dimmick and Mr Taylor for providing these opportunities.

The Sports Department is firmly rooted in our values of 'MEMORIES, GROWTH and SUPPORT' and it has been another fantastic term where our pupils have brought these values to life with their passion to represent the school and also to further themselves as sporting performers and people. I wish them all a restful break and Happy Easter. We look forward to hopefully sunnier times as we start our Summer sport programme after the break. Happy Easter!!

MGS PE & Sport Department



# CCF Army Section

The onset of spring brings with it the start of a season of competitions for the army section. Our team has been training restlessly during our Thursday parades and then with further extra sessions afterwards, all preparing for the Military Skills competition that took place on the 24-25th March.

Arriving at Oxney Farm, Bordon on the Friday afternoon, the team had much to prepare for the following 24 hours. With night approaching fast, our main concern was to get our bashas (shelters) made before the light disappeared, along with the gift of visibility. However, the M25 traffic had other ideas, meaning that by the time our initial admin had been sorted, we were operating in complete darkness.

Nevertheless the harbor (campsite) was created swiftly within the woodblock, ration packs began cooking and we had some time to relax and prepare for the day ahead. Speaking to other schools had allowed us to gain an insight into the fact that we all felt a sense of concern due to the new rules, where each time is only allowed 2 senior members as opposed to the previous years which would see teams of mostly year 11s, 12s and 13s. Although many saw this as a restraint, it presented an opportunity to surpass other schools through advanced training of the younger years, bringing them up to a standard we would not usually expect of individuals their age.

After sleeping through a windy and wet night, the team arose ready for action on the Saturday morning. Throughout the day we forged through 7 challenging stands, testing our abilities in all respects, from high paced adrenaline filled events such as section attacks and

casualty evacuations to transmitting messages via semaphore and radios.

As the section commander, I can express nothing but gratitude to all other 9 members of our section. They showed their skills to adapt and improvise when things didn't go as expected, demonstrated their proficiency with their drills and thought outside the box to gain the edge over the competition. Although our results are currently unknown due the second half of the schools competing on Sunday, we could not have asked much more of our cadets and they should feel proud of their performance.

We will take our shortcomings as learning curves, celebrate our successes and although under a new commander, we will return stronger than ever next year and keep the renowned reputation of Maidstone Grammar School Army Section.

Cdt RSM Ellis

Year 13, Corpus Christi House



# CCF Royal Navy Section

Since Christmas the Royal Navy section of the CCF have progressed far in all aspects. The year 9 recruits have finished the basic training all cadets go through and are now well involved in the wider section, participating in more complex lessons and activities. This has made a distinct difference in the section's dynamic, such as our drill which is now at a good standard, a massive achievement from where we were in September as well as the different year groups becoming more integrated within their divisions.

The most eventful trip this term has been going down to Britannia Royal Naval College where the Royal Navy's officers are trained. While there we were able to gain an insight into the workings of the college and were taken through a number of activities. These activities included bouldering, driving boats down the River Dart and undergoing training with the Field Gun equipment.

The training with the Field Gun was especially an eventful and challenging exercise, involving disassembling the gun, swapping wheels off and on as well as having to pull the 500kg assembled gun through different parts of an 80 yard course. As a team the cadets on the trip and myself were forced to work together and overcame challenges of coordination and speed, however by the end of the training we managed to pull together and set a new cadet record of 3 minutes and 16 seconds

Early in the term the senior staff ran a first aid course, including CPR, how to respond to a situation involving casualties and the recovery position. This allowed a number of cadets from year 9 to year 12 to gain essential skills and understand the importance of knowing basic first

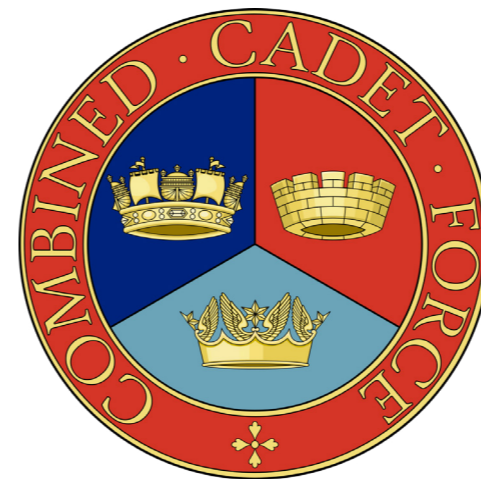
aid. The maturity shown in these sessions showed how the newer cadets have developed and fills the senior staff with faith as they will be showing the new recruits in September what it is to be a Royal Navy cadet.

Looking forward there is a bright future for the section. We have recently received confirmation we will be getting the up to date uniforms the Royal Navy wears so we will, after long last, look like the real Royal Navy. On top of this due to the higher intake of recruits we have experienced over the last few years the section will be able to go on trips we weren't able to before that require higher numbers to run.

As section commander the progress the section has made this year has continually shocked me and I could not have asked more from the cadets. I'm sure this trend will continue under the new command next year and I look forward to seeing the section after myself and the senior staff depart.

CWO 1st Class Crease

Year 13, College House



# CCF RAF Section

Since the last instalment of the newsletter, the RAF Section has been gearing up for the summer term through a mixture of further training and competition, as well as some exciting news for one of our cadets.

At a section level, all year groups have been furthering themselves, moving through the syllabus and gaining competencies. Training such as this, while not the exciting flying we all sign up for, affords older cadets the opportunity to develop teaching skills, and opens doors to otherwise inaccessible camps and experiences. With the weather now improving, and chances to fly beginning to filter down to us from the RAF, it is looking hopeful that we will get our younger cadets airborne.

Alongside the activities of the rest of the section, the GT Team, a dedicated team of cadets who represent the School's RAF Section at competitions, prepared tirelessly for the national round of the Royal Air Squadron Trophy, the most prestigious event for CCF RAF Sections across the country. During the months since Christmas, countless lunchtimes, evenings, and weekends were sacrificed to the cause. By the penultimate weekend before the event, we were in high-spirits and eager to deliver a strong result after the skills-fade experienced over covid.

The day of the competition saw the team assembled in the MGS car park bright and early, the coach arriving at 6, ready for a speedy departure to RAF Halton, Buckinghamshire. The day began with a drill sequence, in which the we took a reassuring 3rd place. As the day went on, the other notable placement for the team was 2nd in the command task, losing

out on 1st by but 1 point. Across the other disciplines of shooting, first aid, and aircraft recognition improvements were seen, hopefully ensuring a strong start for the team next year. Overall the team came in at 8th, not as high as we had hoped, but nonetheless a worthy recognition of the effort they put in.

Finally, as the term draws to a close, cadets have begun to refresh their radio and navigation skillset - a look ahead to the increase of outdoor activities synonymous with a summer in the RAF Section. Not only are these valuable abilities for the future, among more senior cadets, our tasks are a great way to showcase their leadership as we near the time when Heads of various sections are appointed.

As the outgoing Head of Section, it is my honest belief that these cadets are some of the best people I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with, and although I leave the school this Summer, I look forward to hearing of their experiences and exploits in the future.

CWO Henry N

Year 13, College House





# Debating

This past year has been an exciting year for the Oxbridge debating society, the primary academic society of MGS. It has been run by Thomas W Year 13 Tonbridge, Jack W Year 13 Tonbridge, Samuel H Year 13 Corpus Christi and Callum B Year 13 College. Whilst we didn't face the same level of success as last year, we built the groundwork for a thriving community within MGS that we hope will last for a great number of years. For those who don't know, we compete in the Oxbridge parliamentary style consisting of 4 teams of two people discussing many motions that span an incredibly large variety from economic based motions for example debating the concept of a 'Universal Basic Income' to social based motions surrounding torture or freedom of speech. If you have a spare five minutes, are interested and want a challenge, try to figure out some arguments for and against the motion: "This house opposes the dominant narrative that relying on yourself is a primary path to success (eg the American Dream)". This motion was my personal favourite from the Cambridge tournament we attended earlier in the year.

This year we achieved record attendance from year 11s which culminated with 2 pairs joining year 12 and 13's in the Cambridge Tournament held on the 4th of February. This was the main debating tournament that we attended this year, it consisted of four heavily challenging rounds competing against elite private schools such as The Tonbridge School, Benenden and Sevenoaks school. Whilst we faced stiff opposition throughout,

we performed excellently and despite no one qualifying for the final, two teams were one point off doing so and we achieved the highest combined score of any MGS team who have performed in a debating tournament ever before. An unbelievable achievement.

Our weekly debating society consists of two debates every Tuesday after school; this acts as a great way to improve our skills, not just as a debater but in confidence, critical thinking, and social skills. In my opinion this is the most impressive form of debating as it requires quick thinking and a wealth of prior knowledge, unlike other forms where you get weeks or months to prepare. This develops better transferable skills and leads to a more well-rounded debater. This society is really for everyone, and it is easy to get started to begin developing your skills. Some of our year 11s have only been debating for less than a year and achieved excellent marks at the Cambridge tournament.

I am immensely proud of the performance of the society, and it progress this year and I look forward to seeing what the new year holds as we pass over the baton to the very capable hands of Joseph H Year 12 Tonbridge and Amelia L Year 12 Tonbridge.

Thomas W

Year 13, Tonbridge House

# Key Dates

31 March	-	Greece Trip Departs
08 April	-	Ski Trip Departs
26 April	-	Year 6 Welcome Evening
01 May	-	May Bank Holiday
02 May	-	Year 12 UCAS Exams (until 12 May)
08 May	-	Coronation Bank Holiday
22 May	-	Year 8 Exams (until 26 May)
05 June	-	INSET Day
12 June	-	Year 7 Exams (until 16 June)

# Careers Update

This is just a quick note from the Careers Team to reflect on the events from the previous two terms and highlight the events coming up in Terms 5 & 6. Alongside all these events, numerous students took advantage of the opportunities to participate in online webinars or careers events.

- Year 11 Careers interviews throughout January and February
- 19th January                      Year 11 Post-16 Options Evening with MGS Departments and also Mid Kent College
- 6th February                      Year 12 UCAS evening – University of Kent – talk on degree apprenticeships and student finance
- 10th March                        Maidstone apprenticeship fair at Mote Park Years 11 – 13
- 22nd March                        Careers afternoon Years 9-13
- 6th – 9th February              Old Maidstonian House Mentoring assemblies

In Terms 5 & 6 we have the following events to look forward to:

- 24th April                        Year 7 BAE Roadshow
- 26th April                        Year 10 Careers workshops with CXK start
- 17th -19th May                  Year 9 Business Challenge
- 22nd May\*                        Mid-Kent College talk to Year 10
- 8th June                         Year 12 UCAS Day
- 30th June                        Year 8 Work Shadowing
- 3rd July                         Year 10 and Year 12 Work Experience
- Year 10 Morrisby profiling st the end of Term 6

Alongside this there will also be the chance to explore your careers options with the events advertised on TEAMS, do make you check out what is available!

The Careers Team



