

MGSN News



MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2023



From the Headmaster

We have arrived at the end of another academic year and once again I cannot believe that we have reached this point so quickly. The year has been full of delights, like our wonderful production of *Shrek: The Musical*

in March and our Queen in the Quad event as part of our Pride celebrations just a few weeks ago, but the year has also included a moment of tragedy with the death of fellow Maidstonian Harrison Fordyce. Despite the joyful

and tragic nature of these events, they all illustrated how Maidstonians feel about each other and their school. I have always said that MGS is like an extended but close-knit family; families have their highs and they have their lows, but whatever they go through, they go through them together. This comparison is exactly what MGS has been through this year, and I have been humbled to see the power of humanity in each and every Maidstonian. Thank you MGS.

Looking forward to next year, 2024 marks the School's 475th birthday. It is 475 years since the town of Maidstone was issued a Royal Charter to establish a school in Maidstone. Since that time Maidstone Grammar School has grown in size from a few boys being taught in All Saints Church to a school of today with nearly 1500 students. Throughout next year we will be marking this important milestone with a number of different events, and so being a Maidstonian now is a very special thing indeed.

In addition, as we look forward to next year, from September I will no longer be the headmaster of Maidstone Grammar School. Don't worry, I am not leaving - I am changing my job role to headteacher and will no longer be headmaster. After 474 years, and the fact that we live in a completely different society, the time is right for MGS to not have a headmaster, but to have a headteacher instead. So, over the summer holiday, my name is going to be removed from the Headmasters board that hangs in the Hall, and underneath the name of the previous head, Dr Argent, a new heading of Headteachers will be placed, with my name being rewritten below it. Changing my job role from headmaster to headteacher is not a small thing; it reflects a different and more modern time that we live in. MGS will always cherish its past, but at the same time will also acknowledge its future, and so the time has come to make this

important change.

As we are now at the end of the year I wish to thank and say goodbye to a number of my colleagues who are leaving the MGS community. Mr Brown, who is an Old Maidstonian himself, is leaving after one year to begin his university placement after supporting the PE department as the PE technician. Ms Onah, who has also been with us for one year, leaves after supporting the Computing Department. After two years' service, Mr Saunderson leaves to start his new career as a PE teacher, and Mrs Grant leaves to retire to Suffolk after being the school librarian. Leaving after three years, Miss Payne moves to another school in Kent after working in the History Department and Mrs Fowler leaves the teaching profession and her role as Head of French to start a Masters. Mr Campbell, our head of D&T, after three-and-a half years, moves to Thailand to work in an international school; and Miss Collard leaves after four years to continue her career as an English teacher elsewhere in Kent. Old Maidstonian Mr O'Hanlon leaves after five years as head of geography to work closer to home, and Mr Ferguson, one of our deputy heads and Old Maidstonian, leaves after six years to take up his first headship post in a school just down the road. Mr Ferguson has made a huge difference to the progress of MGS in many ways, and so I thank him for his contributions, support and laughs during these last six years. Mr Knight retires from the teaching profession after giving seven years' service here as well as being an animated character in both the classroom and the staffroom. Also after seven years, Miss Lancaster leaves MGS to continue her career in China. With the support of her departmental colleagues, she has turned the English department around - having both vision and passion for her teaching and the care of her students. We thank her immensely for putting English back on the map. Mrs Lynch has been teaching geography

for 30 years, and after 14 of those 30 at MGS, retires to move back to Northern Ireland. I describe her as the barometer of the school, and has often been the one member of staff I have gone to, to seek her views on whatever I was thinking at that time. She is an outstanding teacher, and I know the students she has taught will miss her. Mr Conisbee, one of our Student Services managers retires after giving MGS 17 years' service. Mr Conisbee has been integral to how the Student Services Department has developed since its beginning in 2006, and I know the many students he has supported are grateful for the time and care he has given them. And finally, Mrs Byatt, a member of the office team, leaves MGS after 24 years. She has been a stable and friendly face in the main school office for nearly a quarter of a century. She has been integral to the workings of MGS and I know that many of my colleagues will miss her support and friendly manner.

In addition to these 15 members of staff, Lindsey Evans is stepping back from her role as a governor after 24 years. She joined the school community as a parent governor when her son, Henry, attended MGS from 1999 to 2006. Following that, Lindsey continued her service as a governor being chair of the curriculum committee before becoming chair of the full governing body for five years in 2010. Throughout her time she has been committed to the progress of the school as well as being committed to the support of me in my role. As chair of the governing body her role was to be a critical friend for me, and in that time she has listened to me and helped me solve many problems along the way. In my interview for this job I described the relationship between a head and a chair of governors as the same as the prime minister and the monarch, which I remembered she liked, as I was comparing her to the late queen, Queen Elizabeth. It is a unique relationship, and over

the last 11 years Lindsey and I have developed a very special friendship that I know will continue far beyond the school gates. The end of this academic year marks the end of her 24 years' service, but does not end the friendship that we have. On behalf of the entire MGS community, thank you Lindsey for your service and leadership, and I wish you well for your future.

Finally, I wish to thank all my colleagues whom I work with who continue to give service and leadership to the School, and to the family of students who see MGS as their second home. All of us connected to MGS are Maidstonians, and being known as Maidstonians is very special indeed. Thank you all, and have a wonderful summer holiday.

Mr Tomkins





Farewell

It is with great joy and gratitude in my heart that I say farewell to the MGS community. It is widely known that I was a student at MGS... and not a very good one!

I wasn't proud of what I achieved here as a teenager, and through some bizarre twist of fate, I ended up here as the deputy head and in the unique position of being able to do it all again. It is fair to say, that things have gone far better during our second spell together! The last six years have been some of the happiest and proudest times in my life and I can't say thank you enough for all the support I have had from the students, staff and parents at MGS. When I joined, I wanted to 'shift the dial' and get the whole school community aiming for even higher heights. I do not think that journey is complete yet, but to quote the All Blacks rugby mantra, I do like to think I have left "the jersey in a better place." I am incredibly proud that I am moving on to become a headteacher myself, but the reason I am full of such joy and gratitude is because I know I am only moving on to this new adventure because of the MGS community. I was at an Old Maidstonian Supper once when I listened closely to an Old Maidstonian reflecting on his time rowing at university and his blossoming legal career in America. He summed up his life experiences thus far as a quest to find great communities, as great communities raise all their members to new heights. In my experience, never has a truer statement been made about MGS.

Olim Meminisse Juvabit

Robbie Ferguson



Business Challenge

Thank you to the local businesses who worked with our students as part of our Business Challenge event in May: The Rotary Club of Maidstone Riverside, Maidstone Leisure Centre, Maidstone Community Support Centre, Golding Homes, Fusion Maidstone HLC and Mid Kent Mind. Also thanks to Alison Temple from Firebird Training who organised the event. The winners of this challenge were Ben W (Y9 Corpus Christi), Theo V B (Y9 Corpus Christi), Ethan W (Y9 Corpus Christi), and Sebastian F (Y9 Corpus Christi). Their Business Partner for this activity was Julie Herbert from Golding Homes. Well done to all.



Wear it Green Day

On Friday 26 June, we held our 'Wear it Green Day' in support of Mental Health Foundation Awareness Week. This event not only marked the end of term, but it also concluded our Mental Health Awareness Month, which was led by Tonbridge House.

County Athletics



MGS placed 6th overall at The County Athletics Championship earlier this term. Some of the standout performances from the day included: Noah S (Y8 Corpus Christi House), who placed 2nd in the Junior Shotput; Theo R (Y10 Corpus Christi House), who won the 800m inter-race; and Alan B (Y10 Corpus Christi House), who placed 3rd in the 1500m inter-race. Additionally, both our junior and inter 4x100m relay teams placed second in their respective races. Well done to all!

College Report

By Eloise, Josh, Callum, and Sam, Year 12, College House

What have we been up to?

In September, we welcomed a new selection of dedicated students into the junior prefect team who helped alongside Year 7s with events such as open evenings, and with arranging charity days.

On the topic of charity days, in January we held our charity day. During that day we held a bake sale, thanks to the tireless effort of the prefect team and teachers spending their free hours baking cookies and cakes to be sold all around the school. Sweets were also sold at the gate before school, and during the day. Remaining sweets were then sold throughout the week to raise as much money as possible for the cause. With the turning over of the year, there was also a turn-over in the senior leadership team with the unfortunate leave of the Year 13s for their summer exams. Representing College house now are Eloise as house captain, and Sam, Callum, and Josh as vice captains.

Recently, we have held form-time competitions, such as a book cover bunting competition. Special shout outs to Douglas A of Cg8, Charlie S of Cg3, Vis V of Cg12, and Henry C of Cg13 for their spectacular contributions.

What can you look forward to in the future?

In the year to come you can expect a wide range of fun and exciting events to get involved in, including future charity events such as helping with the bake sales alongside the prefect team.

Also expect to see many opportunities to prove what it means to be a part

of College house, and represent the house in many interhouse competitions spanning beyond just sports.

We are so excited for everything coming up in this upcoming year, and can't wait for everyone to become involved!



'We are all eagerly anticipating next year's grand celebration of the 475th anniversary of our historic school.'

From the School Captain

By Rafe L, Year 12, Tonbridge House

A significant highlight of my year was the rugby season, which concluded with an impressive 10 wins and only 3 losses for this year's MGS side. This achievement makes it the best team Maidstone Grammar School has had in recent history. We managed to triumph over formidable opponents like Skinners, against whom we would typically be expected to lose, marking an exceptional season for our school.

As the year drew to a close, the perfect team was formed, which included Jess and me as school captain and vice-captain, respectively, alongside a remarkable roster of house captains and vice-captains. We are all eagerly anticipating next year's grand celebration of the 475th anniversary of our historic school.

Additionally, we concluded the year with a celebratory month dedicated to LGBTQ+ inclusivity. Among the highlights was the sixth form inter-house netball tournament, which was a great deal of fun. Corpus, the winners of the tournament, went on to challenge and defeat the teachers' netball team. An exciting event on the horizon is the teacher-student lip sync battle, in celebration of this month, which everyone is keen to watch.

This year, we also had very successful charity days, including one for Children in Need. During this event, many sixth form students participated in an 8-hour 'Badmintonathon,' raising a substantial sum of money. I'm excited for the coming year, when we can continue to support various charities and engage in more creative endeavours

From the School Vice-Captain

By Jess R, Year 12, College House

This year has been very eventful for the students of MGS, ranging from charity events to school trips. One highlight of the year, for me, was the Children in Need day in November. With the senior prefects engaged with their mocks, the task was left to the junior prefects to organise the entire charity day. Several prefects ran their own events, with an all-day long "Badmintonathon" played by Callum Scudder and Rafe Lamb, going from 7am until 4pm, which (as the name suggests) involved the boys playing badminton continuously during this time. Crossbar football was also a successful event held at lunch, primarily ran by Callum Birchall. The very popular sponge a teacher event was organised by Annabel Sender, and saw students paying money to throw wet sponges at some of the most prominent teachers in the school! This, as you can imagine, raised a lot of money for Children in Need. There was also a cake sale, organised by myself and the rest of the 6th form, which proved challenging as all cakes had to be baked using the school facilities after school. Despite some minor hitches (like running out of eggs and baking trays!) the end result was very successful, with over seven hundred cakes being baked, and all ended up being sold to ravenous students the next day.

Another highlight of the school year for me was the Harvard trip in January. Twenty-two others and I were privileged enough to go on the trip to Harvard University in Boston. We spent three days in New York sightseeing, and then four attending the Harvard Model United Nations

competition which was the point of the trip. MGS was representing Ukraine, and the way it worked was that every person was representing Ukraine in a different 'committee' so essentially we were all split up and put in different groups once we got to the competition. Before the trip, there was a lot of research involved, and we prepared as much as possible but honestly, I had no idea what to expect. There were four thousand other students at the conference, all representing different countries, and they all seemed like they knew way more than me about their given countries. However, once the initial nerves subsided, I really got into it and I had such a fun time. I'd say the same goes for everyone else on the trip too- we were all so nervous but ended up making loads of friends with international students, but also with each other. Some of my closest friends now I properly met on that trip. I never used to push myself out of my comfort zone, and if I was still at my old school, there would have been no way I would have gone on a trip solely to take part in a public speaking competition. So, I am proud that I pushed myself to make the most of an exciting opportunity, and if you are in the position where you can do that too, I'd highly recommend the experience.

Sports Day



Dr Tony Webb 1944-2023

Dr Tony Webb initially taught history at the school from 1971 to 2000, and was deputy head from 1981 to 2000. After retirement he worked on the school's archive and was still coming to the annual carol concerts and speech days. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer last year and was responding well to treatment, but unfortunately had a bad fall at home on recently that he couldn't recover from. He was a larger-than-life character who I'm sure will be remembered by many who were at MGS at the time; he certainly had many fond memories of the school he served for so long.



Mental Health Art Competition

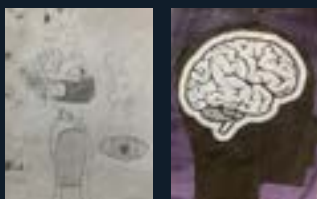
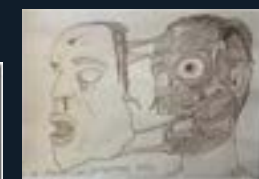
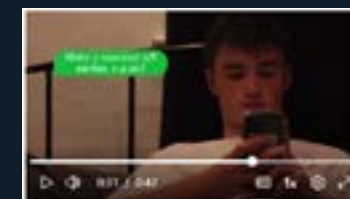
1st Charlie Squirrell (Y12 Tonbridge)

2nd Julius Whiting (Y12 Barton)

3rd Henry Penna (Y7 Tonbridge)

4th Carlos Knowles (Y10 College)

5th Jeremiah Adebajo (Y10 Tonbridge)



Navigating the New: A Reflective Review of Year 7

By Robert H, Year7, College House

Starting off at MGS in September was different for all the Year 7s. I remember arriving at the front gate on the first day and everyone looking up in awe at our new school - a new chapter in all our lives. As we lined up outside reception, I distinctly smelled the freshness of the new uniform and heard the quiet chatter of excited voices.

Some people knew others from primary school or outside of school; some knew no one. The start of the year was therefore exciting for some, but nerve-wracking for others. However, the tight community of MGS soon brought everyone together. Since then, we have all come a long way in our time as Maidstonians.

In September, Year 7 took part in a team-building day where we were able to meet our new classmates and get to know one another for the year ahead. There were many activities on the field we took part in within groups in our class. This was an enjoyable day for all of us, and we all felt that we were more confident around our classmates and could start to develop friendships with them.

On the last day of Term 1, the Year 6 Open Evening took place. This was a major event because it gave us (Year 7s) the chance to represent our school and show others how proud we are to be Maidstonians. This night was an enormous success, and everyone was proud to have delivered an insightful event to the prospective Year 6s and their parents.

Later in the school year, Year 7s attended a trip to Bletchley Park at the end of November. This was an amazing day for the entire year. We enjoyed learning about the

decoding and deciphering that the professionals did at Bletchley Park during World War Two. Discovering the secrets of this fantastic place was an unforgettable moment for everyone.

By December, Christmas was drawing nearer, and we had already completed our first two terms. Everyone felt we had settled in and were comfortable in the MGS community.

In Terms 4 and 5, we were building up for our end-of-year exams in June. With everyone revising and paying extra attention in lessons, by the time we had reached our last term we all felt prepared. Our exams came and went, and after that, we could relax and focus on the last exciting events. Extended Learning Week and Sports Day were entertaining for all of us and magnificent events that everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

Looking back on Year 7 now, I am proud of the journey that we have been on and the things we have achieved. This year has been the absolute best start that we could have hoped for. I am thankful to be at Maidstone Grammar School and for the fantastic first year we have had. I cannot wait to return next year for what I am certain will be a year just as good as the last.



Year 8 at MGS: Choices, Chaos & Chronicles

By Harrison S, Year 8, College House

For Year 8's, this year has been an interesting one as this is the year we chose and found out the GCSE subjects that we would be taking for the rest of our time at MGS (other than sixth form obviously).

As it drew close to our end of year exams, we were all delighted to find out that we didn't have to take an exam for Science as we had already taken one in February to decide if we could take triple science which were all pretty happy to hear this as this was one of the hardest exams we had to sit and was the main revision topic for many as it has the most content. When it came to our exams, most of us were fully prepared for whatever was thrown at us on the day of each test and from all the hours of revision and hard work, Year 8 did very well.

After all this speaking about exams, I feel like I have skipped the whole year and just talked about the end, so let's talk about some of the other things that have been going on.

Firstly, it cannot go without mentioning the court outside the library which the school had just got Astro turfed. We're not quite sure what they thought was going to happen but now it is host to a huge football game every day before school, break, and lunch which brings so many students together and I am sometimes part of.

The sun came out, blazers could be left at home and the bank next to the 3G was an ideal place to chill on a hot summer lunch time with your friends. Unfortunately, this was short lived as the area got fenced off!

I could not go without mentioning Harrison Fordyce, who was a lovely member of the MGS Community, and I would like this to be a little nod to remember him.

Year 8 have done really well with sports and achievements this year, both in school and out, so well done everyone!

For most of us, the last few weeks at school are the best. It gives you something to drag you through all the tough exams and something to look forward to from the very beginning of the year (although it seems so far away at the time!).

Extended Learning Week and Sports Day have been a great way to finish off the year.

Let's hope Year 9 brings just as much fun and positive, memorable experiences for us all.



Sport Report

By Mr J Brown

MGS Sport offers a wide-ranging extra-curricular program that runs parallel to the PE and Games programs offered to all pupils. The extra-curricular program gives students the opportunity to represent the school in a competitive environment and to gain more knowledge and experience in their chosen sports.

Throughout this academic year, we have observed high participation rates across the school, with some excellent results showcasing the hard work of both staff and pupils. Our 1st XV Rugby recorded the highest win percentage in MGS history and consistently fielded three senior sides—a feat unseen at MGS for many years.

This success was echoed by our junior rugby teams, with some exceptional results, especially in the Rugby 7's season. The U15's won the Kent Plate, and the U14's were victorious in the Dartford Valley 7's Tournament!

The 1st XI Football team clinched the East Kent Premier League title for the first time in history without losing a single game all year. Their success was closely emulated by the senior 2nd XI who reached the Kent Cup Final but ultimately fell short against a strong Beth's Grammar School side.

MGS made it to the Gallagher stadium twice this year, with both the U15 and U14's reaching the district cup final. Our U15's triumphed against Aylesford School, while our U14's fell just short against Oakwood Park Grammar.

In Cricket, both our 1st XI and U15's reached the semi-final of the County Cup, and our KS3 cricket teams also demonstrated excellent

growth. Our Athletics programme was hugely successful, with years 7, 9, and 10 all winning the district athletics championships. Furthermore, our year 8's were runners up in their district athletics competition, making MGS the overall district athletics champions.

Our athletics team then competed in the county athletics competition held at Tonbridge School, a fantastic opportunity for our students to compete against the county's best athletes, finishing 7th overall.

The year 2023 marked the start of the MGS Basketball programme, with our teams entering the county cup competitions for the first time. Our U13's, U14's, and U16's all reached the Kent Cup semi-final, with the U15's making it to the Kent Cup Final, narrowly missing the title by just 2 points.

This year also saw the return of Hockey at MGS, with our senior sides back in action! We anticipate that Hockey will continue to grow stronger now that it has returned.

The final sport offered competitively this academic year was Table Tennis, with MGS participating in the district Table Tennis competition held at Cornwallis Academy.

At Maidstone Grammar School, our core aim for our extra-curricular programs is to provide lifelong positive memories of sport, cultivate a growth culture, and provide the necessary support to all pupils to help them find success. We wish you all a restful and enjoyable summer break and look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Memories, Growth, and Support.



Embracing New Horizons: A Personal Reflection on Year 9

By Kian C, Year 9, Tonbridge House

For me, year 9 has been a warm and welcoming experience to new things such as new subjects and GCSEs. Having chosen film studies, design technology and computing for my extra subjects I have had much fun in lessons doing projects and other forms of work.

One of my personal favorites has been making short films in film studies. My friends and I had a lot of fun creating these mini masterpieces as we collaborated on recording and editing the films, and there were, of course, a lot of laughs along the way.

In addition to this, I also got my first taste of proper exams. My class was introduced to more formal exams in the big hall, where we took about 12 exams to help prepare us for what real GCSEs are like. Towards the end of the year, we were faced with a business challenge event, which gave everyone in the year a chance to experience what it is like

to work with a genuine business and face significant business problems. My group was tasked with helping a charity, The Rotary Foundation, appeal more to younger people so that they could attract more volunteers for their cause. Our idea was to advertise more on social network platforms and other modern forms of media.

During this year, I made many new friends due to many new classes being introduced. I improved my grades in several subjects throughout the year and overall, I feel I have improved as a person. For me, Year 9 has been a very enjoyable year, and I am sure it has been for many other students. I

will miss Year 9 and all its fun and new experiences, but I am excited to move on to new challenges such as coursework and work experience in Year 10. Those moving into Year 9 next year sure have a lot to look forward to.

Year 10 Milestones and Memories: An Eventful Year

By Ollie C, Year 10, College House

Year 10 has been an eventful and good year, and for some, their favourite year at MGS. In late September we took part in the Bronze D of E expedition. It was very successful and a good way to start the year. After this, our rugby season started.

This year was our most successful year with lots of ups and only a few downs. Our progress was impressive considering all the challenges we went through in the previous years. With the rugby season cut short due to bad weather, the focus for Year 10 turned to the mock exams after Christmas. These mocks were only the second time doing a full run through of exams in the big hall; and our last before our first mock GCSE's in November. It was a very useful experience and has prepared us well for Year 11.

Our attention then turned to the football season, which is the most popular sport in our year, with four teams having fixtures and it is arguably the strongest team out of all the Year 10 sports clubs. The

U15 A team had a great season, losing only two of the 15 games and dominating the majority of their fixtures, including winning the area Cup Final against Aylesford and losing out narrowly to Simon Langton in the County Cup semi-final. A well deserved Easter break saw many of the Year 10 students took part in the school trips including a ski-trip and a trip to Greece. These were the first trips for many due to COVID-19 curtailing previously planned adventures. Many of our students who completed the Bronze award went on their Silver D of E practice expedition in June. The CCF continues to be popular for Year 10 students, with many representing their respective sections in competitions up and down the country.

The summer term brought with it the start of the school cricket season with a very successful start, not losing a game until the middle of June, where they lost to Oakwood in the County Cup semi-final. There have been many new faces to the cricket team this season with several squad members being selected despite having never played before. It just shows that hard work does pay off and is recognised. Most recently, the band Nameless, which consists of five Year 10 students, performed in the Quad for Pride month, performing Queen songs and many others too. To finish off the year, Year 10 had their first work experience during Extended Learning week and, unbelievably, their first sports day!



Extended Learning Week

Monday 3 - Friday 7 July 2023

MGS Bake Off was very popular at this year's Extended Learning Week with Year 7 to 9 students competing to see who could create the best cake. When the baking ended and the votes were counted, George C (Year 7 Barton) won the event, with Tom L (Year 9 College) in second and Adam M (Year 8 Barton) in third. Well done to all who took part.

Some Year 7 to 9 students stayed in Northumberland as part of Extended Learning Week, visiting Roman forts along Hadrian's Wall and other places of historical interest including Lindisfarne, Durham Cathedral, Beamish Open Air Museum and Bamburgh Beach.

Our CCF Army section enjoyed Extended Learning Week at Yoxter Training Camp with the HQ South West Training Team. This included instruction on clay pigeon shooting, climbing, archery, and laser target shooting. Cadets also took part in the cadet shooting competition.

Some of our Year 7 to 9 students were in Valencia as a part of Extended Learning Week, learning about the historical architecture, the language, cuisine and wider culture. They even spent a day having fun and getting drenched at Terra Mítica theme park. We enjoyed hearing all about their trip when they returned.

As part of Extended Learning Week, our English and Film Departments explored film making and production with the students. This exploration included film making workshops,

script writing sessions, and a trip to the Harry Potter studios to discover the secrets behind the films. There's a photo opposite of the group in the Great Hall during the Harry Potter studios tour.

The two-and-a-half-day history tour of London, part of Extended Learning Week, visited The London Dungeon earlier in the week. There, the students were introduced to society and life during key moments of London's past, including the Gunpowder Plot, a visit from the Plague Doctor in 1665, and feeling the wrath of Henry VIII.

Day one of the Extended Learning Week rowing went well for those students learning how to row, turn, and stop a boat. There was plenty of great teamwork on display yesterday. The picture opposite are from Julian K (Year 7 Tonbridge House) who managed to be the official photographer, cox, and stroke all in one day!

Our CCF RAF Cadets had some unforgettable learning experiences at their Summer Camp as part of Extended Learning Week. See a photo from their iFly experience in the lower right of the opposite page.



Athletics Success

Congratulations to Theo R (Year 10, Corpus Christi House) who, after recently winning the inter-counties race, was selected to represent Kent Schools at the English Schools Athletics Competition in July.



Rowing to Success

Zachary R (Year 9, Corpus Christi House), who began rowing only last April at Bewl Bridge Rowing Club, has found success in several recent competitions. He even participated in the British Rowing Junior Championships in Strathclyde in July. Well done Zachary.



Anthea Ball Prize

Congratulations to Aoife H (Year 12, College House) who recently received a commendation for her achievements in the Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators run by Queen's College, Oxford. Over 15,000 students participated in the competition, and so Aoife receiving recognition is a fantastic achievement. Well done Aoife.



LAMDA Success

Congratulations to Henry P (Year 7, Tonbridge House) who has passed his Grade 5 piano with distinction, and Grade 3 LAMDA with distinction. Well done, Henry!

Karting Star

Up-and-coming karting star, William S (Year 9, College House), recently secured sponsorship from Marden-based Scarab Sweepers Ltd. With this sponsorship, William is able to defend his Southern and National Championship titles. Well done and good luck William.



Tonbridge Report

By Joseph H, Leo G, Amritha S, and Amelia L, Year 12, Tonbridge House Prefects

As we approach the end of this academic year, the prefects of Tonbridge house would like to take this opportunity to reflect on another successful year at MGS. This term comprised the stepping down of the Year 13 Tonbridge team, and the appointment of the new team. We would like to thank this year's House Captain, Riwaaj G, and his team of Vice Captains: Tom P, Tom E, and Georgia G, (all Year 13) who welcomed us into the Prefect Team under a year ago, and who have done so much for our house.

We would like to formally introduce the 2023-2024 Tonbridge Prefect team: Joseph H, House Captain, and the three Vice Captains, Leo G, Amritha S, and Amelia L.

Throughout this year, Tonbridge has worked with the Head of House, Mr Holmes, the Deputy Head of House, Mr Taylor, the other houses, and the School Captain Team to organise events, charity days, and to provide a sense of belonging for the students of Tonbridge house. The winter term saw Christmas Jumper Day organised amongst the houses to raise money for a local homelessness charity, and the school's green agenda pushed. In the spring term, many Year 12 Tonbridge students, alongside other students, attended Harvard University for the annual Harvard Model United Nations Conference, with Maidstone Grammar School being the only UK school, to attend. We would like to congratulate all of these students for their excellent performance. Additionally, the Spring Term saw Tonbridge student Rafe L Year 12 appointed as the School

Captain of MGS, and the school and his house congratulate him on this enormous achievement. The house teams together raised money for Comic Relief and Maidstone Mind last term, both very important charities to MGS

This past term has been a very busy one for the school community. Tonbridge would like to congratulate all of our students who received Junior and Senior, Half and Full Colours this term; we are very proud of every student who has contributed to Tonbridge house, and shown service to their school. On 26th May, the Tonbridge prefects came together to organise a non-uniform charity day for Mental Health Month, and delivered an assembly to each house on the topic of mental health. We'd like to particularly thank Billy L Year 12, who is Tonbridge's ambassador for mental health, and Hubertas R Year 12, who created an inspiring video for the whole school to watch. The school has been celebrating Pride this month, led by Corpus Christi House, and Tonbridge took part in a charity interhouse netball tournament, placing second overall. Finally, we welcomed the incoming cohort of Tonbridge Year 7 students with the House Teas, which were a great success. We look forward to welcoming new students into the Tonbridge community in September.

We would like to take this opportunity to mention our Head of House, Mr Holmes, who celebrates his 25th year at MGS in 2023. We'd also like to thank all Tonbridge Prefects who have worked hard all year in making sure events run

smoothly - the work that students put in is always recognised, and we are extremely grateful to have such an active sixth form. We look forward to the upcoming year, particularly meeting our new Junior Prefect Team which will be appointed in the first term in September.

Tonbridge House aims to inspire belonging into each of its students, and would like everyone at MGS to feel part of a community here. We look forward to leading Tonbridge House next year!

Changing of the Guard

We were delighted to welcome our soon-to-be Year 7 students and their families to our Year 6 Welcome Evening in April. It was great to see so many excited faces and smiles, and we look forward to welcoming them to our community in September. This event also marked a changing of the guard for the prefect team. Outgoing School Captain Ethan and Vice-Captain Sam and their prefect team handed the reins over to the incoming School Captain Rafe and Vice-Captain Jess and their prefect team. This event was marked by the two prefect teams singing our school song to Year 6 and their families, as well as the ringing of the school bell by the outgoing School and Vice-Captain. We thank all the outgoing prefects for their service and wish our new prefect team the best of luck.



Year 10 Football Success

A massive congratulations to our Year 10 football squad for their 2-1 win against Aylesford School in the District Cup Final at the Gallagher Stadium earlier this term. Alan B (Year 10 Corpus Christi) also won man of the match after a fantastic performance.



Kent Cup Winners

The final of the Kent Cup was a thrilling encounter, with MGS emerging as victorious 5-0 winners against Norton Knatchbull earlier this term. Norton dominated the first 15 minutes of the game, but MGS's brilliant defending kept the score at 0-0. After taking a 1-0 lead, the Maidstonians controlled large portions of the game, successfully withstanding waves of attack from the skilled Norton forwards. Well done to all.



Leavers' Day

On May 12th, Year 13 donned MGS uniforms again, sparking nostalgia & marking their Leavers' Day. Celebrations included a Quad BBQ, photos, heartfelt goodbyes, and a final rendition of the school song at their assembly. Tears were shed. We wish Year 13 the very best and look forward to celebrating with them all on Results Day in August.



Year 11

We formally said goodbye to our Year 11s on May 10th before the start of their GCSE exams. They assembled in the Big Hall for their final assembly, sang the school song for the final time as a year group, and there were tears. We wish them all the very best and look forward to celebrating with them all on Results Day in August.



UCAS Day

In June, on our UCAS Day, all Year 12 students officially began the university application process. They attended presentations on various topics, including Introduction to Higher Education and the UCAS Application Process, Applying for Competitive Courses and Writing a Personal Statement, Student Life, and Choosing a Course/University. These presentations were delivered by representatives from the University of Bath, Cardiff University, University of Nottingham, and University of Sheffield. Additionally, OM Edward Higham (2010-2017) shared an informative presentation on his career journey since leaving MGS and his current degree apprenticeship programme with Salesforce.



Young Photographer

Huge congratulations to Ben L (Y10 Tonbridge House) who has won the South East District Rotary Club Young Photographer Competition for the Senior Age Category, outshining 72 rotary clubs. His shot of Battersea Power Station, "Let there be Light," impressed the judges with its unique perspective & lighting. He is now a finalist in the National competition! We're looking forward to seeing what he captures next.



Pride

June 5th marked the start of Pride Month at MGS, a celebration led by Corpus Christi House. As a symbol of our commitment, the pride flag flew over the gatehouse, affirming our role as a welcoming, inclusive school that encourages students to take pride in their individual identities. Lots of exciting events took place throughout the month, including a BBQ and Big Band in the Quad on June 30, where there was an LGBTQ Icons LipSync Battle with staff and students participating.



Mental Health Awareness

In May, Tonbridge House championed mental health awareness with assemblies and tutor time programmes as part of Mental Health Awareness Month at MGS. Building on our April Autism Awareness Month efforts, we're dedicated to fostering understanding and inclusivity.



Gold Medal Winners

Congratulations to our CCF Army section who became Cadet Cambrian Patrol 2023 Gold Medal Winners in May. The Cambrian Patrol is the premiere UK competition for Army Cadets, conducted in the challenging environment of the Brecon Beacons. With teams from all over the UK competing against each other, the standards are high and demanding, and we are incredibly proud of our team's outstanding performance. Well done to all.

Geography Field Trip

Our Year 12 Geographers spent a number of days exploring Knoll Beach, Swanage, in April. They dove into an engaging Sand Dune Beach Management Study, learning hands-on about coastal ecosystems & preservation.



Alps Ski Trip

Aosta Valley, April 2023





Atlantic Quest

On Thursday 22 June, a group of 12 cadets attended the launch event for the Atlantic Quest Expedition. The Corps of Royal Engineers are undertaking the expedition to follow Shackleton's Quest expedition to South Georgia and summit unclimbed peaks. It will also collect scientific data in support of the Global Oceanic Environmental Survey and Bristol University's Glaciology Department. The expedition will cover 15,000 nm, involve 100 soldiers and will visit 5 continents.



Future Leaders

Congratulations to Justice M (Year 9 Tonbridge House) who was chosen to present the awards at Kent's Try Angle Awards in June. This event recognised the outstanding achievements of young people who strive to do their best either at school or within their wider community across Kent. Well done Justice.



Volleyball Success

A massive well done to Oliver B (Year 10 Tonbridge House), who, in less than a year, has embraced competitive volleyball, demonstrating an exceptional knack for the sport. Recently, his hard work and dedication were recognised by the Maidstone Volleyball Club, where he was honoured as both the Junior Player of the Year and the Men's 2nd Team Player of the Year. Well done Olly, and we're proud of you.

DofE Expedition

56 Year 9 students completed a variety of training activities and two day hikes earlier this term in preparation for their assessed expedition in September. Well done to all involved, some great team work and resilience on display!



Powerlifting Champ

Congratulations to Owen V (Year 11 Barton House), who recently competed at the National Sub-Junior British Powerlifting Championships. As one of the youngest competitors, he distinguished himself by coming first in his flight and tenth overall in his category. Well done Owen.



OM Rowing Success

Congratulations to Daniel Jones (Old Maidstonian 2017) who was selected to row for Great Britain at the European Championships in Slovenia in the Lightweight Men's Double Sculls. Since leaving MGS Dan has actively continued with his love of the sport, rowing at university as well as training with the GB squad in Scotland. We are delighted for him and wish him well.



Year 11 Reflections: Milestones, Triumphs, and GCSEs

By Tom M, Year 11, Corpus Christi House

I'm sure I speak for everyone in Year 11 when I say that this year has gone by unbelievably quickly. While the focus has obviously been on our GCSEs, we've still managed to achieve quite a lot as a group, and have had some fun along the way.

In sports, there have been loads of milestones reached, like many of the rugby players playing senior rugby for the first time. There were also many achievements, such as the football team winning the Kent Cup 5-0 vs Norton Knatchbull, which was well-deserved for the hard work put in throughout the season. The MGS senior first team won the East Kent Premiership title with a game in hand. This team consisted of six Year 11s, which was a great achievement. There were also some important personal achievements, with Ed Skinner competing in weightlifting for Great Britain and Jake W, (Year 11 Barton) fighting for England across Europe in Karate.

In November, we sat our first set of mocks which were over two weeks, and then in February, we tackled our second set which really got us prepared for our GCSEs, which we finished in June. Personally, I found the mocks harder than the GCSEs, which was a huge relief. I reckon the school did this on purpose to scare us into revising! On average, we each completed 27 exams, which is crazy to think, as it's about 54 hours of sitting in the

same hall over a four-week period. We now have the anxious wait for our results in August.

We've just started a long and hopefully hot summer (which we've all massively deserved). Lastly, wishing everyone the best to get where they want to be in September.



Year 12 Reflections: Shifting Dynamics

By Jack S, Year 12, College House

My Year 12: This year has been filled with many ups and downs. The start of the year brought new faces and saw some of our group depart, boys with whom we had essentially grown up with at MGS.

Personally, I felt that the school dynamic changed significantly compared to previous years due to these shifts in student population. However, this change wasn't entirely negative. Although it was tough to see some close mates leave MGS and our community, it also opened the door for me to form new friendships.

The academic side of school felt entirely different once we moved into sixth form. Despite issues like teacher turnover in some departments potentially impacting learning, I noticed a higher level of efficiency in the teaching standards. I would particularly like to credit Mr O'Hanlon, who taught Geography with remarkable consistency, no matter if it was a Monday morning or a Friday afternoon.

A significant part of Year 12 was the increased amount of free time, especially for private studies. At first, it was a bit chaotic, as you would expect from a group of former 'Year 11s'. However, I noticed a transition from chaos to calm, probably due to a natural increase in maturity. Credit must also go to Mr Rothwell, who adopted a different approach from the previous sixth form supervisor. He took interest in our lives while maintaining the school's expectations, which made his requests to work feel less like nagging and more like guidance.

Other notable aspects of Year 12

include the freedom to leave at break and lunch times, and the opportunity to learn to drive. These were personal highlights of my year. The freedom to make trips to Maccies or play football as the weather warmed up brought back memories of Year 11. We boys have grown up on such activities.

Ultimately, Year 12 has made me realise what is required for the coming year. It's been an eye-opening experience that encourages me to put my head down, work hard, and make the most of my final year at MGS. Even the lows of this year haven't overshadowed the good times and memories. My advice to those entering Year 12 is to embrace the newfound freedom, get to know new people, and enjoy the changing dynamics, especially those boys coming from MGS.



Young Farmer

Henry B (Year 7 X House), is a young farmer for New Line Learning Farm. He spent the entire weekend at the Kent County Show and received five rosettes—an amazing achievement! He secured first place twice, third place twice, and was even named Reserve Champion out of hundreds of young farmers involved.



French Day

Twenty MGS Y8 students took part in a French Day hosted by the Institut francais in London on Thursday 13 July. The event consisted of a language activity around the French classic novel "Remi, sans famille" written by Hector Malot in 1878, followed by the projection of the film adaption in French with English subtitles. Students put to the test their reading, listening, speaking and translation skills throughout the visit.

Young Dragon

Asher M (Year 8) had the chance to attend a business leaders summit on his Work Shadowing Day in July. He participated in keynote sessions and heard from leaders, including Steven Bartlett. He made a positive impact on these leaders, with one so impressed that they offered him a free coaching session. Well done Asher, for stepping outside your comfort zone and speaking to a lot of strangers, asking and answering many questions. You equipped yourself well and made the school proud.



Quality in Careers

The school was successful in regaining its Quality in Careers accreditation in July and has been assessed as "fully meeting the Benchmarks and all of the accreditation criteria". This is a testament to the work of all our staff who embed careers across the curriculum and in particular, our Careers Team who work tirelessly to ensure that our students are best prepared for the future.



Work Shadowing

Luke S (Year 8) and Henry W (Year 8) spent Work Shadowing Day visiting the Home Office, New Scotland Yard, Lambeth HQ, and finally, 10 Downing Street. During their visit, they met officers from various departments such as the Police IT replacement programmes (NPCC and Home Office), Counter Terrorism, 999 command and control, and Downing Street protection officers. Interestingly, they also encountered a senior official, who himself is an Old Maidstonian, at one of their meetings.

Corpus Christi News

By Callum, Lavinia, Thomas and Annabel Year 12, Corpus Christ House

As a house team, we have been exceptionally busy, putting in an unprecedented amount of work to create a successful and meaningful Pride Month. Throughout June, we set about organising a variety of events to show our support for Pride Month. In the week commencing the 12th, an inter-house netball tournament took place to identify the strongest team to play the staff in an emphatic match that saw many students watching and joining in with the crowd. This Pride netball event was envisioned to unite the school, and in particular the sixth form, as a collective to celebrate Pride Month.

Furthermore, during this week, we screened the successful film “Bohemian Rhapsody” in the big hall. This biographical musical drama acutely outlines the life of Freddie Mercury, an icon in the LGBTQ+ community. His success in life and resistance against prejudice create an inspiring narrative for the younger generation and students at MGS to be confident and proud of themselves, regardless of their identity.

The following week, we hosted a Pride BBQ in the quad, providing a platform for students to come together and enjoy a stellar performance from the Year 10 band. In support of Pride, they performed a plethora of songs from artists such as Queen and the Arctic Monkeys, creating a lovely atmosphere in the centre of the school.

Finally, as Pride Month drew to a close, Corpus Christi House wanted to finish with a celebration of the

relationship between Pride and music. On Friday, the 30th of June, we hosted a lip-sync battle in the quad featuring songs by LGBTQ+ artists. This event further displayed the pride not only Corpus Christi House has, but the whole school’s belief in supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

Corpus Christi, as a team and family, will continue to uphold our beliefs and create a safe, friendly, and successful community to bring out the best in the students at MGS. Our main objective is to provide an inclusive environment and organise multiple events to unite the house and improve school life.



Lower School Speech Day Prizewinners

Friday 14 July 2023

Year 7

Aiden M	Cg13	Art	Subject Prize
Daniel D	Cr4	Computer Science	Subject Prize
James W	To3	Design & Technology	Subject Prize
Samuel B	Ba9	English	Subject Prize
Robert H	Cg4	French	Subject Prize
Adam W	Cg2	Geography	Subject Prize
Joshua M	Cg5	German	Subject Prize
Judah A	To2	History	Subject Prize
Oluwadarasimi D	Ba2	Latin	Subject Prize
Ryan V	To2	Mathematics	Subject Prize
Henry P	To1	Music	Subject Prize
Ethan J	Cg5	PE	Subject Prize
Lucas K	Cr10	Drama	Subject Prize
Robert H	Cg4	RS	Subject Prize
Alex Z	To7	Science	Subject Prize
Robert H	Cg4	Spanish	Subject Prize
Marian E	Ba2	Top Scholar in Barton House	
Adam W	Cg2	Top Scholar in College House	
Oluwamayomikun O	Cr14	Top Scholar in Corpus Christi House	
Alex Z	To7	Top Scholar in Tonbridge House	
Robert H	Cg4	Top Scholar Overall in Year 7	
Luke F	Ba4	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Luke P	Ba3	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Alexander V	Cg1	College House	Parents' Association Prize
George J	Cg4	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Eric E	Cr9	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Arin M	Cr11	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Zac P	To11	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize
Matthew O	To3	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize

Year 8

Leon S	To1	Art	Subject Prize
Seizou P	Cr14	Computer Science	Subject Prize
Adam M	Ba8	Design & Technology	Subject Prize
Henry H	To1	Drama	Subject Prize
Oluwabamiyo O	Cr9	English	Subject Prize
James G	Cr11	Food Technology	Subject Prize
Henry M	Cg10	French	Subject Prize
Henry M	Cg11	Geography	Subject Prize
Henry M	Cg12	German	Subject Prize
Seizou P	Cr14	History	Subject Prize
Henry M	Cg10	Latin	Subject Prize
Henry M	Cg10	Mathematics	Subject Prize
James B	Ba14	Music	Subject Prize
Evan S	Cr14	PE	Subject Prize



Lower School Speech Day

Prizewinners Continued

Friday 14 July 2023

Oluwabamiyo O	Cr9	RS	Subject Prize
Luca A	Cg8	Science	Subject Prize
Noah T	To9	Spanish	Subject Prize
Adam M	Ba8	Top Scholar in Barton House	
Alexander S	Cg14	Top Scholar in College House	
Oluwabamiyo O	Cr9	Top Scholar in Corpus Christi House	
Remion A	To9	Top Scholar in Tonbridge House	
Henry M	Cg10	Top Scholar Overall in Year 8	
Oliver B	Ba5	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Indy N	Ba14	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Ethan B	Cg13	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Jasper M	Cg11	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Edward C	Cr12	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Luke R	Cr5	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Harry B	To2	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize
Isaac F	To8	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize

Year 9

Georgi G	To1	Art	Subject Prize
Fintan A	Cg11	Biology	Subject Prize
Mohsin A	To4	Business	Subject Prize
Jonathon B	Cg9	Chemistry	Subject Prize
Max G	Ba3	Classical Civilisation	Subject Prize
Georgi G	To1	Computer Science	Subject Prize
Jacob K	Ba11	Design & Technology	Subject Prize
Sebastian F	Cr4	Drama	Subject Prize
Sebastian F	Cr4	English	Subject Prize
Bert P	To5	Film Studies	Subject Prize
Tom G	To4	Food and Nutrition	Ratcliffe Prize
Jay C	Ba3	French	Subject Prize
Alexander O-R	Cg5	Geography	Subject Prize
Nibek P	Ba2	German	Subject Prize
Jamie G	Cg1	History	Subject Prize
Jonathon B	Cg9	Latin	Subject Prize
Alex O-R	Cg5	Mathematics	Subject Prize
Tom G	To4	PE	Subject Prize
Sebastian F	Cr4	Music	Subject Prize
Mark W	Ba13	Physics	Subject Prize
Jonathon B	Cg9	RS	Subject Prize
Sebastian F	Cr4	Science	Subject Prize
Nathaniel V	Cg14	Sociology	Subject Prize
Sebastian F	Cr4	Spanish	Subject Prize
Jacob K	Ba11	Top Scholar in Barton House	
Jonathon B	Cg9	Top Scholar in College House	
William B	Cr6	Top Scholar in Corpus Christi House	
Georgi G	To1	Top Scholar in Tonbridge House	

Sebastian F	Cr4	Top Scholar Overall in Year 9	
Theo R	Cr7	Cross Country Cup	
William B	Ba13	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Ollie G	Ba6	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Sebastian J	Cg9	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Jake B	Cg3	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Jacob E	Cr4	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Matthew H	Cr14	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Kavindhu P	To12	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize
Aditya T	To11	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize

Year 10

Oscar H	Cg1	Art	Subject Prize
Thomas D	To11	Biology	Subject Prize
Ross H	Ba4	Business	Subject Prize
William C	Ba14	Chemistry	Subject Prize
Ryan A	Ba4	Classical Civilisation	Subject Prize
Hadyn C	Ba3	Computer Science	Subject Prize
Oscar H	Cg1	Design & Technology	Subject Prize
Jayden C	Cg3	Drama	Subject Prize
William L	Cg9	English	Subject Prize
Fabian R	Cg13	Film Studies	Subject Prize
Luke B	Cr10	Food and Nutrition	Subject Prize
Ryan A	Ba4	French	Subject Prize
Nishchal G	Ba4	Geography	Subject Prize
Ross H	Ba4	German	Subject Prize
Valentino M-M	To8	History	Subject Prize
Ryan A	Ba4	Latin	Subject Prize
William C	Ba14	Mathematics	Subject Prize
Marcus R	Cg6	Music	Subject Prize
Thomas H	Cr8	PE	Subject Prize
Alan B	Cr6	Physics	Subject Prize
Ryan A	Ba4	RS	Subject Prize
Jun Jia L	Cr11	Science	Subject Prize
Haydn C	Ba3	Sociology	Subject Prize
Johann L	Cr8	Spanish	Subject Prize
Ryan A	Ba4	Top Scholar in Barton House	
George B	Cg7	Top Scholar in College House	
Alan B	Cr6	Top Scholar in Corpus Christi House	
Euan C	To3	Top Scholar in Tonbridge House	
William C	Ba14	Top Scholar Overall in Year 10	
Hugo B	Ba2	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Callum P	Ba11	Barton House	Parents' Association Prize
Daniel H	Cg6	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Adam C	Cg10	College House	Parents' Association Prize
Jack B	Cr3	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Aadar C	Cr1	Corpus Christi House	Parents' Association Prize
Ethan W	To3	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize
Jacob M	To2	Tonbridge House	Parents' Association Prize



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