

maidstonian

M A G A Z I N E

Scholam **CONCIAMUS**
Maidstonensi urbe *nostram*
Impostam **Rege** eduardo
ante *hos* tam Longos
annos CONDITAM
Maidstonenses *gaudeamus*
laudibus et efferamus
SCHOLAM nostram quae
oramus sempiterna *floreat*
FORSAN olim **MEMINISSE**
NOS juvabit et **vixisse**
Dignos **illis quos fuisse**
GLORIAMUR **SOCIOS**
Maidstonenses **GAUDEAMUS**
Laudibus **et** efferamus
SCHOLAM nostram **QUAE**
oramus sempiterna
floreat

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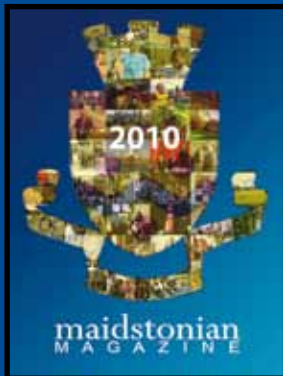


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EDITORIAL



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Dear Reader,

I am very proud to welcome you to the Maidstonian 2010. This magazine has by no means materialised in a straight forward manner. Alex and I started working on the Maidstonian last April after the previous edition was published late. We were six months behind schedule before we started, and had had no training from the previous editorial team. Even then, we knew the magnitude of the task that was facing us. What followed was 10 months of extremely hard work to make this magazine available for you to read today.

After deciding on and gathering much of the content at the end of the last academic year, we struggled with the infinite complexities of designing the Maidstonian. Luckily, our saviour materialised in the form of Tom Pilcher; who became the Designer, and is responsible for the vast majority of the layout and design you will find in the magazine. I would like to thank Tom for the massive amount of time and effort he has put into making the Maidstonian a reality. Quite simply, it would not exist without him. I must also thank all of our contributors; there are too many to name, but I owe all of you an incredible debt of gratitude. Special thanks must also go to Mrs Friend, who has given Alex and me invaluable advice and assistance ever since we started the project. She has also been admirably patient in tolerating our ever changing deadlines. Of course, we are grateful to all the other members of staff that have helped throughout the last year.

So, I sincerely hope you enjoy this year's Maidstonian. Putting this magazine together has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my school career, and I hope that the Maidstonian continues to flourish and grow for many years to come. I feel extremely privileged to have been its Senior Editor, and am very proud of all of its content. Particularly, the MGS Wartime History Article, a fascinating piece which I hope will come to represent an important part of the school's archives. I am also very pleased with the brand new Q&A section, which will be a fitting replacement to the dearly departed Quote-Unquote.

I feel compelled to remind you that the Maidstonian is a student-led magazine. Although members of staff donate much time and effort, it cannot exist without the necessary dedication from students. Alex and I have gained so much from taking part in it, and we can't urge you strongly enough to be a part of Maidstonian 2011 – and contribute to making sure this great historical tradition of our school continues to thrive.

In fear of sounding clichéd, I would like to finish by saying that the Maidstonian is not like any other school publication. Whilst researching its 200 year history to prepare me for this role, I have come to appreciate the massive significance it has for this school. Through its interviews, features and reports – it embodies everything that is great about life at MGS. Hopefully, reading this will reinforce to you how good life at MGS in 2010 really is. But of course, you must be the judge of that.

I hope you enjoy the magazine.

Yours sincerely,

Adam McLaren
Senior Editor, Maidstonian 2010

Alexander Hunter
Senior Editor, Maidstonian 2010



INTERVIEW

Meet
Dr Argent

2009 saw the end of an era, as the headmaster of 17 years, Neil Turrell departed. We went to speak to Dr. Argent to see how he was finding his new role....

What brought you to MGS?

I wanted to work in a school which was in some ways similar to the school I was working in. It had a very good ethos and I was looking for a school with one very similar. By this I mean a school that will give you more than just qualifications, one that will add value to you through things like sport, music and CCF. This is the first place I applied for and the rest they say is history.

Did you find taking on the Headship here a challenging prospect?

Every headship is challenging - you'd be a fool if you didn't think they would be. It's a big school for starters; and I was certainly daunted by that. I knew there would be more challenges; it's a difficult time for education full stop! I would like to think that I'm equipped for the challenges, but I do think it would be bizarre not to be a little daunted by running a school this size.

How have you found your first year as Headmaster here?

If you mean has it lived up to my expectations – yes! It has been challenging; there is so much to learn, and so many new faces. In my last school, I had actually taught every boy in the school by the time I left. Now, I still pass people and think: who is this pupil? But that's just down to the size of the school. So probably, if I am completely honest, the school has exceeded my positive expectations. The attitude of the pupils and the commitment of the staff are better than I had hoped them to be. So yes, it has been a learning curve - but I've found out some really nice things about the school along the way!

What have you most enjoyed about working at MGS so far?

I'd say surviving a year has been the most

enjoyable thing! I'd probably say it's the people. Schools are communities; they are about the pupils. I teach in Year 7 and I do a bit of hockey coaching, so I get to meet the pupils. In the end, what makes the organisation good or bad is the nature of those pupils. The vast majority of pupils I deal with are very positive about the school; they like being here, and respect what we are trying to help them with. Sadly, I spend probably too much time in my life dealing with the very tiny minority of naughty boys, and not enough time dealing with the good - But that is the nature of being a headmaster!

What has been your biggest challenge at MGS so far?

I think it has been getting to grips with the large scale of the school..

What changes and developments do you intend to bring to MGS, in your years to come as Headmaster?

I think the clever answer to that is: who knows? I think that development comes from evolution rather than revolution. Schools are a bit like super tankers; they are on their course and the gradually turn - but you wouldn't turn a super-tanker hard-right. I am also very lucky in that I have very able deputies as they are able to guide me in what I can do. We produce something very enviable; our boys and girls are leaving at 18 and going on to higher education, and they are pretty good citizens. I believe society can be proud of what we have done. We have developed them over the years, and we need to make sure that this development is not eroded. We live in a period where simply continuing to do what you are good at is not enough - we should have an aspiration to go beyond that.

“
...it has been a learning curve - but
I've found out some really nice things
about the school along the way!
”

What would you say is your ethos to teaching?

I like to think that my teaching is fun, and I hope that the Year 7's would agree. I still think that lessons should be enjoyable and I enjoy teaching Geography – in my opinion a great subject. I would also say, as an educator, that I want every boy in my class to do their best. I'm not particularly keen on settling for second best, and I would hope that they aren't either. It should be entertaining though; there are such good resources for teaching, particularly geography, on the Internet. It would be a crime to teach a Geography lesson and talk about something that you don't illustrate. So, that's what I aspire to do - and it is up to Year 7 to tell you whether I succeed or not.

About Dr. Argent

Before coming to MGS, Dr. Argent was principal of Elizabeth College, Guernsey, the Headmaster of Bagnor Grammar School of Northern Ireland and Vice Principal of Foyle and Londonderry College in Northern Ireland.

He has worked in a number of schools and in higher education, principally teaching geography but also coaching games particularly Hockey and Cricket.

Why do you continue teaching?

I can summarise this from a parallel with what I do in sports coaching. I'm a much better hockey player now I'm a coach, because on the sidelines it's really easy. There's a great danger if I simply stand on the sidelines of teaching, then I'll forget what the difficulties are. I think that the fact I teach Year 7s goes down very well with parents. There is a cohort of boys I know really well, but unfortunately it's only a third of the year. I also think that it gives you a certain amount of credibility with your colleagues. Otherwise I would just be the managing director of a large company. You could run a company making beans, and never need to work on the shop floor. You can understand what making a can of beans is like without actually being on the production line. But education – it's much more subtle and complex. I think the moment you stop teaching, and just fly the desk; you cease to be grounded in what the demands of the profession are. So for me, I think it's vital that I keep teaching. And anyway, it's much more fun than dealing with naughty boys.

What differentiates grammar schools from comprehensives?

There aren't many comprehensives out there that try to do what the grammars do in terms of what we do outside the classroom. That's perhaps the unique selling point of grammar schools. We have this high level of aspiration that education doesn't end at the classroom door.

How would you respond to critics of grammar schools?

If we mean the allegation that we're all elitist toffs, then that's laughable isn't it? I'm a really good example of what grammar schools do, because I come from a very lower middle class background. None of my extended family went to university. For all I may come across as somehow vaguely posh, it's a risible notion. My Father was a baker's barrow boy in the East End of London, before the Second World War in the 30s. I'm an example of how the grammar system can allow a boy, in this

case me, to transcend their origins. Going to university, getting a PhD, becoming a headmaster, are things that, before the existence of the free education system, would never have been open to me. So I'd say far from being elitist, we actually allow people to transcend their class at birth.

What makes MGS unique?

I think if you identify the unique selling point of this school, it's probably the breadth of the curriculum in the sixth form – which is unusually wide. Nationwide, there aren't many state schools that have a CCF and do the IB – so that's two lots of unusualness about us! So yes, obviously this school is unique. Its history and image is quite old. A lot of grammar schools originate from the 19th or early 20th century. It's much older than that, but I suppose that there are some schools who claim to be over a thousand years old. However, every school is unique in some way, and I think this applies here at MGS as much as it does to all other schools.

What do you enjoy doing outside of school?

The clever answer is I don't have time to do anything outside of school, but that wouldn't be true! I think it's extremely important that anybody who works in education has a dichotomy between their working and non-working lives. I read a great deal. I support a well known premiership football team, who for a suitable fee I'm willing to name. I love watching sport. I enjoy walking; that's probably the physical activity that I do to keep vaguely fit. I like hill walking, which is ironic because I've just been living for eight years in a place with nowhere higher than 109 metres. I used to have to leave the island to go walking. Essentially, I do the things that are an antidote to my working life. I like to be active; out in the garden, sitting in the sun, because I'm stuck in my office for such a high proportion of my working life.

Would it be a London team you support?

It would be a North London team.

Tottenham?

It would indeed. When I was young they did the double, and my Dad and Uncle used to take me to the ground. I can still remember the league trophy being paraded at White Hart Lane in the May of that year. I was only 5, and I can still remember that. I've been a fan ever since.

You wouldn't want to know my football allegiances.

3 Things you didn't know about Dr. Argent

He supports Tottenham

Hobbies include hill walking, geology and hockey

He doesn't know the words to the school song yet

What team?

Arsenal.

Oh well, never mind.

I've actually seen Arsenal win the league at White Hart Lane.

Have you? Oh what a wonderful memory you'll have.

And lastly, have you learnt the words of the school song yet?

The answer to that question is... no. I did sing them on Friday night at the Old Maidstonians' dinner, and I noticed that not all the Maidstonians know them off by heart. Some of them had to read them off the sheet! It's also the third school song I've had to learn, and they all have incredibly similar tunes, bizarrely enough. They also deploy the same late Victorian Latin. They all seem to be written about the same time. But no, to my shame I haven't learnt the words to the school song - so you can't test me on them!

Interview conducted by Alexander Hunter and Adam McLaren.

In Memoriam

Stuart Smith

1970 - 2010

When I was asked to write this I didn't quite know where to start. Stuart was more than a colleague; he was a friend and I will remember him with great joy for many years to come. Stuart's time at MGS began in 2007 as a result of the birth of my first child and consequently our time was inextricably linked. We spent most of our early friendship in the world of virtual correspondence whilst Stuart got to grips with MGS. It soon became clear to myself and many of my colleagues that he was a dedicated professional with a passion for his subject, English, though clearly his main love was and would remain to be Theatre.

Stuart's pastoral skills were, for me, and many other colleagues, where he shone. He understood innately that every student was an individual. Within the first week he knew his inherited form group by name and swiftly built a rapport with all of them, seeking out what made them tick, with his natural sense of fun. On my return it came as no surprise that Stuart was to remain at MGS and that he was to be a Year 7 tutor, a natural choice. In her eulogy Naomi Lumuntenga put it like this "His excellent pastoral skills meant that he was an obvious choice for the Year 7 team, to help young students through transition from primary to a new, massive secondary school. He was excellent and, when I covered his form, during one of his tough bouts, the messages at the parents' meeting day were overwhelming; all of them wished him well and wanted him back."

In the classroom Stuart's boundless energy proved to be the foundation of his teaching, he could enthuse even the most disinterested student, engaging them with a broad range of texts, through his dramatic talents, to quote his IB class he "took you with him to NZ, USA, West Africa.. wherever the text had been based, you felt you had been there and talked to the people, tasted the food and smelt the smells." It was this ability that made him such a vital part of the students' life and why his loss was felt so greatly by many of them. The students initiated a Facebook Tribute page and I quote a few: "One of the most



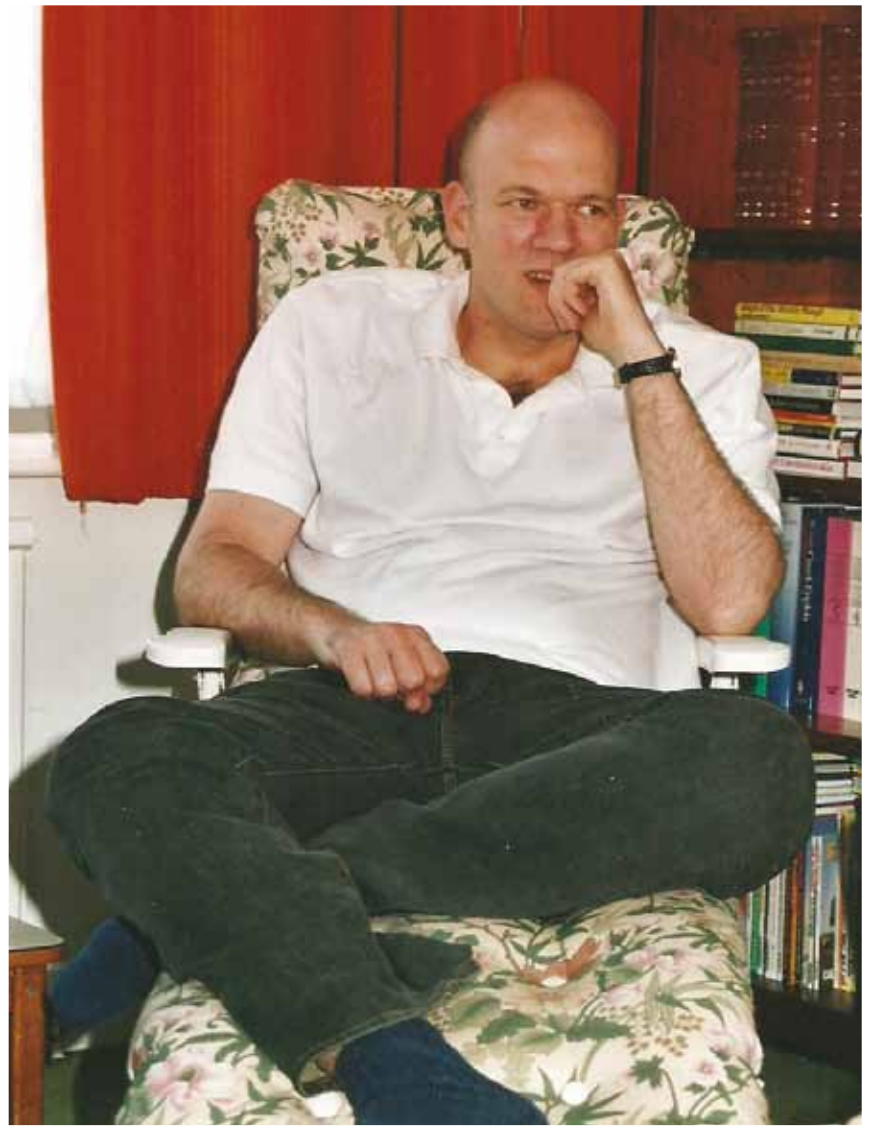
happy and funny teachers I've ever had. Greatly missed.", "The way he called out the register with a different voice for each person was so funny. Best English teacher I have had.", "He was a great guy and showed passion for his subject... He always respected the pupil and is the sole reason why *The Great Gatsby* is my favourite book.", "The Pink Fluffy Bunny Game!" As you can see he had an impact. I shall not begin to explain the last comment other than it leads me back to Stuart's main passion in life, acting. Stuart would have loved nothing more than to be a professional actor and it was, as I have been told, with great difficulty that he made the decision to become a teacher, and what a blessing it was for us all. His personal love was Musical Theatre but he was desperate for Drama to be taught at MGS, and together we were asked to set up the Drama Curriculum from September 2010.

After his initial illness Stuart returned to teaching in the autumn of 2009 and we began to plan the Year 9 curriculum together in any spare moments we could grab. Discussing texts, starters, mapping out year plans, it was promising to be a very exciting time for us both. Towards Christmas it became apparent to me that Stuart was still not right and as time moved on the news I had dreaded was given. Stuart remained determined to get Drama moving and it became the main focus of our conversations together and my final promise to him. It is a fitting tribute that now we have begun, though somewhat bereft and that the generous donation of Stuart's books, by his parents, will remain as a memorial library to the man described by many students simply as "A Legend!"

Mrs Burns



“One of the most happy and funny teachers I’ve ever had. Greatly missed.”



“He was a great guy and showed passion for his subject... He always respected the pupil...”

“Best English teacher I’ve ever had.”





Mike Barrett meets...

The School Captain

Room 57, Friday Lunchtime.

Interviewer: Mike Barrett.

Interviewee: Tom Woods, School Captain

Notable Absentee: Jordan Wooler, School Vice-Captain.

M: So, no Jordan. Tensions?

T: No comment. [laughs], But no, Jordan is in a meeting of his own. The working relationship is good. Before taking on our roles as Captain and Vice -Captain, we didn't really know each other well.

M: No?!

T: [laughs] but come the end of the year, we'll be much closer.

M: Your pasta smells nice.

T: It is. I'm enjoying it.

M: 5 months in to the School Captaincy, what have you achieved?

T: It's hard to appreciate how much work actually goes into being School Captain. Only when in the job can one truly appreciate the administrative and fairly mundane work that comes with the territory of being School Captain. It's good fun, and gives a new impression of a prestigious school which I've been a part of for six years. Also, without sounding cliché-

M: You... cliché?!

T: [laughs] But no, without sounding cliché, it does

feel as if I'm truly giving something back to a school which has helped me progress in so many ways in the six years I've been here.

M: As School Captain, has your working relationship with teaching staff changed in any way?

T: Generally, I receive more respect from the teachers and this is something I see as important being the 'voice' of the student community.

M: Care to divulge?

T: No.

M: Very well. Continue.

T: It's nice to be respected.

M: The School Captain and Vice Captain are not necessarily too well-known outside of the sixth form community. Do you plan to try and familiarize yourselves with the lower school?

T: Yes, Jordan and I do. Without sounding big-headed-

M: Impossible.

T: [laughs] Without sounding... egotistical, it's a good feeling to be acknowledged by younger members of the school, and Jordan and I do our best to try and fulfill our roles as positive role models to younger students in the school. I like to think that the School Captain is somebody who represents the sixth form, the student body as a whole, and the school - as a 'public figure' who makes speeches on the big occasions and performs many ceremonial roles at particular events in which the school is involved. This is something I am working to achieve. With the sixth form for example, at the end of the summer holidays I arranged for 20 or so members of the sixth form council to come in to school and decorate the Sixth Form Common Room. This was a success, and a good demonstration of students working to put something positive back into the school community. Also, members of the sixth form are helping to develop plans for the proposed new sixth form common room; again highlighting the commitment of the student community to create something positive for the school. This has helped produce a more positive mindset amongst many members of staff with regard to their opinion of how much students care about the schooling environment.

M: What will be your most significant memories you take with you once you leave MGS?

T: Fortunately, the school has provided me with the opportunity to travel all over the world: Botswana, New York, Barcelona, Paris and Zambia. These op-

portunities are gladly available to all MGS students, and provide invaluable experiences of different cultures. The groups of teachers who have supervised these trips have often made the experience just as enjoyable as the actual nature of the trip and location of the trip has done. Mr Zaccarini, Ms Lumutenga and countless other teachers will always be remembered for school trips for showing interesting and personable sides to their characters.

M: What do you plan to achieve by the time your tenure as School Captain expires?

T: God, a question about the future. I was worried I was coming across too nostalgic.

M: As ever...

T: But yes, my most significant aims are to rebuild the School Council- a student body which has worked in the past successfully, but has had decreasing significance in more recent years. Also, I'd like to make sure prefect numbers increase next year, and interest remains high in the prefect positions. These positions are important because they ensure a high element of student participation in the running of the school machinery. I don't want to try and influence any radical changes within the school; the main reason I applied for my position was because I like the school so much. I've wanted to give something back, and I hope I have given a significant amount back to the school by the end of the year; both on a personal level and through encouraging increased student participation in school matters.

After Tom's informative and entertaining revelations, we proceeded to start a quick-fire round of questions regarding school life as a whole... The results were not perfect...

M: Uniform regulations- strict or necessary?

T: Um... Is this pertaining to the lower school or...

M: This is meant to be short and snappy.

T: They're necessary.

M: Maidstonian- Better as a hard printed copy or downloadable PDF file?

T: A hard copy.

M: This interview- good or bad?

T: Mildly interesting.

Development of the House System

Since its inception in 2007, the house system has grown to become what can only be described as an integral part of school life. It has gradually caused the establishment of a House identity amongst students – who now feel a strong and faithful allegiance to their house. This is particularly clear in Key Stage 3, where the students have spent their entire time at MGS as part of a house. At first some were doubtful of MGS's suitability for a house system, but the critics have been proved wrong - it has proved to be a complete success.

To some, it feels bizarre that it was only 3 years ago that the names Churchill, Challenger, Endeavour, Hurricane, Invincible and Spitfire were chosen as the official names of the MGS houses – after a democratic process in which every member of the school was allowed to state their preference.

Originally, the only inter-house events were Sports Day and Charities' Days. However, over time they have expanded to include winter sports days, inter-house music competitions, attendance competitions, and merits. Now, nearly all parts of school life are in some way House-orientated. Even the ties show what house you are in!

Credit must be given to those who administrate the House System – without which it would not have achieved a fraction of the success that it has enjoyed. Primarily, MGS owes a huge debt of gratitude to the 6 Heads of House: Mrs Cook, Mrs Anderson, Mr Smith, Mr Philpott, Dr Everett, and Mrs Lumutenga. Each Head of House is of course supported by a House Captain – who leads a prefect team. The House team work tirelessly throughout the year to make sure their House performs as best as possible. Not only do they organise and administrate Charities Days and Inter-House Events, but they are also responsible for the pastoral element of the House system. Other crucial figures include Mr Holmes, (who acts as the Inter-House coordinator), and the School Vice Captain, (who works with each House Captain throughout the year to make sure each and every Charities' Day is a resounding success).

“...the house system has grown to become what can only be described as an integral part of school life.”

Although any assessment of the ranking of the Houses is inevitably slanted and biased, it would be fair to suggest that Challenger and Churchill have done especially well since 2007. Churchill emerged as victors of the inaugural House Cup, and has won the Charity Shield three years running. Challenger has been House Cup winners for the past two years, and has had notable sporting success in that time as well.

In our eyes The House System has developed at an astonishing rate – and it would be fair to label it as a victory for the School. Personally, we will miss the part it has played in our School lives once we have departed for University. As House Captains, we would like to acknowledge all of the work that goes on behind the scenes to make it the success it has become. For our academic year, thanks must go to all of the people mentioned in this article, but especially to all of the House prefects – without which the House system simply would not function. In three short years, the 6 Houses have so quickly become an invaluable part of life at MGS. By summer 2011, our input into this system will be over – as we make way for the ascendancy of the talented cohort of Year 12s. Under their leadership, we are of no doubt that the House System will flourish to become an even more defining part of MGS's identity.

Alexander Hunter
Churchill House Captain

Adam McLaren
Invincible House Captain

Sports Day 2010

Year 7 Summary		
Pos	House	Points
1	Churchill	147
2	Challenger	134
3	Spitfire	123
4	Invincible	118
5	Hurricane	118
6	Endeavour	110

Year 10 Summary		
Pos	House	Points
1	Challenger	160
2	Endeavour	153
3	Spitfire	111
4	Churchill	108
5	Invincible	104
6	Hurricane	92



Year 8 Summary		
Pos	House	Points
1	Invincible	144
2	Challenger	139
3	Churchill	133
4	Spitfire	117
5	Endeavour	104
6	Hurricane	100

Sixth Form Summary		
Pos	House	Points
1	Endeavour	57
2	Spitfire	49
3	Hurricane	46
4	Invincible	42
5	Churchill	41
6	Challenger	30

Year 9 Summary		
Pos	House	Points
1	Challenger	157
2	Hurricane	139
3	Churchill	133
4	Invincible	131
5	Endeavour	111
6	Spitfire	110



Sports Day Totals

Position	House	Points Total
1st	Challenger	620
2nd	Churchill	562
3rd	Invincible	539
4th	Endeavour	535
5th	Spitfire	510
6th	Hurricane	495

Challenger *review*



The second Charities' Day of the year fell to Challenger House to organise with proceeds going towards 'The Wooden Spoon Foundation,' the official Rugby charity, helping disabled children have the opportunity to enjoy sports. With the charity decided it seemed only right that the theme of the day would be based around sports - with the theme carried into the non-uniform and the two biggest money raisers, a sponsored row and the rugby vs. football match. Planning began a month in advance with a planning meeting, comprised of all the house staff and prefects to set out our plan of action and veto those plans which would never pass the dreaded Health & Safety. The organising continued up to the day, however with a weeks holiday preceding the Charities' Day and an INSET day resulting in a four day week to finishing organising, things turned into a challenge (not helped by me being ill the week leading up to the big day!). The team came together well to get everything organised and ready for the day with huge support from the tutor groups and tutors. The money raising started in the week leading up to Charities' Day, with the tradition of sending round Copper Bandits to collect loose change from pupils, an activity raising over £100. The Challenger House prefects were out on the gates from 7.30, collecting money for the non-uniform day, in the now famous orange buckets, finally leaving at 9 to ensure we collected money from anyone turning up late. Throughout the day many events were going on around the school set up by the Challenger tutor groups, including busking, a penalty shootout and a Concorde simulator from the Year 9's, ping-pong balls in a jar and an inter-house Wii tennis championship. Following on from last year's success, 10AE returned to room 60 to run their auction, raising £72.62, a figure which could

have risen more had they managed to collect even more items and not needed to result to selling their own lunches! The three big events of the day were the Big Hall event, 'MGS Has Got the Pop Factor', the rugby vs. football match and a sponsored row. The Big Hall event saw head of Art, Mr Ashenfelter, triumph with his acapella rendition of Swing Low. Other competitors included Ben Wright, Miles Featherstone and a band from Year 9, Chaos Theory. The big hall event went off without a problem, my big thanks goes to the Sound & Light team for setting up the event. The main competitor to the Big Hall event at lunch was the rugby vs. football match which saw members of the Rugby 1st and 2nd XV take on members of the Football 1st and 2nd XI in a match comprising of one half football and one half rugby. Unfortunately the match came to a premature end when a very unfortunate injury occurred. In total the two events raised £180.41. Throughout the day a group of Year 13's managed to raise over £120 with a sponsored row. The equivalent distance of rowing from Dover to Calais and back again, was achieved by the group inside 5 hours. James Milner, 13WW, aptly rowed the final kilometre having rowed for most of the day alongside Will Burbidge, Challenger House Deputy Captain and myself; with help from other members of 13WW and the Challenger House Prefect Team. With one last drive for money apparent, members of 13WW were thrown an orange bucket to have a quick 'whip round' during registration for more money - a plan which worked well.

Mark Heads, Challenger House Captain

Challenger House Charities Day Total

Non Uniform Total	£1,143.44
Fundraising Events Total	£599.99
Overall Total	£1,743.03

Churchill *review*



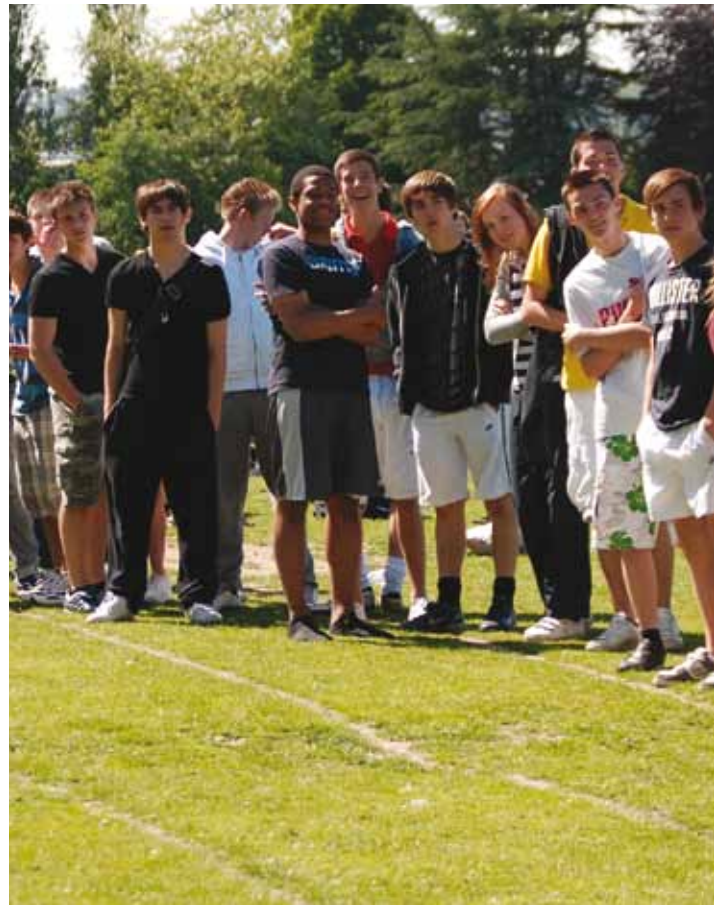
On the anniversary of Jean-Marie Sanfourche's death one year ago, it was somewhat fitting that we had the most productive Charities' Day since the house systems introduction three years ago - all in the name of Cancer Research UK. A completely novel and original idea was proposed for our event this year in the Big Hall. We decided to produce MGS's very own version of the game show 'Would I Lie to You', hosted by the very sporting Mr. Holmes. However, our imaginative idea did not quite receive the rapturous reception we were expecting. A big thanks is due to all the participating teachers, without them the show could not have possibly happened, and after all a handsome sum was contributed towards the cause. After two years, we felt it was time for the return of the 'Staff Sumo Showdown'. In a series of three rounds, teachers fought in hilarious padded sumo costumes in an effort to impose superior physical dominance over their colleagues. The Teacher's Dress-Up raised over £200, and in the process we saw Mr. Robling in a pink tutu, Dr. Everett as a Priest and Ms. Arbizu as a Nun. There are not enough superlatives in the English language to describe the colossal effort by Emily Thorpe in her contribution to this year's Churchill House Charities day. Single handedly she managed to raise over £1000 with nothing but a piece of duck tape, a few posters and a whiteboard. But this was not Emily's only effort. After a series of consultations between herself and Cancer Research UK, we managed to get our hands on hundreds of Cancer Research UK wristbands and dog tags free of charge, which we sold successfully. Emily's persistence, determination and motivation were key to her success, and she deserves much appreciation. With an unexpected donation from Mrs. Spendley, we found ourselves in the posses-

sion of over 50 clear key rings. After hours of toil from Miles Featherstone, we (he) managed to produce a selection of specially made MGS key rings to sell for a very generous 50p each, and a neat sum was added to our total. We have observed from previous years that the lower school tended to host their own stalls and events without very much success. What we believed instigated their failure was that the location of these events tended to be very remote. To break the mould, this year we decided to host an arcade room, where all the lower school events would be hosted in one location. The staff parked their cars in the hard court areas for the day, during which time their cars were washed by willing and enthusiastic students. Staff paid £5 for one wash, which produced around £100. Other events which took place around the school were 'ball in a bucket' in the Gym, a last minute coconut-shy and the collection of old mobile phones to be sold which ended up raising £100. This year's Churchill Charities' Day proved to be a real success. As a house we worked collectively, and all the prefects and students that got involved deserve much reward for their efforts; it is impossible to imagine the day working so well without them. In total, an outstanding £3251.45 was raised for Cancer Research UK.

Morgan O'Flaherty Churchill House Captain

Churchill House Charities Day Totals:

Non Uniform Total	£1121.67
Fundraising Events Total	£2129.78
Overall Total	£3251.45



Hurricane *review*

This year Hurricane House was given a local charity to support, the team were thrilled with this as it meant helping people in our actual community. The local charity chosen was The Kent Air Ambulance Trust, a group with whom the team and the school already has links and are always in desperate need of funding. Further to this, we joined the Can at Christmas Campaign which provides food to the homeless over the festive period. Janet Nakiganda is a 21 year old Ugandan girl who is a friend of our Head of House, Mrs Lumutenga. Janet is in her first year of Nursing Training and we all thought it an excellent idea to provide the cost of her studies for the next year.

Planning began very much in advance with a Hurricane Charities' Committee being established in September, with the Vice Captain of School invited to help with organization. Our major event was decided as 'MGS has got Talent' with a mixture of teacher and student acts, in the Big Hall. As well as this a VI Form 'Girls Vs Boys' Netball match on the Hard Courts. The various form groups also organised small events to take place around the school including Year 7 Map Competition, Year 8 Finger Football and Scalextrics. One of our House Prefects, Melissa King decided to attempt a sponsored silence, the true courage of this will be appreciated by anyone who knows her! We would also launch a 'Quid and a Can' campaign to make sure students remembered to bring in as much food donations as possible.

Encouraging the forms to provide details of individual events was challenging, but luckily Mrs Anderson stepped in to ensure all paperwork was completed and all the day's proceedings were presented to Senior Management for clearance. Roles were distributed throughout the team. Auditions were held for 'MGS has got Talent', with a variety of acts being presented including a very enthusiastic staff contingent. All the

events were heavily publicised around school a week before with a range of posters and advertisements.

For my House Prefects the prospect of turning up at school for 7.30 on the day was positively eye watering but all did arrive, if a little bedraggled, for money and can collecting on the gates. We were 2 prefects down due to a trip to Paris but we all pulled together and managed to collect all the non-uniform money and the overwhelming amount of cans. Transporting the 600 cans from both ends of the school to be stored in Room 60 proved a challenge but with the help of passers-by and Mr Wadsworth's range of wheelbarrows the job got done. Myself and members of the team met the Representative of the Homeless Appeal at 11:00 who assured us this amount of cans must be a record. The charity were incredibly pleased and the Kent Messenger came to report and take photos. A large feature in the Sunday KM spoke of the school's generosity and how much the food provided would help Maidstone homeless people. Myself and the Deputy House Captain, Alex Auger took responsibility of the Big Hall event which went very well, with a large audience and excellent acts. The show was stolen by the Swan Song of Mr. Coltella and Miss. Kennedy who performed their farewell duet, along with numerous Year 13 boys who were both T Birds and Pink Ladies!! Much credit must be given to the Sound and Light team who as always provided excellent support. The Girls vs Boys Netball was also a great success with the boys claiming a narrow victory. The forms did very well in their smaller events which proved popular as always. With the generosity of staff and students we were able to raise £1600 for the Kent Air Ambulance and provide the necessary funds for Janet who I am told by Mrs Lumutenga was overjoyed at our donation. Each can we collected was converted to 30p for purposes of the Charity Total, I recently received a letter from the campaigns Chair who thanked MGS for its support and expressed a wish to work with the school in the future. **Blaise Matthews,**
Hurricane House Captain



Hurricane House Charities Day Totals:

Non Uniform Total	£1,050
Fundraising Events Total	£780
Cans	£180
Overall Total	£2,010

Invincible *review*

Invincible's Charities' Day was one which was truly unprecedented in the history of MGS. For the first time, a House had chosen to completely abandon the Big Hall event - in favour of something that the school had never tried before. Our idea was the "MGS Mile", and our ambition was to have as many people from the school as possible participate in a sponsored run at lunchtime in order to raise money for Sport Relief.

The prefect team spent Period 4 frantically trying to set up the course. It was actually surprisingly difficult to set up a course that was exactly the right length. When lunchtime started, we were pleasantly surprised to see masses of people flocking towards the Pavilion. As people gathered to warm up for the run, there was one thing that everyone was staring at. Our Senior Prefect, Olly Smith, was at the head of a Jamaican Bobsleigh team inspired by the cult Disney film – "Cool Runnings." As well as crafting a streamlined sleigh, the Bobsleigh team even wore Lycra - and made themselves almost indistinguishable from the Jamaican team from the film.

The race itself was a huge success in every respect. It was a genuine example of the huge advantages that can be achieved when the school comes together as a community. Teachers and students ran together in an inspiring effort to raise money for disadvantaged children throughout

the world. The clear winner of the race was George Duggan, who eclipsed every other serious competitor – and was able to contribute a significant sum from his sponsorship. However, George's victory is not the only feature of the race that is worthy of mention. Mrs Sanfourche managed to raise over £300 for her to compete in the race, and walked the mile course with the support of several of her colleagues. Another exciting part of the run was the nail biting race to the finish between Mr Philpott and Mr Tismer – in which Mr Tismer won decisively. This is just one example of the intense competitive spirit amongst both staff and students generated by the race.

To conclude, I can say with confidence that the Invincible House Charities' Day was a success. There was an excellent combination of events, and the "Shorts and Shades" non-uniform theme created a vibrant and warm atmosphere. What's more, I think I can speak on behalf of the whole of the Invincible team in saying that the "MGS Mile" could not have been more successful. In a unique and innovative way, the whole school came together to produce more than a thousand pounds that contributed significantly to the total of £3,070. I hope that the extraordinary success of this event is noted; and revived by future years to raise even more money for charity.

Adam McLaren, Invincible House Prefect



Invincible House Charities Day Totals:

Non Uniform Total	£1,143.44
Fundraising Events Total	£1927.36
Overall Total	£3070.80

Spitfire *review*

Spitfire House Charities' Day saw the emergence of the greatest day ever known to man. All members of Spitfire, tutor groups and tutors, came together to produce a day that will live long in our memories. Spitfire House ensured that the Charities' Day lived up to its name and tradition, by raising an unbelievable amount of money, which went towards Haiti, as well as the usual antics and banter surrounding the whole day.

There were a whole host of invigorating events on offer: 7Ch organised a Wii games event which proved to be an absolute hit and raised £17.21

8Ml ran 3 events, Beat the keeper, Basketball shoot out and Xbox challenge to raise £7.90

9Hy did a penalty shoot-out and Guess the teacher quotes which raised a worthy £22.80 as well as a class collection of £10.90, a fantastic effort.

10Rh organised a crossbar challenge which raised £16.82.

Some brave lads in 11Wt dressed up in drag and raised £78.90.

The event in which the masses had congregated for was the Big Hall event,

MGS Royal Variety. This brought together the finest crème de la crème of talent in the school, and we even had our very own Queen, Ms Tomes, to pass her judgement on the acts with the aid of a watching audience. The acts lived up to the name of the event and we witnessed a range of talented acts perform, Mr Morse and his wonderful companion sang a fantastic rendition of 'Breaking free' from High School Musical - there is definitely talent to be exploited there. An honourable mention to the Long Forgotten, who made a worthy attempt at a cover of 'Poker face' by Fall Out Boy. Also to Mr Sparkes and the biology department (+ Mr Willis) for performing a classic farmers anthem. The runaway winner of the event was by far the dance group who call themselves 'Wazaaaaaa'. They performed a variety of dance routines and were joined by Mr Rogers in the end to cap off a world class routine - they certainly were worthy winners.

For the whole day, Spitfire raised £1,835.06, a magnificent total. Spitfire House also held an additional non-uniform day to raise extra money for the natural disaster in Haiti, and that individually with collection, raised £2,317.11. Overall, Spitfire House has made a contribution of £4152.17. Thank you and well done to everyone involved.

Timothy Boobier
Spitfire House Captain



Spitfire House Charities Day Totals:

Haiti Appeal Total	£2,317.11
Spitfire Charities' Day	£1,835.06
Spitfire Total	£4,152.17



Class

A C T S

2010 saw a rapid growth in the popularity of Girls Sport. Emily Haffenden, a key member of Girls Sport at MGS tells us how much it has developed...



There has been a growth in girls sport this year at MGS with Mr Rogers coaching us in many different games including netball, rugby, hockey, tennis, basketball, curling and rounders. We trained every Tuesday and Thursday in these sports and played a few matches and tournaments.

Netball and rugby were the main focus of the winter months and have grown in interest and numbers this last year. We were able to get around fifteen girls to turn up for rugby training every week so easily formed a sevens side, and eleven for our first game. The girls were pleased with the performance and thoroughly enjoyed playing competitively while putting the training into practice. The 7s tournament was great fun and we achieved our first win, beating Sutton Valance 15-14. Although we suffered a defeat against Judd, the results along with the draw against Benenden B were enough to take us through to the 3rd/4th playoffs. In this match we faced Benenden A and although we were beaten we came 4th in our first rugby tournament. None of us had played rugby before, but as it plays a large part in MGS life it seemed necessary to give it a go. Now many plan to continue with it - looking to play for clubs or university teams. Everyone contributed their own talents to the games with a balance of Year 12s and Year 13s. I would encourage any girl that joins sixth form to give the rugby a go. In netball we really developed as a team throughout the year. As we are from different schools we have to get to know how each of

us play and work together to form a team. Our first match against MGS was an awful defeat but the only way was up and we did well to win our matches against St Simon Stock and Basingstoke. This was our last game together and we were thrilled to finish on a high with the rugby team watching before supporting them in their last game together that followed. In the summer we continued to meet every Tuesday and Thursday trying different sports although rounders was the key game getting in a couple of matches before exams started. Throughout the year Mr Rogers worked to get us matches in whatever sports a school offered including a hockey match and a basketball tournament.

The sport offered at MGS for girls has a wide variety so that all can enjoy it - yet it also demands the commitment of those that take sport more seriously. I'm sure the rugby team will expand next year and as the number of girls in sixth form increases the netball team will continue to grow. I'm sure the girls will agree with me that it is a way in which both year groups can come together and would want to thank Mr Rogers for all the effort he has put in to it for us. I wish all those that are leaving this year the best of luck and hope that those who remain in sixth form continue with the sport and help it to progress even further.

Emily Haffenden



ARMY SECTION



After returning from the adventures in the rugged terrain of northern Cornwall, the location of Summer Camp 2009, the Army section got stuck into the various tasks that faced us at the start of a new year.

These involved the basic training of eager new recruits and advanced training for the Year 10s. For a few of the Year Y11s this was the first real opportunity to lead, rather than be led, following our recent promotions on Summer Camp.

With the start of the new year many of our NCOs were teamed up with RAF and RN section NCOs and transferred to the Tri-Service Recruits section to run their demanding 10 week basic training, where they were taught; drill, map and compass work, how to operate the PRC349 radio system, and, the always favourite rifle training. This gave the newly promoted NCOs some experience in instruction, whilst the new recruits were learning some basic skills which are the foundation for further training in the CCF.

All this training led to the first major event in the recruits calendar, Recruits Camp. This was the first real opportunity for recruits to use their new skills

in a realistic setting with the recruits participating in 'sections attacks,' camouflage and concealment tasks, radio and signals stands, first aid situations, map and compass exercises as well as trying out the demanding assault course.

This year's methods of Instruction (MOI) Course for NCOs ran at the same time as the Recruits Camp so fortunately we had the task of delivering lessons in a nice warm classroom, apart from one occasion, when we found ourselves out on the range participating in live firing which enabled the recruits to witness a section attack using blank ammunition in an adjacent field. The people that participated in this year's MOI were Cpl McLeod, Cpl Oehlert, Cpl Walker-Jopson, LCpl Bartholomew, LCpl Glenister and LCpl Kemp. All passed the first stages successfully.

Another major event for the 'marksmen' of the Army section was the Cadet Skills At Arms Meeting (CAD-SAM). This year's over 16 team consisted of CSM Seeds, SSgt Stuart-Hill, Sgt Arscott, Sgt Robinson and Cpl Barton. Cpl McLeod, Cpl Davis (RAF), LCpl Krangel, LCpl Vaughn and Cadet Barham formed the Under 16 team. This competition consisted of an Electric Target Range (ETR) shoot, a Gallery Range

“THIS YEAR HAS BEEN ANOTHER GREAT YEAR FOR THE ARMY SECTION”



shoot, a Snap shoot and the Falling Plate competition. The over 16s team did really well, winning prizes in many of the disciplines and reaching the semi finals in the Falling Plate. The Under 16s team did equally well, coming near the top in most of the events as well as Cpl McLeod claiming the ‘Under 15s ETR Gold’ – unfortunately to my embarrassment I missed my last target at 100m, not good.....

Unfortunately, this year the 4 Div Military Skills Competition was not held, so instead, several CCF’s worked together and formed the first 2 Brigade Skills Competition. The MGS team consisted of Sgt Arscott, Sgt Robinson, Cpl McLeod, Cpl Walker-Jopson, LCpl Glenister, LCpl Leigh, Cadet Barham and Cdt Ali, but we also cannot forget the professional acting of Cdt Whitehouse on the first aid scenario! Despite being a rather ‘junior’ team in terms of rank (but not experience), MGS came first – beating our rivals from the Duke of York’s School.

The Recruits then performed their ‘Passing Out’ Parade and officially became cadets, and so even more training began in preparation for this year’s summer camp at Penally Training Camp in South Wales.

At the camp we spent the first half of the week in and around the camp, participating in various adventure training activities such as abseiling, rock climbing, kayaking and the notorious raft building, where, after several tense heats of racing, 2 Troop came out on top and claimed victory. After adventure training we moved out of Penally and onto Sennybridge Training Area to experience the tactical stage of the camp. Our first activity was to play the role of the enemy in which we had to defend a farmhouse. Next it was our turn to be the good guys and take part in a 24 hour exercise, which was, despite being a bit cold, lots of fun. On our final day on the training area we went to the ranges and finished with some live firing. There was also a bit of competition between the cadets resulting in some high scores being achieved.

This year has been another great year for the Army section. With all developing new skills and the welcoming of new members into our ‘close-knit’ team; we are ready for what waits ahead.

Cpl Alex McLeod

CCF RAF SECTION



The academic year of 2009-10 was one of great enjoyment and successes for the Royal Air Force Section.

The year started with the biggest intake of new recruits so far, with about 35 new cadets electing to sign up, making the total for the section of 90, the largest in the Contingent. The NCO in charge of the section was CWO Oliver Smith, ably supported by Flt Sgts Robert Entwistle, Matthew Thomas, Alex Field, James Tatham and Jack Robertson. During the year our section added to its number of Officers with the Pilot Officer Day, who joined Flight Lieutenant Coltella (Officer Commanding), Flying Officer Kennedy and Flying Officer Adekunle.

November once again saw the Royal Air Force section turn up in large numbers to pay their respects on Remembrance Sunday, with a sea of blue march-

ing through Maidstone town centre, which installed a great sense of pride, belonging, and humility in us all.

The first camp of the year was a tri-service recruit section camp combined with a weapon handling safety test weekend on the L98A1 rifle. All of those who took part passed and gained experience of life on a military base.

In June RAF Wyton played host to twelve cadets, who took to the air in a Grob Tutor for which they gained their first AEF certificates and took control for aerobatic manoeuvres including barrel rolls and 'loop the loops,' this also opened opportunities in the future for further flying courses.

The section's successes in the Ground Training Competition continued, winning the South-East regional's with ease. The team then took part in the UK



finals against twelve other teams at RAF Cranwell. After a fiercely fought contest, full of physical and mental challenges, the Ground Training Team won the national competition for the third time in a row. The rewards for this were twofold. As well as the presentation of the invaluable Air Squadron Trophy at Air Squadron Day, the team was invited to take part in the fly past following the Trooping of the Colours. We flew in a Lockheed Tristar from RAF Brize Norton – a truly memorable experience.

The second part of the reward was a place for 60 cadets from the section at a parade celebrating the 150th year anniversary of the cadet force in the United Kingdom. This started with a day at RAF Halton undertaking drill before a number of Warrant Officers in order to get everyone, including the Officers, up to scratch for the next day. Despite the incredibly early start and almost continuous drill in the searing heat, a lot was learnt and surprisingly a lot of fun was had. The next day heralded an incredibly prestigious event. We gathered at the Horse Guards Parade before marching down the Mall – which included a salute to HRH Prince Charles – and a fly past from the Red Arrows before coming to a halt in Wellington Barracks. At the barracks we quickly downed a much needed bottle of water before being assembled into a new order for a short march to Buckingham Palace for a Royal tea party. In the plentiful gardens of the palace some cadets met members from the Royal Family, including Prince Charles, Camilla (Duchess of Cornwall), Prince Edward and high ranking officers from the armed forces, whilst others explored the gardens and enjoyed incredible food, including chocolate crown topped cakes and the fabled cucumber sandwiches.

This year the section participated in two summer

camps, the first being at RAF Coningsby, home to the operational evaluation squadron, the Typhoon fleet, and the Battle of Britain memorial flight, containing the last of many aircraft which flew during the second world war. We visited the RAF police dog section and RAF Waddington for swimming proficiency tests. Back at RAF Coningsby cadets passed their weapon handling safety test on the L98A2 rifle before taking part in a scored shoot and an evening on the dismantled close combat trainer. This simulates a live firing range with the facility to vary length, provide different scenarios and track the movement of the rifle. At the camp lots of new friends were made, and existing friendships were strengthened, this was clear in the entire camp joining a performance of the “Jungle Skank” in the “The Lounge.”

A second summer camp took place at RAF Halton – the historic home of the Royal Air Force. It was another action packed week with trips to the Farnborough Air Show, the World War II Bunker at RAF Uxbridge, World War 1 trenches at RAF Halton and a tour of the C-17 Globemaster at RAF Brize Norton. This week culminated in a large scale night exercise involving cadets from a camp at RAF Odiham.

During the year cadets also took part in gliding at RAF Kenley, work experience placements, the air cadet pilot navigation scheme, gliding scholarships and flying scholarships, to name but a few of the events on offer.

With new opportunities to come next year, we are all looking forward to what the future holds in what will be the 70th anniversary of our section’s formation.

J/Cpl. Tom Etheridge

CCF NAVY SECTION



The new school year started well, with the resumption of water based training in September, namely sailing and kayaking. This is always a favourite time of year for RN cadets and was enjoyed by all up to the October half term. In the third week of the new term, we attended the Kent CCF regional regatta. Robert Ledniczky, Matthew Owen and Steve Simmonds represented MGS, with Robert and Matthew finishing second and Steve a close third in their respective categories.

As the year continued, the RN section moved indoors to land based training, which included lessons on; sailing and how to improve ready for the resumption in the summer; subjects such as meteorology and navigation (important knowledge for any member of the RN); and also numerous personal leadership tasks, which are always a great

way to get out of the classroom and experience some hands on training.

After Christmas the new RN recruits enjoyed a successful Recruit's Camp and Weapons Handling Weekend, and joined their main section in February. They were a welcome addition to our growing section and fitted straight in, learning the syllabus which would enable them to take their Able Rating test and receive promotion. All cadets rose to the challenge and passed, reaching the first rank in the RN and receiving their rank slides.

As summer approached, the return from the Easter break saw a recommencement of water based training, which was a new experience for most our new recruits. The summer sailing session saw a real drive to learn new sailing skills and improve ex-

“..IT WAS A GOOD WAY TO ROUND OFF WHAT HAD BEEN ANOTHER VERY SUCCESSFUL YEAR”

isting, ready for the regattas at the beginning of the next season. Many cadets attained both their level 1 and level 2 RYA sailing qualifications, which was a great achievement.

Over the year, there were a number of trips which the section attended. Included in the trips was a chance to go to Dover and visit a Naval patrol boat, as described by Rowan Field, at the time a year 10 cadet:

“In 2010, our Royal Navy section got the chance to go down to Dover for the day to be shown around on a PT2000, a type of patrol vessel, and go out to sea. When we reached our destination, the ten of us were disappointed to find out that the captain was ill, so the chance of going to sea was lost. However, we got an interesting tour on the ship, and the crew were very hospitable. Having found that we couldn’t go to sea, we decided to take a walk along the white cliffs, and then went down to the beach and looked at the old gun emplacements. We also had lunch by the sea before returning to school.

As well as this the Clyde Fleet Tender trip, which ran for the first time in 2009, was repeated in 2010. This is the main trip of the year run by the MGS Royal Navy section and Ben Smith, a new recruit at the time, talks about his experiences:

On the day of England’s untimely exit from the World Cup, 9 Recruits and Mr Tismer boarded the train from Maidstone East set for the destination of Gailohead Army Base, just North of Glasgow, which was our lodging for the first night. For 6 of the cadets (including me), this was our first Navy trip and we were excited about the forthcoming week, not knowing what to expect.

The following day was our first on the SS Omagh, a tender to the Clyde Fleet of Submarines, and it was here that we met Commander Sanders, who would be accompanying us on the trip. We boarded the Omagh and met the crew at Faslane Naval Base with all our kit and provisions for the next four days.

On the Omagh we were split into our 3 watches and learnt what our duties aboard the boat would be. On the boat we would be allowed to navigate, steer and plot the route for the following days. We were heading towards Tarbet, and after a 4 hour trip, with a short stop in the coastal town of Rothesay, we arrived in the picturesque fishing village. The next day we headed north to Inverary, during which we practised man over board drills with a life preserver being the man, and at Inverary we were allowed to explore the village.

The next day our destination was Cambletown via Port Ranza, a tiny village with only a village shop and a ruined castle. Cambletown is a major town with many shops and a bustling High Street. Many sweets and souvenirs were bought there! On our last day on the Omagh, the weather had also turned for the worst with huge swells and high winds making the trip back rather unpleasant. This brought on some sea sickness but no complaints were heard, I guess that’s all part of being in the Naval Cadets! However once we got back into sheltered water we quickly recovered. We returned for Gailohead Army Base for our last night of the trip and the next day returned home via a delay riddled journey.

I felt the trip was brilliant. Not only was it great fun but I have learnt a lot about seamanship especially navigation which I enjoyed a lot. Special thanks to Mr Tismer and Commander Sanders.”

Towards the end of the summer, sailing activities were halted as many cadets were away attending numerous trips run by the Royal Navy itself, including everything from leadership to range firing courses, as well as a number of sailing and yachting courses. All cadets who attended these courses thoroughly enjoyed their experiences, and it was a good way to round off what had been another very successful year for the MGS CCF Royal Naval section.

P.O. Robert Ledniczky, Year 12



REVIEW

Two not to be forgotten occasions stand out since the previous Maidstonian Report: The RAF Section's unique triumph of becoming the National Ground training Champions of 2010 for the third successive year and the Army Section Annual Camp 2010 at Penally on the South Wales Coast with three days training in the field on Sennybridge Training Area. The tactical aspects of the infantry work were challenging along with the additional reconnaissance, planning, and strategically timed operations needed for the use of the 2 portaloos that were available for 50+ cadets, 5 staff, and the cadet training team! On one day the sun did shine and there was no rain all day, and we won the Drill Competition having assembled a squad on arrival with two hours to prepare and practice!

Once again I am pleased to report that the Maidstone Grammar School CCF has provided a valuable opportunity for developing leadership, teamwork, and the value of caring for fellow cadets as well as developing self confidence and transferable life skills.

Many qualifications have been gained by cadets and adults. The BTEC Diploma in Public Services has been well supported and two coveted Distinction * grade awards have been earned.

Staffing Changes and Recruitment:

Out of the 14 officers on strength we still rely on 5 who are not employed by the school, and who are limited in the time that they can give to CCF activities.

Three new additions are in the process of commissioning but their future involvement depends on job availability and other demands on their time in school. Some existing officers are overstretched due to their other positions of responsibility within the school.

Recruitment of cadets has again been successful for a voluntary activity run outside school hours with approximately 67% of the eligible year group signing up.

Training:

Training has remained very active and competitive. The year has witnessed a lot of varied activities despite the

loss of training facilities and backup required for these activities resulting from the MOD cutbacks and cost saving measures imposed in October 2009. Thankfully MGS responded in the only acceptable way and met the setbacks with a determination to carry on and do the best we could under the restraints! Participation in local and national events, competitions, courses, and camps over the year was again maintained at a high level with successful outcomes. The RAF Section was triumphant over 11 other schools in 7 different disciplines emerging as Champions in the National Ground Training Competition in 2010 for the third year in succession. This is an unprecedented and unique achievement. This is now the ninth time in the fourteen years of the competition that Maidstone has won this award and our thirteenth appearance in the fourteen years of the national finals. The section was presented with the Air Squadron Trophy and cadets were given the opportunity to fly in a variety of aircraft owned by members of the Air Squadron. In addition, members of the section were awarded the opportunity to participate in the cadet 150 Celebrations by attending the Royal Review in London and the subsequent Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. (The cucumber sandwiches were for real – as noted in the RAF report!). The Ground Training Competition winners also received the privilege of participating in the fly past for Queen's official birthday following the Trooping of the Colour Ceremony earlier in the day.

The Army Section achieved notable success at an annual camp at Penally as well as being winners of the 2 Brigade Military Skills Competition that replaced the 4 Div Competition that was cancelled due to the financial cutbacks. The much anticipated and eagerly awaited Adventure Training in Snowdonia 2010 was a great success and brought out some of the best qualities seen in our young people.

Recruit training has produced one very successful weapon safety training weekend with another to come in January 2011 along with a First Aid Course. A recruits' training camp and the Contingent Biennial Inspection to come in February 2011 will mark the 70th anniversary of an RAF Section at MGS. The Inspecting Officer is scheduled to be Air Commodore M Crayford OBE – a former student at MGS.

The Contingent continued its contribution to the local community with its representation at Remembrance Day in Maidstone town centre, collecting within school for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, and helping with the Poppy Appeal Charity event at Aylesford Bulls rugby club

helping to raise further funds for The Royal British Legion.

RAF cadets have gained gliding and powered flight qualifications whilst Cadet Sgt Oliver Arscott of the Army Section was nominated as the top cadet on a leadership course (on which three of our Army cadets were awarded places) involving 120 cadets from all over the country held at Nesscliff, Shropshire, in April 2010. Sgt Arscott has also been awarded a Lord Lieutenant of Kent Cadet of the Year Award for 2010 for his contribution to the cadet movement and the example he has displayed in representing the young people of the community.

The future:

The Army and RAF Sections in particular need more full time officers who are members of the school staff and who are not overburdened by other responsibilities!

Despite the difficulties of staffing and the financial restraints that have limited activities over the year MGS CCF continues to provide a particularly valuable extra curricula education for our young people. Our cadet NCOs and the newest members of the Contingent demonstrate remarkable qualities within the young people of our society. We look forward to further

Contingent Competitions & Successes Sep 2009 – Dec 2010

- Army CADSAM 2009 (Cadet Skill at Arms Meeting; 54 teams entered). Team awards: -
Over 16 CCF Rifle Match (CGR) – Winners of shield and 4 gold medals.
Under 16 Open ETR Match – Individual first place LCpl Alex McLeod – gold medal.
Over 16 CCF Snap Shoot Competition – Runners Up - 4 silver medals.
Over 16 CCF Clay Pigeon Shoot – Runners Up – entered on the day with no previous preparation.
Over 16 falling Plate Competition – reached semi finals.
- Army HM Lord Lieutenant of Kent Cadet of the Year awarded to SSgt Jake Seeds
RAF Ground Training Competition 2010 – SE Region – Winners.
Army 2 Bde Patrol Competition – Champions, winning three out of six events.
RAF Ground Training Competition National Finals – Winners and National Champions.
(13th appearance in 14 years of this competition). This is now the 9th time in the 14 years of the competition that MGS has won this award.
This is also a unique three times in a row that MGS has won this competition.
Presented with the Air Squadron Trophy for 9th time, July 2010.
- Army National Signals Competition Easter 2010 – 4th place
RAF Gliding Scholarship Gold Wings Cpl Alex Williams; Silver Wings Cpl Alex Riddell
RAF A group of cadets participated in the military fly past for the Queens Birthday Parade.
Cadets invited to take part in the Cadet 150 Celebration Royal Review in London and the Royal Garden Party.
- Tri-Service BTEC Awards 2 x Distinction*, 4 x Distinction, 1 x Merit
Army Summer Camp 2010 (Penally / SENTA – Week 3). Drill Competition – Winners.
Army CADSAM 2010 (Cadet Skill at Arms Meeting; 38 teams entered). Team awards: -
Under 16 CCF Rifle Match (CGR) – Runners Up - 4 silver medals.
Under 16 Open ETR Match – Third Place - 4 bronze medals.
Individual Open (CCF & ACF) Under 16 CGR - Winner – LCpl James Leigh – gold medal.
Individual Open Under 16 CCF Snap Shoot Competition – Third Place – LCpl Elliot Barham – bronze medal.
Under 16 Open Champion Shot Competition – Runner Up - LCpl James Leigh – silver medal.
- Army HM Lord Lieutenant of Kent Cadet of the Year awarded to Sgt Oliver Arscott .



MUSIC REVIEW

This has been another exciting year for the Music Department here at MGS, once again filled with many exceptional music events. The performances have, as always, been outstanding, and it is with the participation of the numerous and highly talented musicians within the school that make this possible. Although we had to say goodbye to Mr Orchard at the end of last year as he went on to be Assistant Head of Music in Guildford, we welcomed another Old Maidstonian in to the Music Department. Mr Galbraith has returned to MGS for the final part of his teaching qualification. Mr Galbraith was a student at MGS from 1998 until 2005, and is very happy to be finishing his training here at his old school. After he finished sixth form Mr Galbraith went on to do an undergraduate degree at Surrey and then a Masters in performance. He is an excellent trombone player and drummer, and has been a very supportive, reliable and inspirational teacher. He says that he has thoroughly enjoyed his time here and we wish him the best of luck with his future career.

Although this year was the 'off' year for our Biennial productions, and thus one was not performed, the Music Department was still just as busy. We have put on 3 concerts, as well as intending to perform a Carol Concert and making a very suc-

cessful appearance at the National Youth Festival of Music. We also had the annual Music Competition on Sports Day, and for every event have made excellent appearances.

Over the last year, the music department at MGS has played concerts every season, including our recent spring concert, in which the wind band played the theme songs from Pirates of the Caribbean, The Nightmare before Christmas and Les Miserables. These songs, chosen by Joe Atkin-Reeves - the senior prefect - were not only exciting and motivating to practice in school, but were also thoroughly enjoyed by the audience at the concert. The wind band has grown significantly and the massive effort that Joe offered to the band is something the whole band is very thankful for.

Although the severe weather conditions resulted

'We were graced with a large number of extremely talented performances, with solos, duets and small groups'

in the Christmas carol concert being cancelled, the rehearsals were fantastic to participate in, as the school choir and string orchestra came together to perform Vivaldi's Gloria, with the help of Mr Fuller playing the organ. The wind band also played, and although it was a great disappointment to not be able to showcase our great effort in rehearsals, it was a brilliant experience to be part of.

The autumn concert was another successful event, in which the school orchestra, choir, wind band and jazz band played. Mr. Galbraith's support for the jazz band throughout the year led to a fun and rewarding performance of tracks such as Superstition by Stevie Wonder, amongst other classic jazz numbers including Ain't No Mountain High Enough, originally performed by Marvin Gaye and later by Diana Ross.

We were incredibly lucky with our Summer concert having fantastic weather. It was an extremely good event with a huge amount of excellent performances. We were graced with a large number of extremely talented performances, with solos, duets and small groups. The concert closed with another rousing performance by the Wind Band, who played a number of Beatles hits.

Something to mention is the continued progress of the bands throughout the years. These fantastic events & performances couldn't be achieved without the encouraging support of the school music teachers and the senior prefect, who dedicate their spare time to helping the bands and orchestra through their rehearsals and also offering their musical advice to individual performers.

On the 14th July, Sport's Day took place and the music department held a competition for Years 7-9 to show their skills to a panel of prefects, who judged the performances and awarded students with points for their house. Jack Young, from Year 7 in Challenger house, sung a pitch-perfect version of Yellow by Coldplay with colour and maturity, winning the competition for his year. Other winners were Alex Morgan of Year 8 and Michael O'Hagan / David Norman coming joint first in Year 9. The skill of these young performers shows that the future school bands will no doubt contain many more talented musicians for our music department to be proud of.

We are hoping next year will be another exciting and interesting year for the Music Department, and that we will be able to put on performances of the same high calibre we have become accustomed to. Thank you to everyone who has been involved with our events this year and for the continued excellent support of the teachers, performers and audiences.

Jonty Tindall and Joe Bligh



Short Story Competition

WINNER

My First Day at MGS

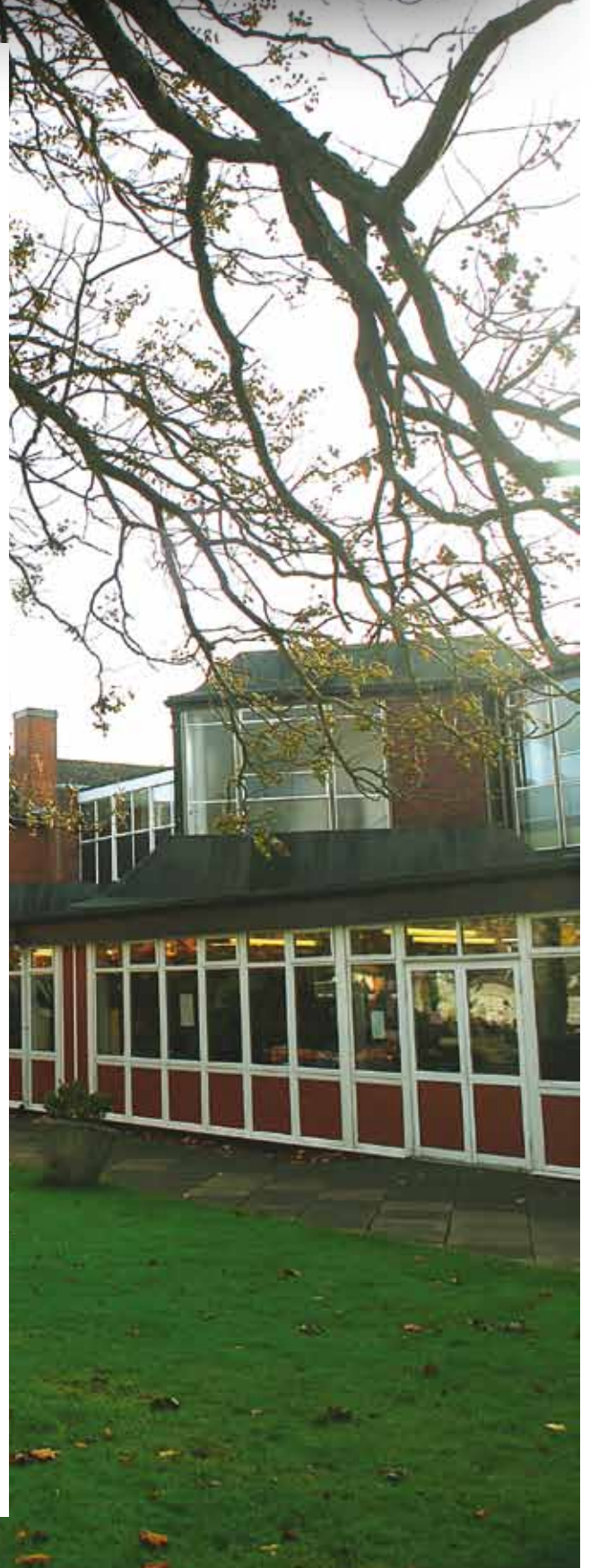
When I first walked into the sports hall and I saw lots of people there I felt slightly overwhelmed. Then a Sixth Former told me I was in Invincible. Unfortunately nobody I knew was in my form but I'm sure I will make some new friends. My form tutor is Mr. Tismer. He is really nice and welcomes you warmly.

When it was time for break some of the Year 8s were playing tag-bulldog on the field and asked us Year 6s if we wanted to play. It was really fun because I did really well in it. When break time finished, Invincible went into a room where we were split into four groups. We had a tray, full of straws, 3 pairs of scissors and a roll of sticky tape. Which ever group built the highest tower had to put a tennis ball on top and see if it was stable enough to hold it. It was really challenging but our team did really well.

When it was lunch we met up with some of our friends to eat. Then I went out onto the field and made some new friends, they are called: Max, Ed, Ethan and Hayden. When we were walking back to where we were told to go I thought we might be late but luckily we weren't.

We went to an assembly outside and sung a song which was in Latin. Then there were a few speeches. As we got back we played a name remembering game. It was really fun. Invincible went back to the sports hall. Overall I had a really enjoyable fun day.

By Cameron Giesbers



Short Story Competition

WINNER

My First Day at MGS

Gas spluttered out of the car continuously until we reached our destination – MGS. I set foot on which was new ground and would hold my future. Everyone was soon led to the Sports Hall. Once inside a fresh smell tingled my nose whilst I was amongst many other new students feeling the same. Time soon passed and the presence of the Headmaster was acquired. He came in and did a memorable speech to the Year 7s before we were taken to our classroom by our new form tutor. I stepped inside and the floor creaked, the window snapped at me as well as an unbearable force that was pulling me in. Suddenly it was pitch black, all that was to be heard was the pulse of my heart beating, then tapping getting louder and louder and louder. It was coming from forwards, backwards, left and right. I didn't know what it was, why it was there and how come it was after me.

Dust got caught in my eyes. So I rubbed them harder and harder and harder until I realised I was daydreaming and that the tapping was the clock ticking. Luckily I was at the back of the classroom so I didn't get caught, or so I thought. It was lunchtime already and the bell had just rung for the end of play however the school was so big I didn't know the way back for the classroom. After adventuring through every room, there was no sign of hope. I asked every teacher I saw, but it was just delaying the process. I then just sat and waited although there was a slight faded hint of sound from the distance, as I approached nearer the singing was of an old maidstonian, then it stopped, now I was stuck with an awful task of finding them. I carried on walking and found Finley, so I snuck in at the back of the queue. The register was read out and there was my name. The teacher was even surprised to see me, all in all it was my favourite day at MGS, so far.

Tom Marchant

On March 11th 2010, students aged 11-14 from over 700 schools produced and published a news report for the BBC. 25,000 young journalists joined BBC news, including 180 Year 7's from Maidstone Grammar School, and together they took part in a huge interactive news podcast.

BBC School Report starts in the classroom, where a teacher from each form would talk the students through the codes and conventions of a good news story. There were six lesson plans in total, ranging from 'Finding the News' to 'Broadcasting the News'. There were also several videos to watch and lots of resources and ideas on the BBC school report website. One video included a short brief from BBC news reader Huw Edwards wishing the pupils luck in their upcoming project.

Once the lessons were over, the Year 7's began discussing and planning ideas for stories they wanted to tell. The year was separated into several groups and each were assigned jobs to do. Groups included researchers, reporters, news readers, camera assistants and editing assistants; and if the students found their task difficult, they were supported by a team of media prefects.

The researchers were a very important part of the School Report, because without them, there would have been no news to tell. These students spent the first day of the project searching through several newspapers and various websites to find news stories which would appeal to a large audience. After a selection of interesting news stories were found, the pupils came together as a group and decided which stories would be included in the final broadcast.

The Year 7's had a lot of preparation to do before the final news broadcast. After deciding which news stories they wanted to report on, the pupils had to write the articles, and go on location to interview people of importance in advance.

Once the researchers had finished compiling their news stories, they then were given the task to write the news report. This included supplying the article and writing the script which the newsreaders would read from during the final presentation. In turn, these students were able to experience real world media issues by having to complete this task by a strict deadline. If this deadline was not

met, the whole process would have been slowed down. In the afternoon of the first day, every group was brought together to find out which news report each group will be assigned.

One group was sent to Priestfield stadium on a Gillingham Football Club report. The group got the chance to interview vice-captain Danny Jackman, and attend the Gillingham FC press-conference presented by manager Mark Stimson.

Other news stories the Year 7's decided to report on included Kent's Anti-Bullying Conference, where three students were able to attend the Conference and interview Becki Avery and Kate Winspear, the organisers of this event.

The Haiti Earthquake was the most recent news event during the making of this School Report, so one group thought it would be a good idea to send a news reporter to the country and report on the destruction. However, they only had two days to complete this report and a very low budget, so they decided to film the report at the rubble near the back entrance to the school to make it look as though they are filming at a rundown area of Haiti. Once each report was filmed, the Media Prefects and their Year 7 assistants spent a while in the editing suites constructing each one to make them look professional. Opening and closing animations were supplied by the BBC so the reports seemed as though they were official BBC news stories.

The two newsreaders, Jordan and George, were chosen to present the news on the day. One of the most important tasks for the newsreaders was to rehearse and practice their presentation several times over. For the duration of this project, the boys spent time with Mr Seymour and Miss Kennedy to perfect their script.

Finally, in the afternoon of Friday 5th March, the Year 7's were ready to present their BBC News School Report. Every student in Year 7 gathered in the big hall to watch the newsreaders present the report the whole year helped to create. Everything went according to plan once the camera started recording. Jordan and George were faultless and each story chosen were interesting enough to entertain the audience.

Kieran Sullivan



The final presentation and each report were uploaded to the BBC and MGS website, and can be found at

http://www.mgs.kent.sch.uk/mg/events/bbc_school_report



MGS WARTIME HISTORY



The war years saw Maidstone Grammar School adapt to the challenge of the Second World War and its unprecedented effects upon school life. This analysis begins at the start of the threat to the Home Front, the Battle of Britain 1940, and continues all the way through to the war's end in Europe in July 1945.

The significant impact on school life during the war years were not truly felt until the beginning of the Battle of Britain of 1940 as this was the first real threat to home life in Britain, and, as it lies on the south-east coast, Kent especially. Understandably, the threat of a possible German invasion had cast an extremely gloomy pallor upon the school as all windows were fitted with adhesive net to prevent glass flying,

blast walls were put up in every free corner of the school and so it was more like a prison than a school. Trips to the shelter became a daily experience for pupils in 1940, with teachers acting more like waiters at mealtimes. The war had an impact upon uniform too - tin hats became part and parcel of the uniform, with gas masks also becoming more common. The bombing raids inevitably led to dwindling school attendance which did nothing to help the already depressing atmosphere around the school. For those who remained however, school life would be very different than anything they had experienced previously. Clubs and societies were "unable to function owing to the necessity of scuttling home before the next 'alert' signal sounds" to quote the December 1940 edition of this magazine.

“
...it was more
like a prison
than a school.”

From reading the first paragraph, the reader could be forgiven for thinking that the feeling of this period is one of doom and gloom. However, the war experiences described insofar are of before 1941. From further exploration of the archives, a jovial mood returned to the school quickly, as soon as March 1941. The air force of the Third Reich had been defeated and the Blitz beaten. Work was permitted to be undertaken above land until there was immediate danger from bombs and the whole school rallied together in the Youth Club set up at this time, fully aware of the training needed to play their part in a post-war society. Interruptions to the school life had not been eradicated however, as parts of the teaching staff left to join the services. Pupils filled the jobs of those who had already left for combat, most notably the hop pickers, but this did little to dampen the growing patriotic feeling felt in the school and country. Indeed by December 1941, the Maidstonian shows that war was becoming a distant “sombre background” to their activities as it had hardly touched their lives. The reason was that more clubs and societies had been created, air-raid shelters were hardly used and the school was in regular full attendance, facts that demonstrated the hopeful optimism that had slowly enveloped the country.

Towards the mid-point of the war 1942-3, attention in the school focused on training the students and preparing them for potential armed combat with increased participation in the CCF. Those who were already NCOs were encouraged to take commissions in the cadet corps so that they could perform useful service until they had to join the services. The middle of the war saw a gritted response from the school, determined amidst a pallor of patriotism, in aiding in the war effort through whatever means possi-

ble. This had the effect of unifying the school - in fact the entire war period was marked by the appearance of a strong ability to band together.

1944 was tempered by two significant events in the schools experience of war: the creation of a Junior Dramatic Society and the establishment of a Young Farmer’s club. Their sense of responsibility was so much so that according to the July 1944 copy of the Maidstonian, ‘the Young Farmer’s Club has already a nucleus of keen and hard working pioneers, who are determined that the chief school of the county town shall have a Club worthy of Kent’. Given that by this time the Third Reich were in definite retreat, the visits to the air shelters were but a mere memory. Routine had started to become established once more, as that summer ‘there was, fortunately, no alteration in the time-table of public examinations.’

The school throughout the war did remarkably retain a sense of humour - December 1944 having apparently been blighted by ‘the sudden appearance, and equally sudden disappearance of the “doodle-bug”’. Beginnings of a return to normality started to become ever more conceivable with the notion that 1945 would see a return of the “Occasional”, the School literary and artistic magazine, which has not been seen during the war because of the paper shortage’.

“This term, during which the war in Europe has at last ended, has seen little change in the School.” According to all accounts of the summer term in July 1945, the only major change that had occurred was the fact that the students could now look through the windows ‘to the detriment of lessons in those rooms which face the cricket pitches’. This apparent anti-climax was confirmed by the first Peace-Time school year, the only change being an intensification of existing School activities.

The School had survived the war intact and unified, and was striding into a new era with a renewed sense of duty for a Britain exhausted by six long years of bitter war.

Lloyd Riley and Owain Roberts

Trips

WORLD CHALLENGE

Two years of hard saving and back breaking jobs were over and the long awaited expedition to Zambia and Botswana loomed as our group of 21 gathered in the School Sports hall the day before our flight. Last minute checks to our luggage, a game of catch the sock and the establishment of rules such as 'don't get antsy' saw the end to our last full day in England and everyone but me settled down to sleep on their new equipment, as I had underestimated how cold and hard the sports hall floor actually was. We woke up early for our coach trip to Heathrow and our 12 hour flight to Johannesburg.

We arrived at Johannesburg to be met by a mini bus, it was much like one of the school ones yet claimed to hold twice the capacity - welcome to Africa! The poverty and corruption of Johannesburg became all too clear when we were stopped by police claiming that there were problems with the mini bus' trailer but would look away if we bribed them with an extortionate amount of money, we were all now scared that our long awaited trip was about to be cut abruptly short by corrupt police. However, after a long wait, a falling out involving the police and Joshua, (our driver), and numerous calls to the boss of the mini bus by a now distraught Joshua we were all relieved to finally be let go and see the back of South Africa.

A couple of days later after settling in to 'Mokolodi' our new campsite and home for the next week we soon set upon our project phase at 'Childline Botswana' a place that cares for disadvantaged children. This was definitely the

most rewarding part of the expedition for me; as we succeeded in creating a sandpit, a shelter and the decorating of the counselling room. Over the week we really got to know the children and became like their parents for the week. At the end of the week Miss Tomes joined the group; boosting everyone's spirits with her ability to make people laugh.

After Ms Tomes' arrival, we left for the Kalahari Desert on the back of a lorry which we crammed both ourselves and our backpacks into - meaning a very long, uncomfortable journey. By the time we arrived we were covered from head to toe in dust, had numb backsides and were very stiff but all in high spirits. We were warmly welcomed by three short and lively Bushmen who were to teach us how they lived and survived in the Kalahari. They showed us how to build huts and shouted the names of various plants and bushes with their uses at us expecting us to remember names such as "Silver Silky Bushmen Grass". We thoroughly enjoyed our stay with the Bushmen, finishing it with a bow and arrow, a spear competition and bushman challenge.

Our main trek in the Batoka gorge lasted 4 days with treks up to 8 hours long. All the food and equipment we needed was split between the team and carried in our backpacks. However, this part of the expedition was plagued with illness - causing me to sing 'another one bites the dust' when another person fell ill. Most definitely the worst person to fall ill was Henry, (our gentle giant, and the last person we expected to fall ill!).



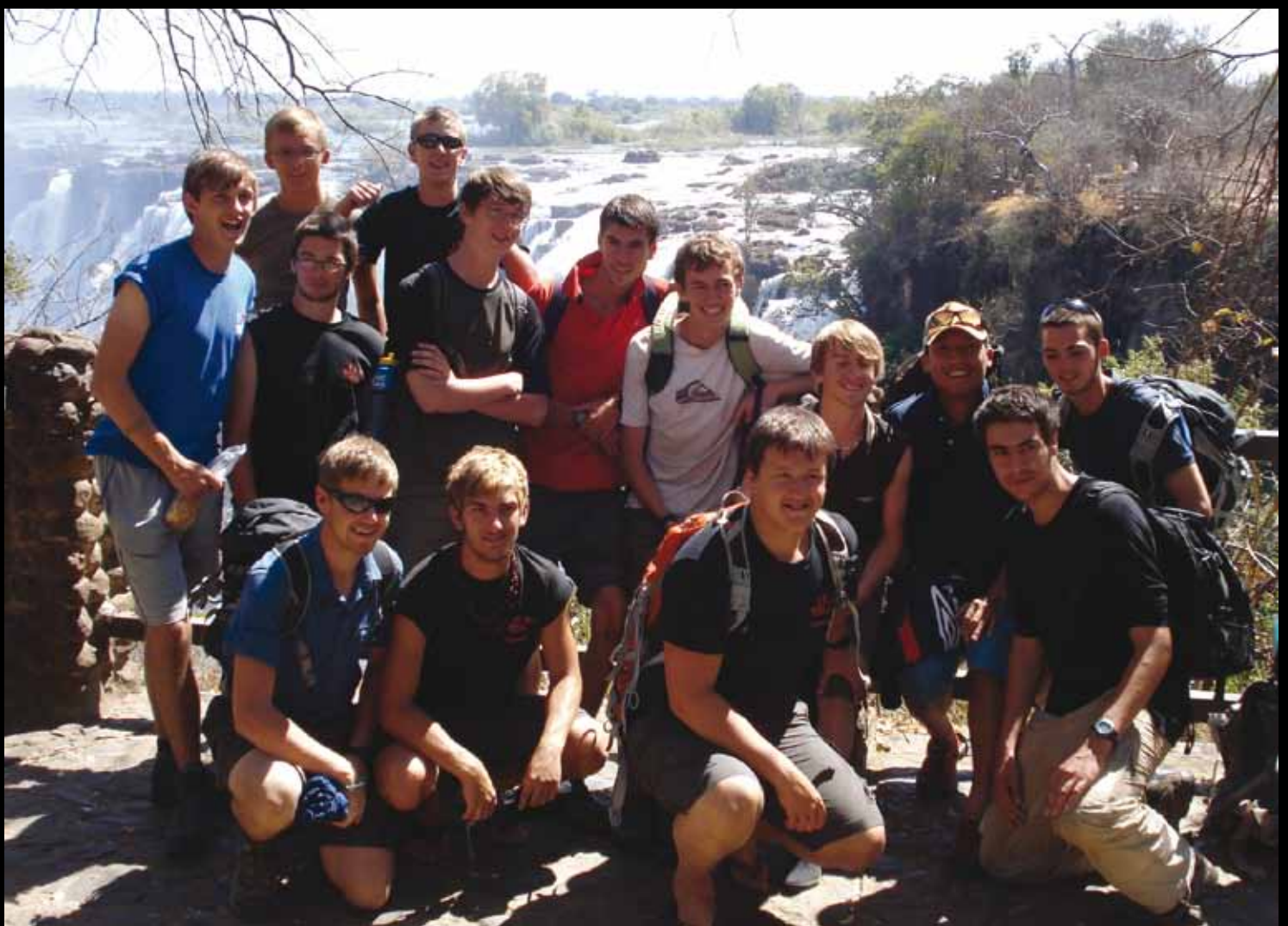
In the rest and relaxation phase of the expedition we all enjoyed exciting new experiences. This included a number of safaris all exploring the African landscape in different ways; on trucks, boats and by foot. The wildlife and scenery was incredible with a variety of wildlife like zebra, giraffes and elephants making frequent appearances – we even saw some lions! Other activities included elephant interaction - where we had the opportunity to feed the elephants. Some of us were able to have breakfast on Livingstone Island – on the edge of Niagara Falls! Unfortunately, I wasn't lucky enough to partake in this activity due to the presence of two wild bull elephants on the island which had to be scared away by shooting at them. Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the trip for me was a helicopter ride over the Victoria Falls - providing us with a spectacular view of Livingstone and the falls themselves. Only a lucky few were able to take part in this as it cost \$130 for just 15 minutes in the helicopter, but it easy for me to say that this was money well spent. It was definitely one of the best things that I have ever done in my life and it will stay with me forever.

I will end by encouraging those of you out there to put yourself forward and take part in this trip. It really is a once in a life time experience and will, like me, give you memories that you will never forget.




Alex Wiseman





Trips | PARIS





On Monday we had to be at school at 4.30 in the morning. Nearly everybody was on time so we left about 4.45. When we got to the terminal we had enough time to go in and have a quick look around the shops, well, WH Smith. When we got on the train we had our own carriage which was lucky for any other travellers. In about 40 minutes we were in France. We had a few stops along the way before arriving in Paris for the cruise along the Seine. After, we went to the Eiffel tower which was excellent and nearly everyone went to the top. Next we had a traffic filled 2 hour journey to the centre. We got our rooms and settled in before going to dinner.

On Tuesday we went to the Sacré Coeur which had a lot of steps and you had to be quiet inside. It was busy and hot so we looked around quickly and went off to the restaurant. We had three French courses and I think I'm safe in saying that everybody enjoyed it; we had a chance to look around the square outside where there were a lot of people painting. Most of them were good. We went back to the coach and drove to the museum which was very interesting but we didn't have long there as we were going swimming in the afternoon which was also very fun.

On Wednesday we had to get up early to travel to Futuroscope, we stopped at Vouuray wine cellars which was very interesting, there are 13 kilometres of underground tunnels into the cliffs and it was very cold when we went down which was welcome as the coaches air conditioning was broken. After we got to taste the wine and after telling us they had millions of bottles I feel they could have been more generous with the two teaspoons of wine they gave us. It would have made the Chateau we went to next much more exciting. The Chateau was really good, we had a group photo in front of it and then we had free time to look around, it was very hot and there were ice creams for sale so naturally a lot of people went there first. When we got back to the coach a couple of hours later it had broken down

so we had another wait in the shade until it was fixed.

Everyone was really excited about Thursday, because we all knew that Futuroscope was going to be the highlight of the trip. The hotel was amazing, and I think everyone woke up feeling good and ready for the day. As usual, we got ready and had breakfast and then we were briefed on the park. It isn't your usual theme park with rides reaching crazy heights and fast loops that make your head spin and eyes go blurry. Instead, Futuroscope is a park set in the future, and the majority of the rides being simulators. After arriving, everyone charged off in their groups to get on the big rides before the queues grew longer. The majority of us went to Dancing with robots, one of the few non-simulator rides. It's basically a mechanical hand that swirls you around to dance music. Everyone loved it, and my group went on it twice, but I heard about some other people who went on it more than that. There was an amazing 4D ride, which was hilarious because we were all screaming as the rides took twists and turns, but when you look to the side, you realise you're just sitting still. But the laser show in the evening was the best because it looked so real and 3D, when there were only lots of lasers shining over water, but it was simply incredible and something unique that we probably would never see again.

The last day was quiet, and we woke up early-ish to get back to Maidstone for six in the evening. The coach was finally cool as we managed to hire a new company, which was brilliant. We listened to music and messed around, and although it was sad to be off the trip, I think we were finally relieved we were in a place where we could understand everything.

Tobias Granham 9LN

Trips | HARVARD MUN



The challenge of the Harvard Model United Nations lies in the preparation. The conferences and committees themselves are daunting enough, but when faced with pages upon pages of research on heavy topics, it becomes all too easy to become lost in context.

So the preparation was tough, but it wasn't fun either. The good times begin when you realise that American girls really like an English accent. If a Californian girl named Jennifer asks you to say *Wingardium Leviosa* over and over again, you do it. Our fair School Captain in particular, being perhaps the best-spoken of our group, was a big hit with the ladies.

It was all of the following who attended the 2010 HMUN: Tiffany Keep, Nick 'the funny one' Harden, George Oram, Thomas Woods, Sophie Wilkinson, Catherine Blenkinsop, Ollie Turner, Adam McLaren, Oliver Arscott, Polly Bass and Myself. Also present were Blaise Matthews, Thomas Chesover and Alex Field, three HMUN veterans who were there to lend a guiding hand.

The committee structure is focused upon active debate. Throughout the conference, delegates representing all manner of nations argue and reason towards a resolution on a particular issue: Adam and I sat on the largest committee, Disarmament and International Security (DISEC). Our goal was to construct a resolution detailing fair and appropriate ways to intervene in conflicts that endanger human life. Working together, Adam and I also made speeches to the congregated delegates. With the aforementioned advantages of being English, after a few frightening practice runs we were confident in making our voices heard.

Around committee sessions, we visited other parts of Boston, including the Covent Garden-y Quincy Market, and Newbury Street, a long stretch of shops and restaurants through the heart of Boston. There were plenty of opportunities to shop and eat, and we took a tour of the prestigious

Harvard University. It snowed sideways on that day, and some of us lost toes to the bitter cold. Thomas and Adam had to huddle together to keep warm.

Onwards to New York; we took a train south through New England, the countryside of which is beautiful. We began to wind down from the highs and lows of the conferences, and around this time began to reflect on what we had achieved. For most if not all of us, the conferences and committee sessions had taught us to strike careful balances. Diplomacy is a fragile thing, and between being tactful and controversial, watchful and pragmatic, it's difficult to do the right thing all of the time. But at least we now had an idea of how rewarding it can be when all goes well. In the end, Adam, the Committee and I never reached a resolution. We were close, though, and it wasn't disheartening; So much of what we had done as a delegation had brought scope and efficiency to the proposed resolutions.

Upon arrival in New York, for those of us that had never been before we were awestruck: New York is truly the busiest city I have experienced. We visited Grand Central Station, had dinner at the Hard Rock Café, and browsed Macy's, including a ride up the rickety old wooden escalator and taking the lift to the 1 ½ floor.

If, in the coming years, you are given the opportunity to attend the Harvard Model United Nations, make every effort to go. It will teach you to accept every challenge, speak articulately in front of enormous numbers of people, be tolerant and reflective, and to be charismatic, even if you thought you couldn't be.

If you need a second opinion, just ask Nick. Nick loved it, and he's extremely judgemental and slightly xenophobic.

Oliver Sanham

Interview with Mr Philpott

After 10 Years at MGS we speak to **Mr Philpott** about the development of Languages, and how they impact on everyday life

How long have you been at MGS now?

It will be 10 years by the end of this year.

What made you want to come to MGS?

I had always previously worked in non-selective schools or comprehensives and I had worked in some quite challenging and demanding schools. I was looking for a change of job and the post of head of modern-languages came up here when I was at Cornwallis; so I decided to do a sideways move from one school to the other.

Why are languages so important to you?

Languages were my strength at school and I went on to study it at university. I tried teaching, and I quite enjoyed doing it. I believe that languages are an important part of a broad and balanced education for children. I think languages help you to communicate, travel and learn about other cultures. Learning languages is an essential part of a broad and balanced education.

If there was one language everyone would learn, what would it be?

I think by lots of different measures languages are important. Spanish is a European and World Language, and Chinese would be very useful to study. France is our nearest neighbour. Germany is a powerful country



in Europe, and German is the most widely spoken language in the European Union. So, there are lots of different languages and lots of reasons for teaching languages and I think diversity of the languages that we offer at this school is a very positive thing. We offer six different languages at MGS.

What do you like so much about being a teacher?

I find it's an interesting job. I talk to friend's families and they all come back and say they've had a boring day at work, but I can always say it's an enjoyable day, or it's a challenging day. But I can never go home and say I've been bored. To interact with children and colleagues you have to be on your toes; you have to be active and lively. It's a stimulating environment to work in! I would recommend it to people to consider as a career. When the children were young I was always available to look after the children, so that's an advantage as well.

“... languages help you to communicate, travel and learn about other cultures”

Are there any extra languages or developments that you would see as beneficiary to MGS?

Well the most recent development was in community languages. We now teach Urdu, Bengali, Hindi and Gujarati in evening and after school classes as part of our community languages programme. We now have 20 different evening classes teaching different languages which I think is the number of languages that we want long term

As head of Invincible house, how have you found the introduction of the House System?

It's been a positive step. It has been nice to have the children cheering on their house rather than their own class. I think we have had some very good House Captains over the three years, and that makes a difference. I think we have had a good prefect team that have helped with assemblies, supervision and sports. I think it could be developed a bit more; we could have more house competitions, have more assemblies and have a slightly higher profile within the school in the long-term.

Obviously you have a number of roles in school....you're not only a teacher, you are an assistant head and also the director of the language college....What would you say is your favourite role within school?

What I would say about MGS is that all the Senior Managers do teach. I've got to the

position I am in because I am a teacher and I think that it is valuable that the Senior Managers have a teaching commitment. I teach a half-timetable and even Dr. Argent has a regular teaching commitment. I think that makes us visible to the children and gives us credibility among staff. It gives us a bit more credibility and it shows the school that we are actively involved as teachers. I enjoy teaching and all the roles I have in school. For instance, I do all of the teacher training of GTP and PGCE trainees. I have a lot of different roles in school but at the end of the day it is teaching that has got me where I am, and I probably do prefer being a teacher. I do like getting the children to enjoy languages. I'm pleased when I see my classes wanting to continue from KS3 to KS4 or from KS4 to KS5 - it makes me feel that I have done a decent job.

Interview by Adam McLaren and Oliver Sanham.

Things you didn't know about Mr. Philpott

He is fluent in Spanish and French, and competent in Russian

He has been part of the promotion of non curricular languages, such as Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati, Polish and Mandarin.

Interview with the Adult Learners



What subjects are you all taking here?

Isobel- We're all doing French A-Level
Hannah – last year we did French AS

Why do you think it's important to keep learning into adulthood?

Isobel – Well, I don't think you ever stop learning in life; it's so important to carry on. It's brain training, isn't it? We're a lot older than you are, and we need to keep our faculties.

Jacki – Use it or lose it is the phrase.

Would you say it's easier to learn than when you were younger?

Isobel – It's much easier when you're younger – please take that advice. If you're going for degrees, go for them.

Jacki – You don't have families to worry about. You don't have to do the washing, shopping, cooking, ironing etc. You can concentrate purely on your studies.

Hannah – but if you have the time all the time, we've done it, well some of us working as well. But it has opened our horizons and given us this chance to enjoy a holiday when you go to France or a country that speaks the French language.

Why did you choose to study French specifically?

Isobel – I've been learning French for over 40 years and I was getting nowhere, so I needed some real help and I came here because my daughter was choosing schools for her sixth form and I was very impressed by the language laboratory. For me,

when I heard Maidstone Grammar School was doing adult education, I signed up straight away.
Hannah –I had only been learning French for five years, taking my GCSE two years earlier and I am really thankful to Mr Philpott because he has given me the opportunity to carry on, without him agreeing to do this A level I would have lost the momentum and it is very difficult to find a place to learn French and it can cost a lot of money and time as well. So I think we are very, very lucky and I cannot thank Mr Philpott enough for the opportunity he has given me.

Have you started learning any other languages like Spanish or Italian?

Hannah – Well I started Spanish, but this was before French about 6 or so years ago but I didn't carry on, it's to do with the teacher actually, the teacher didn't make the subject easy whilst with Mr Philpott he is focused, he knows we what and he directs us to the right path.

What do you intend to do after you've got a French A level, do you hope to go to university or collage and start as an adult learner?

Jacki – we can't go back to full time collage but we are looking to take our studies further in one way or another. We have been checking out the net for courses, I will probably go for French literature as a part time degree.

Isobel- I'm thinking of something similar but I've since moved to France so I have a baptism of fire ahead of me. And I would like to continue and perhaps do something like a part time degree if I could

“we are very, very lucky and I cannot thank Mr Philpott enough for this opportunity...”

over there, but also being semi retired now I think I could apply vocabulary by doing some voluntary work.

Which part of the course do you most enjoy?

Isobel- for me, the bane of my life was? but now I feel as if I've nailed it so that's become the most enjoyable part of the course, the other bit I've loved is actually finding out how young people relate to learning French because we've been part of the class and that's been great. I mean talk about bridging the generation gap it's really helped me understand where all of you are coming from and we can talk on the same wave length.

Jacki- I just love languages as a whole because I had done some German, some Russian and some Spanish in the past but French has been the mainstay really.

So you don't want to take a bit of an adventure and go for something new like Chinese, Japanese or Portuguese?

Jacki- I would love to, or Urdu even I mean when I see all those squiggles on the wall I'm really annoyed that I cannot make head nor tale of it and I think somewhere there's got to be a key to that puzzle that's on the wall.

Do you think that there are a sufficient number of opportunities for adults to actually continue their education?

Hannah – no, especially not now.

Jacki- no it's the recession, Maidstone adult education has cut a lot of their classes.

So M.G.S has really saved you there?

Jacki- yes its been a lifeline.

Isobel – Which is a shame because if it means that the interaction between say us and the French is becoming less and less, that's a pity because I've



now found out that all over the world; people are people, they are lovely and it would be such a shame.

Jacki – But there's this initiative in primary schools they are getting children to learn younger and younger, but they are not continuing it and so it can just go to waste.

If anyone does have the opportunity like you did and are thinking of studying languages would you advise them to do that?

Jacki- Absolutely

Isobel – yes I definitely would, and I would certainly recommend MGS over and over again, I mean just the opportunity we've had with Mr Philpott, I was just tearing my hair out, I was never going to be able to speak French but he gave me confidence, and that confidence has grown.

Interviewees – (left to right)
Jacki Kilbourne, Isobel Crouch,
Hannah Alkass

Interviewers –
Adam McLaren, Alex Hunter,
Olly Sanham

Photography – Olly Sanham

Mrs Ghandi Profile



I am the communities language teacher for Gujarati and Hindi at MGS. These classes have now been running for over a year. I was born in India and have lived in Maidstone for the last 17 years. I have been running Indian language classes in Maidstone for more than two years in total, previously with the KCC. I believe that it is important for members of the Indian community to learn and improve on their language skills as this helps the younger generations to communicate with grandparents and may also be useful if they travel to India on holiday or family visits. We have the aim of getting students to GCSE level at least, and there are a few promising candidates that are already emerging. We also have one English student in the class. The classrooms at MGS are very well suited for the class with white boards and a classroom environment. We often split the class into reading/writing and then conversation. The eldest member of the class is 67, the youngest is 8 years old, so we need to be very flexible in how we manage the differing abilities of students. We use text books imported from India that start from the very basics, (alphabets and the Gujarati and Hindi scripts), working up to full sentences and short stories. We also try to draw upon instances of daily life in India when working on examples or for conversation topics in the hope of providing some cultural background in addition to the pure languages.

Gujarati is a regional language in India spoken in the Western state of Gujarat. However, there is a wide diaspora of Gujaratis that have immigrated to all parts of the world, from USA, Canada, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Continental Europe, as well as the UK, so it is arguably a global language. Hindi is the national language of India, alongside English, and is the most commonly spoken language in India. It is also the main language for the Bollywood film industry, which has also become a global phenomenon in recent years.

It is probably worth mentioning that in addition to this global spread of Indian popular cultural, the more recent economic successes of India also mean that in the future, communication with India and Indians will become increasingly important for all nations. I hope these language classes can offer an introduction to this.

Finally, I am very grateful to Mr Philpott for his commitment and support in introducing these classes to MGS.

These classes are free for all students, young and old, Indian or non-Indian and I would strongly recommend that everyone should consider trying the classes out to see if they find it useful and enjoyable.

Interview with

Dr Usmani

Urdu Community Languages Tutor

When did you start teaching here?

Three years ago.

How many students have attended in this time?

When we started there were about 15-20, but now you typically get 10 per class.

Have many students managed to get qualifications?

It depends on which year they are in at school. Nowadays our students are below the age of GCSE, but previously we had students take GCSEs and get good grades.

What materials do you use to teach?

Well, we use textbooks, as well as writing books, (in which the students have to copy what is already written). We also use the whiteboard, and sometimes we speak the language.

How do classes typically operate?

Well, we have a group learning the basics of letters and words, and then a more advanced group learning about how Urdu is spoken in other countries. The third group is currently learning material for GCSE.

Why do you think community language classes are important?

They are very important because they enable the children to communicate with their parents, grandparents, and anyone they meet when they return to their countries – it basically makes it a lot easier for them to express themselves. The world is becoming a global village – and community languages are a big part of this concept.

So, how important do you think Urdu is as a world language?

I would say Urdu is, (after English), the main language spoken across the globe. It is the main language of the Indian subcontinent. People from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka use Urdu as a common language they can communicate with.

Do you think as India becomes more influential in the next century, Urdu will become more important?

I think so, yes. There is a difference between Indian Urdu and Pakistani Urdu. The spoken language is the same, but the written forms are different.

In a general sense then, how do you see the future of teaching community languages?

I think community languages will become more important in the future; for business, for tourism, and for many other things as the world develops.

So what would you say to anyone considering starting a community language class?

I would definitely recommend it!

Q&A Mrs Arbizu- Powell



Q: When were you happiest?

A: Well one of my happiest moments was last year, my wedding.

Q: What is your greatest fear?

A: Spiders.

Q: What is the earliest thing you remember?

A: I don't remember. Oh, yes! I remember being at my grandparents' house, I was really little, about 4 or 5. I think I was on a bicycle. Not a bicycle, but a bicycle with three wheels. A tricycle, yes.

Q: What is the trait you most deplore in others?

A: I hate lies and dishonesty.

Q: What was your most embarrassing moment?

A: I fall over all the time, I'm very clumsy. A few years ago, I fell over in front of my Year 12 class. They all laughed, and they didn't help me at all! Another moment would be my painful feet in Italy. They have always been sausage feet.

Q: What is your most treasured possession?

A: I don't have any. I don't have special things. My wedding ring for example?

Q: Where would you most like to live?

A: Spain or Australia.

Q: What would your super power be?

A: To read the minds of people.

Q: What makes you unhappy?

A: I am happy most of the time. Injustice, war, how society is.

Q: What is your most unappealing habit?

A: It is horrible, but I bite the skin on my fingers.

Q: What is your favourite book?

A: I don't have favourite books, but a very good one I read was a Spanish one called 'La Catedral del Mar'.

Q: What would be your fancy dress costume of choice?

A: I would like to dress as they did in medieval times, in one of those big ladies' dresses.

Q: What is your guiltiest pleasure?

A: I love chocolate biscuits! Also, red wine.

Q: Who would you like to say sorry to, and why?

A: I'm a very nice person, I don't have to be sorry to anyone.

Q: What or who is the greatest love of your life?

A: Well, I have to say my Husband? I will say my family too, can I say that?

Q: Which words or phrases do you most over-use?

A: Venga, vale, 'It's enough!'

Q: What has been your biggest disappointment?

A: That's difficult. (Pauses for a long time). Pass.

Q: If you could edit your past, what would you change?

A: No.

Q: Tell us a secret, something that people don't know?

A: I used to play the piano, and the guitar.

'I FALL OVER ALL THE TIME, I'M VERY CLUMSY'

Q&A Mr Highway



Q: When were you happiest?

A: At the birth of my children

Q: What is your greatest fear?

A: Not seeing my children grow up.

Q: What is your earliest memory?

A: Dropping a pick axe on my toe at 3 years old.

Q: Which living person do you most admire and why?

A: Joe Simpson for sheer determination to survive.

Q: What is the trait you most deplore in others?

A: Bullying.

Q: What was your most embarrassing moment?

A: Too many to mention.

Q: What is your most treasured possession?

A: My family.

Q: Where would you most like to live?

A: Near the Mediterranean coast.

Q: What would your super power be?

A: Invisibility.

Q: What makes you unhappy?

A: The Gills losing.

Q: What is your most unappealing habit?

A: Shouting at football referees.

Q: What is your favourite book?

A: Lord Of the Rings.

Q: What is your guiltiest pleasure?

A: Chocolate.

Q: What would be your fancy dress costume of choice?

A: James Bond.

Q: What or who is the greatest love of your life?

A: My wife of course!

Q: Which words or phrases do you most over-use?

A: Ref: 13S "Shutup Harry!"

Q: What has been your biggest regret?

A: My Tattoo

Q: If you could edit your past what would you change?

A: I would have taken the YTS job at the borough surveyors office.

Q: What is the closest you've come to death?

A: I fell three stories off a ladder and landed chest down on a car.

Q: Who is your lookalike?

A: Daniel Craig.

Q: Tell us a secret.

A: When I was 15 years old, I used to clean Steve Bruce's windows. He's now the manager of Sunderland FC.

**'...I USED TO CLEAN
STEVE BRUCE'S
WINDOWS'**

Q&A Mrs Carter



Q: When were you happiest?

A: First 10 years of my partnership with my old man (before marriage and after).

Q: What is your greatest fear?

A: Suffering a nasty illness like dementia or parkinsons.

Q: What is your earliest memory?

A: I was sat underneath a table, smelling kippers in my grandparent's house.

Q: Which living person do you most admire and why?

A: Husband's mother for her stoicism.

Q: What is the trait you most deplore in others?

A: Manipulation and Deception.

Q: What was your most embarrassing moment?

A: Driving the car into the back of my garage.

Q: What is your most treasured possession?

A: My old man.

Q: Where would you most like to live?

A: In a city, probably London.

Q: What would you super power be?

A: Change people's behaviour with the flick of a finger and keep them frozen.

Q: What makes you unhappy?

A: Things that affect my family, who I care about. When I feel helpless.

Q: What is your favourite book?

A: John Donne's Love Poetry.

Q: What would be your fancy dress costume of choice?

A: Hindu Outfit – Sari probably.

Q: What is your guiltiest pleasure?

A: Eating chocolates.

Q: Who would you like to say sorry to, and why?

A: My daughter for serving her frozen fish fingers as a child. I've put her off for life.

Q: What or who is the greatest love of your life?

A: My old man.

Q: Which words or phrases do you most over-use?

A: You'll have to tell me. You are never aware of those sorts of things.

Q: What has been your biggest regret?

A: I would have liked to have studied neuroscience at university.

Q: What is the closest you've come to death?

A: I've seen people die. The closest I have is when I had Scarlett fever.

Q: Tell us a secret.

A: I met someone from the Clash and told him I'd never heard of him.

**'I MET SOMEONE
FROM THE CLASH
AND TOLD HIM I'D
NEVER HEARD OF
HIM'**

Q&A Dr Everett



Q: When were you happiest?

A: July 4th 1981. You'll have to guess why.

Q: What is your greatest fear?

A: Being becalmed with the food running out.

Q: What is the earliest thing you remember?

A: Christmas 1962 and January 1963 – a magical time for a young child.

Q: Who do you most admire and why?

A: Nelson Mandela. He is an example of what can be achieved, not by one man but one charismatic character.

Q: What is the trait you most deplore in others?

A: Arrogance.

Q: What was your most embarrassing moment?

A: Every time I forget somebody's name in the classroom, I get embarrassed a lot.

Q: What is your most treasured possession?

A: My model of Quoth the Raven.

Q: Where would you most like to live?

A: Anywhere within 500 yards of the sea.

Q: What would your super power be?

A: Flying, or time travel if I'm allowed that.

Q: What makes you unhappy?

A: Not being able to fly.

Q: What is your most unappealing habit?

A: You'll have to tell me.

Q: What is your favourite book?

A: Soul Music by Terry Pratchett, in which Quoth the Raven first appears as ridekick to the Death of Rats.

Q: What would be your fancy dress costume of choice?

A: One of the disclaimed wizards, probably Rincewind.

Q: What is your guiltiest pleasure?

A: A nice drop of really good cider.

Q: Who would you like to say sorry to, and why?

A: My sister. I'm sorry I never got to know you.

Q: What or who is the greatest love of your life?

A: See question one and work it out for yourself.

Q: Which words or phrases do you most over-use?

A: Open your textbooks to page....

Q: What has been your biggest disappointment?

A: Falling ill, the night before a sailing trip to Madeira and not being able to go.

Q: if you could edit your past, what would you change?

A: Nothing. What's done is done. Move on.

Q: What is the closest you've come to death?

A: There have been so many occasions. Thankfully we never know which one is the closest.

Q: Tell us a secret, something that people don't know?

A: I've been married for 30 years this year.

**'I GET EMBARRASSED
EVERY TIME I
FORGET SOMEBODY'S
NAME...'**

Leaving Staff

Mr J. C Meigh (MGS 1976 – 2010)



It is an almost impossible task to sum up 34 years of a colleague's career in a few short lines – especially when I am a relative newcomer having only been here for seventeen years.

I think I would start by saying that Mr Meigh was a real pioneer and never afraid of a challenge. Who after all would stand in front of a packed Hall and sing the Norwegian national anthem unaccompanied on Charities' Day? The pioneer bit is of course his contribution to computing in the school. A couple of years ago Mr Meigh, assisted by his prefect team, put on a fascinating exhibition of 30 years of computer teaching at MGS. Mr Meigh of course was in there from the start at a time when no schools taught computing. From punch cards being taken down nightly to Kent County Council and put on their mainframe, through Amstrad and BBC Masters to Macs and now the PC network we have today, Mr Meigh has been involved in and responsible for the development of computing in the school over all those years. Until the recent development of a Network Manager, Mr Meigh also managed the network as well as the ICT Department. His department has grown from just himself to four full-time teachers. However, he has responded to all sorts of other challenges that the Senior Management Team has thrown at him in terms of compulsory computing for all in KS3, GCSE half course, applied A Level ICT, now applied GCSE ICT, a Computing GCSE and functional skills for all at KS4. Although Mr Meigh leaves Mr Young a significant range of new courses to finally develop next year the ground has been well laid. However, Mr Meigh knows that all is in safe hands – after all he trained Mr Young as an NQT 17 years ago and has had him working alongside him for 15 of the last 17 years. His legacy is therefore secure.

However, Mr Meigh's first love in ICT would be A Level Computing and I certainly am only too aware of how

much expertise in developing the very brightest of our Computing students we are losing when he retires. Students have always been his first concern. His meticulous preparation of them for exams, huge numbers of hours devoted to checking coursework and showing them how to improve – these are the hallmarks of a man who is first and foremost a teacher and a good one.

Many however might be surprised to realise that he was first appointed in 1976 to teach Economics, the subject he read at Queens' College Cambridge, and Mathematics, shortly afterwards becoming Head of Economics. It was not until the 1980s when his interest in computing was growing that the then Headmaster, Dr Pettit, told Mr Meigh that he had to choose whether he was going to develop computing or stick with economics. Mr Meigh as we know chose computing and went off to the University of Kent on sabbatical to obtain his MSc in computing before embarking on a whole new side of his career. However, in typical fashion in the last few years when I have needed some additional economics teaching he has returned to the fold and taught A Level without hesitation.

Chris has also played a significant part in the life of the school representing and supporting his colleagues as a union rep – often a thankless task. But he brought to this his thoroughness and eye for detail which has helped many colleagues whilst he brought matters to the attention of the Senior Management Team in a gentlemanly but determined fashion. As such he has also played a key role in the Staff Consultation Team, and on the Health and Safety Committee.

Governing all Mr Meigh's actions is his unflinching Christian faith which he has been willing to put at the disposal of students leading the Christian Union for many years. He has also run the Bridge Club. Less well known is his passion for heavy rock music which has led to his support and encouragement of many student rock bands and he was a regular supporter of Battle of the Bands nights and he will have been especially pleased to hear rock music played at his last Speech Day in July. He also maintains a wide contact with many of his former students whom he sees regularly. The value ex-students place on this contact was evident from the number who attended the 30th anniversary exhibition. There is no finer tribute that any teacher can have than that his former students see him as a friend who they chose to know.

With the retirement of Mr Meigh the school loses a scholar, a fine teacher and a true gentleman. Maidstone Grammar School is the better for his outstanding service and loyalty to this school. For this we thank

him from the bottom of our hearts and wish him a long and very happy retirement.

PGS

Mr Sparkes (MGS 1979 – 2010)



David Sparkes leaves a very big hole as he departs MGS. He served 31 years here, and in that time he fulfilled a large number of roles and faced a great number of changes and challenges, but in all the time I have known him he was always good-humoured, patient, polite, cheerful and full of interesting conversation.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of his character was his ability to understand the motives and points of view of others, staff and students alike. I remember numerous occasions when he had to deal with students who had broken rules, particularly when he was a Head of Year. He would issue sanctions and warnings as was required, but always with patience and faith that the miscreants would do better after being corrected. Students appreciated that he would look for the best in them, and he was much respected for this.

It is worth noting how the school has changed during his time with us. For instance, some students may be surprised to learn how much freedom the school used to have by way of punishments. One of Mr Sparkes's first form groups was a Year 11 group very much "in need of guidance." He and the Headmaster at the time arranged for them to have a class detention painting the student toilets in bright orange. A very useful and appropriate punishment, even if some parents of lower school students later phoned to ask why their sons' backsides had orange rings round them.

As a colleague, I was pleased that he came up for breaks in the Physics prep room in the later years. We always enjoyed his contributions to the banter that goes on there. As well as the usual science-related talk, he was able to instruct us in topics such as the advantages of sheep over lawn mowers, the nutritional values of our lunches (usually measured in roast-dinner-equivalents), real ales, theology and, of course,

his adventures in his beloved West Country. Discussions about religion are common amongst the Science staff, and it was always a pleasure to hear Mr Sparkes carefully explain why some people believe what they do and point out where we might be misunderstanding the views of others. We got to benefit from the same combination of patience, humour and kindness that generations of students at MGS have experienced and it is easy to see why he was so well liked and respected.

We will all miss Mr Sparkes, but we know how much he loves Devon and we wish him luck as he starts a new adventure there.

SPM

Mrs Lavender (MGS 1999 – 2010)



Penny arrived at MGS to take up a full time English post in January 1999. She had been working on maternity cover at Tonbridge Girls' Grammar, but once she sampled the delights of teaching the boys at MGS, there was no looking back.

Penny very quickly adjusted to the different methodologies and strategies required for teaching boys, using a firm, fair, balanced approach that was always tempered with good humour. Like all good teachers, and despite her diminutive stature, Penny was quite capable of using her acting skills and terrifying the students on the rare occasion it proved necessary.

Despite, or perhaps because of this ability, Penny was an inspiring classroom teacher, with a 'light touch.' Alongside English, Penny has taught Media Studies and Theory of Knowledge for the IB, eventually acquiring the grand title of Head of Theory of Knowledge, which she inherited from the equally grand retiring Deputy Head Tony Webb. Penny recalls the days when Theory of Knowledge was taught after school as a matter of course, and smiling caretakers provided tea and biscuits to all involved. Regrettably, this practice ceased long ago, even for those amongst us who have to teach the dreaded period 6.

One of Penny's particular qualities is her adaptability. In Laurence of Mar, Penny had an inspirational, yet also eccentric Head of Department. She recalls how Laurence would organise departmental social evenings at his house. Unlike most teachers' social events, these did not consist of the usual lively discussions on school life. The delicious food had to be eaten swiftly, so we could get down to the real business of the evening: the play reading. We were not able to choose our own roles, but cast in them by Laurence, and woe betide anyone who wished to leave before we had read all three acts of the play. On one very hot day when the English Department held a meeting at Laurence's house to plan for the most recent unnecessary change in the English curriculum, our Head of Department came to the door dressed in what can only be described as a blue and white striped night-shirt and slippers. Needless to say, Penny was not in the slightest taken aback and revelled in this original approach, which yielded excellent results.

Penny has regularly taken part in charity fundraising events for a number of worthy causes. One year she persuaded a number of female staff to take part in the Race for Life to raise money for cancer research. We eventually agreed and dutifully trained as the event approached. On the day itself we were very surprised to find that our leader, Penny, did not turn up to urge us on in our endeavours. Our surprise led to concern when we heard that she had been involved in a serious accident, when her horse took fright and kicked her head, resulting in a stay in hospital. We had to run reluctantly without Penny. Fortunately, Penny is made of stern stuff and we were delighted when she made a complete and speedy recovery.

Penny particularly appreciates the way that at MGS the teachers 'get to know the students as individuals and do their very best for each and every student, no matter what their ability.' This particular caring attitude led Penny to take on the role of SEN co-ordinator, helping students with special needs, such as Asperger's Syndrome, dyslexia and dyspraxia. She also organised a number of special G and T days. These were not, unfortunately, days when teachers sat back sipping gins and tonic while Year 7 students waited on them, but hugely successful days which were based around creative themes that challenged the most gifted and talented students in the school and involved students at all levels.

Throughout her 12 years at the school, Penny has had a close involvement with Drama, from her unforgettable performance in the school pantomime as principal boy Jack (of "Jack and the Beanstalk" fame), complete with very short shorts, fishnet tights and funky boots, to running a regular drama club for Year 7 and 8 boys. Despite this latter activity appearing to be part of a forcible relocation policy, shifting on a regular basis from the Small Hall to the Big Hall, to Room 60, Penny has always kept her cool over the relocations and avoided

succumbing to melodramatic fits of indignation displayed by others (such as myself). Her calm persistence in the face of such difficulties is a tribute to her dedication and commitment to putting the boys' needs first, particularly where Drama was concerned.

One of Penny's favourite early memories is of a Year 7 'Creative Project Day.' Themed around dragons from different cultures, this involved students working in groups to script a short play; to design and produce costumes, weaponry and scenery; and to write and rehearse musical scores for a performance for parents – all in one day. This was very challenging indeed – not least for the staff who took part in it. It was also both alarming and surreal to see the five sets of dragons: each colourful carapace supported by six to eight tiny students, queuing patiently outside the Hall with a minimum of jostling, waiting for their moment of glory in front of the eagerly expectant parents.

Penny has always taken great pleasure from her positive relationships with her tutor group. She has proved herself to be equally adept as a Year 10/11 form tutor and as tutor to the sixth form, which has been her role for the last six years. Penny thoroughly enjoys this role, managing with serene ease that difficult balancing act of maintaining a friendly but nevertheless disciplined approach with the students.

This is one of the things she will miss in her retirement. Penny says that one of her lasting impressions of MGS will be its 'sense of community' and the fact that she has made lasting friendships here. But above all she will miss the students and the ways they have made her laugh over the years – and they will most certainly miss her, as will we all.

EML

Mr P Robling (MGS 2003 – 2010)



Phillip Robling completed a long and distinguished career – including a stint at Oakwood Park Grammar School - when he retired at the end of the academic year. He joined MGS in 2003 being appointed as Head of Science. Seven eventful years have followed

Mr Estepa Silva (MGS 2003 – 2010)



but in some ways Mr Robling so quickly established himself as a key personality among the staff it seemed that he had been here much longer. Of course Mr Robling knew the school well before joining the staff not least because his son Jason was educated here. However, when he applied for the job of Head of Science when Mrs Renn left he was without doubt the outstanding candidate for the job. The rest is history. Mr Robling is first and foremost a strong classroom performer. I have watched him teach on many occasions and never failed to be impressed at how he can make concepts in Physics seem easy which were utterly indecipherable to me when I was taught them at school. However, I must confess that the first time I observed him I thought we had got someone that could teach Science in a foreign language - before realising it was just Mr Robling's Welsh accent! I have also always been impressed by the high expectations and strong work ethic he demanded of his students – not least on uniform. Mr Tismer will have no competition at all in the future in the staff competition to sign the most Appearance Cards. More seriously Mr Robling believed that standards and discipline were important and has been keen to uphold them: a sentiment that few of his colleagues would dissent from.

Beyond his own classroom he presided over and led the development of science in a number of different directions. We saw the numbers taking triple science at GCSE develop, numbers taking A Level Science, particularly in Biology and Physics, expand dramatically and results improve. Moreover Mr Robling's presence has often been felt behind the scenes. He was a staunch fighter for his department and colleagues, keen to acquire the necessary resources to improve teaching for students and to try where possible to lighten the load on colleagues. During his time in charge of science we have seen a large increase in the amount of practical work done to try to make teaching more relevant for students. In the last two years he has taken on the mantle of running the Growing Young Scientist Project, co-ordinating the activities of seven schools to encourage younger students to see science as fun and exciting with the hope that more will take science as a career in the future. One of his last acts for the school was to help secure £30,000 a year for the next two years from the Rochester Bridge Wardens Trust to sustain this programme.

In addition to his school work, as we saw at the Founders' Day Service in July, Mr Robling has a strong faith and he also has a major involvement in leading a local Christian church as well as being a devoted grandfather. These interests and many others, including examining for the IB, will keep him busy in retirement I have no doubt. For his years of leadership of the Science department and for his contribution to the life of the school we thank him most sincerely and wish both him and Mrs Robling a long and very happy retirement.

PGS

Antonio, as he was then known by students, first arrived in England in September 2003, bringing with him an enormous suitcase, some Spanish ham and a desire to work as hard as he could for a year, in order to teach the students at MGS and MGGS, where he was employed as a Foreign Language Assistant, some Spanish.

Almost immediately it was clear to everyone that here was a thoroughly dedicated and professional colleague; someone with a great capacity and enthusiasm for teaching Spanish. He was a great asset to the MFL department, and we were all very pleased when he asked if he could come back for more. Despite the best efforts of some rather boisterous Year 11's, Antonio wanted to come back, and stayed for a second year as FLA, during which he gained his QTS to enable him to teach in the UK full time.

Antonio's third and fourth years in the UK were spent working for a supply agency, where he toured some of the more unsavoury secondary schools in Kent, and also a one-year contract at a school near Maidstone.

This, however, did not put him off, and when a vacancy for a teacher of Spanish arose in 2007 at MGS, Antonio applied. Mr Smith, whose task on the day the candidates were interviewed was to observe their lessons and to then feed back to Mr Turrell on what he had seen declared, "I've just observed one of the best lessons I've ever seen" as he walked into the Headmaster's office. The rest of the interview process was a formality really and Antonio, the Spanish FLA from two years previously, had become Mr Estepa, teacher of Spanish, French, Italian, Latin and ICT coordinator for the MFL department.

No piece about Mr Estepa could possibly fail to mention his encyclopaedic knowledge and total commitment to the dancing, singing and researching of what, for the sake of argument, I will call flamenco. He has been the main man of the Tunbridge Wells Spanish Dance Society for a number of years and has

performed at MGS to raise money for the Parents' Association, once singing and clapping a flamenco version of the school song; Latin with an Andalusian accent. To my mind however, his most memorable performance came on a 6th form trip to Madrid in October 2008 when he danced with a flamenco dancer, who turned out to be Brazilian, accompanied by a couple of guitarists, who rather incredibly were Dutch, to the delight of all those assembled for their evening stroll and drink in the main central square in Madrid, the Plaza Mayor.

Early this year Mr Estepa informed us that he was returning to Spain and was applying to teach in the Escuela Oficial de Idiomas, the state-run language teaching schools which are present in all Spanish towns of a reasonable size. This would mean his having to negotiate the Byzantine admissions and examinations procedure, necessary to become a "funcionario" – an employee of the Spanish state. However, if anyone could achieve this, we felt that Mr Estepa could, and he duly has, being posted to San Roque, a small town close to Gibraltar where he is currently enjoying the sun and fiestas of southern Spain, no doubt asking himself how a one year placement as a Foreign Language Assistant in England became a seven year stint in Maidstone.

CLZ

Mr Willis (MGS 2005 – 2010)



Writing a valedictory can be tricky. It is hard to keep it from sounding like a submission to the Roman Catholic Church's 'Congregation for the Causes of the Saints' for the canonization of someone to Saint-hood or a eulogising newspaper obituary, neither of which Trevor would want!

It seems amazing to think that Trevor has been at MGS only five years. He has become so much "part of the furniture" that one could almost imagine him having been there when the school song was written, accompanying the newly composed words on

his euphonium. It seems that in his time here Trevor has done more than many teachers do in a lifetime of work. The breadth of his contribution to the school has been considerable. Here is what I am sure will be an incomplete list: creative, innovative, expert and passionate work in the RS and Philosophy departments; dedicated and professional leadership of the Theory of Knowledge (IB) and Critical Thinking departments; being a caring, effective and efficient form tutor and deputy curriculum manager for Year 7; being a school squad football coach; being a games teacher; membership of working parties to do with behaviour and assessment and a staff trainer in those areas; becoming staff PA representative; organising the Interhouse Football Competition Day; being a PGCE subject mentor for RS; becoming a PGCE Associate Tutor for Christchurch Canterbury; playing in the school band. This is what the school is losing and a preview of what Trevor's new school is gaining – a hard working and dedicated teacher, team player and community member.

I am sorry to be losing someone who has given so much to RS and Philosophy in the school and who has given so much support to me – goodness knows I have needed it and am not easy to work with!

I have two further positive observations about him. Firstly, despite its faults, from the beginning Trevor has always given the impression of how privileged he has felt to be a member of MGS. I only wish that all other colleagues, including myself, and all students, would feel and demonstrate the same thing. Secondly, over his time here Trevor has experienced tragedy and personal issues to deal with, and I am amazed at his resilience and how he has coped so well. I am certain this has partly been due to his strong Christian faith and his membership of the Salvation Army. He has never pushed this faith at people, "rammed it down people's throat" or worn it as some kind of badge. Rather he has been an example of what St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the Gospel, and sometimes use words." He has shown that religion is something to do or live, not just something to talk about.

Finally, being *Advocatus Diaboli*, I have a more negative point and some advice for Trevor. Do not be too willing to say, 'Yes,' when asked to do something. You have much to give over many years to come. Spread your contribution out a bit!

We thank you, Trevor. Very best wishes to you. Proverbs 3 verses 3 – 6.

BCS

Mr Morse (MGS 2005 – 2010)



Dafydd Morse joined Maidstone Grammar School in September 2005 after completing training at Canterbury Christ Church. I was given the task of mentoring Dafydd through his first year of teaching, and I have been proud to watch him develop in the role as a mathematics teacher throughout his time here.

With youthful energy and a very individual style, Dafydd certainly made an impact on his students. Classes soon became used to being greeted by 'Morning boys and girls', and Dafydd's 'concentration exercises', set as a punishment for students who were not listening, achieved notoriety. Dafydd particularly enjoyed teaching statistics at A level, a love that the rest of the department were keen to exploit whenever they could!

For his first Christmas at MGS, Dafydd was given some presents by a Year 10 class that included a sheep noise maker, the infamous 'I love Essex mug', two plastic swords and a pair of water wings. These presents became well known throughout the school, as they added interest to the general clutter on and around his desk – Dafydd's wife said she did not want them bringing home! Anyhow, after being presented with these gifts, Dafydd duly took the class out on a dance round the building, leading the way himself. He was sporting the aforementioned water wings, waving his swords and causing general chaos as he and the group knocked on everyone else's classroom windows. The sense of amusement for the students was only matched by the look of thunder on the face of the then Head of Mathematics, Wendy Balmer, when he brought the class back in!

Dafydd has played a full part in the extra-curricular life of the school too. Each year, he coached one of the school football teams, not even deterred by that incident (those present will know). Dafydd played an active part in the Christian Union and the Bridge Club and he will also be remembered for his obsession with High School Musical, Glee and other such trash. (Sorry Dafydd). Dafydd was regularly heard serenading the maths corridor with renditions of these songs,

and who could forget either his duet with Miss Spruce or his singing over the tannoy?

There will be many things we will miss about Dafydd. He was fun to work with, and he kept the department in good spirits; he could be a little crazy at times too (I still don't get the whole shorts in mid-winter thing). I personally will miss a good friend, and on behalf of MGS, I would like to express gratitude for the five years service he has given to MGS. Thank you. From the outset, Dafydd always said he would return to Wales to start a family and that time has now come. I leave the final word to a parent, whose sentiments written in a letter to Dafydd are mirrored by the feelings of many others. 'Mr Morse, we wish you and your family all the very best of luck in the future, although we are selfishly very sorry you are leaving.'

ADS

Mr Chantler (MGS 2006 - 2010)



Geoff Chantler has been a much valued and indispensable member of the Design & Technology department. He has proved to be very popular with staff and pupils alike. Geoff will be remembered for his wry sense of humour and his positive, smiling attitude in the face of adversity. We'll miss you, Geoff and wish you all the very best in your future career (or retirement).

JFW

Mrs Quarman (MGS 2006 – 2010)



Back in 2005, the History Department was struggling to find a quality, permanent member of staff to join its team. As the Head of Department, I was pulling out my remaining hair trying to support inexperienced, and what proved to be inadequate, agency staff. But in January 2006 Marie Quarman came for interview; we couldn't believe our luck and she has filled the void admirably ever since.

Marie brought with her over 30 years of teaching experience and a vast array of her personal classroom resources, but even more impressive was that she still had the energy, enthusiasm and exuberance one normally associates with newly qualified teachers. Marie has proven that she is willing to put herself out to try and get the best out of her students: she researched the new AS topics most assiduously (and achieved excellent results); she trained to become an OCR GCSE examiner to familiarize herself (and the department) the nuances of this exam board and the new syllabus – it is no coincidence or luck that her GCSE sets have always had healthy 'value added residuals,' indeed being some of the best in the school; she adapted to the new technology on offer as a teaching aid and has created numerous PowerPoint presentations which sit proudly in the curriculum area for the benefit of all History students and staff.

It is not only in the classroom that Marie has given sterling service, being a firm believer in giving the students the opportunity of 'education in the round', she has organized and led 6th form trips to the Battlefields of World War One, being an NST authorized tour guide. She has also been the producer of four very successful junior drama productions. Indeed, Marie has a clear passion for drama, being a prolific and successful writer, performer and producer in the amateur dramatic scene. She has been known to write a play for the students to read and perform to help cement and clarify a key topic e.g. why was it Stalin and not Trotsky who succeeded Lenin.

It is this zeal for her subject, and her 'Duracell-style' energy that will be sadly missed. Marie decided it was time to retire, but hers won't be a stereotypical, sedate retirement – indeed she has already been lured back to a job and from September will be standing in as maternity cover at MGGS, and typically is already preparing the new A level topics she will be delivering.

Marie has made a tremendous impact to MGS in general and the History department in particular during her 4½ years tenure. Her desire to serve her community and to do what's best for her students and colleagues, convictions underpinned by her religious devotion, mean I have so much to thank Marie for. Hopefully this tribute will have given the reader an insight into my, and the school's, gratitude for her ultra-professionalism. It certainly didn't take me long,

as a rabid Yorkist, to forgive Marie her Lancastrian roots, though I don't think I ever managed to convince her of my view that the 'Wars of the Roses' were one of those 'myths' created by the writers of history for their own ends.

Clearly, we all wish Marie well in her MGGS interlude, and then her very deserved but what we all know will be a very busy and varied retirement.

GMW

Mrs MacArthur (MGS 2007 – 2010)



When, as part of its Language College bid, MGS decided to undertake to teach a non European language as part of the curriculum, Mandarin was the language of choice. Unsurprisingly no one in the MFL department was able to step up and offer this language, so it fell to Mr Philpott to scout the market and see if a suitable appointment could be made.

Mrs MacArthur was appointed in 2007, and for three years she taught students at MGS how to speak, read, write and listen in Chinese – quite an achievement. The majority of her classes were in Key Stage 3 in which she hoped that the high standards she set herself would be reflected in the levels of application shown by her students. Anyone failing to meet these standards was left in no doubt as to where they stood.

The success of Chinese at MGS has been resounding, virtually all of which is due to Mrs MacArthur's skills and enthusiasm in the classroom.

We wish her well in her new post.

CLZ

Interview with a Transferee

Interviewee: Emily Williams
Conducted by: Alex Hunter



Why did you come to MGS?

I came to MGS because after not achieving my potential at my old school, I decided that I needed and wanted a change. MGS was the best school for the subjects that I wished to study at A level and I loved the atmosphere of the school.

Is it very different to your previous school?

The differences between both schools are vast. I much prefer studying at MGS because it has allowed me to feel both independent and supported at the same time. The teaching style here is much more interactive such as class debates which allows one to feel as if they're learning much more as opposed to just being told facts about a subject.

How have you got involved within Sixth Form life?

The variation of sports offered at MGS, especially for girls, allow everyone to get involved in something they wouldn't usually do – rugby is a personal favourite. I have also been able to help with organising Charities' Day and gain the title of Sports Captain which gives the opportunity of further involvement.

What do you most enjoy about life at MGS?

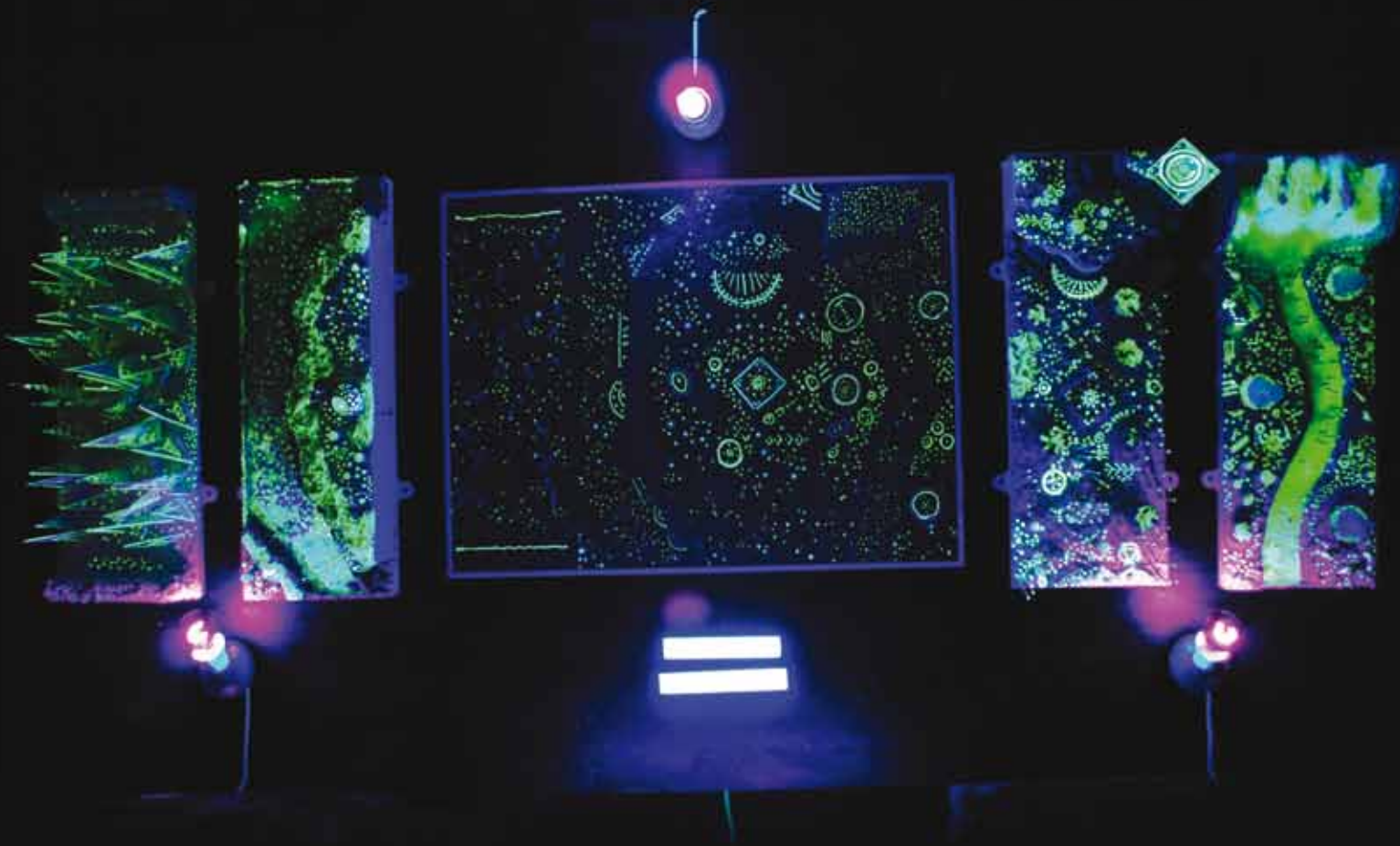
Life at MGS has provided a highly active social calendar and giving me the chance to interact with people who I usually wouldn't. I enjoy that the teachers treat us like adults to an extent but expect us to complete achievable tasks and I like having the reassurance that if help and support is needed, it's always there and the teachers do their best to accommodate time for you.

Would you recommend that other girls come to MGS?

I would recommend strongly that other girls would at least consider coming to MGS. At first it can be a bit daunting, as can any change, but in the long run it provides so many opportunities and chances that you would not get if you did not come to this school. I have loved my time at MGS, will miss it a lot when I leave and do not regret coming to MGS in any way.



Art exhibition 2010





**MGS ART EXHIBITION
Prize Winners**

GCSE Prize
SAM SHAW

Year 12 Prize
GEORGE CHILD

Year 13 Prize
ROBBIE DUNCAN

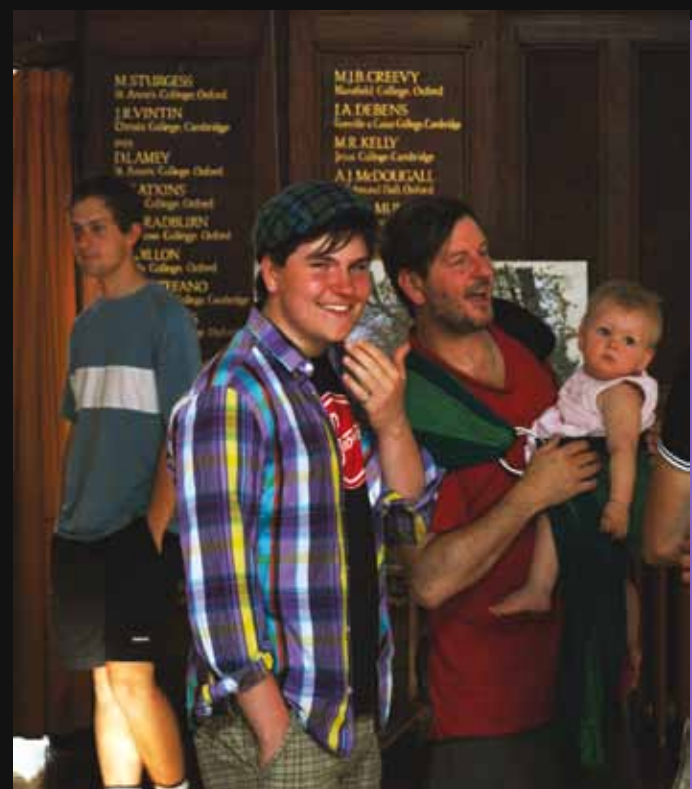
Sculpture
DAN ARMSTRONG

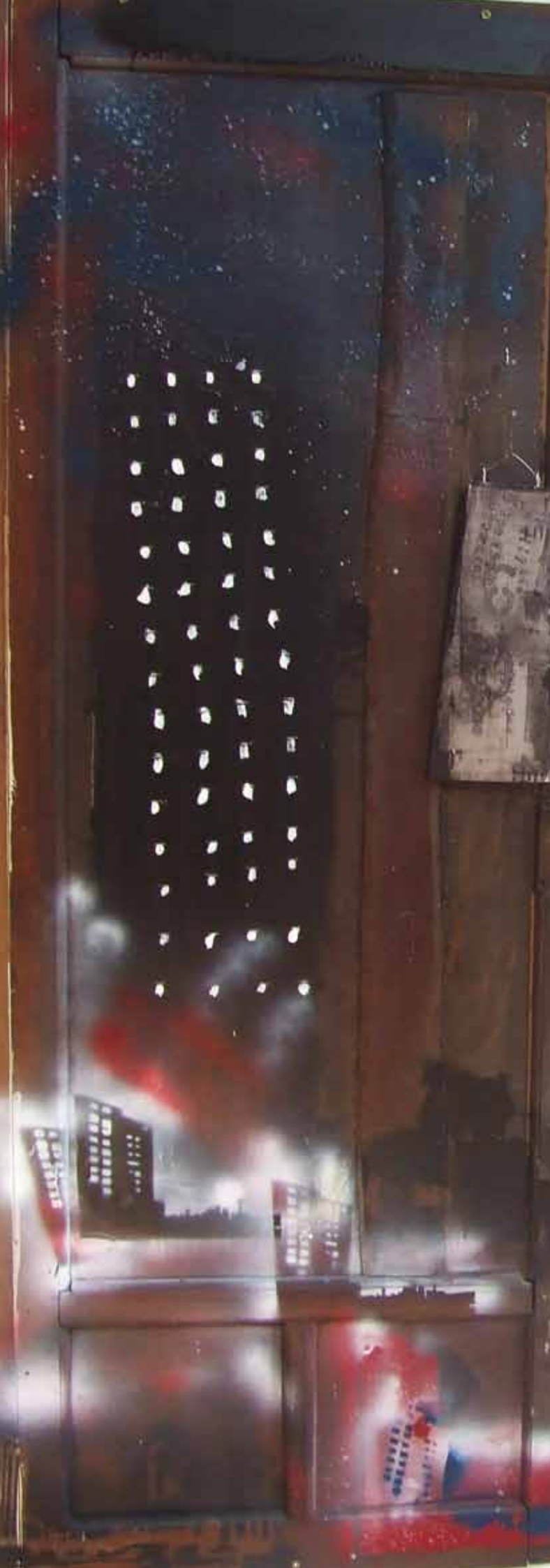
Textiles
HOLLIE DRAKE

Lens Based Media Prize
JOHN PHIPP

Graphics Prize
DUNVEGAN SEY

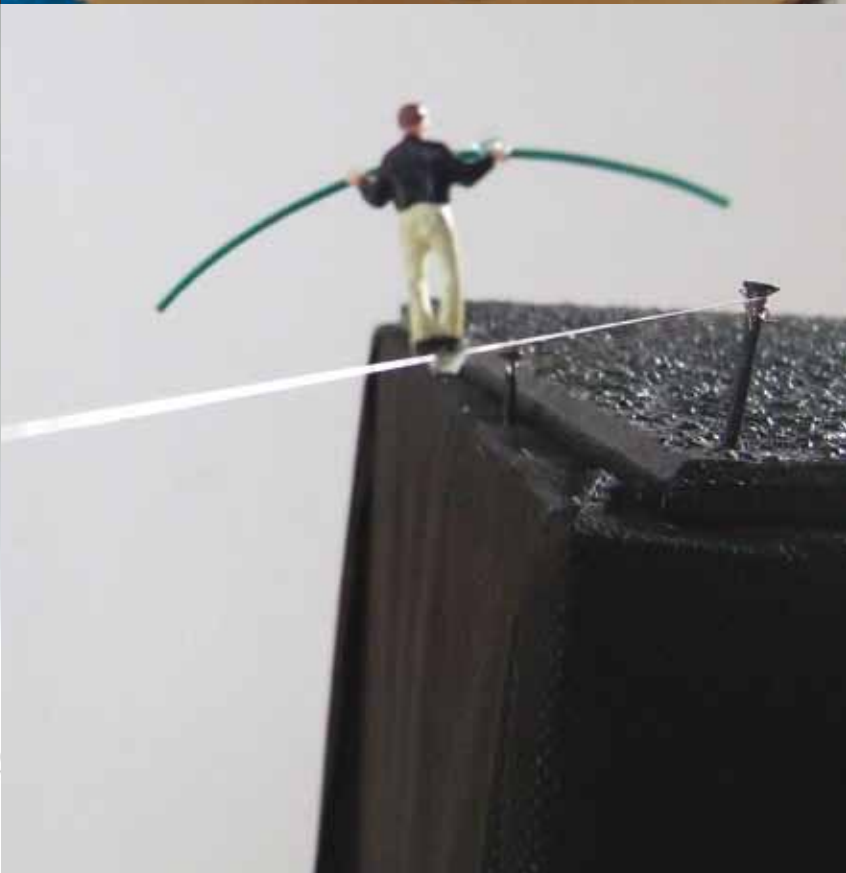
Guest of Honour Prize
JACK NAISMITH





“Really
interesting
exhibition”







“**Excellent,**
thought provoking
pieces”





