
MGSN News



MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2024



From Mr Hanratty

Hello there. Mr Hanratty here in the absence of Mr Tomkins who, this week, alongside 24 Year 12 students and 5 staff, has made the journey to Nepal to begin their trek to Everest Base Camp. This trek will involve

a 9 day hike up to Base Camp and a 4 day hike down, followed by a few days in Kathmandu before flying back. By the time they return, Term 5 will have started, and we will all be excited to hear about their journey. While

the Headteacher leads this trip to the snow of Everest, another group of staff and students will spend the Easter break skiing in the snow of the Alps. We wish both our skiers and Everest hikers the very best of luck, and I look forward to sharing their photos and stories on our social media channels and in the next edition of this newsletter. These two trips are just a small part of the excellent range of opportunities the School has provided since January.

Since the Winter edition, we've seen students take part in the Harvard Model United Nations Conference in Boston in January; debate teams compete in regional rounds of the Cambridge University Debating Competition, at MGS in fact in February (On the topic of debating; you can find out more in this edition about Joe and Amelia's participation in the Oxford Schools Debating Competition at Oxford University a few weeks ago); and MGS students hear from 30+ industry leaders about their careers at our Careers Afternoon in March (more about this in this edition). Alongside these, there have been countless fixtures, CCF trips and competitions, individual co-curricular and academic achievements, mock exams for Year 13, Sixth Form open events, meetings with prospective students, recruitment processes for the next School Captain, Vice-Captain, and House Captains and Vice-Captains. I hope you will enjoy finding out more about these aspects and much, much more in the following pages of this newsletter.

Particular highlights that have stood out to me this term were: The Wedding Singer, Girl's Rugby 7s, and a Year 12 assembly.

This year's school production, The Wedding Singer, was a great success. The three 2 hour plus performances early in February exemplified what is great about MGS: staff and students working cohesively together on a shared vision of achieving excellence.

The huge ensemble of cast and crew had the audience in stitches and brought them to their feet at the end of the night I attended. The school performances each year set a new high bar for subsequent years, and this production has really set a high standard for next year, one that I'm in no doubt the staff and students will surpass. The Wedding Singer was an excellent production, and we're proud of everyone involved.

Our Sport and PE programme is one of the many jewels in the MGS crown, and it's no surprise that we have a national and local reputation for excellence in sport when you consider the dedication of our staff, the participation of our students, and the support from our wider community. With such success, it can often be challenging to identify areas for improvement in such an outstanding programme.

Well, this term, the efforts of much work behind the scenes by staff and a group of our female students came to fruition in the first fielding of a Girl's Rugby 7s squad since 2015. Despite a rocky start, their rate of progress rapidly improved, culminating in the lifting of a trophy a few weeks ago. The persistence and determination these girls have demonstrated are another testament to how Maidstonians rise to an occasion and pioneer new ground.

This group has not only inspired the school and given us another reason to be proud but has also established a legacy for future Maidstonians to build upon. A massive well done to all involved!

Finally, the way in which our Year 12 students came together to remember fellow Maidstonian Harrison, who sadly died one year ago, was moving and a reminder of how amazingly supportive and kind our school community is. Harrison's closest friend, Ollie O-H (Year 12 Barton House), brought the entire year group and staff together with words of

reflection and support and showed us how we can all find strength in the least likely circumstances. Our community will never forget Harrison and we seek to create a permanent sculptural work and space, to be installed later this year on site, in his memory.

The end of a term can often mark changes in personnel at a school. For us, this term, we bid farewell to two members of the teaching staff: Mr Morley-Brown and Mr Chapman. Mr Morley-Brown has been a design and technology teacher here for two and a half years. He is leaving to begin a new journey outside of teaching. Mr Chapman joined the school in September 2017 as a science technician and then became a teacher two years later in 2019. He leaves MGS to become head of science in a small middle school in the South West. We wish Mr Morley-Brown and Mr Chapman the best, and thank them for their service to MGS.

Looking ahead, we will return from the Easter break to a jam-packed term, which will include a week long series of 475th anniversary celebrations. We look forward to sharing this milestone anniversary with our community, and media, and stories from our 475 events will be shared in the next edition of this newsletter and The Maidstonian at the end of the academic year.

As part of the School's 475th Anniversary, we've also commissioned Haywood Media, founded by former School Captain Chris Haywood, to produce a documentary celebrating the School's past and present. Filming for this will begin on the first day of Term 5 and will continue for four days. We are excited to share this legacy piece with you and celebrate what makes MGS great. We plan to release the completed documentary and any other videos created from this production on the School's YouTube channel in September 2024.

Before then, we have, of course, the

business end of the academic year to prepare our students for. State exams for Year 11 and 13 will begin in May, and those year groups and their staff are working incredibly hard to best prepare for these. It's heartening to see the increasing diligence with which these year groups are approaching their exams and to know that they will make themselves, their teachers, families, and school proud. At either end of the GCSE and A Level exams, Year 10 and Year 12 will sit their mock examinations, with Year 7, 8, and 9 also completing exams in lessons during Term 6. We wish all our students the very best in their exam preparations over the next two remaining terms. You've got this!

Finally, a massive thank you to all our staff for their continued hard work and dedication to our students and school. I hope you all rest and enjoy the Easter break. To our students, I hope you also have a restful break and enjoy time with your families. It is the great work that our staff and students do, the characters they are, and the relationships they form that make MGS the special place it is. I've always said that, although examinations are important, what happens outside the classroom is even more so. MGS is much more than a set of books, examinations, and what happens in the classroom, and this newsletter, along with all our other publications, hopefully shows that. Join us in celebrating the last two terms. Happy reading!

Mr J Hanratty
Deputy Head



Game Changers: Girls Dominate the Rugby Field

By Gabby B, Year 13, Corpus Christi House

This season, we have been fortunate enough to see an incredible rise in interest in rugby. We have since formed the first MGS Girls VII team since 2015.

Over a dozen girls have been training weekly since January, some who had never played before, to prepare for fixtures. These sessions have gradually increased in difficulty and skill preparation in readiness for a tough first tournament at the end of February.

On 28th February, the girls saw their first run out in MGS colours at Dartford Grammar School. Here, they played some of the toughest teams in Kent. The effort demonstrated by the girls was immense despite some light injuries. This was all taken in stride and used as an incentive to train harder and prepare for their next tournament. Luck wasn't on their side, and they struggled to win any games, but they were determined not to be downhearted.

The team regrouped and refocused and were determined to use the tournament to set goals for the future.

That opportunity arose a week later when the girls travelled to Bishops Stortford High School for another tournament with a different set of teams and with that, different challenges.

Unfortunately, one of the team suffered a horrific injury, which meant they were a player down. However, the girls remained focused and continued to play on for their injured teammate. Their hard work paid off, winning every game that was played with the greatest points difference throughout the whole tournament.

This resulted in the plate being brought home to Maidstone!

This unbeaten run and terrific winning streak kept spirits high all the way back to Maidstone; resulting in a musical minibus that even saw Mr Seymour singing along.

The girls are eager for another fixture and are planning on hosting a tournament at The Fortress soon.

Wishing Sophia M-S (Year 12 Tonbridge) a speedy recovery.



Debating Triumphs

By Amelia L, Year 13 Tonbridge House

On 9th March, I, Amelia L, and my debating partner, Joseph H (Year 13 Tonbridge House), attended the National Oxford Schools Debating Tournament held annually in the Oxford Union, accompanied by Mr Tomkins. The tournament comprised 4 rounds of intense debate between teams from schools across the country. The condition for participation in this tournament was 'breaking' from the regional competition, held in January. Six teams from the Southeastern regional tournament qualified for the national tournament, with MGS A-team (myself and Joseph) being one of the six. For both of us, this was the first time making it to a national competition. Both Oxford and Cambridge hold School Debating tournaments, and the last time MGS made it to the national round was in 2022, with a previous team. As you can imagine, this caused great excitement for our Debating Forum, who have supported us throughout, alongside Miss Adams, who has managed our team this school year, and who has been hugely supportive.

The tournament itself took place in Oxford, specifically in the Oxford Union, a debate forum comprising mainly Oxford University Students. The history of invigorating debate and prominent speakers was inspiring. Most famously, Boris Johnson himself was president of the Union in 1986. We performed well amongst the prestigious schools we competed against, and averaged second place in our 4 debates, narrowly missing out on a place in the semi-finals. The experience was hugely educational in developing our debating skills, with both of

us improving even throughout the day, challenged by other competitive debaters from around the country. We are immensely proud of this achievement.

This tournament was the first that me and my partner have competed in at a national level, and will also be our last, as this concludes the debating season of this year, our final year at MGS. We have both valued leading the Debating Forum hugely, and hope that the society lives on and grows in the future. We would like to thank Mr Tomkins for his support at this tournament, and also Miss Adams, who has supported us throughout the year, and has provided much needed organisation! We say Good Luck to the leaders of the Forum next year, and hope to see them in the national tournaments.

A Message from the School Captain & Vice-Captain

By Jess R, Year 13, College House

Serving as your representatives as School Captain and Vice-Captain over the past year has been the most incredible experience. Our term as School Captain and Vice-Captain officially kicked off with the Red Nose Day cake sale last March, where the year group once again pulled together to help bake and sell 800 cakes to the lower school. The money raised from this was amazing, and the cause is equally as rewarding but what really struck us was how the year group bonded in the process. Grudges were put aside, and class rivalries were swapped for mixers and piping bags. This event, like many other school events the last year, would not have been possible without the help of such an amazing year group, and it's the helpfulness of the year group which has made our roles so enjoyable.

Since the Children in Need event, we've had a busy year as a prefect team, organising the various year 6 induction events, with the most memorable being the induction day - a whole day welcoming excited year 6s into MGS to experience big school for the first time. This was the most heart-warming event we've ever helped at, and it was so lovely to see that the new students recognised many of the prefects on their first day of year 7 in September.

The lower school speech day was also memorable, obviously it was an enjoyable day for the younger years, but largely because it was one of the HOTTEST DAYS OF THE YEAR, and while the rest of the school got a half day, we worked hard in the baking hot sun, providing refreshments for parents. Nevertheless it was definitely a team bonding experience and, once again, proves how strong the team are.

The school fireworks night was also a big event on the school calendar, and it was so fun to be part of, especially due to the power that being a marshal granted the Prefect team! A particular highlight for me was having control of my own walkie talkie for the evening - a true privilege which caused severe jealousy among the team.

The baking sale antics were repeated in November, and this time it was even bigger, with even more cakes being made due to our extended team of year 12 volunteers. (We had fancy cakes too - Mary Berry take that!). We had mini egg brownies, mars bar rocky road, kinder cakes and all sold out extremely quickly. After that event, term quieted down (thank God because everyone was sick of my messages to the prefect chat), until January when the New Year bought a new set of open mornings and evenings for year 12 students. As an external student myself, I wanted to make a good impression of MGS life onto the year 11 potential students, and I think we did that successfully. It's been a goal of mine since I was little to speak at an open evening, specifically regarding why external students should consider moving to MGS, and it felt amazing to finally be able to do that. Of course there's been countless other events in the prefect calendar and we can't mention all of them but these events have been the most memorable. We'd like to sign off by saying thank you once again, it's been an honour. Like I mentioned earlier, it's the whole year group that's been a pleasure to work with, alongside such a supportive, helpful prefect team. You truly are all superstars and we're so grateful and appreciative of all the time and effort that volunteers have given selflessly to the school.



FA Cup Journey

By Alex D, Year 8, Barton House

As a 12-year-old supporter of Maidstone United, nothing could have prepared me for the rollercoaster of emotions experienced during our FA Cup 5th round tie away to Coventry. The adrenaline rushing through my body as I watched our non-league Maidstone playing in the CBS Arena (nine times the size of the Gallagher Stadium).

The journey to Coventry was filled with anticipation, my Maidstone scarf hanging out the window. Fellow fans gave us excited waves and honks as they passed by. Having travelled up to Ipswich for the previous round, there was hope as the magic of the FA Cup was alive. I knew that we were the underdogs, facing a formidable opponent in Coventry City, but that only fueled our support for our team.

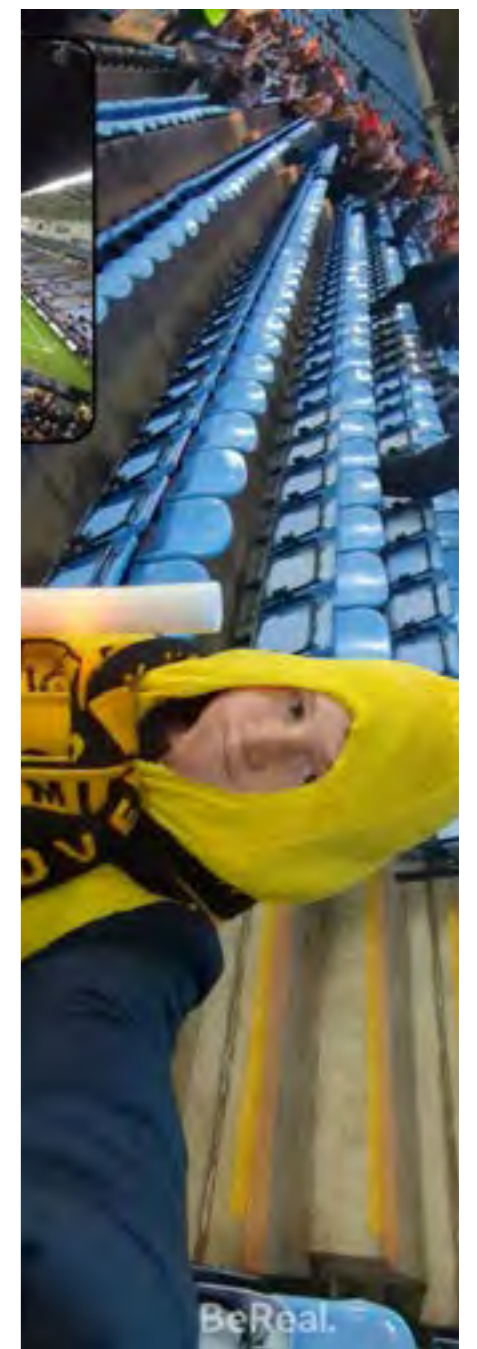
After the three-and-a-half hours of driving, we arrived in Coventry. Walking up to the towering stadium, pre-match nerves were rising, as I knew that soon I would be watching the Stones playing in the most important game in the club's history. At the Ipswich game the TV cameras caught me multiple times standing behind a group of fans wearing banana costumes, so I decided to grab the one from our loft and wear it. The next thing I knew I had attracted the attention of Juliette Parkin, who asked my family if we could be interviewed as a piece for the BBC South-East News.



The turnstiles opened.

As we entered the stadium, the atmosphere was electric. The first thing I remember was the rumble of the singing and drumming that hit me like a tsunami wave. The tensions rose as I walked up the stairs and caught my first glimpse of the pitch. I felt a surge of pride seeing our Maidstone players step onto the pitch, ready to take on the challenge ahead. The first half was tense with two unfortunate early goals and the worry we could get battered (as the Coventry fans were quick to sing), but this didn't stop the fight from Maidstone. Half time came quickly and before I knew it, we were already in the 60th minute. The atmosphere was like no other, with relentless singing from the Black Amber Army beyond the final whistle. Unfortunately, the force of Coventry was just too much for the Maidstone semi-professionals.

On the long journey home, replaying the match in my mind, I reminded myself that being a football fan isn't just about victories. It's about the passion and joys of supporting a team. Though the loss was heartbreaking, I will always stand by Maidstone United, through the highs and the lows, because that's what football, and being part of a local community, is all about.



Barton House Update

By Neve B-D, Year 13, Barton House

The Spring Term has been one of great success for Barton, with Barton students consistently displaying a strong work ethic in all their lessons and extracurricular activities. Barton's lead in House Points reflects the dedication collectively shown by its students.

The Spring Term is crucial for Year 11 and Year 13 Barton Students, as they prepare for their GCSE and A Level exams in May. The hard work demonstrated during this term will enable each student to fulfill their potential. Additionally, Year 12 students have proven themselves by contributing to Barton House. The process of selecting the House Captain and Vice Captains has concluded this term. Congratulations to our new House Captain, Navadeepsai S (Year 12), and Vice Captains Kiran S L (Year 12), Colette J (Year 12), and Jacob A (Year 12). They have demonstrated remarkable skills and will lead the house into the future. Discussions are underway to further progress Barton between the departing Prefect team and the upcoming team, which will be showcased next term.

Barton students have excelled not only academically but also in numerous extracurricular activities. This term, the school musical 'The Wedding Singer' featured many Barton students, including Poppy H (Year 13) in the lead role, Susannah B (Year 12) as Linda, Rob A (Year 13) as 'George', and others like Elliot W (Year 10) in the ensemble. Many Barton students also participated in sports such as rugby, football, and netball, showing support for their peers and the house. Barton

has reaffirmed its values this term: Work Hard, Think for Yourself, Take Responsibility, Learn from Your Mistakes, and Celebrate Our Differences. These values have been discussed in assemblies and embraced by students across Barton.

As the new House Captain and Vice Captains take their positions next term, this is my final newsletter as Barton's House Captain. It has been an honor to lead Barton House and I have thoroughly enjoyed celebrating our achievements, leading an amazing prefect team, and looking forward to the future of Barton. Thank you.

College House Update

By Josh H, Year 13, College House

Over the past two terms, the College team has been diligently working behind the scenes in various ways. With the help of the junior prefect team, we have continued to renovate College's corridors with new boards and provided each form with their new signs representing the new College logo, all to strengthen our identity as the best house.

Additionally, members of the prefect team took on the task of writing, arranging, and delivering an assembly focused on mental health. With the invaluable assistance of additional speakers from the younger years, College house was able to emphasize the importance of mental health and provide tips on how to manage stress to the entire school over the course of a week.

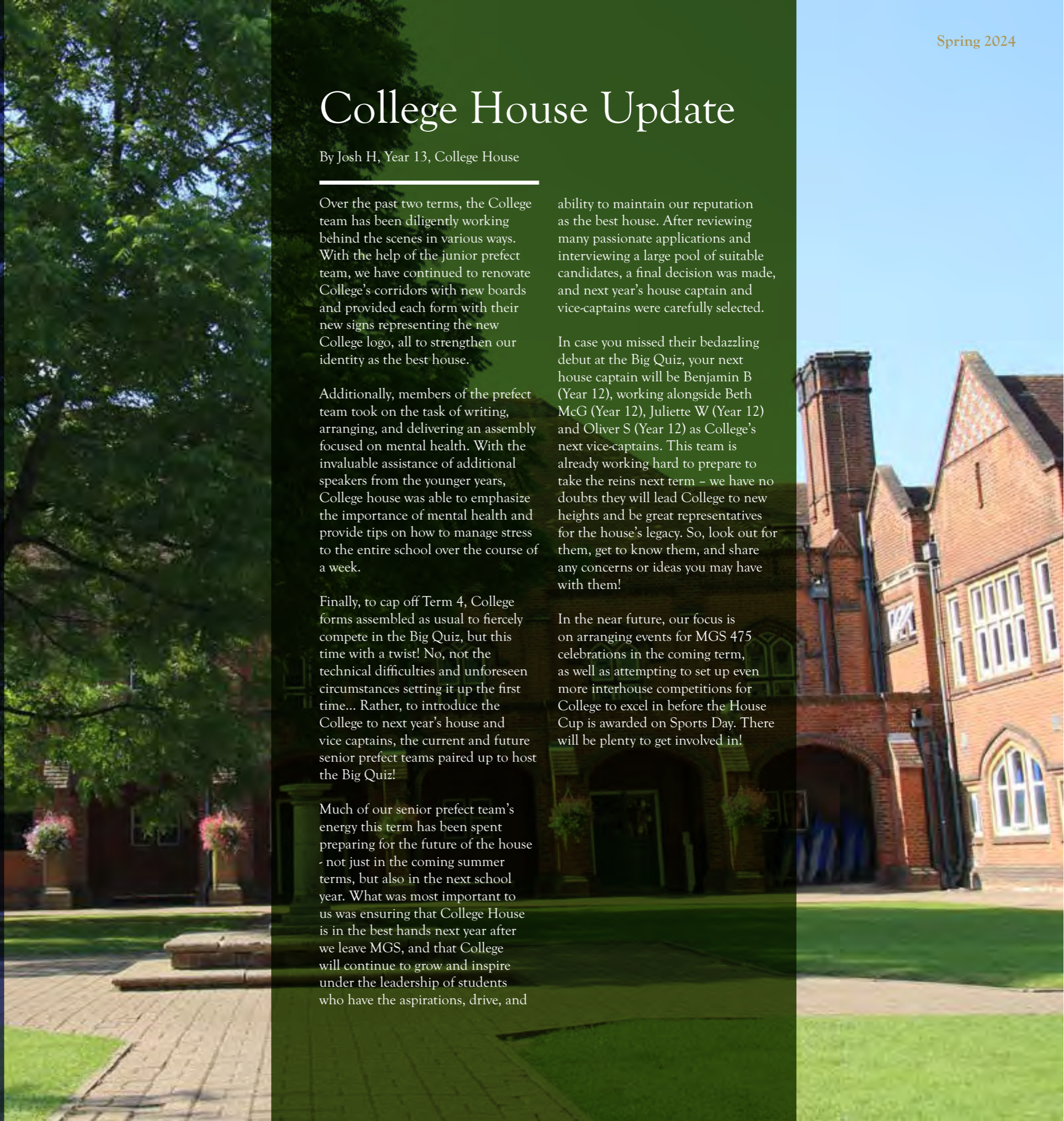
Finally, to cap off Term 4, College forms assembled as usual to fiercely compete in the Big Quiz, but this time with a twist! No, not the technical difficulties and unforeseen circumstances setting it up the first time... Rather, to introduce the College to next year's house and vice captains, the current and future senior prefect teams paired up to host the Big Quiz!

Much of our senior prefect team's energy this term has been spent preparing for the future of the house - not just in the coming summer terms, but also in the next school year. What was most important to us was ensuring that College House is in the best hands next year after we leave MGS, and that College will continue to grow and inspire under the leadership of students who have the aspirations, drive, and

ability to maintain our reputation as the best house. After reviewing many passionate applications and interviewing a large pool of suitable candidates, a final decision was made, and next year's house captain and vice-captains were carefully selected.

In case you missed their bedazzling debut at the Big Quiz, your next house captain will be Benjamin B (Year 12), working alongside Beth McG (Year 12), Juliette W (Year 12) and Oliver S (Year 12) as College's next vice-captains. This team is already working hard to prepare to take the reins next term - we have no doubts they will lead College to new heights and be great representatives for the house's legacy. So, look out for them, get to know them, and share any concerns or ideas you may have with them!

In the near future, our focus is on arranging events for MGS 475 celebrations in the coming term, as well as attempting to set up even more interhouse competitions for College to excel in before the House Cup is awarded on Sports Day. There will be plenty to get involved in!



Corpus Christi House Update

By Callum S, Year 13, Corpus Christi House

Unfortunately, this will be my final newsletter as House Captain of Corpus Christi. This year has seen many successes, and I am glad to have spent every moment in the midst of it. Our house has been involved in numerous events, such as the Girls 7's tournament, in which many of our members, including our very own Vice Captain Annabel S (Year 13), participated. The team had a great day and secured the Cup from the tournament.

Putting current events aside, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as House Captain. Our astounding win at sports day, beating every other house by over 70 points, and coming in second overall in the house cup precisely show the commitment this house has to becoming not just a better community, but better individuals. The four words that define this house are courage, commitment, courtesy, and compassion.

My primary goal as captain was to encourage students to become their best selves through commitment to their minds, bodies, and relationships. Despite what they may believe internally, anyone can achieve anything with hard work. I believe Corpus Christi and the community within it promote commitment not only to academics but also to each other. I have witnessed many student-teacher relationships and sincerely hope that any students struggling will seek help, as they will always find support at Corpus.

As Year 13 and the current senior prefects look ahead to A-levels and the future, we must leave MGS and Corpus with fond memories of triumph and unity. So, who will take our place? Fortunately, a very strong

team of individuals, who bring new ideas and even better personalities, will take the reins of the house. I could think of no one better than Neve C (Year 12) as House Captain, with Harrison V (Year 12), Toby M (Year 12), and Aleks Y (Year 12) as Vice Captains. Working as a synchronised team, they will create a welcoming atmosphere for all students of Corpus to be inspired by.

Hopefully, many changes will come in the future, and the students of Corpus will continue to thrive and flourish in the school, gaining the most from their time here and sharing a similar fondness for their experiences as I do. As the school motto rightfully says, "Olim Meminisse Juvabit" – it will be a joy to remember.

Tonbridge House Update

By Amritha S, Year 13, Tonbridge House

As the fourth term draws to a close, Tonbridge have been able to celebrate new beginnings whilst also looking into the past.

First, this period of the academic year heralds the dawn of a new era, with the appointment of our new prefect team. Congratulations to Sophia M-S (Year 12), who will be taking on after Joe (Year 13) as Tonbridge House Captain, as well as the new Vice-House Captains, Rhys E (Year 12), Stephanie R-E (Year 12), and Abid R (Year 12). Here's to their leadership and success in the coming year. It was a tough competition and we saw strong house pride and motivation, well done to everyone who applied.

Throughout this term, our community has been privileged to witness outstanding achievements, such as Joseph H (Year 13) who performed in the school production, 'The Wedding Singer', as well as many Tonbridge students showcasing their immense talent both on and off stage.

We were also happy to see the engagement in rugby from our female students and their success already. Well done to Amelia L (Year 13) and Joseph H (Year 13) who competed in the Oxford Schools Debating competition finals.

As the impending exam season looms, we wish good luck to all those sitting their GCSE and A-Level exams.

Furthermore, the Tonbridge team is proud to announce a new focus on looking into the past to build the current community within our house. Taking a glimpse into the archives has instilled nostalgia and a longing to revive old culture. We are aiming to

strengthen our house team through rebuilding some old cherished traditions and customs, as well as hopefully forming new ones too, laying the foundations to grow our community. Whether this be through competitions, some classic iMovies, or the characteristic yellow banana, we are excited for what is to come.

Army Section Activities

By RSM Luke T, Year 13, Barton House

Since returning after school, after the Christmas holidays, the army section has advanced greatly. The first of two CFIT (cadet forces instructional training) cadres have been qualified and are now teaching the younger cadets, with the second cadre close behind. The year 9 recruits completed their CSBTR (cadet small bore target rifle) training and are now undergoing their L98a2 GP cadet rifle training, to participate in our summer exercise and eventually in our annual summer camp later this year, taking place over a whole week.

The army section has also participated in two military skills competitions, the first of which was between MGS and Skinner's school at Pippingford park, followed by the annual HQ southeast competition at Oxney Farm, in which 15 schools took part, over the course of a weekend. Both consisted of multiple stands involving all aspects of cadet knowledge, from communication and information systems (CIS), to first aid at a basic level, all the way up to an evacuation level, even including a mine probing exercise, to clear a path to safely reach and extract the casualty.

These two competitions saw teams comprised of cadets from years 10-13 achieve success, and utilise what they have learnt, and interact with experienced regular and reserve personnel from the Army, RAF and Navy. The military skills team have been attending extra training after school on Mondays, and after parade on Thursdays, to hone their skills and deepen their experience further, which proved useful on both competitions they have attended,

and hopefully will also be put to use on Cadet Cambrian Patrol this May. They have shown excellent commitment to the CCF; I am thoroughly proud of their progress and am confident in their abilities moving forward.

The current ALT (army leadership team) is forming a selection process for the leadership roles in the army section for next year. Each year, the previous ALT carries out interviews and convenes with the officers to decide the leading roles in the section. This year, we will involve year 11 in the process, to provide future leaders with greater knowledge and prowess in ALT roles, to benefit the section further down the line.

I am personally very thankful for the career I have had in the CCF. From a rocky start in year 9 with the beginning of the covid pandemic, to the numerous camps throughout each year, to the competitions, and finally becoming head of section, it has truly been an enriching and crucial experience in my life. It has helped me decide on a career path, has provided me with life skills, social skills and has also given me qualities that I would not have learnt anywhere else. Without the CCF, I would not be the person I am today, and I am sure that many others leaving this year share this feeling.



Navy Section Update

By Chief Keira B, Year 13, Tonbridge House

It has been a busy couple of months for the Navy Section. Ever since Christmas, we've had cadets rapidly advancing through the ranks and engaging in a variety of lessons, learning more about the Royal Navy and other volunteering services such as the RNLI.

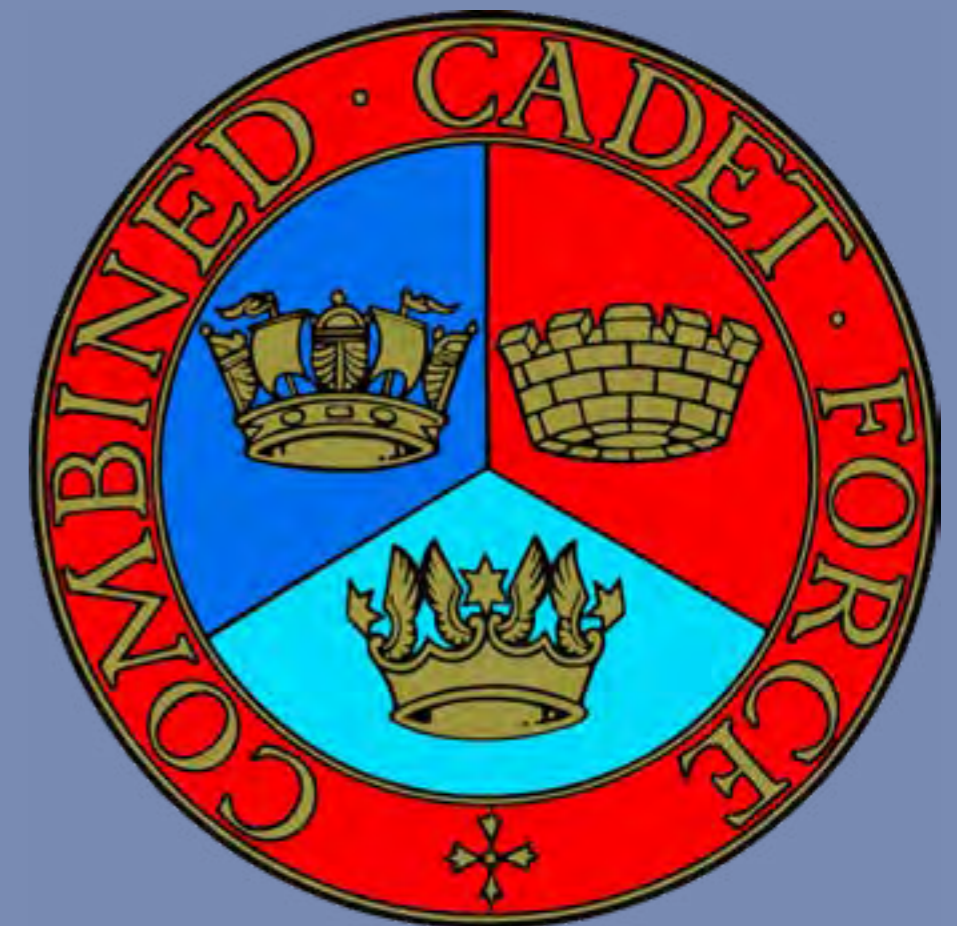
At the beginning of term 4, cadets visited HMS Excellent, where they experienced a submarine disaster simulator. They had to patch up holes filling with water, amidst blaring lights and sirens, simulating the experience of being in an actual sinking submarine. They also did a firefighting simulator as well, a once in a lifetime experience for all involved.

We also had our annual trip to Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, where cadets learned about life for RN recruits training at a naval college. In addition to kayaking in the college's swimming pool, we engaged in rock climbing and other activities. On the trip home, we visited the Fleet Air Arms Museum, where the section's mascot, Captain Honk, nearly got stuck atop a model plane. Thankfully, retrieval was successful.

As exams approach, our Year 11s and 13s will be more focused on their studies, while our Year 10s and 12s will hopefully step up to be role models for both current and future cadets. In the Navy Section, we believe that regardless of rank, all cadets have their own individual talents and naval-related passions. Whenever possible, we allow any of our cadets to teach a lesson with guidance from senior cadets. This

builds their confidence and teaches them key life skills, both within and outside of the CCF. For example, James L (Year 10 College House) and Jamie G (Year 10 College House) have shown exemplary knowledge in various naval topics, establishing themselves as key leaders among their peers.

It has been wonderful serving as the Head of Section this year, filled with laughs, challenges, and pride. Being in the CCF can be challenging at times, juggling between completing extra work and attending parade. However, the memories made during the 90 minutes we spend after school have been incredible for me over the last 18 months. So, thank you, Lieutenant Pinn and Sub-Lieutenant Alloy.



Activities of the Royal Air Force Section

By Flight Sergeant David R, Year 13, Corpus Christi House

For the second half of this academic year, the school's RAF Section continued to deliver aviation, military, and leadership-oriented training. From in-depth first aid and applied exercises in radio communication to high-stakes command tasks, we have filled Thursday evenings for the past months teaching cadets' skills and knowledge that are as interesting as they are important.

Half term saw weapons handling training in the range, where Year 9s were given basic training in the safe operation of the L144 target rifle. More senior cadets were given additional experience on the L98 rifle, a more complex firearm that requires a thorough technical understanding.

In April, our section was offered flying spots on the RAF's Grob Tutor T1 trainer. Flying out of the RAF base at Wittering, 12 cadets experienced hands-on flying experience in the elementary trainer. Student and instructor are seated side-by-side in this aircraft, which is ideal for basic flight training, and a large cockpit canopy provides an excellent outside view for aerial navigation and even flying aerobatic sequences.

Also that month, a shooting camp conducted with cadet squadrons from across Kent extended cadets' experience of marksmanship as they conducted various weapons drills at the Pirbright ranges.

One of our cadets was also offered a visit to British Airways' training HQ at Heathrow Airport, where they took part in a training session in a full-motion flight simulator under the instruction of a BA pilot, had a

tour of the maintenance of an Airbus A350 airliner, and took part in a simulated emergency evacuation of an aircraft.

Towards the end of the school year, we are all looking forward to the section's annual summer camp, organised by the incredibly committed volunteer officers that make these experiences possible. The camp we run is so popular we will also be joined by cadets from other grammar schools for the camp that runs throughout the extended learning week. The week is likely to feature flying, shooting, airbases, and unbeatable camaraderie.

And finally, a note of thanks to the two officers that will be leaving the section at the end of the year. Flt Lt Moores and Fg Off Parish have served with the school's CCF for 12 and 10 years respectively, and over that time have given hundreds of cadets' opportunities, forming some of their most memorable experiences of MGS.



MGS Careers Afternoon

By MGS Careers Team

On Thursday 14th March, we held our annual Careers Afternoon – an opportunity for all students in Years 9-13 to attend careers presentations of their choice, to find out more about occupations that might interest them and to speak with people working in these fields.

We were lucky to find volunteers from a wide range of industries, including some former students, to come into school and talk with our students. The career areas represented included Accountancy, Automotive Industry, Biodiversity, Civil Engineering, Construction, Engineering, Finance, Forensic Science, Food Industry, Healthcare & Therapies, Insurance, Law, Media & PR, Ministry of Defence (Army, Navy, RAF), Planning, Quantity Surveying, Science/Horticulture, Teaching and the Theatre.

The event was a great success, with positive feedback from students, staff and presenters:

- "The finance talk was really informative and I enjoyed the talk"
- "The forensic science talk was very interesting"
- "The automotive careers talk has really painted a picture in my mind of how I would get into the business, which is either through an apprenticeship or going to college".
- "Through this talk, I was able to broaden my perspective on the multitude of opportunities within Theatre that don't just include acting"
- "The NIAB guys were fab, I found it interesting and they were both engaging to listen to".
- "It was excellent – the speakers were good and had an excellent range".
- "Yesterday was a great event and it was good to see the students very enthusiastic about their future"
- "It was a pleasure to deliver my talk at MGS last week. I thought it went well from my perspective and would be happy to do it again"

We would like to thank staff from the following organisations who gave up their valuable time to talk with our students. Events like this would not be possible without their support and expertise.

Apex Contractors, BAE Systems, DHA Planning, , Environment Agency, Ernst & Young, Ford Motor Company, GE Healthcare, ITV, KPMG, Ministry of Defence, NHS, Metropolitan Police, NIAB (National Institute of Agricultural Botany), Richard Ratcliffe, Sysco, The Ambassadors Theatre, Tony Gee & Partners, Weightmans LLP



Paul Oldham (OM 1955-1963)

Maidstone Grammar School was saddened to hear that Paul Oldham (OM, 1955-1963) passed away on Sunday 7 January 2024, aged 79, after a battle with cancer.

Paul left MGS in 1963, having gained an Open Scholarship to Wadham College, Oxford, where he graduated with a degree in History. Following graduation, Paul took up a teaching post initially, but he soon transitioned into a career in finance that involved extensive travel worldwide. Before retiring, he held the position of heading the board of the British Steel Pension Fund.



3 Y : Autumn Term 1955.

Back row : Gerald Skinner ; Peter Clark ; Ian Duncan ; Peter Wright ; Roger Froud ;
Roger Davis ; David Griffiths.

2nd row : Terence North ; Anthony Bishop ; Richard Bourne ; Graham Jones ; Gordon Seager ;
Roger Dukehurst ; Victor Gouldstone.

3rd row : Philip Barrett ; Richard Pearce ; Paul Oldham ; M.C.N. ; Gordon Manning ;
Roy Geller ; Peter Baker.

Front row : John Adder ; Richard Gilbert ; George Watts ; Anthony Hooking ; Malcolm
Allardice.

Not in photograph : Patrick Messup ; William Broadbent.

Paul pursued history as a hobby and he was a past Chair of the Maidstone Historical Society, and a leading member of the Kent Archaeological Society. Paul was known for giving talks on local history and archaeology and had, even the day before he died, regaled family members on the history of Barming Bridge back to the 1700s.

Paul served as a borough councillor for Teston & Barming, and a KCC councillor. Paul was also the Mayor of Maidstone during the term 1993-94. Paul's public service also included his role as Chairman of Governors of MGS, at a time when MGS and MGGS still had a common Chair.

Paul was a great benefactor, and he set up the William and Edith Oldham Charitable Trust in 1995. Despite leaving MGS in 1963, he was a huge supporter of the School and played a significant role as a benefactor for the recent War Memorial Library adaptation and the video wall, which is currently being installed.

We are grateful for Paul's dedication, service, and generous support to Maidstone Grammar School throughout the years. His passion for education, commitment to the community, and efforts have left a lasting mark on our school and the lives of countless students and staff.

As we reflect on Paul's life and legacy, we extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

Riding to Victory: A Journey in Dressage

By Gaby H, Year 12, House

On the 12th February 2024, I competed for Maidstone Grammar School in the Southern Counties Schools Equestrian dressage competition in Eastbourne.

The school had given me permission to compete for them earlier in the year. I had originally hoped that the competition might be on a school day but, to my disappointment, I discovered that it was to take place early on a cold winter morning on a Saturday. When my alarm went off at 5 a.m. I was wondering if I had made the correct decision to compete!

Nevertheless, we set off for Eastbourne for a prompt start at 8 a.m. I was competing on Rufus, a pony I have ridden since the age of 8. I had only recently started competing in dressage, having previously mainly competed in showjumping events.

Dressage is a competition where every part of the horse and riders movement is judged. You have to follow a routine and are scored on how well you execute each movement. It is like a form of floor gymnastics for horses (though without the somersaults and front rolls!).

Rufus did amazingly well, and to my amazement, we achieved the title of Kent County Champion. This has allowed us to qualify for the National championships at Hickstead in May. So, our journey continues, and hopefully that will take place on a weekday in slightly warmer weather.



MGS Sport

By Mr T Highway

Football

Seniors

Term 3 began with the highly anticipated 1st XI game against Cardinal Newman in the Round of 16 of the National Cup. It was a thrilling end-to-end encounter, and with MGS going 2-0 up very early on, it looked as though a quarter final spot was well and truly theirs. However, having won the last two National Cup games with phenomenal comeback wins, it was our turn to be on the wrong end of a comeback. The final whistle blew with the talented opposing side narrowly besting our boys 4-3, ending what has been an unforgettable cup run that the boys should be immensely proud of. They also enjoyed a strong Kent Cup campaign, making it as far as the Quarter Final, while the 2nd XI made it to the Semi-Final in their respective Kent Cup after well-fought victories against Dover and Oakwood.

Term 4 also saw the inaugural 1st XI vs 2nd XI match to celebrate the end of the football season with some “friendly” competition. Friendships though were put on hold as the 2nd XI looked to cause an upset in a game that showcased the players’ competitive spirit. Managers Mr Hughes and Mr Smith even made appearances for their respective sides and battled fiercely in the midfield, but to no avail as the score ended 1-1. Meanwhile, Mr Saunders led the Year 11 team over to Cornwallis in a play-off game to advance to the District Semi-Final. After extra-time there was nothing to separate the sides with the score at 3-3, but the team kept their cool and won 4-2 on penalties to secure their place

Year 10

Plenty of football has been played across Year 10 with A, B, C and D

teams all in action over the last two terms. All 4 teams were involved in very competitive games against Judd, and in our block fixtures against Dartford the boys scored a combined 17 goals, winning all games. The A and B teams have both also gotten stuck into their respective district leagues and are in hot form, winning their last few games each. With just a handful of fixtures to go, both teams are in strong contention to advance into the District Semi-Finals – best of luck to them.

Year 9

The Year 9s picked up where they left from, continuing their fine form with the A team advancing in both the Kent Cup and the National Cup in their first two games back. They made it to the semi-final of the Kent Cup and the last 16 of the National Cup before eventually being knocked out, but have displayed plenty of talent in the process. This was rewarded when they attended the Birley’s 5-aside Tournament, going all the way to the final and beating hosts King’s Canterbury 1-0 in the final to bring home some silverware. The B team fell agonisingly close to some silverware, losing in the final of the Kent Cup, but they still find themselves in a strong position in their District campaign which is yet to conclude.

Year 8

It has been another successful few terms for Year 8 in their football fixtures. The A team started 2024 in spectacular fashion, advancing to the final of the Kent Cup after dominant 7-1 and 8-1 wins in the previous two rounds. Unfortunately it wasn’t to be as they lost 5-2 to St Paul’s at the Gallagher Stadium, but credit to the boys for going toe-to-toe against a very strong side – I’m sure they will come out on top in their league which is still to be decided. The other teams

have performed very well also, with the B team winning all their games these last two terms. In their last three games, the C team have won all three while conceding no goals, and the D team earned a hard-fought 4-2 victory against Colfe’s in their last game. Their willingness to train up until near darkness every Thursday with Mr Hughes. Quality is in abundance in this year group which has led to C and D teams also being put out, with all four teams in action in some highly competitive fixtures against the likes of Dartford and Judd. Just Ravenswood stand in their way to an unbeaten record, so well done to all boys involved, and best of luck for that last fixture.

Year 7

Over 120 Year 7 students have been attendance at football training each week with lots of talent on show. Highlights of the last two terms feature a very busy Friday where 8 teams took on Judd and simultaneously 3 more teams played against Colfe’s, seeing well over half the year group involved in fixtures. The boys have put in very strong team performances against some tough sides, including a clean sweep of victories over Skinners’ School. Only a rematch of 6 fixtures against Judd stand between them and a well-earned Easter break – good luck to them.



Rugby

Since January our Rugby 7s squads have been busy preparing for their respective seasons. Junior training has been led by Mr Seymour on a Thursday evening and has been well attended as the boys look to develop their technical skills to play the game. The seniors have been training three times a week including Wednesday morning conditioning sessions to ensure they were in the best physical condition possible. Since then the season has been a huge success across all age groups. At U14s our team made the final of the Judd Sevens whilst at U15s we were winners of both the Kent Shield and Arthur Jones Shield. The U12 teams were also back in action with the A team winning the Dartford tournament, while the B and C team also competed up in the A and B team tournaments respectively, owing to their strength and enthusiasm. At Senior level our boys have travelled all over the South-East to play at the very highest level. Our U16s travelled to Gordons School and the All England 7s in preparation for their Kent and Judd tournaments. In the Kent tournament we lost in a tightly contested quarter final to Judd whilst in the Judd tournament we reached the final before succumbing to a strong Judd side again. Our Seniors have also fared well winning the Kent Shield at the Kent 7s and performing at Rosslyn Park. I wish to thank all the pupils for all their efforts since January and the staff allowing us to run such a thorough programme.



Hockey

Terms 3 and 4 saw the return of the Senior Hockey team – a massive thank you to Mrs Cook for leading training and fixtures against some very strong schools. The first XI recently came out on top in a comprehensive 4-1 win over King's Rochester, and have also faced Gravesend and Sir Joseph Williamson's. Please find below a match report of their opening game against Ashford:

The first XI began their second season away to Ashford School, with a squad full of new players and young talent across the school, but also a squad depleted by the school trips to Cambridge and Harvard respectively. This left the boys with just 10 spirited players, including a goalkeeper with no experience of hockey before (Harrison V, Year 12, Corpus Christi) and several players who hadn't picked up a stick since primary school. Despite what could be deemed as setbacks, the first xi travelled to Ashford with spirits high. The game would be different to last year's 5-0 victory, as this time it was Ashford's first team they were facing, but this did little to dampen team morale. After a solid start (which had also included the addition of a former Ashford player who willingly agreed to play at the back) MGS found themselves unlucky to be 2 goals down, after 1 top quality drag flick and a well worked goal from open play. MGS then came back into it after playing out from the back and the ball found Will G (Year 12, Corpus Christi) who, after a quick skill, played the ball to Scott S (Year 11, Tonbridge) who finished calmly past the keeper. MGS then faced multiple onslaughts from short corners, which proved no challenge for stand in goalkeeper Harrison and his defence unit, who kept Ashford out admirably including a save off the line from Josh H (Year 12, Tonbridge), until eventually the pressure gave way to third Ashford goal, again from a short corner. Still,

at half time, MGS were still in it and looked to fight back in the second half. After another strong start, MGS sadly succumbed to a fourth Ashford goal on the counter, before they fought back to win a short corner of their own. In a classic routine, Riley D (Year 9 College House) trapped the ball for Will G (Year 12, Corpus Christi) to flick the ball expertly into the back of the net. The game wasn't to be for the first team, however, as Ashford pressure in the second half forced Harrison into a string of saves and, after several more short corners (one of which Matthew P was unlucky to keep off the line) Ashford had made it 6-2, and that was how the game would finish, despite some late near misses from Scott S (Year 11, Tonbridge) and Rhys E (Year 12, Tonbridge) who put in a great shift having to run all the way back to defend short corners whilst playing up front. All in all, the effort showed by all the MGS players was brilliant to see, and everyone played such an important role in the game, especially first time players Fintan A (Year 10, College) and Jacob K (Year 10, Barton), who were solid on the left. Despite the weakened team, MGS never let their spirits drop, and they will certainly look to challenge more teams in the season to come after a strong performance today.

Basketball

Basketball has continued across all year groups, particularly for the U16s who have played three incredibly tight games, featuring a 74-51 win over Wrotham. The U13 team also came up against Wrotham, winning their match-up 50-18. Congratulations also to the U12 team who have made it to the Kent Cup final after a series of good wins against the likes of Northfleet and Langley Park ~ we wish them the best of luck.

Netball

Thank you also to Mrs Coveney and Mrs Dimmick for their continued efforts with the MGS Netball team. Hard work paid off as the 1st VII claimed a good win over King's Rochester



The Wedding Singer

By Judah M, Year 13, Tonbridge House

Performing Arts at MGS has been a hugely valuable part of my school experience. Since Year 7, I have regularly attended Performing Arts clubs such as the MGS choir and Lower School Drama Club, and appeared in countless showcases and performances. I was delighted to be cast as the villain of this year's school production of *The Wedding Singer* which we performed in February. Following my performance as Lord Farquaad in *Shrek the Musical* last year, I knew people had high expectations of my performance and the production in general, and I am incredibly proud of what we achieved.

The Wedding Singer was a particularly important show for me, as it marked my final performance at MGS. Musical Theatre is a real passion of mine, and thanks to the support and guidance of the amazing Performing Arts team at MGS I have been able to develop key skills I can take into the future. The show itself was a huge success with a brilliant cast, live band, backstage team and sound and light crew. As a fan of 80s music, I immediately fell in love with the catchy soundtrack, and I am sure *The Wedding Singer* will be one of my most listened to albums of the year.

Most important to me, however, are the close friendships I have formed with the cast and crew. Performing alongside friends I have known since Year 7 (Connor V, Y13 Corpus, Joseph H, Y13 Tonbridge and Robert A, Y13 Barton) was particularly special for me, as well as solidifying friendships with Catherine D (Y13 Corpus), Poppy

H (Y13 Barton) and Susie B (Y12 Barton) who joined MGS in the Sixth Form. Forging friendships with students in younger year groups has also been massively rewarding- Henry P (Y8 Tonbridge), Jayden W (Y10 Corpus), Seb F (Y10 Corpus), Luke H (Y10 Barton), Lucas K (Y8 Corpus) and Toby M (Y10 College) just to name a few. Watching the younger students throw themselves into their roles wholeheartedly gives me great confidence that the future of Performing Arts at MGS will be bright.

While emotional for many of us, following *The Wedding Singer* I have reflected on my role in Performing Arts at MGS over the years, and it is safe to say I am proud of what I have contributed. This article would not be complete without thanking the amazing staff who made *The Wedding Singer* possible- Mrs Brooks, Mr Bourne, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Morton, Miss McKelvey, Miss Mason and Mrs Martin. Although I will be sad to leave Performing Arts at MGS at the end of the year, I look forward to returning to watch fantastic performances for years to come.



Rafferty Pedder (OM 2018)

A massive congratulations to Rafferty Pedder (OM 2018, Corpus Christi House) who made his professional first team debut on 6 January for QPR v Bournemouth in the FA Cup.



Harvard Model United Nations 2024

In January, some of our Year 12 students and staff represented the school at the prestigious Harvard Model United Nations Conference in Boston. Prior to the conference, the staff and students stayed in New York, immersing themselves in the sights and sounds while enjoying everything the city's culture had to offer. We are honoured to be the only UK school that attended this conference, a testament to the hard work, commitment, and impact of our staff and students year after year.



The Experimental Archaeology Club

The Experimental Archaeology Club enjoyed a visit to the School archive recently, exploring lots of artefacts from the School's long history, including maps, old photos, school caps, football boots and even a ceremonial drum! Special thanks to Mr Walker, who gave his time to share some of the stories behind the items.



Warhammer Club



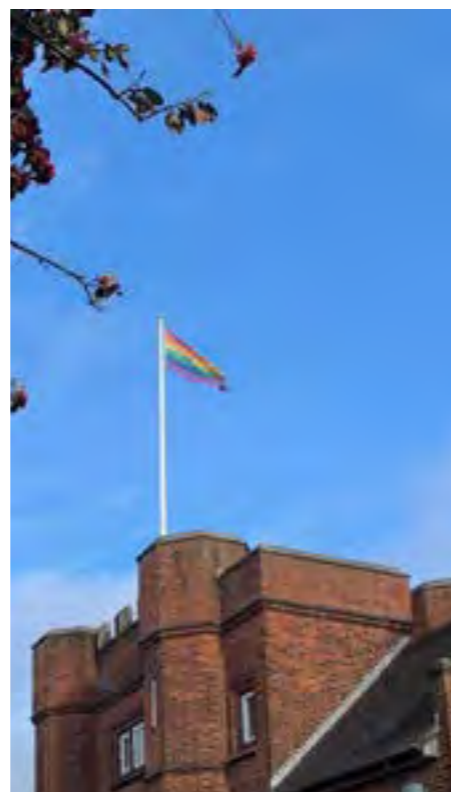
KGMSA Piano Competition

We recently hosted the KGMSA Piano Competition. Both Frank M (Year 8 College House) and Matthew C (Year 13 Barton House) won their rounds and will now move to the final, which will take place in Canterbury this summer. Well done to all.



LGBTQ+

1st February, marked the start of celebrating LGBTQ+ History Month at MGS. This year's theme celebrated the contributions of LGBTQ+ people to the field of Medicine and Healthcare, both historically and today.



Lego

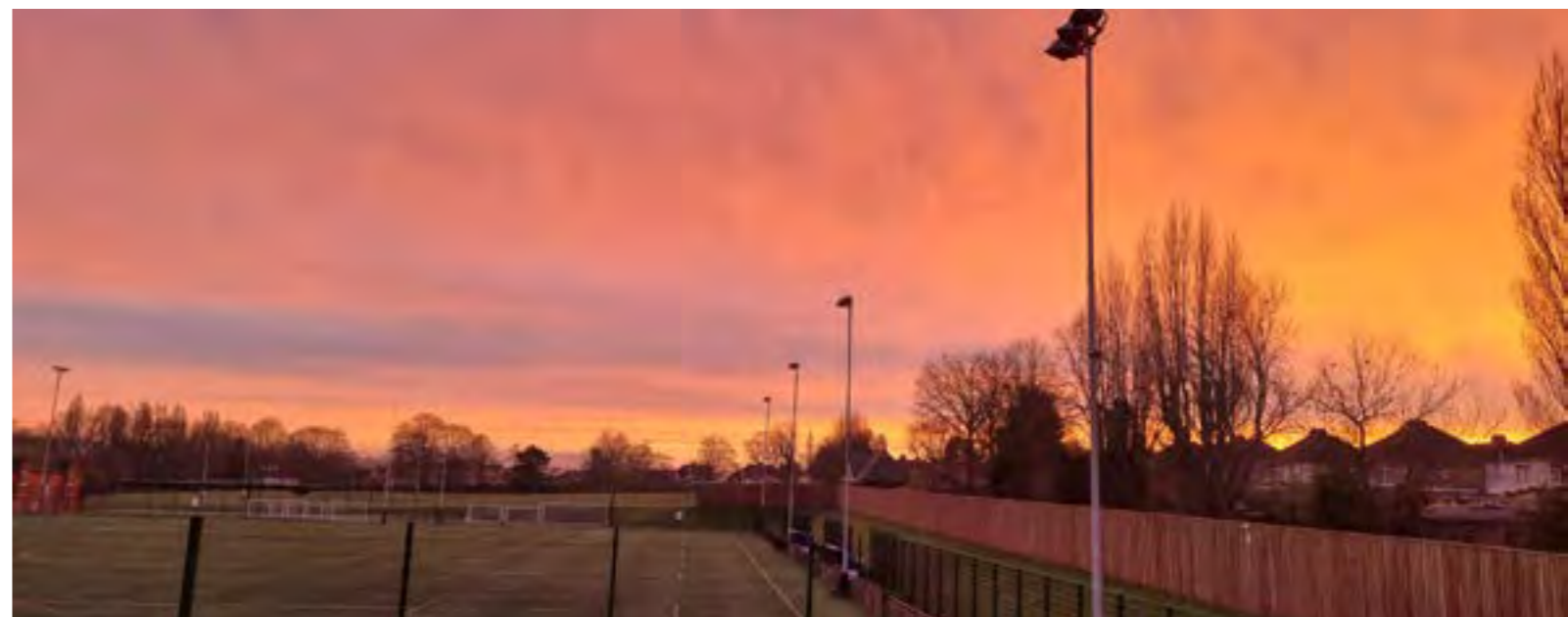
Year 12 Design and Technology students have had a fantastic time creating these Lego figurines, which have taught them many valuable manufacturing skills.



Mary Pettit

Maidstone Grammar School was saddened by the news that Mary Pettit died at the age of 89 on 30 December 2023, after a short illness. Mary was associated with the School for over 50 years and was the wife of Dr Philip Pettit, who was Headmaster at MGS from 1972 to 1992. Additionally, Mary contributed to her community by treating cancer patients during her work as a therapeutic radiographer.

We are grateful for Mary's service and support to MGS and extend our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.



Journey to the Roof of the World: Preparing for Nepal

By Henry H, Year 12, Barton House

Preparations for arguably one of the largest events in the history of the school have been getting well underway over the last 3 months, as 24 students and 5 staff get ready to leave for Nepal on the 27th of March.

Our expedition will take place over 21 days, starting with a very long flight on Air India to Kathmandu via Delhi. Once we land in Kathmandu, kit will be sorted out and we will stay in the Himalaya Hotel overnight. We then catch a flight to Lukla airport, which has one of the shortest runways in the world with some amazing views. Once landed, we start our trek.

Over the next 11 days, we make our way very gradually to our destination of the Base Camp of the grandfather of all mountains. Once there, we carry on going up, and summit Gorak Shep. We then descend over the next 9 days and have a day where we learn about the culture in Kathmandu and do some sightseeing.

To prepare for this epic trek, we have done 4 practice walks around the local area, including the North Downs, Bluebell Hill, Cob tree Manor Park and Rochester. During these walks we learnt a lot about pacing, layering and helped to gel the group together. These walks also contained some very steep hills which will help prepare us for the hike up to Base Camp.

At the time of writing, there are now 7 days until we leave from Heathrow, and some of us are packed but all of us are very excited!



Musings from the Penthouse: 475th Year Celebrations #2*

By Icarus, OM

In my last 'musings' I referred to school uniforms and that 'In 1552 the Christ's Hospital charity issued an obligatory uniform for its scholars designed to emphasise their low status with a russet (later blue) coloured cassock.' This colouring of the uniform was adopted nationwide and Blue Coat Schools were set up around the country. I refer back to this as I hadn't mentioned the girls' uniforms, which were yellow. Yellow, it was supposed, to deter vermin from breeding. An extraordinary thought in modern day thinking!



Maidstone's Blue Coat Charity School, as it became known was established in 1711 and was originally located in High Street before moving on to its final home in the previous workhouse in Knightrider Street. Maidstone Museum has two wooden sculptures, one of a boy and another of a girl in their school uniforms. When the school closed the funds were amalgamated into the Grammar School funds. At the bottom of the staircase in the Sanfourche Corridor, at the Main Entrance end, (the stairs up to WAC's office, for the older OMs) is a board listing the Blue Coat

Scholarships from 1906 to 1920.

Here is just one -

In the 1885 edition of 'The Maidstonian' lies a tale which perhaps many could learn from today. The contributor is recalling about 30 years back during his time at Corpus Christi Hall, a hall which in 1885 was falling to rack and ruin. His story relates to his first view of the Headmaster by peeping through the enlarged keyhole into the School Room; the Rev. Thomas Harrison, a large man of 6' 2" (1.9m) was seated at his desk with the pupil's desks to his left arranged in a line down the wall side. Apart from those desks there was one for 4 older boys on the other side and for 2 Assistant Masters, who in our writer's opinion were not 'University men'. There was just the one school room.

Relationships between the older and younger pupils were not great and on one occasion a quarrel broke out between an older pupil, known to be a bully, and some of the younger ones. Unable to trade blows because of the size difference, missiles were thrown, including some cabbage stalks, one of which went through one of the leaded light windows, breaking many of the small panes. Other panes were broken by other missiles, leaving the School Room in a dilapidated state. All pocket money was stopped and every boy concerned had to write down how many panes he had broken. The headmaster reviewed the lists and called in the boy who had the highest 'score'. Expecting to be caned, the boy (our writer), tried to make excuses, only to receive the words in his ear, 'I do not care for your excuses!'. Terrified the boy listened as the reverend gentleman continued, '... but I do care for the truth, and you have told the truth, whereas the others have not.' The boy was then invited to dine with the headmaster that night and given 2 shillings and 6 pence to offset some of the loss due to stopped pocked money! That's the equivalent of £80 in 2024 values.



He continues to say that school discipline was fair and any discrepancies often made allowance for the small yard which was the only play area. On half day holidays, the boys went to Penenden Heath some 30mins walk away, for sporting games. Other outings, given permission, were to local shops in Earl Street and Pudding Lane for hot-buttered rolls and confectionary respectively. A treat, I am sure that would have brought much pleasure, was an early version of

MGS Tuck Shop, the pie man (the proverbial 'Sgt. Bennett?') who was allowed to enter the grounds at 2:00pm each day.

One excursion he names was that during school holidays, when he could not go home due to the distance to his parent's house, a number of pupils walked to Chatham to see the three-decker man-of-war, 'London', launched (She never fired a shot, but served on the east coast of Africa before becoming obsolete a few years



later.). Our writer was so tired he admits that he had to sit down and rest on the way back!! Regrettable he only signs himself off with the title, 'An Old Maidstonian'. How interesting it would have been to research the rest of his life.

1871 saw the opening of the new school, situated in Tonbridge Road –



“Tuesday 10th October 1871

This interesting and long-looked-for event took place on Tuesday afternoon last, the town putting on a holiday aspect in honor of the occasion. The day was an extremely fine one, and the proceedings passed off with considerable eclat. Shortly after 12 o'clock the Mayor, the Corporation, and the clergy, with a large number of the town officials, attended by the trustees and officers of the schools, and proceeded by the brass band of the Volunteers, left the Town-hall and walked in procession to the new building, which is situate in Tunbridge-road, a few yards higher up than the railway station. Arrived there 'midst the ringing of the bells of All Saints' church and the music of the band, the procession went direct to the large apartment to be used as the schoolroom. Upon the Mayor ascending a platform at the further end of this room, the proceedings commenced by the Rev. D. D. Stewart offering prayer.”

- Kent Messenger & Maidstone Telegraph 14 October 1871

(Note: - When the school moved to Barton Road the school bell, the stained glass windows, shown in the photo above, and the coats of arms were incorporated into the Gatehouse, the Main Hall and the Sanfourche Corridor stairs respectively. Another memento of the Tonbridge Road School is the time-capsule that was found when the old buildings were demolished that is held in the Archives.)

On a lighter note, also in the 1885 edition of The Maidstonian, a contributor explains how he became his own grandfather!!

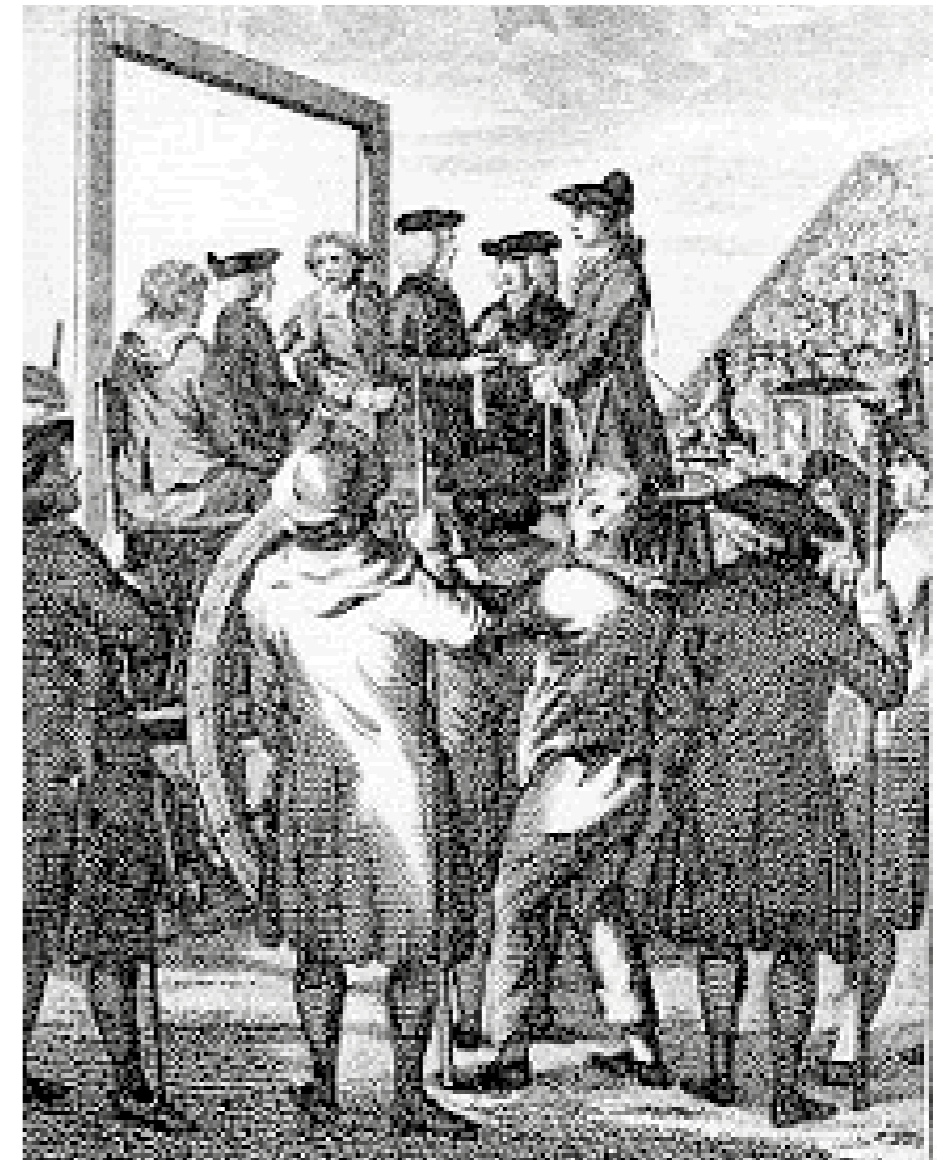
I married a widow who has a daughter, aged nineteen. This daughter marries my father. By that marriage I become father-in-law of my father. And for the same reason my daughter becomes my mother-in-law. A son is born to me, and, as he is my mother-in-law's brother, he is also brother-in-law to my father, and is therefore my uncle. But when my mother-in-law has a son, as she is also my stepdaughter, of course he is my grandson; and at the same time my half-brother. In addition he is the grandson of my wife, and, being also my brother, my wife becomes my grandmother. And being the grandson of my wife, it stands to reason that I am my own grandfather!!

If you have got your head around that and are still thinking clearly, let's move on.

It was under the headship of the Rev. Herbert Armstrong Watson that the 'school archive museum' was founded in 1890. It is there that we can find documents relating to the sale of Corpus Christi Hall and land and the purchase of the Tonbridge Road site and a few other historical artefacts. The archive is a much

under-used facility and I would encourage you to use it to its full capacity. Graham Walker, our archivist, has achieved much since Jeff & Roger retired.

One question I do have to ask is that I have noted that the infamous Dr. William Dodd, the 'Macaroni Parson', was an old boy of MGS. Googling reveals that he was born in Lincolnshire, but that would not have stopped him having been a boarder at the school. Dodd was a many-faced character, being a 'wrangler' when he left university, a spendthrift before taking holy orders, a winner of £1,000 in a lottery, being a chaplain to the king, an author of a dull obscene book (not my observation – I have not read it!), then moving on to writing religious books, a forger (the largest of which was for £4,200), an inventor of a practice to revive those who had been hanged, condemned to death for forgery but so popular that many a person, including Samuel Johnson, sort a pardon, hung on the gallows (regrettably for him his restoration method failed to revive him despite the best efforts of his fans), and a puzzle for Icarus. If anyone could help, I would appreciate it.



Next time – maybe a skeleton in the cupboard as we move into Part 3 of the celebration musings. Moving to Barton Road!

The school is arranging many events to celebrate this 475th Anniversary, make the most of them, it will be another 25 years before we can celebrate in this way. Maybe I will see you there.

Wishing you all well, and may your summer be fully enjoyable and restful.

*#1 can be read in the Winter 2023 Edition of MGSNews.

Careers Update

By Mrs S Acaster, Careers and Enterprise Manager

A quick note from the Careers Team to reflect on the events from the past two terms and highlight the events coming up in Terms 5 & 6.

Exploration of different careers and future study/employment options is an important focus of these two terms.

Year 8 Information Evening: 4th January

- The Year 8 Information Evening was an opportunity for Year 8 students and their parents to find out more about the GCSE courses and GCSE Options process at MGS

Post-16 Open Evening: 18th January

- The open evening enabled Year 11 students from MGS and other schools and their parents to talk with subject teachers and find out more about the A level courses available at MGS

University of Cambridge visit: 25th January

- Visit to University of Cambridge for a group of interested Year 12 students

Year 12 UCAS Evening for students and parents: 5th February

- The UCAS evening was an opportunity for Year 12 students and their parents to get information about the process of exploring university options and making applications. In addition to a talk from Mr Rivers, Head of 6th Form, Jonathan Stebbing from the University of Kent gave presentations about Student Finance and Degree Apprenticeships.

Maidstone Apprenticeship Fair at Mote Park: 8th March

- We take all our Year 11 and 12 students to this annual event. Year 13s were also able to attend. Around 60 local and national employers from a wide range of industries were available to talk with students and answer questions about careers and apprenticeship opportunities within their companies

MGS Careers Afternoon: 14th March

- This annual event is an opportunity for all students in Years 9-13 to attend careers talks in school, delivered by external speakers from a wide range of industries. This year students were able to choose from 20 different presentations.

6th Form Apprenticeship Presentation: 15th March

- All our Year 12 and 13 students attended a presentation delivered by John Cobb and Rebecca Howarth from the National College of Education about modern apprenticeships in the workplace. (John is an MGS school governor with careers responsibility)

Meducators Careers Workshops: 26th March

- Around 100 students in Years 10, 11 & 12 signed up to take part in the Meducators Careers Workshop programme in school, choosing to attend a series of workshops throughout the morning relating to either Law, Engineering or Medicine.

Year 11 Individual Careers Meetings

- Throughout these two terms our Year 11 students are scheduled individual appointments with the Careers Team to get impartial information, advice and guidance about their Post-16 Options and future career and study plans

Year 12 individual Careers Meetings

- Throughout these two terms and continuing after Easter our Year 12 students are scheduled individual appointments with the Careers Team to get impartial information, advice and guidance about their Post-18 Options and future career and study plans

6th Form Consultation Meetings with SLT: 11th-15th March

- All our Year 11 student have an individual meeting with a member of SLT to confirm their plans for after Year 11.

In Terms 5 & 6 the following activities will be taking place:

- Year 12 individual Careers Meetings:** continuing
- Year 10 Careers Workshops with CXK:** April-May
- Year 9 Business Challenge:** 14th-16th May
- Year 8 Work Shadowing day:** 5th July
- Year 10 & 12 Work Experience week:** 8th-12th July
- Year 7, 8 & 9 Extended Learning Week:** 8th-12th July
- Year 12 UCAS talks and UCAS registration:** During Core 4
- Year 10 Morrisby Profiling:** July



Key Dates for your Diary

Mon 15 April	First Day of Term 5
Fri 19 April	475: CCF Dinner
Sat 20 April	475: OM Sports Day & OM Supper
Mon 22 April	475: College Day
Tue 23 April	475: Corpus Day
Wed 24 April	475: Tonbridge Day
	Year 6 Welcome Evening 7-8pm
Thu 25 April	475: Barton Day
	Year 13 Leavers' Photo
Fri 26 April	475: School Celebration
Sat 27 April	475: MGSPA Tudor Banquet
Mon 29 April	Year 10 Exams Start
Wed 8 May	Year 10 Exams End
Thurs 9 May	GCSE & A Level Exams Start
Wed 15 May	475 Performing Arts Showcase
Fri 24 May	Last Day of Term 5
Mon 3 June	INSET Day
Tue 4 June	First Day of Term 6 for Year 7-10 & 12
Tue 4 – Fri 7 June	Year 6 House Teas
Tue 18 June	Year 10 Virtual Parents' Evening 3.45-8pm
Tues 25 June	GCSE & A Level Exams End
Wed 26 June	Year 12 Exams Start
Tues 2 July	Year 12 Exams End
Thu 4 July	Year 6 Induction Day
Mon 8 – 12 Jul	Extended Learning Week Day
Sat 13 July	OM 475 Garden Party
Mon 15 July	Founders Day Church Service & Lower School Speech Day
Tue 16 July 16	Sports Day
Thu 18 July	Reserve Sports Day
Fri 19 July	Last day of the Academic Year
Thu 15 August	A Level Results Day
Thu 22 August	GCSE Results Day





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Founded in 1549 | Headteacher Mr M Tomkins BSc NPQH

