

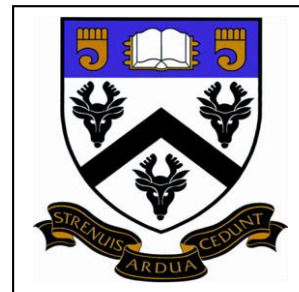


O.M.A.

Newsletter No. 81 January 2015

President: Colin A R Cutler BSc FPRI

Website: www.oldmaidonians.org.uk



The Newsletter of the Old Maidonians' Association

OMA Committee News

Committee membership The Committee lost two of its members during 2014, Mrs Betty Collin and **David Eyre (1963/70 and Headteacher 1956/2005)**. Betty, who has served as our Secretary for the last 18 years has had to resign on health grounds. Although she will no longer be on the Committee, Betty is happy to serve the Association in whatever way she can, including acting as an initial contact point for those making contact with the Association. She will also continue to receive applications for membership and for the Annual Dinner. Before Betty became the Association's Secretary she had been a member of Desborough's office staff for over 20 years and so her knowledge has been of invaluable assistance to the Association. The Association wishes to place on record its gratitude to Betty for her commitment over the years.

The Association is now in need of a new member to take over the Secretary's role. Please contact our Chairman, Grahame Fisher, if you feel you could help the Association in this way.

David Eyre has moved to Shropshire. Further details will be found in the 'News of Old Maidonians' section in this Newsletter.

Annual Dinner – 28th March 2014 A total of 73 attended this event, including the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr and Mrs Jenner, the College Principal, Paul Frazer, the Chair of Governors, Nigel Cook, and past and present members of Staff. Also present as guests were the Head Boy and Head Girl (the first in Desborough's history!) and their deputies whose enthusiastic efforts with the raffle were much appreciated as was the enthusiastic support by the Mayor in this fund-raising activity.

At the Chairman's invitation Paul Frazer described the progress being made at Desborough to continue to raise standards for all pupils.

Photographs of the group organised by **David Horton (1958/64)** are on page 11.

War Memorial Board. **Mike Willoughby (1958/64)** who had previously found the names of 16 former pupils of the School to add to the School's War Memorial Board, has now found a further name, Louis Edward Richardson, Private in the 2nd Battalion of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry who was killed in action in France in May 1915 at the age of 22. His home was in Wargrave. His name has been added to the Memorial Board at a cost of £130, bringing the total costs to £1830.

In the last issue we acknowledged those who had responded to the appeal for donations towards the costs of the Memorial Board. We now acknowledge with thanks donations received from **Bart Sams** and **Derek Woolford**. Any member wishing to contribute is asked to send the contribution to our Chairman, Grahame Fisher.

Changes of addresses/email address Please remember to let us know if you change your address or email address. After each issue we lose contact with a number of our members, with Newsletters and emails being returned as undeliverable.

Overdue subscriptions If you have received notification that your subscription is due for renewal or is in arrears, we would ask you to please give this matter your attention before it slips your mind.

Email addresses If you have received this Newsletter by post and are now on email, we ask you to let us have your email address (by sending an email to omanewsletter@aol.com) so that we can send future issues

Annual Dinner

Friday 20th March 2015
at 6.30pm for 7.30pm
At Maidenhead Golf Club

Booking form on back page

Chairman: Grahame Fisher, Bramleigh, Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead SL6 2PZ (01628 625555)

Hon. Sec: Vacancy

Hon. Treas: Andrew Bond, 60 Ray Park Avenue, Maidenhead SL6 8DX (07879 426442)

Committee: Colin Cutler (President), Mrs Helen Duncombe, Paul Frazer (Principal), Tony Lehain, Daniel Lister, Christopher Nunn, Robert Weston.

by email, thereby cutting delivery time by some 10 days and reducing our postage costs for which we no longer have a sponsor.

News of the College

We thank Paul Frazer, the Principal, for contributing the following article

I can look back on 2014 with some satisfaction as Principal of Desborough College, but far more importantly I can look forward to 2015 with great optimism.

September 2014 saw the arrival of an Ofsted Inspection team which came as no surprise because they visit all sponsored academies within two years of them being established. The timing of the visit, the second week of the new academic year, could have been more in our favour because teachers, including the ten Newly Qualified Teachers who had joined the school only eight days before the visit, had barely time to learn the names of their pupils. Indeed, I had barely time to learn the name of the teachers!

The overall judgement was Good (the full report is on the website), and my disappointment at not receiving Outstanding is well-documented. Next time Ofsted visit, within the next two years, I believe that we will be deemed Outstanding and I will be able to declare that Desborough is back where it belongs: at the top of the pile. Why am I so confident and what drives me to making such bullish predictions knowing that I could end up with egg on my face? Simple enough: the boys and the staff. There now exists a real can-do ethos at Desborough and nobody here wants to settle for second-best. News of our resurgence is spreading and the numbers opting to join us in September 2015 is the highest for five years.

We saw a number of improvements to the school site last year, most notably the Dan Jacoby Studios, a new drama facility costing £500,000 and fittingly named after one of our governors whose prodigious work on behalf of the boys attending Desborough has been appropriately acknowledged and celebrated.

In terms of sporting achievements it was a good year, with our First XV going through the season unbeaten apart from in the fourth round of a national cup competition. We were clear winners of what has become the most important fixture of the school calendar: the annual memorial match against Claire's Court.

*Certainly one highlight of the year was the visit of Old Maidonian, **Brigadier Matthew Holmes DSO RM (1978/83)**, who fully engaged the entire sixth-form with a pictorial account of aspects of his career in the Royal Marines. He has about him a remarkable presence and is a great ambassador for Desborough and role-model for the boys who were delighted that he chose to come back to his old school and deliver what was an inspirational presentation.*

The school motto: 'Strenuis Ardua Cedunt' translates as "Difficulties yield to diligence." Be assured that I, with the support of my staff, the governors and our sponsors, The

Education Foundation, will be diligent in removing all obstacles to us achieving the Outstanding judgement that our boys deserve.

David Course Memorial match - 2014 This competition is held to commemorate the memory of **David Course (1966/73)**, a renowned rugby player who later became a key member of staff at Claires Court School as Second Master and rugby coach. The eighth match in the series, played on 12th November 2014, saw Desborough, who had lost the last three matches against Claires Court, score a very convincing 29 points to 3, levelling the series at 4 all.

BBC Radio 4 broadcast In March, the BBC approached the College regarding a programme on Radio 4 they were making on the effect of government legislation on the school since the 1944 Education Act. Desborough had been selected to be featured in view of the various stages of its development under local authority control from the Maidenhead County Boys' School to Maidenhead Grammar School, and then to the comprehensive Desborough School. It then became a grant-maintained school under the control of its governors before reverting to local authority control and finally achieving its current status as an academy, with the name change to Desborough College. The producer and presenter interviewed the Principal, the Chair of Governors and Colin Cutler as an Old Boy of the school and a long serving Chair of Governors.

The programme recorded contributions from several previous Education Ministers who talked about the legislative changes they had introduced. Desborough was mentioned throughout the programme and Colin Cutler's recollections of the school during his time as a pupil were included. The programme went out under the title of 'Government versus the Teachers'.

Old Maidonians' Sport

Golf

41st Annual Match v College did not take place as some members of the College team were on a school trip and others were in another golf competition.

40th Competition for the Brooks Cup – 18th July 2014 took place on a fine summer's day, with 13 participants. Last year's winner, **Nick Snell**, was not able to play because of flying duties. The winner, on countback, was 14 year old Nandit Sondagar with 34 points off a handicap of 17. Since the competition his golf has continued to develop and his current handicap has now come down to 11. The runner-up David Long, is always one of the leading scorers in this competition and for a second time lost only on countback. In 2012, with 39 points, he lost to David Langley, playing off scratch.

The leading scores were:-

	Handicap	Stableford Points	Ranking
Nandit Sondagar	17	34	1*
David Long	15	34	2
Peter McNicoll	18	32	3
Barrie Woolford	21	29	4
Richard Woolmer	12	28	5*
Rajpal Bahra	21	28	6

*On countback



*Colin Cutler presenting
Nandit Sondagar with the Brooks Cup*



*Some of the players in the 2014 Brooks Cup
From left to right – Rajpal Bahra, Steve Hill, Tim Hamilton, Pete
McNicoll, Richard Woolmer, David Long, Nandit Sondagar,
Michael Clyde, Barrie Woolford, and
Colin Cutler*

The Brooks Cup Competition - In the 40 years since **Eric Brooks (1915/21)** presented the trophy named after him, many hundreds have taken part in the annual competition. Among those who took part in the competition while at school and have subsequently had success in the professional ranks are:-

Van Philips (1983/88) A Walker Cup player, turned Professional in 1993, played on the Champions and European Tours, winner of the Algarve Portuguese Open in 1999; now the Teaching Professional and Academy Director at Dukes Meadow Golf Course, Chiswick.

Max Newman (1982/87) Brooks Cup winner in 1985. Played in a number of satellite tours, now the Professional at Galton Manor Golf Club, Dorking.

Will Dugdale (1987/94) Brooks Cup winner in 1990. Oxford and Cambridge: golf blues; member of the Europro tour, now Head of German, Dulwich College.

Warren Defoy (1986/91) Brooks Cup winner in 1991, turned Professional in 1994, now Professional at Hazlewood Golf Centre, Sunbury-on-Thames.

Nick Scrutton (1998/2001) Brooks Cup joint winner in 2006 and outright winner 2007, turned professional in 2014 (see page 7).

David Langley (2005/10) Brooks Cup winner in 2011. Not yet a professional but has a golfing scholarship to Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia (see page 6).

Rugby

The annual OMA v College took place at Maidenhead Rugby Club on 17th December 2014. As in the last few years this was an exciting game, with the OMA gaining a narrow win by 22 points to 19. After the match over 60 enjoyed a meal, after which awards were presented to individual members of the College 1st XV by Tim Hamilton and Joe Allen of the College's sports staff and by Mr Stephen Jones, the Sunday Times rugby correspondent who assists with the coaching of the team.

News of Old Maidonians

The Association is always pleased to hear from Old Maidonians, acknowledges with thanks the news they have provided about themselves and about other Old Maidonians, and invites members to send in their news. Please give dates of joining and leaving School in all communications, to assist in identification.

Nigel Bevan (1965/72) We congratulate Nigel on his appointment as County Commissioner of Scouting in Berkshire, which has a membership of over 10,500 and is still growing. For the past six years he had been the District Commissioner of Scouting in Maidenhead, overseeing a significant growth in the numbers in the District. As a boy he had been a member of the 18th Maidenhead Scout Group (based at the school), later becoming Venture Scout Leader in the Group.

Nigel is a Chartered Surveyor and now, with a partner, runs Quantic Management which prides itself on completing projects on budget and within the agreed time scale.

David Chant (1971/75) We were delighted that Dave, who has been in New Zealand for the last 40 years, got in touch with us after viewing our website. He has now become a member of the OMA. We thank him for this summary of what has been happening to him since leaving Desborough. His tribute to the School will no doubt be echoed by many Old Maids.



*It was with sadness that I heard all too late, of the death of my school friend **Martin Briggs (1971/78)**. Another class mate, **Michael White (1970/76)**, had communicated the news via Facebook. Unfortunately I'm no Facebooker and got the message 10 months late - but it stirred a nostalgic bone in me and led me to the Old Maids website. Thanks to Betty Colin, Colin Cutler and Tony Lehain (one of my many long-suffering teachers. I managed to acquire a copy of Mr Evans' '100 Not Out' and Mr Wilmott's print of the school, both teachers who had to endure my educational indifference. The book and artwork will take pride of place on Waiheke Island (this will become clearer).*

In 1975 at my completion of the 4th form, my parents, my 2 sisters, my younger brother and I left for New Zealand, which for a teenage English boy was a culture shock indeed. I managed to get an apprenticeship in refrigeration engineering and became qualified in 1980. I have spent most of my working life at all levels of the industry and am currently managing the refrigeration and mechanical services assets for a large supermarket chain (Countdown) with 172 sites, a role I continue to enjoy.

In 1982, I married my wife, Janine, a Regional Manager and MRI specialist for a private radiology company. We have two boys, Nicolas (27) and Thomas (24) and live in Cockle Bay, Howick, which is a suburb in the East of Auckland by the sea...well, inner harbour.

We have just been lucky enough to have just bought a holiday place in Palm Beach, Waiheke Island which is an hour ferry trip from our home. It is very accessible (Google maps) and we can't wait to get over there with our two dogs, Benson and Harley (Bichon / Tibetan spaniels). Be assured, it is modest but in a beautiful place.

We love to travel and have been to most places in the South Pacific, more recently to Bali, which was fabulous. I have been back to my ancestral home a couple of times, initially in 1988 and more recently in 2008, dragging my very tolerant wife to all my old haunts including the school where we met Mr Evans who said that he remembered me and even if he didn't, it was still very nice to be back.

I have always been an avid sportsman, reaching levels of mediocrity (1st team and Reserves) at my club, Fencibles Utd. The Fencibles were the original British defence force stationed here in the mid 1800s, for those of you with an interest in history. I finally retired in 2009 and moved into coaching, currently an Auckland division 1, championship - winning under -35s team. I have been lucky enough to have been selected as a team liaison officer for the upcoming Fifa under-20 World Cup in Qatar, a career sporting highlight for me. I am also a keen golfer at my

local club, Whitford Park, with a handicap 10.9 currently. I often wish I'd played earlier in my life, especially with the golf club across the road from the school. One day I'm going to play in the Old Maids tournament.

Finally, while researching the history, I discovered the passing of Mr Len Reynolds who was Headmaster whilst I was there. He was a man who not only commanded respect, he was totally deserving of it. He is woven into the fabric of the school and someone I can look back at with pride, having been there during his tenure. I was not a stellar student; those of you who may remember me will no doubt attest to that. However, Maidenhead Grammar School and Desborough gave me things that cannot be taught and have contributed to who I am today. I will always think fondly of my time there and hope to maintain the contact from the other side of the world.

Should there be any ex-pupils (or even their offspring) travelling this way, they will always be welcome, dave.janine@xtra.co.nz

My best wishes and good luck to you all.

David Eyre (1963/70: headmaster 1996/2005) retired from teaching in 2011 and began his retirement by entering the world of politics. He was elected as a Borough Councillor (Labour) for Brighton Hill South in Basingstoke in May 2012 and served for two years. He assisted the Labour Group in the town by writing their educational manifesto and he worked on several committees of the council, including Development Control and Human Resources.

In April 2014 David moved up to the West Midlands with his wife in order to realise his dream of commissioning his own bespoke narrowboat. He now lives in Market Drayton in Shropshire and hopes to have the new narrowboat, in the water by April this year. The boat, to be named Ella, is being built by Bourne Boatbuilders at Rode Heath on the Trent and Mersey Canal and will be the 29th they have made.



Ella in its embryonic state

David and his wife intend spending the next few years exploring all of the waterways of England and Wales and they expect to be passing through Maidenhead one day on the River Thames! More details of the boat can be found at www.ellanbtravels.blogspot.co.uk.

Harrie Hayward (1983/90) has sent us the following information:- After a few years back in Maidenhead, I have moved recently to Burnham, where I am currently busy renovating my new home. I still work for a dental manufacturer in Surrey, and when not busy with either of the above I can usually be found dancing at pubs and village fairs with Datchet Border Morris. We are available

for hire, and photos and further details can be found on our website www.datchetmorris.org.uk.

I have been involved with TIMBERTOWN, an event for young people that has taken place in Maidenhead now for the last 31 years. It was started by my mother, Erika, who was a teacher at Desborough for many years. Literally thousands of local children have enjoyed building, painting and playing at Timbertown since 1984! This year's event will have a "Proms" theme, and we'd like to hear from anyone who is involved in a brass band or similar and would be interested in performing at the opening on the morning of Sat 29th August!

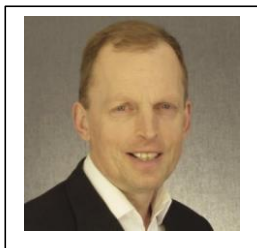
Datchet Border Morris has a busy summer programme planned, including our May Morning sunrise dance at Runnymede (5:30 - in the morning!), a Day of Dance in Windsor on 4th July and a celebration of the Magna Carta anniversary in Wraybury on 13-14th June. Details will all be on our website soon! We are also currently looking for new members.

In between, I like to visit Reading's folk club, Readifolk, as often as I can, as well as singing sea shanties at Harwich International Shanty Festival each October.

If anyone wants to contact me, they can reach me through the websites www.timbertown.org.uk or www.datchetmorris.org.uk.

Branton Kenton-Dau

(1972/79) writes:- I moved to New Zealand in 1996 for the adventure. It was the other side of the world, a tiny country with barely 4 million people while I had built my consulting business in the UK with companies such as IBM, Xerox, Nestle not to mention GQHC and the Ministry of Defence, all of whom had more staff than any New Zealand organisation.



Adventure I found in plenty. The first company I created provided an innovative way for corporates to measure their environmental improvements. It became a UK plc and is still going. I met my wife at a Ceroc (a mixture of Salsa and Jive but with less complicated footwork) dance class and sat outside on a freezing winter's night after the class speaking with her in French. Very romantic and very cold! We now have three teenage children, top athletes and gifted artists.

I have always been interested in how people tick. Even at Desborough I took Divinity A Level with Mr Wooff who became my friend for many years after I left school. I also received a First Class Honours degree in Religious Studies from Lancaster University in 1982. My next company in New Zealand investigated the relationship between corporate culture and financial performance in S&P500 companies. This developed into a way of asking people 10 simple questions that enabled up to predict this behaviour. We demonstrated it could improve Google's search engine. We worked with many of the major insurance and telephone companies in the US, China, Australia and Europe to see if

it could help their businesses. Eventually however we could not get around the need to ask the 10 questions and the company folded.

That was my first real failure and it took me a couple of years of trying to keep the company afloat and dealing with my guilt of letting our investors, including my family, down before I could return to a more balanced sense of self. I learnt our failures, as much as our successes are opportunities to learn about ourselves. They can help us become more enthused about who we are and more tolerant of our shortcomings.

In 2011 Christchurch where I live was hit by a number of devastating earthquakes. Our home was severely damaged and we were camping out on the lawn for the first few weeks. Seeing the ground I was standing on turn to jelly and watching to see which house was going to come down upon me was an experience I will never forget. My main thought was 'Isn't death banal'.

To say that it shook us all up is an understatement. Part of the shakeup for me was immensely beneficial. Standing on the lawn one morning beside the tent I had a flash of inspiration that the financial markets work as electrical systems. I had been interested in the markets for a few years and had even been told that I could make a contribution in this area but I never thought it would unfold like this. In fact the process started during the time I was at Desborough. In the evenings and at the weekend I would often spend hours in my room drawing recurring geometric patterns – circles, spirals, vortices. That love of patterns over the last 4 years had led me to unravel the structure of the S&P500, Gold and many other markets. You can see where I have got to on my website www.kenton-dau.com. Once you know the structure of a market you can trade it for consistent returns without any further information.

The link between playing with patterns while at Desborough and the breakthroughs I have made have reinforced for me how important it is to follow what you love. You will never know how it is going to work out but along the way the most important compass we have had is to keep doing what we love. It's keeping that feeling in my heart that makes me feel younger today than I did during my time at the school.

The King brothers were both involved in fund-raising activities for charity organisations during 2014, towards which the OMA Committee was pleased to make a contribution.

Henry King (2003/10) has graduated from Leicester University in Law with French Law and Language. In order to raise money for a trip to China in 2010 he memorably shaved his head while at school. In 2014 he set out to raise £800 to do International Citizen Service with VSO to go to Nepal for 3 months. As part of the fund-raising he ran in the Strasbourg half marathon. While in Nepal he worked in the health/education sectors covering HIV/AIDS, sex education and women's rights.

Andrew King (2005/2012) who is reading Philosophy and English at Warwick University where he was elected President of the Raising and Giving (RAG) Society. He set out to raise £1000 for Practical Action, an international charity fighting poverty throughout the world. Included in his fund-raising efforts was a sponsored cycle ride from Crystal Palace Gardens in London to the Eiffel Tower in Paris, which he completed in three days, with over 100 other cyclists who raised over £100,000 between them. Andy provided us with a graphic description of aspects of the ride.

David Langley (2005/10) In July 2014 David sent us the following update:

Just to update you on how my golf is progressing. I've just finished my first of four years at Old Dominion University in Virginia.

Having had a good first year out there academically and golf, I've come back for three months of summer and I've been playing well. My handicap has come down reaching +3,4 and as well as top 10's in some national tournaments I won the Berks Bucks & Oxon county championship at Mentmore golf club shooting – 18 for 4 rounds and a final round 65 (-7) to win by 8 shots. This definitely tops all my previous achievements and has given me lots of confidence for future tournaments.

We have now received a further update as follows:

There hasn't been much change here for me since the summer. I played all four of the tournaments in the autumn semester here at Old Dominion University and played steady golf, the highlight was a 16th place finish at Firestone. In the class room I received Deans list honours for academic success. This is for athletic students who obtain a 3.4GPA or above (maximum GPA is 4.0). I achieved a 3.53GPA with five A's and one B grade which I am very pleased with. As for my golf we are just about to fly down to Florida to play at TPC Sawgrass to play in a tournament and then two weeks later we will be flying out to California to play. My current World ranking is at 858 which is the lowest it has been so far and my goal this year is to break into the top 500 in the world. Here is a link to my world ranking page where you can view my results and their points allocations.
<http://www.wagr.com/en/Ranking/Player.aspx?playerid=13879&isMens=True>.

I look forward to the Brooks cup this year!

James McGill (2003/10) studied Economics at the University of Reading, graduating in July 2013. He left his part time job at Tesco in Maidenhead in the final year. At the end of July 2013, he started working for Donald Reid Group in Maidenhead as a trainee Chartered Accountant. When time allows he enjoys playing golf at Maidenhead Golf Club, squash, football and tennis.

Philip Palmer ((1957/62) who is a regular attendee at our Annual Dinners, relocated to Malta early in 2014. He set up his own company in the healthcare logistics sector, later operating worldwide, being based in High Wycombe. After 21 years Philip sold the company to a German enterprise, before becoming concerned with the buying and selling of businesses. He and his wife Yvette now live in Rabat, Malta. In answer to our question about the reasons for this move, Philip has kindly sent us the following:-

As I have now retired (for the third and definitely the last time) and because we felt we couldn't take another winter of continuous rain and dark skies we were looking for somewhere warm to live. We looked at various options and chose Malta as not only is the weather very warm but it also has a sympathetic tax regime. Like the Isle of Man, Gibraltar and the Channel Islands there is no capital gains tax. There is however a downside. In order to become resident we have to spend a minimum of six months here each year and we are only allowed back in the UK for a total of 90 days a year.

For some Malta may be an acquired taste but it is steeped in history (Knights of St John, Ottoman Siege, Napoleon, the British, WW11) and has the most impressive Baroque buildings. The weather, of course, is fantastic and the lifestyle is fairly laid back. We have made many new friends through the British Residents' Association and Malte Accueil (the French equivalent) and we frequently entertain visitors and family from the UK.

I hope that is sufficient for the newsletter – I could write much more as I am becoming something of a bore on Maltese history – if you need any more let me know.

I shall be attending the dinner this year so I look forward to seeing you on the 20th. [We have indicated to Phil that we would welcome an article on this topic.]

Richard Pearce (1956/61) has moved to Bath from his home for the last 17 years in Portishead. He tells us that the main reason is not having grandchildren and so Richard and his wife Maggie are looking for a more active social life and in their new home many of the amenities are within walking distance.

Richard, who says he has been semi-retired for the last 12 years, still takes an active interest in the running of his pub, the Two Brewers in Street, Somerset.

He is a keen outdoor bowler and is now General Secretary of the Somerset Bowls Association.

Richard's new address is 9 Connaught Mansions, Great Pulteney St, Bath BA2 4BP tel. number 01225 338175.

Nick Scrutton (1998/2003) a former Head Boy and very talented golfer who was joint winner of the Brooks Cup in 2006 and the outright winner in 2007, turned professional in March 2014 after a couple of very successful seasons in the amateur ranks. He tells us *I thought my game was good enough to compete on the more local tours at least and with*

a bit of development I could one day achieve my dream of reaching the European Tour. My game progressed from strength to strength through 2014 & in November I notched up my first two wins as a professional, my proudest moment coming in a play-off win at Monte Rei in the Algarve, Portugal. We congratulate Nick on the promising start he has made to his professional career and wish him further success in the future.

Nick Townsend (1962/69) is a sports writer and prolific author who has now published or ghost written six books. He was, for many years, a sports feature writer on the *Daily Mail* before joining the *Independent on Sunday*, initially as football correspondent and later chief sports writer. He is currently a freelance writer, predominantly for the *Sunday Times*. He collaborated with Sir Steve Redgrave and Sir Ben Ainslie on their autobiographies. He is a long-time confidant of the Irish trainer and highly successful trainer Barney Curley and assisted him with his acclaimed life story *Giving A Little Back*. His latest book, *The Sure Thing: The Greatest Coup in Horse Racing History*, published in February 2014 (paperback version is due out in April), tells how Curley beat the bookies with winnings of £2 million in 1970, £3.9 million in 2010 and an estimated £2 million early in 2014. Nick lives with his wife Louise near Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.



We asked Nick how he had started his career and we thank him for this contribution:-

I remember producing a poem for the 1964 edition of The Maidonian. I think Bob Stanley said it was excellent, but he was probably just being kind. Also in English classes, I recall one lesson I found particularly interesting in which we had to write a newspaper opinion column. Another was a lesson about how books were produced.

I played for the school tennis team. My doubles partner was Ken Griffin, who is still a close friend. The team was unbeaten, and we received school colours.

After school, I went to East Berks College, Windsor for a year, and then to Enfield College to do a Social Science degree but left after a year.

I started my career as a photographer with an agency in Hertfordshire (I travelled with Tottenham Hotspur as part of the job), and then joined a big newspaper group, the North London Weekly Herald series. I switched to writing, eventually becoming news editor. I was also film critic. The moment I best recall was interviewing the actress Sigourney Weaver who had just appeared in 'Alien'.

When the paper's owners, Thomson, decided to close the group, I bought the title, relaunched it and ran it for four years as editor and managing director - exciting, but highly stressful. I then joined the Daily Mail as a racing sub-editor, including giving a daily tip under the name The Wizard - reasonably successfully! I eventually became sports feature writer, and was at the Daily Mail for 12 years. I later joined the Independent on Sunday as football

correspondent, before being promoted to Chief Sports Writer, covering the range of the Olympics, World Cups, Ashes Test series, Open and Ryder Cup golf and Wimbledon.

I am now freelance, covering mostly football for The Sunday Times, while concentrating on books.

As I said, a few of us from MGS meet up roughly once a year. The others are Ken Griffin, John Hall, Vaughan Pearce, Hugh Bulford, Dave Ritson, Chris Rasey, and Ron Emmons.

John Woodward (member of staff 1972/95) was a former second-in-charge of English, Year Head and in charge of Tennis and Badminton at Desborough. His proud claim is that throughout his time one or other of the age groups in tennis or badminton were County Champions. During the summer holidays John used to run his own tennis coaching business and he left Desborough to concentrate on tennis coaching full-time. He and his wife, Justine, run a successful tennis academy in Crowthorne, their clientele ranging from individuals to classes at schools and colleges. They both still enjoy their tennis and as John says, 'It's nice being paid for doing something you really like doing'.

While at Desborough John was to have an important influence on the future BBC Dragon **Peter Jones CBE (1977/82)**, whom John used to employ in the summer holidays as an assistant coach. Peter has gone on record to say how much he learned from John in how to handle clients.

John and Justine live at 'Woodlands', Wellingtonia Avenue, Crowthorne, Berks RG45 6AF: tel 01344 775952

In Memoriam

We regret to report the deaths of the following and extend our sympathies to the families.

Adam Archer (1986/93) has died at the age of 39. His contemporary, **Sam Wheeler (1986/93)** has sent us the following tribute:- *I'm sad to report the passing of a contemporary of mine, Adam Archer with his infectious charm, was very well-liked at Desborough. He played for the 1st XV at rugby (at 2nd row). He was most renowned at the school for his bodybuilding exploits. His lunchbox of tuna, pasta, chicken etc was a constant source of mirth in the Sixth Form common room. Adam is survived by his wife Sarah, son & daughter.*

David F Chesterman (1948/53) died in January 2015 at the age of 78. On leaving School, Dave joined High Duty Alloys (HDA), Slough, and attended Acton Technical College, studying metallurgy. For some years he was in charge of the Metal Physics Laboratory at HDA before moving to Goring Kerr, Windsor, working on metal detection in their Electronics Section, later becoming

Works Manager. When the company was taken over by a US company Dave was appointed to tour the world lecturing on metal detection, before retiring.

Dave had been a Cub and Scout and when his sons reached Scout age he became Scout Leader of the Furze Platt Scout Group, before becoming a District Scout Leader and then, for a number of years, Assistant District Commissioner (Scouts). For some years he was the Chairman of the Maidenhead District Scout Council, latterly being appointed its President. For a number of years Dave was joint manager of the District Scout Shop and at the time of his death was the District Badge Secretary. Dave is survived by his wife, Dorothy, and two sons, Ian and Colin, to whom we send out condolences.

Michael Vaughan (Chemistry teacher 1977/90) – a tribute by his former colleague, **Chris Nunn (1967/74)** former Assistant Headteacher. [We apologise for the fact that this tribute did not appear in our previous issue. **Editor**]

Michael died in May 2013 at the age of 58, after a brave battle with cancer. As a graduate chemist he made a considerable contribution to the Science Department, encouraging many students to develop their talents further by supporting applications to Higher Education with passion and a great deal of success. He was popular and respected by Staff, pupils and parents alike. He made an invaluable contribution to the extra-curricular life of the School in activities such as Young Enterprise, that he led, and educational visits to Europe. He was a popular mentor for a number of student teachers and continued his own professional development alongside his teaching duties.

Following his career at Desborough he gained promotion and worked at The Ridgeway School, Swindon and then Waingel's College in Woodley, Reading.

*Michael was a keen supporter of Wolverhampton Wanderers. He supported the OMA and enjoyed many OMA Annual Dinners. His wife, Sally, has taught at Newlands School for many years. As a parent governor at Desborough from 2000 to 2006 she chaired the Curriculum Committee for much of that time, providing valuable contributions to developments at Desborough. Their two children are Laura and **Peter (1998/2005)**. Laura graduated in History from Warwick in 2009 and now works in London. Peter graduated in Law and German at Nottingham University before completing a Masters in Commercial Law in 2010. He is currently a qualified Trade Mark Attorney with Boulton Wade Tennant and lives in Cambridge.*

Eric John Wooddin (member of Staff 1956/64) We thank **Graham Bridges (1957/63)** for this contribution

Eric who died in 2013, was born in Dumfermline, Scotland in 1928. His father was a cypher clerk with the Admiralty at Rosyth. Both of Eric's parents were keen musicians and played in the local orchestra. When Eric was just a year old, his father (aged 38) died of influenza, and within days of that his baby sister (only 5 days old) also died.

Eric's mother decided to move back to Rochester, Kent from where they had originally moved and with the support of both sets of grandparents, life went on at 32 Star Hill. Eric's mother imbued Eric with a love for the church, strength, honesty, integrity, a wicked sense of humour and a great love of music.

In 1939 at age 11 Eric won a scholarship to Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School but within a year, enemy bombing resulted in the school, along with the Girls' Grammar School, being evacuated to Canterbury. Some while later the schools returned to Rochester where Eric and nine other lads attended the Girls' School to study the arts. He was heavily involved with the church youth club at this time as an organiser. Eric was offered a scholarship at Oxford to study French, but decided to attend Kings University in London instead. Whilst at University, Eric developed a love of ballet and opera, learned to box, to fence to a high standard under a Spanish Master Fencer and took 6 months out to live in France (La Rochelle) to perfect his French.

Having achieved a good degree, he looked forward to no more studying and presented himself for Nation Service. At his initial interview he was invited to join the Special Branch of the Navy, so duly signed the Official Secrets Act in order to discover more. He was assigned to the Joint Services School for Linguists, where followed a very intense 18 month course in Russian. Eric would never be drawn exactly on what he did, but he did serve on a motor torpedo boat in the Baltic, and it is believed that he served on dangerous clandestine missions to unfriendly countries behind the Iron Curtain where capture would probably have meant no return.

Returning to Civilian life Eric considered joining the church (he had already achieved a Theological qualification at Kings) but in the end decided that teaching was the road to follow with his first appointment being in the tough environment of Woolwich Polytechnic, where he taught French.

After Woolwich Eric joined Maidenhead Grammar School: he and his mother lived in Highway Avenue. He continued to teach French for 8 years (he once joked you don't get 8 years for murder!). Whilst at Maidenhead Grammar, he became famous for his interest in Aircraft and formed a new Thursday afternoon activity, "The Aero Club". He also had a passion for old cars, particularly Bristols and he had an old and very rare Aston. He could be seen sometimes working on one of these even in the rain whilst wearing an old gabardine mackintosh tied up with string.

Eric's next career move was to Ewell, The North East Surrey College of Technology. Here, Eric's first position was teaching Russian and English but then took on the French Teaching post, later becoming Head of Business Studies Department, and still he managed to squeeze in some fencing lessons.

Whilst at Ewell, Eric met and married Heather and they were to have 30 happy years together. They had 2 children, Kristina and Jonathan. Kristina took up ballet and Eric, of course, was able to help her.

Eric will also be remembered outside of the success of his academic career. He was the kind of person who made friends easily, and once you were a friend of Eric, you were a friend for life. His interests and dedication were wide. His love and knowledge of cars led to his being involved with judging classic cars at concourse events, connections with Lagonda and Bristol Cars which led to several job offers (which he declined). He was chairman of the Bristol Owners club for many years. He was often seen helping ex MGS pupil, the late John Carter, with both his famous Steam Fair, and earlier with John's Pre-50 American Car Rallies during the 1960's and 70's. Even earlier on he had felt privileged to be the deputy clerk of the course at several British F1 Grand Prix events, meeting some of the "Greats" like Stirling Moss, James Hunt and Nikki Lauder. Eric often joked that he was better known in motoring circles than education.

However his greatest love, even beyond his cars, was flying. He first took up gliding and then learned to fly powered aircraft at White Waltham Aerodrome where he obtained his Private Pilot Licence. Later he was attracted to hot air balloons and at one time came overall 2nd in the Irish balloon championships, of which he was very proud. Apparently not so proud when ballooning in Belgium; he landed the balloon in the compound of NATO headquarters and was rapidly surrounded by armed troops. As ever, Eric was able to charm the head of NATO HQ and even took him for a quick tethered flight before packing up the balloon.

Eric enjoyed a colourful, happy and fulfilling life which was filled with "joie de vivre". He was a man who succeeded in all and everything he took on, a polymath. Though Eric, with typical modesty and humility, would have laughed off the very idea of being a polymath.

Eric always endeavoured to serve his God, his country, his family and his friends in whatever way he could. He had a great capacity for love and understanding, an irrepressible sense of humour and a sense of perspective. He cherished his family and his friends. He was a good listener, a born teacher with enormous wisdom and grace.

A truly lovely man.

Table Plan for the Annual Dinner 28th March 2014

Table 1

Andy Bond
Colin Cutler
Colin Edwards
Grahame Fisher
Paul Frazer
Bob Halfacre
Andrew Jenner The Mayor
Julia Jenner The Mayoress
Jeremy Sams

Table 2

Lisa Colley
Helen Duncombe
David Evans
Dawn Hughes
Rachel Leedale
Tony Lehain
Chris Nunn
Hazel Pickett
Steve Reed
George Scott
Hilary Seth
James Ward
Ken Wheeler

Table 3

Jackie Carr
Jasmeet Chagger
Matt Davis
Tom Gibson
James Herron
Andy King
Chris Lee
Matt Mault
Martyn Nicholas
Tinashe Nyereoyere
Christina Sansom

Table 4

Mel Bridges
Ray Clark
Steve Godfrey
Tony Grant
Ian Hammond
Fred Hearnab
Chris Maltin
John Moses
John Nash
John Powell
Bart Sams
Barrie Woolford

Table 5

Ian Baker
Graham Bridges
Pat Folliard
Dave Horton
Mike Lindquist
Philip Palmer
Ken Pragnell
David Scott
John Smith

Table 6

John Plews
David Revell
Mark Roberts
Geoff Strawbridge
Chris Thirkettle
Mike Willoughby

Table 7

Geoff Barnes
Barry Hatch
Keith Hatch
Tony Johnson
Jack Tomlin
Derek Woolford

Table 8

Carlton Barnard
Nigel Bevan
Ian Bishop
Adrian Cannon
Jonathan Casey
Gurinder Gill
Peter Jacobs
Chris Jones
Steve Nash
Mike Webster
Rob Weston



***David Scott, Pat Folliard, David Horton and
Ken Pragnell***



David Scott, Ken Pragnell and John Smith



Pat Folliard, Phil Palmer and Graham Bridges



***Phil Palmer, Graham Bridges, Mike Lindquist
and Ian Baker***



***Dave Revell, Chris Thirkettle and
John Plews***



Geoff Strawbridge and Mike Willoughby

Annual Dinner – Booking Form

Friday 20th March 2015 at 6.30 pm for 7.30 pm

You are warmly invited to come to the above event in the cordial surroundings of Maidenhead Golf Club. As in recent years there will be no guest speaker and other speeches will be kept to a minimum to give those attending more opportunity to converse with other members present.

The ticket price has had to be increased from last year's, at £23 for paid-up members and £25 for Old Maidonians who are not members of the Association. Those joining on the night will be refunded the £2 difference in ticket price.

For those who would like to visit the School there will be an opportunity of making a tour at 5 pm, starting at the School Reception. Please mark the form below accordingly.

If you or any members of your party require a vegetarian meal, please indicate on the form below.

The bar will close at 11.30 pm and the Club will close at 11.45 pm.

Tickets will be available only from Mrs Betty Collin, although orders may be left at the School Office, care of Mrs Read.

All orders must be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. Tickets will be issued only for named Old Boys. Members wishing to make party bookings must name those on whose behalf they are purchasing tickets.

Please use the booking-form and complete all requested details. **Bookings cannot be accepted if they arrive after Monday 16th March 2015.**

To: Mrs Betty Collin, 18 Badminton Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 4QT (tel: 01628 626349; e-mail bill.collin@talktalk.net)

Name* Address

..... Tel

Email address At School from to

I wish to attend the Annual Dinner on Friday 20th March 2014 and I shall be in a party which includes the Old Maidonians whose names and addresses are listed below. I enclose a cheque (endorsed a/c payee only) drawn to the Old Maidonians' Association, **together with a stamped and addressed envelope, please**, for tickets as follows:

.....tickets at £23 each, ...tickets at £25 each. The total value of my cheque is £.....

(Signed).....

Years at School

Names* and initials of party Address from..... to

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

6.....

*Please include first name (or name known by) and initials

Numbers of vegetarian meals required

Names of those interested in touring the school at 5 pm.....

.....

.....

Continue on a separate sheet, if necessary