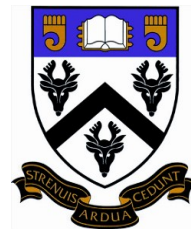




O.M.A.D.S.

Newsletter No. 88 January 2022
President: Colin A R Cutler BSc FPRI
Website: www.oldmaidonians.org.uk



The Newsletter of the Old Maidonians and Desborough Society

OMADS Committee News

The Society's Centenary The Old Maidonians' Association, the forerunner of this Society, was formed in 1924 and the Committee will be considering ways to mark the Centenary of this event. Any suggestions from our members would be welcomed by our Chairman, Grahame Fisher.

OMADS Annual Dinner 2022 A booking has been made with Maidenhead Golf Club for this event to be held there on 1st April 2022. After the cancellations of the 2020 and 2021 Dinners due to Covid-19 we hope that members will reserve this date and contact others to make up a party.

The Wilfred Upson Prize This prize is awarded to former pupils of the School/College who have brought the most honour to the School/College during a year. It had been our understanding that the prize was initiated by Bishop George Appleton (1913/20) in recognition of Thomas Wilfred Upson's (1910/19) services to the Old Maidonians' Association of which he was a founder member, its Secretary for 25 years and its Treasurer for a further 15 years. It had also been our understanding that Bishop Appleton was Wilfred Upson's brother-in-law. These statements were included in the history of the OMA on our website.

We have now been informed by Wilfred Upson's daughter Christine Moore, that the Appletons and the Upsons were family friends and were not related. Bishop Appleton suggested to the Upsons that they might wish to consider making a donation to the School for a prize to be named after Wilfred in memory of his services to the Old Maidonians' Association. The funding was provided initially by Christine's mother and a further donation was made by Christine after her mother's death. Bishop Appleton communicated the family's wishes to the School and to the Old Maidonians' Association.

We are grateful to Christine, who lives in Calgary, Alberta, for the background she has provided. The Society's website has been amended accordingly.

In recent years the Prize has taken the form of a cheque for £100. It was last awarded in 2017 and if any members wish to make a nomination, please advise our Chairman, Grahame Fisher.

Changes of address/email address/phone 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. Please notify the Chairman or omanewsletter@aol.com

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 by email, thereby cutting delivery time by some 10 days and reducing our postage costs.

News of OMADS The Society is always pleased to hear from pupils of the School/College and acknowledges with thanks the news they have provided in this issue. We invite further contributions for the next issue of the Newsletter and ask that School/College joining and leaving dates are given in all communications to assist identification.

ANNUAL DINNER

Friday 1st April 2022

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: Vacant

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

Committee: Gareth Andrews-Jones, Ms Maggie Callaghan (Principal), Colin Cutler (President and Newsletter Editor), Mrs Helen Duncombe, Mrs Bernadette Eaves (Senior Assistant Principal), Tony Lehai, Daniel Lister, Robert Weston.

Desborough College News

Principal's Update

We thank Maggie Callaghan, Principal, for the following news about Desborough.

There is no doubt that 2021 continued to provide us with challenges. COVID-19 meant that in January we returned to school for one day before the country was put into lockdown. For us, this meant keeping our doors open for children of keyworkers, whilst providing remote learning for everyone else. Our pastoral team really proved their worth during this time, going above and beyond by visiting boys at home and checking in daily with others.

We were all so delighted to return to school in March albeit in a very limited way with year groups essentially based in 5 or 6 classrooms and teachers moving to them. I am so proud of what we achieved in these challenging circumstances.

We continue to grow and develop our drive to create leaders of the future through The Desborough Way providing opportunities for growth and development. We have had a huge drive on Inclusion, recognising the myriad of cultures, communities, religions, languages and beliefs we are privileged to host at Desborough. This means celebrating the uniqueness of each individual regardless of their gender, race, religion or sexuality. It is incredible see our young people openly discussing, without judgement, these issues and welcoming and celebrating the differences in our school community.

As part of this drive, we have launched 'Desborough Icons', a weekly event where each week students learn about amazing people from a diverse range of backgrounds and at the end of each half term vote on their chosen one. This is with a view to enabling our boys to rename our houses. We would be delighted to hear from any of the OMAD members who would like to suggest Desborough Icons for our boys.

Examples of Desborough Icons



DESBOROUGH ICON- SHASHI THAROOR



WHO IS SHASHI THAROOR?

Shashi Tharoor, (born March 9, 1956, London, England), prominent Indian diplomat and politician who, after long service in the international diplomatic corps, became an official in the government of India.

Tharoor was born into an Indian expatriate family living in London, which returned to India after his birth. He completed a bachelor's degree at the University of Delhi in New Delhi, and in 1978, at age 22, he was awarded a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. At that time Tharoor was the youngest person ever to earn a doctorate from the Fletcher School.

DID YOU KNOW?

Shashi Tharoor has been hugely outspoken against the British empire and is demanding apologies and payments for impact of what Britain did to India.

CLIP TO WATCH!

[Shashi Tharoor interview: How British Colonialism 'destroyed' India - YouTube](#)



DESBOROUGH ICON- MARSH P. JOHNSON



WHO IS MARSHA P. JOHNSON?

MARSH P. JOHNSON WAS AN AMERICAN LGBTQ+ ACTIVIST AND DRAG QUEEN BORN ON AUGUST 24 1945. SHE GREW UP IN ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY WITH SIX OTHER SIBLINGS, ORIGINALLY MALCOLM MICHAELS JR. SHE GREW UP A DEVOUT CHRISTIAN. SHE WAS ALSO A MAJOR PLAYER IN THE STONEWALL RIOTS, SHE WAS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL DRAG QUEENS WHO PLAYED AT THE STONEWALL INN SHE WAS NAMED AS THE "VANGUARD" OF THE PUSHBACK AGAINST POLICE AT THE TIME.

DID YOU KNOW?

MARSHA P. JOHNSON ALSO HAD A TRAUMATIC CHILDHOOD GROWING UP IN A HOMOPHOBIC FAMILY AND BEING RAPED AT 13 BUT HER STRUGGLE RESONATES WITH MANY PEOPLE TO THIS DAY.

HOWEVER JOHNSON HAS BEEN CREDITED AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT GAY ACTIVIST AND A FIGUREHEAD OF GAY PRIDE TO THIS DAY. SADLY SHE PASSED AWAY ON JULY 6 1992 BUT HER LEGACY STILL LIVES ON TODAY.

CLIPS TO WATCH!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_RAuCW814

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkshh6n8oA>

As part of our drive for inclusion, we have introduced personal, social, health and emotional (PSHE) into our curriculum as a dedicated subject to broaden students' understanding of the wider world and their place in it as well as how to have healthy relationships. We are also delighted to have appointed a Head of Religious Education who is working on building a first-class religious education curriculum empowering our students to learn, understand and appreciate beliefs which might be different to their own.

There has been so much more: charity work; work in the community; sporting fixtures; improving extra-curricular provision; training boys to Restart a Heart and the list goes on.

I would like to extend an invitation to any of you – you have an open invitation to come and visit us. I would be extremely proud to show you around the site and for you to meet the next generation of Desborough leaders.

Maggie Callaghan, Principal

OMADs Sports

Golf

43rd Golf Match v Desborough did not take place as the College were not able to raise enough players. Instead a Stableford competition was held on the day with nine Old Maidonians and one pupil taking part.

The leading results were:-

Position	Name	Points	Handicap
Winner	Nick Snell	33	20
Runner-up	Rajpal Bhara	32	20
3rd	Mike Clyde	28	16

Members of the Society taking part were:- Rajpal Bhara (2002/09), Mick Carr (1967/74), Mike Clyde (1955/61), Colin Cutler (1936/43), Grahame Fisher (1952/59), Stephen Godfrey (1954/61), Peter Jacobs (2003/10), Roger Keys (1974/77), Nick Snell (1974/79).

47th Competition for the Brooks Trophy There was an excellent turnout for this competition held on 19th July, one of the hottest days of the year. A total of 23 players took part including a member of staff and three pupils who all did well, one of whom, Josh Gibson, was the winner.

	H'cap	Points	
Josh Gibson	17	36	Winner, Desborough Pupil, Age 16
Roger Keys	17	35	Runner Up
Phil Battye	15	34	3rd
Callum du Preez	29	34	4th, Desborough Pupil, Age 15
Brad Lovegrove	23	32	5th
Andrew Wyles	10	32	6th

The leading scores were:-

Nearest pin in 10th	Andrew Wyles
Nearest pin on 13th	Roger Keys
Longest drive on 18th	Chris Jones

Members of the Society taking part were:- Ian Barton (1975/82), Philip Battye (1973/79), Michael Carr (1967/74), Michael Clyde (1952/59), Colin Cutler (1936/43), Grahame Fisher (1952/59), Alan Frampton (1957/63), Stephen Godfrey (1954/61), Chris Jones (1973/80), Malcolm Kempton (1970/72), Roger Keys (1974/77), Bradley Lovegrove (1975/80), Peter McNicoll (1967/74), Chris Mills (1970/72), Nick Snell (1974/79), Andy Thompson (1989/94), Richard Woolmer (Staff 1981/2005), Andrew Wyles (Staff 2000/21)

Dates for 2022

The following provisional dates have been booked at Maidenhead Golf Club:-

44th Match v Desborough, provisionally Tuesday 5th April at 2.00pm

48th Brooks Trophy competition, provisionally Monday 25th July at 2.00pm

The start of Old Maidonians Golf



The first OMA match v Desborough in 1975, which Desborough won 10:4. Simon Harding teeing off.

The results were, Old Maidonians first: Simon Morris beat Guy Martin: Eric Brookes lost to Jonathon Miall: Les Lawrie lost to Andrew Livsey: Derek Woolford lost to Simon Harding: Frank Shaw lost to Robin Shaw: Peter Brown beat Andrew Turner: Ken Piercy lost to Ian Groom: Ivan Ing last to Peter Green: Revd Bernard Saltau lost to Mark Twineham: Keith Walker beat A Grierson: Ron Carey lost to Anthony Dunning: Colin Cutler beat Martin Price: : Mike Hawe lost to Ian McKerrow: Ken Lawrie lost to Ian Forbes.



July 1976: Eric Brooks, with Ian McKerrow, presenting the trophy he had donated to the OMA to Simon Harding, winner of the first competition for the Brooks Trophy.

News of OMADS

Jack Beaumont (2005/08) In December 2021 Jack announced his retirement from international competitions, after a brilliant career which culminated in his winning a Silver Medal in the Quadruple Sculls, which he stroked, in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, held in July 2021, and on which we congratulate him. This was Great Britain's first ever Olympic Medal in this event.



Jack's international career started in 2009 when he raced in an eight for Great Britain against France. He was a Bronze Medallist in the quadruple sculls in the 2015 European Championships. In the same year he suffered serious injuries when the British men's eight collided with another boat. In 2016, having recovered from his injuries, he was a late replacement in the men's quadruple sculls at the Summer Olympics in Rio, coming fifth. In the following year he was a Silver Medallist in this event at the World Championships in 2017.

Jack, whose father, Peter, was a member of the men's eight at the 1988 Olympic Games in 1988, was appointed Club Captain of Leander Club for 2020. He says that he is not leaving the sport and will be spending time on the river with Maidenhead Rowing Club and with Leander Club as well as participating in some Masters' racing.

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Dr Stephen Burnhope (1968/73) In our last issue of this Newsletter Stephen gave us an account of his career and family. He had previously published a book 'Atonement and the New Perspective' and mentioned that a new book of his would be published later in the year. The book became available from Amazon in May 2021 and is entitled 'How to read the Bible Well', aimed at 'ordinary' Christian readers, rather than scholars.

David J E Butler (member of Staff 1960/65) writes: - Thank you for the latest OMADS Newsletter. I want you to know how very much I enjoy reading the Newsletters: I do so with great interest. This time there was some sadness for me in the Newsletter. I taught chemistry and physics at the school, my very first teaching post, under **Tom Fox** (Head of Chemistry) and **Godfrey Wolf** (Head of Science) but seeing **Brian Battye's** name in the Newsletter reminded me that I joined the staff in 1960. I actually replaced Brian as assistant science teacher at Maidenhead Grammar School. I was at that time and am ever grateful to Brian, for he left behind for me a complete set of science teaching notes, a most valuable resource for a young newly qualified teacher.

In the Newsletter I read with sadness the death of **Alan Grimsley** who took over from Godfrey Wolf as Head of

Science. I learned a great deal from those very experienced senior teachers and moved on to take up a post of Head of Chemistry and then Head of Science at Burnham Grammar School, posts I held until I moved to Devon to take up the post of County Science Adviser.

Naturally, I was delighted to read in the current Newsletter a further note about **Bob Stanley**, written appropriately I note by a former pupil. Bob joined the staff at about the same time as me but he was, of course, an experienced teacher. There were some great characters in the staff team at Maidenhead at that time and Bob was one of them.

Let me conclude this brief note with a comment about responsibilities for teachers new to the job. When I arrived to take up my teaching post I was given the job, in addition of course to the science teaching role, of Form Master to U5R. This was a small group, about a dozen if I recall, but they were all boys who for a variety of reasons had failed most of their 'O Levels' and returned to school for a year to re-sit them the following Summer. Their 'Form Room' was the old Scout Hut remote from the main school building and these 'boys' were very experienced students, each one an interesting character in his own way.

If I say that the majority of these students were reluctant learners, my first job, having cleared the lingering cigarette smoke from the hut, was to establish my authority and thereafter knock them into shape. This I did with gusto, and luck was on my side. Rugby was the team sport in the Autumn Term and these lads were obliged by **George Griffiths** (Head of PE and Rugby) to participate in the sport. As a keen young active player myself, I assisted with rugby and was more than happy to join in on Wednesday afternoons. If I say now that I never held back when an opportunity arose to tackle hard one of the boys in U5R, I happily took it. Long before the end of the Autumn Term my form and I had established a working relationship of mutual respect. But the question I should ask but didn't at the time was, should responsibility as Form Master for a group of boys/students like these be given to a young and inexperienced teacher?

I am very pleased to add that for many years after I left Maidenhead I kept in touch with several of the U5R group. Some found successful careers locally but sadly I now know that some too have passed away. Even now, and remember I left Maidenhead in 1965, I still correspond annually with one member of that unforgettable group.

I am long retired (now more than 20 years) from science teaching and my work as County Education Adviser and Ofsted Inspector but as you may see, I have very happy memories of my 5 years teaching at Maidenhead and understand why I read the OMADS Newsletters with such interest. There are now, of course, many names in the Newsletter I don't recognize but that doesn't seem to matter.

Malcolm Cox (1959/66) writes-

Having had disappointing A-levels I decided to take a 3-year General Apprenticeship with BOAC (an introduction to the commercial operations of the airline), successfully completing my apprenticeship as a Planning Clerk in the air cargo division. This involved many varied tasks preparing for the pending move of BOAC Cargo from its then office/warehouse in the central area of Heathrow to the brand-new cargo terminal on South side.



One of the tasks for the planning team was to devise shift patterns for the various grades of workers. Two of my proposals were selected by both the unions and management. I was surprised some 40 years later to learn that warehouse staff at BA were threatening industrial action as the management were trying to replace that same basic pattern with a new shift system!

In 1971 BOAC and BEA were merged into BA and I stayed with them until 1974 when I joined Air Express International, a freight agent in Staines, on shifts, with a 60% pay rise. My role as an Assistant Duty Officer in the consolidations department involved allocating cargo to consolidation, then preparing the air waybills and manifests for that cargo to destinations all round the world, maximising the profit on all shipments, and liaising with the warehouse to arrange loading and delivery to the various airlines.

In 1978, feeling I needed more experience outside of just consolidation, I moved to Forwardair Ltd as an Export Clerk, preparing individual shipments including letters of credit, certificates of origin, as well as consolidations. I then joined Hellman International and was with them until 1984 when I joined JAS Forwarding UK Ltd a relatively new company, as export supervisor. The company was to grow from 8 to 200 staff. The work was interesting and challenging, so much so that I was to remain with JAS for the remainder of my working life. I gained additional functions as an IT Network Supervisor, and later part-time Quality Manager. When in 2000 JAS moved into a new purpose-built office and warehouse building in Stanwell I was full time Quality and Health & Safety Manager with the additional functions of Building Manager for the new HQ, and as IT network supervisor until a full time IT Manager was appointed. I retired from JAS (and work) at the end of 2010 after an interesting and largely enjoyable career.

I have enjoyed a number of non-work activities over the years. During the late 1960s to the early 1980s I was an active member of the Bucks Berks Border Group of the YHA, cycling from my home in Maidenhead to weekly meetings in Eton and later Windsor. Through the spring summer and autumn the group organised monthly weekend trips to Youth Hostels. Additionally a few of us would borrow the group tent to go away weekends with no organised trip, this gave me a great deal of UK travel and met and made a wide range of great friends. I became a life member of the YHA, which I maintain was the best 8 guineas I have ever spent!

Later I was a founder member of the Reading YHA local group. I also served on the YHA Southern Region Council for some time, this included a few years on the Finance and General Purposes Committee. At these meetings I rubbed shoulders with the Patten twins of later political fame, and Nick Crane later of "Coast" on tv.

I also served on the Hants/Berks YHA Sub-Region committee including several years as Chairman. This Sub-Region organised a challenge walk on the Isle of Wight in early October initially 30 miles but later 50 Km within 10 hours, based on a youth hostel, the original aim being to extend the season to the hostels on the island. The event took place 35 times and was distinguished because we had a new route each year, which made it organising quite a task, I was on the organising sub-committee from number 8 and had taken part in four of the early walks. I have continued to use Youth Hostels throughout, although much less frequently in recent years.

While I was at BOAC/BA I enjoyed playing hockey for the Speedbird Club mostly in the men's 2nd X1, but also playing mixed hockey on occasions – a far more dangerous sport than men's hockey. I even played internationally when the Speedbird hockey club was invited for a weekend visit to Frankfurt 1888 Club.

From the 1970s I had enjoyed numerous canal holidays with groups of friends. It was on such a trip in 2000 that I met Pat Watts and later that year she moved in with me. In 2001 we moved to a new home in Warfield. Life with Pat in Warfield seemed blissful for some time, however, we gradually grew apart and in 2010 we separated, but remain friends.

At the end of 2010 I decided to retire and moved to Devizes where I have been active with several of the local U3A groups.

After I turned 40 I decided to do something about my boyhood aspirations to sail, and took an RYA Competent Crew course from Tenerife. I also embarked on study with the Open University which I thoroughly enjoyed, learning a great deal, and meeting more interesting and lovely people. After some 10 years I graduated in 1999 with an Open University BSc Honours degree. Since I retired I have studied many online courses with FutureLearn an offshoot of the OU, and other online courses to keep the "little grey cells" working.

I periodically splashed out to go on further sailing trips and eventually achieved my RYA Day Skipper qualification. Unfortunately I find sailing a very expensive hobby and can only go every few years. I did make a trip on the JST barque *Tenacious* in 2012 which was a race with the other JST vessel the *Lord Nelson* from Southampton to Cherbourg and return. *Tenacious* came 2nd but it was a tremendous experience on a tall ship. In 2017 I sailed on the ketch *Tecla* from Ullapool via the western isles to St Kilda and return to Ullapool, another very memorable trip.

Paul Frazer (Principal 2012/18), a Vice-President of this Society, tells us that he is coming to terms with retirement, which did not come easy at first. He received invitations to apply for interim headships at failing schools in Liverpool, Doncaster and Sheffield, which he declined. He says that his headship of Desborough was the pinnacle of his career and that he was doubtful that he would have been able to muster the energy and passion that Desborough inspired in him, given that young people are entitled to have their schools led by fully committed headteachers. He continues to be impressed by the achievements of former pupils of the School/College and looks back on his time in Maidenhead with affection and pride.

Paul's golden retriever, Lola, makes sure that he takes plenty of exercise, with long walks.

Paul tells us that **Steve Elliott** who was a Deputy Principal at Desborough in 2014 has been recognised nationally by publishers Pearson who have awarded him the title of England's Secondary Headteacher of the Year 2020/2021 for his achievement in transforming Wrenn School, Wellingborough, Northants, from a failing school into a high-performing one. Paul says that Steve, who had been seconded from Airedale Academy, made a significant impact during his time at Desborough. Steve has now retired to his home in Yorkshire.

Arthur Hill (1962/69) BSc, CITP, IEng, FCBS, MCQI, STEM Ambassador

In our Jan 2018 issue, No 85, we published an account of Arthur's career. In the correspondence he mentioned that he was having a house built and was encountering a number of problems. We thought his experience could be of interest to our members and we thank Arthur for this account of the pitfalls in undertaking such a project.



Arthur is a Life Member. _____

Grand Designs – No, bats in the belfrey!

If you have ever watched an episode of Grand Designs on the telly and then thought "I'd really like to build my own custom designed house", I'd say go stand in a cold shower for at least five minutes until the idea fades away. If you still think that it is a good idea, then you might just possibly have the mental resilience to see the project through to completion, always providing that you have deep pockets.

I speak from experience, having recently completed a custom designed, architected house which was far from straightforward to build.

The story starts three years ago when I purchased a 1950's bungalow with the view of renovating it for my retirement. The attraction of the property was as much the land and the location as it was the actual house itself. The plot was about a third of an acre with a large garden set on a fairly steep slope on a clay soil. It's only 10

minutes into town and is walking distance to local services, including the local Tesco. I tried living in the bungalow for a while just to see how comfortable it was and what could be done to improve it. It quickly became obvious that the house was not that well insulated and it had been "added to" numerous times leading to different flooring levels and types, and roof structures.

I consulted a local architect about doing a fairly significant extension to create a large open plan kitchen/diner at the back of the house. His view was "well you are never going to get what you really want and it will still cost you a fair bit of money". How about knocking it down and building what you really want?

Being naive at the time, I worked with the architect to come up with the drawings of my "ideal" home. Having come up with a floor plan, we set about creating drawings suitable for submission for Planning approval. I asked the architect about the likely costs for the project and he had only a sketchy idea of the likely ball park budget for the works, but it was at the very top end of what I expected to pay.

We submitted the plans for the demolition and rebuild to the local planners for approval. The planning process comes with a number of conditions, including the need for a bat study. We also had to get a topographical survey done to establish levels across the site and how it fitted with the street scene outside.

I commissioned an approved ecologist and they came on a couple of nights to record the local bats. They also went up in the bungalow roof and that's when the trouble started. There was a bat roosting in the rafters. Just one bat, but that was enough! The Council took note of this bat study report and granted planning approval with conditions. Number one, I had to wait all through the winter and do nothing until early summer in case the bat wanted to roost there. Number two, we had to erect a temporary bat box in my garden in case some passing bat wanted to stop off for the night. Number three, I had to commission another bat study in the summer to determine whether any bats used the roof as a roost and whether my resident had moved on (which he had). I also had to specify the old-fashioned tar-based roofing felt rather than the modern permeable membrane as it's better for bats apparently. Having got the second study submitted, we had to apply for a licence to demolish the bungalow. Fortunately my passing bat was of a common species, so permission was granted with the condition that the ecologist witnessed the demolition.

By then I had paid a fencing contractor to rip out all the old rotten fencing around the property and put in new fencing. One neighbour was concerned with the boundary running alongside his bungalow. There was quite a drop from his side of the fence to my side and he was concerned that any building works would disturb his foundations.

The Party Wall etc Act 1996 requires that I get his permission to carry out my development. The Party Wall Act doesn't just apply to a shared boundary wall, it covers the excavation of ground within 3 (or possibly 6) metres of the boundary. I commissioned a structural engineer to do a ground study of the existing situation and any risks of soil disturbance. I offered to get a retaining wall built to support his soil and stabilise the situation. He was not keen on that idea because it would "cause water to collect behind the retaining wall" causing further possible instability.

Due to clay soil, I was already pretty convinced that we would have to do some piling to support the new build, so that was the approach which was accepted by the neighbour.

I asked the architect to do a piling design and he said I should get a structural engineer to do it.

The structural engineer wanted a soil survey to be done. This involves drilling a number of small-bore holes across the site and analysing the cores at various depths. Due to the fact that the bungalow had not yet been demolished, we couldn't drill under the foundations, so we had to sample outside the existing footprint. The result came back as clay down to at least 15 metres.

The structural engineer made it clear that the architect's drawings were virtually useless when it came to actually building the new house. What we needed were structural drawings with all the stress calculations and loadings worked out. There was much calculation in terms of levels across the building as the site sloped right to left and front to back. The slope front to back is such that the front entrance at ground floor equates to a first-floor level at the back of the house. I have exploited this to create a lower ground floor level.

Having decent engineering drawings, I went out for quotations.

The aim was to select a credible builder who could take on the entire build and project manage it from start to completion. I went out to tender to three local builders on a "fixed price" basis. Two came back with quotes and one No Bid – "Too risky a project". I arranged site visits to builds that each builder had completed to establish that they were a good builder and had the capability to build what I wanted.

Builder A was a long-established company with a largish workforce on the payroll, they clearly were well organised and had good support in place. Builder B was also long established and had a good reputation in the area; they were a smaller outfit with a minimum core team of trades people.

When it came to the prices, Builder A was 10% more expensive than Builder B, but the pricing was not uniformly spread. The biggest difference was the price of the piling works, Builder A was totally unrealistic in this respect. Bear in mind that for a large number of piles,

the average cost per pile is £1000 and I had 40 piles, so that's forty grand for starters.

For firm "fixed prices", I have to say that both prices came back at over 150% of what the architect had indicated it should cost. Frankly, I couldn't afford either bid, so something had to give.

I looked at the specification to identify the expensive "nice to haves". The first one to go was rainwater harvesting at £20K extra, then stripping out the non-core parts of the build such as driveways, paving, front walls, landscaping, etc. It was still not affordable, so I reviewed the cost breakdown to identify any large cost items. These were in the windows and doors and in the laid tile flooring. I went to a local double-glazing company and negotiated a fixed price deal for the supply and installation of my doors and windows for half what the builder quoted. By going direct to a tile warehouse, I was able to negotiate a bulk buy deal which enabled me to get much better tiles for half the retail price. The builder used the discount that I had negotiated to buy the tiles for the house.

There were certain things that the builder wasn't prepared to let go, so I had to swallow the bathroom costs and the costs of the roof, but overall I was able to get within my budget.

Once work started, we had problems with the clay soil over the winter turning into a bog, the crane manoeuvring the roof trusses managed to demolish an interior wall, the bifold doors got filthy during the build, it took two months to get a gas connection, the glass balustrade was 2 months late, and then Covid brought the build to a complete halt for 4 months.

Anyway, 3 years after I started, I am now happily living in my wonderful house.

Lessons learnt:

- Understand the maximum amount of money you can easily fund for the build and set that as your maximum budget.
- Choose a site which is straightforward and easy to develop.
- Don't expect your architect to do any more than get you through planning.
- Engage a good structural engineer early on.
- Carry out a thorough site survey before you go to planning and make sure that you know where and at what depth all your services connections will be.
- Do not go out to tender until you have a full set of engineering drawings if you expect to get realistic costs and an affordable fixed price.
- Do your homework and understand what things cost. Go out and get your own quotes for expensive items.
- Challenge the builder's estimate where you think he is uncompetitive.

- Plan in detail, even down to how many and where power sockets, TV sockets, cabling etc go.
- Be hands on from day one, at least every other day.
- Factor in the delays caused by dealing with the utilities/ services (and the costs).
- Nice-to-have features always cost extra, it depends how much you want to spend.
- Forget about rainwater harvesting (unless you have to have it), it adds cost and complexity.
- It always costs more than you are told (or expect).
- It always takes longer than you expect.
- You will have forgotten something and that's what adds cost.
- The builder will load the "extras".
- Do not change the design once the builder has started unless you really have to.
- If you go Fixed Price then you minimise your risk but you lose the ability to direct the build.
- Expect the unexpected, because it will happen.
- Live somewhere else close and comfortable while the build takes place.
- Be realistic about timeframes, most bespoke builds will take at least a year and complex ones, much longer.



David G Moore (1962/69) writes:-

Maidenhead Grammar School. Of course, this school, our school, had a lasting effect on my future. Friends were made and teachers experienced, a learning ethos instilled. A red brick grammar school of the past.



Thinking back my lasting memory is of Mr Stanley. That standout of the English masters and Head of the Upper School. How many

of us can still write his after-school detention lines for talking in class? *'My natural verbosity is in direct antithesis with the consummation of my academic career'*. I'm sure a reader or two will have a recollection of slightly different words and it will be good to hear them. It is interesting to note that I held him in the highest respect, yet my younger brother had the complete opposite recollection of him. Such things are very subjective.

My time was in the L.C.Reynolds era. Strict and not always, from my perspective, fair, but the rules were clear. Yes, there was caning by LC, slipper and the ruler by history and geography masters, but we survived, and society has evolved.

I was fortunate to be involved in the school plays of '64 and '65. I think I was the youngest cast member at the time and it was an experience that will surprisingly come back to support me some 56 years later. Read on. Then there was the tuck shop, located on the lower field area? A paradise for sugar addicts.

Whatever the views are about Grammar Schools I am grateful for the education offered by MGS and the grounding it gave me for my future career.

Leaving MGS to take a thin sandwich degree in Mechanical and Aeronautical engineering was a decision taken by my father. He said no to RADA and anything else not engineering was out of the question. He even signed an indentured apprenticeship agreement with Hawker Siddeley Aviation for me to follow this course. I don't recollect having much freedom of choice in this process! Off to Hatfield, Herts and Hatfield Uni. (nee Poly). Five years of learning about the outside world, away from home, how to budget, girls, business operations and union rules, manufacturing, the end of the glory days of British Aviation, all night pop concerts and independence. Worked on Tridents. Great air shows. Learnt to program in BASIC on a DEC PDP 10. That was the last time I used my degree in aeronautics. Tragically during this time we lost my best friend Peter May in a car accident. Peter was also from MGS. I still miss his company.

Moved on to copper mining in Zambia along with my wife and my mate Jim and his wife. What a revelation on how an alternative life can be and how different African culture is. A tiny village (Chililabombwe for those interested in looking it up) on the Congo border. In the UK meat was expensive. In Zambia our first meat purchase was half a cow, half a pig and a lamb (I kid you not. All butchered of course). Food in abundance and sunshine. No TV and more than a dozen very active social clubs ranging from Rugby and Squash to Golf and Theatre. Learning how to coexist with Zambians whose life experiences were totally different from mine. Working underground in pumping and service chambers so vast we would barbeque our lunch there. Bancroft was one of the worlds wettest mines!

No calculated stress design, failure analysis or redundancy modes here. Just make it big and solid so it can't fail. Specifically remember putting in a new water supply pump system to a remote African village two hours' drive into the bush. In the centre of Africa, alone, just an amazing feeling. Two glorious years.

Back to the UK. The beginning of the Thatcher years. Strikes, three day working weeks, power cuts. Found a company in Guildford that wanted a Project Manager on pneumatic conveying plant. This was the beginning of my real career. Project management has been the thread running through most of my working life from then on. It's interesting to note that within months I was given a multimillion-pound project for BP Barry. No real training, no computer aided designs or project management tools, just left to get on with it. That's how to gain experience, hands on and knowing you are responsible. Being trusted. I think this managerial attitude is missing now. We are so risk averse we lose sight of the need to encourage responsibility.

Anyway. Four years of UK weather got to me. The need to find some sun in the end led me to Egypt. A two-year project as Site Manager to build a new Chloride automotive battery factory just past the Giza Pyramids in the desert. How many people drive past the Sphinx every day to work? Once again, an eyeopener, this time on Middle Eastern culture. Sadly, during our time there President Sadat was assassinated. This potential societal upheaval led to a few sleepless nights as alongside my expat team of about 20 I had my wife and baby twins there. Things eventually settled down and the country was then led by Mubarak until the revolution of 2011. No room to tell the many stories about Egypt and how different cultures and people work together despite politics and religion. A side note though. My youngest son was born on the banks of the river Nile.

Back to the UK. The country was in a poor state, again! Industrial unrest, unstable economy, collapse of the pound, remember when the UK fell out of the ERM? It didn't take many months for us to decide to leave again. This time for South Africa and Sasol Secunda. What a beautiful country SA is. Sasal not so interesting though and within a few months we had moved to Jo'burg and Simon Carves. Thirteen years of project management, constructing probably the largest pneumatic conveying systems in the world, handling fly ash from ESCOM's power stations. Many other projects too, including food production and pharmaceutical facilities. With roles ranging from project management to director and subsidiary management. Whilst there I ran the SAIMEchE school's outreach program for two years and the Jo'Burg SAIMEchE Industrial liaison group. I also met my wife of now 33 years there. So have much to thank SA for.

We lived through huge political and social changes in SA. Taking part in the crucial vote to bring new government to the country. But ultimately staying as a long-term plan was never going to work for us as a family.

For me so sad as Jo'burg has the ideal climate, SA is a stunning country, and we have many friends and family there.

However, back to the UK. Notice the trend here? The company that I first worked for after Zambia relocated us from SA and employed me first as General Manager and then Managing Director. Oversaw projects in Europe, Japan and Singapore, all in the materials handling business area.

After five years I moved to the Midlands as MD for Chronos Richardson. Our primary business market being materials handling systems globally for the major international tyre manufacturers. This lasted until a French-Canadian company bought us out. Not much to add to this.

Swiftly moving on. After a short stint with an automotive conveying systems company that really wasn't my forte, I moved to CEL in Birmingham. Running the Food and Pharmaceutical division led to some large projects (Quorn, GSK, Cadbury) and I also had the responsibility for our Scottish office. This was where I started to really specialise in pharmaceutical facility design and build.

After three years a position became available to run the company's China office, based in Shanghai. Off we go again. New country, new culture. And make no mistake working in China is like nowhere else. Many major international companies rotate management every three years but in China five years is the norm. Why? Because it takes two years just to understand the culture, both business and social. The business was primarily pharmaceutical focussed with clients such as GSK and Merck but also some chemical companies such as Dow Chemicals. After two years I moved on to SKM, an Australian company, to run their Shanghai office. All told five years in China. We made great Chinese friends, attended two Chinese friend's weddings and travelled extensively round the country. Served as an Exec Director for the British Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai. A memorable event being the Shanghai EXPO in 2010 where a vivid memory is of being entertained by a British Military Band, playing Rule Britannia on the banks of the Huangpu River in Communist governed China. Somehow bizarre! For two consecutive years I was also a lead 'judge' for the BCC China British Business of the Year competition. I could go on about China for pages.

Then back to the UK to retire, but not so fast. Since 2014 I have been providing consultancy support to PM Group, primarily on pharmaceutical projects. Only taking up full time retirement at the end of 2021. I promised my wife this is permanent. Honestly.

During this time a second tragedy struck when my daughter (one of the twins) lost her life to cancer.

One thing I have learnt through my adulthood is that planning a career is great but don't expect life to go to that plan. Regret nothing except the odd missed opportunity, but even those can unexpectedly lead to alternatives that you couldn't predict. Make the most of what life offers. When I left MGS I could not have even imagined, in my wildest dreams, where my career would take me. Professionally I am a Fellow of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. I know it is a bit old fashioned but nevertheless this gives me a sense of pride that surpasses my Degree and I always aspired to.

Now to end with one little story of my life that has come full circle. Last year I was on stage again, yes, after 56 years. This time in the annual Shakespeare play held at the Kourion Roman amphitheatre in Cyprus. Small walk on parts in The Merchant of Venice but nevertheless on a 2000-year-old stage. Such a long way from those early days on stage at Maidenhead Grammar School where I learnt the art of amateur dramatics. Much has happened in between, as I hope I have given you a flavour of, bookended by Shakespeare, who would have expected that.

What can be attributed to MGS? Impossible to quantify, but I doubt the opportunities would have been so varied and interesting without its grounding. So a heartfelt 'Thank you' to all you Masters and Teachers that tried so hard with us, every year, again and again. For your dedication to your chosen profession we students I will always be grateful.

Chris A Parsons (1961/68), a Life Member, has sent us the following for which we thank him.



During a recent phone conversation with Tony Lechain, I was 'persuaded' that I would like to write a brief resume for the Newsletter, which I'm afraid I shall always consider to be the Old Maids' magazine. How could I possibly compare my lifetime's achievements with some - most - of the

ones I've read? Tony said not to worry, not everyone's a star and we need a few plodders. Actually, he didn't, I made that up, but it's how I felt.

I was at MGS from '61 to '68 and, on the whole, I loved it. I saw it change greatly from what seemed a frightening place, with a rule book designed to instil fear, to a learning academy with teachers who truly wanted you to succeed. So, why didn't I? In the Sixth Form, I had Mr Cole as my tutor, and in my final report, he wrote 'he will always want to plough his own furrow' and those were very prescient words.

Like so many in those days of full employment, I hadn't a clue what I wanted to do when I left school. My parents wanted me to join the Civil Service - I don't think so! There didn't seem to be any point in going to Uni until I had a better idea of 'what next?'. So I got what was probably the greatest job in the world for an 18-year-old who

loved cars - I worked for Gregorys who were part of the Henley organisation, and I delivered cars wherever in the UK there was a customer who wanted that particular model. I got to drive pretty much everything, Rolls Royces, E-types, an Oldsmobile Tornado - what an awful car! It couldn't continue. My dad thought, quite rightly, it was not a proper job and I needed to do something more useful with my life.

My friend Lynn had gone to Bishop Otter College in Chichester, training to be a teacher. I had hitch-hiked down to see her a few times and been to some great parties. I could be a teacher. Why not? I was good at French and German, I could teach languages. I applied, I was accepted. Until the day my long-suffering parents drove me down to start my new life, I hadn't really considered that teaching involved children and I didn't really like children. Still, apart from that, everything was looking good. Unsurprisingly, this didn't turn out to be such a great plan and within six months I had worked out that it wasn't right for me, and neither would it have been right for any of the unfortunate children I might have taught. I really didn't know what to do next, and to add to my problems, my parents were losing patience. I was lucky - I usually am - we had a mature student on our course whose husband was the RAF Resettlement Officer for nearby Tangmere, helping RAF personnel return to civvy jobs. He gave me various tests and said 'Computers are for you, my boy'. Wherever you are, Wing Commander Pollard, you have my eternal gratitude.

In 1970, there was no shortage of work opportunities - even in 'computing' as it was then. However, the only way to get a job was if you were already in computing. I took various fill-in jobs while I wrote hundreds of (increasingly desperate) letters selling my services. My girlfriend's mum spotted an advert in the Daily Telegraph for trainee programmers. Geo. Wimpey, the builder, was going to train 6 people in a comprehensive course. I wrote immediately and was offered an interview. What it did not say was that there was a whole day of psychometric testing as well, and Caroline's mum had driven me there. I explained the situation to her, she hesitated and then said, yes, she would wait for me. What a wonderful, wonderful woman. To cut to the chase, I must have done OK, despite a cracking hangover, and I was offered a place on the course with a job at the end of it if I proved suitable. I was determined to be suitable.

Luckily, I was, and had six happy years there, ending up as a systems programmer, responsible for keeping the operating environment running. But itchy feet were (and remain) my problem. I saw a job advertised for a contract in Sweden, was interviewed and, with very mixed feelings, sold all my possessions and went off to Gothenburg, to experience the coldest winter they'd had in one hundred years - from the end of November until March, the temperature hovered between -10 and -25. I loved it and made friends I have until this day.

And that is how life continued, really, I worked overseas - Sweden again, Stockholm this time, Bordeaux, Amsterdam, Darmstadt - and had the occasional period back in the UK, including an idyllic three years renting a large house with river frontage near Boulton's Lock. I was working for ICL during this time, helping to develop main-frame operating systems, but I always wanted to change, and the corporate world was never for me.

Working in France was amusing, it was in the south and my colleagues certainly had a southern temperament. Often, a meeting would end with screaming, followed by chasing someone around the building, murder in mind. It was, as you can imagine, very sunny and the building had computerised climate control, including shutters that were supposed to follow the sun around. It often failed, the shutters closed, but the computer wouldn't allow the lights on 'it's June, midday, why do you want the lights on?' - so we'd all go home. I loved it there, but instead of extending my contract, they offered a permanent job, and that was definitely not for me, time to move on.

You don't want every detail of my life. When I was living in Amsterdam, I had to install an airline reservation system for American Express in Brighton. Somehow, with only partial agreement by me, I was 'sold' to Amex as part of the package. Six years later, they insisted I became a 'permie' and, as we'd bought a house near Petworth and liked Sussex, I reluctantly agreed. In the next ten years, I went from being a happy systems programmer to a miserable vice president. Fortunately, redundancy was not far behind and I was able to return to my irresponsible existence. After Amex, I taught physics for a year in a public school, fixed PCs in the Pyrenees and did all sorts of odd things. And then I decided to stop; commuting to various clients in the City from Cornwall - we'd moved back to the land of my birth - was no longer much fun, so I didn't do it any more. And like so many, I wondered after I retired, how I'd fitted work into my life at all.

On a personal level. I married Pat Wheeler, a Maidenhead girl who attended the Convent of the Nativity, and whom I've known since I was 15. We have no children jointly, though Pat has a daughter who seems to like me. I learned to fly, got an instrument rating, flew around Europe visiting friends, then went back to my first passion, cycling, and cycled all around Europe visiting friends, slower than flying, but better for the environment, and more interesting.

It's been a lot of fun, with some sadness thrown in. Like most people, I guess. I would be pleased to hear from anyone who knew me. My email address is cornubia@gme.ie.

John Southcombe (1949/54),



A Life Member who lives in Perth, Western Australia, has sent us the following contribution, for which we thank him.

A Career Down Under

During a recent COVID decluttering at home, I surprisingly found a box with many of my exercise books from the County Boys Grammar School. How they survived for 60 years and found their way Down Under is a complete mystery. Then I received the OMA Newsletter No 87, and recognised Laurie Keys, we were in the same class - he hasn't really changed. These two incidents prompted me to write my bio.

School and many masters were certainly memorable and influential to me. Along with many other old boys I played hockey for the Maidenhead & Bray hockey club. My first job after school was at the Grassland Research Institute at Hurley. The work was interesting, it was a cross between science and farming which I liked, all the staff were very supportive of a youngster.

After a couple of years I was called up for National Service - I would have been amongst the last cohort to be called up. I was put into REME (the Royal and Electrical Engineers), where I spent a year training in the UK, before being attached to the 2nd Royal Tank regiment in Germany - if a tank broke down in a battle, I think we were supposed to run out with our tool box to fix it! I guess that all gave some direction to my life, because I decided to do an adult apprenticeship with the GEC in Birmingham. I passed all the exams, including the entrance exam into the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

After I qualified as an electrical engineer I joined McLellan and Partners a firm of consulting engineers in West Byfleet, Surrey. Within a year of joining them, I was given the opportunity in 1966 to go to Australia for nominally 6 months to a year, which was too good an opportunity for a young man to turn down. I spent a lovely 18 months in Sydney working on steel mills in Newcastle (NSW) and Whyalla (SA). In 1968 rather than return to the UK, I decided to transfer to Perth (WA), which was an exciting time, because it was the start of the development of the iron ore industry in the Pilbara (WA). I worked on many construction sites and projects in their Perth office. During this time I married and we had two children.

My next appointment was to join a team of advisors developing the Sicaitsa iron ore mine and steelworks on the west coast of Mexico. After Mexico I returned to Perth and became an Associate of the firm, I headed up their Field Services Dept, and also opened an office in Darwin, where we built the first Gas Turbine power station there. As a consequence of an economic downturn in the mid-1980s, we parted company.

After a couple of years freelancing, I joined Mt Newman Mining (an iron ore miner, now BHP - the international mining giant) as a senior project engineer where I worked on a variety of very interesting and challenging projects, including feasibility studies to increase production, a sinter plant and constructing a gas pipeline and GT power station.

These took me on a couple of visits to Japan and the Philippines. Unfortunately during this time our marriage failed and we separated in 1995.

I visited the School in 1999 and became a life member of the OMA. I also met my new wife in that year.

I retired in 2006. It's been a good career change, although there is a reduction in income, but we've had some exciting holidays exploring the world. During the current pandemic, we've been pretty safe in Perth. It's the most isolated capital in the world, with only two main roads and a single railway connecting us to the rest of Australia, plus airlines and ships, so it's easy to close our borders, to the rest of Australia and the world.



Probably the Upper 5th, I'm next to the master Boggy Lee on his RHS - with Laurie Keys next to me, Surprisingly I can recognise most and remember a lot of their names

Gordon J Stanley (1947/52), a Life Member, writes:-

I left School after O-levels and joined a local plastics moulding company as a trainee engineer and attended Maidenhead Technical College and Southall Technical College on a day release basis to study Mechanical and Electrical Engineering.

I transferred to West Bromwich with the Metal Closures Group in 1957 working on design and development of automatic plastic moulding machines. I then moved to British Industrial Plastics in Oldbury in 1960 as a design engineer until 1961. During this period I continued my day release studies, qualifying as a Mechanical Engineer.

Throughout my time in the "Black Country" I was lucky in making some very good friendships and consequently I enjoyed a very good social life.

In 1961 I signed a 2-year contract to work as a Production Manager in a plastics company in Medellin, Colombia. This was at the time of extreme violence in Colombia as a result of the earlier civil war in that country but fortunately I stayed safe and was able to enjoy an excellent and adventurous social life with flatmates and with German, French and Swiss expatriates who all became good friends.

Luckily the drugs trafficking in the country had not then commenced in a serious way and the "mafia" were more heavily involved with emerald smuggling.

I returned to the UK in 1963 and joined the Courtaulds Packaging Group (Films Division) in London as a trainee technical representative, graduating to a sales position the following year.

In 1968 I joined another Group Company in Bristol as Development sales manager working in a joint venture with the North American company, American Can (Flexible Packaging) to develop sales of German- and US-made automatic vacuum packing machines plus packaging film laminates for food products. I relocated to Bristol in 1971 to continue in Development sales, subsequently becoming Commercial Manager and then manager of a plastics extrusion and printing operation for the Bristol company.

In 1982 I turned down an offer to run one of the Group's packaging companies in Venezuela and re-joined the Films Division to work in UK sales plus export sales to the Iberian Peninsula and the Canaries.

In 1988 I moved to Barcelona, Spain to set up a new sales company, returning to the UK in 1993 to take over an export sales position covering Latin America and the Caribbean to develop our sales to those markets. This involved four tours per year of between five- and six-weeks duration. My wife travelled with me on all these tours and was a great support.

In the late nineties our Division was taken over by the Hoechst Group which had production facilities in Mexico and I was invited to move to Mexico as International Sales Manager to further develop sales in Latin America. This was a period of relative stability in Mexico and we passed a very happy two years in that country.

In 2000 we returned to the UK and I took retirement. I have one son, three granddaughters and daughter-in-law in London. My hobbies are fly fishing, sea fishing, a little golf and we live in a very pleasant part of Clevedon, North Somerset, overlooking the Bristol Channel.

Gordon's email address is g.stanley@talktalk.net.

Will Torrent (1997/2004) We congratulate Will on his appointment as Senior Brand Development Chef at Waitrose & Partners in October 2021.

Andy Whitmore (1974/78)

In our Spring 1998 Newsletter No 64 we reported that Andy had established himself as one of the top keyboard



players in the country as well as being a producer, remixer and writer of Rhythm and Blues/Pop songs. He had also set up his own studio, Greystoke Studio, in West London, a well-established programming, recording and mixing facility.

Andy tells us that in 2011 he built a new studio at the old Greystoke Studio address, with three sound designed air-conditioned rooms, including a vocal booth, live room and control room.

The studio has been very busy since opening, with many well-known names, as covered in his websites www.greystokestudio.com and www.andywhitmore.com. In the studio he has a collection of 50 Analogue keyboards, one of the largest in the country.

On YouTube he has 100 videos that can be accessed on <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyWhitmore/video>. He has had 14 top ten hits in the UK and has played keyboards on 59 hit records.

Andy continues to produce new artists and has his own project <https://omnivi3e.com/playlists/> which has some 50 tracks on the site. Omnivi3e has teamed up with Martin Conlon Management and is being played on UK radio stations including 39 BBC radio stations.

We were pleased to learn that Andy remains in contact with his music teacher at Desborough, **Roger Durston**, who had a major impact on music in the school in the 1960s and 1970s, and who now lives in Greece.

Andy lives in Barnes, London and has three children including an 8-year-old from his second marriage in 2014.

In Memoriam

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

Gary Gibbons (1952/57) died in September 2021 at the age of 80. He joined the Police and after an illness became an Ambulance driver in Morecombe, Lancs. His classmate **Michael Courtney (1952/57)** remembers spending two weeks one summer, riding down to Lands End and back, youth hostelling with Gary in the company of Gary's cousin, **Tony Hearman (1953/58)** and **Karl-Heinz Boerner (April/December 1956)** a visiting German student whose career was published in our Newsletter No 85.

Gary is survived by his wife Lorna.

Alan B. Lidiard D.Sc. FInstP FRSC (1939/46) died in November 2020 at the age of 92. He won a State Scholarship to Kings College, London and in a distinguished career achieved the highest levels in the academic world and in atomic energy research.



At Kings College he graduated with B.Sc. (Special Hons) in Physics, staying on to complete his M.Sc. in Physics and a Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics. After doing research at the University of Illinois, Urbana, and at the University of California, Berkeley, Alan spent 3 years as a senior Research Fellow at Atomic Energy Research Establishment Harwell before spending 4 years as a Lecturer in Theoretical Physics at the University of Reading.

From 1966 to 1993 Alan held senior appointments with the UK Atomic Energy Authority during which time he

was, for 24 years, Head of the Theoretical Physics Division at Harwell.

Throughout this time Alan did spells as Visiting Professor, Consulting Professor or Visiting Fellow at a number of Universities in the UK, Continental Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA. During the 1990s he was Visiting Professor in Theoretical Chemistry at Oxford and a member of the sub-faculty of Chemistry. He was also Visiting Professor of Physics at the University of Reading.

Alan, who was both a Chartered Physicist and a Chartered Chemist, was awarded the prestigious Guthrie Medal and Prize of the Institute of Physics. He was Honorary Editor and Chairman of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Physics, Part C (Solid State Physics) for some years and later became Associate Editor of the Philosophical Magazine. In 1993 he was the author, with A.R. Allnatt, of Atomic Transport of Solids (Cambridge University Press) and was the author and co-author of some 160 other publications.

At the age of 22 Alan married his first wife Brenda (née Hewitt). They parted amicably seven years later and remained good friends. He met his second wife Ann (née Peerless) while she was working as a researcher at the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough and they married in 1961. They spent 38 very happy years together during which time they raised their two daughters Kate and Henrie in Woodcote, on the edge of the Chiltern hills, in South Oxfordshire. To his great distress, Ann died after a short illness in 1999. He was very happy though, to marry for a third time, 4 years later, to Diana (née Wigmore a former pupil at Maidenhead Girls' School), whom he had known since their school days in Maidenhead together. Diana died in May 2021.

On the local scene Alan had been the Local Secretary for the Ramblers' Association, a member of Goring Heath Parish Council and a Governor of Woodcote Primary School. Alan also supported his wife Ann, with her well-recognised work for CPRE, Woodcote Parish council and various other bodies.

Alan is survived by his two daughters.

Major General Matt Holmes CBE DSO RM (1978/83) died tragically in October 2021 at the age of 54 after a most distinguished career in the Royal Marines, being appointed Commandant General Royal Marines in June 2019, a role he held until a reorganisation in April 2021.



He was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the Queen's birthday Honours list in 2019 for his outstanding contribution to the Royal Marines and to the UK's defence and security interests.

In 2008 Matt was a joint recipient of the Upson Prize in recognition of the Distinguished Service Order he received for his leadership of 42 Commando Battle Group which had more than 300 engagements with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Matt joined the Royal Marines in 1988 after reading Economics at Exeter University. He later attended Staff College and completed a Master's degree in 2000. In 2012 he attended the Higher Command and Staff Course.

During his career he completed seven operational tours: twice in Northern Ireland, Kosovo and Iraq and three times in Afghanistan. After his promotion to Major General and before taking up his last appointment he was Senior British Military Representative in Afghanistan. He was a pallbearer at the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral. A fuller account of his career was given in our January 2020 Newsletter No 86.

Matt is survived by his wife Lea and their two children.

John M Smith BSc (Hons) MSc CITP* CEng FBCS*, FIET* (1958/1965), died in December 2021 at the age of 74. After serving an undistinguished 'stretch' at Maidenhead Grammar School where he felt his greatest achievements



were eating four jam doughnuts a day purchased at the school's tuck shop and being an occasional customer at the *El Toucan* coffee shop in town, John ("Monty") went to Slough College to study for an HND sponsored by Mars in mechanical engineering which became his lifelong passion.

After a year, John decided that electronic engineering was a preferred topic for study and began a 4-year Dip.Tech course at Hatfield Polytechnic, sponsored by Cossor Electronics Limited. The Dip. Tech later became a 1st class honours degree but John was still uncertain whether electronics was the right field of endeavour for him.

John became a member of a small team, led by brilliant engineer Michael C Stevens, which wrote a proposal to the Civil Aviation Authority for an experimental address-selective Secondary Surveillance Radar (SSR) ground station – then known as ADSEL/DABS. John was responsible for the outline design, development, project management and tuning of the software over a four-year period. During this four year project and perhaps making up for his earlier insouciance, John also studied to attain another first class qualification, this time a Master's degree in Computer Science

Having finally found out what he wanted to do with his career but, leaving Cossor to join Data Logic in 1979, a firm specialising in telecommunications and network infrastructure, it would be forty years before John learned that these four years had not been wasted. ADSEL (as SSR Mode S) is now in use globally in air traffic control systems.

From 1979 to 1982, John project-managed and implemented the UK's first Criminal Information System, for South Yorkshire Police. He then became a consultant undertaking IT and telecommunications strategy studies, software and hardware platform selection assignments and performance tuning work for a wide range of blue-chip clients in the UK, Europe, the USA and the Far East.

He spent four years with KPMG Management Consulting and a similar time with IBM, during which he wrote guidance used by IBM internationally for risk assessing sales proposals and reviewing projects in delivery.

A lifelong lover of the Great Western Railway, John was an accomplished model engineer. Enjoying writing, John wrote "*Troubled IT Projects – prevention and turnaround*", published by the IET. One of the world's leading experts on Tower Bridge, he wrote the "*Tower Bridge Operations Manual*" for Haynes Publishing, (which features regularly in Amazon's Top 10 for Architectural Structures) and John featured in a TV programme on the structure. He also wrote some sixty articles for the model engineering press.

In later life, John became interested in ley lines and was able to demonstrate wave-like behaviour, proving that they are excluded by Faraday cages.

John was a Life Member of our Society and regularly attended our Annual Dinners. He is survived by his wife, Lizzie and five children.

*CITP Chartered IT Professional

*FBCS Fellow of the British Computer Society

*FIET Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology

Barrie J Woolford (1953/59) died in March 2021 at the age of 78. He was a Life Member of the Society and brother of one of our Vice-Presidents, **Derek Woolford (1944/48)**. After leaving School he joined High Duty Alloys in Slough before moving to Metallurgy Department of Vandervells, Maidenhead, bearing manufacturers to the automotive industry. This involved a number of overseas trips to Poland, India and South Africa.

Barrie was a keen sportsman. He played for the School's 1st XI in soccer and cricket and later for the OMA in the Julian Cup. In 1974, he was in the winning team which included 3 sets of brothers, **Derek and Barrie Woolford, Ian and Stuart Langley and Ken and Les Lawrie.**

Barrie is survived by his wife, Sylvia (née Lusby)

History Corner

Maidenhead Rugby Club 1st XV which won the Berkshire Cup against Windsor in 1976, with five members from Desborough



Back rows: 2nd from left, David Course (1966/73); 6th from left, Stuart Morgan (Staff); 3rd from right, Max Arnold (Staff); 2nd from right John Hubbick (1964/69). Two members of the 1st XV squad, who were not in the photo due to injury, were Derek Harris (1955/60) and Hugh Todd (1964/72)



July 1976 Headteacher, Len Reynolds, thanking Dr Jan Palme (Head of German), Philip Cole MBE (Head of French) and Frank Shaw (Deputy Head) for their services of more than 100 years in total, on their retirement.

OMA Annual Dinner – Booking Form

Friday 1st April 2022 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 will be £29 for paid-up members, and £31 for former pupils who are not members of the Society. Those joining on the night will be refunded the £2 difference in ticket price. For those who would like to visit the College 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. Please take a lateral flow test before coming.

Requests for tickets should be made only to **Mrs Trish Read** at Desborough College. The processing of the orders will be by Mrs Helen Duncombe, a member of the OMADS Committee.

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 28th March 2022.** Payment to **Old Maidonians and Desborough Society**, can be made either by cheque or by bank transfer to :-
77-49-14 00068669.

To: Mrs Trish Read, Desborough College, Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead SL6 2QB
(Tel: 01628 634505) Email: trishread@desborough-college.net

Name*.....Address.....

.....Tel.....

Email address..... At School from.....to.....

I wish to attend the Annual Dinner on Friday 1st April 2022 and I shall be in a party which includes the OMADs whose names and addresses are listed below. I enclose a cheque or I have paid by bank transfer, for tickets as follows:

..... tickets at £29 each, ...tickets at £31 each. The total value of my payment is £.....

(Signed)..... Years in School From To

Names* and initials of party

Address

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

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Continue on a separate sheet, if necessary

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