

OMA newsletter: Summer 2025

Unfortunately, this is a very different newsletter from the one intended. As you may be aware, Keith Simpson died on the morning of the Open Day, 5th July. We had spent 5 hours the previous day setting everything up including the archive display for the event. Keith was on top form, and he was really looking forward to the following day. Sadly, he didn't make it.

There is so much I could say about Keith, and we will say more in a future newsletter, but I am sure you would agree that Keith has reinvigorated the OMA over the last few years, and we owe him our sincerest thanks. He will be sorely missed both on a personal level but also for his incredible contribution to the OMA and the school he loved.

Can you please ensure that any correspondence comes to me, David Stevens, using:

stevensd@omamembership.co.uk

From his family:

A funeral service in memory of Keith will be held at Barham Crematorium, for family and friends to attend on Wednesday 6th August, at 1pm.

A celebration of his life will take place at The Black Robin pub immediately following the service.

Barham Crematorium, Canterbury Road (A260), Barham, Nr Canterbury, Kent CT4 6QU

The Black Robin, Covet Lane, Kingston, Nr Canterbury, Kent CT4 6HS

(Overflow parking in field opposite)

Any donations to his favourite charities "Help for Heroes" and "Macmillan Cancer Support" would be appreciated instead of flowers. A direct link for donations in honour of Keith will be provided in due course.

Hilary de Planta

Jack Simpson

Callum Simpson

Tom de Planta

Ali de Planta

What follows is the newsletter that Keith wrote just before he died:

So another School year ends and hopefully a long hot summer is ahead of us. We saw the country celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day which also coincided with the 80th anniversary of the return of Manwood's from our four year exile in Wales. I published an essay on the Wales exile which can be found on our Facebook page - for those interested and not on Facebook drop me a line and I will email a copy.

David and I do love to hear from you and what you are up to or have been up to...so do please drop either of us a line which we can post in future newsletters as well as on our Facebook page.

Have a great summer...

Events this term

OMAC

The second OMAC of 2025 was held at the Market Inn on 20 September. Many thanks to OM **Richard Harris** (1999-2006) and his team for their warm hospitality and making The Market Inn our new club house.

Founders Day (May 22), was its normal busy day as the School celebrated its 462 birthday. The church service, as is tradition, was held at St Clement's led by the Rector, The Reverend Dominic Hamilton, with the sermon by Reverend Lucy Sullivan, the Chaplain at Kings College School, Canterbury. This was followed by tea in the School Hall.

Following tea the **OM v School Hockey Match** was held. A very competitive match saw the OMs come from 2-0 down to earn a 2-2 draw and retain the Peter Firminger Cup.

The day ended with **Alumni Drinks** in the Market Inn. Reminiscing continued long into the night.

The **Alumni and Friends Open Day** (5 July) was a great opportunity for the alumni to see how the school has changed over the years and saw the unveiling of this year's Wall as well as offering a chance to catch up with old class mates and former teachers **Mike Judd, Howard Pashley, John Aust, Timothy Setchell** and **David Stevens**. Our thanks to **James Dillon** and **Michael Blandford** for organising this years event.

A full programme included:

- music by the School's music department and the East Kent Rock Choir under the leadership of OM **Tony Johnson**;
- full access to the School which included tours of the astro, pavilion (both of which have benefitted from OM funds) and the Grange;
- afternoon tea provided by the Friends of Manwood's led by OM **Lucy Erasmus**; and a
- Pimm's bar provided by OM **Richard Harris**.

The **2025/26 Wall** was revealed and the six honoured this year are:

1. **Zoe Laughlin** (1992-1999). Artist, Designer, Materials Engineers and TV Presenter. Zoe is Co-founder and Director of the Institute of Making at University College London and is an artist, maker and materials engineer. She is a regular panelist on the BBC Radio 4 show The Kitchen Cabinet. In 2019 Zoe was the first woman ever to be awarded the prestigious Gerald Frewer Memorial Trophy - awarded to those who have made an outstanding contribution in their field, by the Institution of Engineering Designers.

2. **Sarah Philpott** (1991-1995). Swimmer. Sarah left Manwood's at age 16 to go to sports college. In 2020, she swam across the English Channel (solo) and in 2022 also swam across the Bristol Channel (England to Wales), and the North Channel (Ireland to Scotland), the seventh person in the world to complete all three, and the first English woman. In April 2023 she joined Redland Information Systems (Dover), where she is responsible for working with the management team to develop new strategies, new partnerships and new business leads. Redland Information Systems specialise in Business Intelligence, Business Analytics and Data Warehousing, providing organisations with the ability to make faster and smarter decisions about how to manage their workflow. "We are dedicated to transforming your business data into valuable insight and intelligence".

3. **Michelle Westwood** (1992-1999). Royal Navy and HR. Michelle was Head Girl 1998/99. Michelle relished the extra curricular opportunities that Manwood's offered, completing Bronze, Silver and Gold DofE, rising to Drum Major in the CCF Band in 1997/1998, and CQMS in the CCF. CCF annual camps and adventure training filled every Easter and Summer holiday and Michelle particularly appreciated the investment of time and encouragement from Ray Harlow, Howard Pashley, Gill Garvey, Pete Dean and of course Setch and Claire Lupton. A part time job in Tides, as a result of completing Bronze Medallion with the CCF, offered so much fun alongside Siobhan Philpott, Sarah Philpott, Chris Freeborn, Gareth Dean and Laurence Irvine. Following a visit by Ray Harlow's son to the school in his Royal Navy Sea Lynx helicopter, and hearing naval stories from class mate Karen Lloyd's dad, Michelle chose to pursue a career in the Royal Navy securing sponsorship for A-levels and a guaranteed job after her degree in Politics and International Relations at Hull. She completed officer training at Dartmouth in 2002/2003 and enjoyed a 20 year career in the Navy, visiting 22 countries, as far away as South Georgia, and working in jobs with the Army, Navy and central MOD, living in locations across the UK from Plymouth to York. She also served at various times in the Navy with fellow OMs, Phil Beacham, Geoff Braithwaite, Terry Tyack and Mike Bodycombe. As a Logistics and HR officer, the Navy invested in her personal development, funding both a MSc in HR and latterly an Ethnographic PhD in leadership. Michelle left the Navy in 2022 with the rank of Commander, and is now a HR Director in the

NHS utilising every day the wonderful leadership skills, experience and resilience that the Navy and Manwood's developed in her. Michelle married Tom, also in the Navy, in 2005 with two Manwoodians as bridesmaids, and Tom and Michelle have two sons who are 14 and 15. When Michelle joined the Navy women generally served for 6 years and left when they had children. Michelle is grateful that she was able to, via progressive HR policies, balance being a mum and a deployable Naval officer and pleased to see that as dual-serving parents there is now no barrier to career progression.

4. Michael Escudier (1972-1980). Medicine. Professor Michael Escudier is the Executive Dean at the Faculty of Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences at Kings College, London (KCL). He was previously Deputy Dean for the Faculty, Mike has also served as Dean for the Royal College of Surgeons London. Mike is Professor of Oral Medicine and Education King's College London (KCL); Honorary Consultant Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT); former Chair of College Assessment and Scrutiny Committee (KCL); KCL Education Strategy: Co-Chair assessment and feedback theme development group and implementation group. He is also Dean, Faculty of Dental Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons of England; Chair, Joint Committee for Postgraduate Training in Dentistry; President Elect of European Association of Oral Medicine. Mike completed his undergraduate dental and medical training at Guy's Dental Hospital and St Bartholomew's Hospital before returning to KCL where he completed oral medicine specialist training in 2002 and was appointed Honorary Consultant to GSTT in 2003. He completed a doctorate on the use of lithotripsy in the management of salivary calculi and leads the multi-disciplinary salivary and oro-facial granulomatosis clinics as well as an oro-facial pain clinic. His areas of special interest include: oro-facial granulomatosis, salivary gland disease and education assessment and his research interests which include the management of obstructive salivary gland disease, oro-facial granulomatosis as well as other oral mucosal diseases and assessment.

5. Simon Knowles (1972-1979) Technology. Simon read Electrical Engineering at Cambridge, graduating in 1983. He spent five years at the UK electronics research base RSRE in Great Malvern, then joined the pioneering British microchip company Inmos in Bristol, where he learned to design silicon microprocessors. He co-founded Element-14 in 1998, a company which produced the chips used in telephone exchanges to provide broadband internet over old copper phone lines. Element-14 was acquired by US chip giant Broadcom in 2000, and Simon left to co-found a second start-up in 2022, Icera Semiconductor. This company produced the chips necessary to bring 3G and 4G internet to mobile phones, and was acquired by US chip giant NVIDIA in 2011. Simon went on to co-found a third chip company, Graphcore, producing some of the first processor chips and supercomputers for the age of AI. Graphcore was acquired by Japanese conglomerate SoftBank in 2024, where Simon and his team now work alongside British chip giant ARM to design future AI computers. In 2024 Simon was elected to the Fellowship of the Royal Society for his work in silicon engineering. He lives in Bath with his data scientist wife Libby, and daughter Faye who is now studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge.

6. Grahame Millwater (1974-1981). Business. Grahame is Vice Chairman of Acrisure Group, one of the largest global insurance/reinsurance brokers. Prior to joining Acrisure, Grahame had led and built Beach and Associates as Chief Executive Officer, a London-based Global Reinsurance Intermediary that partnered with Acrisure in early 2018. Prior to Beach, Grahame served in a number of senior positions over a 27-year tenure with Willis Group. He was CEO of Willis Re from 2004, and then became President and CEO of Willis Group in 2008 with responsibility for all the global and international businesses outside North America.

Meet your OMAC Committee

I have been nagging my latest victim of “In the Spotlight” for several months, so I was delighted when **Cinzia Cocca** (2008 - 2015) agreed to this:

What School did you arrive from?

After passing the Kent test (my family seemed surprised I passed) but was one of five girls from St Mary’s Catholic School in Deal who got into Manwood’s that year. Like many younger siblings there was reassurance of having an older sibling at the school, but I remember during my summer Year 7 parents’ evening instead of talking about my achievements almost every teacher congratulated my parents on my brother’s achievement of becoming a school captain (who had been elected for 2009/2010 academic year).

School highlights

Since I was constantly in my brother’s shadow, I ended up finding something new because my parents were fed up with having to attend music concerts to watch my brother. Therefore, in my first year at school I helped backstage for the school production Fiddler on the Roof with Susie Jasper being stage manager.

During my time at Manwood’s I was part of various sports’ teams due to my friends excelling at various sports, and I managed to make it onto the team sheet for hockey. During Summer 2010 I remember attending Kent School Games at Polo Farm on a scorching summer Saturday and representing the School in the U13 competition. Hockey is still part of my life and was part of the OMA team who played on the new pitch on Founder’s Day in May 24 as well as the OM V School match this last week.

School lowlights

I never really excelled at any subject and my least favourite subject was English Language. I struggled with it throughout school and was glad to drop it during A-Levels.

After Manwood’s

After receiving bad grades during my A-levels I still managed to get a university place and studied Accounting and Finance. After graduating I started working in international accounting for a U.S. semiconductor manufacturer, Brewer Science. I originally started as office based, but what was supposed to be one weekend in Kent, ended up with me restarting life back in Deal (since March 2020).

Since moving back to my hometown, I have rediscovered the local community and twice a month during my lunch hour I volunteer at Age Concern Sandwich to deliver hot meals to the vulnerable and elderly in the local area. Whilst volunteering I've been fortunate to meet various people who have studied at Manwood's, and it helps to spark a conversation with them.

Through a volunteer's tea party, I had the pleasure of chatting to Sally (wife of OMA vice chair Steve Murray) for the afternoon who encouraged me to research the Old Manwoodian Association. After attending a committee meeting last January, I have been part of the group and help contribute ideas (it's not an old boys club anymore).

KS comments... Cinzia is a very valued member of OMAC who brings great energy and enthusiasm to all she does for the OMA. We are extremely grateful to Sally Murray's introduction.

Other OMAC news

OMA Annual membership fees

Our standard membership fees have been £5pa since 1994 (30 years) although many pay more. While our running costs are minimal and have fallen more after the abolition of correspondence by Royal Mail, this increase will enable the OMA to help financially many school extracurricular activities which are currently beyond the school budget and where funding from other avenues is hard to obtain. At last year's OMA AGM it was agreed that from 1 September 2025 the standard annual membership fee would **increase to £10pa**. We would appreciate if all standing orders could be amended and **in the reference field please add your surname and initials**. Thank you for your understanding.

OMA - where your money goes

I thought it would be good to provide an update and some context as to how we assist the School by using your membership fees, ad hoc donations and merchandise sales (ties, cuff links and pins available).

The OMA and Old Manwoodians in general have a long and proud history of providing funds and assistance to the school to assist in various projects. From early times, projects such as the first Pavilion (firebombed during World War II) and the 4th Centenary Fund of the 1960s and 1970s (which raised £25,000 for various projects including the swimming pool and the first dedicated Biology lab) have been funded by OMs. The list of other projects since those times is extensive...

Since 2023 we have established criteria aimed at funding extracurricular activities for pupils which helps their development in some capacity as well as one off donations towards equipment that will assist the school.

Excluding running costs such as postage, domain costs and merchandise purchase we use your membership fees and donations as follows:

We pay for a prize at Speech Day and we hold a yearly alumni day. In addition, in recent years we have also provided funds for the following:

2023

SRMS Future Fund video £2,300 Card reader £150

2024

Archive cabinets £1,179 Furry Field Fund £8,000 towards renovation of School cricket pavilion, Snow Machine for School Play £450, Martha Mumby donation for health care £500, No2 student personal development grant £250. Total £10,447

2025

Cricket Mats (£675) - this was a joint funding project with The Friends of Manwood's also donating £675. These mats are now in use.

£4,000 was donated to assist completion of the school's recording studio project.

Let us also not forget that the Furry Field Fund last year also saw OMs raising the incredible sum of nearly £22,000!!! These monies have been applied to renovating our beloved Pavilion which was completed this term.

We understand the importance of reviewing school requests for funding and allocating the funds appropriately. We also understand regular updates are important so you can see where the funding is spent. So every penny, either through annual subs or additional donations, is put to great use and greatly valued by the School. So, if you are feeling a little flush do please get in contact as state funds are extremely limited especially for extracurricular activities.

As we have banged on many times in the past finances, in the state school sector are incredibly tough and at the OMA we try our hardest to help Manwood's especially in extra curricular activities. One potential way OMs can help is through bequests. These are gifts that are made as part of a will or trust. A bequest can be to a person, or it can be a charitable bequest to a nonprofit organization, trust

or foundation. Anyone can make a bequest—in any amount—to an individual or charity. If you are interested in how you can help the OMA and SRMS in this way please do contact us.

Thanks for your continued support.

OMA Initiatives

Skills database moves into year two!!

Over the last 18 months the OMA has been delighted to use the skills of several OMs for School and our own projects! Renovating the Farrer Gates, Alumni Open Day events and Alumni drink venues being examples.

We have also provided OMs as career mentors and also OMs have given industry background lectures to Sixth formers.

An area we would like to develop is to engage with those OMs currently at University who could provide excellent, relevant and immediate feedback on University life (good and bad) for those current Sixth formers considering this path.

A further advantage would be for those OMs already working who could use other OMs for networking purposes!

We are sure there are more great reasons why we should continue to collate and use this information for both current Manwoodians and our OM family! The Skills Database we have been collating currently has over 130 OMs in it and many thanks to those of you who have already signed up.

We have spoken to other local schools and educational professionals who think this initiative is fantastic and even “industry leading”.

We are conscious of data protection laws so whatever data we hold would be kept to a minimum so just names; years at SRMS and skills/profession! As per the OMA privacy statement contact details e.g. email, would only be released with the permission of the data provider!

If you would like join us in this initiative please send the following data to David Stevens at stevensd@omamembership.co.uk

- Full Name (plus maiden name if applicable)
- Years at Manwood's
- Email address
- Skills/Profession you would like to share

From acorns do mighty oaks grow!!! This initiative can and will only grow and hopefully benefit many current and future Manwoodians.

Once a Manwoodian ALWAYS a Manwoodian.

Pavilion update

I continue to watch the Pavilion renovation and I've sent a huge thanks to George but especially Mick of the Estates team for the marvellous job they have done. It is really looking great...The main room/kitchen is now largely done and would benefit from some memorabilia on the walls. I gave Mick some old hockey sticks and sports caps which we can use - also I will dig out an old first XV rugby shirt that was recently donated. The PE department will also provide some memorabilia and we will relocate the "Wall" posters of Mel and Tammy to the Pavilion. There is still work to be done such as decorating the outside and fixing up the changing rooms but it's brilliant that we have helped to bring this much loved asset back to life.

OMA Merchandise

The following OMA merchandise is available from the Hon Sec:

- Tie at £20 plus P&P
- Cuff links £15 plus P&P
- Lapel Pin at £5 plus P&P

Social media

The OMA aims to keep in contact with all members using email as well as Facebook (now 1,730 members) and LinkedIn - see links:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/theoldmanwoodianassociation>

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/42929/>

The Facebook page in particular is very active and has all the latest Manwood news and pics (sadly this newsletter can't utilise pics as they cause the file to be too big and usually non deliverable). I'll leave the IT geeks out there to pick pieces with that quote. lol.

Please ensure those who use LinkedIn record SRMS on their education part of the profile as all publicity is good publicity as they say.

Forthcoming events for 2025/26

22 September, 2025 **OMA AGM and OMAC** 6.30pm in the Kings Arms, Sandwich.

December Carol Service* date TBC

4-6 December School Play Alice in Wonderland

***Invite only - due to number restrictions in School Hall and St Clements. School News**

News from SRMS

This term SRMS have appointed two new members to their Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

Deputy Head Teacher – Beth Boxall, who is currently working as Raising Standards Leader for years 11, 12, 13 at Dover Christ Church Academy, having previously been Assistant Head Teacher at Dover Girls Grammar School.

Assistant Head Teacher Student Progress - Liam Fricker, who currently is part of the extended leadership team and Head of Science at King Ethelbert School, having previously been Head of Physics at Dane Court.

We wish them the best of luck in their new positions.

Fundraising for The Grange

The Grange project continues to make good progress. As reported in the Spring newsletter, the fundraising thermometers have leapt up thanks to the school winning a major government grant alongside fundraising at school and a very generous legacy left by an OM. The project still relies on the sale of The Lodge which is currently under offer and we remain hopeful that this will complete in the autumn, which will allow us to move towards the build phase.

Whilst the sale of The Lodge, alongside that government grant, and, the money already raised will allow us to carry out most of the refurbishment, the thermometers show that there is still a gap in funding for the decoration and furnishing of all of the rooms. If you would like to help us transform the building into a sixth form centre we can be really proud of, there are a number of ways you can do that.

Raffle - buy a raffle ticket/tickets to win the chance of a week in a lovely holiday home in Spain with £1,000 of spending money (a prize given by one of the school's governors). Each ticket is £10.

<https://srms.charityhive.co.uk/raffle/1/win-a-week-in-a-spanish-holiday-home>

Buy a brick - put your name and a message on one of the bricks that will make up the new entrance pathway to The Grange. There are two sized bricks costing either £100 or £200. Alternatively, a donation of £1,000 will mean that your name will appear on an oak benefactors' board in the entrance hall of The Grange.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/the-grange>

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Sponsoring a room - if you'd like to help refurbish one of the rooms in The Grange and have the opportunity to name that room - a brass plaque will go on the door - then please get in touch with David Anderson (the School's Development Officer) via email D.Anderson@srms.kent.sch.uk to discuss this. Four of the ten new rooms have already been sponsored and that money will make a fundamental difference to the quality of the refurbishment, decoration and furnishing of those rooms.

Thank you for your ongoing support with this incredibly important project for the school.

David Anderson

News of OMs

Richard Pilcher (1976-1982) writes "I have been invited to play cricket for Essex Seniors Over 60s. Played in my first match on Saturday. I am actually 60 today!" Well done Richard.

Andrew H Osborne BEM (1941-1947) wrote recently "I thought you might be interested to hear how Manwood's celebrated the end of the war. The 8th of May was an afternoon for the Officer Training Corps, later called the Junior Cadet Force (*now the CCF*). The band was rehearsing in Manwood Road. The Drum Major was Eric (Cat) Spalding with band members I remember Roy French, Auberry (lob) Roberts, Bill Tucker, Mike Brown, Tony Jarman, big base drum Adams, Peter Cox, Tony Bloodworth, Jim Cullen, Jefford. I played the cymbals! and others I can't remember. I have probably got some of these wrong anyway. Mr Oaks (*Headmaster*) sent a boy round the school about 4.00 pm to announce that the war had ended and we sent him back a message to ask if the band could make a victory parade around the town, but that was refused so we had to be content with marching up and down Manwood Road playing our hearts out.

The school was given a long weekend off but Faversham, where I lived, was considered too far to go for a weekend so I cycled to Broadstairs to stay the weekend with Roy French. We spent the Saturday evening at the pictures where despite only being 14 we saw the X rated newsreels of the Belson camp was shown much to our horror, but it did forcibly remind us why we had fought a war. At fourteen years old it really was an experience that I have never forgotten.

Over the last few weeks I have the great pleasure of chatting with **Lee Moroney** (1981-89) and have persuaded him to do an "In the Spotlight". Many thanks Lee for this most interesting insight into your life...

Lee joined Manwood's as a boarder in the Lodge in 1981- the last year of the school being an all-boys school. Coming from a military school in Germany he struggled to slip into 'the system' and adjust, finding it extremely challenging. This resulted in Lee doing his first year twice!!

So even though this could be seen as a low point in his time at Manwood's, the fact that he re-joined the school in the first year of it becoming a co-educational school after 419 Years(!!); the low point can also be seen as one of his high points having one foot in each year of the history of the school.

The changes at the school meant a move to the Grange where he happily stayed through to his A-Levels and where he continued to make lifetime friends, some of whom he is still in contact with. Not the most academic, he threw himself into sports, boarding life and the CCF, and The Crispin Inn; somehow eventually becoming joint Deputy-Head of the School, Head of House and Drum Major of

the CCF Band. After his 'time', he left and fumbled his way (his own words) through university life, vowing that having been brought up in the military, he was never going to join the military and was going to follow one of his mentors, **Mike Judd**, and become a History teacher.

However, he did join the Army! With his head in the clouds (again own words), he joined the Intelligence Corps (like one of his earlier classmates... we'll leave it there!), yet after a few years when he found out there was no way on earth, he was going to be James Bond. So, he planned to leave and continue his passion to be a History teacher. Luckily the planets aligned and over a beer one evening, a member of the local Bomb Disposal team suggested that he might enjoy transferring cap badges instead of leaving the army, and blow things up...to be honest it was more stopping things blowing up.

What followed was a successful career as an ATO (Ammunition Technical Officer) which saw him on Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Ammunition and Explosive Safety operations in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq. He has always said within his time in the Army, the best five years was working with the Navy, where he was one of the three ATOs for 3 Commando Brigade during the busy days of Sierra Leone and the start of the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts.

Having left the Army, he took off his uniform and now continues to effectively conduct the same work in the field of Humanitarian Mine Action. He has used his Army experiences in supporting countries in demining; removal of explosive remnants of war; and, increasing security and safety of ammunition and explosives in Iraq, South Sudan (where he bumped into an old Manwood's classmate, Southern Craib), Lao PDR, Cambodia (working with another Old Manwoodian, Anna Roughley), Vietnam, Thailand, Libya, Mali, North Macedonia, Albania, Georgia, Kosovo and Ukraine. He is now a Director within a small INGO he now tends to manage more than getting his hands dirty (much to his sadness, but not his family members!).

Lee did eventually show some academic spark, and not wanting to do anything easy, managed to complete his Master's Degree at the age of 45 with Staffordshire University in *International Policy & Diplomacy* (while his children were 4 & 5 years old and he was also managing projects across continents!).

Married to Yaa, whom he met while setting up a landmine clearance operation on the Thai Cambodian border, he has two children, Elizabeth and Patrick, who are Irish twins (!!) - born on the same day one year apart. Some say Lee travels so much he only gets home once a year on the same day!!

Elizabeth is currently studying (GCSEs) in Bangkok, but is hoping to be in the UK later this year to start her A-Levels. Patrick is now in his second year at... Duke of Yorks Royal Military School (sigh)!!! So yes, one of the low points further down the line was finding out that boarding was no longer an option at Manwood's!!

Workwise, Lee is currently based out of Bratislava, Slovakia, but home is effectively Surin in Thailand (the Elephant Province). He has informed us that any Manwoodian who is ever passing through either Bratislava, or Surin is most welcome to call on him... or indeed anywhere in the world he is at any one time.

Lee continues to be a proud Manwoodian stating that he is only who he is now because of the mentors who helped him grow and keep him on the right path while boarding at Manwood's. A special respect and thanks from him to **Mike Judd** and **Tim Setchell** as well as remembering the late and great **Peter Firminger** and **Howell Griffiths**. All legends (again in his own words) who helped shape him and are part of the SRMS history, which continues to ensure Manwoodians “*Engage, Explore (& Excel)*”

Congratulations to **Toby Churchill** (2004-2011) on captaining over 30s tennis team to a gold medal in the World Championships.

Many congratulations to OM Notable **Aidan Corley** (2001-2008) who was honoured with an OBE in former PM Rishi Sunak's Resignation Honours List. Aidan is a former special adviser who ran research and messaging in No 10 under Sunak.

I heard from **Amy Judd (1991–1998)** who wrote “Manwood's was my home for the first sixteen years of my life. Both of my parents lived and worked at the school, providing me with a unique and cherished childhood. Many days were spent exploring the expansive school grounds and swimming in the pool. To this day, my dreams often transport me back to those familiar buildings and moments, with memories that remain vivid and deeply treasured. The teachers and friends I encountered there have played an integral role in shaping the person I am today. I would like to especially acknowledge Mr. Newton, my Art teacher, for his support and inspiration.

Amy is a British contemporary painter based in London. Her work draws upon the deep connections between women and nature as explored through folklore and mythology, with recurring themes of the natural world's inherent strength and fragility. Her practice is also an exploration of the fluid and often contradictory nature of femininity. The enigmatic Animals in Amy's work serve as symbolic representations of relationships, acting as both messengers and reflections of transformation. Her protagonists, often partially obscured, inhabit still, meditative spaces that evoke a sense of quiet anticipation for change or transcendence. The absence of facial features invites the viewer to forge a unique and personal connection with the figures, while the titles of her pieces subtly suggest hidden narratives. Central to Amy's work is her joy of painting; focusing on creating luminous light and form—whether it be the graceful curve of a neck or the delicate edge of a petal. Oversized, sculptural flora or fauna sit surreally alongside soft skin tones or delicate fabrics creating a striking visual dialogue. The powerful, ambiguous relationship between women and nature serves as the foundation for this

obsession, resulting in work that is both sumptuous and seductive: a constant endeavour to create something beautiful.

Carl Philpott (1991-1993) recently wrote Although only at Sir Roger Manwood's for the sixth form, my time at the school helped shaped my preparation for medical school. Some fond memories of time in the CCF, new friendships and a supportive environment in which to realise future ambitions.

Carl is a leading ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist in Norwich and Great Yarmouth whose areas of expertise in rhinology includes sinusitis, smell and taste disorders, allergic fungal rhinosinusitis and endoscopic sinus surgery. Carl is a graduate of Leicester University Medical School and completed his basic surgical training in the University Hospitals of Leicester before undertaking a period of research (2003-2004). His research career started by developing apparatus for olfactory testing, where he discovered an under-researched clinical topic in Smell and Taste Disorders (SATDs) and a passion for research. During his specialist training he completed his Doctorate in Medicine and following a clinical fellowship in Vancouver, returned to take up an appointment as clinical senior lecturer at the University of East Anglia (UEA). In 2017, he was appointed to a chair as Professor of Rhinology & Olfactology and has established a national and international reputation for leading research in his field. As a Chief Investigator, he currently holds over £4.5 million in research funding including the MACRO Programme for chronic rhinosinusitis (www.themacroprogramme.org.uk) and the APOLLO trial for post-viral olfactory dysfunction (<https://rhinology-group.uea.ac.uk/apollo-trial/>). He has also taken a leading role in evaluating the latest evidence through the Cochrane ENT Group producing systematic reviews and related podcasts, underpinning funding applications. He has published books/chapters that have been sold internationally and published research in the top-ranking specialty journals with over 300 publications including 196 peer-reviewed publications; field weighted citation index and Altimetric scores show an international readership and reach. His work has incorporated observational and interventional studies, including epidemiological and qualitative studies and randomised controlled trials for both medical and surgical interventions. He is an invited speaker at international conferences and on the editorial board of two leading speciality journals. A UEA Engagement Award in 2016 recognised his work with the charity for SATD patients, Fifth Sense, for public engagement, inviting input and disseminating knowledge and outputs nationally and internationally. He has worked closely with patient representatives to develop research priorities that will empower both patients and researchers (James Lind Alliance). He is the holder of a Silver National Clinical Impact Award.

Christopher Welch (1973-1978) is an expert in astronautics and space systems, with a career spanning over three decades across academia, consultancy, and public engagement. He holds a BSc in Physics from University College Cardiff (1981), an MSc in Experimental Space Physics from the University of Leicester (1982), and a PhD in Spacecraft Engineering from Cranfield University (1992). Following more than 30 years in higher education at Kingston University, London and culminating as a Full Professor at the International Space University (ISU) in Strasbourg, France, Chris is now Principal of space-ist, an independent space consultancy that provides technical, strategic, and educational guidance across the global space sector. He also serves as adjunct faculty at Embry-Riddle

Aeronautical University Worldwide, contributing to its graduate-level space programmes. Based in Strasbourg, Chris works internationally with clients and collaborators from both public and private sectors. His professional service includes high-level roles in several space organisations. He is an Academician of the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) and also a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society. Chris has served as President of the British Interplanetary Society and as Vice-President of the International Astronautical Federation, roles through which he has promoted international cooperation and advanced space education. Chris is a respected voice in space outreach and media, with over 300 television and radio appearances as an expert commentator. He regularly delivers public lectures, including as a guest speaker on cruise ships. In 2009, he received the Sir Arthur Clarke Award for Space Education, recognising his sustained contributions to the field. Throughout his career, he has maintained a commitment to interdisciplinary thinking, mentoring, and fostering the next generation of space professionals. Other highlights, include being in the final 24 candidates for the 1991 Juno mission to the Mir space station (but being rejected because of a poor left nostril !), writing what he thinks is the first academic paper on extraterrestrial garden design, and having one of his poems spend four years on the International Space Station.

Peter Jones (1952-1959) writes... After studying science at Wadham College Oxford, Peter switched to a career in television production when offered a chance to train at Granada TV in Manchester. For the ITV series "This England" he made programmes on northern topics such as "Odds on Outsider" about a Leeds bookmaker and "A Hill Some Sheep and A Living" set in a snow bound lambing season on Pendle Hill. In 1969 he joined the BBC Horizon team to combine film-making and science, making over 20 programmes including "Rumours of War" about the arms race; "Mind the Machine" (Horizon's first film about AI); the English Landscape explorations of W G Hoskins, the pioneering historian; two episodes of a drama-doc "Microbes and Men" - the story of Pasteur starring Arthur Lowe; "The Selfish Gene"; several award winning films on medicine and ecology; and "A Whisper from Space" on the big bang (a co-production with NOVA WGBH). A film made with Tim Clutton-Brock on the behavioural-ecology of the Red Deer also shown in the USA, led to Peter moving to the BBC Bristol Nature Unit in 1979 to take over the World About Us team. In 1983 Peter started "The Natural World" and in 1987 David Attenborough asked Peter to research and take the lead on The Trials of Life - a thirteen part series shown in 1990. A BAFTA award for best series followed and a tribute at The Telluride Film Festival. In 1991 Peter left the BBC to form Green Umbrella and over 70 films followed for US TV stations WGBH, WNET, National Geographic, and Discovery Channel. Many programmes were also seen on BBC or CH4: "Einstein Revealed", "Living Europe", "Triumph of Life", "Longitude" and the Emmy winning "Galileo's Daughter". Between 2002 and 2005, three films for American Experience on PBS followed, but from 2006, family and personal health came to matter most; and he now pursues his interest in cosmology with the Bristol "Lunar Society" which he co-founded in 2015. He has also contributed to celebrations of the life of W G Hoskins, most recently at Oxford in 2023 and to commemorate the publication of The Making of the English Landscape.

Mark Davison (1983-1991) Mark has been a professional actor since 1994, specialising in comedy. Screen credits include "Stath Lets Flats", "Drunk Histories", "Plebs" and "The Witchfinder", and parts in a number of feature films. He is one half of the online comedy duo "The Exploding Heads" producing sketches around football and politics. The American Broadcaster ESPN commissioned six

seasons of the web series “How Will They Line Up?” and “The Premier League in 90 Seconds”, and they were subsequently asked to write and perform broadcasts during major football tournaments including “Ballsupski” for the World Cup in 2018. They were also responsible for stunts such as attempting to visit every Premier League Stadium within 24 hours to mark the start of ESPN’s Premier League coverage for the 2019 / 20 season. Mark plays the Exploding Heads character “Colin From Portsmouth” which first emerged online in 2021, and whose acerbic commentary on British Politics and the culture wars features regularly on LBC’s “The James O’Brien Show.” In 2022 they were commissioned to write and perform the audio sitcom “Sports Horn”, a parody of sports radio featuring their long-running character Ian Fiveankles (also played by Mark). They were nominated for “Best Comedy Podcast” at the 2023 British Podcast Awards and the same the following year for season two. In 2024 The Exploding Heads took a live show on tour around the UK. Mark can trace his love of acting all the way back to when he played Jack in the Manwood Christmas production of “Charley’s Aunt” in 1989. It seems like only yesterday, he writes!!”

James Mannings (1995–2002) and **Tom Mannings** (1997–2004) are the co-founders and directors of Top Villas, a globally recognised leader in luxury vacation rentals. Established in 2010, Top Villas has grown into one of the world’s premier villa rental brands, offering over 15,000 high-end properties across 150 of the most sought-after destinations worldwide. Renowned for its seamless service, cutting-edge digital approach, and commitment to excellence, Top Villas is a three-time winner of the World Travel Awards for World's Leading Villa Collection. The company has a global footprint with offices in Canterbury (UK), Orlando (USA), and Mallorca (Spain), serving discerning travellers from around the world.

Over the last couple of weeks I have had the pleasure catching up with **James Gold** (SRMS 1982-1987). Nick named "Kermit" 'coz I speak French' James arrived at Manwood’s in the second year from Petersfield Comprehensive. He was to become Captain of the First Eleven cricket and admired greatly Mr Griffiths and Mr Gadd. With A levels in History, English, Art and French he went up to Cambridge where from 1987-1990 he studied a Master of Arts in History, played cricket for Cambridge University and rugby for Peterhouse. Since Cambridge James has followed a rich and varied career path as a quick glance at his LinkedIn page shows. Since 2024 he has been Chief Executive Officer for fleetbrokers.org who are a bilingual Intermediary Broker in Mortgages, Mortgage Insurance and FX, as well as EFP's, Equity Finance and Exotics.

Prior to that:

- from 2023 -2024 a Foreign Exchange Broker for International cross-border Mortgage transactions in France;
- from 2021-2023 a team leader in reverse logistics with Ingram in France;
- in 2021 he was tailleur de vignes ie pruned vineyards in France;
- from 2018-2020 he was a barman in the Lord Nelson Pub;
- from 2006-2017 he established and headed up the Exotics Derivatives Broking desk at Kyte Broking Ltd;

- from 2001-2005 and EFP and Equity Finance Broker at Sunrise Brokers LLP;
- from 2000- 2001 a researcher and Analyst of the taxicab trade in the UK with Cevercab.com and Globally. Startup early version of Uber Technologies and UberEats;
- from 1994-2000 an equity trader at UBS Joined the bank as a Back Office expert in resolving failed Far East Equity trades. Later, established the Global Dividend Analysis desk and then helped establish the Electronic Index Arbitrage Trading desk for Day One of SETS (Stock Exchange Electronic Trading System) automation of Equity Trading in October 1997;
- from 1993-1994 Sales Attendant Cambridge wine merchants;
- from 1992-1993 took a career break travelling the world and,
- after Cambridge he taught English to Executives in and around Tokyo, including intensive two week courses in other locations around Japan and illustrating English Teaching Manuals.

Family life - divorced with two sons, Finley aged 23 and Blake aged 21 and a daughter, Angelina aged 8.

Hobbies - Raising buried rivers such as the Fleet and Hackney Brook.

Where do you live now? Hackney

Anything else? I have a political party called The Orange Party, with manifesto item number one: To raise The River Fleet.

I have also caught up with **Marianne Davies** nee Galbraith (1985-1992). Marianne is Vice President, Global Head of People Services at GSK, a leading biopharma company with over 70,000 employees globally. Marianne has over 25 yrs of HR experience, working in various HR Business Leader roles and most recently leading a team of over 600 people globally accountable for all HR Operations globally for GSK, from Payroll to managing all stages of the employee lifecycle. Marianne is also developing her NED and Trustee career, and is the Chair of the Board for SPANA, (www.spana.org), the international charity for Working Animals. She is also an NED and Chair of REMCO for B3Living, a social housing organisation in Hertfordshire (www.b3living.org.uk), and in addition is an Independent Committee Member for the EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) Committee for RCOG (Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (www.rcog.org.uk)) Marianne holds a BA (hons) degree in Philosophy from King's College, University of London, and a Diploma in HR Management from De Montfort University. In her spare time she enjoys spending time with her family and being active outdoors, particularly through running and playing hockey.

In memoriam

Barry Hoile (1959-1964) passed away on the evening of the 24th March 2025. His daughter writes "it is my sad duty to tell you that Barry has passed away. He just sat down in his chair and fell asleep. It was all so very peaceful".

Derek Tyrell Collins (1945-52) passed away on 17th April, aged 92. He was a contemporary of the Firmingers and is pictured in the 1950/51 photo of the rugby 1st XV with them. A front rower "a sound scrummager who was always working in the tight. Certainly did his share of work". Derek was a Knolles House prefect and was awarded School rugby colours 1950-52 and house colours in hockey and cricket. He left School for National Service in the RAF in 1952 then completed a degree in Metallurgy at Imperial College before moving into industry.

Brian Clarke (1963-1965). It is with great sadness that we received the following from **Andrew Gregory** (1958-1965). "I have recently returned from the funeral of Brian Clarke, one of my oldest friends and one of the few that I kept in touch with since my days at Manwood's . Brian came to Manwood's in the sixth form – his father was in the RAF and because of his incessant travelling, Brian never settled at a school for more than a couple of years. Brian arrived in 1963 and left in 1965. Brian was a good sportsman; he played for Sandwich Town at football, but his main contribution to Manwood's was his ability at tennis. He was a shoo-in for the Men's 1st VI and he and I had a successful partnership for a couple of years. In those days there was little support from the teaching staff for tennis – we organised our own matches against local schools, as well as our own transport. Brian and his brother Dennis had motor scooters and four of us would travel to matches on the scooters and one of the parents (Denise Collier) would take the other two players by car. Not sure this would be allowed these days! As a team we were reasonably successful, certainly winning more matches than we lost.

The highlight of the two years we played together was the Youll Cup that was played each year at Wimbledon. This was a knockout competition for schools that were part of the Headmaster's Conference. The format was two doubles pairs and a singles play off in the event of a draw. In the second year, we contrived to lose our first-round match, which qualified Manwood's for the Plate. We reached the final and lost a very tight match (2-1) to Dulwich College

After leaving school, Brian qualified as an Accountant and had a hankering to travel, particularly in Africa. He did tours to Zambia (the copper belt), Kenya (Nairobi) and Botswana. Wherever Brian went, he succeeded in picking up silverware as the local tennis champion! He was also the natural choice as Club Treasurer and held the role of treasurer or chairman at numerous clubs. In the latter part of his career Brian turned to lecturing in Accountancy.

Three years ago, Brian was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease, his final challenge which he fought very bravely. Brian leaves behind his wife (Ruth) of more than 50 years and two daughters Jo and Fran of whom he was immensely proud.

Our thoughts and best wishes go to his family and friends.

We were recently reminded of the passing of **Robert (Bob) Ford** (1938-2018) who would have been at Manwood's circa 1949-1956. After SRMS Bob went on to become an architect in private practice and then for the GLC. If any old classmates are on here please feel free to add to our limited knowledge of Bob by dropping either David or myself a line.

Rachel Keeling nee Shaw recently advised us of the passing of her mother **Jennie Shaw** who taught English at SRMS from the late 1980's to the mid 1990's. The funeral will be held on Thursday 24th July at 11am <https://www.martinpaul.org/visit-st-pauls-without-the-walls/>. The wake should be at the church hall afterwards. Our thoughts and best wishes go to her family and friends.

New OMA members this term

Leo Munns (71-77)

Duncan Lambie (2017-24)

Amy Judd (91-98)

Sam Judd (89-96)

Howard Pashley (staff 76-15)

Seb Willett (98-05)

Jason Gault (86-90)

James Goold (82-87)

Tim Dastoor - School Governor

We hope you enjoyed this edition. If you have any suggestions for future content of this newsletter or venues/ events for Alumni gatherings, please let us know. In addition, we love to hear your news so drop us a line to let us know what you have been up to post Manwood's.

Once a Manwoodian ALWAYS a Manwoodian is after all our motto!!

Have a great summer.

Best wishes and kindest regards,

Keith Simpson – OMA Hon Secretary and David Stevens – Membership Secretary