

## **The Mount House Association**

**Minutes taken during the Committee Meeting at Mount House School at 11 am on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007.**

### **Those present:**

Patrick Cashell (Chairman), Jon Elworthy (Secretary), Chris Redman (Treasurer), Graham Bush, Gavin Grier-Rees and Ian Kilpatrick.

### **AGENDA**

#### **1. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Quintus Travis and Chris Cole.

#### **2. The Signing of the Minutes of the Meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2007.**

It was agreed that the minutes were accurate and were signed by the Chairman

#### **3. Matters arising from the Minutes.**

It was agreed that the discussion to follow would cover the matters arising from the previous meeting

#### **4. Chairman's Business.**

The Chairman thanked Melanie Redman for all her hard work in producing the new MHA website, Ian Kilpatrick for his work in updating the MHA database and Jon Elworthy for his efforts.

The Chairman said that he felt there should be a lady representative on the Committee and, to that effect, he had contacted Morwenna Armstrong who was the first girl to attend MHS. To date, he had received no reply.

It was agreed that there should be a lady appointed.

Gavin Grier Rees suggested an alternative lady to contact – Sophie Liddell-Grainger, stating that she was used to organising events and functions. Gavin volunteered to contact her on behalf of the Association.

Melanie Redman also said she would ask other lady parents if they were interested.

## **5. Treasurer's Business.**

### **5.01 The Independent Examination of the Accounts to date**

The Treasurer confirmed that the accounts were in good shape. The Treasurer had had the accounts reviewed by a Major Bill Lane (Churchtown Accounts). Bill Lane had suggested that the Association should look at ways of being more Tax efficient and might consider becoming a Charity. The suggestion that the Association might come under the School,s Charitable status was thought to effect our independence and was to be avoided.

He also suggested that one of the current accounts should be shut down as it only had a token sum in it and had been dormant for some time. He thought the same should happen to the deposit account, but no final decision was reached.

The Treasurer said he would investigate alternative ways of attaining Charitable status.

The Treasurer asked if he could destroy all chequebooks and paying-in books over 6 years old. The Committee agreed. The Treasurer said he had been advised by Bill Lane to keep a cashbook and it was agreed that he should do so.

The Treasurer is to contact Neil Jory, the School Bursar to ask to what the tri yearly payment MHA receives from the school relates.

### **5.02 Retrieval of monies, presently on loan to MHS.**

It was agreed that the loan should be given back to the Association as soon as possible. After discussion as to what to do with the money, it was agreed that the Treasurer investigates the alternatives and that, in the short term, it is to held in the current account.

### **5.03 Expenses to date and anticipated expenditure in the future.**

The Treasurer had produced a detailed report of the expenses incurred to date. These were associated with the design of the website, the design of the logo, the independent examination of the accounts and the production and postage of the first Newsletter.

It is expected that any future expenditure on these aspects of the running of the Association will be greatly reduced.

The payment of a retainer to the web designers WhatAboutAWebsite was discussed. Previously the Chairman had agreed a fixed total retainer of £20.00 per month for the addition/editing of members' details on the website; this was endorsed by the Committee. It was also agreed that, should the website require more work in any one month, that work would be authorised by either the Chairman or the Secretary.

"Churchtown Accounts", who had examined the accounts, had yet to submit their invoice.

### **5.03 Membership Subscription.**

The treasurer showed the committee a chart showing the gradual decline in Membership totals for the period between 2000 and 2007. This indicated that the number of members paying annual fees had dropped from 143 individuals to 115 in 2006.

He also showed details of members who had paid 10 year and lifetime memberships. These records were not complete, as details for 1988 and 1996 were not available. There is no definitive list of life and 10 year members. The Treasurer stated that many members probably did not know their status as parents had paid subs on departure from school. Most 10-year memberships will have expired.

It was agreed that these members should still be sourced and "advertised for" on the web site.

It was reported that there were now 40+ new contacts following the Association's last Newsletter and networking.

There was then a discussion about the subscription fees – their type and the amounts. It was agreed to increase the fee to £10 per annum and to offer a life membership set at £100.

The Secretary proposed that we should offer a free membership to the current parents who have children attending the school. He stated that this would be a good idea because until the "old pupil/teacher membership rises" the people coming to future events etc will be these parents.

The method of subscription was then discussed. It was agreed that bank details could only be sent once the member had inputted his/her details and given a contact address or e-mail. Bank details would then be sent with a request to go to their bank and make out a standing order to the Association. This would be done now the new fee levels have been agreed.

#### **5.05 To consider how best the MHA can help MHS financially.**

It was decided that the MHA should stop providing funds towards a "hardship" fund. It was thought that the monies the Association could offer the school were, unfortunately, not sufficient to support a pupil for more than a token amount of time. It was agreed that MHA monies would be better spent on more tangible items for the school.

It was stated that several conversations had taken place with Neil Jory and that there were various options that we were invited to look at for funding. One was a future hockey tour to Barcelona, another the purchase of various "trim trail" obstacles/training pieces or benches to be positioned in the Grounds. JRE stated that he and the Chairman had previously discussed these ideas and thought it would be preferable to have visible pieces of equipment purchased rather than one off payments made to entrants to events. However, in this case the Association would make an offer of £250 towards the trip. It was agreed that this donation was a one off, goodwill gesture to help offset the present shortfall in funds for the Barcelona Hockey Tour.

It was also agreed that CR and GRR should source benches made in Devon and that ideally 5 benches should be purchased with a £1000 budget.

Ian Kilpatrick volunteered to try to track down any plaques that had been removed from the old broken benches.

Ian Kilpatrick stated that he thought an old boy (John Shields?) made benches and would try to contact him to give a quotation.

### **6. Secretary's Business**

#### **6.01 General Report on the progress of the MHA to date.**

See below

#### **6.02 The Website and the Database.**

The Secretary reported that progress over the last 6 months had been impressive and that the Mount House Association website was finished. He said that further additions/facilities on the site are bound to occur, but that the basics had been achieved.

It was thought that a new web page should be added to the site to advertise for lost subscribers. It was thought that the Association should continue to try to find these individuals, who may be unaware that they are still paying and also to inform them that the membership fee is increasing.

It was agreed that the Secretary should talk to Marcel Kral of Smallfish, who produced the artwork for the MHA logo, to arrange the next phase of artwork for a business card sheet, a letterhead and a compliment slip. This would be produced with the idea of printing it off by our own individual machines as and when they were needed. The Secretary stated that this was in the original total fee of £150.00. Smallfish will then be instructed to issue their invoice on acceptance of this artwork.

### **6.03 Merchandise.**

The Committee was shown the existing tie produced by the school and given to departing pupils on leavers' day. It was thought that the tie and scarf (unseen) are of good quality and that, if the Association is to produce any merchandise, it should complement the tie and scarf. JRE suggested a tiepin and brooch. It is unknown how many ties and scarves are in stock.

Ian Kilpatrick is to contact Peter Wortham to obtain permission to contact South West Television and Film Archives. He is to ask Peter Wortham for permission to use the films for the Association's benefit. He stated that this had previously been given, but would confirm this again. He will then ask South West Television and Film Archives how much it would cost to digitise the films.

### **6.04 Events.**

The matter of future events was discussed. It was agreed that a Christmas "event" was not practical this year due to both timing and current membership totals. It was therefore decided to concentrate on organising a Summer Ball, hopefully to be held on Association day, after the Chairman's XI Cricket Match. It was suggested that the Ball be held in a Marquee on the Stoney pitch.

Mel was going to get ideas from Margi Jervoise, a contact who is experienced in organising such events.

It was hoped that, should the Summer Ball be a success, then the School would be approached and asked if a Christmas Ball could be held in the School.

Various issues were discussed such as security and age restrictions. It was agreed to discuss this further at the next Committee meeting.

#### **6.05 Fanfare.**

It is to be confirmed whether leavers receive Fanfare for their 10 year Paid subscription period. Several committee members commented that they had not, or at least only for a short period after leaving, received the magazine. The Chairman sourced some correspondence suggesting that MHA paid towards the distribution of the magazine only. The Secretary suggested that Fanfare should be sent for the next year to leaving pupils only. He suggested that the Association (or the School) should then make Fanfares available on-line, and downloadable in .pdf format. The current issue would not be available until the following year.

#### **6.06 Newsletter.**

The Secretary stated that he will produce the next Newsletter for publication at the end of July.

### **7. Other Business.**

None

### **8. Meetings**

#### **The Date and venue for the next Committee Meeting.**

It was proposed that the next committee meeting is on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2007 at 10.00am. The school is to be contacted to confirm that a room at the school can be made available.

#### **The Date and venue for the Annual General Meeting.**

1<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the revived Mount House Association is to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The school is to be contacted to confirm that a room at the school can be made available.