

Dear Members

When you last had contact with the Association, it was, perhaps, under another name and appeared to be on its last legs. We can now write to assure you that the Association "has risen from the ashes" and, with your continued support, will enter a new more proactive era.

That sounds rather grand, but that's what we are hoping will happen. Let us explain events since the "crisis" AGM in December.

There was a limited response to the letter sent out to members, but those who did respond and attended the meeting showed that there still is a great enthusiasm for the Association and the work it has done and should be doing in the future.

Without going into too much detail of what happened at the meeting, we will set out what we propose to do in the near future to set up a new more dynamic Association, which will work to keep you informed of Association issues and events, and the work we will be undertaking. If you are interested in seeing the minutes of the meeting please contact Jon Elworthy, in one of the ways listed at the end of this newsletter.

What we have done since the December meeting

- We have confirmed the name of the Association is THE MOUNT HOUSE ASSOCIATION. This name was actually adopted about 7 years ago at an AGM to reflect the fact that "Mount House Old Boys Association" was no longer suitable, as very soon there would be Mount House Old Girls.
- We have instructed whataboutwebsite.co.uk to undertake the design of a new website for MHA. This will allow those with access to a computer to keep up to date, and be updated electronically. We are hoping that most of you are now able to receive e-mails as this will be our preferred method of contact in the future. Those, who do not have a computer, will of course, still receive information by post. whataboutwebsite.co.uk already works for the School updating its website, so it made sense to employ them for ours. To coincide with the release of this Newsletter, we have produced a temporary website to enable you to contact us. The temporary website address is [www.mounthouseassociation.co.uk](http://www.mounthouseassociation.co.uk). The website will then be expanded to a full site within the next 2 months. The MHA website will be linked to the School's website and will also have links to other "of interest" websites such as FriendsReunited and senior school websites. On the MHA website you will be able to input your details and give some idea of what you have been doing since leaving MH as well as what you are doing now. We will leave a lot of space for our older members! You will also be able to post items and requests for people to contact you. The site will contain password sensitive areas for personal details and of course any details posted will be secure and only for the use of the Association. If you do not wish to post information, then you can leave any details with Jon Elworthy.
- One of the most important changes to the Association is the opening up of the membership to parents and to others who want to continue their relationship with the school. It was thought that the parents had been "shut out" in the past and that, considering the amount of time and money they have invested in the school, they should be included.

- We are also undertaking a full audit of the accounts and a full financial report will be available to all members. It is still to be confirmed whether it will be posted on the web site. Our new Treasurer, Chris Redman, will also confirm who is paying by Direct Debit. It is proposed that we will cancel the Direct Debit of all members who do not respond.
- We are organising an Association day at the School, proposing to base it around a Cricket match between an Association X1 and an X1 made up of Staff, Parents and Others. This day will be in the Summer term so that pupils and parents can see that they can still have a link with the School after they leave and that there are regular events to which they can return. As well as the cricket there will be other events (to be confirmed) and, for those of you who have not seen the amazing changes that have occurred over the last 20 years or so, an opportunity to look round the School. If any of you would like to play for The Association XI, please contact Jon Elworthy
- Another event that we hope to organise is an annual Dinner, alternating the venue in Devon and London. We are also considering reviving the Dinner-Dance, which was so popular several years ago.
- The membership will remain at £3 per annum for the next year. As you know, for the first 10 years after leaving MH, you are a member of the Association. It is hoped that, with the increased profile of the Association, more will continue their contact with the school. The Committee will be working hard to ensure this is the case and that the Association will prosper.
- With hardship funds, prizes and in other ways, the Association has and will continue to help the School. We would appreciate hearing from any of you who have further ideas of what the Association should be doing in this area.

The new Committee

Patrick Cashell, Chairman

Jon Elworthy, Secretary

Chris Redman, Treasurer

Jon Banyard

Gavin Grier-Rees

Graham Bush

Ian Kilpatrick

Chris Cole

Quintus Travis

The Committee very much hopes that you will respond to this Newsletter, and that you will help by making sure that all members, with whom you are still in touch, have received it and will also respond. Please encourage all those, whose membership may have lapsed or who have lost contact with the School, to get in touch. We really do need as full a response as possible to keep the momentum going and to endorse the Committee's efforts to rebuild the Association.

Finally the Committee would like to extend our best wishes to all members and hopes that you will continue to support the work of the Association.

Patrick Cashell

Chairman.