

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Merchistonian Club
Held at the Old Library, Merchiston Castle School on Monday 13 March 2017 at 6.30pm**

1. **Present**

Present:	Chair	Andrew McDonald	President, Fishing Secretary
		Matthew Gray	President-elect
		Gareth Baird	Chairman of the Board
		Rob Elliott	Governor
		Ian Wilson	Area Representative - Tayside
		Robert Foreman	Golf Secretary
		Oli Green	Rugby Secretary
		Stuart Murphy	Skiing Secretary
	Secretary	Gill Imrie	Club Secretary
In attendance:		Angie Lees	MCS Financial Controller
Apologies:		Gavin Thain	Treasurer
		Steve Abram	Committee Member, Governor
		Iain Wright	Committee Member
		Michael Ferndale	Area Representative - London
		Brendan McKerchar	Area Representative - London
		Campbell Mackenzie	Area Representative – West of England
		Alastair Campbell	Curling Secretary
		David Clements	Sailing Representative
		Richard Macmillan	Shooting Secretary
		James MacKenzie	
		Jamie MacLean	
		Alastair McDonald	
		Gordon McDonald	
		Alan Mickel	

1. Apologies. Andrew McDonald welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were recorded. It was accepted that overseas reps would not attend meeting.
2. Matters arising from Minutes of the AGM held on Monday 15 March 2016

Action points:

1. New Club Secretary to work with all secretaries to investigate options and possibilities for future events – MRFC v Accies post-match dinner. Attempts have been made to pursue a Newcastle drinks night, **awaiting confirmation from the Newcastle rep', John Bruce (and James Angus and Andrew Taylor).** Action ongoing

2. Current Chair to work with Chair-elect to talk about Club business over the current year - **Action ongoing**
 3. Award nominations to committee members for decision – **Action closed**.
Stephen Biggart won the Merchistonian Award.
 4. Merchistonian Award development. It is a struggle to get nominations for this award so we need to look at the criteria i.e. is it too restrictive? Make sure to keep advertising it as the Merchistonian Award not the Merchistonian of the Year Award. Keep getting the message out, publicise who won it and why. – **Action ongoing**
 5. Club Secretary to include production of a Merchistonian burgee. GI noted that David Clements is in process of having burgee produced for the Sailing Club. Currently 6 members strong who are all keen to have one. Get photos of them on the yachts to show further development and interest. New supplier of Merchandise can offer items with low order numbers, i.e. min order of 6 with crest so we can expand our range and see what the interest is. - **Action ongoing**
 6. Club Secretary to meet with the President to agree on date for Annual Dinner 2016 – **Action closed**
This was at the Macdonald Holyrood Hotel.
3. **Financial Statements – See financial statements attached**
- Total income was £66,842, total expenditure was £67,936, deficit for the year was £1,094. Improvement on last year which was a deficit of £1,440. Less income from boys this year due to less pupils at school (£15 per term, per boy), £225 per lifetime of pupil, no charges thereafter. Last year only one pupil contacted to opt out of joining Club/paying the fee. Corporation tax due for the year was £182.
 - Merchandise sales up slightly – It was thought this could be improved upon by further marketing at events etc. Also, short sleeved rugby shirt would appeal to younger Merchistonians, something more casual, golf polos, ball bags, rugby sweaters, rugby shorts, navy blue polo shirts, labelled wine. Price accordingly for the younger members. Give younger members survey asking them what they want. Try to get all members to buy one or two key items. Andrew looking at boxers options Ready Ay Ready but elastic stitching is expensive. Get Zach Mercer to pose with the blazer for next mag and website. –
- Action point (AP1) – The Club Sec to ensure updated photo of Merchistonian blazer is included in 2017 The Merchistonian Club Magazine.**
- Investments £88,101, S&J higher as they hold cash sum for Club, market value of portfolio is £140K, is £52k higher than we paid. We receive £5-6k a year from dividend income. Graham from S&J to advise about any re-investments, explore tax efficient ways to do this –

Action point (AP2) Club Treasurer and MCS Financial Controller to discuss investments with Graham from S&J.

- Debtors – Long-term debts recovered in full, £325.
- Creditors & Accruals – Last year was £5300 outstanding for payment, £4,537 outstanding for payment this year (bulk is accountancy fees to Geoghans).
- Due from the School – Money to be paid from School to Club for merchandise etc. total balance in intercompany account is £12,327.
- Events held – 5 held (4 reunion dinners and MRFC dinner) which overall returned a deficit of £985. Unlike previous years, no raffle or auction was held at the annual dinner.
- Angie asked what is the policy, should they be running at a surplus or break even? No controls, funds from Club used for them, more important to get connection from alumni as long as deficit is small. Ways to run a surplus have been auctions and raffles. This year this was not done at the annual dinner.
- **Total reserves, not restricted £121,058, bulk in shares.**

4. **Appointments** - See appendix 1 for list of Club Bearers

- Resignations, Andrew McDonald from President
- Office Bearers, Matthew Gray from Vice President to President.

Action point (AP3) - Matthew to consider appointments to new roles.

- Committee, Chris Gray, Matthew Gray, Gareth Baird, Roger Baird, Gavin Thain, Andrew McDonald, Iain Wright, Steve Abram/ Area Representatives / Sports Secretaries

There is now a space now for Vice President. Matthew suggested introducing President-elect who will become President then a Vice President in behind that to keep a continuum and flow. It has been useful having 2 VPs in past. Voted sensible suggestion as long as they do not tire over time, especially if a President were to stay in role for 6 years contributing as VP then President.

Sport reps - John Robb stepped down as tennis rep and David Clements is temporary sailing rep.

Area reps – Robbie Mitchell moved from London, no longer London rep. Will Biggart now London rep (along with Brendan McKerchar and Michael Ferndale). John Bruce now Newcastle rep.

Overseas Reps – to send an update (even if it is ‘no news’) every quarter and to supply a photograph of any Merchistonian gatherings.

Action point (AP4) – Club Secretary to approach overseas reps to request quarterly update.

5. **President’s Report** – see appendix 2

6. **Secretary’s Report** – see appendix 3

Andrew noted it was good to have pupils present at the business breakfasts.

Andrew noted that HM could attend some events if he knows well in advance, can say hellos market school and then leave before dinner. Look at mini committee for annual dinner to talk about raffles, auctions etc, targeting, merchandise for the event, get a core base for it to work.

7. **Sports Club Updates** – see appendix 4

8. **Any Other Business**

- a. **The Merchistonian Award** – Nominations discussed and winner selected – to be announced at Merchistonian Annual Dinner on 24 November.
- b. **Club update** - Matthew honoured to be president and looking forward to working with committee and extended family. Big thank you to Andrew for everything he has done.

9. **Any Other Business**

Committee Meeting – Monday 12 June 2017

Committee Meeting – Monday 11 September 2017

Christmas Committee Meeting – Monday 11 December 2017

Date of next AGM – Monday 12 March 2018

Appendix 1 – Club Bearers

<u>Sport Secretaries</u>			
Alastair	Campbell	1967	Curling
David	Clements	1962	Sailing
Chris	Cowan	1985	Golf Treasurer
Alistair	Evans	1997	Cricket
Robert	Forman	1994	Golf Secretary
Oli	Green	2007	Rugby
Bill	Hannay	1958	Golf Captain
Richard	Macmillan	1987	Shooting
Andrew	McDonald	1985	Fishing, President
Stuart	Murphy	2002	Skiing
Ali	Turner	1993	Fives

<u>Club Committee</u>			
Chris	Gray	1981	Immediate Past-President
Matthew	Gray	1985	Vice-President
Gareth	Baird	1975	Chairman of the Board of Governors
Roger	Baird	1978	Committee Member
Gavin	Thain	1985	Treasurer
Andrew	McDonald	1985	Fishing, President
Iain	Wright	1965	Committee Member
Steve	Abram	1975	Committee Member

<u>Area Representatives</u>			
Michael	Ferndale	1992	London
David	Fulton	1972	South West of Scotland
John	Glen	1990	Glasgow
Campbell	Mackenzie	1951	West of England
Brendan	McKerchar	2001	London
Roy	Weir	1980	South West of Scotland
Ian	Wilson	1977	Tayside
Will	Biggart	2001	London
John	Bruce	1981	North East/Northumberland

<u>Overseas</u>			
<u>Rep</u>			
Soichi	Abe	2002	Japan
Jamie	Aitchison	2003	Germany
David	Bassiouni	1995	New York
Robin	Hall	1964	South Africa
Graham	Desson	1964	Canada
Graeme	Henderson	1982	New York
Peter	Hurst	1964	Chicago
Grant	McCorquodale	1984	New South Wales
Craig	McLaren	1979	Dubai
Daniel	Moussa	2002	Hong Kong
Nick	Quin	2000	the Caribbean
Chris	Reid	1959	Alberta
Scott	Roberts	1973	Italy
Robert	Salvesen	2002	New Zealand
Paul	Sukhum	1980	Thailand
Jack	Usherwood	1950	Southern California
Robert	Young	1980	South Australia
Bob	Windle	2003	Melbourne

Appendix 2 – President’s report

As I sit down to write my last President’s Report, I recall yet another busy year for the Club that has given me the privileged opportunity to meet many of you at a whole variety of events, ranging from reunion dinners to sporting events and business network meetings. I was also pleased to hear of Merchistonians meeting informally, even accidentally, overseas and also supporting the Headmaster’s visits abroad.

The Club’s Committee, Sports Secretaries and Area Representatives have continued to play their parts in providing varied opportunities to participate in Club activities. These gatherings involve a great deal of planning and co-ordination so I continue to extend a huge ‘Thank You’ to all those who get involved and who help in their organisation.

Unusually in 2015, we decided not to hold a separate Annual Club Dinner but instead to join with members of the current School to help in launching and raising funds for the School’s proposed new Sport and Leisure facilities - the fundraising Gala Ball at the Sheraton Edinburgh was very well attended and an undoubted success.

Our Edinburgh Business Network Meetings continued to grow in popularity and there were reunions for the Class of 1995, the Class of 2005, the Class of 1981 and the Class of 2006, with Merchistonians travelling from far afield to attend. The year was rounded off with a very successful, well-attended reunion for those who arrived at the School in the mid-1950s. Having looked at some of the photos from the 1950s, and now as a current parent, I can see how much the School has changed, not just since then but since my own time at Merchiston.

For our sporting clubs, there were competitions, with varying success, for the Rugby Club, the Golf Club, the Curling Team and the Shooting Team. Our fishermen also enjoyed a day of competition on the Lake of Menteith this year, and there was the regular Merchistonians v School cricket match. Reports for the sporting sections can be found in full on the Club website. Some sporting sections of the Club continue to thrive in terms of membership whilst others are always on the lookout for new participants. Enquiries from new members, particularly younger Merchistonians, are always very welcome and are a great way of networking as well as keeping fit.

Our Annual Club Dinner for 2016, to mark the conclusion of the 150th year of the Club, was held at The Macdonald Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh. At these dinners, it is now traditional to hand out the Merchistonian Award and it was my pleasure this year to hand over the award to Stephen Biggart (96-03). Over the years, I have been encouraged to read the nominations for the Merchistonian Award which reflect some of the inspiring achievements and dedication of Merchistonians. I hope that the Award is a showcase for the Merchistonian talent and continues to flourish in the future.

I would like to finish by offering a huge ‘Thank You’ to the Development Team of David Rider, Gill Imrie (Merchistonian Club Secretary) and Louise Pert for their unstinting support

throughout the year and would like to extend a warm welcome to your new President as I look forward to continuing to meet up with many of you at events in the coming year.

W Andrew McDonald

Appendix 3 – Secretary’s report

Membership

As at 2 March 2017, the Club had a membership totalling 5045 of which 4300 are contactable. Our contact rate has decreased on previous years reflecting more accurate contact details obtained (or not) following the annual membership survey and then further updated during the School’s telephone fundraising campaign carried out in last summer.

	Merchistonians with address/email/phone
2017	4300
2016	4855
2015	4896
2014	4764
2013	4768

It remains an ongoing effort to increase the number of contactable Club members. The Club has postal mailing addresses for nearly 80% of our members and there has been a continued decrease in any postal returns. Once again, we have a slight increase in the number of email addresses that we hold for Merchistonians which now stands at around 59% (up from 57% in 2016). The aim is to reach 65% of Merchistonians by email by AGM 2018.

In January 2016, we commenced the first annual survey of recent leavers who left the School in the last 5 years. The aim of the survey is to get an understanding of their academic experience at Merchiston, how it has helped them and what they now know would have helped them during their time at School. We are using this opportunity to cement the benefits of the Club, particularly around career development.

Club Communications

The weekly e-newsletter has changed in style over the year and continues to be a cherished route for publicising Merchistonian events, news, notices and interaction with the Club office and School. Positive feedback continues to be received from members and they enjoy reading it. The newsletter has a weekly distribution of 4254 and now includes former parents and Upper Sixth Form pupils.

The Club magazine remains the mainstay of the Club communications. The magazine was produced in the same (foolscap-A5) format as in 2015. An additional 200 copies of the magazine were printed for 2016 to provide copies for staff and Upper Sixth pupils. The magazine page count and content also increased by 10 pages over the 2015 edition.

	Magazine Print	Carrier Sheet & Poly Bag	Postage	Invoice total + VAT
2016 magazine (4500 copies)	£5715	£1087	£4861.00	£12,852.60
2015 magazine (4300 copies)	£5444	£1084	£4517.67	£12,166.00

Social media continues to provide a useful engagement mechanism. We use Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. MRFC has its own social media account and the golf section has recently set up a Twitter account for the Halford Hewitt. We will be contacting other sports secretaries to help them do similar and at the same time will provide them with a list of leavers interested in each sporting area.

In an attempt to create a closed group messaging service, we trialled two pieces of software 'Slack' and Graduway's 'Connect'. Despite initial enthusiasm, neither of the trials were successful which we put down to the preference for 'push' communications rather than 'pull' messaging. We will monitor developments and trends in this area to help Merchistonian communications.

Events and reunions

We continue to manage and support a range of Club activities and events, which in 2016 included:

- The monthly Edinburgh Business Network
- London Drinks Reception
- Merchistonian Annual Dinner
- Reunions for 1981, 1986, 2006 reunions
- MRFC v Accies rugby match and follow-on dinner.

Club Discount/Loyalty Card

We have had modest success in attracting retail discounts from out with the Club and we will now concentrate on Merchistonians who are willing to offer a discount to their company's product or services to progress this Club benefit.

Careers

We have played an increasing role in identifying and organising speakers for the School's Career Cafés in 2016, giving senior pupils the opportunity, in a less formal setting, to hear

about a wide and interesting range of occupations Merchistonians have. More formally we have also arranged for a number of Merchistonians to support for the annual School Careers Convention.

Business Breakfasts

Whilst ever-popular for those attending, we did see a reduction in numbers coming to our monthly Edinburgh Business Breakfasts in 2016. We have refreshed the format and switched to bimonthly allowing a longer period to market these events. A current pupil has agreed to help encourage fellow pupils along to Merchistonian Events, and is writing a short article after each Business Breakfast, bridging the gap between the Club and the Sixth form over the coming year.

Merchandise

Merchandise has been selling steadily and a stand at Prizegiving proved successful for last minute gifts and forgotten ties! We are investigating alternative online payment services for web sales, as our current provider's fees (Paypal) are becoming expensive. Going forward, Merchandise will be made available at all appropriate events – Business Breakfasts, Reunions, School events, particularly Prizegiving, and the Annual Dinner.

President

Since becoming President of the Merchistonian Club in 2011 Andrew has been very committed, giving up a substantial amount of his time to attend many Merchistonian events. I would like to thank Andrew for the support that he has given me whilst I have settled in as the Club Secretary and hope that he will remain a familiar face with us.

Future Activity

We are concentrating on key decade reunions and will be driving these forward over the next 12 months to be held in and out of School (recognising the School's priorities).

In 2017 we have the following activities and events planned:

- Bi-monthly Edinburgh Business Breakfasts
- Rifle and Clay Day, 18 March,
- MRFC v Accies Match and Lunch, 3 June
- Golf Autumn Meeting, 26 August
- London Drinks Reception, October
- Newcastle Drinks Reception, TBC
- Merchistonian Annual Dinner, 24 November

- Class of '07 10 year Reunion, TBC

- Class of '87 30 year Reunion, 7 October
- Class of '92 25 year Reunion, TBC
- Intake of '59, '60 and '61 Reunion, 20 May
- Class of '97 20 year Reunion, TBC

Appendix 4 – Sports reports

Cricket

On Friday 20 May 2016, the 1XI played its annual fixture against the Merchistonians. This is always a great occasion and this game did not let us down. Merchistonian Captain, Mike Legget (97-04), won the toss and decided to bat. After a couple of early wickets for the 1XI from opener Johnny Alexander (11-16), Chris Sole (07-12) and Angus Paterson (05-12) steadied the ship. Angus hit a quick fire 16 and Chris ended up on 56 off just 40 balls. Chris still plays competitively and has recently been selected for the Scotland Development XI against Ireland A. The Merchistonians reached 121-7 off their 20 overs.

It was then the 1XI's turn with the bat. After losing 4 quick wickets for the loss of just 20 runs, it looked in trouble. However, a marvellous 76 off 46 balls from 1XI Captain, Angus H, nearly won the game. In the end, the 1XI finished just 10 runs short of the total in its 20 overs. The match was followed by a meal in the beautiful WWI Centenary Pavilion. Thank you to all the Old Boys who came back for the game – we look forward to the next fixture in summer 2017. **Alistair Evans**

Curling

In the Wanderers League we won two matches (against Strathallians and Aberdeen Grammar School FP) and lost the other three (against Glasgow Accies, Kelvinside Accies and Old Glenalmond). A marginal improvement on last season and hopefully further improvement next season! I will be gauging interest in a match between Merchistonian curlers in Glasgow and Edinburgh to be held in Edinburgh sometime next year.

Alastair Campbell

Fishing Section

Another busy year has passed with many enjoyable lunches and our fair share of reasonable weather to offset the occasional catching of brownies and rainbows (and perch!). It must be noted that the deserving 2016 winner of the Latimer Cup was Nigel Rickard with a fine 2lb 11oz Rainbow Trout from the Lake. The 2017 outings will take place throughout the season at Black Loch, Dunwan Dam, Linlithgow Loch and Glencorse Reservoir (check website for confirmed outing dates). Our annual visit to Oykel Bridge will be in early June 2017 and The Latimer Cup will again be fished for at the Lake of Menteith, on Saturday 12 August 2017.

Andrew McDonald

Fives

It would be great to get a Merchistonian team together in 2017. If anyone is interested please get in touch with me - andrewd@donaldson-timber.co.uk

Andrew Donaldson



Golf report for Season 2016

I am pleased to report that there has been another busy season for the Merchistonian Golf Club on the social and representative front. Under Bill Hannay's (54-58) captaincy there have been a number of fixtures and these are reported on below.

Autumn Meeting

Despite a later date for the Autumn Meeting this year we had an extremely successful Autumn Meeting at Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society on 8 October. Fifty-one golfers gathered for lunch prior to heading out for a shotgun start and to compete for the various prizes on offer. The change of venue and format last year has proved to be a success and it was very pleasing to note that the age range of the participants was from the early twenties to the eighties, with a number of new participants as well as some well-known faces.

After golf there was a slight pause for drinks and then dinner was held in the dining room at Bruntsfield Links. There were 58 people at the dinner including the Headmaster, Mrs Hunter and the captain of Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society. Bill Hannay, Captain of the Golf Club, gave a brief summary of the golfing year, and the Headmaster then provided an update from the School.

Thereafter, there was the usual presentation of prizes - a list of the prize winners is below. However, notable achievements were by Mike Rolland (98-03) who won the Gold Medal for the third year running with a gross score of 67 (3 under par), Sam Paulo (94-02) who won the Silver Medal with a net 65 and Morison Zuill (50-55) who produced a "clean sweep" of all of the prizes in the categories for the over 50's. All in all it was a hugely successful day and the Captain, the Secretary and the Committee of the Golf Club would like to thank all the participants for turning out.

Merchistonian Golf Club – Autumn Meeting 2016 – Results

Competition	Age Group	Type	Winner	Score/ Points	Runner-up	Score
Gold Medal	All	Scratch	Mike Rolland (98-03)	67	Martin Stein (84-89)	71
Silver Medal	All	Handicap	Sam Paulo (94-	65	Mike Rolland	66

			02)		(98-03)	
Merchistonian Quaich	Under 30	Scratch	Freddie Ward (07-11)	73	Pete Legget (03-11)	75
Abram Jug	Under 30	Stableford	Freddie Ward (07-11)	37	Pete Legget (03-11)	36
Centenary Trophy	Under 40	Stableford	Sam Paulo (94-02)	40 (bih)	Mike Rolland (98-03)	40
Biggart Donaldson Trophy	Over 40/Under 60	Stableford	Robert Forman (89-94)	36	Andrew McDonald (79-85)	35
Allan Salver	Over 50	Scratch	Morison Zuill (50-55)	81	Andrew Mack (63-67)	83
Ness Tankard	Over 50	Handicap	Morison Zuill (50-55)	70 (bih)	Andrew Mack (63-67)	70
Hewat Driver	Over 60	Stableford	Morison Zuill (50-55)	36 (bih)	Charles Abram (65-69)	36
Biggart Memorial Trophy	Over 60	Scratch	Morison Zuill (50-55)	81	Andrew Mack (63-67)	83

Tujoh Puloh Tappit Hen	Over 69	Stableford	Morison Zuill (50- 55)	36	Fraser Low (56-60)	33
Mickel Cup	Past Captains	Stableford	Morison Zuill (50- 55)	36	Charles Abram (65- 69)	36
Ladies	Ladies	Stableford	Leslie Abram	29	Margaret Milligan	25

Social Matches

There was a fairly full schedule of social matches this year including: Lorettonians, OG/Fettesians, Sedburgh and the match against the School boys. Once again can I thank the Match Managers (Ian Wilson (72-77), Malcolm Gourlay (56-61), Gavin Thain (79-85) and George Walker (69-74)) for the time and effort that they put into arranging these matches. It is much appreciated by the Committee and also the participants.

The results were as follows:

Lorettonians – The team of Charles Abram (65-69), Iain Brechin (79-84), Doug Allan (87-92), Duncan Bland (70-74), Alan Brown (52-57), Colin Barbour (78-83), Peter Young (77-82) and Malcolm Gourlay had a great day at Muirfield playing the Lorettonians. Malcolm Gourlay led the side to a 6-2 victory and despite a soaking after 4pm the match was played in excellent spirit with some fine performances from the team.

OG/Fettesians – Ian Wilson again took charge of the team at Panmure and was joined by David Morrison (82-89), Sandy Robertson (75-81), Bill Peterkin (55-60), John Hewat (51-56) and Ken Fisher (80-86). The scoring in this match never appears to be easiest to understand but I can confirm that the final result was Merchiston 4, Fettes 4, O.G. 1 and that we will interpret that as a win!

Old Sedberghians – The team consisting of George Walker, Steve Biggart (96-03), Neil Kilpatrick (51-56), Ken Fisher, Alistair Milligan (58-63), Donald McIntyre (72-77), Ian Ballantine (61-65) and Campbell McLaren (54-58) played the match at Muirfield in lovely, if cold, conditions arriving at lunch 3-1 ahead, having won 2 and halved the other 2 matches. The afternoon session proved tighter with 2 matches won and 2 lost, however the MGC were always in control of the match with their morning lead and ended up winning the match 5-3.

School – Unfortunately Gavin Thain's leadership of the Merchistonian team was not quite as successful as the other Match Managers. His team of Chris Cowan (79-85), Roger Baird (73-78), Nick White (83-89), Matthew Gray (79-85), Ronnie Irving (52-58) and himself treated

the School Golf Team to a fine lunch at Muirfield on 19 June - the boys regard the lunch at Muirfield as one of the highlights of the golfing year! The golf match, which is only an incidental to the lunch, was won by the School 2 – 1....and for those interested Ronnie Irving lost to his grandson 7&6.

As with previous years I would recommend participating in these social matches. They provide a fabulous opportunity to play some of the finest courses in Scotland at a knock down rate and in good company.

Representative Matches

As well as the social matches the Club fielded teams in a number of representative fixtures throughout the year. The Club entered teams in the Stenhouse Quaich, the Halford Hewitt, the Cyril Gray, the Senior Wayfarers and the Queen Elizabeth. As with the social matches, can I thank Stuart Briggs (60-65), Chris Cowan, Chris Smith (96-02), David Hutchison (73-76) and Gavin Spencer (73-78) for organising the teams at these events.

Scottish Wayfarers/Stenhouse Quaich – We have a terrific record in this competition and we are multiple winners over the past 10 years. This year was no exception with the team seeing off a strong challenge from the Academy to win over both days in Elie. The final results were:

Position	School	Wins	Holes Up/Down
1	Merchiston	4	17
2	Academy	3	16
3	Loretto	3	9
4	Fettes	3	0
5	Glenalmond	1	-16
6	Strathallan	1	-26

The Queen Elizabeth Coronation Schools Trophy - The last weekend in September saw the Merchistonian team of Martin Stein (84-89), Jamie McIntosh (02-09), Chris Smith (96-02), Pete Legget (03-11), Mike Rolland and Alistair Duncan (69-73) compete in the QE at the Royal Burgess. It was a tough (and tight) first round match against Glasgow High which we sadly lost with all three matches going down the last.

Halford Hewitt - Over the Easter break, the Merchistonian golf team headed to Kent for the Halford Hewitt Competition. Unfortunately, it was twice the agony for the team of Martin Stein (84-89), Jamie McIntosh (02-09), Chris Cowan, Dougie Cowan (84-91), Charlie Simpson (94-98), John McKean (75-81), Chris Smith, Robbie Bremner (85-91), Harry Thomson (72-78) and Mike Rolland. They were beaten 3-2 in the first round by a strong Cranleigh team. They were bitterly disappointed with this result, but all was not lost as 6 of the team then had the

opportunity to compete in the Plate Competition at Princes Golf Club. In the first round of the Plate, the team beat Aldenham 2/1 in a good quality match. In the next round the team played Malvern, one of the consistent top-performing school sides in recent years and won 2/1. Their next opposition was Berkhamstead in the last eight, who they again beat 2/1 setting up a semi-final against Felsted. Again, the team prevailed with Martin and Jamie winning 2/1, Charlie and Mike halved their match and Chris and Robbie won 7/6. Unfortunately, a very good run in the Plate came to an end against The Leys, who rode their luck over the last five holes of the deciding match, and beat Merchiston 2-1.

Cyril Gray - The team of David Hutchison, Graeme Dickie (75-80), Donald Thomson (74-80), Colin Braid (79-84), Alastair Duncan (69-73) and Gavin Spencer represented the club on 23 and 24 June at Worplesdon Golf Club in Surrey. In the first round Merchiston defeated Wellinborough 2½ - 1½ but unfortunately crashed out in the second round losing to Wrekin 2 – 1. Thank you to Colin Braid (79-84) who stepped in at the last minute after Harry Thomson (72-78) had broken his hand falling off a ladder.

Senior Wayfarers – The highlight of the year was the victory in the Senior Wayfarers at Muirfield on the first weekend in May. In this competition the first four teams qualify for a knockout match play event on the Sunday morning with the bottom two teams left to fight it out for the Wooden Spoon. The team of David Hutchison, Graeme Dickie (75-80), Alastair Duncan (69-73), Rory Bell (75-80), Roger Baird (73-78), Ken Lauder (72-77) and Gavin Spencer (73-78) was the leading qualifier on Saturday afternoon. On the Sunday morning Merchiston defeated Fettes 2 and 1- David Hutchison and Graeme Dickie won the deciding match on 20 May with a birdie. On the Sunday afternoon Merchiston beat the Edinburgh Academy by 2-1. The deciding game was again down to the final pair. David Hutchison and Graeme Dickie who won on 18 May. Merchiston were in the final of this event for the 3rd year in a row. The team lost last year to Edinburgh Academy and the previous year to Fettes, so it was good to get a win at last.

Joining the Club

The fixture list for 2017 will be published in January and I hope that as many of you as possible will take the opportunity to sign up for representing the school and the club when this is issued. If you are interested then please do get in touch as we are always keen to attract new members of all abilities for social and competitive golf alike. In the meantime I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible throughout the 2017 golfing season.

Robert Foreman

The MRFC Report

In an 'all action' game at Raeburn Place the Merchistonian XV took on the Edinburgh Academicals for the third time since our revival in 2014. Phil Godman (95-00), Graeme Smith (94-99) and Jamie Mayer (91-95) returned with their boots in hand and made appearances at fly half, lock and centre respectively. Despite the 53-19 loss, the committee are encouraged by the amount of enthusiasm from the players to dawn the blue jersey again. This can only stand us in good stead for the future.

Alongside our annual Accies fixture, the Club also took part in the 'Stay Strong Stu' 7s tournament on 18 June. MRFC were in a tough group and pitted against Stu's Blues (A Tynedale team), Blaydon (National 1 Team) and Tynedale colts.

Their first game against Stu's Blues was tough, however the boys managed to come out victors after a hard fight. The second game was against Tynedale colts, which was won convincingly. The team then went on to play against Blaydon who were a strong outfit and, while we led for two-thirds of the game, they got a breakaway try to win. This unfortunately put MRFC into second in the group, missing qualifying as best runner-up to remain in the cup competition by one try. Merchistonians were then put through to the plate final against Austin Fryers Old Boys; unfortunately they lost the final and had to go and try the numerous beers in the beer festival to drown their sorrows!

On 24 June the Merchiston Old Boys chanced their luck against the Leavers in a game of touch rugby at the School. In the spirit of accommodating imminent new members to the Club, it was decided that a 9-9 try draw at full time (after some generous 'extra time' from the School referee) would go to sudden death which saw the School finish off a fun evening with a well-deserved try to officially beat the Merchistonians on the night! The onus now is on the Leavers to reverse this result next year when they will be eligible to play for the Merchistonian team.

None of this would have been possible without our sponsors, who have been extremely generous in supporting the Club financially. Not only has their help enabled the team to take part in various tournaments but to do so in style, modelling our fantastic new kit.

The 2017 fixture list will be published in January and I hope that any of you with an interest in playing rugby will take the opportunity to sign up to represent the Club. The Committee would love to hear from anybody with tournament entry ideas, and from those interested in playing, sponsoring or helping. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible throughout the 2017 rugby season.

Sponsors

Bonk and co
Mackie's Crisps
Cask 88
Anderson Strathern
Rule Valley
Make Summer School
Best Intent Marquees
Oliver Green