



# THORNTONIAN DAYS

Newsletter of The Old Thorntonians Association (Clapham)

*"Education is the leading of human souls to what is best, and making what is best out of them."* John Ruskin (1819-1900)

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**No 42**

**November 2018**

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## 2018 Reunion

Attendance at this year's event, held at The Windmill on 12 November, was 21.

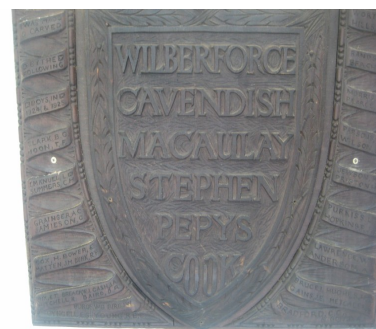
For your 2019 diaries: the 15th reunion, again with a buffet lunch available, will be on Tuesday **5 November**.

## Memorabilia at Lambeth College, South Side, Clapham Common

The July 2017 issue (no 38) reported on the scheme to relocate the following items to the Henry Thornton building from various rooms within the main College premises fronting South Side:

- WW2 memorial
- School crest
- Pupil honours boards for 1951-68
- Three small shields, including one with the names of the pre-1951 Houses.

After some delay, caused mainly by changes within the Lambeth College senior management directly associated with the project, this work was completed in early September. Selected photos of the display are given below.



## Obituaries

**Graham Walker** (1948-9): died 17 June.

**W J C (Bill) Rouse** (1943-8): died 12 March 2018. Awarded matriculation prize at ceremony held on 12 November 1948; came 3rd in the Under-14 100 yards (1945); and, a year later, 2nd in the Over-14 high jump. Near-contemporary Ron Morfee (1943-51) writes: "I only have one recollection of Bill. We were in a class together when a V2 rocket exploded not far from the school. Boys whose homes were in the apparent direction of the impact were allowed to go home to check whether theirs was damaged. I seem to remember that he was the only one to leave for home from our class – fortunately we

heard no more afterwards so I assume he did not have a problem. Odd memory from 74 years ago!”

Henry Randall (1954-9) recalls **Richard Ponman**, who as reported in issue 41 died in November 2017:

“I was sorry to hear of the death of Richard Ponman. I remember him as a quiet, very clever young man who was even worse at games than I was. We were in the same form and some of the same classes from 1954 although Richard stayed on to take his A levels when I left in 1959.

We hadn't kept in touch but on 1 March 2017 I received an email: ‘I saw your name in the OTs circ list, hope you don't mind being contacted out of the blue like this. I just wondered if by any chance you are the same Henry Randall I was in classes with at HTS up to about 1959.’

This led to us writing to each other about our lives, families, careers, ailments and so on. From this I can tell you that Richard remembered HTS as ‘a happy little school, by and large’. His favourite teacher had been Mr Linden who he credited with starting him off in his favourite subject, Latin. He also spoke well of Messrs Everard and Jeremy. I found it particularly poignant when he was referring to his friend Philip May and said that David May, Philip's younger brother, had told him that Philip had died of a heart attack at only 58, Richard said, ‘So count our blessings and TG we don't know what's round the corner.’ He said that in March 2017.

Among the blessings Richard counted were his wife, Dorrie, who he married in 1970, daughters Beth and Vicky and grand-daughters Holly and Emily.

It would be an extreme understatement to say that Richard had more than his fair share of health problems. He was however very positive about how he dealt with them.

I suppose the news that he gave me about himself that surprised me the most was that he hadn't been to university. I hadn't either, but I left at 16. Richard had completed his A-levels. I always felt that he had almost a photographic memory and would breeze through the requirements of Masters and PhD.”

Instead he ‘went into the Cabinet Office for 40 years, last few years helping official historians, fascinating. Then at 60 they gave me a part-time job reviewing PM's files for transfer to PRO/National Archives, even more fascinating. Did that till age 73.’ Although very modest about his roles in the heart of government, Richard did ‘count myself very lucky career-wise. In 40 years in the Cabinet Office I think for only one short-lived job of 3 months did I have that Monday morning feeling.’ ”

Ron Davies offers this memory of **Stan Parrack**, whose obituary was also reported in the previous newsletter: “I was sad to read in the latest obituaries that Stan Parrack had died. We had been colleagues in the same office at Bird's Eye Foods from 1957-59, but it was not until I attended my first reunion in the resurrected OTA and saw Stan there that we realised we had both attended HTS (me '48-'56; Stan '46-'51).”

This photo, taken in 1958, shows Ron (second on left) with three of his Bird's Eye colleagues; Stan is on the far right.



## 1949 School Inspection

### SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION HISTORY

All boys follow a five-year course in History. They discover “How men learned to live, how men came to live where they do now” and trace man’s struggle in Britain for freedom and security. Time is found to give all pupils some individual background knowledge of European development and of the expansion of Europe overseas. In the fourth and fifth years a fairly detailed study of the main currents of British and European history is made. In the fifth year, the boys are asked to consider the unifying forms of science and literature, including a brief account of modern scientific development, and the growth of internationalism, whilst studying the disruptive forces that led to the two great wars of the twentieth century. In each of the first three years an alternative syllabus may, at discretion, be followed. This provides a course in which a few practical topics are selected and treated as “lines of development”. In each of the five years of the course attention is paid to the influence of geographical factors on historical development and to literature, science, architecture and other evidence of culture.

The teaching is almost wholly concentrated in the hands of two Masters [*Mr C E Jeremy and Mr W R John*] who hold Honours degrees in History. The senior and responsible Master is a man of wide and cultured interests. His classroom manner is sympathetic and friendly, and his lessons quietly stimulating. The other Master who shares the brunt of the teaching is hard-working and earnest. As yet he does not appear always to stretch the boys of the Main School sufficiently nor to trust in the ones to read and to work independently. With growing experience he will learn to gauge both the capacity and the will to work, of the able and of the less able pupil. Two other Masters [*one identified as Mr J A H Spofforth*] teach the boys in Forms 1A and 1B. It was not possible to hear lessons in these Forms during the course of the Inspection.

A very fair standard is reached by many boys in the Main School. The younger of the two History Masters is wisely experimenting with visual aids, and he and the responsible History Master hope to build up a large stock of history film-strips. Use is not made at the moment of the History School Broadcasts. The department is in urgent need of a great many books of general historical interest to which the boys in the Main School may be introduced at an early date in their school careers. Until a Main School section of the History Library can be built up, lists of books likely to attract might be prepared and placed in all the classrooms.

In the Sixth Form boys are reading History in preparation for the Higher School Certificate Examination. They are reading widely and doing promising work. The boys in the Economics Sixth Form are studying the British Constitution. They too are working with real and profit.

### **From the Pages of *The Thorntonian***

Autumn 1944:

#### THE NEW LEAGUE OF NATIONS

I went into a discussion recently on future wars, naturally it turned into the League of Nations. No important conclusions were reached, but every person there learnt something.

It was first agreed that the old League was not a failure, but the people in it. The great Powers had not stood by their promise. America had clung to Isolationism and Russia had not felt welcome there. Britain cool see no danger in the invasion of Abyssinia It was too easy to remain inactive while nation after nation dropped out.

Spain was the cradle of the present war. The Russians were condemned by prominent men in this country for joining in, while a blind eye was turned to the Nazis and Fascists gaining experience in the slaughter of civilians. United action then would have meant peace now.

Certain gentlemen seemed to think that it was more profitable to fill their own pockets by selling arms to Germany than to protect their own people.

On 19th August, 1938, German bought 200 tons of copper to London.

Nations did not want to fight if someone else could do it. Economic sanctions were regarded as obstacles to trade.

People had not bothered to read the Covenant of the League, which had articles concerning conditions of work, health, education, etc. Force was only a last resource [*sic*].

A League of Nations was certainly needed, but its form was another matter. Greater Powers should be constantly on a council, but smaller states should have some rota. Who is to make the rules? A Federation of States is a good idea, but intellectuals would gain sway and be resented by the more backward ones. Some nations would resent losing their sovereignty.

These are but a few ideas on the subject ...

R. Metchick, VA


## Magazine Advertisements

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The Editor welcomes contributions for future issues. Please post or email them to:  
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