



# 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 48**

**JANUARY 2021**

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## **Annual General Meeting 2020**

The Association's thirteenth AGM was held virtually on Saturday 12 December 2020, having been postponed owing to Covid-19. The main items discussed or reported were:

- Management Committee members elected or re-elected to serve until 31 March 2021:

President: Michael Caplan, QC

Vice-President: (Vacancy)

Chairman: Jeff Green

Vice-Chairman: Ron Davies

Secretary: Ted Hayward

Treasurer: Peter Greenwood

Entry-year representatives:

1930s/1940s: (Vacancy)

1950s: Bob Hay

1960s: (Vacancy)

1970s/1980s: (Vacancy).

- Co-opted: Mike Surridge (as local representative)
- The statement of account for the year ended 31 December 2019, prepared by Peter Greenwood and examined by Bob Hay, was adopted. (A copy was enclosed with the papers for this meeting but contact Ted Hayward if you'd like to receive a duplicate.)
- The following recommendation from the Committee meeting held on 24 October 2019 was accepted:

*That a. as there were sufficient funds in the Association's account to cover known or probable expenditure in the coming year, the annual charge of £10 for Full members and £6 for Associates be waived for the year from 1 January 2020; b. joiners in 2020, and any rejoining, after a break, in that year, would be required to pay the relevant membership fee in the normal way.*

During subsequent discussion of the above recommendation, it was agreed that – as a potential means of encouraging more OTs to join the Association – the Committee would consider its next meeting whether part b. be varied in 2021 to grant free membership also for joiners and rejoiners in their first year.

For your diaries: the **2021** AGM will be held on **Saturday 20 March** (again using Zoom), starting at **2pm**. The agenda and supporting papers will be circuited later; if you plan to attend, or are likely to be able to do so, please let Ted Hayward know.

### **Annual Reunion 2021**

Currently booked for **Tuesday 2 November**, on the assumption that by that date it will be safe for OTs to be able to attend in person and also provided it will still be possible for The Windmill, as hitherto, to continue to offer the Association the use of a private functions room. The latter caveat is mentioned as a major refurbishment, with re-allocation of space, is planned for the interior of the premises later this year.

### **Obituaries**

**W B (Barry) Evans** (1943-8): died 17 October 2020. A few excerpts from the tribute received from his sister, Joan Ingrams: “[He was] a man of books, with a huge collection..., and a lover of poetry... He also loved the arts, especially classical concerts, opera and ballet He was always keen to visit museums and art galleries, and took up painting, attending classes to learn the art of water colours.. Unusually for a man, he collected porcelain figures. Mostly animals and birds. He was very knowledgeable about all farm animals. When the U3A started in Cockermonth [to which he had retired] he became an eager early member, taking part in the writing group for nearly 20 years and also in the singing group. He became a National Parks warden, escorting parties on long walks and hill climbs. He was a keen letter writer, with excellent handwriting. A life well lived indeed.”

**Kenneth Gathercole** (1937-43): died 25 June 2019. Son Mark writes: “Whilst evacuated to Chichester he stayed with Wally and Daisy Hunt and in the 1960’s he took my brother and me down to see them on numerous occasions – and what a special couple they were. In Dad’s working life he qualified as a Chartered Surveyor ARICS and later FRICS, working at Hillier Parker May & Rowden, Grosvenor Street, London W1. After leaving HPM&R he started his own practice in the West End.”

**Roy Daniel** (1957-63): died 19 November 2020. A detailed tribute from his former classmates is attached.

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

Spring Term 1939:

#### **Before the Charge**

After the muttering of the guns,  
The soldiers saw the rising sun,  
Showing the war-torn battlefield  
On which one side would have to yield.

Through the rising mist they saw  
The ill-bred users of the war.  
They saw the terror and the strife  
That stood between the peace of life.

They saw a field of waving corn,  
The trees in blossom stood;  
They saw again the field forlorn,  
And then they understood.

The field of corn a sign of peace,  
The field forlorn of war;  
The whistle blew, and o'er they went,  
And would keep on till war's fury spent.

Peter G. Shaw, IIIc

[Editor's note: a third-former's sombre reflections on the carnage of the First World War, and probably – given the publication date of this copy of the magazine – prescient thoughts on the threat of renewed hostilities in Europe.]

### **1958 School Inspection**

Two further extracts from the HMI report.

#### **Staff**

Two appointments have been made to the Headmastership since 1948. The present holder of the office [Mr B J F Dorrington], who joined the staff in 1956, is a Master of Science of London University, who has taught in secondary schools and a training college and has been in charge of another London secondary school. There are many signs of his energetic and thoughtful leadership.

The 27 assistant masters are well qualified for their task and well distributed in age, and include five who have served the school for more than twenty years. It is a pleasure to record the distinguished services as teacher and second master of one [Mr C E G Jeremy] who is himself an Old Thorntonian, and the skill and vigour of the Physical Education master [Mr R S Bramble], who retires this summer in his seventieth year. If the staff contains few brilliant teachers it certainly includes many who are thoroughly efficient and give up much spare time in the out of school hours to the welfare of individuals and out of school activities.

#### **Organisation, Curriculum and Standard of Work**

The new boys are grouped in three forms, usually parallel but sometimes graded in ability. For the first two years they follow a common course, which includes Latin as well as French. At the end of the second year there is a choice between continuing Latin and starting either German or mechanical science. Music is taken by all boys for two years. In the Second and Third Forms the year's course includes Art and Handicraft in successive stretches. The form is the teaching unit in the first three years except for mathematics and French, which are taught in sets from the second and third year respectively.

In his fourth year a boy has a reasonable measure of choice. All boys take religious instruction (subject to the usual withdrawal clause), English Language, French, mathematics and either a second foreign language or mechanical science. The remaining subjects are arranged in three groups each of five subjects, and one subject is chosen from each group.

*Group A*

*Group B*

*Group C*

Chemistry  
Economics  
History  
Handicraft  
Art

Physics  
Geography  
English Literature  
Physics and  
Chemistry

Biology  
Geography  
History  
Technical Drawing  
Music

These grouped subjects are taught to sets averaging 22 pupils, and care is taken to ensure a proper breadth of programme and a proper relevance to a boy's future studies or employment. The inclusion of a number of subjects in more than one group substantially widens the choice. There are excellent features in this programme which will be extended next year into the Fifth Form.

Another promising innovation is a syllabus for mechanical science which has been submitted to an examining body for the General Certificate of Education.

#### SIXTH FORM

At present the Arts and Science sections rarely meet for lessons and neither group has any contrasting studies taken from the territory of the other. The Headmaster hopes to introduce in September a programme which will supply both these needs; only staffing and time-tabling difficulties have prevented such a programme from being already in operation. He also wishes to reduce the time now given by some members of the Sixth Form to work at Ordinary level and gradually to eliminate the Upper Fifth Form; this form, which has numbered 16, 17 and 20 pupils at the beginning of the last three school years, contains those who were unsuccessful in the previous term's Ordinary level examinations. If their number could be reduced sufficiently for them to be attached to Fifth Form groups there would be a valuable saving of teaching time.

Of the 42 members of the Sixth Form, 29 are on the Science side. On the Arts side, where the choice of main subjects embraces English, history, geography, economics, French, Latin and German, some sets are so small that it would seem hard to justify teaching the Upper and Lower Sixth separately throughout the week.

A detailed assessment of the work of the school will be found in the next section of this report [entitled "Subjects of Teaching": extracts will appear in later newsletters. Ed]. A good standard is reached in chemistry, in the early years of French, in much of the work in history and in physical education. Art is a lively and promising subject. Written work is as a whole carefully set out and well marked. On the other hand, many of the senior boys are unskilful in written English, and in the school as a whole speech is indistinct and sometimes hesitant. Masters inclined to over-teach the older boys, particularly those who will soon be taking external examinations. Indeed, in a number of subjects the work is planned with too keen an eye to examination requirements.

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