



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)

No 30

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Obituary

Peter Katin (1942-4): died 19 March 2015. Born in London, Peter was educated at private schools in Balham, Caterham and East Grinstead and at the wartime HTS, Clapham, temporarily redesignated as the "South-West London Emergency Secondary School for Boys at Henry Thornton School, Clapham Common". Admitted to the Royal Academy of Music at the unusually early age of 12, he made his debut at the Wigmore Hall on 13 December 1948; the programme included works by Mozart, Beethoven and Rachmaninoff. He went on to give concerts in Europe, Africa, Japan and America. He was acclaimed for his technical mastery of the piano, and specialised in Romantic music, particularly Chopin, and impressionist music. He wrote many pieces on piano technique and interpretation, and lectured at the Royal Academy of Music and other seats of learning. He married fellow pianist Eva Zweig in 1954; after a lengthy separation they divorced in 1988. [The above information is abstracted from his Wikipedia entry; a fuller obituary appeared in the 23 March 2015 edition of *The Daily Telegraph*; let Ted Hayward know if you'd like to have a copy.]

Lambeth Academy Visit

Accompanied by Committee members Ted Hayward and Mike SurrIDGE, seven OTs:

Monty Clarkson (1935-42), with his wife Dorothy, son Peter and Peter's partner Sue King; Allan Gellett (1943-50) Derek Jakes (1938-46); Peter Lawson (1936-41); Terry Sharp 1938-45); Peter Wells (1954-60); and Ernie Williams (1940-5)

enjoyed an extensive tour of Lambeth Academy, Elms Road, on Monday 23 February, including in particular a predictably longish stop in the sixth form study area. This room houses the earlier set of the school's pupil honours boards, covering the years 1918 to 1950.

Our guide was Sarah Essaye, the Academy's PR and Marketing Officer, who expertly fielded a number of questions from members.

A photograph of the group appears below.



Commemorative Plaque – Unveiling

This ceremony was held on Saturday 21 March, again at Lambeth Academy, Elms Road. On this occasion the Association was represented by 16 OTs:

Jeff Green (1951-8)
 Brian Bloice (1950-7)
 Ted Hayward (1950-7)
 Terry Lawlor (1951-6)
 Chris Bishop (1953-4)
 Peter Greenwood (1964-71)
 Mike Surrudge (1947-52)
 Peter Braithwaite (1957-63)
 Colin Corbey (1955-62)
 Ron Davies (1948-56)
 Allan Gellett (1943-50)
 Roger Govus (1955-61)
 Bob Hay (1950-6)
 Derek Jakes (1938-46)
 John Parr (1952-9)
 Ernie Williams (1940-5).

Two other members who had hoped to attend – Peter Lawson (1936-41) and Terry Sharp (1938-45) – had to cancel at short notice.

Jeff Green welcomed the Mayor of Lambeth, Councillor Adedamola Aminu, who at his invitation then unveiled the plaque. Others present included local ward councillors and representatives from the Clapham Society, the Streatham Society and the Brixton Society, and the minister of the Church of Holy Spirit, Narbonne Avenue.

The photographs below show, from left to right: Jeff Green, with the Mayor; the unveiling; and the plaque on public display. More appear, with supporting text, on the dedicated website page: click on Memorabilia (Home page), then select Plaque Unveiling.



AGM

The Association's eighth AGM was held at Lambeth Academy, Elms Road, SW4, on Saturday 21 March (shortly after the plaque ceremony); 15 members were present. The main items discussed or reported were:

- Jimmy Hill OBE was re-elected as President, and Michael Caplan QC as Vice-President, for a further year. The other Committee members elected to serve until 31 March 2016 are:

Chairman: Jeff Green
Vice-Chairman: Brian Bloice
Secretary: Ted Hayward
Treasurer: Terry Lawlor

Entry-year representatives:

1930s/1940s: Brian Robinson
1950s: Chris Bishop
1960s: Peter Greenwood
(1970s/1980s: Vacancy).

- Co-opted: Mike Surrige (as local representative)
- The statement of account for the year ended 31 December 2014, prepared by Terry Lawlor and examined by Bob Hay, was adopted.
- The following recommendation from the meeting of the Management Committee held on 20 October 2014 was accepted: :

That a. as there were ample 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 2015; b. joiners in 2015, and any rejoining after a break in that year, be required to pay the relevant membership fee in the normal way.

- The Management Committee would consider options for celebrating the tenth anniversary, in September 2016, of the re-founding of the Association, eg, a special lunch (probably on Saturday) in the "Blue Room" at The Windmill. Members would be advised of the Committee's final recommendation.

Reminiscences

A few post-war memories offered by **Ron Davies** (1948-56):

In September 1948 I joined HTS and was placed in Form 1B where, together with my classmates, I soon came up against the formidable Art master, Mr Dix. Remember him? Our first lesson was terrifying. We hadn't stood up when he entered the room (presumably we hadn't done so for the other teachers, or was Art the *very first* lesson we had on that very first day?). Dix exploded. "Stand up, you elementary school kids!" he yelled. He then marched us along to the Art Room where our first lesson was in how to sharpen a pencil. "You always use a knife, and you always bring it towards you" (or was it away from you?). "You never use a pencil sharpener. A pencil sharpener is for pansies!"

Dix never ceased to remind us that we were "elementary school kids", not of true grammar school calibre as were our forebears in pre-war days. He held an Art Exhibition after school

every Tuesday where pupils' work created in the previous week was displayed, most pinned up on the walls, but the better ones propped up on easels. My main memory of those exhibitions is the number of pictures entered by a 5th or 6th former named "Bowler". I don't remember anything about him except that he clearly had a talent for draughtsmanship (or "drawing", as I would have said then).

Allied to Dix's art periods were the woodwork lessons of Pop Rawlings. His workshop always stank of liquid glue, which was kept bubbling in a pot (reminiscent of a mini-witch's cauldron) on a gas ring. I was pretty useless at woodwork, but I did once make a passable teapot stand. I was proud of that stand until Pop tapped it - quite lightly - with a mallet and it collapsed into mere pieces of wood. I remember I was both upset and angry. Pop must have sensed this as later in the day a message came for me to present myself in the Woodwork Room at 4 o'clock. Pop was there and, gently putting his hand on my shoulder, showed me where I had gone wrong. A lovely gesture, although I'm sure I didn't appreciate it at the time! But what I did appreciate, out of the corner of my eye, was a quite superb wooden castle being made by the biology master, Mr Philips. I think he was making it for his young son.

I often saw Mr Philips at Tooting & Mitcham Football Club, where he was a regular supporter, but I made sure he never saw me. However, on one Saturday as I was leaving the ground a melodious Welsh-accented voice behind me said, "Enjoy the game, Davies? Better than last week's, wasn't it?"

More extracts from the 1949 school inspection report and *The Thorntonian* will appear in the next issue. Ed

The Editor welcomes contributions for future issues. Please post or e-mail them to:
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