



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 49

MAY 2021

Annual General Meeting 2021

The Association's AGM was held virtually on Saturday 20 March 2021, attended by 11 members. The main items discussed or reported were:

- Management Committee members elected or re-elected to serve until 31 March 2022:
President: Michael Caplan, QC
Vice-President: (Vacancy)
Immediate Past Chairman: Jeff Green
Chairman: (Vacancy)
Vice-Chairman: Ron Davies
Secretary/Acting Chairman: Ted Hayward
Treasurer: Peter Greenwood

Entry-year representatives:

- 1930s/1940s: (Vacancy)
- 1950s: Bob Hay
- 1960s: (Vacancy)
- 1970s/1980s: (Vacancy).
- Co-opted: Mike Surrige (as local representative)
- The statement of account for the year ended 31 December 2020, 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.)
- After discussion, the following recommendation from the Committee meeting held on 11 February 2021 was accepted:

That a. as there were sufficient funds in the Association's account to cover known or probable expenditure in 2021, the annual charge of £10 for Full members and £6 for Associates be waived for the year from 1 January; b. a similar waiver be granted to joiners/rejoiners in and after 1 March 2021, with the proviso that it be limited to one year only, ie, expiring on 28 February 2022.

For your diaries: the **2022** AGM will be held on **Saturday 26 March**, if possible at the previously available venue, Lambeth Academy, Elms Road.

Annual Reunion 2021

Still 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 suitable accommodation.

Membership

The current tally is 84. Association Secretary Ted Hayward is pleased to report that two recent joiners – David Mace (1960-7) and Richard Pointer (1958-63) – have taken advantage of the offer of free first-year membership, as agreed at the last AGM. This concession is also mentioned on the Home page of the website. Let's hope more OTs will wish to do so in the months ahead – if you know of any, do, please, relay the good news to them!

Obituaries

Harold J Noah (1949-60): died January 2019, aged 94. Mr Noah taught Economics for the full tenure of his appointment, resigning in 1960 to take up a post at Columbia University, New York. He joined the Association in 2011. Further details of his work and interests during his time at the school are given at some length in newsletter 19 (March 2012).

Derek Sydney White (1953-8): died 10 May 2010. Younger brother Geoffrey, also an OT (1958-65), offers this tribute:

“He left in the July and I joined in September so we weren't there together. When he was younger Derek suffered badly with asthma and eczema and went to Stowey House next door which, as you probably remember, was largely an open-air school. He passed his 11+ and chose Henry Thornton as Mum thought that the air at Stowey House suited him so he should be OK there – a good choice, as it happened.

Derek left at the end of the 5th Form and took up a trainee accountancy post at Milne, Gregg and Turnbull, a chartered accountancy firm in Albemarle Street, off Piccadilly. He gained Chartered Accountancy and Chartered Secretary qualifications by correspondence courses, and after working as the Company Secretary of William Willetts in Clapham set up his own practice in Whyteleafe, not far from Caterham, Surrey. He remained in private practice all his working life.

He is survived by his two children, Christopher and Sarah, who are both married and have children of their own. Christopher continues to work at Derek's practice.”

Michael Edward Davey (1951-6): died 24 March 2021. Member of 2nd XI football team, 1955 and 1956; was a leading goal scorer, with 15 recorded, in the 1955/6 season; and also selected for the 1955 2nd XI cricket team. The Editor has received these extracts from a letter from his son John:

“Dad was not only a successful businessman, founding his firm – Michael Davey Financial Management – back in 1980 and remaining Chairman of the firm up until his death, but also in his spare time a classical guitarist, releasing a CD in support of the Rheumatoid Arthritis charity; and an author, having published a book detailing his life in the City at the end of last year. He was also an avid sports fan, with a lifelong passion for Fulham Football Club, horse racing and cricket, and a ceaseless determination to lower his golf handicap.”

OT Terry Lawlor and close friend (for 70 years) recalls: “Michael was diagnosed with what seemed a trivial cancer last summer but it became extremely aggressive and he died on 24th March, 2021.

We were 11, first year at Henry Thornton, and he first came to my attention when he was running around the playground waving a Fulham FC scarf.

He was still waving that same scarf 70 years later when we toured Craven Cottage and met some of the players. That scarf was laid to rest with him, as well as his OTA tie.

We went through the school playing together in the football and cricket teams.

We shared lots of social and sporting occasions, particularly cricket; he was an Associate Member of the MCC. Other interests were horse racing – he owned two racehorses – and opera.

We and our families shared many social occasions, weddings (I was his best man), and holidays.

Apart from sport he was a very successful businessman: after working for various insurance and financial businesses he started his own investment company in the City.”

Entry-year Groups

Those members admitted to the school in one of the following years – 1955, 1957 or 1958 – may like to know that further information about other former pupils within each intake, as well as any activities being organised, such as local reunions, may be obtained from the following contacts (email addresses available on request from Ted Hayward): Colin Corbey (1955-62), Geoffrey Clark (1957-64), and Chris Batt (1958-65).

Overseas OTs

Do you know of any former pupils living outside the UK? If so, Jim Humphrey (1950-7), a resident of Victoria, Australia for some years, would be delighted to hear from you. His email address is: jimhumphrey@bigpond.com (Jim has kindly offered to act as the Association’s “overseas rep” and envisages inviting some of the fellow overseas students, if traced, to write about their interests and experiences. Subject to their agreement they could then be published periodically in the newsletter. Jim’s offer was unanimously welcomed by the Management Committee at its last meeting, and also endorsed at the AGM.

Ted Hayward has the names of eight other OTs falling within this category, although in some cases the addresses and other information on his files may not be accurate or up to date.

An Enduring Mystery

Calling all Thorntonian sleuths! Has any member ever come across a copy of *The Thorntonian* for the year 1953? If so, please let the Editor know, as despite his best efforts it has never surfaced. His current theory is that, for whatever reason, it was not published that year. This view is supported by the fact that the immediately preceding copy., dated Autumn 1952, is identified as “Vol. III, no. 1” and that for Spring 1954 “Vol. III, no. 2”. Both these extant versions were printed by the same company, Battley Bros, Clapham. Curiously, the 1954 editorial makes no specific mention of, or gives any explanation for, the “missing year”: the opening line merely states that “In this issue we are continuing the policy begun in the last issue by again devoting more space to illustrations”.

1958 School Inspection

A further extract from the HMI report. More, dealing with specific teaching subjects, will appear in later newsletters.

Library

The library is housed in three out of four rooms which form a connected and attractive group on the first floor of South Lodge. Such an arrangement would normally have everything to commend it. But, in spite

of every effort on the school's part, its library still remains insufficiently used because of the distance between South Lodge and the main school. No improvement can be expected as things are; if the library is to play its proper part at the centre of the school's intellectual life, there seems to be no alternative to arranging for its transfer.

Much has been done to make the library efficient and attractive, and its day-to-day administration is altogether admirable. A committee of four or five senior boys works on the cataloguing and issue of books with great skill, while the Senior English Master is responsible for general policy. He has done wonders and some of his lists of recommended books are particularly interesting. Most, though not quite all, of the "dead wood" has been removed; the books have been chosen with care and good sense; a fair balance is maintained between fiction, other recreative books and books for serious study. ~

Some of the gifts from members of the school have been most welcome. But there are gaps. There is, for example, a real need for some provision directed towards the particular needs of the younger boys in the First and Second Forms, who might provide the library with some of its most regular users. The Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms do not at present seem to use it nearly as much. Many books belonging to the specialist collections are at present kept by the specialist masters concerned in their classrooms; in the history room, for example, there is an excellent supplementary collection and there are other good supplementary collections in geography, science and mathematics. If the library can be rehoused in the main school many of its books might well be returned to the main collection where they would be more generally accessible. The subject collections are well chosen and provide admirably for the needs of older boys, but the younger, here too, are less well provided for.

The present number of books is about 3,000. Such a figure is surprisingly, and reflects a somewhat low annual grant. This comes to £100, or not much more than four shillings per boy per year. The two special grants of £100 made in recent years have been much appreciated, but it is to be hoped that the regular annual grant may also be increased. In this school it will be well used.

Some welcome periodicals are taken. An excellent feature is the quality of the library furniture and equipment generally; this adds much not merely to amenities but also to effectiveness. Some of the junior forms spend a regular weekly period in the library and their number might be increased if their number if the library can be transferred to the main school; it would then be easier, too, for individual boys to use the library during school hours for their own assignments.

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