



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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Editor (at least for this issue!): Ted Hayward

Introduction

New Year greetings, and welcome to the first issue of the newsletter for Association members. Its aims are, briefly: to keep members informed of the activities of the Association, including reunions and any other appropriate events; to assist in developing and maintaining contact between OTs; to revisit the history of the school, eg, with the help of extracts from *The Thorntonian*; and, equally important, to encourage contributions from members on relevant topics (remember – this is your newsletter).

The Association

At the reunion held at The Windmill, Clapham Common, on Saturday 23 September 2006 it was formally agreed to establish "The Old Thorntonians Association (Clapham)" with immediate effect. "Clapham" is included in the designation to avoid confusion with another, similarly named organisation for former pupils and staff of Thornton College, in Buckinghamshire.

At the same meeting a Management Committee was appointed, in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Constitution, to manage the day-to-day affairs of the Association. In addition to Jimmy Hill OBE (1939-45), who kindly agreed to serve as President, the Honorary Officers are: Jeff Green (1951-8) – Chairman; John Simmons (1945-9) – Vice-Chairman; Terry Lawlor (1951-6) – Treasurer; and Ted Hayward (1950-8) – Secretary. The other members ("Ordinary Members", as defined in the Constitution) serve as nominated representatives of one or more specific decades of pupil entry years: Brian Robinson (1948-53) – 1930s/1940s; Chris Bishop (1953-4) – 1950s; Peter Greenwood (1964-71) – 1960s; and Krishna Siva (1980-5) - 1980s. The other appointee is Mike Surridge (1947-52), who was co-opted in view of his local connections and interests as a longstanding Clapham resident.

At the kind invitation of the Principal, Richard Chambers, the Committee held its first meeting on 10 November 2006 at Lambeth College, a further education centre at 45 South Side, ie, on the site formerly occupied by South Lodge. Matters discussed included:

- Bank account: it was agreed to open an account in the name of the Association with National Westminster Bank Ltd; the account is now available
- Association tie: quotations to be obtained, for consideration at the next meeting on 26 January 2007, for a revised design consisting of broad black and silver stripes, interspersed with narrower maroon and light blue stripes, and with the school crest encircled with the Association's title
- Pupil honours boards: as readers may know, a set of boards, with entries spanning the years 1918-68, was fortunately rescued from the 1929 building when it was demolished in 2003 (to make way for the construction of the Lambeth Academy); they are stored at Lambeth College. Richard Chambers has proposed that at least a selection could be displayed in the new Sixth Form Centre which will be incorporated in a major redevelopment of the present South Side frontage buildings. This scheme is expected to start shortly, and the Committee will monitor this aspect of its progress
- Memorial plaque: sadly, despite exhaustive enquiries, the present whereabouts of this plaque – containing the names of 53 OTs who lost their lives during the Second World War – cannot be traced. The cost had been met through donations from members of the then OT Association and relatives of the dead. It was first displayed in the main building in 1950, but Ted Hayward has been unable to ascertain either when it was last seen at the school (for example, in the 1929

building or the comprehensive school which predated Lambeth College on South Side) or in what circumstances it was removed from the site.

If you have any information which you feel might help, please contact Ted; he has a photograph of the plaque, with a transcribed list of the entries and an extract from the 1951 issue of *The Thorntonian* describing the unveiling ceremony.

Membership

Former HTS pupils, teaching staff and governors are eligible for Full membership; the first-year subscription, which runs until 31.12.07, is £10. The current tally is 75, including one Associate member.

If you know of any OTs who might be interested in joining, Ted Hayward would be glad to have their contact details. The Committee is also anxious to identify relatives/friends/others interested in becoming Associate members, for whom the annual subscription is £6. Again, let the Secretary know if you have any names in mind.

2007 Reunion

Next year's event will again be at The Windmill, from 1 until around 6pm, on Saturday 22 September, with a buffet lunch served from 1.30pm. The Committee agreed, as had been suggested at the September 2006 reunion, that in view of the limited seating capacity applications from registered (ie, paid-up) Association members for attendance at the lunch should be given priority over those from others interested in coming to the function. The Manager of The Windmill has indicated that, as requested, it should be possible on this occasion to increase the lunch bookings to around 70-75 (compared with 50 last year), by using both the Conservatory and extra tables in the adjacent public dining area.

Obituaries

Peter Jablonski (?1966/7-70): 9 December 2006. Played football for the OTs as a teenager and subsequently in all the Elevens, including the veterans; held administrative posts in the club, to which he gave loyal support. He was known to the football club members as "Jabs". His career was in the charity field: he was connected to the Charity Share Community, with responsibility for helping people return to work.

Neville Mellon (1946-54): 3 July 2005. State scholarship (1953); BA, Oxford (1960); Head Master at King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon (believed to have been Shakespeare's school), 1981-97. Richard Pearson, the school's archivist, adds: "Whilst Head he taught some German. Neville's greatest passion was World War One, and especially the activities of the Royal Ulster Regiment. When he retired to Mickleton he wrote a book about the young men of the village who died during the Great War".

Syd Perl (1945-51): 8 November 2006. Until recently he had been an active member of Grafton Squash Club (Clapham Park). He also played for the Old Thorntonians Football Club during his early 20s and, after a break, again in his late 30s. Mike Surridge, a friend and near-contemporary, writes: "Everyone who played with him would agree his tackling was fearsome and that you were pleased he was in your team, not playing against you!"

If you'd like to add your own recollections of any of these OTs, or wish to offer a pen-portrait of others known to have died, for inclusion in the next Newsletter please let the Editor know.

School History

A short history of HTS, from its founding in Battersea in the 1890s to closure on the Clapham site in 1987, is available from Ted Hayward.

The Thorntonian

Look out for selected extracts from the magazine in future Newsletters.

Finally...

If you have any comments or suggestions, eg, on the format, title or frequency of publication, or would like to submit a contribution, the Editor would be delighted to hear from you: ted.hayward@btinternet.com; 31 Linfields, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9QH; 01494 762838.