

HORIZON CONTINUE 100 YEAR OLD HOLGATE REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

The Remembrance Ceremony for the 76 Old Boys of Barnsley Holgate Grammar School, who died in the First World War (WW1) - originally called the Great War - has been arranged by Horizon Community College for 11.30am on Monday 11 November in the Cooper Gallery, after the Civic Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph. (Horizon now organise this because the Community College amalgamated Holgate and Kingstone Schools).

Old Boys of the Holgate, relations of men on the Holgate War Memorials and everyone interested in this Ceremony are welcome to attend.

After the Holgate School premises were demolished in 2012, the War Memorial commemorating these 76 men was erected in the Cooper Gallery. This was an appropriate location because the Grammar School was in this building until 1912, when it relocated to larger premises in Shaw Lane, and some of the Old Boys who died in WW1 had attended school here.

From 2012, Students from Horizon have read out the names according to the tradition of the Holgate. From 11 November 1919, the first national Remembrance Day, the Head Boy read out loud in the main hall the names on the Great War Memorial (as it was then known); after each name was spoken it was repeated by the Deputy Head Boy standing in the corridor. The names of Old Boys who died in the Second World War were added after 1945. The poignant Ceremony remains memorable for Old Boys of the Holgate.

It also acts as a salutary reminder of the mere 20 years between the enormous loss of lives in the Great War, followed by the Influenza Pandemic in 1919, and the widespread devastation of the subsequent war, which started in 1939.

Jane Ainsworth, Historian and Author, explains: 'When I was researching the 76 Old Boys in 2013 to tell the stories of these individuals and their families, I contacted Nick Bowen, Principal of Horizon. I was delighted by his interest in the history of the Holgate because of its significance for Horizon.

'Having discovered the full names of the men, Horizon Students were able to read them out for the first time in 2014 rather than a surname and initials. Doing this, knowing the individuals' stories, viewing photographs of most of them and meeting some relations brought the men 'to life' and made this Ceremony much more personal and relevant. Throughout the Centenary period, Horizon have continued to pay proper tribute to the Old Boys in their Remembrance Assemblies and impressive displays in their Heart Space. Horizon Students also participated in the Somme Centenary Commemoration on 1 July 2016 that I organised at Silverwood Scout Camp (originally Newhall Camp, where the Barnsley Pals and Engineers were billeted and trained).

'While researching War Memorials in 2013, I learnt that the WW2 Memorial for the Old Boys of Barnsley Holgate Grammar School was in a cupboard at Horizon. I attempted to persuade Nick to erect it so that people could view it as originally intended – this Memorial like most was funded by Public Subscription, including relations of the individuals who had died, to commemorate those who had died. Unfortunately, it seems that there was no suitable location as the prefabricated walls could not support such a heavy Memorial. I was saddened to discover that it was donated to Experience Barnsley, where it is still in storage.

'I contacted the Old Boys Association to elicit their support because I felt it would have been a fitting tribute to display it for the 80th Anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, perhaps in tandem with Experience Barnsley's exhibition in the Town Hall. Regrettably, it will remain 'hidden' and these 98 Old Boys 'forgotten' for the 8th year running.

'If anyone has any suggestions about the most appropriate location for it to be displayed please contact me. I personally would like to see it in Horizon's Heart Space, but advice is needed about how to fix it and funds raised to do so. Two Old Boys and a relation have kindly offered to do some research to find out about the men on the Memorial, which will be a challenge because many records are not yet available publicly.

If you are related to any Old Boys on either of the Holgate War Memorials, or if you can provide more information, photos, documents, memorabilia etc, I would love to hear from you. I am also interested to hear from relations of those men who served and survived.

'My heartfelt wish is for the Old Boys on the WW2 Holgate Memorial to be remembered as they deserve by November 2020 along with as many relatives as possible and more recent Old Boys.'

More details about the 76 Old Boys on the Holgate's WW1 Memorial and a detailed history of the Grammar School can be found in Jane's book, *Great Sacrifice: the Old Boys of Barnsley Holgate Grammar School in the First World War* published by Helion and Company in March 2016. A much more in-depth family story about two of these Old Boys is in *Keeping their Beacons Alight: the Potter Family of Barnsley and their Service to our Country* published by Helion and Company in November 2017.

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