

New Southendian 2017-2018

Hitchcock Building, H-Bomb, Remembrance, LGBT Society, Model UN



Exclusive access to the school's newest block

I was allowed into the new building for a first look, and the thing that struck me when I walked inside was the sheer scale of the space downstairs, and this impression carried on while I was very kindly being taken for a tour by Miss Bainbridge. Despite the fact that the furnishings were not finished when I visited, the vibe given off was that of a professional office with an academic atmosphere.

The whole of the downstairs space has been devoted to the library for the whole school to use. The main entrance is through a side alley, located to your right as if you were walking towards the languages block. A small section of this space is designated to be used only by the Sixth Form, offering an extra space for them to work and concentrate.

Upstairs, there are two Politics/Citizenship classrooms and extra computer rooms. Furthermore, the entire pastoral team (i.e. Year Leaders 7-11) will be situated in one room upstairs, next to the classrooms.

We've all been in the situation where we desperately need to

print one piece of homework off that's due for the next period, only for there to be such a long queue that you can end up spending the whole of lunch waiting for a computer. Those days should be long behind us once the new library has been opened, due to the addition of "Hot Desks." These are to be used only when you will not take long at the computer – usually just to print one thing off, saving a lot of time instead of having to wait in line, growing increasingly frustrated as the clock ticks on.

The older students of the school will be able to remember when what used to be the Year 7 Playground first made way for the groundworks of the building, which started over two years ago. The wait is nearly over. The library is expected to be in use after February Half-Term. Being by far the biggest change to school in my time here, I'm certain this will be an amazing addition to the school for everyone from Year 7 all the way to the Sixth Form.

James Dillon

Dropping the H-Bomb - Derek Tuthill talks to SHSB

How Britain's first successful hydrogen bomb test unfolded, from the man who was in the very plane that dropped it

On Wednesday 8th November, Derek Tuthill visited the school exactly 60 years to the day that a Valiant bomber, just off the coast of Christmas Island, dropped a 1.8 megaton hydrogen bomb, in a weapons test known as Grapple X.

Tuthill was the flight navigator on board the bomber at the time, and has been on TV on several occasions since retiring from the RAF in 1991. It was his job to plot the course of the bomber, no easy thing in an age long before GPS systems. So his talk in the hall on that Wednesday lunchtime was no small event.

The 1950s was a key period in the development of the Cold War. By now, both the USSR and the USA had so-called "superweapons," or hydrogen bombs. These were not your average nuclear bombs - if such a word could be used to describe a weapon of mass destruction. They used nuclear fu-

sion, rather than fission, to create blasts hundreds of times larger and more destructive than the ones created by the conventional "A-Bombs" dropped by the Americans onto Japan. They were a massive force, and the ultimate statement of power for any nation. Hence, the British knew that they had to have some, in order to really be recognised as a power on the world stage.

Three tests had been conducted beforehand with hydrogen bombs, Grapples 1-3, but all failed to deliver the expected results. It was only the fourth test, on 8th November 1957, which produced the big blast. Tuthill says that, to avoid the destructive shockwave, the bomb had to be dropped at a lofty 45,000 feet, above the flight "ceiling" of most passenger aircraft even today. And even this wasn't enough on its own - Tuthill's job as navigator would have been to inform the pilot on exactly what flight



inputs were needed to execute an exceptionally tight 135-degree turn, at full thrust, to get away from the blast in the 2 minutes the bomb took to explode after being dropped. If this had gone wrong, the consequences would have been absolutely dire. Every second counted.

Fortunately, the Vickers Valiant was a solid and capable bomber, well suited for the task. Capable of flight up to 56,000 feet, and even able to out-run some Soviet jet fighters, Tuthill had a capable machine on his hands. He would have had to take into account the wind speed and direction, airspeed, bank angle, and true ground speed, among a myriad of other variables, to get away in



time. He gives the example that, if a navigator did not compensate for a wind speed of 200 knots, he could end up plotting the plane's position over ninety miles out from its real location after just one hour. If this was a real bombing situation, imagine how catastrophic that could be! And yet, despite this, Tuthill remarks that, in all of his many practice runs over more than a year's worth of training, his crew were rarely more than 100 yards out from their target location.

The bomb was dropped over the sea, several miles from the coast of Christmas Island in the Pacific. Tuthill compared the feeling of the moment when the bomb left the plane to being in a car going over a speed bump; the aircraft became considerably lighter as the bomb, weighing 5 tons, began its descent! It did not actually hit the water - the fireball would have irradiated the ocean for miles around. Instead, it detonated at roughly 8000 feet. The crew had to pull blackout blinds over all windows to avoid being blinded by the flash; even then, the whole aircraft interior was brilliantly lit up, just for an instant. Shortly afterwards, the shockwave would rumble the bomber as if experiencing heavy turbulence. Tuthill recounts that this shockwave physically swept some ground-based observers clean off their feet. Observers standing twenty miles away...

If being on the plane dropping the bomb wasn't daunting enough, some unlucky crew members had the task of flying back through the mushroom cloud to collect radioactive dust samples (all in the name of science, of course). Tuthill recalls that, on return, the planes would be quarantined and inspected with men in hazmat suits, fallout-measuring Geiger counters clicking wildly all the while. On one occasion, the radiation level around the door sills was so dangerous that they decided to lock the crew inside! It soon emerged that the fluorescent paint around the doors was largely responsible, as it had reacted with the fallout dust. The poor crew were let out after all!

Luckily, none of the crew members ever came away with the symptoms of radiation sickness. Instead, Tuthill remembers feeling a great sense of pride; pride in both what he had done, and in his country, particularly what it was capable of. Seeing a nation's power made real in a tremendous bang has that effect, it seems. He doesn't regret it either - he had no moral objection to the weapon, because he knew it was necessary to send out the message to the Soviet Union - don't mess with the Brits, or you'll face the consequences!

Luke Mitchell

SHSB Remembrance Day

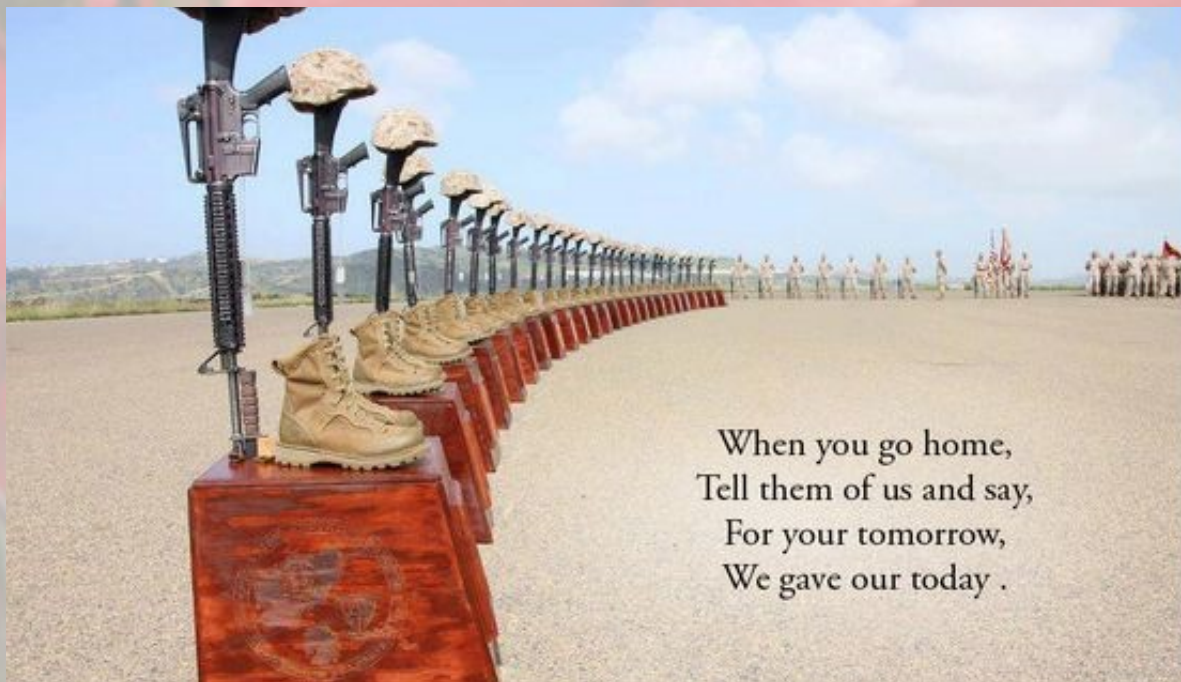
SHSB Looks Back and Remembers. The School's touching and poignant annual Remembrance Service

The date was Friday the 10th of November 2017. 100 years prior, the Battle of Passchendaele reached its end, yet the setting could not have been more different. In a large, quiet hall, students of Southend High School for Boys held their annual remembrance service, including members of the Old Southendian association, and war veterans. Taking place on a normal day, in a safe and free town, we have the men who fought and died in treacherous conditions like those in Passchendaele to thank for our freedom. We have the countless numbers of soldiers, who willingly gave their life so selflessly, to thank, so that we may live in a free and harmonious society. As John Edmonds wrote: "For your tomorrow, we gave our today".

Some of the features of this remembrance service, like all others, were the musical performances, this year by the Concert Band and Chamber Choir. Chamber Choir opened the service with a performance of the Latin song, Agnus Dei. Agnus Dei translates to "lamb of God" and this version was composed by Bob Chilcott, however

the lyrics have been used throughout classical music, by composers such as Mozart and Beethoven. The Concert Band performed a piece of music called Forgotten Heroes by Jeremy Bell. When asked about the piece, Mr. Bell said, "Forgotten Heroes is a musical memorial for those who never saw fame or glory but strove to make the world a better place."

As well as this, there were musical items through the singing of hymns. The hymns selected for the service were Abide With Me, Eternal Father and I Vow To Thee My Country. The difference between the solemn Abide With Me, and the uprising I Vow To Thee perfectly encapsulates the different emotions felt as a result of war, and on Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day. Whilst on the one hand, people are mourning the loss of loved ones, others are celebrating the safe return of their own. Abide With Me talks about the struggles of helplessness people often feel within war, in the line, "When other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless". Similarly, I Vow To Thee talks about the unfaill-



When you go home,
Tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow,
We gave our today .

ing love shown to them in the line, “The love that never falters, the love that pays the price, The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.”

During the service, there was a focus on three old boys who lost their lives, John Palmer and Laurence Raby, who were both on the lists of names read out, and were in the same year at school. As well as them, Stanley Haves was focused on, having been in the same year as them, and having died during the Battle of Passchendaele. Dr Bevan mentioned these three individuals during his introductory talk and prayer, briefly focusing on the legacy each of these ex-students leave behind them.

During the reflection in the service, the Chairman of Governors delivered a reading pre-



pared by Mr. Sanders about the Battle of Passchendaele. Mentioned in the reading was how the allied troops were optimistic of the time and resources that would be needed for this battle, with many predicting it would take no more than a few days, partially due to the new and updated tanks at their disposal. However, like the whole war, the time was underestimated, and variables were not considered. This time it was the weather, with the sea of mud sinking the tanks that were far too heavy. This summed up the mistakes made by Britain during the war, disguising the true hor-

rors of war and underestimating the amount of time it would take.

In the subsequent video, images were shown of what it was like in Passchendaele, giving just a glimpse of the horrors that the soldiers were exposed to. Facts and statistics flashed up on the screen, with the most memorable the fact that over 320,000 allied troops lost their lives during the battle. At the end of the video, an extract from The Memorial Tablet, by Siegfried Sassoon, was read. The extract is as follows: “I died in hell, They called it Passchendaele, My wound was slight, And I was hobbling back; and then a shell, Burst slick upon the duck-boards; so I fell, Into the bottomless mud, And lost the light”. This extract would be very similar to the stories of hundreds, if not thousands of fallen soldiers, one of whom is Stanley Haves.

One thing that becomes immediately noticeable if you read this year’s program, is the vast difference in age between some of the soldiers. Just in the 15 names read out this year, one man was nearly twice the age of the other. The youngest name read out this year was Leslie Palmer; he was just 17 years of age when he lost his life in 1917. This highlights the earlier point made about the stark contrasts between now and 100 years ago. 100 years ago, men the same age and younger than some of the Sixth-Formers in school were off fighting for the country and their own lives; nowadays, 17-year-olds are required to be in some form of education and roughly 380 of them were sat in the hall during this remembrance service.

It is easy to forget how much has changed in the last 100 years, with the major inventions that have revolutionised the way we live our lives. Yet it is important not to forget, important to remember, exactly what those millions of men and subsequently women gave up during the two world wars and all other wars since. It is important to remember the sacrifices they made, that have shaped the world we live in. It is important to remember them and not to neglect them and let them fade into history. It is important to do this, and as Laurence Binyon wrote, “We will remember them”.

Noah Sims

SHSB LGBT Society

Embracing the rainbow

Last year an ambitious and deeply motivated group of students at SHSB took on a challenge. They decided that for too long schools like SHSB, which hold tradition so close to their heart have ignored minority students, whom face passive oppression, day in and day out. Their idea to combat this involved the founding of our school's very first LGBT & Equality Society, and after much deliberation and discussion with the school's leadership bodies, it was made possible.

Of course founding any society is difficult. It appears to be that once we actually get what we want, it can be very difficult to decide how we are going to use it. What influence

could such a society potentially have within the school?

Now, naturally when you have a blank canvas in front of you everybody has a different idea on how best to decorate it. This may have led to one or two rifts here and there, but that has only contributed to the society's development. After a large amount of discussion and planning throughout the summer, and with a fantastic new leadership duo; George Wright of Year 13, and myself (Owen Carley of Year 12), we can finally say that our rebranded and re-launched LGBT Society, is having its most successful year yet!



On average the society has doubled its membership in the first few weeks, reaching 18 consistent members, and still has huge potential to expand within the school. Unlike last year, we have attempted to broaden the horizons of the society and attempt to fully integrate within the school, instead of hiding away in an isolated sub-group of the SHSB community. This integration was demonstrated on Wednesday 4th October, when our Equality-tea cake sale, completely sold out and raised £70 – which for a society with a somewhat controversial reputation is a fantastic success which we aim to build upon later on in the year.

As Co-Leader of LGBT society, one of the questions I get asked most frequently is “Why do you bother having a society in the first place?” The answer to that is of course different for everyone, but for me in particular it’s so that we can bring people together instead of tearing them apart. Honestly, I alongside many of our membership are not concerned with labels, pronouns or genders. We just want a society that is fun and open to anyone but also educates and helps those of us who are struggling with our identity when that is needed. Ultimately it's so we have the opportunity to gossip every Wednesday lunchtime.

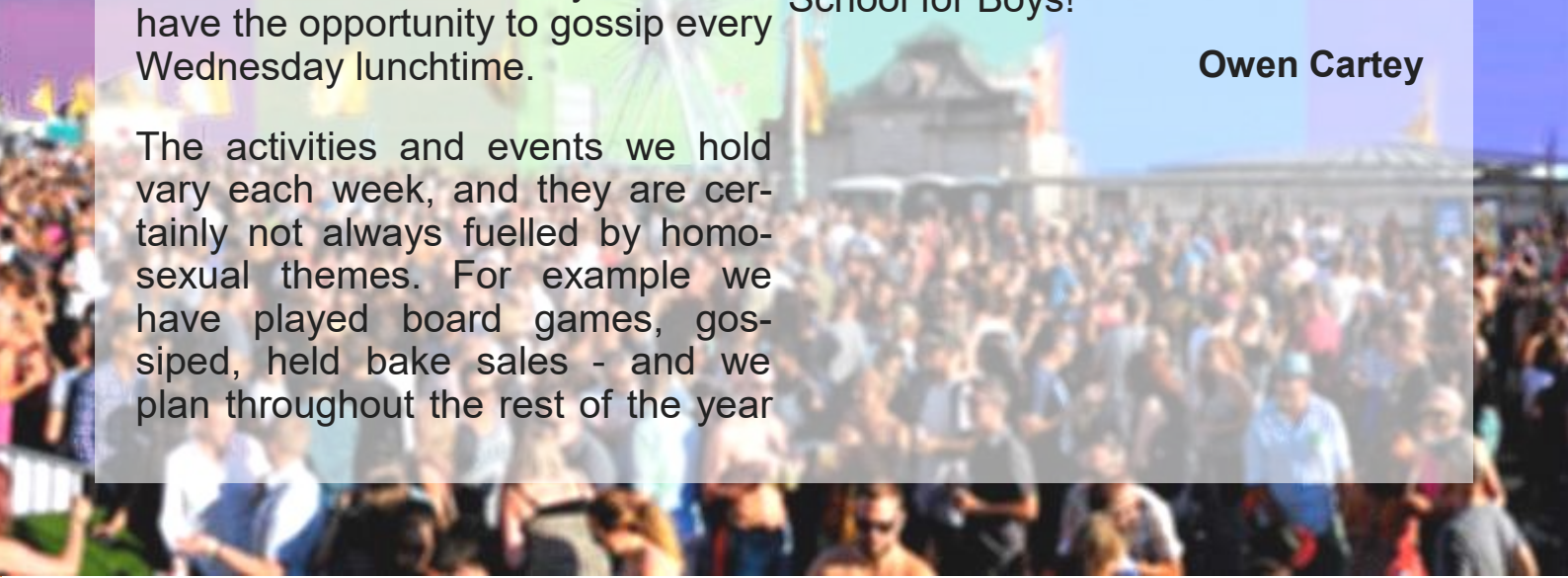
The activities and events we hold vary each week, and they are certainly not always fuelled by homosexual themes. For example we have played board games, gossiped, held bake sales - and we plan throughout the rest of the year

to have monthly quizzes covering a range of different topics, educational talks, and organise other events within the school. Perhaps even pushing for our very own SHSB Pride in 2018 full of music, art and mass participation throughout the school. An event that demonstrates our unity behind a message of fairness and equality for all. Certainly, this would mark a phenomenal transition from the dark and oppressive corridors the school had beforehand.

At the end of the day, having an LGBT society in any school is by no means an opportunity to push some of the beliefs of an extremist faction of the community upon everybody else. The vast majority of LGBT people are not convinced by these louder, more ideologically flamboyant individuals themselves. We have these societies to ensure there is never misrepresentation in the future, and to create a comfortable and fun place for anyone to go on a Wednesday at lunch, when they don't have anything else to do.

I personally like to think of myself as the Leader of the most vibrant and fun society at Southend High School for Boys!

Owen Cartey



The Model United Nations

On 21st September 2017, Southend High School for Boys held its first Model United Nations (MUN).

Operating just like the real United Nations would, various schools (including SHSB) came together to represent 34 of the 193 states that make up the UN. The day opened with an introduction to the MUN, before the delegates of each country split into 3 different committees – Health and Human Rights; Ecology and Environment, and the Security Council. After a quick lunch, all the delegates then came together in the main hall to debate an LGBTQ+ resolution, which was the overall theme of the day, and as well as an emergency resolution surrounding the situation with North Korea. It was, without a doubt, a busy and exciting day!

Throughout the day, I represented the delegation of Nigeria, and in the morning, I was in the Health and Human Rights committee. Originally, I found it difficult to represent a country that I disagreed with on so many issues however, as the day progressed I was better able to represent these views as a delegate – despite my own personal opinion. The first debate in the morning was surrounding obesity, and the second on the Myanmar conflict. It was hard to represent Nigeria in the obesity debate as being a country with

a highly malnourished population, they didn't have much of a stance on tackling obesity, however it was still interesting to see other countries' opinions on the matter.

In the afternoon, me and the rest of my delegation assembled in the hall to discuss the two larger resolutions of the day. The first resolution (and the most controversial) proposed increasing LGBTQ+ rights across the entire world, and it really opened my eyes to the amount of countries who still do not support LGBTQ+ rights; even in today's society. As a result, the entire resolution changed from improving LGBTQ+ rights, to infringing upon them. The final debate of the day was an emergency resolution on North Korea. It was fascinating to see the delegations, ours included, making alliances with one another, and taking sides on the matter. It showed me just how quickly negotiations between countries have to be made to fight an urgent matter.

Throughout the day, the debates were conducted in a formal manner by the chairs, in a similar way to which real-life UN debates are conducted. Each debate started with an opening speech



by the country proposing the resolution, followed by more speeches from other delegations who were for and against the resolution. The most exciting part was definitely when other delegations were able to question the opinions of the ones making the speeches, which created tensions between opposing states. The speeches were then followed by suggestions for amendments to the resolution, in order to make it more appealing to other delegations. This created room for debate and controversy amongst the delegations. Finally, the resolution would be brought to an end with votes on all the amendments, as well as an overall vote on whether or not the resolution should be passed.

A messaging system was also used throughout the day, thanks to students from Year 8, which allowed the delegations to talk privately to each other during the debates to find out their views on the situation, and to form agreements with certain countries on which parts of the resolution to vote for. We also had time to

talk to the other delegations in between the debates and find out their views on upcoming matters so as to help us to form a plan of what to do during the debates.

Overall, the day was a huge success, and was enjoyed by the students at SHSB and other schools, alike. From this invaluable opportunity, everyone was able to increase their understanding of international relations between countries which was perfect for anyone who was interested in pursuing politics or current affairs.

Special thanks go out to James Hicks, Olivia Wass, William Webster and George Wright for organising and chairing the event, without whom it wouldn't have run as smoothly – the work that they put in was most appreciated by all who took part.

Bring on the next MUN!

Kate Fewings

