GORDONSTOUN
Plus Est En Vous

Jocelin Winthrop-Young OBE

Round Square, 1938

Recognised for pioneering leadership in founding both Anavryta School and Round Square, in addition to his instrumental role creating the Kurt Hahn Archive in Salem.

Jocelin Winthrop-Young was a British educator, headmaster, mountaineer and Naval officer. He was also one of the first students at Gordonstoun.

Born in Westmorland (Cumbria) in 1919, Jocelin is the son of mountaineer and educator Geoffrey Winthrop-Young - himself a Founding Fellow for his role in starting the school.

Jocelin's parents were long-time friends of Kurt Hahn, so at age 11, he joined Salem school in Germany before following Hahn from Salem to Scotland, where he became one of the first students when Hahn established Gordonstoun. Here he became Hockey Captain, Scottish Junior High Jump Champion, House Helper and Vice Guardian, whilst also developing a lifelong love for sailing.

As a result, he volunteered for service in the Royal Navy during World War II and was on the front line during the D Day landings.Returning home in 1946, his connections with Kurt Hahn led him to Greece, where he became private tutor to Crown Prince Constantine and then in 1948, co-founder of Anavryta School. Jocelin remained Headmaster there until 1959 and was awarded an OBE.

Following the Kefalonia earthquake in 1953, he helped organised a multi-school reconstruction project which inspired him to set up an association of Hahnian schools in order to arrange aid projects on a regular basis. Over 12 years, and led by Joceln, these efforts resulted in the founding of the Round Square Conference in 1966.

In 1964 he returned again to Salem, becoming Headmaster of the Salem campus and setting up the Kurt Hahn archive there. He continued to run the Round Square Conference until he retired in 1992.

After retirement, Jocelin remained a sought-after interviewee as an expert on Kurt Hahn and in 2003 spoke at the Reconnections and New Directions Conference in Vancouver on the four organisations attributed to Hahn: Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Outward Bound, United World Colleges and Round Square.He had been present at the beginning of all of them.

Jocelin died in 2012 and his daughter Sophie remembers him.

If it wasn't for my father and the constant help from his best friend Roy McComish at Box Hill, I don't think the Round Square Conference would have survived.

We grew up whilst he set up the group. It was very much his idea and his motivation that made it happen. Even the name was chosen by my father. At the founding meeting, in 1966 in Salem, it was called the Hahn Schools Conference but when Hahn took part in the 1st Conference in 1967, he wasn't sure of the name. He felt it prevented other, non-Hahnian schools from joining. The meeting was taking place in Round Square, and my father looked out of the window at that moment and suggested the name - and it was agreed. Still, it took a lot of networking and encouragement to get, and keep, so many schools behind the idea; my father took that on and made it work with help from Roy.

Gordonstoun gave my father his love of the sea, and skills with people.

As a founder member of the Coastguards, he took part in a trip to Norway aboard the Henrietta and it really opened up a whole new world for him. Not only did it trigger his love of sailing, but it showed him what else was out there. He wasn't an intellectual as such, but he discovered the power of getting out in the world, learning languages, meeting people and bringing them together.Essentially he made a career from it.

I think my grandfather was very proud of him - Hahn was not always an easy man.

Whilst Geoffrey was known for his charisma, my father was more reserved and withdrawn. I often think it must have been difficult when you have such a big character as a father, to create your own person and come out of his shadow. However, he was a master communicator, and worked tirelessly to promote Hahn's ideas and the ideals they both shared. Kurt Hahn was not always an easy person to get on with, however my father pulled through because he fundamentally believed in Hahn's principles and he was a strong enough character to withstand him. He was exceptionally loyal to Hahn and - crucially - he had the resilience and persistence needed for success.