

MINUTES of a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc. held at the offices of Shereff, Friedman, Hoffman and Goodman at 919 Third Ave., New York City on April 2, 1989. Present were:

Abraham Bein  
Norman Bernstein  
Alvin Dobsevage  
Victor Feingold  
Nathan Epstein  
Lester Friesner  
Irving Gerber  
Julius Graber  
Saul Grossman  
Eugene Heil  
Herbert Kadison  
Therese Lazar  
Morton Lederman  
Morton Lisser, Presiding  
Melvin Moore  
Henry Shereff  
Harold Spielman

Also present were Albert Nerkin, Class of '28 and Peter Joseph of the FTA.

Mort Lisser opened the meeting at 10:10 AM.

Henry Shereff introduced Albert Nerkin. Maury Paprin noted that Albert had endowed a chair at Cooper Union, his Alma Mater. Maury recommended Albert for a place on our Board. Albert declined at this time since he is already serving on three Boards.

Henry called the Board's attention to a dinner being held in honor of Claire Shulman on April 12th. He urged all who could to attend.

Mort Lisser read a letter from Marvin Bloom indicating that the current newsletter going out would be his last. Mort pointed out the importance of maintaining an information flow to our membership. Henry noted that the last Publication Committee was probably set up around 1983 and many members are no longer serving. Mort will appoint a new committee.

Peter Joseph told us of his daughter who wore her THHS jacket while walking in Florida. She was stopped twice by alumni now living there. Peter would like to see more news of the new school sent to alumni as a sort of binding agent between the old and new groups. Mel Moore pointed out that the original brochure that Ted Peck made up for us depicted the new THHS rising like a Phoenix from the ashes of the old school.

Maury Paprin would like to see a professional hired to seek out alumni. In response to Abe Bein's query, we were told that the best actuarial guess was that there were about 5,000 of alumni out there and we had about 1500 names in our records. Mel Moore suggested that each class should have a committee of around five members to keep an active contact with their classmates. Julie Graber gave his experience with the class of Jan '40. Many in this class belong to the Alumni Assn but most have an allegiance to their class only. Maury Paprin thought that the total of about 60 members in the Jan '40 class was good and we ought to continue personal contacts in other classes.

Peter Joseph pointed out that in many respects ours was a holding operation until the new alumni finished their college and established themselves in their careers. Present classes at THHS are very school conscious and will form the nucleus of a strong young Alumni organization. Therese Lazar said that her class were not sure what was expected of them. Julie Graber replied that they were the best suited to speak to the current students and advise them of what lay ahead in college. He suggested that the recent alumni speak to students at the next Career Day.

Irv Gerber suggested that the '89 class contribute a column to the Alumni Newsletter as a way of keeping in touch with each other and letting the rest of us know what they are doing. Peter Joseph recommended that we invite students to our meetings to get their views of conditions at the school. Maury suggested that the new alumni representatives write directly to their classmates of the Board's activities.

Albert Netter pointed out that with only less than 200 graduates per year it would be at least 10 years before their increasing numbers caught up with the decreasing alumni of the older group. It was still our job to make and preserve THHS as the pre-eminent school of the City. Albert asked if we had considered having THHS as an examination school. Henry and Mort reviewed for Al our plans in this regard.

Therese wanted the Board to know that the current THHS students

always recognized the impact of the old school and the alumni and were constantly striving to attain the goals established at the old THHS.

Nathan Epstein would like Board Members identified by class on our stationary and publicity releases.

Mort and Henry reverted back to the need for a new Publication Committee. Mort appointed Maury Paprin, Arthur Graham, Harold Prince, Harold Spielman, Peter Joseph and Irving Gerber on this Committee.

Mort discussed the awards to be given to the Class of '89. Last year the Alumni had made 10 awards of \$100. each. The amount of the awards was recommended by Dr. Largmann. Five of the awards have been funded and five were appropriated from the general funds. Nathan Epstein volunteered to fund the current year's awards in honor of our retiring President, Henry Shereff. Albert Nerkin offered a contribution of \$5000. to fund the Board awards in perpetuity.

Mort Lisser appoined an Awards committee of Victor Feingold, Nathan Epstein and Albert Nelkin to deal with these funds and seek others.

Les Friesner reported for the Hall of Fame Committee. We have been waiting for a response from the Governor as to an available date, but none has been forthcoming. Henry Shereff has met with

Saul Cohen, who is on the Governor's staff, in an attempt to get a response. Whether or not we get an answer to our invitation the Committee is meeting later this week to select a date and site and move ahead with plans.

Hal Spielman told us of a report in the UFT Bulletin to the effect that a new building for THMS is "in the works". Hal noted that THMS students were referred to as "Townsend's". This is inappropriate, if anything the students are Harrisites. Hal spoke of the recently deceased Harold Abelson Class of '20. Dean Abelson was a giant in the field of Education. He was given a full time appointment to the CCNY Education Dept at the age of 19 and also subsequently became the youngest Dean at the school and in the field. He wrote the leading text in educational techniques and was a scholar and gentleman in every sense. Hal requested that a letter of condolence be sent his widow. Victor Feingold who knew Dean Abelson confirmed Hal's evaluation.

Nathan Epstein wanted a list of members from the Class of '34. Abe Bein suggested that all Board members get current lists of their class in order to coordinate a membership drive. Mort Lisser determined from Irv Gerber that our computer listings could be so sorted and requested that they be made up and distributed to the Board.

Irv Gerber, prior to reporting on current correspondance remarked that it almost appeared to be a pattern in that there

was one death among our members every two weeks. The correspondence 1) Richard Geiger '31 doesn't want open admissions in THHS. 2) Kenneth Foreman '32 would like the Alumni to acknowledge the talent among alumni as well as the students. 3) Sid Belman would like to return to the Plaza for our dinner. 4) Phil Gelfand '34 would like THHS to be a test school. 5) John Kaufman '39 thinks the Alumni are doing a great job. 6) B. Kalich has mixed feelings about THHS even after 50 years. Are we removing the cream of the crop of high school students? 7) Richard Carlton '35 is a TV executive and wonders how many of his fellow alumni are still putting in a full five day week?

Peter Joseph suggested that we ask Mal Largmann to write a column in the newsletter explaining the admission procedures to assure that we get quality students at THHS.

Therese relayed a Question from Tom Sweetin, the Senior Class Advisor. Do we want a representative from each graduating class? The reply is yes.

Les Friesner announced that there would be a meeting of the PTA on May 25th for which students will be invited to get answers re college admissions.

Abe Bein believes that the average graduating age for his class of '24 was 14!

The date of the next meeting was set for May 7th.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

*Julius W. Graber*  
JULIUS W. GRABER, SECRETARY