



The idea for Round Square originated in Greece where Jocelin Winthrop Young was headmaster of Anavryta School. A former Hahn pupil, Young was inspired by the international students' reconstruction project organised by Salem after the great earthquake in the Ionian Islands in 1954.



(On far left) Jocelin Winthrop Young founded and governed a permanent association of schools called Round Square. Kurt Hahn (far right) attends the first Roundsquare conference held at Gordonstoun in 1967.

Sir Lawrance Darvall. Sir Lawrance Darvall, Commandant of the NATO Defence College in Paris, had observed how staff officers and diplomats from 15 different nations had “learnt through the common task how to give to the point of view of the foreigner first a hearing, then understanding and even sympathy, till one day a community had found itself...” This led Hahn to reflect the possibility of bringing young people from different nations together to do the same in two-year colleges with high academic standards, a scholarship entry, strong commitment to outdoor activities and community services. During the Cold War in 1957, Kurt Hahn was asked to give a lecture at the plenary session of the Atlantic Conference at Bruges where he presented his plan of the “Atlantic Colleges”. He believed, “Our Atlantic young will become attached to the small community in which they have worked, adventured and served together. They will have learned to love one other country besides their own, and that is an important link in their advance to Atlantic Citizenship”. Today there are 13 United World Colleges found on every continent. The students are selected on personal merit, irrespective of race, religion, politics and the ability to pay – with the explicit aim of fostering peace and international understanding”. Almost 40,000 students from over 180 countries have studied at UWC and there are over 120 National Committees.

The idea of Round Square was conceived in Greece: From its foundation in 1949 to 1959, Jocelin Winthrop-Young had been Headmaster of Anavryta School that he had built up from the ground following the concepts of Salem and Gordonstoun, where he had been a student of Kurt Hahn. In 1954, he was involved in an international students reconstruction project organised by Salem after the great earthquake in the Ionian Islands. This had been such a success that he considered the scheme of founding a permanent association of schools that were committed to the educational principles of Kurt Hahn, to provide aid projects for those in need, including an annual conference for co-ordination and discussion. At Round Square’s birth in Salem, Hahn’s ideas were – similar to the development in the other three organisations - being taken over by the next generation. J. W. Young had invited Hahn’s former colleagues and pupils who were Heads of “Hahn-Schools” to become members of the association. Hahn’s four pillars have been embodied, modified and expanded in the six pillars of Round Square. The now 70 schools share the common philosophy of the IDEALS - Internationalism, Democracy, Environment, Adventure, Leadership and Service. Students at Round Square schools take part in community service, work projects, exchange programmes and adventuring. Round Square international projects are organised in

developing countries where students from different schools spend part of their vacation together helping to, for example, construct building and water systems.

Round Square has a Kurt Hahn Prize that “is to further a lasting spirit of unity among all schools of the Round Square Conference”. The prize is “awarded for an exceptional act of service to others, immediate or long term, either within or without the school community”. The concept for this Prize was presented at the same celebration at Salem when Round Square was founded: on Kurt Hahn’s 80th birthday in 1966.

Considering the life of Kurt Hahn is a complex undertaking. In doing so, it is possible to distil two main themes from his life which are worth consideration and assist in contextualising this book.

Inclusion and Expansion

Salem was inclusive in its outlook and scholarships have always been considered an extremely important part of the school. A meeting before the school was even founded stated the intention to have scholarships. The fees were graded according to the parents’ ability to pay. A number of students were orphans whose fathers had been killed in World War I, or they came from the local villages.

At Gordonstoun, too, before the school was founded there was discussion of grading the fees according to the ability of the parents to pay, as established in Salem. The setting up of a scholarship fund was discussed and it was stated that there was a need for a greater number of poorer boys among the boarders and that the majority of students should be picked without regard to the financial position of their parents. In 1944, it was stated that fees are graded according to the ability of the parents to pay.

This theme of inclusion is joined by the theme of expansion. At Salem, the school expanded significantly in twelve years, from one new school in 1920 to five branches of the same school on different sites in 1932. Hahn also lectured on plans to introduce the Salem system to the German public day school system. Alongside this school-based expansion is growth outside the school environment. Hahn was involved in a programme for the Confederation of Old Salemers whereby they would take part in three months of practical social work, four weeks of athletic training (following the conditions of the German Sports Badge), and attendance on a course, such as horseback riding. Strict

training conditions, which included abstaining from smoking or drinking, had to be followed during the four weeks of athletics. Hahn hoped that this course would later include ex-pupils of other German independent schools. In many ways, this looks like the precursor of the badge schemes - and possibly Outward Bound - as a house was to have been made available, as a sort of training centre for the students.

Expansionist (and inclusive) aims were continued at Gordonstoun. In 1936, there were plans for a day school to be attached, presumably for local boys, with graded or nominal fees for the students. There were also plans for a seamanship school, open to local boys, and boarders who would come for six week courses – the implication was that this would be for small boat sailing. Associated with this were plans for sail training ships, capable of carrying 30 to 40 boys on foreign expeditions, which were similar to German Sailing Schools. In 1936, there were also plans for a school farm and horsemanship school, each having a dormitory house with courses lasting 6 to 10 weeks which would be open to all boys. In 1937, the King George’s Field cinder track was built to act as a training centre for the people of the local district with Gordonstoun students acting as coaches. In 1938, local boys from Morayshire were involved in the Watchers organisation at Gordonstoun, involving a mix of sailing and coastguard work.

When the Moray Badge was publicised in 1936, it was clearly stated that the intention was to expand. Even the sequence of badge names serves to highlight the expansionist and inclusive aims – Gordonstoun, Moray, County. Perhaps the best indicator of inclusion and expansion is when Hahn joined with Elgin Academy to take the scheme to a larger and wider audience. The badge schemes would be advocated through the twin track approach of training in schools and in training centres. Hahn stated that training centres should be used as a delivery method of the scheme in January 1938. In the same year, an independent company, the Gordonstoun Training Society, was set up to further his expansionist educational aims, partly through the Moray Badge Scheme for all students. Hahn and others used the related concepts of fitness and pre-service training in the late 1930s as a means of promoting his schemes.

It is in the contexts of inclusion, expansion, fitness and pre-service training that the training centres can be seen - Scottish Summer Course (1938 and 1939), Welsh Summer Course (1940), and Outward Bound (1941). In 1942, Hahn, when talking about the County Badge syllabus, stated that “what

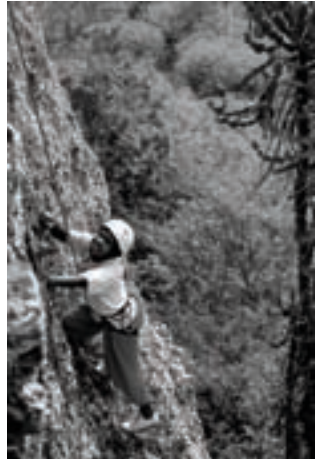
we should have done in peace time as an act of social justice, we have to perform today as a military necessity.” This indicates that the scheme was first introduced as an act of ‘social justice’ and later also included the aim of assisting the war effort. In the same document, Hahn states that he “cannot rest until similar opportunities... are made accessible to an ever-increasing number of youths”.

Note that the idea of social justice has undergone significant change of use and meaning since that time (when Hahn used the term). This idea of social justice is seen in 1936, when Hahn said that, through the inclusion of boys from the district of Morayshire, “We shall have demonstrated that a school of public school-type need not be restricted to the well-to-do classes”. The concept of social justice, with the Cistercian message of giving health to the district (which originated at Salem), is stated by Hahn on a number of occasions.

Hahn, or other close associates, often referred to the training centres as demonstrations, trial camps or training demonstrations. Therefore, the intention was to demonstrate Hahn’s view of education, and this was to include all aspects of society. In striving to achieve the aim of expansion, through demonstrations, Hahn appealed to private trusts and Government departments for money. The meeting between Hahn and Holt and the starting of Outward Bound needs to be seen in this social justice context. The starting of Outward Bound involved more than the stated need to train seamen.

In this context of expansion in 1938, Hahn had tried to convince the President of the Board of Education to include a badge for physical education in the School Certificate examination. Research indicates that the badge schemes were the only schemes involving badges that Hahn was associated with. Therefore, there is a strong probability that Hahn tried to get the badge scheme into formal state education. This highlights that, along with the attempts to influence the Norwood Committee with the County Badge Scheme, Hahn’s expansive aims need to be seen as an attempt to influence state education on a national scale.

The reason for this expansive aim might be seen when Hahn talked about the continued existence of Gordonstoun “for the reform of the national education system” and that Gordonstoun had hoped “to be more than a Boarding School” and aimed “at becoming the core of a health-giving movement”. On another occasion, Hahn quoted Geoffrey Winthrop-Young by saying, “We are more than a school – we are a movement”. Later, Brereton and Geoffrey Winthrop-Young



Founded in 1952, Outward Bound Kenya made expeditions to Mt. Kenya and Kilimanjaro for more than five decades.