Dulwich Crusaders, Thurlow Hall

Closed
Christian
52 Lovelace Road, SE21 8JR

Dulwich Crusaders exterior

Historical summary
In 1932, Mr Arnold, of Stonehills, College Road, approached the Governors about building a hall for the Christian organisation Dulwich Crusaders, now known as Urban Saints. Arnold said 'Bible classes will be held on Sundays and camps, games, and outings are arranged to take place during the school holidays'. The design by Clapham architect F Owen Dunk took some time to be approved but after the proposal had been given the go-ahead the Governors got cold feet and had to be reassured by Mr Arnold who reiterated that 'the purposes for which the hall would be used would include bible classes on Sunday afternoons, meetings during the week, lantern lectures and the like, and a certain amount of social activity, but that no bugles or undue noise of any description would be allowed in the hall or elsewhere.'

Named Thurlow Hall, the motto on the outside belongs to the Crusaders and is based on Hebrews 12:2, which in the original Greek reads: aphorōntes eis ton Iēsoūn and translates as "fixing our eyes on Jesus" or "looking away [from all else] to Jesus".

The person most associated with the Dulwich Crusaders is George Lawrence Hicks (1882-1947). He was born in Peckham and became an insurance clerk with Union Assurance Company based on New Bridge St. He grew up in East Dulwich as one of five children of Louisa and shop assistant Jonathan Cook Hicks; Jonathan died when George was 13. George lived for 24 years at 18 Stradella Rd (as a lodger, at first with his mother - he never married) until his death in 1947. He did much good work in

Dulwich especially with boys' groups and on his death, the Dulwich Crusaders donated a book of remembrance in his name to the Crusaders Union which still exists. It says 'PRESENTED BY THE DULWICH CRUSADERS/ IN MEMORY OF G.L. HICKS/ THEIR FOUNDER AND LEADER 1913-1947'.

In recent years Thurlow Hall has been used by the Church of God. In 2022 it was used by Women of Praise and Faith Revival Ministries and since 2024 for services by Heaven's Gateway Ministries.

Sources: London Archives. Southwark Local Studies