

Bonum magister meridiem

(Good AFTERNOON TEACHER).

A TRIBUTE TO A GREAT TEACHER.

By Rev. Cyril Showers (7630)

“Good teachers impart good education. Great teachers groom their students to become leaders. Ordinary teachers direct them along the right path, but great teachers inspire them to seek their own path. They encourage them to discover their talents.”

Mrs. Gladys Sumner “A GREAT TEACHER”. Taught Latin, English Language and English Literature at the Sierra Leone Grammar school for a considerable number of years where she attained the position of a very Senior Teacher and acted as Vice Principal on a number of Occasions. As a teacher she is amongst a few human beings that are able to etch their names into history through her brilliance, knowledge, firmness, fairness and consistency. Her ability as a teacher and mentor to hundreds if not thousands of Regentonians is unsurpassed.



Mrs Sumner is one of remarkable attention to detail. As a teacher she often operated on a yardstick that separated a good student from a great one, as being the attention paid to detail. She had a manner of teaching that allowed for ORDER and Efficiency which explains the high percentage of Successful students under her tutelage. She was a dedicated teacher who instilled belief on each of her students. She always encouraged us to work hard and achieve more in life.

As young boys it was always a relief to escape our mother’s nagging when we left home for school. However, it was not so much a relief if Mamie Sumner was on your timetable for the day. And woe besides you if she knew your parents as she did mine. But it did not take long after living the Grammar School, for us to understand that her constant nagging was in our own interest. I cannot remember Mrs Sumner with a cane or even raising her voice. But of course she did not need to, because she epitomized authority, she demanded high standards and also set very high expectations which were not negotiable.

As Good as she was, she struggled with first names unlike Mr Lasite who knew the name of every single student. For example she never worked out who was who between me and my brother and so called Henry April Showers and I was September Showers.

There is a breed of men all over the world who are special and I dare say privileged to be who we are today, and we owe that in large part to Mrs Sumner's professionalism, empathy, strict discipline and kindness.

30 years ago, the SLGS OBA UK branch was formed, and Mrs Sumner was at the heart of its creation. Her long and strong links with the Grammar School proved invaluable during the early days as she became a co-opted member. She was regular at meetings and as was expected, made valuable contributions which helped lay the solid foundation on which we the current members continue to build on today.

This world is full of people whose paths we cross often in our day-to-day interactions. Most we forget as we move on; few we faintly remember and there are a handful we vividly



remember... in fact we never forget them. These are people who live their lives like it should be lived ... simple, selfless and for others! Mrs Gladys Sumner was indeed such an exemplary person.

As a School and as the OBA, we are sincerely indebted to you Mrs Sumner for all that you stood for. Especially for your contribution to EDUCATION which is priceless. Your legacy will always be a beacon of light among Regentonians. And so today we express our appreciation to a Great teacher who made a lasting impression in the classroom and had a positive influence on education in Sierra Leone in general, The Sierra Leone Grammar school as an institution and former students all over the world.

On behalf of the Chairman, executive and entire membership of the SLGS OBA UK, I extend heartfelt sympathy to the children, the entire family and friends.

Vale magister. Donec obviam redimus

Goodbye teacher. Till we meet again

GOD BLESS