

# Memorial circuit

– Jérôme Lalande High School 

# Schoolyard

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16 High School Street – Bourg-en-Bresse (01000), France





*Figure 1: Mr Michallat in front of his printing press “Républicaine” (Bir Hakeim newspaper)*

The **schoolyard** of Jérôme Lalande High School was witness to acts of resistance: leaflets, newspapers and photos of General Charles de Gaulle, secretly passed on by **Paul Pioda** to students **Marcel Thenon** and **Paul Morin**, circulated there under the table. Some of the newspapers distributed at the school, such as *Libération*, *Combat*, *Franc-Tireur* and *Bir Hakeim*<sup>1</sup>, were printed by the **Michallat printing house**, located very close to the school. They were also distributed in the town of Bourg-en-Bresse.

<sup>1</sup> **Bir Hakeim**: Clandestine newspaper founded by André Jacquelin (1898–1985) in March 1943, whose title echoes a battle that took place from May 27 to June 11, 1942, pitting the Free French and British forces against the Germans and Italians.

From 1941 onwards, the first **typewritten** leaflets began to appear, as recounted by one student, **Lucien Dupont**.

**Graffiti** is hastily scrawled on the walls: mostly victory ‘V’ signs with the Cross of Lorraine inside. Examples of these inscriptions can still be seen in the attic of the school.

However, not all students were **resistance fighters**. Some students **supported the Vichy regime** and were openly **anti-Semitic**. One day, three of them attacked **Cerf**, a Jewish student. He was violently struck in the face, but several students, including **François-Yves Guillin**, defended him.



*Figure 2: Photographic portrait of François-Yves Guillin (1921–2020)*



*Figure 3: Photographic portrait of Raymond Sordet (1921-1944)*

Various initiatives **were** being taken, but they **remained** isolated. To be more effective, high school students **were organising** themselves.

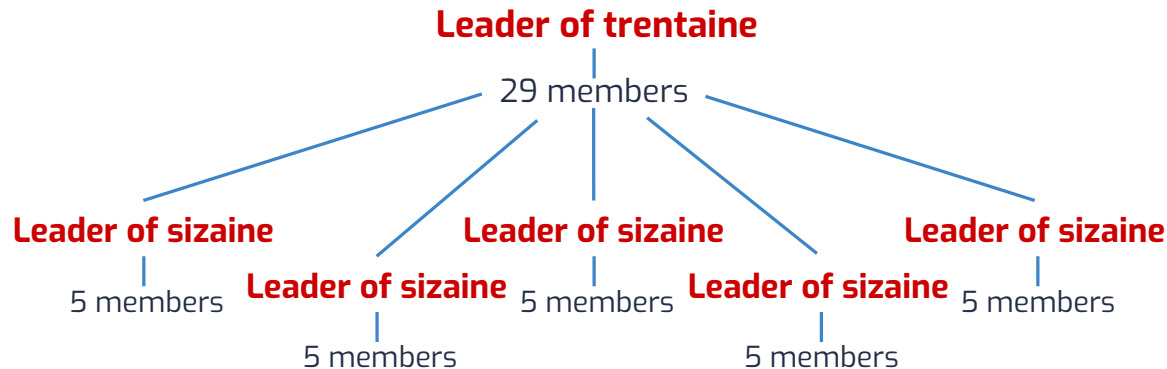
In early 1941, **Raymond Sordet** gathered a group of young people around him tasked with providing information to the ***Secret Intelligence Service***<sup>2</sup>, a mission he carried out until his arrest.

At the end of 1941, **Marcel Thenon** and **Paul Morin**, encouraged by **Paul Pioda**, formed a “**sizaine**” with four trusted comrades.

<sup>2</sup> ***Secret Intelligence Service (S.I.S.)*** or **MI6**: UK's foreign intelligence service, founded in 1909 and headquartered in London.

The “sizaines” multiplied, and the first “**trentaine**” was established in 1942. A second “trentaine” was created in early 1943.

In 1943, **F.U.J.** (United Youth Forces) groups, a national synthesis of various youth resistance movements, were established in Lalande. They were led by **Hugues Barange**, regional head of the F.U.J. and supervisor at the high school. The head monitor, **Pierre Schmidt**, an Alsatian hiding under the pseudonym ‘Bourgeois’, was responsible for **transporting** most of the newspapers and leaflets from Lyon.



<sup>3</sup> **Supervisor:** Teacher responsible for supervising pupils outside of class and who may also make them repeat their lessons.

High school students were not content with distributing their newspapers **within** the school; they also took bundles of newspapers with them when they returned to their **families** each week and distributed them among their **friends** and **relatives**. **Weapons** and **plastic** used in the manufacture of explosives were also brought into the school.



Figure 4: One of the newspapers Forces Unies de la Jeunesse (n°13, October 1943) and Le Franc-Tireur (n°28, 1 February 1944)



## Sources

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- ◆ *Paul Morin*. Wikipédia. Accessed on 06/07/2025.
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## Credits

- ◆ **Municipal Archives of Bourg-en-Bresse**  
– *Imprimerie républicaine Michallat (1945) (674W5)* (Figure 1)
- ◆ **"La Résistance au lycée Lalande" Association – Lalande2**  
– *Forces Unies de la Jeunesse (n°13, octobre 1943)* (Figure 4)  
– *Le Franc-Tireur - Édition Zone Sud (n°28, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1944)* (Figure 4)
- ◆ **DVD-ROM The Resistance in the Ain and Haut-Jura regions**  
– *Fiche biographique de Raymond Sordet, par Jean Léty* (Figure 3)

Infographic created based on the work of the Seconde D class (class of 2023-2024) at Jérôme Lalande High School to commemorate the mass arrest carried out by the Militia at the school on 5 June 1944.

This is not a work of historical scholarship, but rather an attempt to popularise history.