



90 YEARS ON

Woodford County High School – An historical compilation



1919 - 2009

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FOREWORD

At the Old Girls' Association AGM in 2008 it was suggested that the numerous accounts of the history of the school could be brought together into a single definitive document in time for the 90th birthday celebrations. Our objective has been to amalgamate the existing sources, together with any new information we could uncover, to produce, if not the definitive history of the school, a comprehensive account which covers all the main episodes in its development. The result is this WCHS Miscellany.

Thanks

We would like to thank everyone who has helped and in particular Barbara Blossom, Jane Hall, Pat Stone, and staff at Redbridge Library and Waltham Forest Archives. Our special thanks also go to Helen Cleland, who has been very encouraging from the start, and Gordon Becket, who immediately agreed to link the document to the School's website.

We have tried to be as factually correct as possible, but cannot be absolutely accurate (especially with dates), as our sources sometimes do not agree with each other. We would welcome any corrections or further contributions.

Ann Bowyer & Clare Fletcher (both 1952 – 59). Summer 2009.

INTRODUCTION

Since its foundation in 1919 WCHS has seen many changes in educational legislation.

School Leaving Age

1918 Full time education became compulsory from age 5 to 14. The leaving age had been raised from 10 to 12 in 1899

1936 It was recommended that the leaving age be raised to 15 from 1939, but this was not done because of the war

1944 Education Act It was planned to raise the leaving age to 15 and to 16 as soon as practicable.

1947 School leaving age was raised from 14 to 15

1959 A report recommended raising the school leaving age to 16. This was repeated in 1963.

1973 School leaving age was finally raised to 16.

1997 All children were to remain in education until the last school day in June in the school year in which they reached 16.

2006 Bill to raise school leaving age to 18 (by 2015)

Legislation

1944 Education Act: Introduced tripartite system of grammar schools, technical schools and secondary modern schools. Pupils to be allocated by results of 11+ exam. All pupils were to have free secondary education until 15.

1951: School Certificate and Higher School Certificate examinations were replaced by GCE Ordinary

Level (16 year olds) and Advanced Level (18 year olds). This enabled pupils to obtain passes in single subjects.

1965: Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) was introduced alongside GCE.
Circular 10/65 recommended comprehensive education.

1

1971: Free school milk ended for children over the age of 7.

1988 Education Act (Local Management of Schools): National Curriculum and Key Stages were introduced. GCSE was introduced to replace GCE and CSE.
Schools could opt out of Local Authority control and be responsible for their own budgets

1989 Greenwich Ruling.

The Law Lords ruled against Greenwich Council saying that a Local Authority could not restrict access to their schools to those living within their Borough.

1992: OFSTED was introduced to carry out school inspections, replacing those by the Board of Education. They assessed: standards of achievement; quality of learning; efficiency of the school; pupils' spiritual, moral, social & cultural development; behaviour & discipline; attendance; quality of teaching (assessment, recording & reporting); quality & range of curriculum; equality of opportunity; provision for pupils with special educational needs; management & administration; resources and their management; accommodation; pupils' welfare & guidance; and links with parents, agencies and other institutions.

Years were renumbered 1 –12, Year 7 being the first year in Secondary School.

1998 Education Bill: It was proposed to allow parents to select schools.

2002: Introduction of City Academies

2002: CRB checks for new employees in school were introduced. In 2003 they became checks for all staff

2003 The retiring age for teachers was raised to 65.

GOVERNANCE OF THE SCHOOL

Woodford had lost a well established private school and in 1919 Mr Samuel Cutforth, County Councillor, was approached by a group of parents (including Mr Starke, and Mr Hawkey) to persuade Essex Education Authority to open a school for girls similar to that at Loughton. They had to guarantee 75 pupils. 'Highams' was rented and a sum of money allocated for redecoration and adaptation. The buildings consisted of the house and the stables; there was also an overgrown garden.

Girls had to take an entrance examination (in the Wilfred Lawson!) and those who passed were then awarded County Scholarships. Those without scholarships had to pay. In 1925 the fees were £5 per term. In 1929 the school purchased for £7,000 by Essex County Council.

There was also a Cutforth Scholarship £50/annum

Governors

Mr Cutforth became the first Chairman of the Governors with Mr Goodwin as Clerk. He was succeeded after his death by Rev H J Gamble (1930 - 45) and then Mr Reginald Smith (1945 - 48), Alderman H L Green (1948 - 56), and Alderman H E Simkins (1956 - 61). Alderman Mrs E F M Hollis, MBE, Governor since 1956, became Chairman (1961 – 74). She was followed by Alderman Cowan (1974 - 78). His wife was an Old Girl (Vera Marshall). In 1974 four parents were on the governing body. In 1978 Redbridge introduced a rule that governors must **live in the Borough, causing Alderman Cowan to**



retire as chairman. Mr Bailey became Chairman of the Governors.

Subsequent Chairmen of the Governors include Sir John Ellis and Mr W Brock

Col. Sir Stuart Mallinson CBE, DSO, MC, DL, JP was a governor from 1940.

By 1932 there was a chairman, vice chairman and clerk (Mr E C Edgar) together with seven Governors

Local Authorities

1963: Local government Act: Greater London Council (GLC) was created. Control of WCHS passed to Redbridge from Essex Education Committee.

1963: Redbridge Borough Council bought Glasbury House, in South Wales, as an outdoor pursuits centre.

1965: Greater London Boroughs created. School was in Waltham Forest but was managed by Redbridge

1974: Redbridge took over swimming baths and tennis courts so OGs could no longer use them one evening a week as they were in use every evening

1974: Redbridge said there would be no changes for 2/3 years.

September 1977 WCHS was the only girls' grammar school left in the Borough. Exchanges were arranged with local comprehensives for certain subjects. Ilford Boys was still a grammar school.

1977: Ilford County High School became comprehensive. St Paul's School merged with St Mary's Convent to form Trinity High School Comprehensive. Pupils exchanged with Woodford for some lessons: Woodford went to Trinity for typing & technical drawing; Trinity came to Woodford for music, economics and geology.

1978 Woodbridge (another comprehensive) came to Woodford for German.

1979: The intake was restricted to the Borough of Redbridge, except for the sixth form. There were transport problems, as not many pupils came from Woodford Green.

1991: WCHS teachers opposed the parents and governors who wanted the school to opt out of Local Authority control, a move which was being encouraged by the Government.

1992 Redbridge Education Committee proposed to expand their two grammar schools to four form entry to accommodate additional pupils due to boundary changes to the catchment area. This was a controversial subject and many councillors were doubtful about the wisdom of it.

Inspections

Board of Education General Inspections carried out inspections in 1923, 1932 and 1956.

An Ofsted inspection was held in 1994 There was minimum criticism – the main problem was that the buildings needed attention!

They concluded: "Courtesy is the custom" and "Visitors are made welcome"

Further inspections were carried out in 2000 and 2005. The 2005 inspection only found a need for ICT facilities for all, not some, subjects and a 'whole school approach to the promotion of literacy across the curriculum'. Otherwise the school was deemed 'Outstanding'.

In 2001 the school received one of the Evening Standard London Schools Awards. It said that the girls "don't just wonder why something isn't happening, they get on and organise it".

PREMISES

The original building and grounds

"Highams" was rented from the Warner family in 1919. It was originally an elegant Georgian manor house containing: kitchens connected to the room above (room 2) by a dumb-waiter, food being taken to the dining-room (room 3) through an adjoining door (later blocked); a ballroom (room 1) below which was the library; chapel; living-rooms; bedrooms on the first floor; and, at the top of the house, servants' quarters. During the Great War it had been an hospital, so building renovation was needed. This was done by Messrs Wallace & Wallace, but it over-ran so the School could not open until 29th September 1919.

There was a stable-block and yard, vegetable garden, orchard, rose garden, tennis court and a park sloping down towards the lake. The lake had been sold to the Corporation of London in 1891. The grounds covered 16 acres, and included where the roads between Highams Park Lake and Chingford Lane are now: Charter Avenue, Henry's Avenue, Crealock Road and & Nesta Road (built in the early 1930s).

In 1919 the front lawn was surrounded by trees and bushes, and at the back a tree was cut down when the field was levelled for sports. The tree was incorporated into the school badge.



Front Lawn with Trees
still in place



Annexe 1920



First Hall Gym



Building the Hall in 1929

In 1929 the School was bought by Essex County Council and a commemorative inscription was put over the fireplace in the front hall.

The chandelier in the dining-room fell down during a dinner party, given by the Warners, breaking a Minton dinner service. It, was thrown out into the stables, and was later rescued by Miss Gordon, who put it in the Head's study.

The kitchen yard became the gymnasium; the greenhouse area became the hall; the kitchen garden became tennis courts.

The School, which is 211' above sea level, is in two parishes as the boundary crosses the front lawn between the main building and the front wall. Currently the buildings are in Waltham Forest and the lawn, wall & gates in Redbridge.

Caretakers

The first caretakers were Mr and Mrs Daniels. Mrs Daniels cooked the school dinners

The first gardener was Mr Brewer assisted by his horse, Nebuchadnezzar, whose home was in the orchard or on the field. Mr Brewer lived in the Lodge until he left in 1949.

1927: "Sergeant" Chaplin became caretaker. He lived in the flat at the top of the house and retired in 1956.

The modern lodge at the main entrance was first occupied by Mr Masefield, caretaker, who retired in 1974

Alterations and additions

The North Wing, added in **1927**, had 7 classrooms (rooms 5 – 11 incl.), cloakrooms, gym and dining-room. Access was made easier by the provision of a new gate on Chingford Lane corner.

1928/1929: The annexe was demolished and the Assembly Hall built

1938: A crush hall and gallery were added to the assembly hall.

The swimming baths

1926 Fund-raising was started for swimming-baths in the grounds. There were drainage problems, so this ceased; then in 1931 it was re-started.

1928: The old stables were demolished, the site to be used for the baths.

1936: The plans were approved.

1939: The baths were finished.

1981: The pool was covered over after constant leaks and was used for storage and drama.

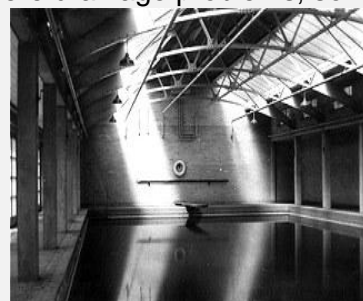
The drama centre in the old swimming baths had a fire in 1988; the swimming baths were then condemned as dangerous. The 70th birthday donations were expected to go towards the £250,000 needed for a new sixth form suite there. The plans were shelved in 1991 in favour in of an art and technology centre to cope with the National Curriculum. This was completed in 1992 The art room was in the New Block until then.

1938: The old laboratories were demolished and the South Wing was built to match the North Wing, where the stable yard was. It housed new labs which were opened but not equipped, cloakrooms, rooms for art and domestic science and four classrooms

1942: The Honours Board for SRNs was put up in the corridor of the South Wing

During the War the building was used as an Education Office and Red Cross depot, while the school was evacuated to Bedford
Early in the war the building was painted brown and green as camouflage

Most of the windows got broken and were replaced with cloth. Blast walls were built in the long corridors, from floor to ceiling at each end of the corridor with a narrow passage left free. Walls were reinforced with sandbags. Girls sat in the corridor during air-raids. The junior cloakrooms were also used as shelter. There was a shelter near the Greek theatre



for use by those having games. The wooden Ionic half-columns on the main staircase were destroyed during the bombing .

1941: School returned to the South Wing and main building. The North Wing housed Woodford Green Primary School.

1944: A V1 rocket blew windows out & exams had to continue in pencil in the twisty passage

1945: The blast walls were removed in by the Royal Engineers.

1948: The fire escape was built

1950s: The top floor was occupied by the Upper VIth. Dr Smith lived in the flat.

1958 – 1965: Five new science labs were built

1962: The new physics laboratory in the South Quadrangle was handed over to the school. It was the first new building for 20 years.

1974: The one-storey building on the tennis court was completed as a Lower Sixth/art room. It was known as the 'New Block' for over 20 years.

1977: The buildings were "preserved"

1977: A new fire alarm was installed, which can be heard everywhere including the flat.

1983: The Parks Department at Redbridge became responsible for the grounds.

1988: New lab and new technology room

1992: Room 16 became a form room for the extra intake class

1995: There were now 9 labs

2003: The sixth form block cannot be rebuilt or have major repairs because it is a temporary structure. Walls are being replaced gradually.

Sports Hall

Nov 1995: A planning application was made for a new sports hall but, due to objectors to the visual impact, it was withdrawn in March 1996

1998: The plans were still 'on hold'

It was proposed that the Sports Hall would cater for netball, basket ball, volley ball, five a side football, badminton, cricket, gymnastics, hockey, trampolining, dance, Indian dance, aerobics, yoga and fitness activities. It would also be used by the wider community.

2005: Big Lottery Fund money (£2,047,000) was awarded towards the new Sports Hall, which was to be built on the tennis courts next to the art block (ex-swimming pool).

(Photographs of the finished Building)



Entrance to Sports Block



Sports Block side view



Sports Hall

2006: Building was begun.

2007: The Sports Hall was opened by Iain Duncan Smith (MP for Chingford & Woodford Green)) and Stephen Dunmore (Chief Executive of the Big Lottery Fund).

Redecoration

In 1945 Essex County Council repainted the walls white, after the camouflage of the war years. In 1953 the outside windows were painted after 15 years. The front was redone in 1954 and the back in 1955. The colour of the Hall was restored to cream. By 1965 the entrance hall was a dingy green. The VI form redecorated one of the form rooms in the flat. By 1980 the whole interior needed redecorating – the dining room was painted green and the South End corridors pink. In 1993 the Sixth Form block was refurbished and decorated.

STAFF

Head Mistresses

Miss Janet M Gordon (History and Scripture) 1919 – 1942. Died June 1963 aged 85

Miss Gordon wanted to perpetuate the spirit of Miss Frances Mary Buss, who founded the North London Collegiate School and encouraged her girls to go to Girton College at Cambridge where she had persuaded them to train teachers after graduation, and Miss Dorothea Beale, who joined the Kensington Society to press for votes for women and bought Cowley House at Oxford which became St Hilda's College providing higher education for women. Miss Gordon was one of the last pupils of Miss Buss and won a scholarship in History to Oxford. She always wore her gown in school

The caretaker was required to call Miss Gordon 'madam', and refer to the staff as 'ladies' and the pupils as 'young ladies'.

Miss Gordon arranged the building of the Greek Theatre.

Miss Gordon was keen on discipline, self-control and no screaming. If someone coughed in Assembly, she was sent out. Out of school Miss Gordon ignored any girl if she was not in full school uniform.



Miss J.M. Gordon
First Headmistress
at Woodford

*Picture above:
Woodford's first
two
Headmistresses
Miss Gordon
(seated) and
Miss Chapman,
her successor*

Teaching staff from the 1920's



Miss Herald
(Latin)
c. 1923



Miss MacDonnell
c. 1923



Miss Cowley
(Geography) &
Miss Herald (Latin)
c. 1923

Miss Katherine M H Chapman (Science) 1942 – 1964. Died 1984 aged 80

Miss Chapman obtained her science degree at a time when science was not encouraged as a subject for girls. She reconvened the school after the war. She encouraged nursing as a career. She was aware of the need for change, but maintained old standards. She was the area president of the Association of Headmistresses. She also formed the first Parents' Committee.

Miss Joyce Eugenie Satchell (Modern languages) 1965 – 1980. Died 2008 aged 90

Miss Satchell was against girls' wearing trousers. She was very musical and loved flowers, putting them in vases in the front hall and made it comfortable with carpet and armchairs. She was interested in politics, recording the election results in 1979 on a blackboard outside her room and was pleased when the Tories won – lessening the threat of WCHS becoming comprehensive – and supported the Monarchy. She instigated the making of the films of the school in 1969 and 1979.

Rory (dog) predecessor of Robbie, came with Miss Satchell.

Robbie (dog) arrived Sept. 1970, aged 8 weeks. He went to school every day to French, German and scripture lessons, and home at night with Miss Satchell, then with Miss Gibbins.

Miss Elizabeth Dawson 1980 – 1986.

Mrs Sue Champion 1986 – 1991.

Mrs Champion was instrumental in the formation of the Association of Maintained Girls' Schools because too many girls' schools were being closed down.

Miss Helen Cleland 1991 – 2009

Early and Long Serving Staff

(10 years+) Teaching and Other Staff, in order of arrival

Miss Lilian G Cowley (History and Geography) 1919 – 1923

Students in 1920



Miss Dorothy M Herald (Classics) 1919 - 1923

Miss Kathleen M V Phenix (Maths) 1919 - 1923. She became Mrs Brown and went to India

Miss Millicent Jackson (Mrs Brabrook) (Music) 1919 - 1925

Miss Phoebe E Crews (PE) 1919 – 1919

Miss Elsie M Smith (RE) 1919 - 1958. She was as in charge of the youngest girls: a class of eight-year-olds in prep form in room 1. There were two Miss Smiths on the staff by 1927, so she was known always as Miss E M Smith. Died 1961

Miss Emily E Burgess (Art) 1919 - 1933. She designed the school badge which included the tree felled when the hockey field was levelled. Died 1945

Miss Matilda E Kellett (French and Spanish) 1919 - 1938. She started with four girls in form V. Died 1938

Miss Mary G Moore (English) 1919 - 1939. Died 1965 aged 86. There is a plaque to her memory in the Greek Theatre

Miss Hilda E Mitchell (Needlework, Science) 1919 - 1921 and 1925 - 1943. Died 1967

Miss Muriel A Ashby (Art) 1920 - 1921

Miss Edith B Brock (Mrs McCarthy) (PE) 1920 - 1925

Miss Matilda McKeague (English) 1920 - 1923

Miss Annie M Taylor (History & PE) 1920 - 1925

Miss Clara S Bailey (Needlework) 1920 - 1920

Miss Winifred M Shutt (PE) 1920 - 1921

Miss Elizabeth A A Witt (Maths) 1920 - 1921

Miss Ruth M Worsley (Maths) 1920 – 1924

Miss Dorothy Helen Nathan (PE) 1920 - 1959. She went to Bedford when the school was evacuated and returned to the centre at Walthamstow for returnees. She was very keen on tidyness, her class frequently winning the prize for it, and keeping desks polished. She also checked each girl had a clean handkerchief, to be kept tucked in her knickers, every day. Died 1976 aged 82.

Miss Henrietta L Kilpatrick (French) 1920 - 1945. She found penfriends for girls. Died 1963

Miss Margery Moodie (Modern Languages) 1921 - 1921

Miss Elizabeth Barty (Botany) 1921 - 1922

Miss Doris K B Bush (Domestic Science) 1921 - 1928

Miss Florence C Lister (English & Classics) 1921 - 1924

Miss Rachel L Perry (English & History) 1921 - 1951

By 1922 there were 16 on the staff

Miss Edith L MacDonnell (Maths) 1922 - 1959. Retired as Deputy Head. Died 1979

Miss Blanche L Watt (Latin) 1923 - 1959. Died 1982 aged 89

Miss Lily D Thornley (Maths) 1924 - 1953. Died 1970.

Miss Ethel F Mercer (Music) 1926 - 1936

Miss Edith E Jessett (English) 1926 - 1949. Created and edited school magazine. Deputy head 1926 – 1948. Died 1983 aged 93

Miss Margery M. Smith (History) 1927 - 1962. Deputy Head in 1958. She was known as 'Miss Margery' to distinguish her from Miss E M Smith. She was an umpire at School cricket. Arranged "Scenes of Highams" in 1945/6 in grounds of Colonel Mallinson's next door – The White House. She retired from guiding (she had set up the school's two companies) in 1948 and from school in 1962. She was also a District Guide Commissioner. She organised agricultural camp during the War; taking the girls in Chiswell's lorry. She wrote and published several histories of the school. Died 1981

Miss Dorothy K Wright (Geography) 1928 - 1944

Miss Ann Lewis (Latin, History and English) 1930 - 1944

Miss J Smith (School Secretary) 1934 - 1946

Miss Edith Ross (Domestic science and needlework) 1935 - 1948, left, returned as Mrs de St Jorre 1951 - 1961. She helped at the Harvest Camps. Died 1981

Miss Gwendolen Wood (English) 1936 – 1965 +.Went to Canada for a year 1947 - 1948.

Miss Elizabeth A Barnes (Maths) 1939 – 1964. She had been a pupil at Loughton County High School. Died 1989

Emily Seabrook (kitchen staff, pre-war).Died 1994 aged 99

Mrs Goodwin (School Cook) 1943 - 1964 Died 1964

Miss Sylvia M Weston (Biology) 1944 - 1963. Left to teach in Ghana. Returned in 1967 and taught at WCHS in Jan 1968 whilst Miss Snow was absent. She helped to do the school timetable. Died 1994

Miss Mona Fell (German) 1945 - 1977. She arranged exchange visits with German girls. She also produced plays and did the make-up.

Miss Gladys Watson (History and Latin) 1945 - 1960. Edited School magazine from 1953.

Mrs Marion M. White (English) 1945 - 1964. She wrote a new school song, but it was never adopted. Died 1992

Miss Marjorie Annie Emery (Physics) 1947 - 1976. Head of Science 1963. Did lighting for school plays. Played cello in the school orchestra, and was on EFYMA committee. From 1955-1975 she was on the Physics Consultative Committee for the University of London. Died 1999 aged 87

Miss A I Leigh (French) 1947 – 1967. She organised the ordering and distribution of text books. Died 1991 aged 85.

Miss Mary Spill (Geography) 1947 - 1962. She left to go to Ware Grammar School. She was a Guide leader. She was on the 'Lady Chatterley's Lover' jury at The Old Bailey in 1960.

Miss Olive Cummins (School secretary) 1946 - 1954. She was also an OG (1934-9), In 1962 she became Mrs Mottet. Died 2007

Miss Barbara C Blossom (PE) 1948 - 1983. Also looked after Health Education, being in charge of the sick-room. Organised fire-drills and March of the Banners. Organised dancing in the hall during wet lunch-hours. Keeps track of ex-staff. She was awarded a medal by the Royal Life-saving Society in 2003 for 50 years' work (she had founded the Essex branch in 1957 and her pupils had received over 3000 awards between them). She was given Buckhurst Hill Parish Council's Citizen Award in 2007. She has now found she shares an ancestor – a Blossom who emigrated in 1629 – with Barack Obama.

Miss Joan Lawton (Art) 1948 - 1978. Made scenery for school plays.

Dr Mary E Smith (French) 1948 – 1970. Was in charge of UVI form. Lived in the flat, with her sister. Died 1995 aged 88.

Miss Alma M. Shand (English) 1950 - 1972. Died 2000.

2007 The Aberdeen Press & Journal published an article about the Shand sisters' £500,000 bequest for a new wing, The Shand Centre, for the Stephen Hospital, after the last sister of the three died in 2002. They were all teachers, taking after their grandfather, who was a local headmaster in Dufftown. They were related to Lord Mount Stephen who made his fortune in Canada and in 1888 donated £5000 to build the hospital. The new wing was opened by their cousin, John Shand.

Mrs Miriam Presswell (Domestic Science) 1951 - 1966 assisted Mrs de St Jorre and then succeeded her in 1961. Died 2002.

Mrs F S Hawkins (Chemistry) 1952 - 1971. Died 1988 aged 82.

Miss Frances Bowler Lab assistant from 1952 (Pupil 1920 - 1926). During the war she was in the ARP as an ambulance driver. Died 1999

Miss Norah H Dryborough (Music) 1949 - 1973. Died 1998

Miss Snow (RE/Latin) 1954 - 1971. Was tolerant of all religions and encouraged the Jewish Study group. Played double bass in the school orchestra, and was a committee member of EFYMA Died 1

Mrs Joyce Kuhns (Geography) 1955 - 1968

Miss Jean Gibbins (Maths) 1959 - 1994. Became Deputy Head in 1978/9

Miss Mary Innes (Classics) 1959 - 1978. Succeeded Miss Margery in 1962 as Deputy Head. Was acting Head in 1964, after Miss Chapman retired. Died 1991

Mrs Winifred Taylor (Art) 1960 - 1982. Worked on school banners, painted a picture of the school for 75th anniversary in 1994.

Miss Gill Joyce (History, Spanish) 1961 - 1981. Made a film about school in 1969 with Mrs Boardman. She made another film in 1979.

Mrs Doreen Boardman (Domestic Science) (nee Applebee, pupil 1926 - 1935). Made colour film of school for Jubilee in 1969 with Miss Joyce. Was keen on conservation: "Friends of Epping Forest" Was District Guide Commissioner for 10 years. Died 1976

Miss Janet Stock (Maths) 1962 - 1982. Retired 1982 due to ill health. Died 2009

Mrs Berriman (Needlework) 1962 - 1974

Mrs Nita Leete (nee **Webb**) lab assistant 1962 - 1973 (pupil 1938 - 45), had two daughters at the school at the time. In 1973 entered college to train as a teacher. Died 1978

Miss Blackwell (Geography) 1964 - 1975. Became Mrs Ridout

Mr Goudy (English) 1966 - 1979. He was the first man on the staff. He helped Miss Satchell plan the new layout for the garden

Mrs Stella Julyan (French and Careers) 1967 - 1982

Miss Elizabeth Martyn (Maths) 1968 - 1999

Miss Rosemary Batten (English) 1970 - ? Co-edited diamond jubilee book. Died 1988

Mr Brian Astell (Music) 1974 - 1984

Miss Jane Hall (Physics) 1974 - 2007. Also an OG (1958 - 1966). Deputy Head from 1994

Mrs Heatherley (English) 1975 - 2008. Co-edited 1979 book about WCHS with Miss Batten

1975 there were 7 men on the staff

Miss Cheryl Corney (Modern Languages) 1977 - Also librarian

Mrs Christine Hunn became Deputy Head in 1990. Left in 2001

Mr Gordon Becket (Religious Studies) 1984

Miss Chapman 1980 - 31/08/2007

Miss Wendy Sharpless retired 1993

Miss Burn retired 1993

Mrs Jennings (Maths) - 2003

Mrs Lamb (Art) 1982 - 2003

Mrs Rowsell (PE) - 2003

Mrs Bent 1997- 2008

Mrs Pettit 1974- 2008

Mr Richard Allen Neal (Head of Music) 1991 –Dec 2011

Mrs Bianca Maria Handley (Teacher of Italian) 1987 – Retired August 2011

Mr Brian Williams (Head Of Geography) 1975 –Retired in August 2010

PUPILS

Early Pupils

1919 pupils included: Phyllis Chidgy; Elsie Cornish (died 1998 aged 91); Janet Gillham (died 1986); Kathleen Harbour; Dinah Hawkey; Joan Kemsley; Clare Jolly; Evelyn Knight; Margaret McNeil; Ida Seabrook (died 1957); Enid Starke and Audrey (died 2003) & Muriel Wadeson (died 1999).

Nell Latham was the first head girl (and also the first university entrant) and there were three or four prefects

Muriel Wadeson became a pro-prefect in UV and a student teacher at WCHS 1925-6

Centenarian: Grace Russ, pupil 1919 – 24, after trying various jobs entered Pitman Business School. She married Bill Herbert of the Daily Mirror, then she became Woman's Page editor on the Daily Mail, reporting on the Paris dress shows. Grace worked for the Evening Standard in the war, reporting on the Evacuation, then for the Daily Express. She was the first woman to be Features Editor on a national newspaper. In 1945 Grace married Edmund Antrobus and joined him in America, but they separated. She then edited the National Enquirer. She re-met Simon Wardell, an old colleague from the Express, in America and married him in 1962. Simon died in 1968, and Grace joined her son in India making her home there in 1971. She celebrated her 100th birthday there in 2008.

Winifred Gozzard (Mrs Battersby) pupil 1921 –29. Her daughters are OGs

Eileen Carter (Mrs McGunn) pupil 1920 – 26. She made the first school banner. Died 1975

Mary Churchouse, pupil 1920. Died 1995

Elizabeth Crossman, pupil 1920. Died 1957

Betty Dadd (Mrs Richardson) pupil 1920 – 27. Died 1975

Dorothy Friend, pupil 1920. Died 2000

Winifred Marshall pupil 1920 – 26. Died 1992

Dorothy Lee left in 1927, retired in 1965

Maude Lee left in 1925, retired 1958. Died 1981

Peggy Carter was one of earliest pupils. Died 1993

Pupil Numbers

On the first day there were 7 staff and 110 pupils, aged 8 – 16, 30 staying for school dinner. Due to a burst boiler putting out the range in the kitchen, lunch was provided by the Wilfred Lawson.

By **1925/6** there were 22 pupils in UVA and 3 in the sixth form, at the top of the building in the flat. Frances Bowler, Mary Jackson & another – became prefects. They studied French, English and history. In 1928 there were 158 new girls, bringing the total to 300 with 19 staff.

1930 - two form entry of 9 – 10 year-olds. Fee paying £5 a term, rising to £7.50 a few years later

1933 - 24 new girls

1937 - 400 pupils in school

1938 - 43 girls in VI form

1942 - 110 new girls and 6 new staff, 483 total in the school



*Jacqueline Hyde, Nancy Ray, Shirley Miller Mary Shelbourne, Joan Price, Iris Howlett, Kathleen Clarke, Mary Jones, Sylvia Wood
Joan Benfield, Shirley Rider, Monica Fairbairn, Maureen Picking, Mrs White, Pat Moseley, Marion Smith, Margaret Pritchard, Vera Smith
Eileen Terry, Ruth Stevens, Joan Turnbull, Mary Harrison, Ruth Norman, Elizabeth Johnson*

Pupils in 1949



Class III X – 1951

Back row

Valerie Pick, Jennifer Gent, Mary Simons, Judith Hall, Judith Gregory, Joyce Ling, Margaret Barnett, Rosemary Bagshaw.

Next row

Jacqueline McLeay, Bierdre Gould, Elizabeth Everitt, Barbara Tucker, Maureen Sanders, Pat Smith, Jean Anderson, Janet Linklater, Sheila Wilson, Valerie Fone, Margaret Neil, Margaret Hickenbotham, Pam Mounsey, Evelyn Brazier, Evelyn Smith.

Middle row

Susan Boyd, Miss Perry, Margaret Farthing

Front row

Pat Mansell, Jean Rhone, Sheila Field, me (Regina Goldfield) Anne Budge, Jennifer Smith

1959 - 630 girls in school

Total no of pupils through School in 40 years: 3783

1969 - over 110 pupils in VIth form

1977 - 660 girls in school. (125 Jewish, 25 Catholic, some Muslim). Over half live outside Woodford

1978 - 669 pupils (160 in sixth form) and 44 staff (8 of them men)

1979 - 680 pupils

1984 - 581 pupils

1988 - 592 pupils

1990 - 615 pupils

1992 - became 4 form entry, with 120 new pupils rather than 90.

1996 - 4 form entry had reached Year 11. 600 pupils in Years 7- 11..

1998 - school now has 840 girls and 57 staff.

2005 - 840 pupils in school

1972 – 2000

In 1972 there were 4 forms in the third year and in both 1975 and 1976 there was a 4-form entry in the first year.

In this period the number of new girls each year ranged from 92 in 1981 to 150 in 1992. This includes new entries to all year groups

In the first five years class numbers were generally 30 (27-30); and in the VIth form 20 (ranging from 5 to 31).

Class numbering between 1972 and 1992 was generally based on the year and the room number eg III15; in 1992 it changed to year number plus class teacher's initials eg 9LC.

Ethnicity

1944-9 Joan Cravity, the only Jewish girl in the school and had to sit outside the Head's door while assembly was on.

1977 - 125 of the girls were Jewish, 25 Catholic and some were Muslim.

By **1978** - 20% of the girls were Jewish

1991 - First Asian head girl in

1991 - There were 21 different mother tongues represented in school.

Heads of Jewish and Asian Societies organised a multi-ethnic festival, including Caribbean, Spanish,

etc, as well.

2000 - The ethnicity of the school was: Black Caribbean 19; Black African 14; Black Other 6; Indian 154; Pakistani 33; Bangladeshi 22; Chinese 19; White 430; other minorities 92.

General

1927 There was no bus service from Chingford - girls got the train to Highams Park then walked

1941 Girls were put in classes alphabetically according to surname: A-L did Latin, M-Z did German. Ilford girls (joined after evacuation) just did French & domestic science and were known as Fs.

1940s First years still started in forms 2

In **1950** there were 6 pupils at the school whose mothers had been pupils - "grandchildren of the school". There were also other relations – Miss Gordon's niece, and daughters of teaching and ancillary staff. Later sisters-in-law relationships were caused by Old Girls marrying other Old Girls' brothers. Joyce Brightman, nee Brown, pupil 1932 – 1940 married the son of the house where she was billeted in Bedford and Olive Davis, nee Clark married an American airman she met there.

Leavers continuing to Higher Education (numbers are averages)

Pre-War

Two/three pupils each year went to University. (In 1932 two went to Oxford)

Four went to study for hospital related professions

Four went to Teacher Training Colleges.

Post War – 1952

- Six to Universities
- Five to hospitals
- Seven to Teacher Training Colleges

1953 – 1968

- Numbers rose sharply from 10 to 39 going to University
- Five into the medical professions and 12 to Teacher Training College
- 1963 – 217 former pupils have degrees
- In 1962 no teachers left Teacher Training Colleges because the course changed from two years to three years.

1996 – 2007

- During this period the size of the Sixth Form increased from c.100 to c.125 and the numbers studying for degrees increased from 74 to 112. People in the teaching and the medical professions were now all graduates.
- A pupil got a degree in **1927**. Clara Stephens got a degree in 1928 (one of the first pupils to do so) She died in 1978.

1950 – Beryl Beadle got an honours degree in Engineering at QMC, being the first woman to do so. She obtained a post at De Havilland Aircraft, Hatfield

By **1963** there were 217 former pupils with degrees.

1977: Three girls went to Oxbridge universities and 16 went to universities to study medicine.

1977: Among the first officers commissioned into the RAF was 19-year-old Pilot Officer Nicola Wells, ex-pupil of WCHS

1979: Margaret Kibley became the first woman in Keble College, Oxford.

Head Girls

1920s

1920 Nell Latham
1921 Anna Ormerod
1922 Phyllis Baker
1923 Lily Watson
1924 Mary Stannard
1925 Mary Jackson
1926 Clare Jolly
1927 Peggy Brittain
1928 Hilda Poole
1929 Janet Lancaster

1930s

1930 Mary Barns
1931 Edith Gilchrist
1932 Alison Black
1933 Marie Hall
1934 Sylvia Porter
1935 Helen Townley
1936 Betty Holt
1937 Margaret Slack
1938 Ruth Compton
1939 Sybil Ramsey

1940s

1940 Olive Gapp
1941 Elsie Crook
1942 Beryl Cockrell
1943 Margaret Lott
1944 Joan Kay
1945 Frances Ward
1946 Muriel Hawkins
1947 Mary Wall
1948 Audrey Everard
1949 Audrey Bloom

1950s

1950 Kristin Carr
1951 Pamela Thomas
1952 Elaine Mumford
1953 Ann Glassborow
1954 Angela Hollies Smith
1955 Diana Rhoden
1956 Elizabeth Kekwick
1957 Johanna van der Weyden
1958 Marie Lewis
1959 Sheila Bullen

1960s

1960 Valerie Moore
1961 Mary Beckingham
1962 Philippa Smith
1963 Margaret Budge
1964 Jean McDowall
1965 Bethan Hughes
1966 Rae Hawkins
1967 Ruth Gardner
1968 Susan Mackie
1969

1970s

1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979 Jenny Hammond

1980s

1980 Melanie Farquarson
1981 Irene Stewart
1982 Jane Vlach
1983 Ann Payne
1984 Caroline Branley
1985 Elizabeth Mills
1986 Julia Kirby
1987 Michelle Horton
1988 Claire Mason
1989 Angela Day

1990s

1990 Harleen Deol
1991 Binnur Beyastaz
1992 Catherine Jones
1993 Shanika Cruz
1994 Imogen Wiltshire
1995 Denise Read
1996 Ceris Pritchard
1997 Elizabeth Heath
1998 Alex Fisk
1999 Helen Kemp

2000s

2000 Rachel Allen
2001 Lucy Kirkwood
2002 Christina Constandinou
2003 Emily Andrews
2004 Adjoa Anyimadu
2005 Laura Jolly
2006 Katherine Watson
2007 Rebecca Schapira
2008 Claire Walsh
2009 Turan Hursit

RULES

Uniform

School badge – Essex shield, with representation of the tree removed when the playing-field was levelled.

1919 Uniform: white square-necked long-sleeved blouse, cotton in summer, woollen in winter; navy serge tunics with three box pleats at front and back, belt at the hips; low-heeled black strap shoes and black stockings; navy blazers; serge caps in winter, boaters in summer; and gloves. Navy knickers reached to the knees.

After some heat waves, plain blue cotton frocks with wide white collars and cuffs. were allowed in summer but still with the stockings. Later summer uniforms were introduced without the stockings. Summer dresses – Miss Gordon announced when to change from winter to summer uniform. For PE lessons tunics were tucked into knickers and plimsolls were worn.

Department stripes – white, inverted V on shoulder of tunic introduced by Miss Gordon.
Prefect's badge: white silk P on black felt circle

The first summer hat was a boater with a blue zig-zag ribbon on a white background; then a bonnet, cream with a navy lining

1930s – uniforms bought at Newcombe's (Draper & Milliner). Fawn lisle stockings, house shoes, panama hats in summer. Tunic cost 15/11, blazer £1-5-11, overall 4/11, blouse 6/11, cap 5/11 and cushion 1s 4d

1930s - panama hats with zigzag ribbon round, long-sleeved shirts, serge tunics, lisle stockings & navy knickers. By 1936 "nurses" hats had been introduced

By **1942** the gymslips no longer had pleats.

1945 - school uniforms named using Cash's name tapes. Red gym slip for teams

1948 - girls changed into brown or black house shoes as they came in. Clark's sandals with crepe soles also worn

1948 - maroon wrap-around skirts for hockey team – waist to adjust for all sizes.

1949 - summer dresses were assorted patterns.

1950s Aertex shirts for PE. Hats were compulsory in winter. In summer they did not need to be worn with a blazer. Summer dresses were blue gingham with white collars and cuffs

1958 or 1959 – sixth formers were allowed to wear plain coloured shirt waister. Bearman's in Leytonstone supplied cap and blazer badges

1960s - first years wore white socks

1962 - new blue and white blouses

1968 – uniform became more casual and practical.

About **1972** - hat abandoned

1977 - parents arranged a second hand uniform system.

1985 - new summer dress. Narrow stripe of light navy or maroon and white.

1987 Uniform : "Woodford blue" blazer (from £30.95) & kilted skirt (from £14.95)
Blue & white striped blouse (from £7.45)
Navy v-neck pullover or cardigan with badge (from £8.60)
Plain blue overall for science & art
White cotton apron for Home Economics
Navy purse belt or shoulder purse
Shoes – navy, black or brown with flat or broad-based heels
Socks – plain white knee-length (or plain white or neutral tights)

Games uniform:

White aertex blouse and navy-blue pants
Light blue pullover with School monogram
Leotard
Navy kilt type games skirt
Navy and white striped shorts
Plain white games socks

Black plimsolls or dance/gym/trampoline shoes for indoors
Black or white plimsolls for outdoor games (NOT trainers)
Hockey boots and socks (knee-length, coloured)
2 drawstring bags – one for shoes, one for clothes
Navy or black swimming costume (NO goggles unless for medical reasons)

Optional:

Scarf in Woodford colours (no other to be worn)
Navy coat or raincoat, with matching hood for wet weather
Plain navy woollen hat
Hair slides – plain navy, black or brown
Boots, for wear with permission when cold - navy, black or brown with flat heels

Summer, optional:

Red & white or blue & white striped dress, or short-sleeved blouse
Sandals, with permission - navy, black or brown with flat or broad-based heels
White sandals, with flat or broad-based heels, for wear with summer uniform only
White ankle socks – only in summer

Games, optional:

Maroon track-suit
White tennis wear & shoes
Tennis racquet
Hockey stick
Sports socks, from Kay Sports, George Lane
Swimming cap

Initials to be embroidered on left-hand side of tops and over left leg of shorts, etc.
Everything to be named.

Conventions

Hung in hall and classrooms: “It is a comely fashion to be glad
Joy is the Grace we say to God”

Each class had monitors - door, window, blackboard, milk, etc.

Class attendance numbers & names of absentees were chalked up and collected for Miss Gordon every morning

1919 – Parents had to provide textbooks

School dinner was optional – if taken, everything on the plate had to be eaten. Fish pie was served on Fridays

Some areas out-of-bounds:

- spiral staircase (most of it), part of terrace from main building to the steps; the courtyard because of a well in the centre (early years); the front lawn; banks down to the field; twisty passage if in 1st or 2nd year. The back drive was out of bounds if it was windy, because of the large trees there.
- Originally everyone kept to the right in corridors, but having the blast walls during the war made it necessary to change to keeping to the left
- No running or sliding in corridors, or sliding down banisters.
- No eating in the street in school uniform.

- No short skirts or high heels. No nail varnish

1940s: No talking in corridors
No pages to be removed from exercise books.

1920s -1950s: Health forms had to be taken to school on the first day of term – to say they had not been in contact with infectious diseases. If pupils forgot, they had to go home for the forms and come back – so they were late for school and had to ring the front door bell and be seen by a member of staff.

1930s: Each classroom had a black vase in it. Girls had to pay for it if it got broken.
First years were not allowed to cycle to school.
Each girl brought a navy cushion for use in the Greek theatre.

1940s Medical checks in the Head's study, by Dr Fox

1950s Pupils all stood up when an adult entered the room
On the last day of term everyone tidied her desk.

Breaking the Rules

1950s:

- a girl hid in the broom cupboard during English
- a tube of fake tan was put in the artroom cupboard
- girls rowed desks to the front of the class in RE
- water was put in the chalk dish in Maths
- someone stood on their head to eat a sandwich in Biology
- everyone brought their dinner money in pennies on April 1st

1960s salt was put in the prefects' water at lunch time

1970s all furniture was taken from a classroom on to the roof
a teacher's Mini was taken to an impossible parking place
a girl climbed up the chimney on the top floor and got stuck. She was found on the roof.
Fairy liquid was put in cake mix

CURRICULUM

Subjects offered

1919 – Bible Study, English, History, Geography, Science, Maths, French, Needlework, Art. Music and Latin started the following year, also PE. Miss Gordon considered music to be an unnecessary luxury. Hand writing was practised

Lessons were 45 minutes long with a half-hour morning break Lunch time was from 12.45pm to 2.00pm and lunch was eaten in the entrance hall or garden

1950s Lessons were 40 mins long – four in the morning and three in the afternoon.

Each subject had a different-coloured exercise book: English – brown; geography – red; history – blue; maths- green, with label "The Woodford County High School for Girls".

1978 – 91 girls took 'O' levels, averaging 8.5 passes each.

1979 – 'A' level subjects offered were : Art, Biology, Chemistry, English, Economics, French, Geography, German, Greek, History, Italian, Latin, Maths, Further Maths, Music, Physics, RK, and Zoology.

Sixth formers could do extra 'O' levels in: Additional maths, British Constitution, Economics, Geology, Greek, Greek literature in translation, Human Biology, Italian, Law (at Trinity Catholic High School), and Spanish.

1979 – all studies were for London GCE 'O' levels, none for CSE.

1987 homework:

First year: 2/3 subjects, 1¼ hours a night

Second year: 3 subjects, 1¼ hours a night

Third year: 3/4 subjects, 1¾ hours a night

Fourth year: 3/4 subjects, 2 hours a night

Fifth year: 3/4 subjects, 2¼ hours a night

Sixth form: 15/20 hours a week minimum

1988 New business studies course started

1994 Curriculum: English, Maths, Science, Technology (design and information), History, Geography, Modern foreign languages (French, German, Italian), Art, Music, PE, Religious education, and Classics.

1995 Latin was still taught

(Sports Equipment Used back in the day)



Sports

1925 - first netball match, against St Angela's Convent, won.

1926 - first hockey match, against Loughton, lost 14 - 0

1928 - first cricket match held, against Oaklea School.

1929 - first rounders match.

Games – 1930s – hockey, netball, cricket, tennis, rounders

1949 - life saving examinations started

1955 - badminton restarted

1960 - swimming competitions started against other schools

1961 - badminton teams started, ended in 1978

1974 approx – athletics started.

Lectures and Visits

Pupils at Woodford were always kept in touch with the wider world by speakers invited to the school,

visits to hear lectures at other venues, trips within the UK and Europe and gradually to more distant destinations.

Pre-War

A variety of lectures covered subjects as diverse as Epping Forest, Chinese Art and Careers in Health and Healing. Pupils visited the British Museum, the National Gallery. Regents Park Open Air Theatre to see "The Tempest", the Science Museum, the Tate Gallery etc. Three girls accompanied Miss Forrest (a French examiner) on a tour of Europe, including France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany. In 1936 girls went to the Danish Guides Jubilee Camp and to Canada under the auspices of the Society of Overseas Settlement for British Women. In 1938 girls attended a Summer School in Dunkirk.

1939 – 1945

Lectures continued during the war, with the emphasis on other countries and careers. While at Bedford girls were not allowed out on their own in the "blackout", although the LSO and London Philharmonic Orchestra gave concerts in Bedford which they were able to attend, accompanied by staff members. Visits were made locally for those at Woodford, particularly in connection with careers, to places such as day nurseries, hospitals and businesses.

1946 – present

Naturally there was a huge expansion of visits after the constrictions of the war, with pupils going to theatres, art galleries, museums, concerts, lectures and sporting events, mainly in London. Geography and biology students went on field trips. In 1946 girls stayed with families in France and Belgium and exchange holidays began with pupils from Lycee Jules Ferry in Paris. Miss Weemys and the English teacher there began a penfriend scheme. By 1947 over 70 girls had joined. Girls also went on school trips to Switzerland, Paris, the Tyrol and Provence over the next few years. More recently, trips were organised to Guatemala and Belize. In 2007 girls visited Russia and in 2008 Malaysia and China (including the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics)

Clubs

1929 and 1930 Two Guide companies (12th and 13th Woodford) were established by Miss Margery Smith. Miss Vincent was their captain at the beginning.
By **1934** there were 100 guides in 12 patrols

The School Orchestra was established before 1945. It had Junior and Senior sections by 1946 and 40 players by 1947. School took part in events organised by the Epping Forest Youth Music Association (EFYMA). In 1951 Junior and Senior choirs were formed.

1949 The Senior Debating Society started, helped by Miss Watson. Membership had reached 90 by 1950

1955 The Jewish Study Group was started by Sally Rose and Kay Wallace and the Highams Group, a discussion group meeting monthly, was started in VI form by Miss Chapman and Mrs White. This was continued by Dr Smith in 1964

Swimming Club formed. 80% of the school could swim 25 yards

1962 The Film Society was formed by Susan Durrant and Marian Pye. Membership 250 girls.

1965 The Table Tennis Club started

1966 The School Theatre Club started with a visit to Beyond the Fringe; the Judo Group also started.

1978 The Jewish Society was started by Ruth Livingstone.

Clubs come and go according to the interests of the pupils. However in 1979 there were 10 clubs listed (Debating, Senior and Junior Christian Union, Jewish Society, Chess, Trampoline, Gym, History, Nature, Mathematics, Yoga). Over the past 12 years there have been on average more than 40 clubs, peaking in 2004 with 52!

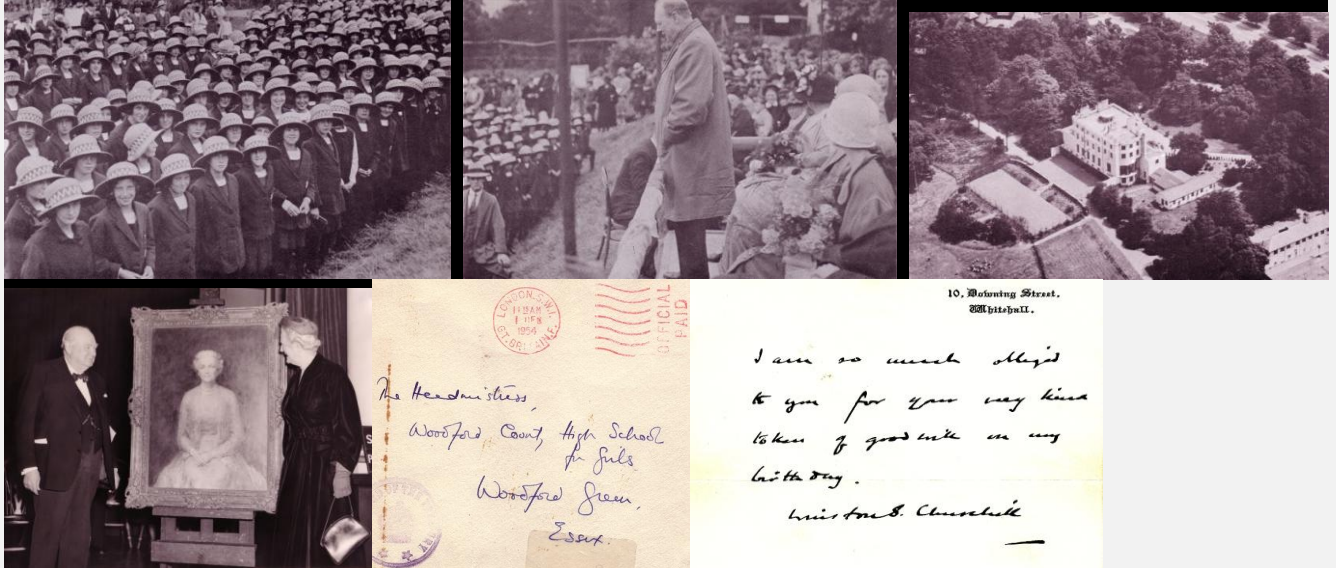
EVENTS

Censuses

The population of Woodford in 1901 was 13,798, by 1921 it was 21,245, & by 1931 it was 23,946.

School Fete 1925

It was opened by Winston Churchill, who was MP for Epping (incl. Woodford) for 40 years and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir Winston Churchill visited the school in 1954 to receive a picture of Lady Churchill for his 80th birthday. The statue on the green, of Churchill by David McFall, was unveiled in 1959.



The General Strike 1926

The school was open as usual.

Votes for Women 1928

The voting age was lowered from 30 for all women (which it had been since 1918 when votes first allowed) to 21 to be the same as men.

King George V Silver Jubilee 1935

73 girls went to a film of the King's life shown at the Majestic Cinema by Woodford & Wanstead UDC.

Coronation of King George VI, 12 May 1937

Miss Nathan, Christine Danielli & Marjorie Fenn went to watch it from a stand in Constitution Hill provided by the County Council.

Evacuation to Bedford

1938 There was no School Birthday tea as staff needed to discuss possible evacuation due to the threat of war. Three million people, mostly children, were evacuated in September 1939. Some school pupils, staff (with Miss Barnes in charge) and banners were evacuated to Bedford Girls Modern School (now Dame Alice Harpur School) on 1st September 1939. Miss Gordon & Miss E M Smith travelled on the train with the girls. Bedford used the building in the mornings and Woodford in the afternoons. Girls were billeted with local families ('billet mothers'). By 1940 so many had returned that school centres had to be opened, firstly at Walthamstow CHS and then Miss MacDonnell opened one at WCHS in 1941. The buildings were damaged in air raids, so the opening was delayed. Essex Education Committee praised Miss MacDonnell. The North Wing housed a primary school. Those girls who remained in Bedford joined Bedford Girls Modern School, with Miss Wood and Miss Thornley on the staff. In 1941 some girls with scholarships to Woodford spent the first year at Ilford,

then, with Chingford & Walthamstow girls, joined Woodford in 1942.

Cheryl Benfield (WCHS pupil 1962 – 9) taught at the Dame Alice school from 1981 until 2006+
Dame Alice Harpur School celebrated its centenary in 1981.

Queen Elizabeth in 1940

Visited the Red Cross depot at the School

School Harvest Camps

From 1937 until 1948 the girls visited and stayed in Essex villages to help with the harvest.

VE Day

7th May 1945

Festival of Britain 1951

- Miss Nathan's netball team played at the South Bank Festival representing Eastern England and won every match.
- There were many school visits to London.
- There was a Festival of Britain Games Day at the Walthamstow Stadium. The rounders team won 12 – 1/2, beating William Morris Technical School in the final.
- A local schools' stoolball competition was organized by Walthamstow Borough Council

BBC Top of the Form 1951

- The School was beaten by one point by Woking Boys' Grammar School

Death of King George VI, 6 Feb 1952

- Younger members of staff - Miss Joan Burch (chemistry), Miss Joy Brown (biology), Miss Valerie Marchant (PE) & Miss Joy Taylor (French & German) - went to the Lying-in-State in Westminster Hall.

The Ascent of Everest, 29 May 1953

- A film of the ascent was shown to the School in September 1953

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, 2 June 1953

- Miss Brown, Miss Burch and Miss Marchant and 52 girls went by bus to see the Coronation from the Embankment. Joan Bilham (a former pupil) joined in the rehearsal for the Fly-Past in a Meteor jet fighter with the RAFVR

Partial Eclipse of the Sun, 30 June 1954

Miss Emery smoked glass in the morning for the girls to use for watching it at 12.30

Centenary of Lord Baden-Powell's birth, 22 Feb 1957

Thinking Day – Guides in the District listened to a broadcast message by the Chief Guide.

At a rally in Chelmsford patrol leaders presented Lady Baden-Powell with cash for a new Guide House. She had visited the school in 1945 for a rally in the school grounds.

School Song Competition

In 1944 there was a School Song competition with a prize of book tokens worth 2 guineas.

1958 An anonymous donor offered a prize of £3 for a new School Song

On the last day of term in July 1959 the School spontaneously sang Forty Years On as they left assembly.

In Sept. 1959 Miss Chapman decided proceedings at School Birthday were going on too long, so

intended to cut out singing of Gaudeamus, but the school sang it anyway, unaccompanied.

The School Song Competition was abandoned as a result.

Bus Strike 1958

School stayed open late so that pupils could be collected by parents.

School's 40th Birthday

20 of the original pupils and three staff: Miss EM Smith, Miss Moore & Mrs Brabrook, attended 'Forty Years On' in July 1959. Events included: dancing in the Open Air Theatre in July; an exhibition of pupils' art hung in the corridors by Miss Lawton & Miss Gee; the chemistry laboratory demonstrating conditions 40 years ago; and a maths exhibition.



Golden Jubilee 1969

A colour film was made. Over 500 Old Girls attended the celebrations.

Minibus

Girls raised £1560 towards the purchase of a minibus, bought in 1975.

A new minibus was bought by the Parents' Association in 1988 and presented to school in 1989.

Diamond Jubilee 1979

Another film was made.

School's 70th Birthday 1989

Logo: "Woodford Backs the Future"

Website

The School website was established in 2000 by Mr Gordon Becket (Head of Religious Studies)

Additional Holidays

1934 - Royal Wedding 29th November

1935 - Major scholarship holiday

1935 - Royal Marriage 6th November

1937 - Coronation 12th to 18th May

1938 - Wanstead and Woodford Charter Day

1945 - Peace Celebrations 8th to 10th May

1946 - Victory Celebrations 7th June

1953 - Coronation 1st and 2nd June

TRADITIONS

School songs

"Forty Years On" was written by Edward Ernest Bowen (1836 - 1901) for Harrow School while he was a master there (from 1859). He favoured a less formal style of teaching than the strict Victorian methods more normally used (which gave prominence to Latin & Greek) and was involved in the formation of the English Football Association. "Forty Years On" had an extra verse added later in honour of Winston Churchill.

"Gaudeamus Igitur" is a student song, the 2nd & 3rd verses said to be in a 13th century manuscript. The modern version dates from 1781, based on a student songbook from 40 years earlier.

The music was written in 1794 and was used by Brahms in 1880 in his Academic Overture.

Charities

School supported many charities from early days: it funded a cot at the Jubilee Hospital from 1928; silver paper was sent to the Ancient Order of Druids, the funds from which also went towards the cot

(the hospital is now New Jubilee Court sheltered housing); a play centre at Dagenham; Rhondda Valley Relief; Poppy Day; and St Dunstons. After the Spanish Civil War they contributed to the Relief Collection.

1930s. The School Scholarship was funded from the sale of buns at break (Bun Fund) to supplement awards for further education. It helped 6 girls in 1933 and 2 in 1934

Buns were 1d each in the 1950s.

The Dolphin Swimming Club – to help Barnados on Saturdays, ran 1954 – 1972

By 1979 4 charities, nominated by the school, were supported each year

School Birthday

School Birthday was begun by Miss Gordon. It involved a morning assembly (service written by Miss Gordon in 1919) with the story of the school (during Miss Gordon's time), a procession with banners (outside, first forms in the lead), the singing of the school songs (singing and marching were separated in 1934, as it was difficult to sing together in a long procession), and a general knowledge quiz. Greetings from Old Girls were read out. There were games in the afternoon.

Banners were traditionally silk but were made of Hessian during the war.

Special banners were made for School's silver, golden and diamond jubilees.

The Birthday cake was made by OGs including Valerie Howard-Gibbons, Mrs Sandor and Phyllis Parker.

(School Birthday 2011)



Thursday 29th September

Tea was provided for the staff, Old Girls and Prefects/UVI

1954 - General Knowledge Quiz re-introduced. Hockey match: School v. Old Girls

1955 - Assembly was in two parts with a film of school life being made in between (in lieu of the quiz).

1974 - School Birthday tea stopped.

1979 - School had own brass band, which played at the School Birthday parade

1982 - 86: Cake competition

1990 - Banner - "Woodford backs the future"

1994 - Banner designed on computer

1995 - Each year has an activity

1998 - Video link from hall to music room for year 8 as hall not big enough.

2000 - Banner has the Millennium Dome on it. The Dome can be seen from the school roof.

Other traditions

A Spring flower-arranging competition was held every year – daffodils in black vases.

An Easter egg hunt was organised by the staff.

There was a strong Old Girls' Association from the beginning. Miss E.M.Smith collected the news for the school magazine. In 1963 it was suggested the OGA collected the news.

The Annual School Fête had started by 1931

1946 - swimming sports started. Novelty dive introduced in 1949

1950s - school Open Day held biennially

1950s -on the last day of term Miss Chapman shook hands with each girl and said "Good-bye and a happy holiday" as the School filed out of the hall

1958 - 1965 There was a day off for Christmas shopping

1959 - the first 'year' reunion was held in the gym, organised by the 1945 entry

1963 - the 1953 leavers had a reunion at the school (1946 entry)

1979 - school photo now in colour.

The Hockey Team mascot called Winnie, with Tennis and Hockey uniforms and a school hat, disappeared just before Miss Blossom retired.

Another mascot was William the skeleton

Houses

The Houses were originally named after mountains. By the 1950s they were no longer in operation.

In 1987 the house system was reintroduced. There were new banners for the school houses in 1988



- ❖ Highams (green) "In unity, in strength, success"
- ❖ Newton (red) "Friendship and trust conquer all"
- ❖ Repton (blue) "To strive is to succeed"
- ❖ Warner (yellow) "Through difficulty to honour".

Heads of Houses

Highams – Mr Becket has been head of Highams House since 1987.

Newton – Mrs Knight (1987 – 1988, 1990 – 1999); Miss Outhwaite (1989); Mrs Dellow (1999 – 2001); Mrs Rowsell (2002); Miss Ali/Mrs Greenfield (2003 – 2006); Ms Sharif (2008)

Repton – Miss Chapman (1987 -1988, 1990 – 2006); Miss Purcell (1989); Miss Douek (2007- 2008)

Warner – Mrs Persaud (1987 – 1988); Mrs Cowhig (1989 – 1996); Miss Bickley (1997 – 1999); Mrs Bealey (2000 – 2001); Mr Saxton (2002 – 2003); Miss Lidder (2004 – 2006); Mr Stein (2007 – 2008)
Each house has pupils appointed as Captain and Vice Captain

Summer Productions

(originally performed by each form of the UV and UVI and presented only to the school):

1932	Caesar and Cleopatra/Cranford/The Admirable Crichton
1933	Toad of Toad Hall/The Little Female Academy
1934	Caesar and Cleopatra
1935	Kings in Normania/A Kiss for Cinderella/Little Man
1936	Pride and Prejudice/Androcles and the Lion/The Chinese Lantern
1937	Toad of Toad Hall/My Hero/Little Women/The Rose and The Ring
1938	Alice in Wonderland/Toy Town
1942	Archibald/You Never Can Tell
1945	Sentimental Ladies/The Shadow Passes/The Goose Chase/Tilly of Bloomsbury
1946	Hullabaloo/Mr Pym passes by/Charity Begins/Little Ladyship
1947	The Spinsters of Lushe/Apple-Pie Order/A Flat and a Sharp/The Lilies of the Field
1948	In Half-an-Hour/Alicia Disposes/The Housemaster/Brother Wolf
1950	School for Scandal
1953	The Mikado
1956	I have Five Daughters (Pride and Prejudice dramatised)
1957	Frost on the Rose
1958	The Women have their Way
1959	The Little Sweep
1962	A Midsummer Night's Dream
1964	She Stoops to Conquer
1966	Toad of Toad Hall
1982	St Joan
1984	Oliver
1985	Inherit the Wind
1986	Seascape
1987	My Fair Lady
1988	The Matchmaker
1989	HMS Pinafore
1990	A Tale of Two Cities

1991	Oliver
1992	Great Expectations
1993	Half a Sixpence
1994	When We Are Married
1995	My Fair Lady
1996	Trelawney of the Wells
1997	Hello Dolly
1998	Inherit the Wind
1999	Guys & Dolls
2000	Oh What a Lovely War!
2001	The Sound of Music
2002	West Side Story
2003	Oliver
2004	Hello Dolly
2005	My Fair Lady
2006	Thoroughly Modern Millie
2007	Anything Goes
2008	West Side Story
2009	The Music Man

SOURCES

- Bulletins of OGA from 1963 to date
- School magazines: 1931-1938, 1941-1942, 1944-1966, 1969
- 'Highams' by Miss Margery M. Smith (pub 1966). Walthamstow Historical Society Monograph 36
- 'Woodford 1919 – 1979' edited by Miss R. Batten and Mrs J.Heatherley, WCHS.
- 'Memories of Woodford County High School for Girls 1919 to 1999' edited by Pat Stone, OGA
- Press cuttings and School Prospectus 1987, Redbridge Library Local Studies Department
- WCHS website
- Oral contribution and papers from Miss Blossom
- Detailed information from Jane Hall.