

BartholoNews



6 July 2016

www.stbarts.co.uk

Anniversary Issue

1466 – 2016 – Celebrating 550 Years of St Bart's

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY

Follow the Clues
By Val Pollitt

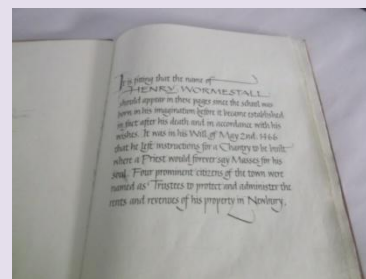


A visitor to St Bartholomew's School today enters a 21st century building buzzing with energy and up-to-date technology. Yet, 2016 marks 550 years since the founding of a school in Newbury that both values its history and thrives in the modern world as **St Bartholomew's School**.

It certainly does not feel like an ancient institution but, on closer inspection, the visitor might notice some clues about the school's past.

The Story Begins

The story of the school began with the 1466 will of **Henry Wormestall**, a wealthy cloth merchant, who left money to endow a chantry chapel in St Nicolas Church in Newbury and a priest to pray for his immortal soul. It is likely that the chantry priest also acted as a schoolmaster who would probably have taught his pupils in the church. Wormestall's name reappears in the records in 1548 when it is recorded that the income from Wormestall's bequest was being used to pay for a schoolmaster.



In 1975 when St Bartholomew's Boys' Grammar School and Newbury County Girls' Grammar School combined, Wormestall became the name for the old boys' school building, and that was where the Sixth Form, Years 12 and 13, were taught until the move into our new buildings in 2010.

Heritage

As you walk around the school there are signs of our school's rich history.



*'Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past.'*

Approaching the main entrance of the school you will see this quotation from a T S Eliot poem which marks our Heritage Garden. This garden is very important to our school community. It contains four memorial stones with the names of the St Bartholomew's School old boys who died in the First World War and after whom the four Houses are named. On Remembrance Day each year a wreath of poppies is laid on each stone. The planting in the garden reflects the four House colours and contains roses chosen by each faculty. There are also roses and benches which commemorate individual members of the school who died prematurely. The benches were brought from a memorial courtyard in the old Wormestall building and, along with the new planting, demonstrate that, while we look forward to the future, we do not forget our past and those who made such a vital contribution to it.

Thank you to Mike Hart for this information.

What's in a name?

The school comprises five blocks and you will see that each of these has a name. What does that tell you about the school's history?



Wormestall block is named after our school's founder and is where you will find reception, the headteacher's office, all the administration offices, the library and sixth form centre.

In the school's reception you can see the stained glass window which was made to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the school and the memorial boards which list the names of all the old boys who died in the First and Second World Wars of the 20th century. These were brought from the old **Wormestall** building when the new school was built in 2010.

The other four blocks are called **Curnock**, **Davis**, **Evers** and **Patterson**.



Who were they?

During the First World War the Boys' School was deeply affected by the loss of life of 45 Old Boys of the school, many of whom had been schoolboys only a few years before. In 1917 it was decided to rename the Houses after four of those who died and at Speech Day in July 1919 Mr Sharwood Smith, whose bust is displayed in the school's reception, paid tribute to the four boys who were chosen: **Curnock**, **Davis**, **Evers** and **Patterson**.

You can find out more about each of them from the House staff and see photographs of Evers and Davis (pictured) outside their respective House offices.



Even the school uniforms the students wear tell us about the school's history.

House colours: Each student at the school today wears a badge of their House colour and students with Junior House Colours wear ties in the same colour.

Why does each House have that particular colour?

When the boys and girls schools amalgamated in 1975 many elements of the two schools continued into the new, especially the values of service and community on which they were built. The Girls' School Groups were absorbed into the Boys' School Houses and each House adopted the colour of a Girls' School group. Curnock joined with Jade (green), Davis with Flame (red), Evers with Blue and Patterson with Gold. The House system became the key structure for pastoral care in the new school, with form tutors working under the leadership of House Heads. House competitions in areas like sport, music and drama became a vital feature of school life, as did House fundraising for a wide range of charities. These continue to demonstrate the values of the school that still make it special today.

Purple and Green

St Bart's uniform colours are very distinctive and again tell us about the school's history.

St Bartholomew's Boys' Grammar School uniform colours had been green and red since the late 19th century and



is still seen in the Old Newburians' Association sports kit when they play fixtures against the school (pictured). Newbury County Girls' School colours were purple and grey. So, when the two schools amalgamated, purple was taken from the girls and green from the boys. In Patterson block there is a display case

(pictured) with items of the old St Bartholomew's School and Newbury Girls' School uniform.

They are very different from our modern uniform but the continuity can be seen clearly.



Grammar School Boys

The green school caps and scarves date back to Rev J Atkins, the headmaster who led the school between 1876 and 1902. The boys still wore a mixture of clothing to school at this time and caps were awarded to members of sports teams. Later they were a compulsory part of school uniform and green was worn on scarves, blazers and caps.

Grammar School Girls

Early photos of the girls also show them in a mixture of clothes but purple was chosen by Miss Jane Luker, the school's first headmistress, as the school colour just a year after the school's creation in 1904. It is reported that it was considered rather outrageous by some of the more conservative citizens of Newbury. Maybe they associated it with the purple and green of the Suffragette movement which was campaigning for votes for women at that time. Purple was later seen on blazer badges and trims, scarves, hats and berets and in the ribbon trim on summer boaters.



The school name and badge

On every student's jacket there is a badge with a distinctive cross and the words **Ad Lucem**, along with the school's name in Latin. **Schola Sancti Bartholomaei**. Why St Bartholomew's School not Wormestall's School?

The cross, adopted in 1903, may have been the emblem of the medieval charity of St Bartholomew's which gives the school its name. This is another clue about

the school's history.

Although the teaching of boys probably began in St Nicolas Church, by 1548 the school's premises were provided by St Bartholomew's Hospital in Argyle Road. This was not a hospital in the modern sense but a small religious community providing care for the sick and elderly. With the closure of such communities in the reign of Henry VIII, the hospital's buildings became almshouses and a school; lessons took place in the Litten Chapel. **Wormestall's Grammar School became St Bartholomew's Grammar School**. The school stayed in Argyle Road but moved into enlarged accommodation in 1848. A house, called The Litten, was built on the corner of Argyle Road and Pound Street and can still be seen today (pictured). The Litten site was too restricted, however, for the school's needs and a new school was built in the Enborne Road in 1885. The new school was able to provide accommodation for 130 day boys and 20 boarders.



Ad Lucem means towards the light and was chosen as the motto of the boys' school by **Mr Sharwood Smith**. He became headmaster in 1902 and you can see a bust of him in

Reception. In 1903 he introduced the St Bartholomew's badge with the cross and the school motto of '**Ad Lucem**'.



When **Miss Jane Luker** became the first Headmistress of Newbury Girls' School in 1904 she also chose a motto for the school: **Wisdom is Strength**. The new combined school could not have two mottos and it was **Ad Lucem** which was chosen along with the historic name of St Bartholomew's School. There's a picture of Miss Luker in the hall.

Why do we play lacrosse?

Students at St Bart's play a wide variety of sports, but the girls play one which is quite unusual to find in a comprehensive school: lacrosse.

When Newbury Girls' School was opened in 1904 the girls played hockey and their young headmistress, Miss Jane Luker, would join in the games. In 1909 Miss Luker took a party of girls to Winchester High School (now St Swithin's) to watch a lacrosse match against Godolphin School, Salisbury. The girls decided that they liked the game and the older girls began to play in 1911. St Bart's still plays lacrosse matches against St Swithin's and Godolphin schools.

Why do we have Fives courts?

The old Boys' Grammar School had Fives Courts and boys were playing the game in the 1890s. The game had fallen out of favour by the end of the twentieth century but was revived in 2006. The three



covered courts at our present school were added in 2013 and both boys and girls continue to play in the national Fives championships.

CCF

If you arrived at St Bart's on a Friday you might be surprised to see young people from Years 10 to 13 in military uniforms; army, navy or air force.

The Combined Cadet Forces were created nationally in 1948. They were aimed at Public School and Grammar School boys and St Bartholomew's Boys' Grammar School began its own contingent that year. In 1975 amalgamation led to the arrival of female cadets. Not all Year 10 and 11 students have to take part and a range of alternative activities are provided. Those that do join the CCF get the opportunity to take part in field days, various courses, camps and adventure training on Dartmoor or in the Brecon Beacons.

Thank you to Alan Patrick for this information.



What is St Bart's connection to Peckham?

Every year St Bart's has a harvest assembly and donations are brought into school to go to a ladies' lunch club in Peckham in south east London. It's run by Peggy who is now over 100 and the slogan each year is 'Please pack a parcel for Peggy at Peckham.'

Why Peckham?

Newbury Girls' School started to support the United Girls' School Missions in Camberwell and Peckham in 1908. The missions had been set up in 1897 to help the people of these very poor districts. From 1908 a strong link was established which lasted throughout the Girls' School's life. In the early days Newbury was known as 'the flower school' as they used to send country flowers to London every week. They also knitted blankets and made gifts for the children and Newbury girls went to help out in the Mission nursery or with the elderly. When the two schools amalgamated in 1975 this tradition carried on into St Bart's. Although life in London has fundamentally changed since 1908, students still bring in non-perishable goods to take to Peckham so that Peggy and her helpers can make up Christmas hampers for their elderly ladies.

The 21st Century

These clues to our history are deeply embedded into the values of St Bart's today. St Bart's is proud of its excellent heritage and traditions. It is a thriving comprehensive school, providing students with an outstanding education and exceptional facilities. What will the future bring? The clues to this are all around us – our students.



THREE SCHOOLS A TIME LINE

St Bartholomew's Boys' Grammar School

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1466 Henry Wormestall's will left money to be used to pay for a priest who also taught boys in the parish church.</p> <p>1548 The first definite mention of a school and schoolmaster in Newbury.</p> <p>1551 St Bartholomew's Grammar School recorded in the Litten Chapel.</p> <p>1630 Rev Thomas Parker became master. He left England in 1634 and became the first pastor of the church in Newburyport, Massachusetts.</p> <p>1700s The school's fortunes and numbers went up and down with quite a lot of criticism of masters and standards.</p> <p>1841 The charity trustees reformed the school which would provide places for 20 free scholars and 40 fee paying boys.</p> <p>1848 Litten House was rebuilt to provide more teaching space for the school.</p> <p>1885 New buildings were opened in Enborne Road, providing accommodation for 130 day boys and 20 boarders, playing fields and room to expand further.</p> | <p>1902 Sharwood Smith became headmaster and introduced many changes and traditions. The school became a County Grammar School.</p> <p>1903 The school motto and badge were chosen and the school song was written.</p> <p>1914 – 1918 45 Old Boys of the school lost their lives during the First World War and the four Houses were renamed after four of them.</p> <p>1944 The Butler Education Act introduced the 11+ exam and all boys who passed it had free places at the school.</p> <p>1960 The Boys' School last headmaster, Basil Cooper, was appointed.</p> <p>1966 The school celebrated its Quincentenary and raised money for an indoor swimming pool.</p> <p>1968 The boarding house closed.</p> <p>1972 The school received a visit from the Queen to mark its 500th birthday.</p> <p>1975 St Bartholomew's Boys Grammar School amalgamated with Newbury County Girls Grammar School and became a comprehensive under the headship of Mr Basil Cooper.</p> |
|--|---|

Newbury Girls' School

- 1904** Newbury Girls' School began with 39 pupils in rooms in the Technical Institute in Northbrook Street. It had a boarding house called The Limes which also provided a garden for the pupils to play in. Miss Luker was the first headmistress.
- 1905** The school colour and motto were chosen.
- 1908** The school began to support the United Girls School Mission in Camberwell and Peckham, now known as the Peckham Settlement.
- 1910** Newbury Girls' School moved to its new premises in the Andover Road.
- 1919** The School Council was introduced with representatives elected from each form.
- 1933** Miss Luker retired after 29 years as headmistress.
- 1939** 400 girls and 34 staff from the Godolphin and Latymer School were evacuated from London to share the school's premises until 1943.
- 1944** The Butler Education Act introduced the 11+ exam and all girls who passed it had free places at the school.
- 1945** Miss Ireland became headmistress.
- 1950** The school acquired Digby Croft to provide classrooms and staff accommodation.
- 1968** Miss Ireland retired and was replaced by Miss Gray, the Girls' School's last headmistress.
- 1972** The school won BBC Radio's Top of the Form competition.
- 1974** The school won BBC's Young Scientists of the Year.
- 1975** Newbury County Girls Grammar School amalgamated with St Bartholomew's Boys Grammar School and became a comprehensive under the headship of Mr Basil Cooper.

St Bartholomew's Comprehensive School

- 1975** The new co-educational, comprehensive school emerged from the amalgamation of the two grammar schools with Basil Cooper as headmaster.
- 1980** The school acquired its first computer.
- 1985** The school received a visit from the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher.
- 1985** Mr Robert Mermagen became Headmaster on Mr Cooper's retirement.
- 1993** The school received a second visit from HM Queen Elizabeth II.
- 1994** Mr Stuart Robinson was appointed Headteacher of the school.



2006 The school successfully competed with other West Berkshire schools to have a completely new school built under the government's Building Schools for the Future project.

2009 Mrs Christina Haddrell appointed as Headteacher on Mr Robinson's retirement.

Mr Robinson continued in his role as Ad Lucem Project Director through to the completion of the move into the new buildings in 2010.

2010 The old grammar school buildings were left behind and the school moved into its new single site, purpose built accommodation.



2011 The new school buildings were formally opened by HRH the Countess of Wessex.



2014 On Mrs Haddrell's retirement, Ms Julia Mortimore was appointed as Headteacher.

2016 The school celebrates its 550th anniversary.



School Trips from the Past – And Still Enjoyed Today

Form 1A trip to Portchester 1958



Paris 1929



(Photographs in this anniversary issue courtesy of Judith Thomas, Richard Sellwood, Russell Smart, Val Pollitt, Allan Mercado)