

I started in Lower 1 in 1940 and remember Miss Woodhouse – Upper 1, Miss Mason – Lower 2, Miss Bedwell – Upper 2, Miss Kerley – Lower 5 and Latin, Miss Buchan – PE and games, Miss Croxton – School Secretary, Miss Dick - Elocution, Miss Voce – Art, Mrs Drake - Art, Miss Goudie - History, Mrs Rye 6<sup>th</sup> form - English, Miss Owen - Geography, Miss Hamlyn - Geography, Miss Ramsay – 3<sup>rd</sup> Form and Scripture, Miss Clegg – French, Miss West - Singing, Miss Stokes-Rees - Maths, Miss Black - Domestic Science, Miss Horner - Music, Miss Roberts (the Housekeeper). There were others whose names pop into my mind from time to time. At one stage we had a French lady for that subject. Mamzelle would walk into the classroom and say “Bonjour mes enfant, ouvrez les fenêtrés” whatever the weather.

When I first joined the school we had to have house shoes into which we changed on arrival at school. With the advent of clothing coupons this was abolished and I am sure it was never revived. The uniform was purchased at Somertons and I always liked the cherry red blazers but like everyone else hated the navy velour hats and the summer panamas. The winter uniform was a navy blue gymslip, box pleated at first then changing to a more pinafore dress style, with a white blouse and cherry red jumper. I remember the school summer dresses being made of cream shantung with chain stitching in cherry and blue down the front placket. What an unsuitable colour for grubby schoolgirls. As the war progressed it was impossible to get the shantung and a cotton mixture was used in varying shades of cream from almost beige to nearly white so we all looked different.

The school was divided into 3 houses, Heath, Field and Gayford (after the former headmistress). I was in Heath with a purple badge, Field was green and Gayford yellow. The latter always seemed to excel in sport, Heath was somewhat more academic and Field just lagged behind. The forms had new monitors each term and we were all very jealous of the two who always seemed to alternate the position (chosen by the staff, no democracy in those days). In retrospect of course the position probably caused the girls concerned quite a lot of unhappiness as girls can be very unfeeling. I have discovered this first hand when two of my granddaughters have been form captains and Head Girls at their boarding schools. Does anyone else remember Courtesy Stars marked in red on the termly report and also the awarding of Department Stripes? When the latter were mentioned in the last assembly of term everyone sat up straight – how naïve we all were to think that that action would make any difference!

When I reached Upper 2 I was evacuated to Durham, where my handwriting was changed to a much more attractive one. Unfortunately when I returned to Heathfield my hand was changed yet again and even now it is very similar to those girls with whom I still correspond. I was upset that I would never be in Miss Bedwell's class, in that room on the ground floor with a semi-circular window. I returned in the third form and progressed to Lower 5 at the end of which I left to start a career as a Quantity Surveyor. Miss Norris was not amused as I was leaving before THE exams, however this did me no harm as I took the National Diploma in Building instead, which to me was far more interesting. I then went on to further study and to work as a Quantity Surveyor gaining membership of the IQS which has since been amalgamated with the RICS. I was the only girl in a London exam Hall all the remainder being male and eyeing me with great curiosity.

I remember the wedding of Miss Buchan. We must have been in Upper 4<sup>th</sup> or Lower 5<sup>th</sup> at the time because four of us caught the Green Line Coach out to ... was it Amersham? .....to see the wedding.

I also recall another gym mistress who always wore blue ballet shoes to class, much to our amusement. She introduced us to lacrosse and I remember playing matches against various London Schools, in Regents Park.

Swimming was in the outdoor pool in Harrow. I remember badgering my parents to let me learn. It was an "extra" but I won my case. My enthusiasm soon abated as the water was so cold and I quickly looked around for excuses "not to swim this week"! I didn't learn for a second year and I didn't master the skill whilst at school. Sport was held at the playing fields some 20 minutes away. I was always first there as I ran all the way, just about the only sport I could do but there were never any long distance races for me to show my prowess! I did make the lacrosse team however but as it was a new sport and I was one of the few with a lacrosse stick it was probably Hobson's choice and I was used to make up the team!

In 1949 the school presented Richard II at the Rudolph Steiner Hall and I still have the sixpenny programme – in which my name is spelt incorrectly! We all found it great fun especially the fact that on the morning following the production we were allowed to go in late to school.

On looking at the 1946 photo(I have one from 1949) I recognise and can name many of the pupils and staff. At present I keep in touch with Margaret Booth,

Marjorie Moss, Aileen Thomas, Mary Hutcheon and Irene Fisk. Irene is Godmother to our eldest daughter and classes herself as honorary Great Godmother to two of our granddaughters. I see her on a regular basis and over the years we have met up with Mary on a number of occasions although we all live many miles apart, my home being near Salisbury. A number of years ago I met Aileen and when visiting universities with our daughter I had an afternoon with Marjorie, recognising her immediately as she ran along the platform trying to spot me in the train.