



## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CITY CENTRE SITE**

Currently Occupied by  
**Cambridge Regional College**  
Formerly Brunswick Infants and Juniors School,  
Newmarket Road, Cambridge

by **Lyn Moulding**

## **DEDICATION**

**To past and present pupils, students and staff**

**Richard Gower and Arnout de Waal**

**Extraordinary teachers, patient colleagues and true friends**

## **FOREWORD**

As Principal of Cambridge Regional College, I know very many students and staff have very treasured memories of studying and working at our City Centre Campus on Newmarket Road. However, in recent years the buildings, dating from as early as 1929, have become unviable to maintain. Selling the site for residential development contributes to the need for more housing in the City and has provided the capital receipt necessary for us to build and equip further state of the art twenty-first century education and training facilities at our new Science Park Campus. This will enable us to provide continuing outstanding opportunities both for young people and adults to develop their skills and gain qualifications to help them progress in their careers and their lives. In particular, we are due to open a fantastic new facility for Catering/Hospitality, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy in September 2009 as well as relocating our Skills for Life programmes at the Science Park Campus.

As a lecturer with connections to the City Centre site for many years, Lyn Moulding very kindly offered to produce a brief history of the site. She has managed to trace the early occupation of the site all the way back to the twelfth century and has produced an enthralling record of its use through to the present day. In particular Lynn gives a fascinating insight into the use of the site for educational purposes from 1929.

We do hope you enjoy reading this brief history and possibly adding to the memories. I am very grateful to Lyn for this great record which I am sure you will find captivating.

**Rick Dearing** - Principal and Chief Executive

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The information contained in this 'brief history' has been gathered from contemporary newspaper articles, text books relating the history of Cambridge, information stored at the Cambridgeshire Archives and several eyewitness accounts. I apologise if I have been unable to include your contribution.

I am indebted to the following people for their advice, support and patience in helping me research and write this brief history:

Colleagues at Cambridge Regional College including the Principal, Rick Dearing, Neil Hobbs for his proofreading and photographic skills, Mike Porter, Alan Darby, Diane Norris and the Marketing team, particularly Oya Finch who scoured the local newspapers and Russell Grief for his design expertise. Thanks also to David Edwards, Miss Batterbee and Mrs Coleman for their contributions and Sam Harris for his riveting stories about life as a pupil at the Brunswick School.

I am also very grateful to the staff at Milton Road Library and Cambridgeshire Archives and Local Studies, Shire Hall for their patience and assistance in unravelling the history of the site and for locating 'the box' which Miss Cox, the last Head Teacher of the Brunswick Juniors School, left with them for safekeeping.

Finally, many thanks to Jo, Jim, Andrew and Daisy.

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## EARLY HISTORY

Settlements have existed around the Cambridge area since before the Roman conquest and archaeologists have located Bronze Age and Iron Age relics and a 3,500-year-old farmstead on land now occupied by Fitzwilliam College.<sup>1</sup>

However, it was not until 40 AD, with the arrival of the Romans, that Cambridge became a regional centre. 'Durolipons' as it was known in Roman times, was a strategic point on the Via Devana, a main road linking garrisons in Colchester and Lincoln and in order to defend the road and the river, a fortified Roman encampment was built on and around Castle Hill.<sup>2</sup> When the Romans withdrew from Britain, the Saxons gradually assumed control of the area. However, by the 7th century, Cambridge or Grantebrycge (the town's Saxon name) was reported to be in serious decline, having been ravaged by feuding Saxon kingdoms.<sup>3</sup> Fortunes

changed with the arrival of the Vikings and due to a phenomenal increase in trade, the town grew rapidly.

By the 10th century Cambridge had become the administrative axis for the area,<sup>4</sup> an import centre for wine and salt and an exporter of reeds, rushes and grain.<sup>5</sup> Two years after the Norman Conquest, William of Normandy built a castle on Castle Hill and in the Domesday Book Cambridge was reported to be a medium sized town with a population of approximately 2,000.<sup>6</sup>

The earliest record of the land adjacent to what is now the Cambridge Regional College City Centre Campus dates back to the 12th century when Pain Peveral, a soldier and standard bearer on the first crusade, returned to England and was granted the title of Baron of Bourne by Henry I.<sup>7</sup> Peveral, who was also Sheriff of Cambridgeshire, sponsored a religious order known as the Cannons of St Giles and in 1112, he moved the order across the river from the

*i Land to the East of the City Centre Campus  
– Elizabeth Way Bridge ▼*



Castle Hill area to the village of Beornewelle (Barnwell) on to thirteen acres of land around the village springs, which had previously been the home of a religious recluse named Godilo.<sup>8</sup> Peveral, along with subsequent sheriffs and rich local citizens, was a generous benefactor and donated not only land but also buildings, elaborately decorated religious artefacts and money. A Priory was established and the Bishop of Ely consecrated the land in 1190.<sup>9</sup> Over the next century an impressive array of accommodation was added, including a guest hall, infirmary, granary, stables, bake and brew house, chapel with cloisters, an almonry school, library, kitchens and refectory.<sup>10</sup> The Priory

Henry VIII and was rapidly dismantled.<sup>12</sup> The religious men and their servants were pensioned off and records show that the commissioners sold alabaster tables, a pair of organs, a clock, lamps, candlesticks and a bell.<sup>13</sup> The Cromwell family took a gilded ceiling to Hinchinbrooke House and stones from the Priory may have been used in the construction of Corpus Christi College.<sup>14</sup> By 1578 the site was being used as a quarry, although the Priory ruins were still evident well into the 19th century.

The Nunnery of St Rhadegund, which was founded in 1133 on land donated by Malcolm



*ii Land to the West of the City Centre Campus  
– Midsummer Common*

was widely believed to be the foremost in the country and was so palatial that a succession of monarchs and archbishops made overnight visits, including King John (1203), Henry III, who stayed several times, Edward I (1296) and Edward II.<sup>11</sup>

In 1538, during the dissolution of the monasteries, the Priory was surrendered to

IV of Scotland and Bishop Nigel of Ely, was located to the west of the college site. The Nunnery was dissolved in 1496 and the buildings and grounds were taken over by the newly founded Jesus College.<sup>15</sup>

In this area of Midsummer Common is a strip of land known as Butts Green and in medieval times, this was where local men would practice



their archery skills, a butt being the target they would aim for.<sup>16</sup> It is also rumoured that the land between the Nunnery and the Priory is the last resting place for early plague victims who were buried in large open pits.<sup>17</sup> However, there is no primary evidence to support this claim.

The current buildings used by Cambridge Regional College appear to have been erected on the site of an ancient fair, one of four held annually in the city. Local youths would gather around a spring in the centre of the site to sing, play instruments and hold wrestling matches.<sup>18</sup> Before long this gathering grew into a formal meeting of traders who would flock to the site from all over the area and in 1211 King John formalised the arrangement, granting the right to hold the fair to Barnwell Priory. Festivities opened on the vigil of St. Etheldreda (the day before midsummer's day) and lasted four days.<sup>19</sup> However, Richard II extended this period to fourteen days.<sup>20</sup> This was also the site of the

Priory pond, which provided the religious order with a regular supply of fresh fish.

In the 13th century a dispute arose between the town elders and the Prior over the land on which the Midsummer Fair was held and in 1232 it was agreed that the Prior would pay a fee to the town. However, in 1299 the Prior proved his right over the land by producing a charter granted by Henry II and the problem was never raised again.

In 1498 Barnwell Priory leased the right to hold the Midsummer Fair to the town burgesses (councillors) for one year and, in 1505, it was agreed that the mayor and burgesses would hold the Priory fair in perpetuity, paying an annual rent of four marks, whilst still recognising the rights of the Prior.<sup>21</sup>



iv 1925 OS map ▲

Although the event was not as large as the Stourbridge Fair, it was an important event and became a centre for trade. Records show that wood, iron and steel along with the locks and keys for the castle cells were purchased there and in 1324 it was reported that the carpenters of Ely Cathedral bought timber from the fair.<sup>22</sup> Entertainment was also provided and in 1714 revellers would have witnessed wild beasts, dancing dogs and even a female rope dancer.<sup>23</sup> Following the dismantling of the Priory, the town assumed full responsibility for the fair.

The buildings currently occupied by Cambridge Regional College were originally built for the Brunswick Infants and Juniors School, which opened in 1929. However, the school was already 90 years old when it moved to its new location on the corner of Newmarket Road and Walnut Tree Avenue.

Originally called the British School, it opened in 1840 and operated from premises on Eden Walk (now Fitzroy Street). The school accommodated up to 250 boys and 250 girls and offered 'the precious gift of a sound and careful education to all without interfering with the religious convictions of any.' An early advertising poster reveals that the syllabus comprised 'the usual elements of useful knowledge' for a weekly fee of 2d per child, although discounts were available for large families. Fees were payable in advance every Monday morning. Parents had to agree to send their children to school regularly from 9 o'clock in the morning until 2 o'clock in the afternoon with 'clean hands, faces and hair' and ensure that they regularly attended a 'place of public worship on the Sabbath.'<sup>24</sup>

For ten years the British School prospered and was highly acclaimed by inspectors, but in 1880 the building was declared to be one of

the worst in Cambridge. An appeal for financial support was launched and in 1901 the school moved into purpose-built accommodation in Auckland Road. A year later, the Local Education Authority assumed control and it was renamed the Brunswick Council School.

annual salary of £105. At the girls' school, Miss Daisy Park, a certified assistant teacher, started work on 26th June 1916 and was paid £85 per annum whilst Miss Elsie Black, an uncertified Assistant Teacher, received £57/10s. In contrast, Miss Nellie Chambers, a monitress at the infants' school, earned just 2/6d per week.<sup>25</sup> In the first half of the 20th century, women were required to give up work when they married and this is evident in a letter dated 21st February 1916 from Miss Grace Love, who tendered her resignation from the post of uncertified teaching assistant at the Brunswick Council School because she was 'getting married at Easter'.<sup>26</sup>

In February 1915 Mr. F.H. Bird, the Headmaster of the boys' school died and was replaced by a man who looms large in the history of the Brunswick School, Mr W. G. Points. It was under his leadership that the 2d school fee was abolished in 1919.

# CAMBRIDGE British Schools

## BOYS AND GIRLS, SITUATED IN EDEN-WALK.

The above Schools are open for the Admission of Children of all Denominations, from Six years of Age and upwards.

The Course of Instruction will include the usual Elements of useful Knowledge; and the Girls will be taught Needle-work.

The Holy Scriptures will be in daily use in the Schools; and read by the Teachers to the Children, and by the Children to the Teachers. The Daily Lessons also will be taken from the Old and New Testaments.

The Parents of Children admitted into these Schools will be required to conform to the following

### RULES.

- I. To send their Children regularly at Nine o'clock in the Morning, and at Two in the Afternoon (Saturday excepted); and to see that their Hands, Faces, and Hair are clean.
- II. Not to keep them from School without leave of the Master or Mistress.
- III. To cause them to attend regularly on the Sabbath-Day such places of Public Worship as the Parents may prefer, and to use every means to promote their instruction in the principles of Religion.
- IV. To encourage a strict Obedience to the Rules and Orders of the School, and particularly to allow their Children to act in such situations as the Master or Mistress may think most useful for the good of the School.
- V. To Pay for One Child Two-pence per week; for Two Children in one Family, Three-pence; for Three or more, Four-pence: such Payments to be made in advance to the Master or Mistress every Monday Morning.

Applications for Admission to be made at the School-Rooms to the Master or Mistress, or to any Member of the Committee.

Tickets of Recommendation may also be obtained from Subscribers.

NETCALFE AND PALMER, PRINTERS, CAMBRIDGE.

v Advertising Poster ▲

Documents in the Cambridgeshire Archives provide a remarkable snapshot of conditions in both the British School and the Brunswick Council School. For example, in 1915 Mr Arthur Burdett, a teacher in the boys' school, received a salary increase from £90 to £95 per annum, whilst Mr Eric Harrison, presumably a more experienced member of staff, was retained on an



Captain Ball Team - 1924-5.  
G. Nelson, I. Whitbread, B. Hardy, M. King, B. Starnell, D. Mole, (S) M. Beattie, G. Roberts,  
M. Bond (Capt), G. Hall, J. Ryder, (R) Duddall, E. Hewitt, N. Burton

vi Girls' Netball Team 1924-1925 ▲

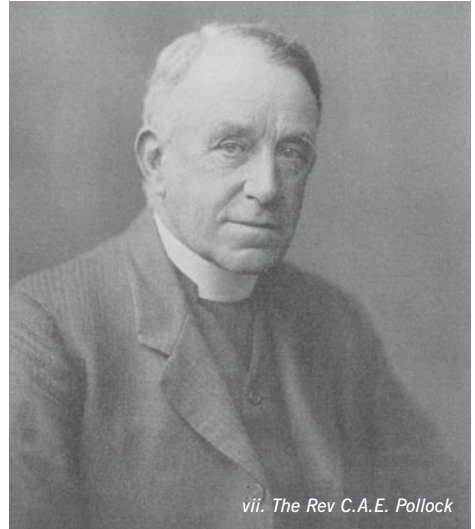
## THE SITE

However, all was not well with the new school building in Auckland Road. In 1920 His Majesty's Inspector of Schools (HMI) stated that the infants' premises were cramped and inconvenient, although they did say that the children were 'appropriately and capably taught', and it soon became evident that the property was subsiding.<sup>27</sup> In September 1922 the girls were forced to move to accommodation in Paradise Street whilst the boys were given temporary accommodation in the Christchurch Institute at the junction of Christchurch Street and Fitzroy Street.

In a report to the Board of Education dated 1925 Mr Points stated that the Christchurch site was unsuitable due to 'heavy traffic in the area, a lack of playground facilities and dangerously inadequate lavatory accommodation'. According to his report three classes were held in one large room and the accommodation suffered from bad lighting, poor heating and inadequate ventilation. Mr Points conceded that the main room had 'fine acoustics', but explained that this 'magnified every sound'. As the building was used by the church every evening, all the desks and chairs had to be packed away at the end of the school day and Mr Points described this practice as a major inconvenience. He also stated that it was hard to say when the premises had last been decorated or cleaned, as there was still evidence on the walls of military occupation in 1916.<sup>28</sup> A similar report concerning the girls' temporary accommodation in Paradise Street was less scathing although the author, Miss Whitehouse, stated that it was a 'wretchedly dismal place' with small windows and bad lighting.<sup>29</sup>

When the School Managers met on 26th November 1923 they revealed their intention to build a new school at the junction of Walnut

Tree Avenue and Newmarket Road. The Head Teachers responded favourably but asked to see the blueprints before any final decision was made. On 8th June 1925 their wish was granted. However, the Board of Education failed to sanction the project until late in 1926.<sup>30</sup>



vii. *The Rev C.A.E. Pollock*

The Ordnance Survey map of 1886 shows that the proposed site for the new school was a large field flanked to the east by a row of houses in Walnut Tree Avenue and to the south by several houses, two pubs, a brewery and the city's fire engine station.<sup>31</sup> Little had changed by the time building work commenced and the foundation stone was laid on 12th May 1927 by the Chairman of the Education Committee, Alderman P.H. Young, J.P.

On 19th March 1929 the Brunswick Council School Managers met to plan the opening ceremony and discussions focused on whether they should ask HRH Princess Mary, The Prime Minister or the Minister of Education to perform the opening ceremony.<sup>32</sup> The honour was finally bestowed on an esteemed local Alderman, The Rev. C.A.E. Pollock M.A.



viii. Assembly Hall

On Thursday 11th July 1929 at 3pm, the Brunswick School was declared open. The school choir provided the entertainment, the national anthem was sung and various local dignitaries made speeches before being treated to a guided tour. G.W. Teesdale, the borough engineer and surveyor, designed the buildings and the school was built by J. Honour and Son

the pitch pine wood block flooring. The boys were accommodated in the east wing, the girls occupied the west wing and the infants had their own separate building. Each of the three schools had its own tar playground and the infants also had a grassy play area. The site boasted a caretaker's house, covered verandas linking the classrooms and an assembly hall, which could be enlarged by a system of moving walls.<sup>33</sup>

The girls and infants entered via the Midsummer Common gate whilst the boys had their own entrance off Walnut Tree Avenue. These gates are still in situ. The houses in Walnut Tree Avenue were demolished in 1971 to make way for Elizabeth Way Bridge.

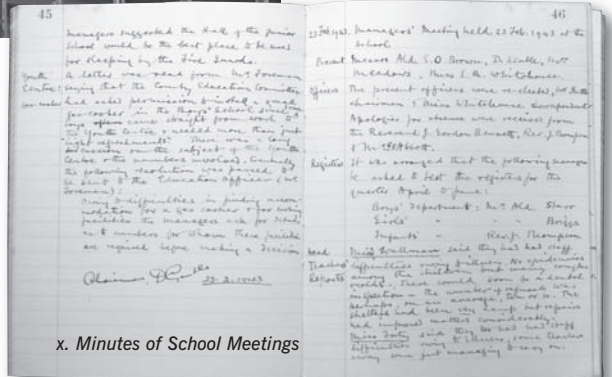
In the summer of 1929 the only cloud on the horizon was the question of who would pay the bill of £7/10s for refreshments at the opening ceremony. Fortunately, Alderman Brown, who had already donated £5, agreed to pay the balance.<sup>34</sup>



ix. School Gates

Ltd. from Tring in Hertfordshire at a cost of £43,000. The Managers' pride in their new school is evident in the opening ceremony brochure, in which they highlighted the low-pressure hot water system of pipes and radiators, the provision of electric lighting in all buildings, the hand made roofing tiles and

As with all new buildings, there were teething problems and these are recorded in the Minutes of the Managers' meetings. In July 1930 concern



x. Minutes of School Meetings



*xi Keep Fit Demonstration 1930's*

minutes long and there were fifteen-minute recreation breaks in the morning and afternoon. The pupils were given a two-hour lunch break, which enabled them to go home for a meal or walk, in a crocodile formation, down Occupation Road to the Ragged School at Young Street where lunch was available. The current refectory was not built until 1945 and even then it was regarded as a temporary structure. School ended at 4.30pm.<sup>39</sup> As pupil numbers

was expressed about the condition of the school grounds and three months later it was agreed that the land at the back of the infants' school should be levelled to prevent accidents.<sup>35</sup>

grew the refectory was also used to house three classes, which were separated by curtains. Miss Batterbee, a teacher and latterly Deputy Headmistress, can remember the refectory being so cold that the ink froze in her ink-well.

In 1932 the teaching staff revealed that<sup>36</sup> maintenance was needed to some walls and in 1933 the teachers reported that the verandas were slippery and that an elm tree at the back of the infants' school was dangerous.<sup>37</sup> Despite this, in May 1934, a school inspector declared that the school benefited from an 'excellent situation' and that the rooms were 'well ventilated, well heated and well cleaned'. The inspector was left in no doubt as to the 'earnest and conscientious work of the entire staff.' However, he did comment on the fact that there were no rest beds in the nursery.<sup>38</sup> Clearly, the school acted on the inspector's advice as Mrs. Coleman remembers both the beds and the uncomfortable dark grey blankets that were provided.

The Junior School boys spent 405-505 minutes per week learning English and 190-245 minutes per week studying arithmetic. They also received lessons in geography, science, drawing, music and PE.<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, there are no records of what subjects were studied by the girls but their syllabus was similar to the boys.

The school day began at 9am with assembly, prayers, religious instruction and registration. Lessons were an average of thirty

*Brunswick Council Junior Boys School*  
 TIME TABLE  
 1934

| MORNING       |            | AFTERNOON     |              |
|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------|
| 9.00 - 9.15   | Assembly   | 9.00 - 9.15   | Registration |
| 9.15 - 9.45   | English    | 9.15 - 9.45   | English      |
| 9.45 - 10.15  | Arithmetic | 9.45 - 10.15  | Arithmetic   |
| 10.15 - 10.45 | Geography  | 10.15 - 10.45 | Geography    |
| 10.45 - 11.15 | Science    | 10.45 - 11.15 | Science      |
| 11.15 - 11.45 | Drawing    | 11.15 - 11.45 | Drawing      |
| 11.45 - 12.15 | Music      | 11.45 - 12.15 | Music        |
| 12.15 - 12.45 | PE         | 12.15 - 12.45 | PE           |
| 12.45 - 1.15  | Break      | 12.45 - 1.15  | Break        |
| 1.15 - 1.45   | English    | 1.15 - 1.45   | English      |
| 1.45 - 2.15   | Arithmetic | 1.45 - 2.15   | Arithmetic   |
| 2.15 - 2.45   | Geography  | 2.15 - 2.45   | Geography    |
| 2.45 - 3.15   | Science    | 2.45 - 3.15   | Science      |
| 3.15 - 3.45   | Drawing    | 3.15 - 3.45   | Drawing      |
| 3.45 - 4.15   | Music      | 3.45 - 4.15   | Music        |
| 4.15 - 4.45   | PE         | 4.15 - 4.45   | PE           |

## Outbreak of War 1939

With the outbreak of war in 1939, life changed dramatically at Brunswick School. On 2nd



*xiii building air raid shelters*

November 1939 the Cambridge Daily News carried a photograph of air raid shelters being constructed in the bank bordering Midsummer Common and for the next six years, these were in regular use by the pupils and staff, although a majority of the alerts were drills.<sup>41</sup>

Sam Harris, who currently works at the City Centre Campus, was a pupil at the school during this period. He can remember being one of the last children to enter a shelter during an air raid and seeing the sky black with enemy bombers on their way to London. David Edwards, a pupil at the school from 1943 to 1949, remembers a prayer, which was hung inside each shelter:

God is our refuge  
Don't be afraid  
He will be with you  
All through the raid  
When the bombs are falling  
And danger is near  
He will be with you  
Until the all clear!<sup>42</sup>

On 4th December 1939 Mr Points reported that for the past four weeks they had been sharing the school with fifty children who had been evacuated from the Langford Road School in Fulham. There was, he stated, 'too little room for everyone'.<sup>43</sup> Mrs Coleman, a pupil at the school, recalls that evacuees from a school in Acton occupied classrooms in the infants' school and were taught by their own teachers. The Brunswick pupils were discouraged from fraternising with the evacuees and an imaginary line was created to divide the playground. However, these were minor disruptions compared to events on the night of 18th June 1940 when nearby Vicarage Terrace was bombed and ten residents were killed.



*xiv. carnage at Vicarage Terrace*

In the Managers' meeting the following day, Miss Forty, the Head Teacher of the girls school, announced that one of her pupils had died in the raid. Mr Points revealed that only 50% of the pupils had arrived for school that morning and that many of the children were falling asleep at their desks.<sup>44</sup>

## IN THE NEWS

By November 1940 Mr Points, Miss Forty and Miss Walman (the Head-Teacher of the infants' school) were faced with hundreds of 'refugee children', a measles epidemic, cold classrooms and damp, leaking air raid shelters, which they claimed were 'not fit for the children'. Eight months later the records show that there were 329 infants, 400 boys and over 300 girls on the registers. The school was so overcrowded

during the weekend before Christmas 1971 when vandals broke into the school and created the 'worst trail of damage and destruction ever seen by city police officers'.<sup>47</sup> The nativity crib was trampled underfoot, Christmas decorations were pulled down and the children's letters to Father Christmas were burned. Graffiti was sprayed on the walls, fire extinguishers were let off, the kitchen was wrecked and a model snowman was repeatedly stabbed in the back with a large knife.<sup>48</sup> Horrified, the citizens of Cambridge jammed the school switchboard



that the assembly hall had to be converted into classrooms.<sup>45</sup> The last record of a wartime meeting at the school is dated 16th May 1944 and with shaky handwriting, the author reveals that Mr Points was very short staffed with only nine teachers for 417 boys.<sup>46</sup>

There were two further key events in the life of the Brunswick School. The first happened

with offers of help. Pupils from other local schools pooled their pocket money to buy ice cream for the Brunswick children, the scouts donated sweets and fruit, Marshall's Garage and Engineering, which was based on the site of the old fire station, sent Father Christmas to distribute toys and games and the mayor, Mrs Jean Barker, handed out even more sweets.<sup>49</sup>



*xvi Mayor - Mrs Jean Barker handing out sweets*

The final key event also occurred in 1970s when, due to falling birth rates, the Education Authority was faced with a surfeit of infant and junior school places and a dearth of further education accommodation. Their solution was to convert the Brunswick School into a further education centre.<sup>50</sup>

In May 1975, fifty parents started the 'Save Brunswick School' action group and in a series of letters to the Cambridge Evening News in August and September 1979, they revealed their dismay and anger stating that the plans would result in the 'terrible loss of the finest primary school in the city.'<sup>51</sup> The parents claimed that the closure would affect 400 children at a 'crucial stage in their emotional development'<sup>52</sup> and estimated that the conversion would cost a massive £800,000.



*Xvii The 'Busy Bees' blazer badge*

In October 1979 the parents instructed lawyers to challenge the closure in the High Court and appealed to the National Ombudsman, alleging 'mal-administration' by the Department of Education.<sup>53</sup> The fight to save Brunswick School went national as the Radio Two DJ David Hamilton discussed the closure on his prime time radio show<sup>54</sup> and in a Daily Mirror double page spread, a pupil from Brunswick School revealed, "I am trying to keep the school open because it is a nice school". In this emotional article the Daily Mirror journalist, John Pilger, commented that the school was set in a 'large wooded area overlooking a river where ducks nestle beneath the classroom windows.'<sup>55</sup>

In a last ditch attempt to save the school, twenty-three infants wrote to the Queen and enclosed a collage depicting life at the school.<sup>56</sup> Despite their valiant efforts, a report in the Cambridge Evening News dated 24th June 1981 revealed that the school was to close on July 22nd.<sup>57</sup> The remaining ninety-two pupils would be transferred to other local schools. The Head Teacher, Miss Margaret Cox and her deputy Miss Marjery Batterbee, who had both been pupils at the school when it opened in 1929, decided to retire from teaching.<sup>58</sup> However, in a Cambridge Evening News article entitled 'Era of balmy schooldays by Cam ends with Brunswick closure' the ladies believed they had the last laugh when workmen failed to demolish the bicycle sheds using a pneumatic drill and had to resort to sledgehammers and

brute force. As Miss Cox said at the time, "The old school doesn't die that easily".<sup>59</sup> A month of festivities was planned for pupils, parents and staff including a school concert, days out, a picnic and a fête.

Thankfully, Miss Cox had the presence of mind to provide

the Cambridgeshire Archives with a wealth of information and memorabilia concerning the Brunswick School, including framed photographs of proud children holding cups and shields for swimming, netball, football and cricket, several photograph albums recording school concerts and plays, the Minutes of the Managers' meetings and even examples of the Brunswick School blazer badge.

## Cambridge College of Further Education moves into Brunswick School

During the 1950s there was an explosion in the number of school leavers seeking vocational training courses in Cambridge and in 1959 the first further education centre in Cambridge was launched in a former Victorian primary school in Young Street.<sup>60</sup> The centre, which initially comprised just five classrooms, was run by George Hibberd and provided lessons in engineering along with 'O' level and general education courses for junior civil servants, police cadets and post office workers.

Despite a purpose built-extension, the centre soon outgrew its limited accommodation and in 1963 an additional facility was opened in a 19th century mission hall, which was leased from St Columba's church. With Jim Moulding as warden, the York Street site offered one and two year 'O' level courses for school leavers and day release courses for office, shop and post office workers.<sup>61</sup> Once they had completed their courses, students could transfer to Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology, which was based in buildings now occupied by Anglia Ruskin University in East Road.<sup>62</sup>

In 1974 the Young Street and York Street centres combined to form Cambridge College of Further Education and in its first year 600 students enrolled on business, general studies, engineering and science courses. In 1976 Harry Bashford assumed the role of Principal and a year later a working party on vocational education expressed their desire to see the whole college based on one site and Brunswick School was identified as a possible location.<sup>63</sup> A photograph in the Cambridge Evening News dated 28th January 1981 shows the architects Bass and Pook proudly presenting their plans for converting the Brunswick School into the



Cambridge College of Further Education.<sup>64</sup> Even before the Brunswick children had moved out, the builders moved in. Work focused on turning the infants' school into teaching accommodation for nursery nurses and erecting a new building for the hotel management and catering department on the existing playgrounds and school field. The new catering department boasted a public restaurant and bar, four kitchens, classrooms and even a housekeeping suite, comprising an en suite, hotel-style bedroom, which was subsequently converted into a staff room.

However, plans for a one-site location were thwarted by a sudden increase in demand for further education courses and before long an additional eleven sites, situated all over the county, were opened.<sup>65</sup> Alan Darby, a catering lecturer at the City Centre Campus, remembers CCFE staff being issued with maps of Cambridgeshire to help them locate some of the rural centres.

accommodation at King Hedges.<sup>66</sup> However, this decision was only reached after extensive debate involving John Major, the MP for Huntingdon, whose constituency fell within the CCFE catchment. Finally, building work started at King Hedges in January 1992 and Her Majesty the Queen opened the first phase on 25th November 1993.



*Xix Her Majesty the Queen opens the first phase at King Hedges site*

In 1987 a second plan was formulated to move Cambridge College of Further Education to one site and it was eventually agreed that CCFE and Cambridge College of Arts and Technology would merge and move into purpose built

Despite this, the York Street site remained open until 1997 when phase three of the King Hedges project was completed and the old Brunswick School site became the much loved City Centre Campus for catering, hair, beauty, music, EFL and basic skills students.

In 2002 the music department moved into purpose-built accommodation at the Science Park Campus and more recently, the demand for hair and beauty courses resulted in several classrooms at the City Centre Campus being converted to provide additional salons. The site currently comprises ten hair and beauty salons, restaurant, bar and kitchens, a science lab, a range of classrooms, including accommodation for EFL and basic skills students, a refectory and learning resources, key skills and study centres.

# THE FUTURE

## The Future of the Brunswick School

This summer, 2009, the old Brunswick School site will close and Cambridge Regional College students and staff will move into purpose-built accommodation at the Science Park Campus. The new building will provide 2 public restaurants and bars, 5 kitchens, 10 industry standard hair and beauty salons and classrooms equipped with state-of-the-art computing technology. For the first time in the history of further education in Cambridge, Cambridge Regional College will operate from one site.

### So what of the Brunswick School?

Well, due to a problem with porous brickwork, the old buildings will be demolished and replaced with private housing and accommodation for Anglia Ruskin University



students. However, following several meetings between Trevor Smith (Head of Facilities at Cambridge Regional College) and the developers, it has been agreed that, subject to confirmation with

the Planners, the Brunswick School bell tower will be incorporated into the new development. Unlike the old Priory bell, which was unceremoniously sold off to the highest bidder in the 16th century, the Brunswick bell tower will remain on the site it has graced for the past seventy years; a lasting tribute to thousands of young learners and hundreds of dedicated staff who worked so hard to provide excellent standards of education in Cambridge.

Inspired by Miss Cox, the last Head Teacher of the Brunswick Juniors School, we are recording the history of the site and presenting a box of memorabilia to the Cambridgeshire Collection. If you would like to contribute memories of your time at the school or the college, we would be delighted to include them in the memory box. Please contact the Marketing Department at

Cambridge Regional College, Science Park Campus, for further details.



*xxii Miss Cox at her desk*



*xx New hair, beauty and Catering Reception*

## End-notes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.Wikipedia.co.uk>. p.2.
- <sup>2</sup> Bryan, P.,1999, Cambridge: *The Shaping of a City*, unpublished, p.8 (available from The Cambridgeshire Archive, Shire Hall)
- <sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p.12.
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.localhistories.org/cambridge>. p.1.
- <sup>5</sup> *ibid.*,p.2.
- <sup>6</sup> *ibid.*,p.1.
- <sup>7</sup> Rutherford, T., *Barnwell Abbey and Stourbridge Fair*, London: Nichols. p.12.
- <sup>8</sup> *ibid.*,p.12.
- <sup>9</sup> *ibid.*,p.15.
- <sup>10</sup> <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>. p.1.
- <sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p 1-2.
- <sup>12</sup> <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>. p.2.
- <sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.2.
- <sup>14</sup> *ibid.*,p.2.
- <sup>15</sup> <http://midsummercommon.org.uk/papers/History>. p.2.
- <sup>16</sup> <http://www.iankitching.me.uk/history/cam/commons.html>. p.2.
- <sup>17</sup> <http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk>. p.1.
- <sup>18</sup> Barnwell Abbey and Stourbridge Fair, p.12.
- <sup>19</sup> <http://midsummercommon.org.uk/papers/History>. p.1.
- <sup>20</sup> <http://www.iankitching.me.uk/history/cam/commons.html>. p.2.
- <sup>21</sup> <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>. p.6.
- <sup>22</sup> <http://midsummercommon.org.uk/papers/History>. p.3.
- <sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.3.
- <sup>24</sup> Advertising Poster for The British School, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>25</sup> Cambridge Department of Education Documents, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>26</sup> Cambridge Department of Education Documents, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>27</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 16 February 1982.
- <sup>28</sup> Report on Condition of Christchurch Institute, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>29</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.50, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>31</sup> Ordnance Survey Map, 1886, XLVII.2, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>32</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.80, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>33</sup> Brunswick Council School: Official Opening: 11 July 1929, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>34</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.85. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>35</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.92. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>36</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.112. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>37</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.127. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>38</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.127. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>39</sup> Timetable, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.
- <sup>40</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup> Cambridge Daily News, 2 November 1939.
- <sup>42</sup> Edwards, D., *Memories of Brunswick School*, 2009.
- <sup>43</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.32. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

<sup>44</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.35. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

<sup>45</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.38. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of School Managers' Meetings, p.52. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

<sup>47</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 20 December 1971.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 22 December 1971.

<sup>50</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 31 July 1978.

<sup>51</sup> Cambridge Evening News, August 1978.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 20 October 1979

<sup>54</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 21 October 1978

<sup>55</sup> Daily Mirror, 20 March 1979, p.13.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 24 June 1981.

<sup>58</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 16 February 1982.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Cambridge Newspapers Ltd., 1999, *Memories of Cambridge*, Elland: True North, 1999, p.38.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, p.38.

<sup>62</sup> *Memories of Cambridge*, p.39.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>64</sup> Cambridge Evening News, 28 January 1981.

<sup>65</sup> *Memories of Cambridge*, p.40.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, p.40.

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IV. Ordnance Survey Map 1925, XLVII.2, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

V. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

VI. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

VII. Brunswick School Opening Ceremony Brochure, Milton Road Library.

VIII. Brunswick School Opening Ceremony Brochure, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

IX. Neil Hobbs.

X. Minutes of Managers' Meetings, Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

XI. Memories of Cambridge, Cambridge Newspapers Ltd.

XII. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

XIII. Cambridge Daily News, 2 November 2 1939.

XIV. Cambridge Evening News, 20 June 1940.

XV. Cambridge Daily News, 20 December 1971.

XVI. Cambridge Evening News, 20 December 1971.

XVII. Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall.

XVIII. Memories of Cambridge, Cambridge Evening News.

XIX. Memories of Cambridge, Cambridge Evening News.

XX. Neil Hobbs.

XXI. Neil Hobbs.

XXII. Cambridge Evening News – 16 February 1982.

## END OF TERM

Once upon a time  
the soles of children lightly tripped  
and heads bowed  
in once familiar deference and toil,  
awaiting the bell's timely reminders  
to move, or rest, or leave for home.

The river slowly snaked,  
then, now, tomorrow.  
Swans feathered journeys,  
cygnet coddling,  
overlooked by Midsummer pastures.  
Reflections of saplings  
and crocodiles of babbling fun.  
Like the rush of water  
over small pebbles.

Cows, unaware of beef.

The gates are still there,  
for a little while longer.  
One each for Infants, Girls (together),  
and (perhaps unruly) Boys,  
around the side  
Lost to rust and traffic fumes,  
where once houses stood.

Some details remain for a term.  
The arches where those young heads  
bent over fountains of water.  
The water has gone, with the children.  
Names on modern boards:  
'Brunswick,' 'Nursery Way.'  
Two-dimensional signposts.

Almost apologetic.  
Pointing to a past  
dispensed with.

Time has eaten  
the railing skeletons  
and killed more than a few  
of those children.  
Some untimely lost  
by Blitz of war,  
or the lottery of age.

Those buildings are,  
for a shortening while,  
all we have to wake  
the gently haunting steps and voices  
of the little ones.

Soon to be  
bigger little ones.  
Almost gone.

Then one day the Developers came.  
Not Developers of the mind,  
but Creation by Destruction.

They shall not have the tower,  
innards ripped some time ago.  
It remains, empty but erect,  
sounds miscarried.

Muted witness  
to that past,  
now captured only  
by the shuttered insight  
of the camera.

The bell tower will be  
kept and guarded.  
Talisman of learning.  
Its deafening silence  
Will bear witness.

The machines will have the rest.

The End



## We're moving to The Park

Restaurant & Bistro

Hair & Beauty Salons & Spa

SmartLIFE Conferencing

Travel Agency

Sports Centre



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