

Moments in Time

130 Years of Bushey Heath Primary School



Respect, Encourage and Achieve

Since 1879, a Log Book has been kept by all the Headteachers, recording significant events in the life of Bushey Heath Primary School. The original Log Book is now kept in the Bushey Museum.

9 February 1842 – 18 September 1879

Children in Bushey educated in Church of England school with Rev William Falconer acting as Manager.

1870

Compulsory for all children over the age of 5 years to be educated.

February 1879

Bushey School Board formed.

September 1879

Miss Catherine Boto, the first Headmistress of the school, aged 20, was appointed and admitted her first 30 children under the age of 7. This where the log entries begin:



1879

- 1 Sept: Admitted 30 children under 7 years of age.
- 5 Sept: Examined and classified children. Found them in a very backward state, the majority of them never having entered a school before.
- 12 Sept: Gave special attention to needlework, the children scarcely knowing the way to thread their needles.
- 19 Sept: Gave considerable attention to singing – a very weak point.
- 7 Nov: Gave the principal part of my time to knitting. Found it very troublesome to teach.
- 21 Nov: Gave special attention to mental arithmetic. Detained the whole school for shouting in the playground.
- 12 Dec: Having written to the Board of the inconvenience arising from the smoke, it was suggested that the stove should be moved nearer the wall, which is a much better arrangement.

1880

14 Jan: Miss Sladen visited and inspected the needlework. Was much pleased with the knitting.

16 Feb: School examined by Her Majesty's Inspector in the presence of three members of the Board.
List of songs presented to Her Majesty's Inspector:

1. Mary Had a Little Lamb
2. What Have You Got for Dinner, Mrs Bond?
3. Three Little Kittens
4. See the Chickens Round the Gate

1881

Feb: Extract from HMI report:
Much illness (epidemic) and severe winter have affected the work of this school... all the children are backward.

1883

Sept: Teaching staff for 1883:
Catherine Boto – Headmistress
Laura Mills – Pupil Teacher
Bertha Bird – Pupil Teacher

70 on roll

HMI report: Better results will be looked for next year as a condition of an unreduced grant.

Miss Boto's examination: Examined the whole school and found that the month's holiday had in no way improved them.

1884

23 Jan: The stipendiary monitor perfectly unable to secure order in her class.

**1886**

6 Jan: Was forced to close the school on account of the heavy snowstorm. Five children only were present, and in such a wet condition that I thought it wiser they should return home and change their clothing as soon as possible. School closed for the rest of the week. Cases of diphtheria mentioned.

1889

24 May: The intense heat has affected the ordinary working of the school. I, therefore, permitted the children to leave the school-room at 3 o'clock and sit quietly in the shade at the back of the shed.
Trouble with puddles all over the playground.

1890

22 July: I caned Arthur Mann this morning for scratching Minnie Hembly. I have cautioned him several times.



17 Sept: Caned 6 children for being three minutes late. They had been seen by their teacher loitering on the road.

15 Dec: There were only 35 children present this morning owing to the severity of the weather. We were unable to follow the timetable as most of the children were crying with the cold. I let them sit around the fires and told them not to return in the afternoon.

1891

9 Jan: A 7-year-old girl in the 1st Standard died of diphtheria.

17 May: Frederick Martindale aged 3 years did not reach school this afternoon until 2.30, so I sent him home for punishment.

Epidemic of Scarlet Fever so severe that summer holiday was changed from August to mid-June to mid-July.

13 Nov: New Pupil Teacher appointed at a salary of £30 per annum.

1896

Dec: Complaints that one fireplace is really not sufficient to warm the large room. Children are given quick marching exercises to help them forget their frost-bitten hands and feet.

Feb: I am obliged to pay a man daily to get water for use in the toilets which are frozen.

3 May: This morning, to my great delight, the 90 children on the register were all in attendance for the first time. Request made for an additional teacher, and Miss Scott was appointed. Increase in numbers made it necessary to put desks in the gallery.

Oct: Death of a 5-year-old child from diphtheria. School closed for a month.

Nov: Second death from diphtheria.

1897

Jan: Third death from diphtheria.

Prolonged epidemic – sickness has seriously affected the elementary subjects.

10 Sept: I have examined the two lower classes in recitation and was much pleased with the result. Miss Scott has taken great pains and taught them very nicely.

1898

28 Jan: No. on register 81.

Examined the I, II, III classes in their needlework specimens and was pleased with the result. Also examined the babies in singing and recitations which they did very nicely. I told the children that I had noticed some very dirty boots lately. I urged them all to try to begin the new school year by coming with clean boots.

31 Jan: Every child came with clean boots this morning... A half-holiday was promised to them by way of encouragement.

18 Feb: The school was visited by HM Inspector. At the close of the examination, the Inspector told the children he was pleased with them as he believed they had all tried to do their best and that they had given no trouble to him or the teachers – they had been obedient and attentive. The children were given a half-day holiday in the afternoon.



6 Sept: Received a note from Dr Wilson stating that Miss Houldsworth was suffering from Nervous Prostration.

9 Sept: Each day the thermometer registers 80 degrees, but today it was 87 degrees and the children were in a most distressing state. I told them to lay their heads on the desks and go to sleep. In less than a quarter of an hour, 62 children out of 81 present went to sleep.

28 Oct: Margaret Burdett was appointed temporary monitress – to be paid 10 shillings and 10 pence a month.

1900

Mar: I have long felt the need of proper kindergarten desks – they are an absolute necessity if Frobel's principles, which I think are the only right system of education for young children, are to be adopted.

Parents summoned for not sending children to school.

23 Mar: School closed for several weeks. Number on register – 90, 45 children had whooping cough, 1 measles, 1 scarlet fever. Never seen children so utterly prostrate.

1901

22 Mar: Outbreak of diphtheria – one child died. School closed for three weeks.



1902

10 Nov: Another visit by the younger children to the Zoo. Some had never been on a railway journey before.

1905

1 Feb: Boys transferred to Ashfield, girls to Merryhill.

1906

17 Feb: Miss Boto left after 27 years to be married.

1 May: Mrs Emily Gibbon appointed. Introduced Nature Study to the whole school.

22 June: One little boy knocked down by a motor car and badly bruised.

1909

15 Jan: We commenced giving lunch to a number of children whose fathers were out of work.

1912

24 July: First Open Afternoon.

29 Aug: We took 20 of the First class children to Brighton for the day. They saved their own money for three months... a very happy day was spent and all arrived home safely.

**1913**

11 Nov: The school was inspected by HMI Mr EH Ibbotson who reported as follows:

'This is a very pleasant and well taught little school. The children as a rule speak freely and distinctly; they are in excellent order, and at the same time very bright and happy, their natural activities have natural scope for exercise and this reasonable liberty never degenerates into license. The work is interesting and suitably varied, the teaching is bright and intelligent, and the progress of the children is decidedly good. The fallen leaves should be cleared out of the closets.'

1916

24 Mar: We observed 'Empire Day' this morning by singing songs in the playground and planting a horse-chestnut tree which had already been grown from seed.

Jul: All under-fives were excluded and staff reduced as a war economy.

1919

20 May: First visit by the school dentist.

1921

24 July: With the consent of the managers and the approval of HMI, the Tennyson Street, Battersea, Cripple School visited us this afternoon and were entertained to tea in the playground by our children. I have since received a letter of thanks from as many of the 75 cripple children as are capable of writing...

1931

23 June: The Jubilee of the building of the school was celebrated this evening. A bird-bath was unveiled... Miss West, a Bushey sculptress, fashioned the beautiful figure.



1939

1 Nov: The schools re-opened on Monday... They remained closed after the holiday owing to the outbreak of war. The managers decided not to open the Infants Dept. No trenches have been provided.

1940

16 Oct: The school did not resume on Sept 2nd owing to the increase in air-raids, and there being no shelter completed.

1941

7 Jan: The air-raid shelter has been completed.

11 Dec: On coming to school this morning, it was discovered that the bird bath had been smashed during the night. The matter was reported to the police.

1943

20 April: Mr Cockram, ARP Warden, tested all gas masks, the stirrup pumps, and filled the water buckets in the loft.



1944

23 June: There have been many air-raid alerts during the week. When danger was imminent, the children went to the shelter. The alerts during the night have caused a few absentees in the morning.

30 June: Alerts have sounded continually during the week. Lessons have been interrupted when it was necessary to take shelter.

21 July: Today is a very bad day for air-raid alerts. The sirens have been going all day and explosions heard in the distance. This has naturally affected attendance.

1945

9 May: The school was closed on May 8th and 9th to celebrate the end of hostilities in Europe.

1953

28 Oct: The Canteen was opened today. 31 children stayed to dinner. The hot water system is not finished yet.



1959

20 Feb: School colours have been chosen – grey and dark red. There are berets for the girls and caps, ties and socks for the boys.

1960

26 July: We had a gathering of friends and parents this afternoon in the playground to make a presentation to Miss AA Coe who has been a teacher here for 47 years. She has not been absent for 28 years, and retires this term.

1962

10 Sept: As well as having no kitchen or staff room, the school has no office now as the old one is being rebuilt. The telephone has been moved into the 1957 extension where the passage must serve as the office for the next two terms. (No staff toilet either!)



1963

4 Nov: Stone figure which had been smashed in December 1941 has now been repaired and a new bird bath installed.

1969

28 Mar: First competitive game of soccer against Holywell JM.



15 July: Junior Sports. This is the first time we have held such an event.

1970

9 Dec: The Carol Concert had to be cancelled because we are having daily power cuts due to a strike by electricity workers.

1971

22 Jan: Work begun on changing room – our first self-help building project. Mr MacLean is our parent-architect, and a group of fathers are doing the work.

1978

24 Feb: The whole school was closed today due to industrial action by oil-tanker drivers. We have very little oil left. Children came in to collect homework.

30 May: I was married today and am now Mrs JW Bunyan.

11 July: Mr Casey, who is painting a picture of the school to commemorate the centenary, came to discuss where it will be hung.

