



St David's School

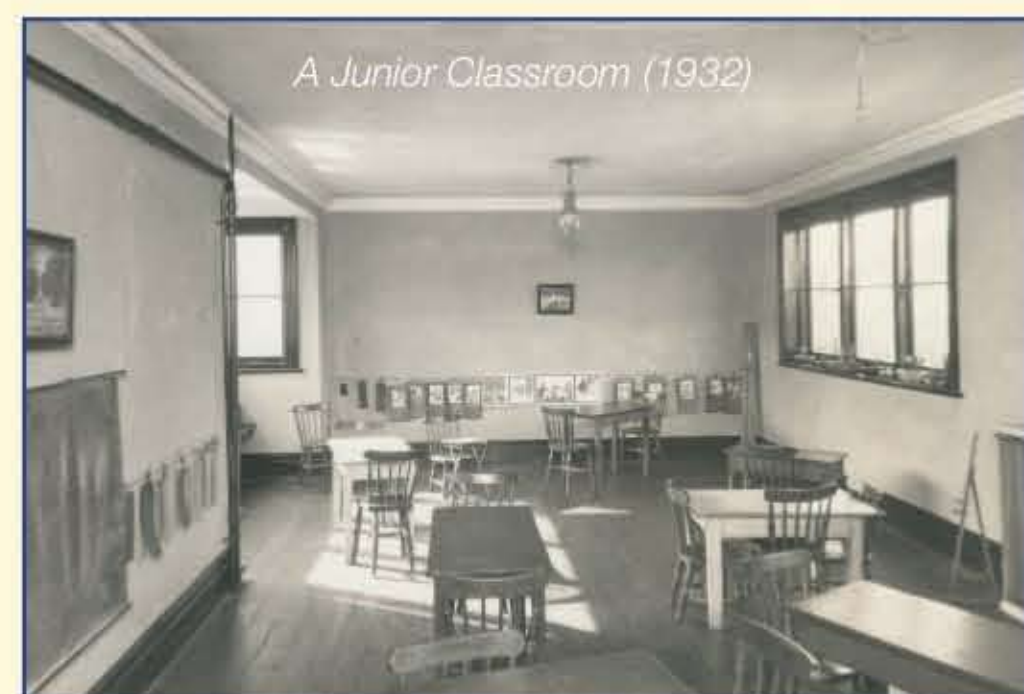


The School 1912-1952

In April 1912, two Welsh sisters, Miss Margery and Miss Mary Talford Jones open St David's School at 23 Woodcote Valley Road, with just five pupils. The School is advertised as being a 'High-class School for Girls and Little Boys' and subjects taught are Reading, Writing, French, Nature Study, Drawing, Brush Work and Drill, which includes daily exercises to help prevent flat feet, weak ankles and round shoulders!

The Misses Talford Jones retire in 1928, leaving Miss Bailey to steer the School through the majority of the Second World War, including its partial evacuation to Upton Wold in Gloucestershire, in 1939. A concrete air raid shelter is built at St David's in Purley, where the remaining children spend their time studying whilst the Battle of Britain rages overhead. In 1944, the School is blasted three times by doodlebugs, resulting in the loss of

all windows, doors and ceilings; but by mid September 1944 the School is in full swing again and 1945 sees the opening of the first Nursery class (or Lower Kindergarten as it was known then). The School's facilities are significantly improved after the war, when Miss Doris Clark, Headmistress, makes a personal purchase of some land on Woodcote Valley Road; with a view to it being used as a much needed playing field.



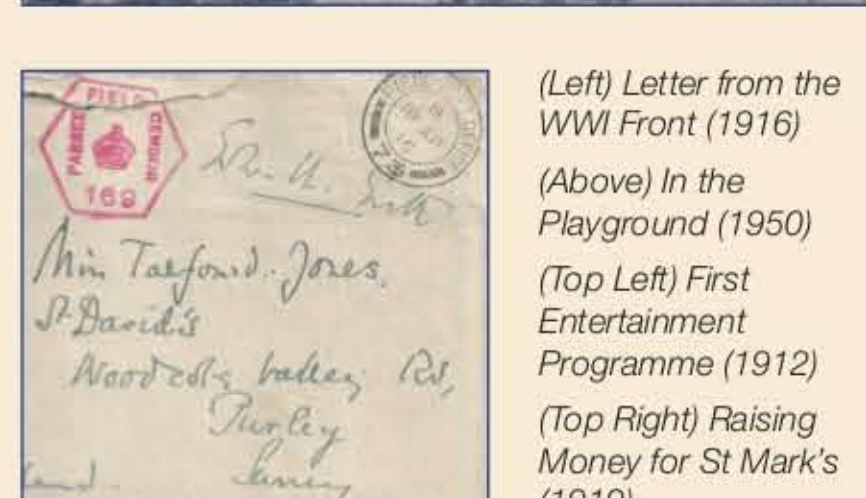
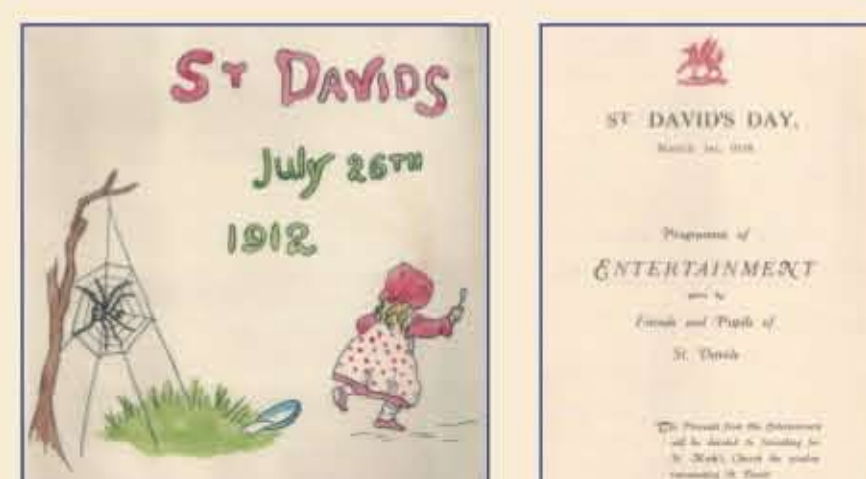
Life at St David's 1912-1952

On the 20th July 1912, the first 'entertainment' of songs and recitations is performed by the School's five pupils and by Christmas 1913, with 23 pupils, an ambitious production of Robin Hood is performed at St Mark's Hall, thus beginning a tradition which endures today. Indeed, so highly regarded are the entertainments by the school that, in 1915, a letter is sent to Kenley Aerodrome (one of the most important fighter stations during the World Wars) requesting that Purley should become a no-fly zone whilst the children are performing their Summer Pageant - and it is granted!

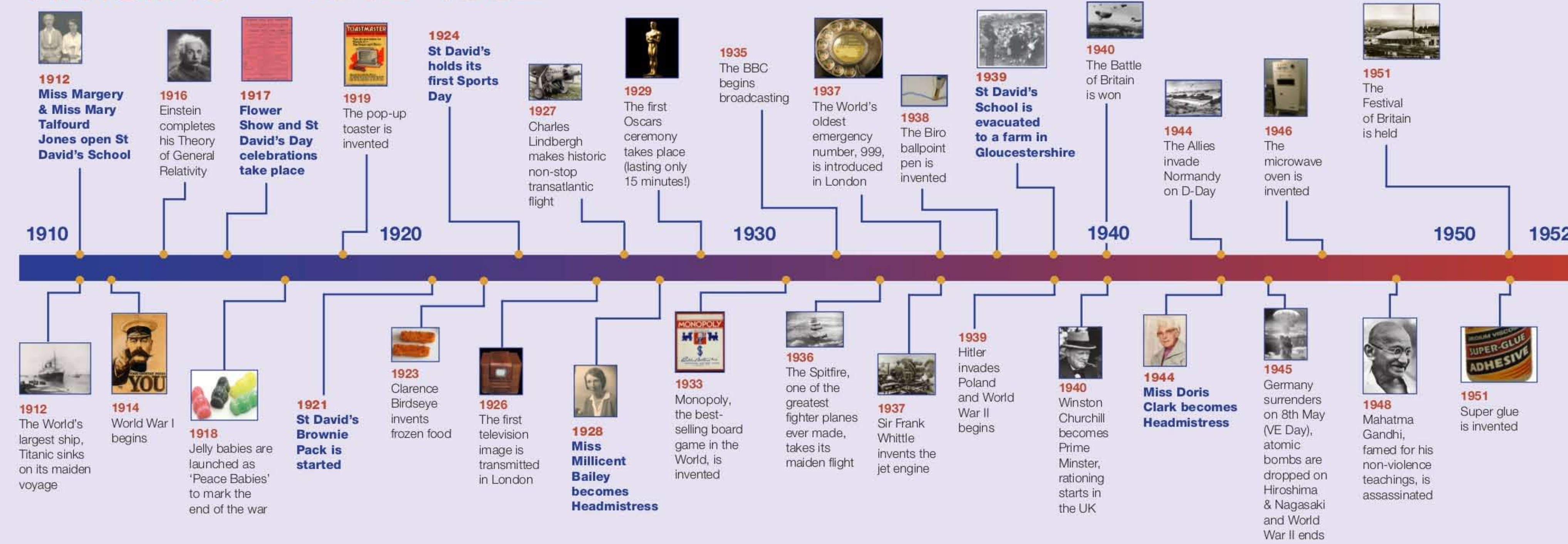
St David's Day is celebrated for the first time in 1917 followed by the inaugural Flower Show and in 1924, the introduction of the first Sports Day. In 1933 the School's 21st birthday is marked by the introduction of a good conduct shield which is still presented each year to the best-behaved House.

During the First World War, the School participates in many charitable activities including the collection and donation of eggs to Purley Military Hospital and the knitting of scarves for soldiers at the Front. This generosity is continued after the war with donations to a wide range of causes including the Children's Ministering League and St Mark's Church, for the installation of a stained glass window which can still be seen today.

Despite the uncertainty and change that characterises this period of history, the children at St David's are kept busy with activities which now include football, netball, Scouts and Brownies. A secure, happy family spirit is created which shapes all aspects of St David's life - past and present.



Timeline - 1912-1952



The School 1952-2012

By the 1950s, with Miss Clark still Headmistress, St David's has 150 pupils (mainly girls) who are taught a range of subjects including Elocution and Choral Speaking as well as Scripture, Handicrafts, French, Latin, History, English, Speech & Drama, Geography and Mathematics. In 1954 the school is divided into three houses (Leo, Cygnus and Aquila) and, in 1984, the school takes delivery of its first computer.

Many celebrations take place, including the 50th anniversary in 1962 which is marked with the planting of the cherry tree which still stands in the school's front garden today; and the 85th anniversary, on which occasion a hot air balloon takes off from the school field.

The school building goes through many improvements during this time, including the conversion in the 1950s of the brick, World War II, air raid shelter into the boys' cloakroom, the installation of central heating in 1968 and the addition of a music room, an IT room, new assembly hall, kitchen and two classrooms in 2003. Despite many changes to the school physically, traditions still hold strong with the annual St David's Day celebration when pupils participate in an Eisteddfod (Welsh festival of poetry); the Junior School Prize Giving ceremony in July, when the Head Teacher recounts the past year's highlights; Harvest Festival; and the Christmas Entertainments.



St. DAVID'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

It was a weekend to remember for all those people who are, or have been, connected with St. David's School, Purley. For that was when the school celebrated its golden jubilee.

A special service and rededication was held at St. Mark's Church, Woodcote, on Saturday afternoon. Then over 400 guests went to a reception in the church hall, where Miss Millicent Bailey, headmistress of the school between 1928 and 1944, cut a golden jubilee cake. (See picture left.)

The service was very much a school affair—for the three men who played the main parts are all on the board of governors.

The Vicar, the Rev. Philip Smith, conducted the service, and an address was given by the Rev. Alan Fagg, chaplain of Maidstone Jail, who used to live in Purley



Life at St David's 1952-2012

Life at St David's includes a variety of activities. Music and drama continue to feature strongly, with a large number of pupils performing in the school choirs, orchestras and theatrical productions, as well as learning an ever-increasing range of instruments from the visiting music teachers. Sport is also important with pupils regularly enjoying football, gymnastics, cricket, swimming, athletics, netball, cross country running and, more recently, korfbal.

In the 1950s after school activities include Scouts, Brownies and dancing. Scouts and dance classes close in 1970, but the St David's Brownie pack is nearly as old as the school itself and celebrates its 90th birthday in 2011! Chess club has been enjoyed by many for nearly 20 years and, more recently, dancing has been revived with the addition of optional Musical Theatre classes. In 1988 a litter of fox cubs are born under what is now the school kitchen and caring for animals continues throughout Mrs Nash's headship with chicks being hatched and nurtured every year at the school.

During this 60 year period, whilst making friends; enjoying a wide variety of music, sport, after school clubs and trips; playing and learning, St David's children continue to follow the School's century old principles of friendship and giving to those less fortunate than themselves with the regular support of a wide range of charities.



Timeline - 1952-2012

