



ST COLUMBA'S SCHOOL



HISTORY OF ST. COLUMBA'S

1897-1906

'Girls' School Company' opens a school on Duchal Road, Kilmacolm to 54 pupils
GSC also owned St Brides in Helensburgh and Park School in Glasgow
School gained a reputation for musical studies
Boys allowed to attend Prep only
School later named St. Columba's
Hockey introduced to School "...a very rough game..."
'Train Girls' - first-class carriage reserved for pupils
Electric lighting supplied to the village
Main Hall at Senior School built
Formation of former pupils' association - St. Columba's School Society
Headmistress: Margaret P Young 1897-1900

1907-1916

School's first science laboratories created
Craigrowan leased for boarding house
First visiting male teacher joined the School to teach piano
School roll approximately 110
Headmistress: Janet JB Waugh 1900-1928

1917-1926

Four additional houses secured as temporary additional boarding accommodation
Acquisition of Shieldhall for boarding house
Purchase of Allanbank in Duchal Road for kindergarten
Playing field on Gryffe Road levelled for tennis
New wing for purpose-built gymnasium and classroom accommodation
Lacrosse adopted as the School game
School roll approximately 150
Headmistress: Janet JB Waugh 1900-1928

1927-1936

First female director invited to join Board
First former pupil reunion organised to mark 30th anniversary
Extension - art room (current library), gymnasium and four music rooms
Introduction of 'position marks' to encourage correct posture
Purchase of Shalott (Junior School) to house all boarders
'Train Girls' - numbers growing, three first-class carriages reserved for pupils
House system introduced to stimulate more interest in games
Eredine bought to provide playground space (now Science block)
1923 wing extended to make continuous frontage on Duchal Road
Domestic science room and library opened
Boarders approximately 24-30
School roll approximately 200
Headmistress: Beatrice SB McMurtrie 1928-1945



Past



1937-1946

Old dining room converted to a new library (currently Room 1) - a gift from St. Columba's School Society
 As a result of the war Park School pupils relocate to St. Columba's for two years
 Boarders busy in the evening knitting for troops
 Incendiary bomb lands in the grounds of Shalott - a stray from the Greenock and Port Glasgow bombings
 People made homeless by the bombing brought to School for temporary accommodation
 Boarders approximately 45
 School roll fluctuates between 170 and 250 because of war
 Headmistress: Beatrice SB McMurtrie 1928-1945

1947-1956

School's Golden Jubilee anniversary
 Prep school outgrowing Shieldhall. Westmarch is purchased
 Miss Margaret Birkmyre presents 18th-century Flemish tapestries to Shalott
 Train girls account for around a third of pupils
 School roll approximately 330
 Headmistress: Katherine C MacArthur 1945-1966

1957-1966

Increased numbers - relocation of Prep School to Shalott
 Main building entrance hall panelled, decorative archway and new lighting installed - a gift from St. Columba's School Society
 New double doors at main entrance donated by Mrs Graham
 School's first involvement with Duke of Edinburgh's Award
 Two storey science block built
 Number of boarders fall to approximately 25
 School roll approximately 440
 Headmistress: Katherine C MacArthur 1945-1966.



Past



1967-1976

First full time male member of staff appointed - Mr Tom Walton, Music
 Nine remaining boarders offered places at St Brides - boarding chapter at St. Columba's closed
 Uniform changes - "...out with belted Burberrys and pudding-bowl hats, in with slimline coats and green corded velvet caps..."
 School's 75th anniversary
 First careers convention held
 Shalott developed to accommodate Preparatory and Junior School.
 Junior class system changed to create a simple primary 1-7
 Cargen Lodge purchased for arts and music centre
 Girls' School Company opts for independence for all three Schools - St. Bride's and Larchfield merge
 School roll fluctuates between 500 and 570 pupils
 Headmistress: Edith Muriel Clark 1966-1976

1977-1986

Announcement of co-education throughout the School - introduction of boys from primary school upwards
 "Around this time alien things like goal posts began to appear in the sunken garden. Footballs rolled around the playground...school was noisier and dirtier, but otherwise much the same. Former Pupil recollection
 New Transitus year established
 Nursery/Preparatory class started
 First work experience programme introduced
 School roll approximately 380
 Headmistress: Sheila M Caldwell 1976-1987

1987-1996

'St. Columba's School Company' created as St. Columba's School becomes independent of Park School
 St. Columba's School Society renamed the St. Columba's Former Pupils' Association
 New Games Hall at Junior School opened by Lord Lang of Monkton
 School pipe band established
 Two additional science laboratories built
 HMC membership attained
 School roll grows from 440 to approximately 600
 Rector: Andrew H Livingstone 1987-2002

1997-2006

School's Centenary Year - coincides with the fourteen-hundredth anniversary of the Saint's death
 Cargill Centre for the Arts and Technology opened by The Princess Royal
 New Library opened by Andrew Neil
 Graham Building at Junior School opened by author and former pupil, Mairi Hedderwick
 All-weather astroturf opened by Craig Reddie CBE and Rhona Simpson
 After school care facility established
 Plans for Senior School extension begin
 Investors in People status achieved
 School roll approximately 730
 Rector: Andrew H Livingstone 1987-2002,
 David G Girdwood 2002-present

2007-2016

School's 110th anniversary



Past