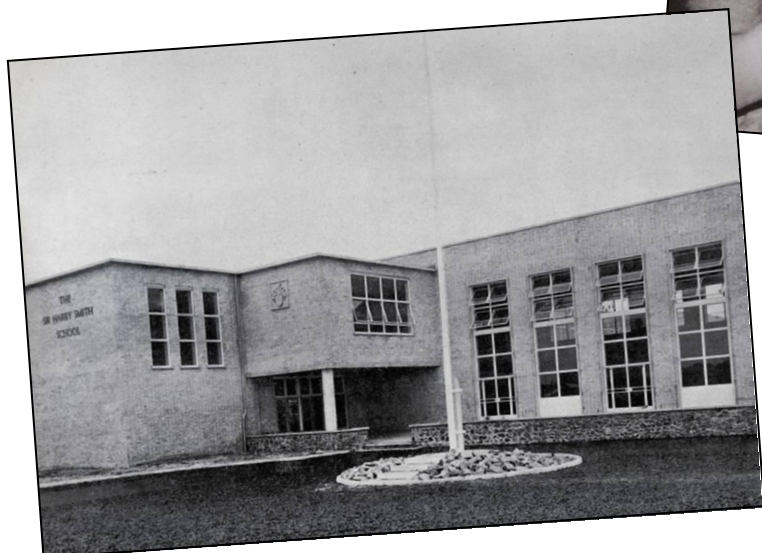
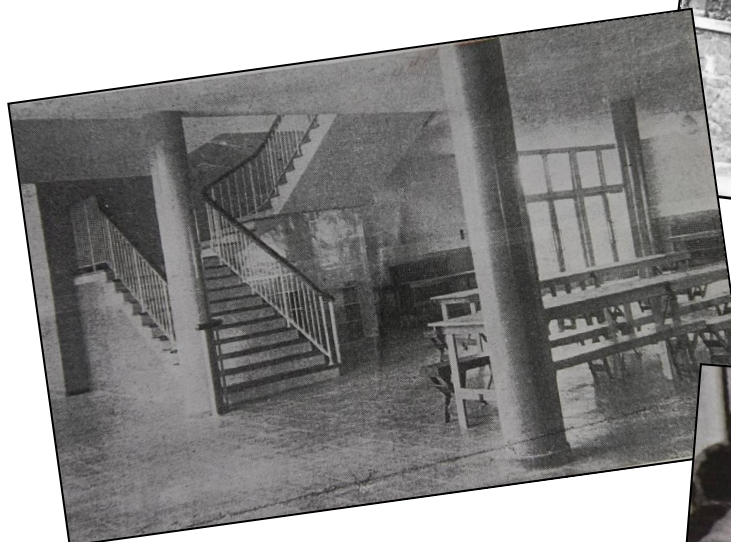




Sir Harry Smith
Community College

A History of the School

by Jack and Jacob
Harris



July 2012



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Contents

1	Introduction
2	Schooling in Whittlesey before SHSCC
4	Whittlesey Workhouse
8	Sir Harry Smith
9	SHSCC Key Dates
10	The Opening of SHSCC
11	The School in 1954
14	Photographs: 1954 – 2012
19	Staff at SHSCC
27	SHSCC Building Phases
28	Recent Changes to the School
29	Buildings Schools for the Future





Sir Harry Smith Community College

Welcome...

Reading the title of this document, you're probably wondering just how much 'history' there is to Sir Harry Smith Community College. After all, the school is not an old one and the buildings which house it are certainly very modern.

In fact, this school has a rich history extending back far beyond its opening in the 1950s. Before beginning this project, we never imagined that we would discover so much of interest; so much information, so many photos and so many memories.

Our research has proved fascinating, and we hope you enjoy reading this document as much as we enjoyed creating it.

Jack and Jacob Harris



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Schooling in Whittlesey before the College

One of the most significant developments that came about with the opening of the Sir Harry Smith School was the idea of boys and girls being taught together. Although perfectly ordinary today, this was something of an oddity, and a source of worry, to the students of Whittlesey, who had been taught separately for well over a century.

In fact, the two old senior schools had been at opposite ends of the town; The National School for Boys was on Station Road and The National School for Girls at West End.



The National Boys School looks much the same today as in this 1937 photo. The portion shown is the master's house.

The earliest record of the boys school is in 1832. In 1849, the Governors of the school were contacted by the Lord of the Manor, J. W. Childers, who informed them that the school building was on his land. He offered to build a new school at his expense if the Governors found a piece of land; the Governors could not find anywhere suitable, so the final agreement stated that the Governors would pay if Mr. Childers found the land. The new school – which still stands today as a Roman Catholic Church – was built next door to the old one. Childers' contribution to Whittlesey is recognised today in the name of the social club almost next door to the school site.

The original Girls School was built in 1823 and consisted only of one large room. By 1849, despite lengthening of the schoolroom, the building could no longer hold the number of pupils in attendance. The following year a new building was opened on the same site, and was, like the Boys School, attractively designed with a head teacher's house attached. As any Mistress was not allowed to continue teaching after marriage, changeovers were regular, with any one not staying at the school for more than 6 years. This was not the case in the Boys School, where masters often stayed for decades, and became well-liked and respected by the Whittlesey community.



The National Girls School stood on the corner of Low Cross and West End.

Both of these schools were provided by the Church, not by local authority. The only provided school in Whittlesey was at Broad Street, which was mainly for infants. Some older boys were taught there until 1926, when the Boys and Girls schools were designated senior schools and Broad Street was left for infants and juniors only. The Broad Street school complex, complete with Master's house, remains today near the junction with Barrs Street.

Unfortunately the Boys and Girls schools, being provided by the Church and so unregulated, had gained a reputation for being unsanitary and outdated by the 1940s. They were threatened with closure before the County Council



Sir Harry Smith Community College

took them over in 1945 and made significant improvements in 1946. This included finally connecting them to mains sewers. The following year, work finally began on the long-awaited new senior school, and the definite closure of the schools was in sight.

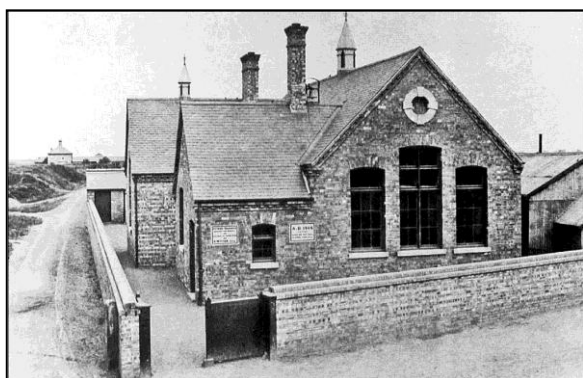
When the Sir Harry Smith School was opened in 1953 all senior pupils were transferred there. The Boys and Girls schools were used now by the junior schools until Park Lane School was built in 1968. At this point the Boys school was sold off, but the handsome Girls school was sadly demolished in order to widen the road. Broad Street school remained in use until 1980 when New Road School was opened.

These were not the only schools in and around Whittlesey. Kings Dyke had a primary school which closed in 1968 and that was demolished as recently as 2005. Turves, Northside and Pondersbridge also had primary schools. It is also worth noting that there were once numerous other privately run and privately funded schools, often run by elderly ladies, including an 'Institution' down London Street, a 'Dame' school down High Causeway, and others down Church Street, Crab Lane and at Eastrea. The earliest record of any form of schooling is from 1692, when five children were taught at a house at Low Cross. This was most likely on the site of the future Girls School.

Head teachers often moved from one local school to another. For example, when the Sir Harry Smith School opened in 1953, head teacher of Broad Street, Mr. Burgess, moved there; consequently, Mr. McCarthy, head of Turves, moved to Broad Street before becoming first head at Alderman Jacobs School in 1960; and the head who succeeded him at Turves in 1953 would go on to be the first head of Park Lane in 1968.



Broad Street school, with the master's house on the left and schoolroom on the right. There are further rooms behind.



Kings Dyke school was built in 1904.



The old school house at Eastrea.

1692: First record of schooling in Whittlesey.

1823: Girls School built at Low Cross/ West End

1849/50: Boys and Girls schools were rebuilt

1938: Approval given for use of Workhouse as school; it was demolished instead

1746: Twelve children were taught at St. Mary's Church

1832: First record of Boys School on Station Road

1877: Broad Street School opened.

1953: Sir Harry Smith School opened; Boys and Girls schools closed



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Whittlesey Workhouse

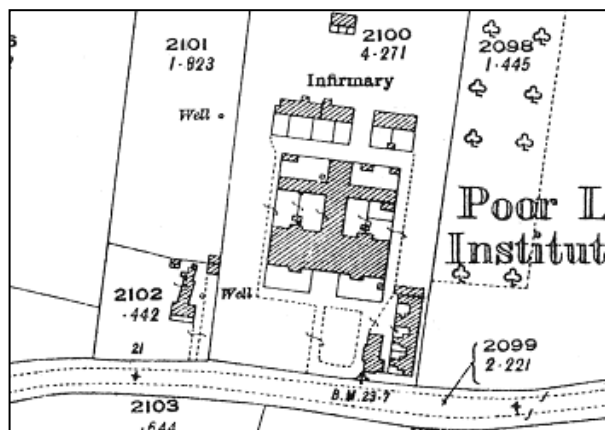
For centuries, the care of the poor was the responsibility of the local parish, who handed out money to those unable to support themselves. Many parishes also allocated a building to house paupers; there is evidence of a workhouse-type facility in Whittlesey dating back to at least 1804, when it was located in Broad Street and served around 30 people.

Throughout the early 1800s, the handout system was increasingly criticised by people who thought that it was being abused. Meanwhile, in agricultural towns like Whittlesey, unemployment rose considerably as more and more labourers were considered inferior to the modern farming equipment that was being produced as a result of the Industrial Revolution. With the annual national cost of relief for the poor totalling £7 million by 1832, the government sought to replace the relief scheme with a better one – one that would give paupers the incentive to work.

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 stated that any unemployed person able-bodied enough to work would be offered a place in a workhouse, and nothing else. By 1838, 573 Poor Law Unions had been formed across England and Wales, with over 500 workhouses built over the next fifty years.

In Whittlesey, the Broad Street building continued in operation for another forty years. It was not until 1874 that a much larger, purpose-built workhouse (shown above) was constructed on the north side of Eastrea Road. Designed by architect Frederick Peck, the building had a capacity of 200 inmates and cost £8000. The workhouse followed a simple layout; a huge central corridor ran the length of the three-storey front, with various other blocks leading from it. The building remained largely unchanged throughout its life, with the exception of minor additions such as a boiler room and bathroom in 1921.

Bottom-right: A 1925 view of Eastrea Road, looking much quieter than today.





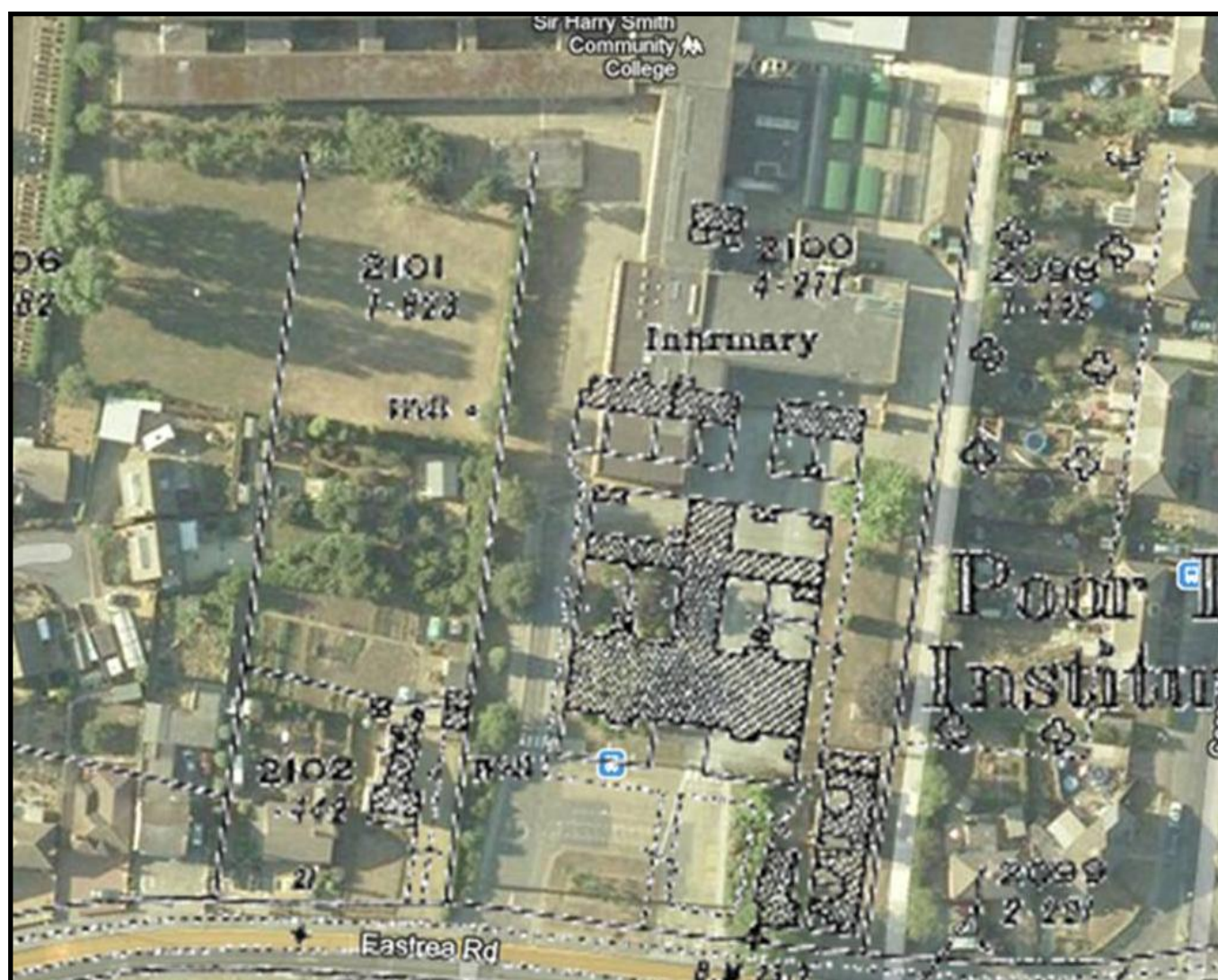
Sir Harry Smith Community College

Inmates were provided with a workhouse uniform, and any personal possessions, including their own clothes, were stored away until they left the workhouse. Families were separated into different areas, with women permitted just one hour a day to spend with their children. Husbands and wives would usually only see each other in church on Sundays, but even here they were not allowed to sit together.

There was a variety of jobs on offer in the workhouse. Whilst men were hired out to local farms, women assisted in the daily running of the building, engaging in chores such as cleaning, cooking and washing. Children could help the women in the vegetable gardens, which provided the workhouse with its own source of food.

At the time of the 1881 Census, there were 79 residents at the Workhouse, 75 of which were inmates. The Master of the Workhouse was Henry Masters (rather appropriately!) and his wife Elizabeth was the Matron. The only other residing staff members were Ann Watson, a Nurse, and George Oliver, the porter.

The majority of the residents originated from Cambridgeshire, and most were listed as 'agricultural labourers'. The oldest inmate in 1881 was 91 years old; the youngest residents were just two.



Above: A 1924 plan of the workhouse superimposed onto a recent satellite image of the school.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

The census list shows just how different attitudes were in Victorian times. For example, one thirteen-year-old boy is recorded as an 'Idiot', which qualified as a handicap. Another inmate, a 55-year-old woman, is listed as a 'lunatic'.

Conditions improved gradually during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and workhouse life became much more bearable. Newspapers, books and toys were allowed and living conditions were, generally, of a better quality than those in much of the poorer housing of the day.

In 1929, local authorities were given the power to take over workhouses as municipal hospitals, and on April 1st 1930, the workhouse system was officially abolished altogether. Renamed as 'Public Assistance Institutions', many workhouses continued to be run as hospitals by local councils until 1948, when the National Health Service was founded and the final traces of the Poor Law Act disappeared.

In many cases, workhouse buildings remained in the hands of the local authorities and were converted into elderly care homes. In 1960, just over half of all council-provided elderly care was accommodated in former workhouses.

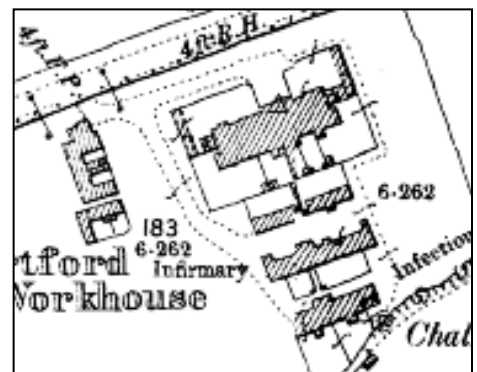
But what of Whittlesey? Unfortunately, the days of the Eastrea Road building were numbered. Although it was taken over as an infirmary in 1930, it closed just four years later and was subsequently left to fall into dereliction.

In June 1937, Coates School moved temporarily into the building whilst its own was extended and renovated to cope with overcrowding. In February 1938, the Whittlesey School Managers agreed that 90 of the oldest junior children could be schooled in the old workhouse once Coates vacated it in April 1938. However, in that same April the Isle of Ely Education Committee approved the demolition of the building, and when war broke out the following year plans for a new school had to be shelved.

Following its demolition, the workhouse site was used by the Broad Street Infants School as allotments, which were utilised for gardening classes. Tenders were invited to build a new senior school on the site in 1947, and the present Sir Harry Smith College was constructed shortly after. The workhouse was all but forgotten until, in November 2011, the old cellar was unearthed (*right*) having been buried beneath the school car park for over half a century.



'The Spike' in the far distance, seen from St. Mary's tower in 1914



Above: Hertford Workhouse, also designed by Frederick Peck. As the map and photo show, it was very similar to the Whittlesey building





Sir Harry Smith Community College

A superimposed plan of the workhouse showing the different sections of the building. It shows that the front of the school is built on the hospital buildings, rather than the main workhouse building.





Sir Harry Smith Community College

Sir Harry Smith: The school's namesake

Sir Harry George Wakelyn Smith was a celebrated Whittlesey hero. His importance in the town is well recognised; the title of this school, the name of a local pub, three street names and a plaque above an unassuming cottage where he was born all serve as enduring symbols of his local legacy.

The influence of his name and his great accomplishments extends far beyond the limits of this small market town. In fact, no less than six South African towns pay homage to him and his wife: Harrismith, Ladysmith, Ladismith, Whittlesea, Smithfield and Aliwal North. During his lifetime he also received personal thanks from the Houses of Parliament, the freedom of both London and Glasgow, and the title of Doctor of Laws from Cambridge University. What did he do to earn such an impressive array of achievements?



He was a soldier, who enjoyed a successful and celebrated career. Born in St. Mary's Street, Whittlesey, in 1787, he joined the Whittlesea Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry at the age of just 16. He joined the army just before he turned 18, his father having bought him the position of second lieutenant in the 95th Foot Regiment.

His first experience of war was in South America in 1806. His attack on Buenos Aires was a failure and it resulted in him being captured for some time. He was released with an agreement stating he and his troops would not return.

He met his wife, whose later title of Lady Smith was given to the names of two South African towns, in 1812. It was during a battle with the French, whilst trying to recapture a fortified Spanish town, that the young Spanish girl sought refuge from the fighting that had killed all of her family but her and her sister. The strong Scottish accent of Harry's more handsome comrade immediately put off the girl, Juana Maria de los Dolores de León, and so her attention switched naturally to Harry. They were married within a matter of days, Juana being just fourteen years old.

Juana left Spain and stayed with her husband throughout his various travels. He was stationed in South Africa from 1828 to 1840, where his job was to calm tension between natives and new English families moving to the Cape Colony, the former name of British South Africa. He spent the next seven years in India. Here, he was to resolve any trouble that may arise from the few areas of India not under British rule. These areas were often under unstable leadership.

Harry's most famous battle was at Aliwal in 1846. Here, he attacked a Sikh army – and won – despite being heavily outnumbered. His tactical approach helped move towards peace a short time later.



Harry died in 1860 aged 73, just a year after retiring from the army. His wife died exactly 12 years later, and was buried with him in Whittlesey cemetery. However, as previously mentioned, his legacy is still well alive both in Whittlesey and South Africa.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Key Dates

April 1938

Despite earlier plans to use it as a new senior school, the Isle of Ely Education Committee approved the demolition of the old Whittlesey Workhouse.

21st June 1946

The Board of Governors of the Sir Harry Smith School was formed.

20th June 1947

Tenders were invited to build a new senior school on the site of the workhouse. It followed an 8 year delay caused by the outbreak of war and the subsequent prioritisation of new housing (Coronation and Victory Avenue).

15th December 1952

Headmaster Mr. Burgess was notified that the new school was to be called 'Sir Harry Smith'.

September 1953

'Sir Harry Smith Secondary School' opened to students, replacing the National Boys School in Station Road and the National Girls School in West End. It was the first new school to be built in Cambridgeshire after the war.

Thursday 7th October 1954, 2.30pm

The school had its official opening ceremony. The next day, members of the general public were invited to view the buildings.

1967

Phase 2 of the building work – the second half of the west wing, several laboratories, D.T. rooms and the sports hall - was completed.

1969

The school was the first in Cambridgeshire to become a Comprehensive School.

31st December 1970

The first headmaster, Irving Nelson Burgess M.B.E., retired. He died aged 66 on 3rd March 1972. Ronald J. Moores succeeded him in September 1971.

1st September 1972

Sir Harry Smith School officially changed its status to 'Community College', with the headmaster becoming the 'Principal'.

1974

The third and final phase of the school was built, albeit in a different style (brown brick) to that drawn up back in 1951.

1992

There was controversy over talks to drop 'Sir Harry Smith' from the school's name. If the plans had gone ahead, it would have been renamed 'the Community College of Whittlesey'.

August 2011

Work on extending and refurbishing the whole school began under the 'Building Schools for the Future' scheme.

April 1st 2012

The school officially changed to 'Academy' status.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

The Official Opening

The admittance of 360 students to Sir Harry Smith School in September 1953 followed the closure of the National Boys School in Station Road and the National Girls School in West End, and meant that boys and girls would be taught together for the first time in Whittlesey's history.

Because of continuing construction work - classrooms were housed in annexes until the buildings were completed - it was not until October 7th 1954 that the school had its official opening ceremony, performed by Alderman J. W. Payne, the chairman of the Isle of Ely Education Committee. The new headmaster, Irving Nelson Burgess (pictured below) noted in his log book that *'the assembly hall was full and some 870 people were gathered for the occasion'*.

"The school had been built on the site of an old workhouse, to which the old folk, wearied with the strain and stress of life, came with dread. But in place of that, we have planted this magnificent edifice, this attractive, inviting, alluring and spacious building, and in place of that building for the old, we have this structure to provide for the young."

- Alderman J. W. Payne in a speech at the opening ceremony

Guests at the opening ceremony were afterwards treated to a special tea provided by the governors of the school. The following days, members of the general public were invited to view the school buildings, and, according to the log book, *'thousands of people from all around the district availed themselves of the opportunity to inspect the premises.'*

The first phase of the school, built by local contractors Rose & Sons, had a capacity of 600 students and encompassed an area of 26 acres, which included playing fields, tennis courts, a pavilion and gardens complete with greenhouse and tool sheds. Phase 2, although planned from the start, was not completed until 1967.

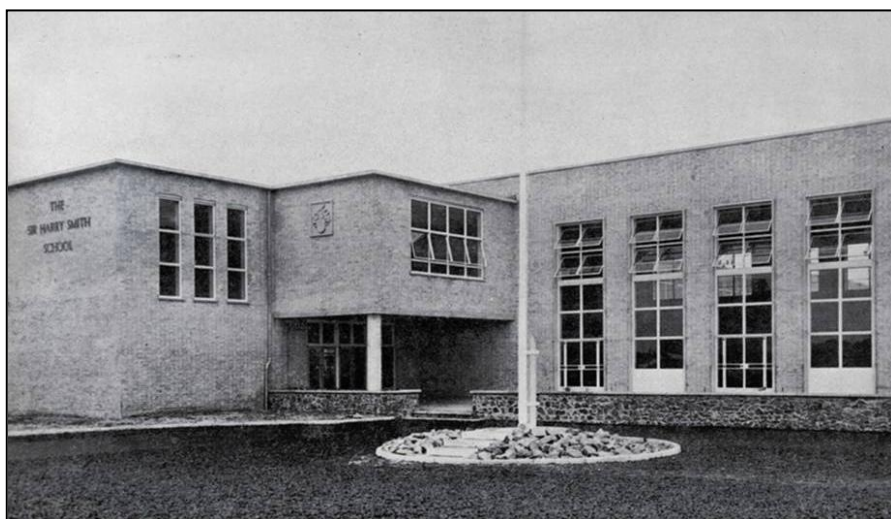
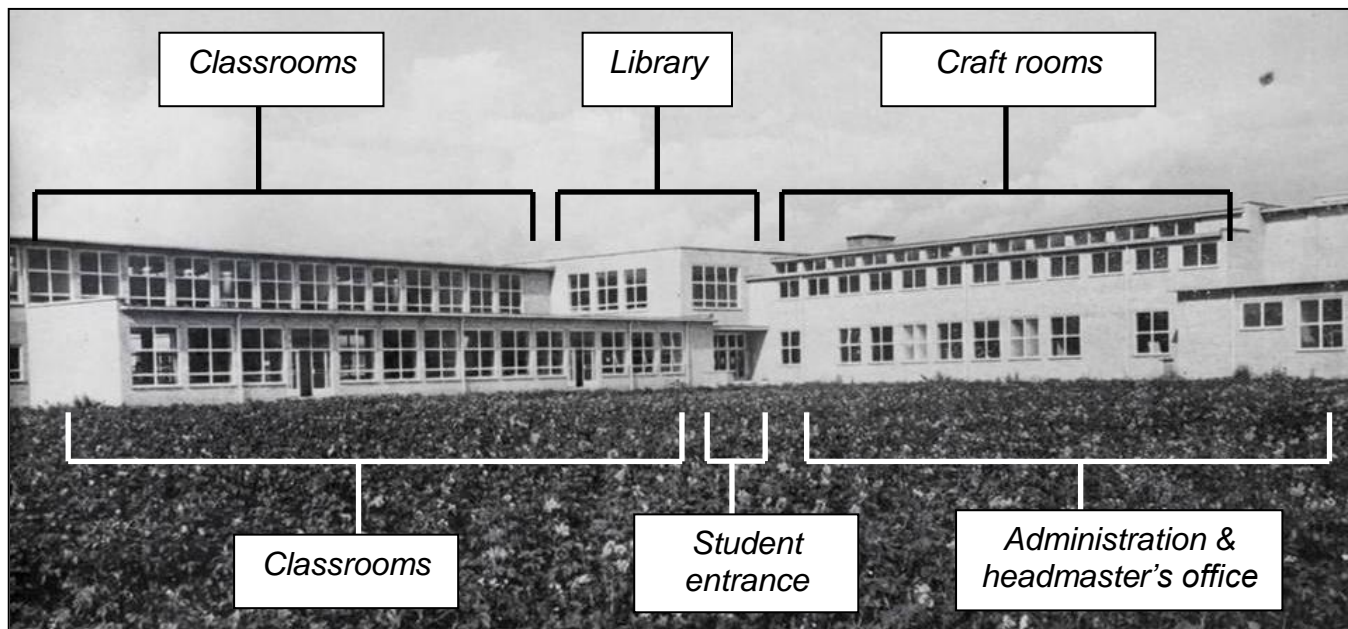


8th October 1954: (l-r) C.W. Anderson, Rev. G. E. Quinion, Ald. C. A. Jacobs, C. Dale, Ald. J. W. Payne, and T. W. Anthony. The group is pictured in the school dining hall.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

1954



The front of the school at the time of opening. The staff room was added in the 1960s and the brown-brick first floor in the early 1970s.

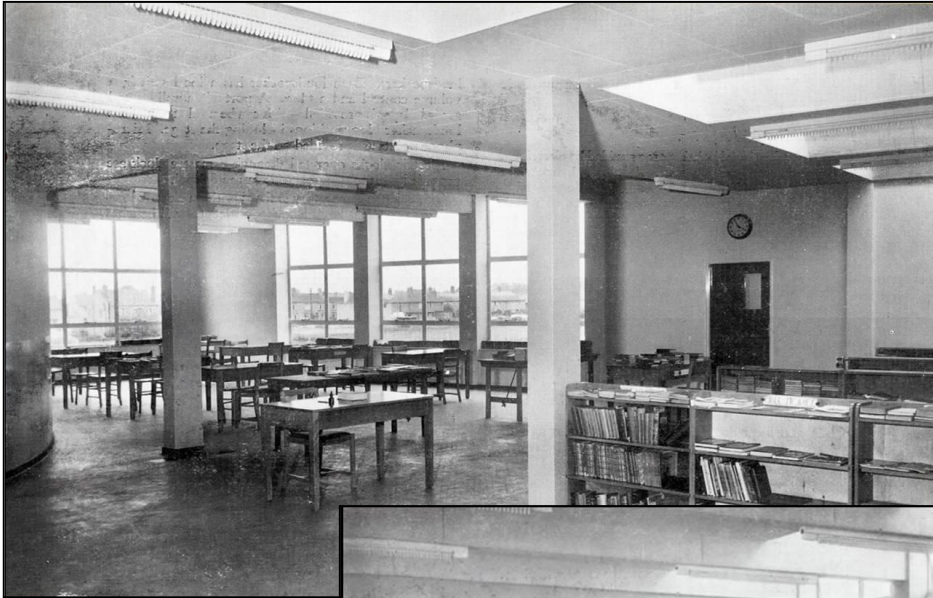
The Main Hall, showing the ultra-modern two-tone pastel decoration that was applied throughout the whole school.





Sir Harry Smith Community College

1954



The original library, which boasted a capacity of 5000 books. It remained in use until the current one was built in 2007.

A view of today's room 46, originally one of two arts and crafts rooms. These large rooms were later divided into four smaller classrooms (rooms 45-48).



One of the regular classrooms, most probably geography. It is likely that this view is looking towards the back of the current room 34; the storeroom seen here has since been knocked through to enlarge the room.



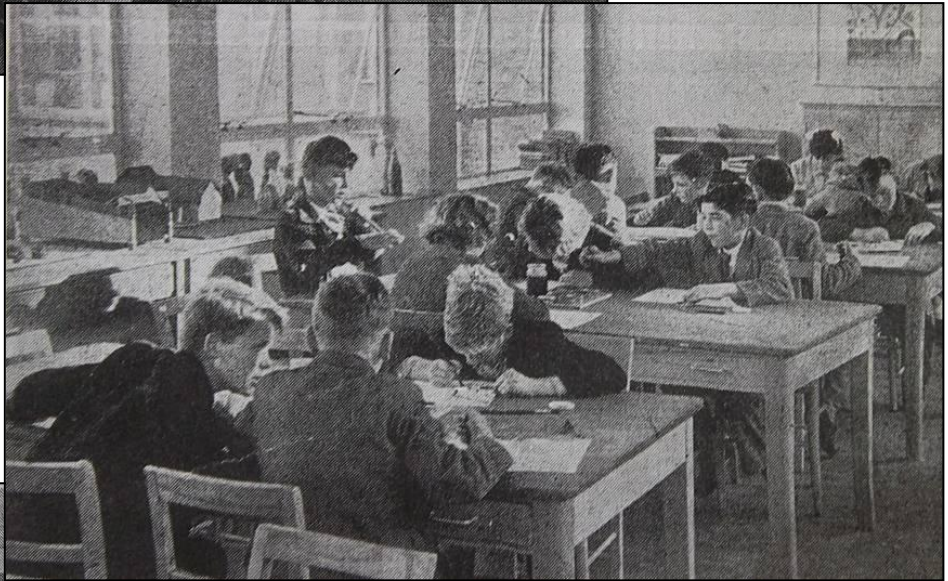
Sir Harry Smith Community College

1954



Room 16, the school's first – and at the time only – science laboratory.

The second arts and crafts room, today rooms 47 and 48. The wall seen at the back of the room here (originally a storeroom) has since been removed.



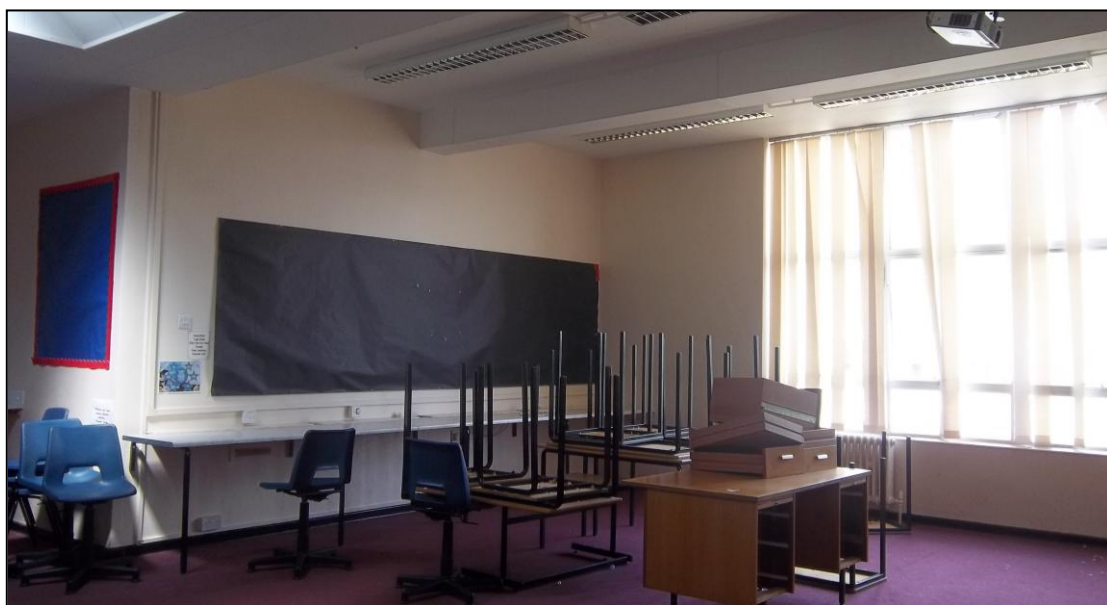
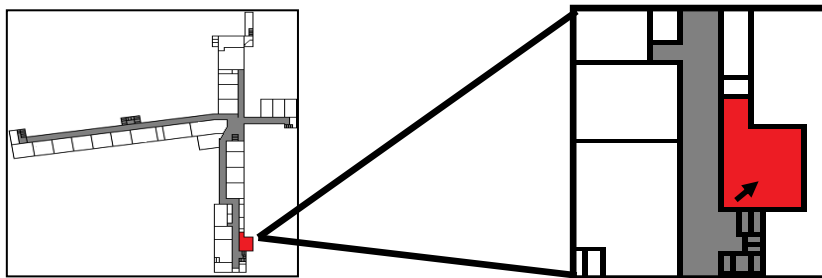
The Crush Hall, showing the original entrance doors and the red floor tiles which are still a feature of the school almost six decades later.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Changes to the School: 1954 - 2012

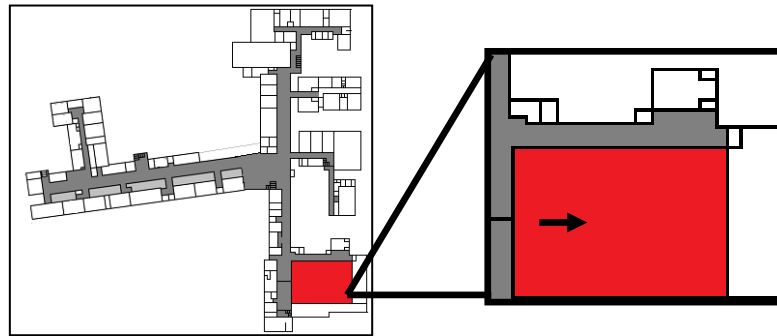
Needlework Room (now room 53)





Sir Harry Smith Community College

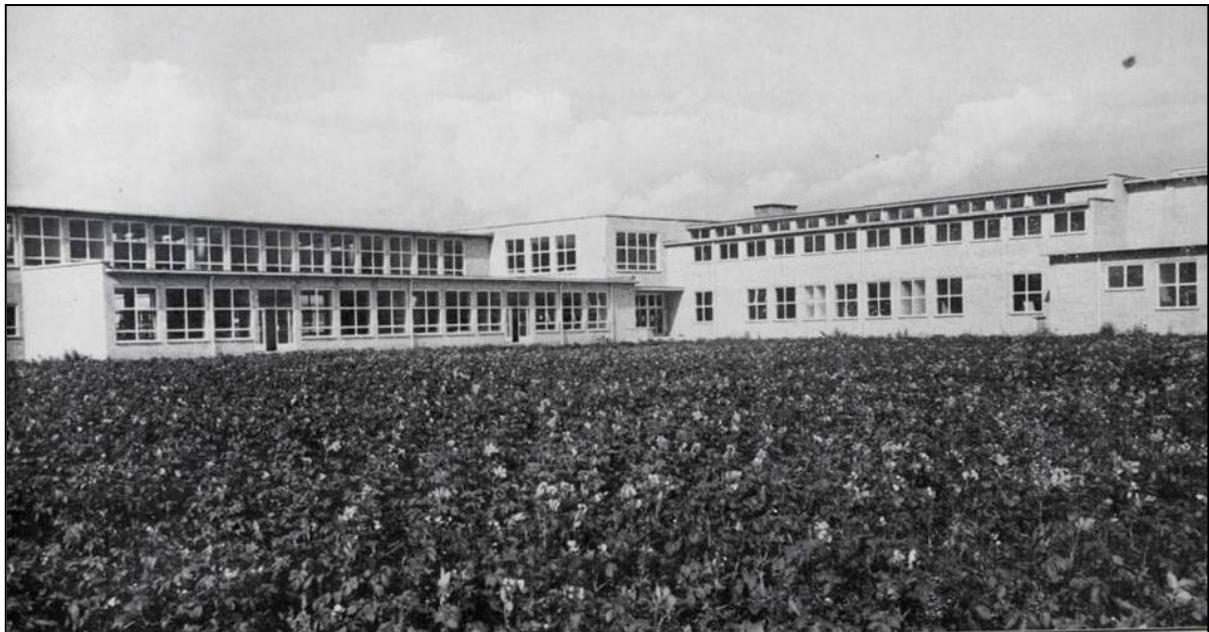
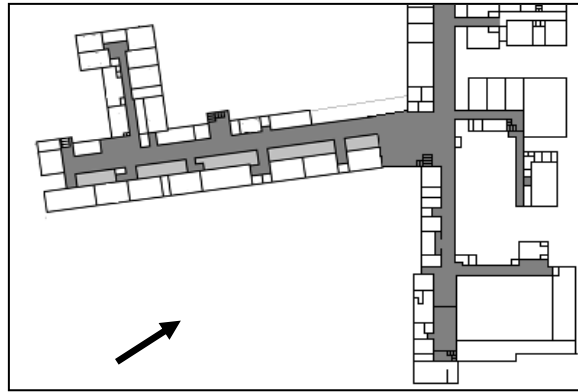
Main Hall





Sir Harry Smith Community College

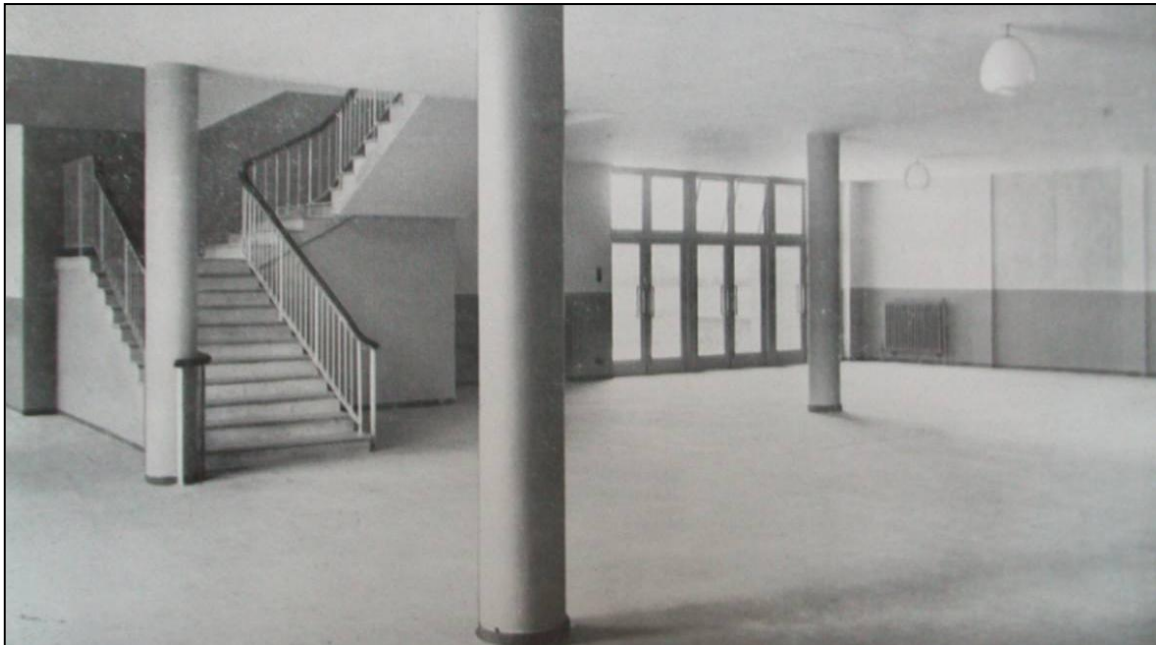
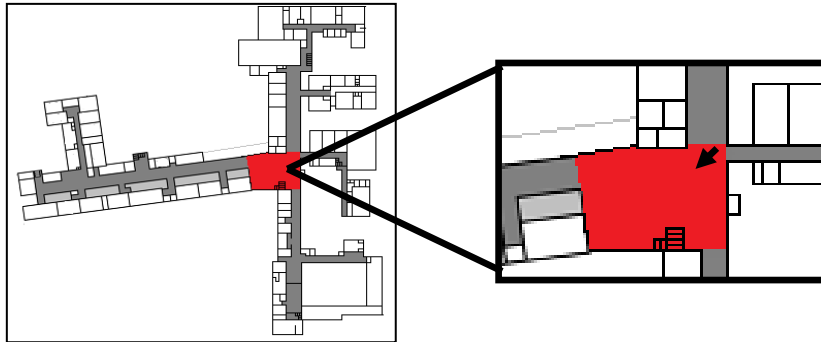
The front field





Sir Harry Smith Community College

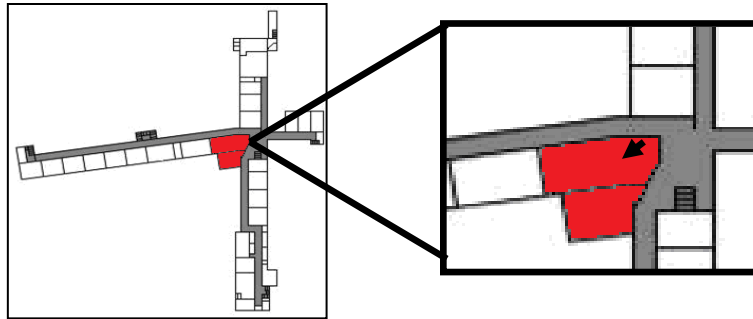
Crush Hall





Sir Harry Smith Community College

Library (now rooms 36/37)





Sir Harry Smith Community College

Irving Nelson Burgess, M.B.E.

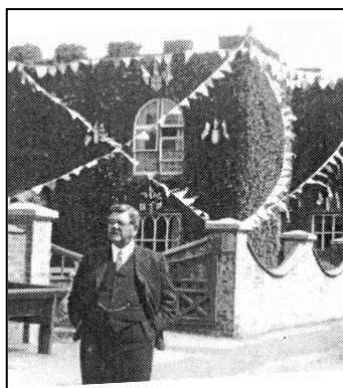


Mr Burgess was the first headmaster of the Sir Harry Smith School. Born in Whittlesey on 9th October 1905, he was named Irving Nelson after his mother's favourite actor, Henry Irving, and because his birthday was close to the centenary of Nelson's victory at the Battle of Trafalgar.

He had been a head teacher in Wisbech and Tydd St. Giles before taking office at the Broad Street School in Whittlesey in 1936. He stayed there until he was selected from 226 applicants as head of the newly opened Sir Harry Smith Secondary School on March 1st 1952. In 1951, he was awarded an M.B.E. for work in the Home Guard and the Cadets.

Mr Burgess lived at 54 Eastrea Road, almost opposite the school. P.E. teacher Jock Craig happened to live next door. He ran popular evening classes during his tenure at Sir Harry Smith, and he was well-liked by pupils.

He retired on the 31st of December 1970, and died aged 66 on the 3rd of March 1972. Today, Mr Burgess's legacy is still evident in Whittlesey, with Irving Burgess Close, off Stonald Road, commemorating his name. His family still live in Castle House, in West End, where he was born over a hundred years ago.



The photo on the left shows his father, Harry Burgess, outside Castle House in 1935, and the picture below is of Mr Burgess with his wife, son and grandson at the front of the school in 1964. The photos bottom-left are of Mr Burgess's visit from the Minister of Education on March 19th 1959.





Sir Harry Smith Community College

Headteachers

1953

1954	_____
1955	_____
1956	_____
1957	_____
1958	_____
1959	_____
1960	_____
1961	_____
1962	_____
1963	_____
1964	_____
1965	_____
1966	_____
1967	_____
1968	_____
1969	_____

Mr. Irving Nelson Burgess, M.B.E.

Mr. Burgess was the schools first headmaster, and is fondly remembered by past pupils. He retired in December 1970. His deputy, Mr. Saunders, took his role for the remainder of the academic year.



Mr. Burgess

1970

1971

1972	_____
1973	_____
1974	_____

Mr. Fred Saunders (temporary)

Mr. Ronald J. Moores

Mr. Moores took over in 1971.



Mr. Moores

1975

1976	_____
1977	_____
1978	_____
1979	_____
1980	_____
1981	_____
1982	_____
1983	_____
1984	_____
1985	_____

Mr. David Talbot Hill

Mr. Hill was appointed in 1975 and is the second-longest serving head. He left in 1986 and Mr. Fay became acting Principal for the rest of that school year.



Mr. Hill

1987

1987	_____
1988	_____

Mr. Edison Giles

1989

1990	_____
1991	_____

Mr. Ian Carpenter

1992

1993	_____
1994	_____
1995	_____
1996	_____
1997	_____
1998	_____

Miss Jenny James

Miss James is the only female head of the school to date. She joined as a deputy in 1991.



1999

1998	_____
------	-------

Mr. Winstone

2000

2001	_____
2002	_____
2003	_____
2004	_____
2005	_____
2006	_____

Mr. Michael Sandeman

Mr. Sandeman left after seven years to be head at Arthur Mellows Village College, Glinton.

2007

2006	_____
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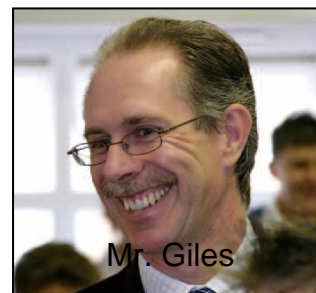
Mr. Laurie Richards

2008

2009	_____
2010	_____
2011	_____
2012	_____

Mr. Jonathan Digby

Mr. Digby joined in 2008, having previously been deputy at the Abbey School, Ramsey.



Mr. Giles

Mr. Digby



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Staff at Sir Harry Smith



This photo dates from around 1960. The staff roll is considerably less than today's!

Back (l-r): Mr. Myrant, unknown, Mr. Fred Saunders (deputy head teacher), Mr. Shadrack, Mr. Fred Cook, Mr. Irving Burgess (head teacher), Mr. Bryan (art), and Mr. James 'Jock' Craig (P.E.).

Front: (l-r): Mrs Myrant, unknown, Mrs Harriet Arnsby, Mrs Emily Oldfield (needlework), Mrs J. Greenfield (Maths and English), unknown, and Mrs Pat Smith.

With two schools merging into one, senior staff members from three different Whittlesey schools combined to form the new head team at Sir Harry Smith: Mr. Burgess, from his previous post as Head at Broad Street; Miss Bartholomew, from her previous job as Senior Mistress at the Girls school, and Mr. Saunders from the Boys School. Mrs Arnsby replaced Miss Bartholomew after six years.



Mr. Burgess
- Headmaster -
Appointed 1953;
retired 1970
*Previously head
of Broad Street
School.*



Mrs Arnsby
- Senior Mistress -
Appointed 1959;
retired 1983
*Previously teacher
at Girls School and
Sir Harry Smith.*



Mr. Saunders
- Deputy Head -
Appointed 1955;
retired 1980s
*Previously teacher
at Boys School*



By the time of this photograph, taken in the late 1970s, the staff number had increased dramatically from 1965. Head teacher Mr. Hill can be seen sitting between Mrs Arnsby (wearing pink) and Mr. Saunders.



Sir Harry Smith Community College



This picture was taken in the early 1980s. Mr. Mitchell (second row up, sixth from left) and Mrs Blackwell (third row up, second from right) still work at the school.



- From left to right - **Front:** Mrs Triggol, Mr. Shilling, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Fay, Mr. Giles (head teacher), Mr. Walpole, Mr. Langley, Miss Stickles, Mrs Land. **2nd row:** Mrs Cripps, unknown, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Darters, Mr. Cheval, Mrs Blackwell, Mr. Carter, Mr. Granger. **3rd Row:** Mrs Ashworth, Miss Howard, Mrs Shaw, Mrs Goody, Mrs Foreman, Mrs McNorton, Miss Davies, Mrs McLean, Mrs Campbell, Mr. Marple. **Back row:** Mrs Smart, Miss Carrington, Mr. King, Mr Brielly, Mr. Demphey, Mr. Pike, Mr. Wales, Mr. Land, Mrs Langley, Mrs Owens. The photo dates from around 1988. Not all members of staff are present.



Staff Memories

Mrs Ashworth

Mrs Ashworth has been an English teacher at Sir Harry Smith since September 1988.

- **What are your fondest memories of the school?**

When I started here, my first impression was a very positive one. There was a distinct sense of unity, amongst both staff and pupils. The school had a very friendly, personal feel that you just don't get everywhere; I was new to the town and it helped that many of the staff were local.

- **What changes have you seen during your time here?**

When I started here, there was a house system in place which I thought was very effective. It meant that goals and achievements could be recognised jointly, as part of a group. Nowadays the emphasis is very much on individual accomplishments, which I suppose is a positive thing.

- **Which changes did you think were good?**

Obviously I was very pleased with the English block when it opened in 2005. I had previously taught upstairs in room 46 (now History) and on the ground floor in what is now BL17. I liked my classroom overlooking the front field, but it was very nice to have a purpose-built block just for the English department.

Another positive alteration was the reduction in the school day. Lessons used to finish at 3.40pm, but it was cut down to 3.15pm and then finally 3pm. We once had a 90-minute lunch break, which was far too long.

When I joined, the school was very much 'behind' in many ways. There was a great deal of sexism; females were not allowed to wear trousers, and boys always came first on the register. I was heavily involved in bringing greater gender equality to the school.

- **Are there any changes that you didn't like so much?**

There are a lot more exams these days. It used to be much easier to organise things such as school trips, but people just don't have the time anymore.

- **What is your favourite part of the current BSF alterations?**

I'm very impressed with the new classroom block and student entrance - the new humanities rooms are my idea of a perfect classroom! The whole place has a sense of brightness and spaciousness, which is brilliant. I'm also looking forward to the completion of the new canteen, as we haven't had a purpose-built dining facility here since the late 1990s.

- **Do you think any part of the current alterations should be done differently?**

I'm not a fan of the coloured corridors, not least because English will be orange. One of my previous classrooms here was situated on a corridor that was painted the most sickly, awful orange, and I've hated the colour ever since! I'm also unsure about the two-week timetable planned for next year; I think the late lunchtime in particular will be hard to adjust to.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Mr Carter

Mr Carter has taught History at Sir Harry Smith since 1983.

- **What are your fondest memories of the school?**

My best memories are of the colleagues I've worked with and the lovely students here.

- **What changes have you seen during your time here?**

The development of technology is undoubtedly the biggest change. The current BSF transformations are also altering the school enormously.

- **Which changes did you think were good?**

Laptops and interactive whiteboards are a great help with teaching and lesson planning.

- **Are there any changes that you didn't like so much?**

There's too much data to deal with nowadays.

- **What is your favourite part of the current BSF alterations?**

When it's finished!

- **Do you think any part of the current alterations should be done differently?**

In an ideal world, I would have liked to have seen a total rebuild. I think that would have been better.

Mr Darters

Mr. Darters has been teaching D.T. at the school since January 1986.

- **What are your fondest memories of the school?**

My best memories are of meeting former students again and seeing how they've got on after school. I also have fond memories of colleagues.

- **What changes have you seen during your time here?**

There has been a great change in the school's ethos; it's standing in the community has really increased.

- **What is your favourite part of the current BSF alterations?**

The dining hall is the best part for me.

- **Do you think any part of the current alterations should be done differently?**

I think they should have built a dedicated facility for Mr. Crofts in site maintenance.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Mr Mitchell

Mr Mitchell started working as a science teacher at Sir Harry Smith in June 1976. Today he is part of the senior leadership team and is heavily involved in the BSF project.

- **What are your fondest memories of the school?**

There are no particular memories that really stand out. I've always enjoyed the drama productions here, and I like seeing students succeed. It's nice to meet a former pupil and hear how they're getting on after leaving school.

- **What changes have you seen during your time here?**

There have been numerous changes whilst I've been here, but as a general comment I'd say the school used to be more laidback.

- **Which changes did you think were good?**

The lunch break once lasted an hour and a half, which was unnecessary.

- **Are there any changes that you didn't like so much?**

Nowadays there is much more pressure on exams and performance. As I already mentioned, school used to be much more 'relaxed'.

- **What is your favourite part of the current BSF alterations?**

I think that the dining hall, main hall, drama block and new entrance area will have the biggest impact. They will give the school a completely different feel.

- **Do you think any part of the current alterations should be done differently?**

I would have liked to have taken more time on some aspects of the design process. The planning time was condensed from a year to about 3 months, so it was quite a challenge. The end product is still very good, however - it's just what the school wanted.



Mrs Langley

Mrs Langley has been teaching Art at the school since 1978.

- **What are your fondest memories of the school?**

It's very difficult to single out one. My favourite memories are those that involve the whole school. Highlights would be a sponsored walk we did in Derbyshire many years ago and a trip to the Millennium Dome in 1999.

- **What changes have you seen during your time here?**

The greatest change is undoubtedly the BSF scheme going on at the minute.

- **Which changes did you think were good?**

Naturally I was pleased to have a new block built purposely for art in the early 1980s.

- **Are there any changes that you didn't like so much?**

There aren't any changes that I dislike as such; it is the disruption that comes with making changes that I have not liked.

- **What is your favourite part of the current BSF alterations?**

I really couldn't say at the minute. Until the alterations are complete and have been used for six months or so, I think it is difficult to judge if they are successful or not. There are certain aspects of the plans that cannot be judged until they are put into practice – such as whether or not you can open the windows and get enough fresh air in!






- **Do you think any part of the current alterations should be done differently?**

Again it is hard to say. I don't think you can spot imperfections in the new areas until they are used.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Building phases

<p>1947 - 1954</p>	<p>PHASE 1 The first phase of building consisted of the assembly hall, administrative areas, four downstairs classrooms, two arts and crafts rooms, the library, and four other classrooms upstairs. These areas were considered 'uneconomical' to build in stages. Some classes were housed in temporary huts.</p>	
<p>1954 - 1967</p>	<p>PHASE 2 Completed in 1967, the second phase of building included the sports hall, changing rooms, the second half of the west wing (both upstairs and downstairs), a new science room, a new cookery room, D.T. rooms and the staff room.</p>	
<p>1967 - 1974</p>	<p>PHASE 3 Rooms 49 – 52 were built during this time. Although always planned, the long time-scale of building meant that tastes had changed, and this first-floor area was built in an entirely different style, with brown bricks. The rooms were originally for the careers department.</p>	
<p>1974 - 2011</p>	<p>With all areas originally planned completed, extensions and alterations were made as and when they were needed after 1974. Major works came in 1982 when the art department was built, along with two new science rooms and a cookery room. The Music department and Drama suite were built in 1998. More recently, large extensions have taken the form of the English and D.T. departments.</p>	
<p>BSF 2011 - 2013</p>	<p>By 2011 much of the school was tired and a large-scale overhaul was needed. The BSF scheme provided funding for this. Already a new classroom block has been completed and work on the new canteen and drama block is now underway.</p>	



Sir Harry Smith Community College

Recent changes

These extensions and alterations have all occurred within the last twenty or so years.

Today the gym, drama suite and music department are on this site. They were opened in 1998.

The old dining hall and kitchen was built with the first phase of the school and demolished around 1998. In 2003 the English block was built on the site.

When opened in 1954, only a few classrooms were complete, so classes were housed in huts behind the hall; these 'temporary' rooms appear to have lasted for forty years! They were probably lost at the same time as the dining hall. Now the Sixth Form centre occupies the site.



This area is today dominated by sports, with two Astroturf pitches and tennis courts.

The tennis courts were in this location since the school opened but have since been moved.

A science lab was added in this gap in 2004.

These buildings were demolished to make way for the new D.T. block, which was built in 2003.

The caretaker's house was completed by 1954 when the school opened. It was demolished in 2011.



Sir Harry Smith Community College

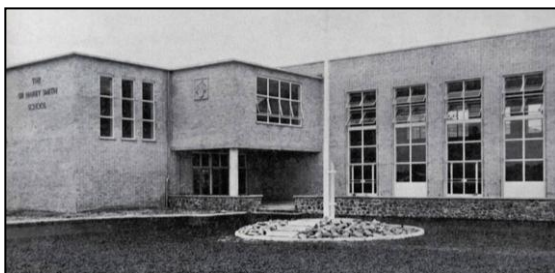
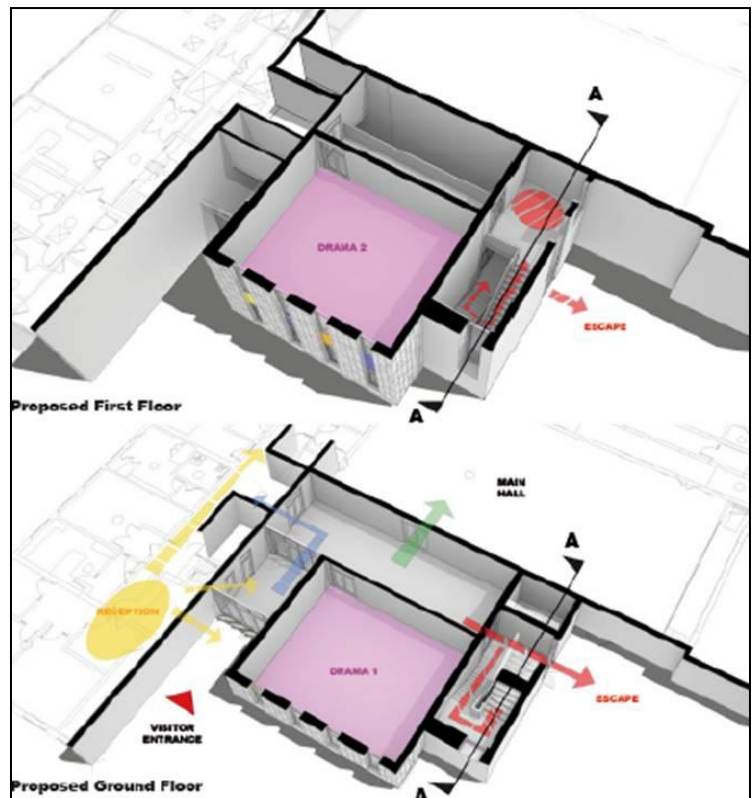
BSF at Sir Harry Smith

Students at Sir Harry Smith Community College today find themselves in a similar position to Whittlesey students in 1953: faced with building work at a site on Eastrea Road and the promise of a 'new' school.

Today the work is not as extensive but it is exciting nonetheless. After genuine doubt as to whether the scheme would even go ahead, and a severe knock to the original budget, the impressive transformations seem even more remarkable when completed. In the space of ten months the school has gained seven new teaching rooms, two new science laboratories, a whole new SEN department, a number of new offices, a new Astro turf pitch and eleven refurbished rooms. But what next? And how will the finished product compare to the school as it was in 1954?

The newly completed classroom block is the first of two major new builds at the school. The other, for which work has just begun, is a drama suite.

This is to be built on the front of the main hall and will completely alter the main appearance of the school. The front façade of the building, little changed since it was built sixty years ago, will gain a much more modern feel. Inside, the drama department will be brought together as one unit, with two large, contemporary classrooms. Downstairs, the block will link with a new entrance lobby under the current shelter, and upstairs, access to the rooms will be via a corridor where Room 53 is currently.



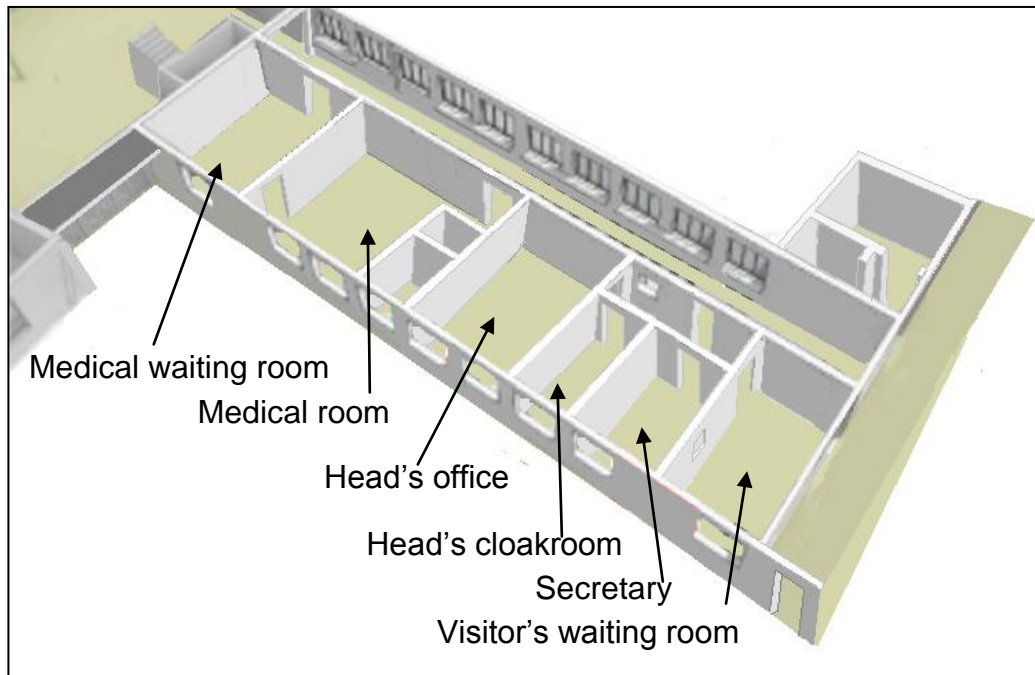
Similar views of the front of the school; firstly in 1954, and, secondly, an impression of how it will be in 2013.



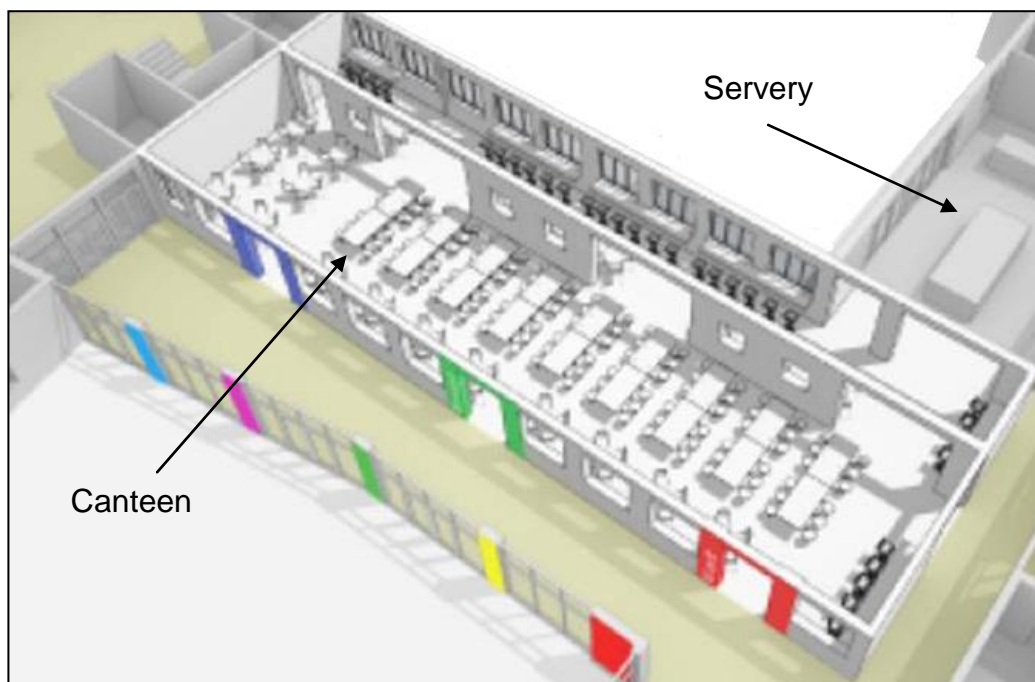
Sir Harry Smith Community College

The creation of a new canteen is one of the most exciting features of the Sir Harry Smith's BSF scheme. Formed by knocking out a row of administrative rooms, it will become a social centre of the school, whilst also freeing the main hall for other uses. The school has not had a dedicated dining facility since the late 1990s. The development also includes a new servery and alterations to the kitchen area. It is due for completion by September 2012.

1954



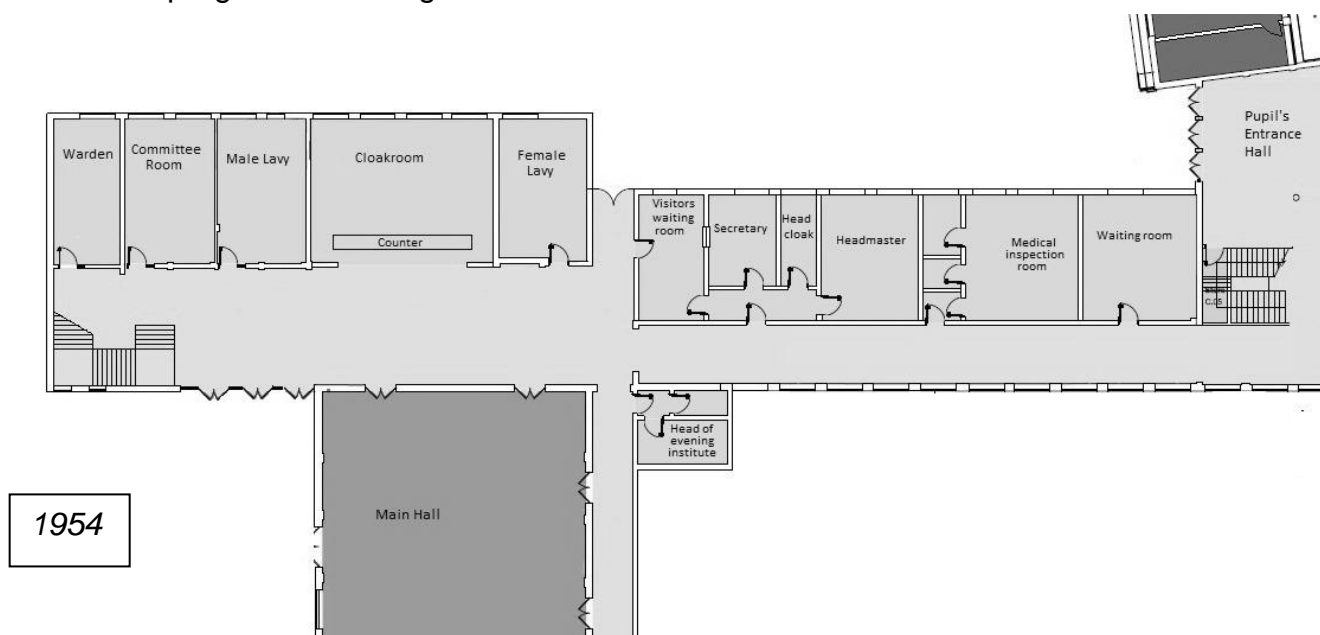
2012





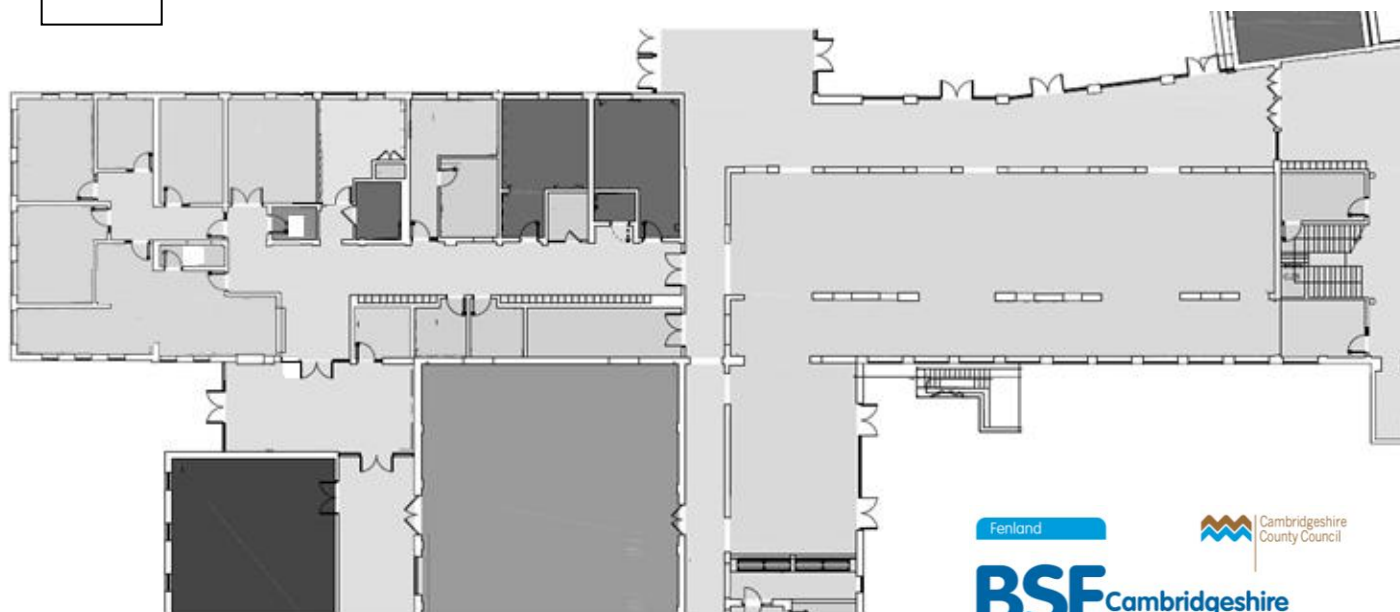
Sir Harry Smith Community College

With a comparatively small proportion of new-build taking place, much building work will be focused on altering the internal layout of the school. The maps below show the changes that will have occurred between the school opening and the BSF programme ending.



These maps show the original and planned layouts of the ground floor front of the building. Before being knocked out to create the canteen, the administrative rooms and headmaster's office were mostly as they were in 1954, the only changes being the partitioning of the original medical room and the removal of the head's cloakroom. The staff room was added after 1954.

2013



Fenland

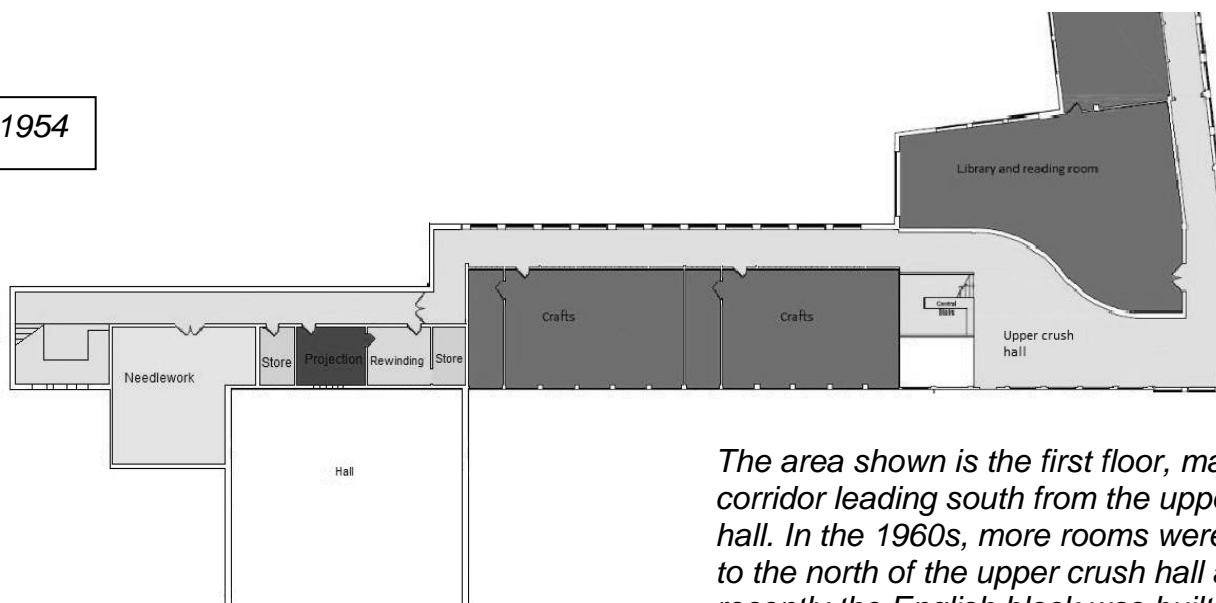
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BSF Cambridgeshire
Building Schools for the Future



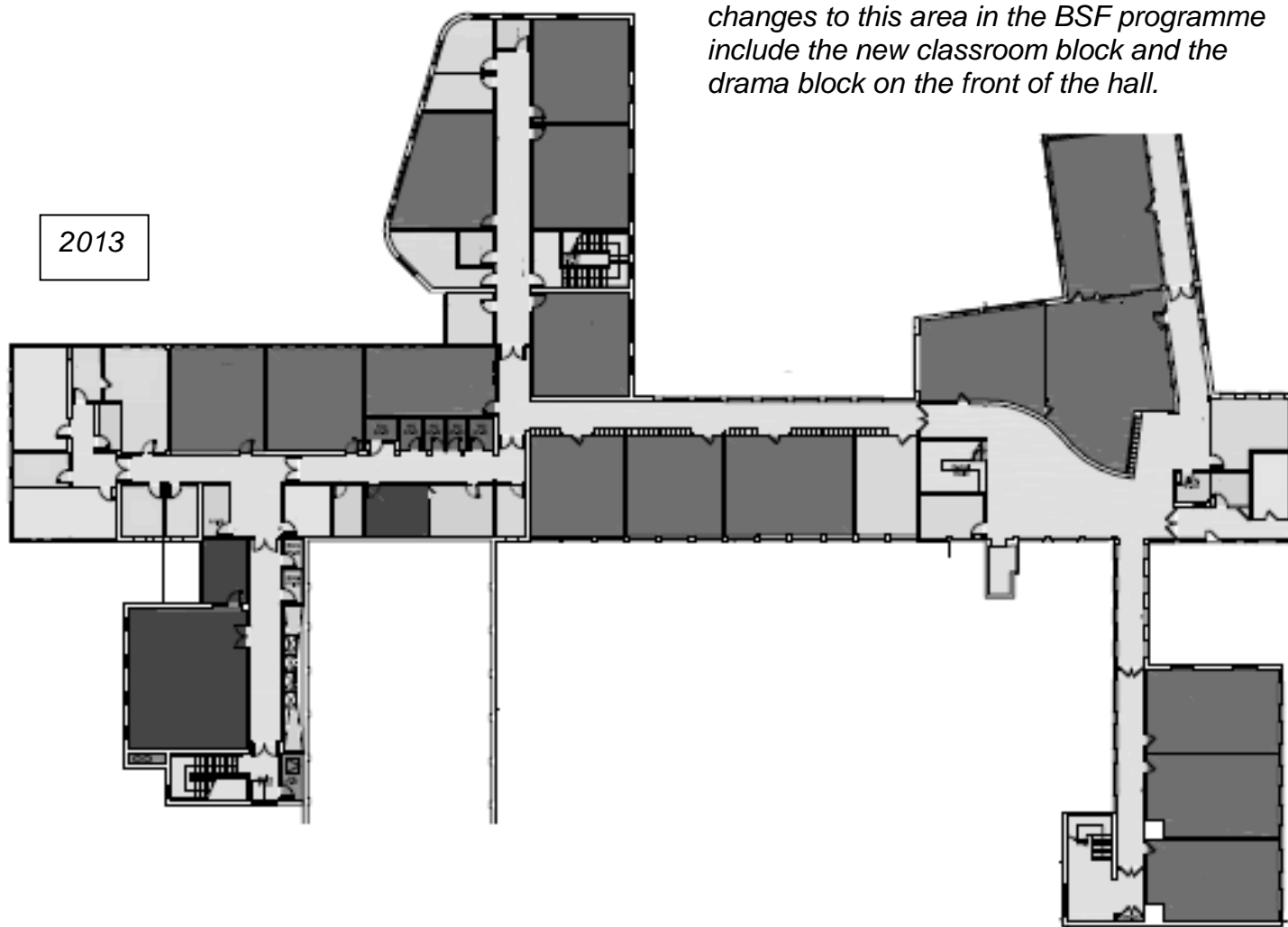
Sir Harry Smith Community College

1954



The area shown is the first floor, mainly the corridor leading south from the upper crush hall. In the 1960s, more rooms were added to the north of the upper crush hall and more recently the English block was built. Drastic changes to this area in the BSF programme include the new classroom block and the drama block on the front of the hall.

2013



These old maps are taken from plans of the school drawn during its construction in 1951. Unfortunately plans of the rest of the building could not be found.

Fenland



BSF Cambridgeshire
Building Schools for the Future



Sir Harry Smith Community College

When we think of 1950s schools, we think of flaking paint, outdated decoration and tired equipment. We think of dreadful, stuffy rooms housed in soulless brick boxes. In many people's eyes, Sir Harry Smith Community College certainly matched these criteria. So when the BSF scheme and possible entire rebuild were announced, there was a tremendous sense of excitement.

But the school was great once. It was Whittlesey's very own 'Secondary Modern', a fresh, forward-thinking educational facility that epitomised radical post-war thinking in Britain. As the first new school built in Cambridgeshire after World War II, it put Whittlesey on the map. Its gigantic proportions had never been seen in the town, and provided a definite solution to the overcrowding that had plagued local schools for over a century. The fantastically modern design – the walls of windows, high ceilings and strictly functional linear appearance – were quite remarkable in the wake of the tiny 1850s buildings used previously. And the idea that it could be transformed into a hospital within 24 hours in the event of mass casualties made it seem incredibly innovative and clever.

Today we have the BSF scheme to reverse the ravages of six decades of wear and tear. Although an entire rebuild is out of the question, the work is still extensive. Whilst enabling the school to meet modern educational expectations, the scheme retains much of the original structure, detail and, most importantly, character. It is this, along with the wealth of history and local significance, which make it completely undeserving of entire demolition. By Easter 2013, we will have a fantastic balance of old and new; state-of-the-art classrooms and technology in amongst undervalued but thankfully preserved original features. Modern educational buildings would pay no thought to parquet flooring or wholly-tiled corridors; the inclusion of these grand features in the 1950s building proves just how highly-regarded the new school was.

Just like sixty years ago, Whittlesey residents will have a 'new' school that they can be justly proud of.