

Kathleen Bird (1892-1984)

Kathleen was born in Cambridge and attended The Perse School and then Polam Hall. Her first post, after completing her training at Bergman Österberg Physical Training College in 1917, was at St James, Malvern. Her chief interests after training were in the medical and remedial aspects of her work.

She joined the staff at Wycombe Abbey School and, in 1923 with two colleagues, founded a sister school to Wycombe Abbey, at Bickley, in Kent. The founders' aim was *to create a happy school with personal integrity and service to others always in mind*. The school moved to Hempsted Park, and was named Benenden School in 1924. Kathleen was very determined that all the girls should have a hobby and so she instigated a Hobbies Exhibition. Every girl was required to submit an entry. Kathleen gave special thought to the health and well-being of the girls at the school. Kathleen was known to the staff and pupils at Benenden as *Birdy*.

In 1940, during WWII, Benenden School was evacuated to Hotel Bristol in Newquay. Kathleen was instrumental in Dartford College spending the war years in Newquay. It was she who secured the accommodation. There were close links at that stage with the school and the college students.

Kathleen became Chairman of the Bergman Österberg Union in 1928 and for the rest of her life was a very keen supporter of the Old Students. She became a Trustee and was a member of the Committee of Management at Dartford College, for many years, before becoming Chairman. She was later Chairman, and then Deputy Chairman, of the Governing body of the College.

Kathleen took a great interest in the work of the students attending college. She died in Cranbrook in 1984.