



the Wonderful World of ST. BRIDE'S

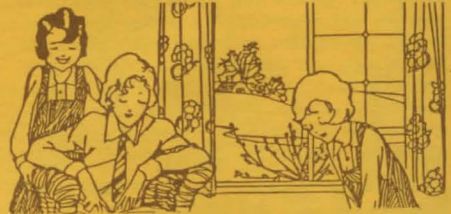
THOSE GOLDEN YEARS YOU NEVER HAD



St. Bride's is a total experience. From the moment you step through the door to the moment you leave, you *are* a child, living in a magical fantasy-world at once so wonderful and so real that it has captivated the world's media (practically every newspaper in Britain has published reports and photographs of St. Bride's. The School has been featured not only on British and American television, but is even familiar to Japanese viewers!).

Because it is in many ways an unusual idea, people sometimes find it difficult to envisage exactly what a stay at St. Bride's will be like. The answer is simplicity itself. The school described in this Prospectus really exists exactly as it is described. It is a real school. Everything is taken completely seriously. The question you must ask yourself is whether you would like to go to this school. To leave behind the responsibilities and the privileges of adulthood. To experience the fun and the discipline, the enthusiasms and the anxieties, the warmth, security and comradeship of old-fashioned schoolgirl life. If you do, then St. Bride's is the one place in the world where you can do it.

being hustled into the world of work, sex and insecurity, experience the gentle, natural unfolding of childhood's golden Indian Summer.



AGE

From the previous section you will have gathered that we are chiefly concerned with the second half of childhood — that part which so many modern girls have missed out on. Most girls on their first course at St. Bride's regress naturally to an age somewhere between thirteen and sixteen. Spontaneous regression to younger childhood can take place, and while this is not the purpose of the course, our staff are well able to cope with it; it usually reflects a need in the girl concerned and is extremely beneficial to her. Equally, some girls are older — say eighteen or nineteen; but they are not like modern teenagers, they are true adolescent children. These older ages usually come out in more advanced work, but there are no hard-and-fast rules here. You will tend to gravitate to your own 'natural' age — the one which is right for you at present.



PERIOD

What period does St. Bride's belong to? A question we are often asked. The uniform is at once reminiscent of girls' dress of the Edwardian era and of the gymslip of the 20s and 30s. The style of the house is in many ways Victorian.

St. Bride's exists in no precise historical period, but in a Golden Age of love and innocence. We have gained much in the last hundred years. We have also lost much. St. Bride's combines the best of all worlds. It is a world which has not lost its innocence. Where adolescent girls are still children; enjoying what has been all but lost in the modern world — the second half of childhood. And where girls in their late teens, instead of



NAME AND PERSONALITY

Some girls like to use the opportunity of coming to St. Bride's to develop an aspect of their personality which has, perhaps, been neglected or repressed. They may feel that a neat, quiet, studious girl is hidden under a brash exterior, and would like to give her a chance to be herself; or that a jolly, out-

going personality has been crushed by shyness and an unsympathetic environment. Coming to St. Bride's is a new start. A chance to let those neglected qualities flourish in a warm atmosphere which will not laugh at them or treat them unkindly. Some girls like to choose a new name to express this hidden personality; others like to do so just to make a different start and see what kind of person they would have been if they had had a different childhood. If you would like to choose a different name for your stay at St. Bride's - perhaps a name from a book, or one that you have always liked or wished to have - please tell us before you come, and we will register you under that name. If you would like to bring out some special aspect of your personality at St. Bride's, you are very welcome to discuss it by letter with the Headmistress before you come, and she will try to give you any advice you may need, and help you while you are here.



POCKET MONEY

Decimal currency is not in use at St. Bride's. We still live in that sunny world where a pound is a pound, a penny is a penny and both of them are worth something.

When you arrive, you exchange £p for £.s.d. at a rate of 1:18.04 against the Irish Pound. This means that for £10 Sterling you will get approximately thirteen shillings.

You will find that you can buy a bar of chocolate for around 3d, a pair of stockings for a shilling or a cream tea in the school tea shop for under 2/-.



YOUR CHILD

Within you is a real, living child which St. Bride's will bring out. Quite how real she is may surprise you. A BBC television producer filming at St. Bride's—a man who has been all over the world and has great ex-

perience of all kinds of people—said "I keep calling them 'girls'. After a few minutes at St. Bride's it is impossible to think of them as grown women any more."

You may think of a visit to St. Bride's as sending your child to school. Clients often discuss their special needs in this way: e.g. "Jane is a little nervous of sleeping in a dormitory; is it possible for her to have a separate room to begin with?" This may sound strange, but it is based on sound psychological practice.

Your child is there, waiting for St. Bride's to show her, perhaps for the first time, the magic of innocence.



DEEPER WORK (for those who want it)

After a week on one of our ordinary courses, many clients have reported unexpected benefits. They have gone away feeling younger, more joyful, toned up both in mind and in body. They have also gained poise, confidence and strength of personality which are developed by traditional boarding-school education.

In deeper work we can concentrate on these 'fringe benefits' and increase them. For example, a girl who is not happy with her present personality can experience growth from a nervous, awkward new girl of thirteen through to a confident, mature young lady. This will probably take a longer stay, or several stays. So many personality problems develop in early youth. So many people wish they had had a better upbringing as a child. Now you can send your child-self to St. Bride's and give yourself a better upbringing!

There are so many special ways that St. Bride's can help you. People who have suffered bereavement or some life-crisis have used St. Bride's to help them make a new start. You are welcome to discuss your special needs with us.

We will be running deeper courses over the winter; but we would advise you first to come to an ordinary course, get the feel of St. Bride's, experience the innocence and joy of old-fashioned childhood. Live the golden years you missed out on in this life. Then you will be ready for any deeper work - or you may find you no longer need it!



TEACHING STAFF

The teaching staff of St. Bride's are eminently qualified both for the academic aspects of their work and in the psychological understanding necessary for helping girls to experience true childhood. At St. Bride's you will be in the hands of trained and qualified professionals.

Miss Brighe Dachcolwyn, the Headmistress, has been trained in various branches of humanistic psychology. She was on the staff of the Pellin Institute in Italy and Co-Director of the Pellin Centre in London. She has been Vice Chairman of the British Association for Humanistic Psychology. She is also a qualified teacher, having taught at the Evelyn Lowe Primary School in London, which is well known in educational circles for its innovative work.

Miss Sheila Stead, Assistant Course Director, has had extensive experience in the fields of both adult and child psychology. Before she came to St. Bride's, she was Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology at Manchester College of Further Education. Miss Helen Baird teaches Latin and Advanced Mathematics. Before coming to St. Bride's she was a senior civil servant in one of the major British Government departments.

Other mistresses may be inducted onto the staff from time to time.



EXPULSION

It is clear that St. Bride's is a very special place. Its atmosphere depends entirely upon everybody fully 'playing the game'. If any girl were consistently to refuse to do this, the whole atmosphere would be entirely spoiled for all the others. Obviously, this would not be fair. We therefore reserve the right to expel any girl who is flagrantly and con-

sistently disobedient, or who, in the opinion of the staff, is undermining the spirit of the School. Please understand that we are not speaking of ordinary naughtiness or mischief. That is dealt with in ordinary school ways. Expulsion is reserved as a last resort only for cases where the atmosphere of St. Bride's is in danger of being spoiled for the other girls. It is very rare, and indeed it has never yet been used. We hope it never will be. We reserve it as a last resort for your protection. Enrolment for a course is deemed acceptance of this condition.



CAN WE HELP YOU?

Most girls come to St. Bride's ready to take the experience just as it comes. But if you have any special requests to make or would like to discuss anything before you arrive, you will find St. Bride's very flexible to individual needs. For example, if you would like to take on the responsibility of being a prefect, we cannot promise to make you one (there is no 'cheating' in the school, and the staff will only give such positions to girls who will fulfill them well) but we will consider your request seriously. If there is any special way you would like to be treated, any way you would like St. Bride's to take account of your own imaginative world, you are welcome to discuss it with us.

But remember that you must discuss such things by letter (or by telephone) before you arrive. Once you step through the doors of St. Bride's, your adventure has begun. There can be no stepping aside to discuss it. You are no longer the adult you were that day when you first read this Prospectus. You are a child stepping into the golden world of St. Bride's. For a moment, perhaps, before the magic sweeps you in, you remember when you were holding the Prospectus in your hands. It was the beginning of everything, wasn't it?

"On leaving St. Bride's, I am convinced that you will have a feeling, not of sadness, but something closer to nostalgia, a happy feeling of carefree youth which can be recalled and savoured for a lifetime. I am sure that memories of your second "Alma Mater" will spring to mind many pleasant hours of joy and happiness."

James Gallagher, Mayor of the Rosses.

FROM THE IRISH INDEPENDENT: FLIGHT TO FANTASY AT ST BRIDE'S

St. Bride's School: A Voyage Back To Childhood Days

IN THE CORRIDOR outside the classroom on the first floor of St. Bride's School, a bell rings to signal the first class of the day.

Six giggling schoolgirls, clad primly in Victorian school pinneys, white school blouses, black lisle stockings and gingham bonnets, came tumbling into the classroom.

They scramble for seats in the old-fashioned two-seater desks, as the headmistress enters.

"Good morning, Ma'am," they murmur respectfully and get out their writing slates.

The headmistress smiles at the youthful faces, framed by the old-fashioned bonnets, and then goes to the blackboard to set them a mathematical problem.

Wearing their prim and proper uniforms, the young women who applied for this week's course will take lessons in this classroom, go for nature walks and play all the schoolgirl games.

The aim of the course is to allow the women participants to experience the carefree joys of childhood revisited, to revel in the smell of chalk, the sound of the school bell, and the familiar chant of nursery rhymes. A return to the comforting routine of schoolgirl days.

The idea has captured the attention not just of women who would welcome a chance to throw off adult responsibilities for a week or two at this boarding school—but of the media as well.

Fleet St. newspapers, as well as the Irish dailies, BBC television crews and the American ABC company, descended on the tiny fishing village of Burtonport to interview headmistress Brighe Dachcolwyn and her staff of three.

And the headmistress patiently retold the school's story to each set of visitors.

Explaining the idea behind St. Bride's to the ABC crew last week in the old-fashioned classroom, she said:

"The school is about experiencing the joy and innocence of childhood — its appeal is that childhood is missing in a modern person's adult life and this is the sort of boarding school they can associate with childhood joy."

What about discipline, asked the ABC reporter: Would there be caning and corporal punishment?

"We decided that the cane would not be used on our ordinary courses," she said.

And explained that 'Love and Firmness' were the cornerstones of the school's philosophy.

"There's a lot of warmth between boarding

school girls. You can't give people love and firmness without structure."

And the course certainly is run on structured lines. Some of the school rules include a first call in the morning at seven a.m., meals taken in the refectory supervised by teachers at the staff table. There are lessons till three p.m. and 'lights out' after the day's activities is at nine-thirty.

Lines are handed out by the Headmistress or by teachers Helen Baird and Sheila Stead, or course administrator Deborah McBride for minor offences like giggling in class or inattention.

There is even a formal school examination for the pupils — involving a General Knowledge paper, Mathematics, English and French.

To the unschooled eye the questions looked quite tough; one pupil, an early arrival for this week's course, confessed that the whole set of papers had taken her two full hours to complete.

The pupil, who attended one of last summer's pilot courses at St. Bride's, is in her late 20's —but admits with a giggle that in this boarding school environment she feels "about 13".

From England, the pupil was attracted to the course because I'd wished I'd been at boarding school as a child instead of day-school."

A self-confessed collector of the Angela Brazil-type schoolgirl stories, she wanted "the chance to recapture that schoolgirl feeling. And I did. It was great."

During last year's pilot course she enjoyed being taught Calligraphy most — and liked French lessons least.

"I loved the games we played — hide-and-seek, pillow fights in the dorm and walks by the sea. It was just like Angela Brazil's book *The School By the Sea*. It was ever so good."

Part of her enjoyment in the course was the structured nature of the week's stay:

"The discipline makes me feel secure. You know what's going to happen every day — and you don't have to do all those silly adult things!"

This week she means to step back again into childhood and "just have a jolly good time."

And St. Bride's does seem the ideal setting for doing just that. The school is an authentic reproduction of a boarding school in a school-girl's storybook — from the soft-pink painted dorms to the tastefully furnished refectory.

The house is beautifully appointed on two acres of land, looking onto the Aran straits and beyond that Aranmore Island, with the Derryveagh Mountains to the east.

St. Bride's ~ Where You CAN turn the Clock Back.