

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY

CLASSIFICATION	SUBJECT	SOURCE	DATE
HS 15	Woolston Secondary School	SEE	17.7.89

A SCHOOL which overlooks the grave of the last known victim of British cannibalism, is soon to close after more than 150 years of continuous education.

Woolston Secondary School's listed annexe on Pear Tree Green, Southampton, was an Anglican church school linked with St Mary's Jesus Chapel across the road.

The mullion-windowed school, opened by the vicar, the Rev William Lewis Davis, in 1852, has operated as Woolston School's art department for 25 years.

It will close on July 25 at the end of term and special events will mark its going.

When the new term starts in September the school's art pupils will

be in sumptuous new premises at an extension to the main building in Portsmouth Road.

The teacher in charge and head of graphics, Jack Stuart, said the quaint schoolrooms still had relics of the Victorian system of "monitorial teaching" when he moved there 22 years ago.

These were the large wooden studs which marked out where the school monitors — older pupils — used to stand and teach pupils as assistants to the headmaster.

The school, which also incorporated the headmaster's five-roomed house, also has what are probably the oldest working toilets in Southampton.

Mr Stuart, 63, said: "It is rather sad that the place is closing because it has an awful lot of character. It is

a delightful old building but needs a lot of upkeep.

"But we are moving to a building which will have all the most modern computerised equipment — it will be like walking from one century to another."

The annexe, with five classrooms, had 800 pupils in 1974. Falling pupil numbers — due to a shrinking population — means that only 100 will be there for the closure ceremony when children will be garbed Victorian style.

Also present at the ceremony will be Janet Wise, head of art.

The cannibalism victim was Richard Parker, 17-year-old cook and cabin boy, who was killed and eaten on board the yacht *Mignonette* in 1884. Three men were hanged for his murder.

Moving into the 21st century

WHEN children from Woolston Secondary School start their new term in September they will be moving into a super £300,000 computer-graphics room and art studio.

It will help the school, mainly built before the Second World War, to meet the requirements of the 21st century.

But the second phase — further extension of the art rooms, extra classrooms for humanities studies and a new girls' toilet block to cost a similar figure — has been thrust back a year to the dismay of its go-ahead governors, head and staff.

It is now scheduled to follow in 1991-92.

Phase III, as yet unscheduled, will involve the construction of a full music and drama studio, plus rooms for community use.

The building improvements have been in the pipeline from as long ago as the 1960s. Then there were county council proposals for the school to be transferred to a site in nearby Inkerman Road.

Because space at the school is at a premium — it was built on a restricted site between two streets — building has been going up on the undersized school playground.

The new electronics equipment being installed inside the computer

graphics department is considered by the departmental head as advanced and forward looking.

Inside, studies will range from the basis of robotics to high-tech methods of drawing by computer. Equipment will include overhead projectors and screens, television screens, chalk-free whiteboards, video-recorders.

In the art rooms, too, there will be computers. But there will also be computerised knitting and sewing machines, a damp room to keep clay at the

right temperature. And there is a kiln room for baking pots.

"We are anticipating the National Curriculum which we will need to start teaching in September next year," said Joe Cornford, head of the computer design technology department. "Computers will be used in every phase of their work."

"We have got the best goods in the city now and what we have got we have deserved."

Headmaster George Katerinas said: "We are attempting to meet the requirements of industry in the 21st century — no longer doing work on the old drawing board but by computer."