Celebrating 125 Years; North Ryde Public School 1877-2002

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Project Co-ordinator and author
Shirley Berg AM
Graphic Design
Kathryn Watkins
Photographs
NSW Schoolhouse Museum of Public Education, Carol-Anne Maurer
School Records, Individuals
Editing and Text
Jackie Forsyth, Kathy Shannon

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Shirley Berg
For the North Ryde Public School P & C Association

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**GOLDEN JUBILEE**  
North Ryde School celebrating their  
50th Anniversary at North Ryde Park  
(Cressy Road, held on the last Saturday in  
March 1928) (also pictured on the front cover)
FROM THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

NORTH RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL’S ANNIVERSARY FOREWORD

It is a great honour for me to write the foreword for a book that commemorates and celebrates North Ryde Public School’s 125 years of commitment to public education.

The school started life in 1877 as City View Public School, so named because if you stood on the roof of the beautiful old Victorian Gothic building that is the Schoolhouse Museum, you could see the young city of Sydney. From those early days this school has been a cornerstone of the community. Over its 125 years, North Ryde Public School has played a significant role in the area’s evolution from a farming community to a vibrant urban centre.

The students – once children of local farmers dividing their days between education and the needs of the family farm – now come from a kaleidoscope of cultural backgrounds. Today’s students are brought together in an atmosphere that celebrates both unity and diversity.

While the view of the city and the local areas has changed dramatically over the past 125 years, the values of North Ryde Public School have not changed. It is preparing our children for the future with quality teaching and learning programs. Just as importantly, the school reflects the needs and hopes of our community by placing a strong emphasis on social responsibility.

As the local Member of Parliament and as NSW Minister for Education and Training, I am very proud of the achievements of this school in its first 125 years. I am sure people in the Ryde area very much appreciate North Ryde Public School’s contribution to the community. We can look forward to the school’s achievements in the next 125 years.

John Watkins
NSW MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MEMBER FOR RYDE.

Senior North Ryde Class 1915
MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF NORTH RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL

North Ryde Public School has proudly occupied a prominent position in the North Ryde community for 125 years. As the area grew so did the school and the wonderfully rich tapestry of this growth is captured in this book.

Throughout its history, this school has provided quality education to the families of North Ryde, successfully combining leading edge curriculum delivery with empathy and compassion for the students in its care. In return, parents and community members have provided enormous physical, financial and moral support through the various Associations and parent bodies.

As educational changes impacted on the school and its staff, a constant element in the development of the school has been the focus on the school motto, “Utile Dulci” — pleasure through usefulness. Teachers, students and parents have been sustained and encouraged by the ideal of realizing each individual’s potential to provide pleasure to others by being of service to them. A powerful sense of community exists in the school, a spirit that has its roots in the traditions of the school and which continues to grow with succeeding generations. Our emphasis on building strong, connecting relationships is a feature, which makes our school unique. This provides the framework for students to acquire the skills, knowledge and values necessary for them to become contributing members of society.

Stuart Anderson and his Staff on Foundation Day 10 September 2002

The school community has achieved many successes in the classroom, on the sporting field and in the concert halls. Teachers and students can be justly proud of the school’s well earned reputation as a place that provides opportunities for all students to develop skills and interests in a wide variety of academic, sporting and social domains.

It is an honour and a privilege to be part of a school with such a proud history and exciting future. I congratulate all of the people involved with the production of this book, particularly, Shirley Berg whose undiminished passion and commitment to the school is an inspiration to all of us.

Stuart Anderson
PRINCIPAL
DIRECTOR-GENERAL’S PREFACE

This history, written by one of NSW public education’s great defenders, Shirley Berg, is a small epic, which tells of one Sydney community’s successful struggle for advancement through education.

Public schools such as North Ryde strike down very deep roots in their localities. Like ancient trees they shelter their surrounds.

In the tradition of good local histories, the author combines a grassroots perspective with an overview which connects North Ryde Public School’s development with the larger political, social and economic transformations of the past century and a half: times of war, depression, poverty, abundance, immigration and settlement. The walls of North Ryde School have housed and supported children through all these watersheds in Australia’s history.

Reading the history I was struck by the extraordinary patience and tenacity exhibited by the school’s supporters in their efforts – sometimes over many decades – to secure the very best for their community’s children.

This is one characteristic of public schools that sets them apart; their local supporters care about providing the quality public education for all local children – regardless of their social, cultural or religious background.

I congratulate North Ryde Public School on one hundred and twenty five years of public education, and I commend this history to all those who cherish the traditions of public education in NSW.

It makes me very proud that I am able to sign this preface on my last day as NSW Director-General of Education and Training.

May North Ryde Public School continue to educate young Australians for a further one hundred and twenty five years.

Ken Boston AO
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MANAGING-DIRECTOR OF TAFE NSW
June 2002

North Ryde Primary Class 1913
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When Shirley Berg arrived at North Ryde Public School to enrol her eldest son in early 1956 she was faced with a situation she had not experienced before – a shortage of accommodation, large class sizes and a shortage of teachers. This was not, she felt, conducive to provision of a quality education. She soon decided that if things were to improve she had to be part of the action that was needed. The Infants Mothers’ Club had recently been formed and had affiliated with their state organisation, the Federation of Infants and Nursery School Clubs, later known as FISC.

Encouraged by the Infants’ Mistress, Miss Smith, she agreed to attend meetings and it was at this time that she first developed a passion about public education. She recognised the need for action to ensure the future of that generation of students currently in the system and for those who would follow if there was to be a education system which was able to allow each and every student to reach their learning potential. She believed also that the local school environment was the best because those children who learn together then learn to live together.

She came to believe, quite passionately, that it was only public education that was inclusive and open to all and that it alone had the means of meeting the educational needs of each and every child particularly those who were disadvantaged by way of isolation, disability or because of social or economic circumstances.

Those early days at North Ryde and her involvement with the parents’ organisations at the school set her off on a steep learning curve which eventually led her to become a political activist in pursuit of improvements, not only to her school, but to the public education system in general. Being a political activist did not mean that she had become party political, it just meant that those who were the decision makers at that time were the only ones that could make a difference in the quality of the delivery of education services for children.

From the mid-50s the needs of schools across the State had become acute. The problems confronting governments were enormous and they were not able to meet the demands for more schools and more teachers. Shirley Berg soon became involved in activities and campaigns to highlight the situation and in 1969 was elected as State President of the Federation of Infants’ School Clubs, a position she held for the next four years. However, despite the time demands and the pressures of this office she still maintained an active presence with the North Ryde Public School, and the local High School parent organisation, so supporting her own five children.

Her resolute determination led her into negotiations with politicians of all political persuasions. It was at this time that the Federal Government commenced funding some aspects of secondary education including private schools. It was not long before Federal funds for schools were going, disproportionately to private schools. This led her to activity at the Federal level. The Australian Council of State School Organisations was the national body representing parents across Australia. Her activities at the Federal level led to her becoming the NSW Vice-President of the national parent organisation and later it’s Secretary/Treasurer.
Then 1983 she was elected to the position of President of the NSW Federation of P & C Associations, a position held until she retired in 1988. She did, however, continue her support of, and involvement with, North Ryde Public School later serving a term as a community member and chairperson of its School Council. Shirley is privileged to have been made a Life Member of both the Infants Mothers Club and the P & C Association of the school.

In 1986 recognition of her contribution to education at both Federal and State level came when the Governor-General announced that she was to be made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

North Ryde Public School acknowledges and pays respects to the many clans of the Eora nation on whose traditional lands this school is located.

Sir Henry Parkes

PUBLISHED TO COMMEMORATE 125 YEARS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AT NORTH RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL

This book records the history of North Ryde Public School, first known as City View Public School, and commemorates 125 years of service to the community.

The writing and researching for the book has provided the opportunity for an excursion through time, looking first at the progress of education from early colonial days and then on to the trials and tribulations that the early pioneers had to endure in establishing the right for their children to be educated in their local area.

City View Public School actually came into being just before the passing of Sir Henry Parkes’s Public Instruction Act of 1880, which established the framework for the development of the public school system, as we know it today.

This all important Act gave the government, through the Department of Education, the responsibility for the education of all children in New South Wales. It aimed to provide equality of educational opportunity for all regardless of their class, colour or religion.

It is therefore important that the establishment of a school in the North Ryde area – at that time a quite remote outpost on the Field of Mars Common - be seen in the context of the history of public education in the State of New South Wales.
PUBLIC EDUCATION –
A BRIEF HISTORY

From the time of the arrival of the first fleet in 1788 and throughout the early penal period there were many and various attempts to provide some form of education for the colony’s children. From the Department of Education’s publication “Sydney and the Bush” we learn that “The educational work of the early penal period evolved as a government and church response to social and moral needs to train up the ‘rising generation’ to be better behaved than their convict parents.”

Early history shows that the churches were firmly involved in endeavouring to meet these educational needs. At that time there was a very strong link between education and religion and the Church of England had a virtual monopoly on almost every aspect of daily life in the fledgling colony.

Initially it was the Church of England, which set up schools and it was these schools that were funded by the Government. It was not long, however, before other denominations, including the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian groups established their own schools and they objected strongly to the government monies that were given to the Church of England schools which primarily based their teaching on their religious doctrine.

Records from the period around the early 1830s show that government funds received by the Church of England schools was 85% of the total, that the Roman Catholic schools received 15% and that the other denominations received nothing.

In the bid to introduce a sense of fairness into the issue of government funding for schools Governor Bourke, in 1836, proposed a national school system based on the successful Irish National system which featured a common course of Christian religious instruction thought to be suitable for all denominations.

The establishment of a comprehensive system of elementary schools, funded by the government, was thought to be the answer to the needs of children in respect to their early education. The difficulties in achieving this aim lay in finding a political solution of how schools, which were funded by government monies, were to be organised and who would control them. The idea was, however, stringently opposed by the protestant denominations and was finally defeated.

The idea of a non-denominational system was next taken up by Governor Bourke’s successor, Governor Gibbs who tried, yet again, to control the amount of funding given to the denominational schools. His plans were vehemently opposed by the Church of England on the grounds that the proposal required their schools to base their teaching on the whole of the bible whereas the Catholic schools were able to provide instruction to their students based solely on the church’s teachings.

Early in the 1840s the colony was gripped by a severe economic depression and this led to real cuts to the subsidies paid to denominational schools. The situation was serious. Their school buildings were badly run down and the qualifications of most of their teachers hopelessly inadequate. To compound the problems facing the government only about half of the children of the colony were attending any school.
In 1844 a Select Committee of the Government recommended that in a country so sparsely populated, the Irish National system as originally proposed by Governor Bourke, was the only logical way to meet the educational needs of all children.

There was a growing agreement that the education of children would form the foundation of a civil society in the colony. The proposal was that the public schools would be ‘inclusive’.

The principles that underpinned the establishment of public schools have provided the basis of today’s pluralistic and democratic society because they have provided education of the children of all citizens – the rich and the poor. They, by law, must accept the sons and daughters of the workers and their employers, the Aboriginal people, those newly settled from other parts of the world, the disabled, and those who believed in the Christian religion and those from other cultures who have different beliefs.

The Select Committee’s recommendations were still strongly opposed by the Church of England so the Governor refused to act on them. However, the expansion of the settlement, coupled with the withdrawal of financial help from generous benefactors, left the church schools almost destitute. Eventually, in return for a guarantee of the continuation of government subsidies for denominational schools the Church of England Bishop agreed not to oppose the introduction of a ‘common school system’.

So a compromise had been reached. The National School System was to be established but government aid to denominational schools was to be retained. A publication celebrating 100 years of the New South Wales Department of Education, “Sydney and the Bush” states “the search for a satisfactory way of funding a comprehensive system of elementary schools had found a compromise, probably the most expensive and least satisfactory one that could have been achieved.”

By 1857 there were in New South Wales sixty-two public schools and by 1866 the number had grown to two hundred and fifty nine with the majority being one teacher schools in rural areas. There were some three hundred and seventeen denominational schools, mainly in Sydney and larger towns. There were however, many others being established in other centres where they competed with the local public schools.

At this time history tells us that there were five rival systems of education which were managed by two rival Boards of Education – the National Schools Board and the Denominational Schools Board. The latter was a funding body only dispensing government subsidies but with no supervisory role or powers.

While the denominational schools were receiving quite a large proportion of government funds more than 50% of the colony’s children were not able to access them because they were exclusive to the adherents of the religions which chose to establish them.

So it became blatantly obvious that having two boards to distribute government funds was both economically and educationally wasteful and that action was needed to reform education so that it was being delivered to students in an equitable way.
Perhaps the person who did most to support and develop the public education system was William Wilkins a leading figure in education from 1851 to 1884. He laboured successfully to make the government schools more efficient and more popular than the denominational schools. It was he who, conscious of the problems of the teaching force and of the low status accorded to teachers, introduced a pupil-teacher scheme whereby a trained teacher monitored the brightest pupils and encouraged them to further their studies and training. Pupil-teachers were employed at a minimum age of thirteen years to spend four years teaching children and being instructed by a qualified teacher after hours.

William Wilkins c. 1859

Wilkins was first Headmaster of Fort Street Model School and then an Inspector of Schools. Finally he rose to become Under-Secretary of the New South Wales Department of Education. He set minimum attainment requirements, which were expected to be reached by students, he introduced standardised courses and methods of instruction and a system of inspection for both pupils and teachers to ensure that these reforms were successfully implemented.

Eventually, Sir Henry Parkes, emerged as the leading political figure who came out in support of the establishment of a single body to control elementary schools but it was not until 1866 that he received any parliamentary support for his efforts to expand educational opportunity and to establish just one Board to control education. The Public Schools Act of 1866 established just one Council of Education and required denominational schools to be certified as to how they delivered educational services and provided that they were to be subject to inspection to ensure that the rigorous standards, which had been laid down for public schools, were implemented by them. As a result of the passing of this Act there were no government grants for the building of new denominational schools and none could be established close to existing public schools.

This new Act had a real impact. The number of government schools, many of them being conducted in privately owned buildings, rose dramatically and by 1872 enrolments had increased by over one third. With the colony’s school age population growing rapidly and with more and more government funds being spent on the dual system of education it was obvious that there was a need for yet another Act which would ensure financial accountability through a Minister of the Crown.

In 1874 an enquiry stated, “education was the right of every child and was not a political concession”. This statement clearly demonstrated the divisions which had risen from the procrastination of governments in finding a real solution to the problems of providing an education system based on equity and fair play.

Sectarian bitterness, however, festered between the growing Catholic school system and the government school system.
The Catholic Archbishop and three Bishops condemned the principle of secular education and stated that no Catholic child should attend a public school. In a pastoral letter in 1879 they alleged that public schools contravened "the first principles of the Christian religion; and secondly because they are seed plots of future immorality, infidelity, and lawlessness". As well they claimed that public schools debased the standard of human excellence and corrupted the political, social and individual life of future citizens.

It was against this troubled background that Sir Henry Parkes finally, in 1880, introduced the Public Instruction Act which provided the future framework for education in this state. This Act provided "for the best primary education to all children without sectarian or class bias." It provided also that financial aid to church schools would be withdrawn by the end of 1882. This Act made education for all children compulsory and provided for just one public education system.

It is sad, therefore, that over time and certainly in conflict with the Act's intention, social attitudes led to the establishment of a number of separate schools for Aboriginal children. Policies which supported segregation permitted Aboriginal children to attend local schools only if they were adequately dressed and well fed, or 'clean, clad and courteous'. In 1902 an "exclusion on demand" policy was introduced when the Minister of Education gave instructions to school in New South Wales to remove Aboriginal children if white parents so demanded and this removal of Aboriginal children from local schools created a need for separate schools.

Secondary education in government schools came into being in 1881 in schools designated as Superior Schools. When at least twenty pupils had successfully completed primary education these schools were permitted to offer "higher branches of education".

Throughout the 1880s the newly formed Department of Public Instruction's commitment to public education was assisted by generous funding and by the energetic leadership of William Wilkins.

In the three years since the passing of the Act the enrolments at public schools had increased dramatically and by the end of 1883 enrolments across the State had reached 177,000. This was because of the growth in the numbers of school-aged children and the impact of the compulsory attendance requirements, which were set out in the Act.

The Department did, however, face serious accommodation problems, which were compounded by the withdrawal of State Aid and the closure of many of the Protestant denominational schools. The withdrawal of funds did not, affect some 70 private schools, the majority of them Catholic schools, which continued to provide education for those who chose it and those with parents able to pay the fees imposed.

At the end of the nineteenth century education in New South Wales schools were still based on the Irish National System. After the 1901 Conference of Public School Teachers Association growing criticism of this system gained momentum.
In response the government appointed a Royal Commission to ‘Inquire into existing methods of instruction in connection with primary, secondary, technical and other branches of education, to recommend......whatever might be, with advantage, introduced to New South Wales”.

At the same time, Peter Board, an Inspector of Schools was also examining education systems overseas. The report of the two Commissioners, Knibbs and Turner and a further report by Peter Board, was presented to a conference of influential educationists and this set the scene for the introduction to NSW primary schools of what became known as “New Education”.

![Peter Board, (left) addressing parents Dulwich Hill Primary School 1909](image)

There was to be a reformed teacher training system, the introduction of special kindergarten classes and the creation of post-primary schools.

With the appointment of Peter Board as the Director of Education the stage was set for a comprehensive reform of the system.

This brief history of the public education system and how it has grown since the pioneers first came to Australia sets the background for the establishment of the public school at North Ryde which, in the middle of the nineteenth century, was still a remote outpost in the colony.

**AN EARLY HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE AREA**

Before the arrival of the first settlers to the North Ryde area the land had been home to the Wallumedgall tribe of Aborigines. These original inhabitants and traditional owners were hunters and fishermen. They hunted the game, which abounded in the forests and fished in both the Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers.

To produce any detailed history of the area it is necessary to firstly take into account the development of the entire Ryde area, which was the third settlement in the fledging colony. Governor Phillip named the area Field of Mars in 1792 when eight marines first settled on land with a frontage to the Parramatta River.

The Aboriginal people called the district “Wallumette” but the early settlers and indeed early documents pertaining to the colony, referred to it as the Field of Mars Common, an area defined as “the area which stretched west from Kissing Point to Ermington and to the north as far as Dundas, Eastwood and North Ryde.”

From this early documentation it is known that the North Ryde area comprised rich fertile soil suitable for fruit growing and farming. It is also known that the whole of the area was covered by dense virgin forests. It is not surprising then that the early settlers saw plenty of promise for the future in its development. Records indicate that North Ryde remained as part of the Eastern Farms and the Field of Mars until well into the nineteenth century. As early as 1792 the first land grant in the area was made to James Weaver, the father of Granny Watts who became
famous as the person who grew the first "Granny Smith" apple at nearby Eastwood. The arrival to the Colony of the sailing ship "Guardian" with one hundred and fifty fruit trees and the implements needed to support agriculture played a significant part in the future development of the Eastern Farms area.

By the mid 1850s many of the land grants made to the original settlers had changed ownership and some had even been divided into smaller lots and by the end of the century a further sixty settlers had gravitated to the North Ryde area. These included Robert Wicks who later was to donate the land on which the North Ryde Public School would be built. These new arrivals included William Cox who in 1869 purchased twenty-one acres of the Allengrove Estate and developed it as an orchard and a vineyard. He and his brother built a substantial sandstone home, Pomona in the vicinity of what is presently known as Amelia and Marilyn Streets.

Progress in the central part of Ryde was quite dramatic. "Willandra" the now fully-restored historic house at the corner of Blaxland and Victoria Road, was first known as "Ryde House" and it is generally agreed that the wife of the Reverend George Turner rector of St. Anne’s Church which opened in 1826, was influential in the change of name for the area.

Just how and when the name North Ryde came into being remains a mystery, however when the district’s first school was built in 1877 it was called ‘City View’. While Ryde flourished, the development of the Field of Mars Common and the Eastern Farms area was causing real concern.

This was, perhaps, because of its isolation and the non-existence of transport. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that thirty per cent of the value of the crops, fruit and produce was dissipated in getting them to market.

The trip was long and tedious, firstly by dray to the Parramatta or the Lane Cove River and then to market by boat. Both timber cutters and fruitgrowers used boats on the Lane Cove River but sand bars were a hazard at low tide. It was possible however, to navigate the river as far as De Burgh’s Bridge.

For the settlers to travel by road to Sydney they had, prior to 1830, to go via Parramatta.

The Opening of De Burgh’s Bridge
23rd February 1901

A prolonged drought added to the problems being experienced and a water shortage was to plague settlers until city water was piped in and for the first time they could irrigate their crops.

The local parliamentary representative, Isaac Shepherd, concerned for the future of the area and of the well-being of the settlers, urged that a Select Committee of the Legislature be set up to consider the needs of the area. The committee was set up and he presided over it.
The committee heard exhaustive evidence of the problems encountered. The deliberations of this committee led to the passing of the Field of Mars Sale Bill in 1874. However, this committee was not able to solve the question of isolation and lack of transport. These were problems that the early settlers had to tolerate for many years to come. In 1940 the opening of Epping Highway, formerly known as the Spooner Highway and in the early 60s the upgrading of Lane Cove Road represented the first opportunity for the community to get better access to the North Ryde area.

It was to be quite a long time before the character of the area was to change and to allow it to develop into a fairly self contained community with the various facilities needed. The building of the school, the churches, the School of Arts certainly did much to improve the lifestyle of the people and to make life more tolerable. The Public School opened in 1878, The School of Arts in 1901, Thompson’s shop in 1904 and Cox’s shop around 1906. The Post Office which had initially been located on Lane Cove Road near the intersection of Trevitt Road, an area known as Adam’s Hill, relocated to the Cox’s Road area in 1908.

As a result the area between Lane Cove Road and Wicks Road emerged as the very ‘heart’ of the community and so it remains today. The settlers were continually agitating for improvements not the least of these being the proper provision of education for their children. The following chapter outlines clearly the tenacity they exhibited in pursuing this aim.

**IN PURSUIT OF EDUCATION TO MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE LOCAL CHILDREN**

Perhaps it was the early stirrings about a public education system to meet the needs of all children, which provided the impetus for the residents to initiate action to have established a school, which would serve their local community.

By the mid 1860s the early settlers were expressing concern about the two and a half mile journey that their children had to make to Ryde if they were to attend school at all. Given that they were relatively poor and because there was no transport available they decided that what was needed was a public school in the North Ryde area, otherwise they believed that their children would not be able to access education and would therefore be deprived of the opportunities that it would bring.

This was at a time when there were one hundred and fifty students enrolled at Ryde Public School and at a time when the supporters of St. Anne’s parochial school were agitating for an extra schoolroom to accommodate those seeking enrolment.

The first recorded representations were made as early as 22nd November 1865 when a group met with the Council of Education seeking their agreement for the establishment of a public school in North Ryde. Little is recorded about this approach or of any action taken by the Council of Education but it does seem that there was continual agitation between this time and 1874.
The local citizens agreed to provide one-third of the cost of the school building and the application made at this time was signed by twenty six residents who furnished a subscription list. Their representations were supported strongly by the School Inspector from Ryde who prepared a comprehensive map which plotted, not only the farms in the area, but also the number of children who would be likely to attend the school.

So just two years before the passing of Sir Henry Parke’s Act which was set to provide “the best primary education to all children” the children of North Ryde had their own local school and no longer had to endure the long and tedious trip to Ryde. Secondary education was not however generally available until 1881. Schools which had at least twenty pupils who had successfully completed primary years were then permitted to offer “higher branches of education”. Ryde was one such school and it then was called Ryde Superior School.

The following time-line clearly illustrates the trials and tribulations and the many representations that the supporters of the school had to endure in their early attempts to secure their right to have a local school to serve their community.

**TIME-LINE**

24.4.74 Letter from Council of Education. Matter being considered.

19.10.74 Notification that school was to be gazetted but NOT URGENT

21.2.76 List of pupils likely to attend was prepared and there were discussions with the Ryde Inspector abour a possible site.

19.6.76 Letters were exchanged with Wicks and Adams re acquisition

26.6.7 Decision on school deferred—visit by Council members.

4.9.76 Agreement reached on site and acquisition transfer signed.

25.9.76 A request for formal transfer of deeds.

10.11.76 Certificate of Title forwarded by Robert Wicks.

2.12.76 William Cox, for the residents still hadn’t received the deeds.

15.12.76 The deeds were eventually received and handed to the Council.

13.1.77 First request to Mansfield (Architect) to prepare plans.

6.2.77 Tenders called for the building of the school and residence.

7.2.77 Abstract of tenders received.

19.2.77 Acceptance of tender from D. A. Young

31.5.7 Ryde Municipal Council poses questions in respect to site.

18.6.77 Request from Young for a two months extension of time.

20.7.77 Question of road alignment which would pass through buildings.

9.7.77 Letter re an underground tank instead of an iron tank.

13.10.77 Builder abandons contract.

16.10.77 Seamer, (a guarantor) agrees to finish the buildings.

19.12.77 A letter sent re the appointment of a teacher.

26.12.77 Notification of the completion of the building by Seamer

10.1.78 Official notification from Council of Education that building was completed.

16.1.78 Charles Crew appointed as teacher.

28.1.78 The City View School opens.

The tenacity and commitment of the people of the area was well rewarded. They had their local school, their children no longer had to travel and there had been a teacher appointed. They were able then to believe that their efforts had not been in vain.
Original Plans Of City View
December 1876

1877-2002

CITY VIEW

SCALE 8 FS TO AN INCH

ELEVATION OF PORCH ¾

FRONT ELEVATION

PLAN OF W.O.

GROUND PLAN

SECTION A.B.

This is the plan referred to in the Agreement
and Specification signed by me the 28th
day of January 1877.

A.H. [Signature]
THE NEW SCHOOL
CITY VIEW

After some thirteen years the local children were, at last, able to attend a school, which was located in their own community. The schoolroom, designed by Council of Education architect, Mr. G. A. Mansfield, was Neo-Gothic in style with some Neo-Romanesque design elements such as the semi-circular arched windows. Because of its high walls and steeply gabled ceilings it was church-like and so reflected the strong relationship between religion and education at that time. There was a stepped floor with long desks – ‘long toms’ for the older students and a separate gallery for the younger children who had to work with their slates on their knees. It was indeed a building that received much praise from the community.

Education for the children of the area had become a reality when on 25th January 1878 the newly appointed teacher, Charles Crew welcomed the forty-five pupils who sought to enrol.

Mr. Crew, a young man with six young children of his own, was to experience many problems in his first year at the school. An invasion of white ants to both the new schoolroom and the four-roomed residence was of major concern as were the frequent absences of many of the pupils from school.

The Council of Education undertook an eradication program. The quote for this work included the building of a kitchen and of a pump to an underground tank so obviously there was water available to the residence. The school obtained its water from a ship’s tank, which had a 400-gallon capacity, however the water was often undrinkable and the pupils had to bring water from home. It was of great concern to Mr. Crew and to the education authorities that the regular attendance fell quite short of the forty-nine pupils who were enrolled. These absences probably reflected the economic circumstances of the struggling community, which was dependent on the help of their children in ploughing the fields, harvesting the crops and picking the fruit.

Mr Charles Crew 1877

By October 14th, 1879 the Council of Education had agreed to requests from the community that the school’s name be changed from City View to Ryde North Public School.

After just two and a half years at the school Mr. Crew was to become ill and in July 1880 he took leave of absence. Just one month later the Council of Education received notification of his death. The Council appointed Mr. Pearce as a temporary replacement and he was to carry on until they appointed Mr. L. Henry who was to remain at the school until 1888.
In 1881 there were, once again, problems with yet another infestation of white ants and the community and Mr. Henry pressed for immediate action. Eventually William Trevitt's tender for the repair of the damage and the erection of a kitchen for the residence was accepted but there were still no plans to add a bathroom or washhouse. Sanitation was obviously not a priority and it was surely no surprise that in 1890 the school had to be closed for a time because of an outbreak of diphtheria and the death of one of its pupils.

In the first ten years, the school's enrolment had only increased by four pupils, however by the early 1890s there were some seventy-six pupils attending on a regular basis. The existing accommodation was stretched to a limit until the addition of a classroom with a verandah designed by Mr. W. E. Kemp in 1893 relieved the situation. This additional room demonstrated a blending of the new and the old and it, like the original building, included a stepped floor and high windowsills.

At that time, to the majority of teachers, school meant children packed into stiff rows of desks with hands behind the back and reciting at the dictation of the teacher. Running, skipping and playing games were considered, to be a sure indication of a sad lack of disciplinary power.

The first part of the 20th century ushered in a new educational philosophy, for teaching and learning. No longer was the emphasis to be on memorising lessons and developing straight mechanical skills. Introduced in 1905 the new curriculum placed the emphasis on the child as an individual rather than on the subject matter being taught.

New education was quickly introduced to the students of Ryde North Public school and it was reported that the students were reading more widely, computing more readily and were able to discover information for themselves.

In a world, which, at the time, was very conservative, the new approach was considered to be revolutionary whereas in today's world our education authorities and our schools continually have to respond to new ideas and different community expectations.

By 1910 the number of pupils attending the school had reached one hundred and thirty three and some were being taught in a weather shed that had been erected two years earlier. Yet another deputation organised by the Ryde Public School Board demanded the provision of two new classrooms.

So the time was right! There was a proven need for new and separate classrooms rather than the combined rooms of the past. The Minister approved and two new rooms were built.

These rooms were arranged on a dual system, which allowed the two to be made into one by the opening of an accordion partition. The classrooms were specifically designed to allow for the implementation of the major reforms that had taken place and at the time represented the 'ideal'.
These 1910 buildings delighted the school community and the acquisition of more playground area added to their satisfaction. Over time the original site has been progressively increased by purchase, resumption and exchange and negotiations for these increases involved some ten owners.

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 had a great impact on the community of North Ryde. With fathers and sons away in the armed forces the women and children had to assume the responsibility of the farms and the orchards. Attendance at the school suffered and it was not until the soldiers and sailors returned to the area that it once again became the productive area it had been before the hostilities.

The community – all strong patriots – soon set about seeking ways in which they could honour those who did not return. The Memorial Rose Garden and an Honour Board at the school still stand as testimony to the bravery of those residents who had served in the Great War of 1914/18 and today the area still provides the focus for the Anzac Day services held each year on April 25th.

On the 16th March 1932 the pupils from North Ryde School, each of them carrying a commemorative flag, marched with children from all schools, across the Harbour Bridge some three days before it was to be officially opened. It had been some ten years earlier that an Act had been passed for the construction of the bridge, which connects Dawes Point in the south to Milson’s Point on the north side of the harbour. The building of the bridge commenced in 1923.

* George Redding, an ex-student of the school remembers well that day in March when he walked across the bridge with pupils from all over the State. One of his most treasured possessions is the now seventy year old flag, which he has kept as a memento of this momentous occasion.

George Redding’s Flag

For the first seventy years the Ryde North Public School was to remain very much as it had always been – a small rural school serving a sparsely populated area and by 1942 the school enrolment had fallen to ninety-two pupils when once again a World War affected the school and its community just as it did for all schools and communities across the State.

* Unfortunately George Redding passed away in 2002 before he could see this book completed.
The pupils raised money for the war effort, they knitted socks and mufflers, made camouflage nets and collected aluminium and other metals. When hostilities ceased in 1945 and those residents who had served returned, they found that life in North Ryde had changed significantly.

George Redding in “A History of North Ryde 1850 - 1950” tells of the grand welcome home function which was held in the School of Arts in February 1946 in appreciation of the service of the veterans.

However, this homecoming signalled a time of change. The birthrate across the country increased dramatically and this coupled with increased immigration from England and war torn Europe, caused great problems in providing education services across the State. This was particularly so in North Ryde.

The release of land from the previously proclaimed ‘green belt’ for the erection of hundreds of homes by the Housing Commission, the provision for returning veterans of war service homes on ‘army land’ in the area and the sub-division of many of the larger holdings all were to have a great impact on the area and more particularly on the school.

By 1956 the school, which had been built to accommodate only one hundred and thirty three pupils, had to find places for six hundred and fifty. Mr. W. Dobell, the headmaster thought the solving of the accommodation problems to be impossible. Little did he realise that in the next couple of years there would be twelve hundred and eighty enrolled.

At that time schools were organised into Departments – the Primary Boys, the Primary Girls. In 1956 changes occurred to the school’s management and led to the establishment of a separate Infants’ Department. Miss Hertha Smith was appointed as Infants’ Mistress and Mrs. Dorothy Pemberton as her deputy.

Just one year later the numbers of children enrolled at the school had burgeoned and the number of infant children enrolled reached seven hundred and eleven. The situation was so serious that it was not possible, because of insufficient accommodation and overcrowded classes, to admit those who had turned five years of age.

Once again it fell to parents to take action. Members of the newly formed Mothers’ Club sought a deputation to meet with Dr. H. Wyndham, the Director General of Education and as a result the Infants’ Department gained an extra teacher and was given an assurance that the whole question of large classes, inadequate accommodation and the lack of toilet facilities would be overcome as quickly as possible.

The Department of Education was facing this sort of crisis right across the State and their response was to provide a myriad of wooden and aluminium buildings in an endeavour to meet the ever increasing demand for accommodation. Ryde North received its share of these temporary buildings. They were scattered all over the site so restricting the playground area. Most were unlined, had no electricity and were unbearably hot in summer and bitterly cold in winter. The situation was so acute that rooms in the School of Arts and in the Church of England and Methodist churches, as well as the local
Scout Hall were hired to overcome the problem. By the end of 1957 there were some three hundred pupils housed in emergency accommodation off site.

The provision of permanent and proper accommodation became the community’s priority and the P & C Association once again became activists in the quest to solve the problems that beset the school. It was obvious that the growth of the area would make unprecedented demands in the future and new schools would have to be built to alleviate the situation. The Hon. Frank Downing, MLA, and the local member for Fuller made continued representations on behalf of his constituents to no avail.

It was an appalling situation so, supported by Mr. Downing, an overflow public meeting, organised by the P & C Association, was held in the School of Arts and the demands of the community were put to the local Federal member, the Hon. John Cramer MHR and the education authorities.

As Minister for the Army, Sir John had some responsibility for the veterans who had moved into the new war service homes in the area and who had enrolled their children at the school. He supported the community and appreciated the points put to him. He was able to persuade the Commonwealth Government to assist by providing some funding and as a consequence, Truscott Street School was built.

In the years following East Ryde and Kent Road Public Schools were built by the State Government and so the accommodation problems which had been the bane of North Ryde Public School and its P & C Association were eventually overcome.

While these new schools relieved the pressure on North Ryde School the temporary buildings remained, and so they remained for a further twenty years. The P & C members continued to agitate for the consolidation of the school and the building of permanent classrooms. Despite many visits from the Department’s Siting Committee and many promises from the politicians, no new buildings were to materialise.

By the early 1960s the ‘baby boom’ had passed through the primary schools and an ever-increasing number of students were seeking places in secondary schools. Statistics from that time showed that much of the area’s population was under 15 years so once again the members of school communities sought to have schools built. In fairly quick succession the authorities established three high schools – Ryde, North Ryde (later known as Peter Board High School) and Malvina to cope with the situation.

Members of both the North Ryde P & C Association and the Mothers’ Club participated in many deputations in an endeavour to have their school brought up to standard but their representations went unrewarded until, perhaps to placate the angry parents, it was announced that a new library would be built.

On 31st May, 1963 this new library was officially opened by the Minister for Education the Hon. E. Wetherall. The library building contained a library room, a reading room, office, workroom and entrance vestibule, a far cry from the areas, the Librarian, Mrs. Woodgate, had put up with for many years. Other improvements included the conversion
of the existing library, (the original 1877 building) into a staff room and the conversion of the existing staffroom to a store room. While the pupils had still to put up with archaic and impossible classroom conditions they now had access to the first purpose-built primary school library in the State. Eventually and only after continued representations and more and more deputations, in May 1973, did the Department commence the consolidation of the school with the building of the necessary permanent buildings and associated facilities.

The first purpose-built primary school library in the state 1963
At long last the pupils of North Ryde Public School were to know what it was like to have well-lit and aesthetically attractive classrooms and the Principal and the staff were able to administer the school from a well-appointed centre. These new classrooms provided an environment where the students felt safe and secure and where they felt that they really belonged.

These new and up-to-date classrooms allowed for a wide range of different learning experiences within the Department of Education’s key learning areas and the school’s teachers and parents all were to genuinely feel that they were partners in the education process. As well the school now had an Assembly Hall so that the students had an indoor venue for assemblies, concerts, presentations and other activities, which had hitherto had to be held on the school playground. There was also a proper canteen – a modern area and very different from the church hall and other temporary areas in which the mothers had, for so many years, struggled to provide lunches for the pupils.

This consolidation and the new facilities certainly were very different from the hopelessly inadequate situation that had been the lot of those who had passed through the school over the years.

Ties with its long history have always been important to the school community. This is evidenced by the selection of the ‘house names’ used for in-school activities and in particular its sporting competitions. Each of the names perpetuates the contribution made to the area by four of the earliest pioneers - Weaver, Wood, Kent and Brown.

It has not been possible to establish the origins of the school motto “Utile Dulci” which means pleasure through usefulness or of the school colours ‘brown and gold’ but each has always been recognised as belonging to North Ryde Public School.

While the consolidation of the school and its buildings were finished in 1975 it was decided by the school community that it would not be opened officially until 1978 so allowing for ground improvements to be made and for the Official Opening to be part of the school’s centenary celebrations when as revealed in the Northern District Times, they had plans afoot to have the 100 year old building restored as a Living Education Museum.
The planned centenary celebrations were to focus on history with, amongst other things, a re-enactment of a flag-raising ceremony as had happened in 1910 when there was an gift of a flag from a Scottish school called Rosevale which is in the Milton area of the City of Glasgow. Today this is a small school, which caters for primary aged pupils who have social and emotional difficulties and which prepares them for integration into mainstream schooling. A significant part of these celebrations was the re-dedication of the Memorial Rose Garden.

One of the most important events of this centenary year was a stage production, in the brand new hall of a play, written by the Principal Neil Pollock, which depicted the life in the area from the earliest settlement through to the community of 1977, and which featured staff and students. It was such a wonderful success that it played for three nights.

The celebrations started in September 1977 with and Carnival and Fete and went on into the evening with a great fireworks display. In the December a Centenary Review by pupils and staff entertained the entire community and at the end of the school year the multicultural nature of the school was demonstrated when students from many countries, in their national costume and carrying the flag of their country of origin, attended “Alice’s Birthday Party” and brought greetings in their native language.

On 11th February, 1978 the new complex comprising an administrative block of offices, clinic, common room, duplicating room, storerooms and conveniences as well as a new four-classroom block with storerooms and toilets, and a large multi-purpose hall with canteen were officially opened by the Hon. H. Jensen, MLA representing the Minister for Education the Hon. E. Bedford MLA.

These celebrations also provided the opportunity for many past students of the school to come together, many of them renewing friendships from the past. A dinner held on February 18th 1978 resulted in an overwhelming response from the entire community and over five hundred gathered together to share in the school’s centenary celebrations. This encouraged many to get together to form an Ex-pupils Association, which has, since then, been actively involved in the school.

With its new buildings and its accommodation problems solved the school’s supporters turned their attention to the environment and to the playground areas. The Australian Bi-centenary in 1988 provided the impetus for the continuation of the much needed ground improvements. As reported in the Northern District Times of 5th November, 1986 a most ambitious project was planned to give a ‘new look’ to the school. An environment committee was formed and a plan of work begun. This project was funded by a Bi-Centennial grant of $13,600 which allowed for the planting of a grove of gum trees which would always provide a reserve food supply for Taronga Zoo’s Koalas, for log units for seating and for a fitness track.

As well the grassed areas were invigorated and pleasant areas for play and for relaxation were established. Lindsay Hill inspired much of what was achieved and it is because of his and the
committee’s efforts that the school now enjoys a park-like environment.

The Bi-centennial celebrations began for the North Ryde community when, on February 3rd, 1988, the local member and Minister for Education. The Hon. Rodney Cavalier called the pupils to class by ringing the ‘old’ and restored school bell.

The year long program to commemorate the founding of Australia included maypole dancing, a variety festival, a bush dance and Colonial sports day, and then on Saturday 19th September the “Greening of Ryde” of which the playground improvements were part, was officially opened. The hours of planning and hard work had come to fruition and were appreciated by the school and by the wider community.

**Fire Damage 1991**

However just as the school community has always done in the face of adversity, all pulled together to keep the school operating efficiently while the Department of Public Works set about the mammoth task of rebuilding the block. It was to the credit of the entire school community that commitment and enthusiasm was maintained, and that the education of the students did not suffer as a result of this disastrous fire.

The establishment of the New South Wales Schoolhouse Museum in the original buildings which will be dealt with in another chapter and the provision of an area for Out of School Hours Program are prime examples of the school community’s pride in their school and their endeavours to meet the needs of the students and their families.

The uniqueness of the school has evolved over past years and the school continues to serve the local community always taking into consideration the changing nature of the times and the needs of its students.

Present students represent many races and many different cultures and their individual needs are paramount in the teaching and learning programs. A profound respect for the different nationalities and the cultural diversity of all students and their families is evident at all times and is based on a firm belief that children who learn together, learn to live together.
The school continues to build on its proud history and traditions. Its spacious park-like grounds, its tennis courts and sporting fields and their ongoing maintenance are evidence of the partnership that the school has developed with parents and the community. Its strong links with its community, the friendly and caring environment and the quality teaching and learning programs all of which place a strong emphasis on social responsibility serves to enhance what is truly an exceptional school.

Education at North Ryde Public School serves society in general in that it functions as part of the community as it has always done. Offered to each and every student is a broadening of intellectual horizons and their development as well-informed and critical citizens. They gain from their education as individuals and yet they experience the wider social system through the school and in so doing they appreciate issues that impact on them as individuals and on their fellow students.

Proudly the school continues to deliver quality education in a caring nurturing environment.

It features such things as –

- **Special support for students with English as a Second Language**
- **Early identification of students with learning difficulties**
- **A reading recovery program**
- **Special early intervention mathematics program**
- **School choir and Dance Ensemble**
- **Assertive Discipline code**
- **An attractive uniform available from an onsite shop**
- **Before and After School Care**
- **Healthy food canteen**

**The NSW Schoolhouse Museum**

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**THE SCHOOL’S MISSION STATEMENT**

North Ryde Public School will, in partnership with the community, prepare students for their future through quality teaching and learning programs and through a strong emphasis on social responsibility.

This chapter has been the story of 125 years of securing the future of the school and of its progress. It has been about the changes to education that have taken place over time and about the school’s response to community expectations and the demands of present day society.

The actions of the community have led to a long and proud history of enduring support to advance the educational advantages, which were, and are still, in place to ensure that the children of the North Ryde area have the best possible opportunity through their education to succeed both academically and socially. It is surely a lasting tribute to those pioneers who strived to have the school established in the first place and to those who have since worked tirelessly to ensure that the strong tradition of community participation and support set by them has been carried on.
The ethos of any school is determined, in the main, by the leadership. Following is an ‘honour roll’ of the North Ryde Public School leaders over the past 125 years. Each has brought to the position entrusted to them, their own expertise, experience and professionalism.

HEADMASTERS/PRINCIPALS OF NORTH RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL 1878 – 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Crew</td>
<td>1878 – 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Henry</td>
<td>1881 – 1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Glynn</td>
<td>1889 – 1909</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Forsyth</td>
<td>1926 – 1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Barnes</td>
<td>1930 – 1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Hamilton</td>
<td>1934 – 1941</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. Rigby</td>
<td>1941 – 1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Dobell</td>
<td>1941 – 1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. Goodwin</td>
<td>1964 – 1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. McGrath</td>
<td>1968 – 1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Frost</td>
<td>1969 – 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. Peate</td>
<td>1971 – 1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. Pollock</td>
<td>1977 – 1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Cudlipp</td>
<td>1981 – 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Calcott (relieving)</td>
<td>1998 – 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Anderson</td>
<td>1999 –</td>
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Two of these leaders remained at the school for twenty years or longer. They are John Glynn who was first appointed in 1889 and Bill Dobell who served from 1941 to 1964.

There is little documentation about the former but fortunately a valuable history still exists on the time spent and the difficulties encountered by the latter. Barry Manefield, a teacher at the school from 1959 to 1964, and later President of the NSW Teachers’ Federation remembers Bill Dobell well and has contributed this acknowledgement of his time at the school under the leadership of William (Bill) Dobell.

Retired Headmaster J.J. Glynn
Playing chess in 1923

R. Henderson 1909 – 1912
J. Pearson    1912 – 1914
A. Crane      1914 – 1916
D. Robertson  1916 – 1916
J. Griffin    1916 – 1924
J. Burrell    1924 – 1926
THE DOBELL ERA

Memories from Barry Manefield
Bill Dobell was a big, forceful, forthright man who soon let you know where you stood and what your place was in his world. I worked for him for 5 of his 22 or so years at North Ryde Primary.
I will tell you about my impressions of him. Also I knew him in the wider context of his world. He was a lifelong active member of the Teachers’ Federation here in N.S.W. and served on its governing Council for “donkey’s years”. Also he was for a number of years the Secretary of the Australian Teachers’ Federation, a very important and significant position.

Let me share with you some of my memories of North Ryde at the time and of the man who played such a key role at the school over a lengthy period marked by enormous change. I apologise if I drift off into reverie at times, but when you get to my age it is hard not to do so. Also I ask you to take into account that this all occurred 40 years ago or more.

The first time I ever saw Bill Dobell was in 1945 when I was an insignificant little 6th class boy at Epping Public. I was a very poor cricketer but I was allowed to accompany the P.S.S.A. team to its matches and act as scorer.

Our team was drawn to play North Ryde on the very rough outer field at Epping Oval – thank heavens the pitch was concrete or serious injury would have occurred! I remember this big teacher with a loud gruff voice who brought the North Ryde kids across by walking from the school along the cobblestone road (now Lane Cove Road) to the new Epping Road, catching the bus to Epping, then taking the long walk to Epping Oval.

When they arrived I was surprised at the largely Italian background of most of the team but of course North Ryde at that time was an area not of houses but of orchards and market gardens. But could those kids play cricket!

He was one of the umpires and gave his decisions (which did not always please our sportsmaster) in a most decisive manner. As an 11 year old I was most impressed. At the end of the game, which they won easily, off he went with his team in tow for the return journey.

I was appointed as a teacher to North Ryde at the beginning of 1958 and what a school it was! Let me tell you about my impressions at the time.

The school was in the middle of an area in which houses were constructed and occupied at a furious place on all sides. The Housing Commission and War Services were building houses everywhere and in addition many home builders were doing their own thing and this had been going on at an increasing rate over a number of years. The school enrolment mushroomed and overflowed in 1956-57 to such an extent that every available space within the school, every nearby church hall and the local School of Arts were jam-packed with children.
At the beginning of 1958 there were 1300 children at the school on site as well as in the surrounding halls. Imagine the primary staffroom at morning tea and lunch break! You had to get there quickly if you were to get a cup of tea let alone a seat.

Truscott Street School had been planned but construction was not complete by the
beginning of 1958 so North Ryde, for some time had to operate with its own 1000 pupils, and 300 boarders and the staff of Truscott Street until the school was completed enough for occupation. Note I do not say finished, it was a long time before that happened. This meant that the 300 students (and the number kept growing) were out in the surrounding halls every day.

From 1957 there were classes in the church halls, 3 classes in the hall of the School of Arts with no partitions and another class down below in a meeting room. Upstairs when it came time to chant tables it was soon found best if all 3 classes did it at the one time. Terry Hunt’s ABC singing broadcasts and a host of other activities were all taken together – how could it be done any other way? So the pattern developed and all oral activities were done in unison. What a hullabaloo there would be today if this happened. The TV cameras would be there every day.

Eventually Easter 1958 came and Truscott Street moved to its own building in North Ryde and the “old” school settled down. But what does settled down mean? There were now about 900 to 1000 pupils on the school site and even if the pace of increase had slowed, enrolments kept coming and we again had 2 classes out in the church halls. Soon a new school building was underway at East Ryde and it wasn’t long before Kent Road also was commenced. Just imagine – over a short period the small 2 or 3 teacher school in Coxs Road had grown to 4 large primary schools!

In 1959, after one of the great teachers Bruce Cole was promoted and left the school, “Dohey” as we liked to call him, gave me the job as Sportsmaster in the boy’s department. I mention it only because at the District Athletics that year we had 561 primary boys and girls and were by far the biggest school challenged only by Gladesville, which had nearly 600. We easily won the overall total with just over 60 points, which was a record according to the memory of the pundits who met after school at the “Royal” every Friday afternoon. But we were beaten for the championship Trophy by Woolwich with 6 points scored by their 50 or so students – well done Woolwich! Of course what should be remembered is that North Ryde already had its name on the shield numerous times as a small school because Dohey was a keen sportsman himself and he greatly encouraged sport at North Ryde Public School.

When he went to the school in 1942 it was a relatively small school with a residence and this continued until the early to mid 50s. In the Department’s scheme of things he went there as a Principal 5 or 6, a very small pawn in the Department’s game. He became, by the second half of the 50s a Principal 1. This feat of growing with the school to such an extent was a very unusual achievement and says a great deal for his native ability and skill in managing the
school and the external situation. There was some wonderment and shaking of heads amongst some of his envious colleagues at his feat.

This growth created a small problem for him. As school “King” he had to share some of his territory and authority with colleagues as the school grew and he found a little difficulty early in coping with this – but not for long. Early in the growth spurt the Infants Department was established and while he still had overall authority, the Infants Mistress had charge of the day to day running of her department, but he soon adjusted to it. The school and Dohey had much to be thankful for at the appointment of that wonderful Mistress, Miss Smith and she was soon joined by her wonderful Deputy, Mrs. Pemberton. What a great and happy Infants Department it was!

Later a Girls’ Department was built near the telephone exchange and that led to a further sharing of responsibility in the big school. I always felt that the school was very fortunate in the wonderful teachers and executive staff appointed over that period. Led by Dohey they always coped with the problems – perhaps today we would define some of those situations as super-stressful!

He had a special feeling for the School Library and early in 1958 the department agreed that in accord with the school population a full time librarian position would be established and on Mr. Dobell’s advice Mrs. Woodgate who had been a teacher at the school for many years was appointed to the position. The library was first established in the original building in the room beside the staffroom. It was inadequate as the staff room and great difficulty was experienced in coping with the large classes of 40 to 50, which were the norm in those days, but when library lessons were on, we managed to stack them in and somehow Mrs. Woodgate managed to cope.

What excitement and magic we all felt when in the early 60s the new library building was completed! It was as if Christmas had come and no one was more pleased than Dohey and Mrs. Woodgate. I am sure the library has been a great boom to the school and continues to be so till this day. Also there is now the school hall, an equally valuable building – Bill Dobell in my days delivered his great speeches at the Weekly Assembly from the weather shed in the playground while the 300 boys and staff sat in the shade under the two great Moreton Bay fig trees in the top playground.

But enough, this has been largely about the things that happened under Bill Dobell’s leadership in the 5 years I was at the school. What of the man himself? With his strong personality he was a powerful principal and he encouraged his staff to go for it, to achieve their best. He was the “king” but he was a benevolent despot and we settled in quickly to calling him “boss” and we meant it. If he judged a person a “goer” he rarely interfered except to give a nod of approval or a word of encouragement, but you knew he was always there and that he would support you.

Also you knew that if you had a big idea you had to do your homework and have all your answers ready when you put it before him. If you failed to have plans thought through disaster lay ahead. He made his decisions quickly and gave you full support or outright rejection. You knew that was the way it was.
I spent many a worried time pacing up and down outside his office rehearsing my arguments before I was ready to go in and front him with some proposal.

If he thought you didn’t have it, or were not pulling your weight, or maybe got on his wrong side, he could be ruthless and the best thing to do was to get out and go somewhere else as soon as you could. In truth, I only saw this once or twice in the 5 years I worked under him and it was a big staff! But I think we all knew the situation. If he agreed with someone about applying for a transfer, he would give them all the help he could and this often meant pulling some of the powerful but unseen strings he held in his hands. As well if you had a private personal problem he could give you invaluable assistance with absolutely no fuss.

He loved the microphone (and knew how to make the best of it). At school athletics carnivals he would give a running commentary of each race. These were greatly enjoyed by the spectators but did annoy the local populace in a half-mile radius. He was so effective with the mike that the shopkeepers in a very modern Ryde Shopping Centre at the time were deafened by his commentary at one of our carnivals and petitioned the Council. As a result all sports carnivals were banned from Ryde Oval and transferred to Dunkin Park and Sobroan.

Sometimes his love of the microphone was a nuisance. Regularly whilst in the middle of a lesson (and sometimes at a crucial moment) there would be a crackle on the intercom in every classroom and over the air would come a message such as, “Does anyone know where Mr. Vinall is? Tell him to come to the office”. But we all got used to it.

He never made you wait for a decision. It was made swiftly and you didn’t have to be a genius to know that the best thing to do was to get right in behind it and make it work – mind you he rarely made mistakes.

He really loved children and teaching. If he was walking by your room on one of his regular strolls around the school and he heard something going on that caught his attention, he was into your room in a flash and without ado, took over and bang went the next half hour or so. But you couldn’t complain, when he was talking and interacting with the kids it was great stuff, and you as teacher were as caught up in it just like your students.

I think it true to say that he viewed parents as a necessary evil. Things were very different 40 years ago. There was none of the “community involvement and participation in decision making” in Dohey’s day as at present. Good parents brought their kids to school, enrolled them and then went outside the school gate AND STAYED THERE unless invited in. He was very strong on discipline but rarely had to make a stand. He was the boss, this was his school and he made the big decisions. Over the years everyone grew to accept it. He never lost a contest because nobody contested his decisions – that’s the way it was! If he thought there might be a little discipline problem or trouble brewing he would appear in the background with his appalling cane held at his side so everyone knew he and “it” were there. He didn’t have to make a further show of force.
The cane was about 5 feet long and looked as thick as a broomstick. I never saw it used – it never needed to be.

What else can I say about him? He encouraged what he perceived as healthy competition. Every week classes vied to win the weekly uniform award or the weekly class spelling competition. Uniform was big at North Ryde and the old brown and white was commented on by visitors to the school. Another favourite for him (and for everyone else at the school) was the Annual School Concert held in the Top Ryde Town Hall until it was pulled down and then held in Ryde High School. They were great concerts and enjoyed by all.

Bill Dobell retired in 1964 and went with his wife to live in East Gosford. I went to visit him there with a friend. I’m not sure he was happy in retirement because I think the pace was a bit slow. But he had spent 22 years at North Ryde and deserved a rest.

Well that’s enough. You now know that I was a great admirer of the “King” or the “boss” or Dohey as he was affectionately known and perhaps this brief article is unbalanced. I don’t think so, I think North Ryde was a great school and was very lucky to have had such a powerful and positive principal for so many years.

Artefacts from the Schoolhouse Museum Collection including the Cane

NORTH RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL’S PARENT ORGANISATIONS

The part played by the entire community in the founding of the school has already been outlined. The formal involvement of the parents and community members by the school parent organisation has, through the ages, played a vital part in providing a quality education to all who have experienced learning at the school.

It was on April 15th, 1910 that the decision was made to form a Parents and Residents Association to support and assist the school. It was so named until 1914 when the name was changed to the Parents and Citizens Association. Those who inaugurated that first parent body were diligent in recording the early activities of the Association and the minutes of their meetings are carefully preserved in properly bound books which hold an important place in the N.S.W. Schoolhouse Museum which is situated on site in the 1877/1910 building complex.

Associated with the formation of the P & C was the opportunity to organise many events, which not only raised funds for the school, but also provided the opportunity for social activities, which involved the whole of the community.

It is recorded that the first fund-raising activity raised nine pounds three shillings and seven and a half-penny. Twelve months later the Association was able to purchase a “Dresden” piano described in the minutes as having “ivory keys and a true walnut bookrest and having a 50 year guarantee and including a matching stool”.

The cost of forty pounds thirteen shillings and sixpence was certainly a large sum to be raised by the fledgling Association.

Just a short time later the P & C Association could boast that it had 120 members and was, as well as providing resources for the school, heavily involved in all of the events and activities that took place in the wider community.

In his first annual report to the Association the President, Mr. Pearse, made it quite clear that fundraising should not be the sole objective of the Association. Following is an extract from the report:

“The financial part of the help though important is not the be all and end all of an Association like ours. The broader and greater assistance that may be rendered in the cause of education, the advocacy and agitation for progress with the times, the increased facilities now affording in various ways for the extension of education in our State are all matters that will require careful attention, thought and discussion and after all cannot be measured in the advantages that may be gained by the school and the district in pounds, shillings and pence.”

Acceptance of these principles set so many years ago have dictated the thinking of the school’s P & C members over many years. North Ryde representatives were instrumental in the formation of the North Western Suburbs District Council way back in 1927 and in their continued support of the State body, the Federation of P & C Associations of N.S.W.

At all times the North Ryde P & C has been well to the fore in supporting all of the education campaigns which have sought to improve the conditions and educational opportunities available to children in public schools.

Never has there been any hesitation by parents in participating in rallies and marches in an endeavour to secure the attention of governments and to alert them to their responsibilities in respect to providing a quality public education. In the 1960s when the status and poor salaries for teachers was of great concern P & C members supported North Ryde teachers when the NSW Teachers’ Federation initiated their very first ever strike action. They were prominent in their advocacy for smaller class sizes and better accommodation.

In the late 60s the P & C Association took their place in a national campaign which made representations to the Commonwealth Government to investigate the needs of public schools and to establish a Schools Commission with a charter to supervise the ongoing funding arrangements which would ensure that federal funding for education was distributed in a fair and equitable way.

In this particular campaign members were most active. It is fact that on Sunday August 10th 1969 the P & C Association actually hired a double deck bus to go to a public meeting held in Sydney Town Hall. The bus was filled and the North Ryde representatives joined thousands of others from all over the State letting the politicians present know just how they felt about the needs of public schools. Discussion within P & C meetings about the needs of not only their own school but of education
generally have always played a part in the deliberations of its members. They, through various conferences and meetings played a significant role in the formulation of statewide policies all designed to improve the quality of the teaching and learning opportunities available to all children in public schools.

Ties with other local schools have been evident from the earliest of times, and these have formed a vital link in education activities and shared events throughout the area.

One of the earliest recorded events was the Empire Day celebration held at the school on the 24th May, 1910 when the local member of Parliament, the Mayors of both Ryde and Eastwood and students from other schools joined in the raising of the flag, a gift from the Rosevale a school in Glasgow, Scotland. This flag was raised by young North Ryde students, Myrtle Heard, Pearce Coleman and Vera Hicks. It is interesting that, through the wonders of the Internet, it has now been possible to contact Rosevale School and that we are presently seeking to renew the connection made so many years ago, and to establish what or who was instrumental in establishing that contact all that time ago.

After the ceremony there was a luncheon, followed by a sports meeting held in the school grounds and then, in the evening a concert arranged by the North Ryde Musical and Drama Society. This must surely have been quite a day!

The minutes of the P & C continually record evidence of community involvement in the school and its activities. Meetings with the Ministers of the Crown on a whole host of issues that affected the school and its community, attendance at civic functions, meetings with Members of Parliament, education and traffic authorities and local government officials all played a prominent part in the school's history.

As well they continually refer to the P & C members' involvement in the affairs of the wider community.

The Association was, during the 1950s and 1960s actually a partner in the production and distribution of a community newspaper “The North Ryde Recorder”.

Many of the members were also involved in a concert group “The North Ryde Revellers” which regularly provided entertainment in the School of Arts and which also helped raise funds to purchase much needed equipment for the school. Tennis parties at the House of David tennis courts, socials and dances, euchre tournaments were just some of the events on the social calendar shared by the school and the community.

In the area of local government and their responsibility in respect to the provision of support networks for local schools, Mick Lardelli, President of the P & C Association 1962/65 and later Alderman and Mayor of Ryde remembers that it
was the North Ryde parents who, through their meetings, first raised the issue and later campaigned to have established an Evening College. Letters written, under the pseudonym of Ada Cook, by Ron Matthews Secretary of the Association who just happened to live on the corner of Ada and Cook streets, were instrumental in persuading the authorities that not only was there a need, but that it would be well supported. And it was!

Classes, which covered a wide variety of disciplines, commenced at North Ryde High School, as an Annexe to the Eastwood Evening College. This Evening College established at the behest of North Ryde P & C members went from strength to strength and was the very foundation of the Ryde Community College of today.

Yet another influence that the P & C of the day sought was directed at achieving improvements in the library services provided for the community. From its membership, which included Mick Lardelli, the Ryde/Hunters Hill Library Committee was formed and this committee campaigned vigorously to, not only have a first-class central library service established for the Municipality, but to have also the branches upgraded so providing easy access for those living in the West Ryde, Eastwood, North Ryde and Gladesville areas.

The efforts and activities of this committee were supported by librarians, Barry Scott from Macquarie University, Alan Horton from the NSW University and by the Chief Librarian of the existing service Julian Woods. At the next Local Government elections the whole issue of library services for the entire Ryde community was well to the fore. Mick Lardelli and his team campaigned vigorously on the library issue supporting the Library Committee and its policies to improve the service. Suffice to say that those in support were elected and the process of establishing a first class central library with appropriate modern purpose built premises began. This was surely a tribute to those members of the North Ryde P & C Association who had the foresight and who campaigned that today the students and the wider community have available to them in their own area a library service which is as modern and professional as they come. When the Central Library was finished, as a fitting tribute to Barry Scott, who had given so much support to its establishment, the Reference Section was named for him – an honour well deserved.

Patience and tenacity are attributes that have always been evident in the work of the P & C Association. This was evidenced in the continuous struggle to rid the school of the many 'temporary' buildings that had been placed there in the late 50s and early 60s and to have the school consolidated with permanent and up-to-date buildings, a struggle that went on for more than a decade. No matter what the problem, members were always willing to take the initiative. Never were they prepared to accept the political answers such as ‘no money available’, ‘the school is on the list’ or ‘we’ll look into the matter’.

That the school has always had available to it the most up-to-date educational resources and teaching aids when these were needed, has been because of the work and dedication to the school of past and present members of the P & C
Association, its Ladies Auxiliary and the Infants’ Mothers Club.

Over many, many years, the School Fete, held each year in September was the main fundraiser for the school. Joan Marscham recalls that even before her own children started at North Ryde School she had met up with the ladies from the school when playing tennis at Clarke’s courts in Sunhill Place. Her first experiences were with the Fete which was always the best fete in the district. She recalls that Margaret Falconer and Beth Gamble were the main organisers of the doll’s stall and that they set a very high standard for the dolls’ clothes which were either knitted or sewed to fit dolls from 8” to 26”. There was quite a variety and they even sewed “Barbie” clothes when Barbie became popular.

The stall was always famous for the ‘dolls on sticks’ and on one occasion Joan remembers having one hundred of them stored in the caravan in their backyard. Everything that was needed for the stalls, laces, ribbons, net, materials, wool was donated. In later years the dolls and a craft stall were combined and Lola Lack made beautiful aprons and teapot covers and others made lace coat hangers by the hundreds.

One incident will remain always in Joan’s memory. After one of the ‘gigantic’ fêtes the ladies on the canteen could not find the washing up dish. They established that Ron Gamble had thought it was a donation for the White Elephant Stall and had sold it to Laurie Frakes for a bath in which to bath the dog. Fortunately it was retrieved before he had used it.

Under the charter of the P & C Association there have been established several sub-committees, which on their behalf operate various functions in the school’s day to day life. These include the running of the School Canteen, the Uniform Shop, the Outdoor Activities Group, as well as the management of the tennis courts.

The P & C Association was also responsible for the setting up of the Out of School Hours program, which provides a service to working parents. This vital service is responsible to the association for its day-to-day management. It is run by properly trained staff who are there before and after school to ensure the safety and well being of those placed in their care.

There is no record of when the P & C set up its Ladies Auxiliary which appears to have taken as its main function the running of the weekly tuck shop and the raising of funds to support the school library. At the time there was no special library building and throughout the years it was housed in various locations throughout the school. Joan Marscham, whose grandchildren Tom and Laura Crockhart are present day pupils, remembers the weekly Tuckshops and their location in the church hall and later in what is now the Out of School Hours room. Joan remembers also that she, Lola Lack and Erica Hill were working on tuckshop duties on that exciting day when man first walked on the moon, a significant happening and the time and place remain imprinted in her memory.

In 1963 when the new library was built it was very much to the credit of the members of the Ladies Auxiliary that the school had available to it a substantial number of books and other learning
materials to allow it to be at the cutting edge of providing excellent research and recreational material for the students.

Today, of course, the curriculum for primary schools set down by the Board of Studies requires much more than just books. For the school of today the present library is not what is appropriate for modern day teaching and learning programs. In the nearly forty years since it was first built things have changed. No longer does the building provide the flexibility and easy access to make it suitable for the integration of modern technology into its operation.

Accepting the challenge to ensure that the students of today have access to a first class facility that will meet the technological needs, the P & C Association has undertaken the task of remodelling and refurbishing the library. A new interior configuration will make the building more ‘user friendly’ and will meet the needs as dictated by the curriculum. This venture is being funded by the P & C in partnership with the Department of Education which has agreed to provide $ for $ to enable the work to be carried out.

Then Greg, now in Year 9 started school in 1993 and finally Michelle now in Year 4 started in 1998. We couldn’t be happier with the education each has received from this school.

We soon became involved with the P & C and all of its activities. It was a great way to meet other parents and to enjoy the atmosphere of the school.

Over the years both Graham and I have taken on various roles. This year I am, once again, P & C President and Graham is the Environment Committee Co-ordinator.

Our participation is this school goes back a long way. Everything is running smoothly, the children, parents and staff are content. That it is so, is evident in the excellent way our children are being taught. We are very proud to be associated with this great school.”

Up until 1956 the parental involvement in the school was confined to activities associated with the P & C Association. However, with the enormous increase in enrolments, which impacted greatly on the infants’ classes there emerged a need for a separate group to work specifically with the newly created Infants’ Department.

So yet another milestone in the history of North Ryde Public School was reached when on Tuesday 20th April, 1956 the Infants’ School Mothers’ Club was formed by the newly appointed Infants’ Mistress, Miss H. Smith. One of the first decisions taken by this group was the establishment of a separate weekly tuckshop to ensure that the young children had a nutritious lunch available to them.

JACKIE FORSYTH
President of the P & C Association in 2002 writes of her and her family’s involvement in the school. Jackie, through her leadership, over several years has contributed greatly to the involvement of parents in the school and in its wider activities. She says:

“Our association with the North Ryde Public School started way back in 1991, when our eldest daughter Kylie, now in Year 11 started school.
The only room available to them was a hat room and adjacent storeroom, and though it was not the ideal situation the mothers persevered with this arrangement for many years to come. In those days free milk for the students was delivered early each morning in 1/3 pint bottles. Invariably the milk was placed in the sun and the taste became tainted. In an endeavour to encourage the children to drink the milk the mothers tried to make it more palatable by adding various flavourings, by providing flavoured straws and in the winter heating it and making cocoa.

Eventually, after much lobbying by Mothers’ Clubs from all over the State a brick structure was built in all schools so that the milk was not exposed to the sun. This also proved to be unsatisfactory and eventually the Department provided a form of refrigeration in the shape of long rectangle containers. The delivery of free milk was discontinued in the late 60s.

The school had never before had staff specially trained for early education so what had been provided for infants’ children in the past did not meet the requirements of the time. There were different needs in respect to teaching aids and resources and these were not provided by the Department of Education. So funds had to be raised and members gave many hours of voluntary time in arranging functions such as fancy dress frolics, toffee and cake days, guessing competitions and other activities to raise the much needed funds so that the young children of North Ryde had whatever was needed to enhance their educational opportunities. Mothers’ Club members were never backward in taking on the authorities in their attempts to achieve the very best educational environment.

They were quick to protest, albeit unsuccessfully, when 150 feet of the playground along the Lane Cove Road frontage was resumed by the Housing Commission, and when the prevailing westerly winds caused a classroom window to blow out and injure a teacher they demanded that the authorities enclose the verandah and in this their demands were met. They protested also when a beautiful stand of gum trees which were growing on what is now the medium strip of Lane Cove Road, were chopped down.

Throughout its existence the Mothers’ Club worked harmoniously with each of the North Ryde parent groups being involved with them in the arrangements of major events. This was particularly evident in the organisation of the school’s centenary celebrations in 1987/1988 when their joint activities raised sufficient money to make it possible to build two tennis courts which have since provided the opportunity for the students to learn to play tennis as a regular part of school’s sport program.

**The Schools Tennis Courts**

In the early 1990s the Department of Education restructured primary schools and Infants’ Departments as such disappeared. The members of the North Ryde Infants Mothers Club decided that amalgamation with the P & C Association would advance the cohesiveness of the school as a complete entity and therefore decided to dissolve the Club.
THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

Public education was founded on democratic principles and the formation of School Councils has made it possible for parents to have a more direct involvement in the school and its management practices. The North Ryde School Council, comprising elected representatives of parents, staff and community, works within the framework of the Department of Education's statewide policies and is responsible for setting the policy directions and the educational goals for the school.

The Council does not replace the responsibilities of the P & C Association but, because of its representative nature, it does provide a forum in which all sections of the school can articulate their ideas, aspirations and any concerns they have. An important part of their responsibility is the overseeing of the school's management and financial affairs.

The North Ryde School Council strives at all times to earn the trust of its school community and has, since its inauguration, provided a forum for the discussion of all things that affect the school. It has provided a genuine partnership of parents, teachers and the community and is truly democratic in its practices.

PETER VOUDSEN
2002 President describes the current activities of the School Council

"The role of the School Council is to represent the whole school community in setting the goals, directions and priorities for the school. Over the last few years the key focus has been given to developing and documenting a variety of school policies, promoting the school to the wider community through a successful promotional campaign which highlighted the great resources and facilities at the school and assigning priority to upgrading the computer/technology facilities.

Most recently, plans have been initiated to refurbish the library, upgrading it to a modern Information and Technology Centre. Significant input has also been made in the preparation of the Annual School Report.

These accomplishments have only been achieved by the enthusiastic and insightful contribution of the community members, teaching staff and the parents/carers who make up the School Council."

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Because of its adherence to democratic principles the opportunity is provided for the involvement of students in the decision-making processes as they relate to their needs and aspirations. Established to make it possible for students, from the youngest to the eldest, to have a say, the Student Representative Council affords each of the elected representatives with the opportunity, within a properly constituted forum, to present the views of their fellow students.

Members are, each year, elected by their peers and they are empowered to present their ideas and thoughts to the staff and to other school groups on a wide range
of matters. A prime example of the value of their involvement in school affairs was their input into the decisions, which resulted in the adoption of a new school uniform.

**DANIEL TIMMS**  
**Boys School Captain for 2002**  
expresses his thoughts:  
“I feel privileged to have attended a school with such a long history. I have enjoyed my time at North Ryde Public School as I have been able to go to school and have fun while learning.

Students from the past would be amazed by the variety of subjects and activities, which are offered at school these days. North Ryde Public School in 2002 is a great place to be and all of the school community should be proud of the achievements of the students and the school over the past 125 years.”

**HANNAH VOUSDEN**  
**Girls School Captain for 2002** adds her comments:  
“North Ryde Public School has great facilities such as the computer room, internet access, the library and the hall. The grounds are spacious with lots of trees and shady places to sit and with two big ovals to play sport on.

I particularly like the way students are encouraged to be responsible and to have a say in what happens at school through the Student Representative Council. The senior students are helped to develop confidence and leadership through the ‘buddy’ system and peer groups and are also given the responsibility to run weekly assemblies as well as special occasions such as Grandparents Day and Presentation Day.

The school participates in many community, social and sporting activities which everyone has an opportunity to take part in. The teachers are very kind, friendly and supportive, which makes learning at North Ryde so much fun.

These are just some of the things that make me proud to be a student at North Ryde Public School.”

Over the past 125 years the provision of quality education for those who have, and are still attending the school has depended largely on the parent and community groups that have been associated with them. The actions taken by the North Ryde parent organisations throughout the years have covered a wide spectrum of issues and activities but underlying every decision taken has been a deep concern for the students.

Their commitment to the school and its students have made possible for the provision of the modern resources needed. North Ryde Public School today provides the quality teaching and learning that gives each of its students the start they deserve if they are to reach their educational potential.
THE NSW SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM of Public Education

From the late 1950s there were proposals within the Department of Education to establish an ‘education museum’ so that the documents and items used by schools throughout the century could be preserved. In the 1960s the head of the Department’s Community Relations section, Mr. Cec. Rubie tried unsuccessfully to secure the Fort Street Girls’ High School on Observatory Hill for this purpose. From that time various other proposals were made none of which reached any finality.

It was against this background that the North Ryde school community was encouraged to make its first approaches to the then Minister for Education, and local member, Mr. Rodney Cavalier with the proposal that the original North Ryde 1877 schoolroom with the additions made in 1893 and 1910 be dedicated as the Department’s education museum. The Minister was enthusiastic and recognised the potential encompassed in the suggested location and he requested that the Historic Building Group of the Government Architect’s Branch prepare a “Survey and Cultural Significance Study” of the historic buildings at the school.

The survey stated that

“the North Ryde school building group is of historical and social significance to the local district in particular, and is a fine example of the sequential architectural and educational development of the basic schoolroom and classroom buildings over the period from 1877 to 1910 in general.”

In commenting on the value of the proposal to develop the building as an educational museum the government architect’s branch concluded that

“the 1877 section of the buildings is one of the oldest public buildings still standing in North Ryde and is important in the context of the early development of that district. It was erected at the beginning of the urbanisation of the rural areas in the district, which were part of the Field of Mars Common in the 1870s.

A comparative analysis of the architecture of the 1877 North Ryde school building and the 1877 Ryde school building, demonstrates a striking contrast between the socio-economic levels in the two pupil-feeder areas at that time. The levels of architectural design and materials were different although they still provided the same standard in educational facilities”.

Since the school’s centenary celebrations in 1977/78 there had been a resurgence of interest in the history of the school and of the district. The school’s P & C Association and the newly-formed Ex-Pupils Association believed that the proposed museum should not just be a collection of education memorabilia but should be a ‘living place’ where the students of today could actually experience the differences in educational practice between the then and now.
They recognised that the changes in education and the introduction of technology made it imperative that the education documents and resources of the past should be gathered to provide a proper historical collection.

As well they considered it to be of particular importance that a collection such as that proposed should be housed and preserved in an appropriate environment and that a special feature should be the availability of a schoolroom of the past to allow for present day students to experience learning in a classroom of the past.

*Pen and ink lessons in the 1887 classroom*

The P & C Association set up a committee comprising parents, staff and community to develop a plan to put before the Minister for Education and to make the necessary submissions. Their proposal submitted that there were real advantages to be gained from the establishment of a ‘Living Education Museum’ at the North Ryde site.

However, by the time the submission was submitted there had been a change of government and a new Minister for Education, the Hon. Virginia Chadwick had been elected. So new representations were made. Mrs. Chadwick was persuaded that there was merit in the proposal and she agreed to the establishment of the museum on site, and so the restoration of the buildings was able to commence.

It was indeed fortunate that, when Inspectors of Schools occupied these buildings, some painting had been done and it had been done in the original colours. There were, however, partitions, which had been put in at that time that had to be removed. It was also fortunate that the original plans and specifications for each of the buildings were also available and that the committee had access to Mr. Rodney Clymo, of the Government Architects Office as a consultant throughout the restoration work.

As well, it was fortunate indeed that members of the committee, Lindsay Hill and Bob Clayton had the expertise and energy to follow these original plans and specifications and to bring the dream of restoring the buildings to their original state, to fruition.

The P & C Association made some funds available but it was really a grant from the Heritage Council that enabled restoration work to really begin. This grant of $10,000 came as a result of an application for funding put in by the then President of the P. & C. Association Mrs. Gillian Russell.

It was generally because of the enthusiasm of Lindsay Hill and his meticulous application to the task, as well as his total dedication to the whole process that has given the State and the North Ryde school a legacy that will serve the students of New South Wales into the future. The commitment made to the project and the many, many hours of physical labour given to the project by Lindsay, and others have provided a
showcase, which now houses an ever increasing collection of written and other resource materials and teaching aids.

During the restoration work it was necessary to demolish additions to the northern verandah, which were entirely unsympathetic with the other buildings. This was done and the verandah was restored to its original state with all materials used being in accord with the original specifications. Some of the timber used was ‘rescued’ by the committee when the Marsfield Public School was being demolished.

Major work undertaken to ensure an absolutely authentic restoration included, among other things, the re-instatement of a chimney to the 1893 classroom, the opening-up of the bricked-in entrance to the original schoolroom, the restoration of the arched doorway identical with the original and the opening up of previously bricked-in fireplaces.

Attention to detail was, throughout the entire restoration operation, the key. The diligence of Lindsay, Bob and others who assisted have made the museum a significant and historic place which represents the different and changed eras of education in New South Wales.

The re-instatement of the picket fence along the Cox’s Road alignment came after yet another change of government and another change of Minister. The Hon. John Aquilina MLA officially ‘hung the gates’ on 6th November 1997.

So what now exists is a museum which houses a collection of educational treasures collected from all over the State. But it is much more than that. Thanks to representations to the Minister, made by the School Council and the P & C, funds have been provided to allow for the employment of an Education Officer to implement the school visitation program. This has proven to be a very popular with many schools including a visit to the Schoolhouse Museum in their excursion program.

During their visit, present day students really experience what it was like in the past. They are seated on authentic long wooden benches – long toms - they have the opportunity to dip their pens into the original ceramic ink wells and they are likely to be prodded with the cane when they blot their work.

The classes are conducted on a one day a week basis, by the Education Officer, Gaye Braiding and her assistant, Kathryn Watkins. Carol-Anne Maurer and Tess Nias help with the visits and all dress for the occasion in period costumes.
The visiting students are encouraged to soak up the atmosphere by dressing in white aprons and sailor collars which were, of course, familiar attire for those times.

As well as experiencing a special lesson students look at the other restored classrooms and artifacts, take part in treasure hunts, games and activities as well as participating in a Maypole dance and an exercise drill with wooden wands. All of these activities fit in with today’s Human Society and its Environment key learning area.

Perhaps the jewel in the crown of the museum is a replica of the original gas lamp, which now stands proudly by the Museum’s front-gate entrance.

The last Gas Lamp to be taken from the streets of Sydney was from Coxs Road in 1937.

Over time the collection of historical documents and educational items has become somewhat overwhelming and the necessity of cataloguing them became an urgent imperative. Once again, the School Council and P & C made representations to allow for this important work to begin. The Minister, The Hon John Watkins made the funds available and much progress has already been made towards completing this important and professional task. The School Council’s and P & C’s interest and support indicate clearly the partnership that exists between the school and the Museum Committee.

The salaries of the Museum’s Education Officer and the Clerical Assistant and the costs associated with the cataloguing program are administered through the North Ryde School. The services of a professional curator, Ms. Jane Varley have been secured and she is guiding volunteers in the process of ensuring that all items are catalogued and preserved safely and can be retrieved when needed.

This museum has become a vital adjunct to those networks, which support the teaching and learning programs of schools from all parts of the State.

Lindsay Hill, (left) and Jim Hull hold a photograph of the last Gas Lamp taken from Coxs Road in 1937.

Graham Lewis AGL, lights the replica in 1997.
MEMORIES

This summary is of an interview with MISS DOROTHY KENNING who was a pupil at North Ryde Public School during the years 1935 and 1936. Dorothy was Dux of the school in her final year. She still lives in the area and regularly attends the Ex-pupils’ re-union dinners.

Anne Shogod on behalf of the Museum Committee conducted the interview. Anne is a student who is completing a BA degree (Cultural Heritage) at Charles Sturt University.

It was during the centenary celebrations of the North Ryde Public School that the idea of an annual get-together developed among the crowd of ex-pupils who had enjoyed catching up after many years away from the school and in some cases away from the North Ryde area.

One of these pupils was Dorothy Margaret Hope Kenning, who has attended many of the subsequent reunions held for pupils who had left the school for at least forty years.

Dorothy also holds the distinction of having been made Dux of the school in 1936 and was happy to share her memories of her two years at North Ryde School for its 125th anniversary. While Dorothy doesn’t remember any special ceremony for the Dux award, she does remember being pleased at the recognition of her efforts.

Having been born in 1924 in Belmore, Sydney to parents who had themselves been born on the south coast of New South Wales, Dorothy’s family moved to Putney and then to Wicks Road, North Ryde in 1934. She continued her fourth class schooling for that year in Putney, staying with an aunt during the week and going home to Wicks Road for the weekend. In those days the houses in the North Ryde area were not numbered as they were few enough in number to be identified by their location and inhabitants. Dorothy’s family home was next to a service station, run by a family well known in the area at the time, the Frews, and this was an identifying mark for their house.

A Mr. Thomas Hamilton began teaching a combined fifth and sixth class at North Ryde Public School in 1935 which was also Dorothy’s first year at the school. While Mr. Hamilton also acted as Principal, there were two other teachers at the time, one conducting a combined fourth and third class and the third teacher conducting the combined second and first classes. One was a Mrs Benson.

This seems to have been a time of comparative discipline, was while the use of the cane was accepted, and Dorothy remembers it being inflicted on occasions, it was apparently not frequently required.

Mr. Hamilton lived on what is now school grounds with his adult daughters and occupied a cottage which if believed to have been constructed of sandstone, although no photos of it are believed to exist. While Dorothy couldn’t remember the architectural details in depth, she believes it was demolished in the 1960s to make way for additions to the school.

Interestingly, her memories of the pupils’ equipment are not largely dissimilar to those who attended school decades later in the 1960s and 1970s. Prior to the major innovation of computer use in schools, pupils for many generations sat at bench-like desks with ceramic inkwells set in them.
The major difference in Dorothy's time was that the inkwells actually contained ink and the writing implements were pens with nibs.

Uniforms were not compulsory at the time but Dorothy was happy to have a box pleat tunic and white blouse from her Putney days, which was a practical choice of clothing for the school week. She also remembers wearing a Red Cross uniform, which she believes was used on special occasions.

Lessons themselves focused on "the 3R's" (reading, writing and arithmetic), seemingly still in reaction to the lapse of these subjects that occurred in the 1920s and extended to the practical subject of sewing for the girls. Dorothy excelled in sewing and remembers receiving various prizes for her sewing in competitions organised by the sewing teacher, and also an exhibition of samplers held in the city. This was to be an activity enjoyed by Dorothy for many years, progressing into garment making in high school and up until fairly recently.

While other domestic subjects such as cocking had been included in various school curriculums even in the late 1800s, this was not the case during the two years that Dorothy attended North Ryde. Considering the size of the school at the time, it could be assumed that this was due either to the current focus on basic academic subjects, lack of facilities, or both. Art was not included and seems to have been a focus of expression in much later times. The question remains as to what kind of instruction the boys were receiving while the girls attended their sewing class.

In the two years in question, boys and girls were taught together apart from the time of the sewing class.

Another difference from some of the curricula some decades earlier was an absence of formal exercise. While photos can be seen in the Cox's Road Museum itself of classes training with Indian clubs and the like, this was not part of Dorothy's memories. While she thought there may have been some informal exercise in the mornings when the pupils congregated together prior to going into the classroom, she does not remember formal breaks for either outside or inside lessons. While there may be photographs of the classes in the 1930s Dorothy has not kept hers and has not come across any on display in the museum so far.

The banking system operated in schools by the Commonwealth Bank was also touched on. Dorothy attributes her lifelong account with the Commonwealth Bank to the fact that she started an account at the school through the system operated within the school itself. This system commenced in the late 19th century and is still operational.

Miss Dorothy Kenning sitting at her old desk with her 1936 Dux Medal. She has kindly donated her Medal to the Museum Collection.
Considering the surrounding area, Dorothy described a semi-rural area in the 1930s which became a ‘green belt’ during WW2 and which wasn’t opened up for large-scale housing until the 1950s. From that time on, change was rapid but during Dorothy’s time at North Ryde, she was aware of much activity in the area of vegetable farming, orchards, cattle and poultry.

On the positive side, this was a peaceful and safe area. Children were able to walk to school safely (Dorothy herself took an accepted short cut from Wicks Road through the Cox’s property) and walked much longer distances than is now usual. Indeed, this was probably a necessity as the main drawback of the area was its lack of public transport. In the days before the construction of Epping Road and the crossing of the nearby Lane Cove River, the only way into the city was to take a bus to Ryde and then catch a tram. With no bus returning to North Ryde after around 7.30pm and infrequently at weekends, transport around and out of North Ryde for those without a farm vehicle or a horse and sulky was difficult after business hours.

With the largely open air lifestyle of the time, and the required farm work by some of the children on their parents’ holdings, Dorothy remembers the general health of the population as being good. While the Depression was still impacting globally, the fact that North Ryde was a farming area meant that fresh food was not as much of an issue for many folk as it may have been for more urbanised populations. Milk was supplied in the school and while Dorothy’s father found it necessary to accept dole payment for some of this time, this was supplemented with gifts of lengths of material, shoes and stockings on occasions. Dorothy was unsure of the source of these supplementary items — they may have been via charities, the council or higher levels of government. Interestingly dole recipients worked for their payments and were responsible for many of the road construction projects at that time.

While Dorothy’s two years do not, of course, convey a large slice of the changing school or environment scene during the 125 years since the school has been built, it is an intriguing glimpse into the mid 1930s and it is with much gratitude that her memories of that time have been accepted into the archives of the museum.

Memories from Mill and Joe Williams - from the recollections of The Thompson family held by the NSW Schoolhouse Museum.

Mill writes of her childhood as one of the ten Thompson children all of whom attended North Ryde Public School at the time when Mr. Griffin was Headmaster. The family lived on a property “Uningra” (Aboriginal for Happy House) which was bordered by Lane Cove Road, Lorna Avenue and Kathleen Streets which was one of the highest points in the area and which had a superb view of Sydney.
Her father was a bricklayer and he actually built the Methodist Church in Coxs Road where Mill and Joe Williams, who was in the Navy, were married in 1912.

Joe retired from the Navy after twelve years and then went to work in the Commonwealth Bank. He rejoined the Navy at the outbreak of WW2 and served until 1946.

Both Mill and Joe worked tirelessly for the school, particularly for school fetes and for local concerts. Joe served for five years as President of the North Ryde P & C Association.

DON RENNIE remembers the Empire Day Celebrations in 1934.

This group Photograph (below) was taken on Empire Day, 24th May 1934, in the North Ryde School grounds beside the porch of the 1877 classroom.

(Don was able to identify all 26 pupils,
Back row Boys, left to right)
Don Rennie,
Jack Cresbie, Jack Blackie,
Spencer Jesson, Jim Poole,
Albert Sayer (Chester), Sid Clayton,
Jim Thompson, Don Norman,
Bob Clayton, (Middle row, Girls L to R)
Laurel Jump, Peggy Beckington
Dulcie Watt, Joyce Andrews,
Marion Scorer, Myrtle Hukins,
(Front LtoR) Les Meurer, Beryl Lett,
Nancy Norman, Betty Stuart,
Dorothy Hukins, Gwen Norris,
Beatrice James,
(Seated L to R)
Ada Rousia, Jean Lett with her Bulldog,
Rose Thompson (on the chair.)
Don Rennie remembers walking two miles to school and two long miles home. He was only six when he started school in 1934 with no uniform or shoes. 80% of the pupils, particularly the boys, did not wear shoes.

The Empire Day Concert was a special occasion with pupils chosen to dress up by teacher Mrs Bryce. The School walked over to The School o’ Arts in Coxs Road where they sang patriotic British songs such as ‘Rule Britannia’ and ‘God Save The King’. Then they were allowed to have a half-day holiday. They sometimes went to the Coxs Road Shop and bought ‘battered saus’ (sausages), pies and cakes.

Don remembers going straight into first and second class in the old 1877 room as there was no kinder class as such. Laurel Jump, a sixth class pupil, looked after these little ones. Mrs Dolly Bensen taught the girls sewing in the 1893 room. Third and fourth class were in the 1910 room close to Coxs Road, while fifth and sixth class were in the 1910 room on the playground side. The fourth class boys were allowed to tend the school vegetable garden. Don went onto Ryde Public School in 1938.

JOHN McCINTOCK
Former Treasurer of the North Ryde
P. & C. Association and his wife Beryl
tell of their memories of activities in
the turbulent 50s and 60s.

Early days for us are the late 1950s when the population of the district was expanding extremely rapidly. We remember the school having to cope with the sudden change from about 70 pupils to more than 700 in less than two years. We remember the emergency arrangements for classrooms in church halls, verandahs and sometimes even under the shade of trees. We remember the difficulties in trying to arrange extra classrooms and teachers, but most of all we remember the sense of community of the district of North Ryde, which, in the 50s and early 60s centered on the school.

The friendships formed between both the parents and the children in those days have endured to the present. The school changed so much in such a short time that the people concerned can really claim that those were pioneering days. A very special focus for the whole district was the annual School Fete for which preparations lasted the whole year and involved so many people. There seemed to be a special ‘blessing’ on the third Saturday in September because it was almost always a beautiful fine day when everyone was at Coxs Road.

Another period firmly etched in our memory has clear political overtones, and this is, in the late 1960s when the idea of state aid for private schools was gaining momentum. Remember that from the point of view of expanding and new schools, such as North Ryde and many others established within 10 kms of North Ryde, this was a period when desperate attempts were being made to obtain sufficient equipment for the rapidly expanding numbers of pupils, and when the gap between the levels of support for pupils in long established schools and the new ones was very apparent.

The claims made by Federal politicians at the time regarding the alleged differences between the character of the parents of state and private school pupils would be considered now, to be ridiculous, but at the time they fuelled differences within the community.
We remember in particular one meeting in North Ryde when the then Member for Bennelong (long before John Howard arrived on our scene) claimed that parents of private schools cared and worked for their children, while the parents of public school pupils just held their hands out claiming support from governments and did nothing themselves to support their schools. This certainly did not impress a team of North Ryde parents who had just spent most of Saturday mowing the school grounds with their own lawnmowers, petrol and energy and had then repeated the exercise the next day at the local high school. “Divide and Win” was the unspoken theme of the politics of the 1960s.

The constant underlying factor, which gave and still gives such strength to North Ryde Public School as an institution of learning and of character building was, in our view, the cooperation between teachers, pupils and parents. This has been maintained over several generations. In many respects North Ryde Public School can be seen as a model which could well be emulated.

**KEREN HARTLEY**  A pupil from 1962-1968 sets her memories to verse.

*I Remember....................
Milk crates delivered in the dawning
Followed by the 3R’s in the morning
Liquorice squares and Sunny Boys
were cool
At North Ryde Public School.

Brown and gold were our colours
The tuckshop was run by our mothers
Folk dancing, sport and lots of fun
Endless lunches in the hot sun.

**KIM VAN OOSTEN** (Nee Clayton),
Writes of three generations of
students who have attended North
Ryde Public School

Some things are taken for granted. Some things you expect will always be there. Some things you believe will not change. As the 3rd chapter for four generations of the Clayton/Van Oosten family living in North Ryde and the 2nd chapter of three generations being a student at North Ryde Public School it is difficult to remember the changes as they have happened. Places that have disappeared, people who have moved on and events that have altered the face of North Ryde.

My earliest memories are of
Dominello’s fruit market on the corner of Lane Cove Road and Epping Road. On the opposite side of the road where Juvena stands today was the cow paddock. I remember Mr. Benson who would walk his cow with the cowbell around its neck every day up Lane Cove Road. Who could forget the days of the Drive-In where Canon now stands. How many times did we walk to the drive-in and watch it from the back rows? You could hear the movies echoing through the speakers.

What a thrill it was when Ashton’s Circus came to North Ryde in the early 70s when they set up their big top on the same paddock where Juvena is now built. I can tell you after they left it was a sight to see certain locals shoveling for leftover elephant fertilizer, which I believe, was wonderful for the garden. Something Sherringtons would have even envied.

You could not have lived in North Ryde in the 70s and 80s if you did not catch
the North Western Bus Route 43 to Top Ryde or Chatswood later to become the 234 and who could forget, (Mr. Jolly as I called him), the bus inspector. I never knew his real name but I am told now that it is Bob, but you could always guarantee to see him at least once a week making sure we had our tickets. Not to forget to mention the double deck green government 288 or 290 buses to the City or Epping with the conductor who sat at the foot of the steps. It was a race to make sure you got a seat on the upper level. Speaking of catching buses who remembers waiting for the school bus in the morning at Mrs. Lette’s tuck shop on Lane Cove Road where you could buy the best lollies around – Choo Choo bars which made your mouth black were a real favourite along with the chocolate freckles, stars and cobbler.

At North Ryde Public School my most memorable days were the school fetes. I would love watching the mums making the dollies on sticks with their colourful netted dresses, the tea cosies, crocheted tea towels and embroidered hankies.

To remember the classrooms of the school is not hard as they are now set up in the Schoolhouse Museum. I can still see Mr. Svanns and Mrs. Jacques in their classrooms where the 1910 classrooms are now reconstructed. The voices of Mr. Bryce, Mr. Doyle and Mrs Stinson can still be heard echoing through the courtyards. How aged do I feel when I say that the rooms where I spent my early primary days are now a museum.

I can now more vividly see Mrs. Buesnell and the folk dancing group with their red and blue matching vest and skirts for the girls and trousers for the boys. My daughter, Danielle was one of those dancers and this one of her most vivid memories of being a student at North Ryde Public School, as is having been a maypole dancer in the bicentenary year.

Kim in 5A 1970 (6th from right, 2nd row)

On December 11th, 2001 I spent my last day of fourteen years as a parent at the school in the school canteen. My son, Matthew was about to leave his seven years of being a student at the school to enter into high school. As I closed the shutters and counted the money it all became apparent that another chapter in my life had come to an end. Overwhelmed with the day, I slammed the doors to the canteen. Despair took over as I wondered what I was going to do next or how I was going to tell the Principal that I had locked the keys in the canteen.

To have lived in North Ryde and been a part of North Ryde Public School both as a student and a parent is something special. I am sure most of those who have experienced the same at some time of their life would have the same feeling.

At a recent school reunion it became apparent how special the suburb of North Ryde is to everyone who has lived here. Some are lucky as I am, by still living here.
Others have moved away but still have parents who have kept their roots here — so many of them have stayed and those who return come with such fond memories they all wish to share.

I am proud to say that we haven’t moved very far, we still have three generations living in North Ryde. My parents Bob and Pauline Clayton still live in the house my father built on Lane Cove Road in the 1950s on the block, which formed part of the land that his parents owned. I am still experiencing things which I am sure will be memories which will become precious one day to someone in our family.

**BETH BUESNELL has been both a parent and a well loved Teacher at North Ryde Public School.**

Beth writes:

“My association with North Ryde Public School began in January 1960, with my appointment (as a new bride of 5 weeks) to the Infants’ Department. Miss Hertha Smith was the Headmistress (non-teaching) and Mrs. Dorothy Pemberton was the Deputy. At the time there were 12 classes in the Infants’ Department, 4 classes of each grade, with each class comprising of approximately 42 to 45 children.

I was given a Kindergarten class next to Betty Miller and apart from a few years on a Year 2, the remainder of my years at North Ryde until my retirement were spent on the Kindergarten.

In the early years, the Annual School Sports Carnival was held at Ryde Oval, with the whole school attending and the day’s activities commencing with the 4 Houses competing in a March Past, accompanied by the school drum band. Later, Sports Day was held at the school and now for many years it has been held at Dunbar Park.

In the mid 70s, Kathleen Brown and myself embarked on our first excursion with our Kindergarten children. There were at least 80 of them and we traveled by bus to Taronga Zoo, accompanied only by our Teacher’s Aide, Heather Vickers. I don’t think we saw too many animals as most of our day was taken up having lunch, queuing for the toilet and counting heads to make sure we hadn’t lost anyone. With smaller classes and parent helpers’ excursions became less stressful and more enjoyable.

I remember most vividly, the Friday afternoon, when a tornado ripped the roof from the North Ryde Telephone Exchange in Lane Cove Road. It was Friday, 2nd November, 1973, when trees in the playground were uprooted and large pieces of timber and corrugated iron were strewn across the Infants’ playground and even as far as the Methodist Church opposite the school. There was even roofing iron impaled in trees. Fortunately, Mrs. Jean Longhurst, the Infants Mistress at the time, had assembled all the Infants children together in one of the Kindergarten classrooms to listen to a recital by a visiting musical group. Had there been children outside, there most certainly would have been injuries and possibly deaths. It was a most terrifying experience!

Some of my fondest memories would have to be the many concerts or evenings of performing arts which have been held at the school. Some of these which involved Kindergarten were Fairy Tales, The Old Woman Who swallowed a
Probably the most memorable for me was the Maypole in 1988. We began early in 1987 learning how to polka and then “perfecting” the various manoeuvres to form a variety of ribbon patterns. Our first performance was on the first school day of Bi-Centennial year, 1988, in front of a large gathering of parents, visitors and dignitaries including Mr. Rodney Cavalier, the then Minister for Education.
Following this we were invited to perform at many venues throughout the year. We were honoured to be invited to perform at the State Dance Festival at the Seymour Centre. On the night of our performance with the stage in darkness and the music having begun, Jason Murray stepped a little too close to the edge of the stage and fell onto the floor in front, taking his ribbon with him. What seemed like the beginning of a total disaster and embarrassment was turned into a huge success when Kirsty Haiphughs, realizing what had happened, danced around an imaginary figure, followed by the remainder of the dancers. Congratulations, Kirsty you saved the day!

Over the years I have had the pleasure of teaching children whose parents I taught a generation previously and these young children delight in reminding me of this fact.

There have been the sad times too. Kathleen Brown, one of the kindergarten teachers, lost her long battle with cancer in November, 1980. Kathleen was a very gentle person, totally devoted to her family and to her students and was a very dear friend. Then little Charlie King, a Year 2 student, lost his life when he accidentally ran into a plate glass window while playing at his home after school. Then in February 2001, Maryanne McKay, passed away having lost her battle with cancer. Maryanne was an inspiration to all who knew her. Her enthusiasm and dedication to her work and to life itself was something to be admired by all who knew her. She was indeed, everyone’s friend.

A most memorable occasion for me would have to be my Retirement Dinner in 1993. It was held at the most amazing elegant venue, Curzon Hall. It was a wonderful evening, shared with many colleagues and parents, both past and present, as well as my family – certainly a night to be remembered!
Since my retirement I have enjoyed many days of casual teaching at the school back to children and the school, which are certainly a memorable part of my life.
“Thank you, North Ryde Public School!”

**NORTH RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL CELEBRATES 125 YEARS OF EDUCATION**

On September 8th the celebrations began on a near perfect spring day, when a Spring Fair was held. As has always been the case, parents, students and the community combined to provide all the ingredients for a wonderfully successful and enjoyable day.
Then just two days later, Foundation Day, was a feature of Education Week, when the students presented a tableau, which took the audience through the history of the school. – and what a wonderful presentation it proved to be! The students and staff took a step back in time and dressed as those who first came to the school would have dressed. It was wonderful to see children from the culturally diverse group who now attend North Ryde School, participating in and enjoying the opportunity of revisiting Australia’s colonial past.

Members of the Student Council presented a play, which depicted the community’s role in getting the school established and then the difficulties encountered in actually building the school. They then played out the roles of teachers and children of the era. This was followed by a display of the many activities, which were part of a day at school all those years ago – wand drill, skipping, folk dancing, hoops, maypole and games. This display involved each and every student attending the school in 2002.

Dignitaries who attended included the first Infants’ Mistress appointed to the school, Miss Hertha Smith and her Deputy Mrs. Dorothy Pemberton, Mr. George Horton and Mr. Silverwood, both ex-students who attended around the time of the first World War, the Minister for Education, Mr John Watkins and the District Superintendent Mr. Peter Haigh, Ryde City Mayor, Mrs. Edna Wilde OAM, School Council Chairman, Mr. Peter Voudsen, P & C President, Mrs. Jackie Forsyth and Mrs. Shirley Berg AM. and Ex-pupil Miss Dorothy Kenning.

Medallions were presented by the guests to each of the present day students and staff members as their memento of the school and its 125 years of service to education in the North Ryde community.

Foundation Day epitomized the spirit of the whole of the North Ryde community and of its long history and thanks must go to Stuart Anderson, Principal and his Staff for the time put into telling the story as told in this book.

Other celebratory activities are planned and the celebrations will climax in March 2003 when ex-students and teachers will gather at the school to exchange memories and renew acquaintances.

Dorothy Pemberton, Beth Buesnell, Hertha Smith and Shirley Berg, (L to R) catch up at the Foundation Day Celebrations 10th September 2002

The 125th Anniversary Medallion
The School—North Ryde Public School provides, as it has always done, a quality and valuable education service to each and everyone of its students.

Its uniqueness has evolved over the past 125 years. Consideration of the changing nature of the times and the individual needs of each of its students has always been at the forefront when the school sets it direction and priorities.

Throughout the years the school has continued to build on its proud history and traditions. Its strong links with its community have created a friendly and caring environment. The quality teaching and learning programs all incorporate an emphasis on social responsibility and this serves to enhance the community’s perception of an exceptional school so ensuring that it meets the growing set of expectations and pressures from the community.

Today, North Ryde Public School serves many different nationalities and in so doing it respects the cultural diversity of each of the students and of their families. This caring attitude is reflected in the schools on going programmes.

This book has been concerned, not only with the past 125 years, but also with the present. The task of sifting through archival material, old minutes, departmental records and other material from community sources has been a difficult one and unfortunately there will be omissions.

There are those in the past and present whose involvement and service to the school has received no mention. None-the-less all have played an important part in the history of the school and their contribution has been invaluable.

The future belongs to those now involved and to those who will come forward in the years to come.

As was said in the beginning what you have read is the history of North Ryde Public School in the context of the NSW Public Education System and as seen by the writer.

In concluding I make special mention of the help and support given by the Principal, Stuart Anderson and the P & C President, Jackie Forsyth. Kathy Shannon and Kathryn Watkins have brought to the task of producing this book their own particular expertise and I have been truly appreciative of their help and support.

(Pictured below)
North Ryde Public School celebrates 125 Years in costume on Foundation Day, 10th September 2002.
(Melba Studios Sydney)
CLASSES OF 2002

Back Row: Mrs J. Forsyth, Tim Rushen, Daniel Hull, Tyrone Li, Zachary Reynolds, Michael Goodhue, Eugene Thi, Mrs S. Calcutt
Middle Row: Simon Leggett, Damon Lee, Liam Whitley, Lauren Gillespie, Jane Andrews, Bayley Sironen, Nicholas Murphy, Philip Lam
Front Row: Hannah Perry, Demika Hedger, Sophie Ge, Isobel An, Samantha Stephens, Kiah Madden, Sharen Ngo, Dianna Lam

Back Row: Mrs A. Cooper, Marlon Randenya, Amnouai Tanda, Richard Wichmann, Daniel Cosgrove, Joshua Mok, Derek Karapelian
Middle Row: Nicholas Green, Joseph Gough, Kevin Yia, Ashleigh Duggan, Corey Smith, John Yima, Armin Danelian
Front Row: Noor Zulfiqar, Rachel Wilforno, Becky Ayad, Kiani Sparkes, Fongmany Sylapnwa, Krist Jhi, Sarja Ohrad, Taylah Van Drumen
Back Row: Mrs. E. Rowe, Hayden Kerfoot, Jonathan Hera, Adam Ohrol, Adam Barzanji, Kristian Kraft, Terry Cai, Zeerak Zulfiqar, Julian Lim, Thepdam Sylaprany
Middle Row: David Nguyen, Beau Allen, Jamie Stattridge, Angie Crosseie, Jade Forbes-Smith, Laura McSpadden, Kelly No, Sean Lohan, Milad Cina, Tony Panetta
Front Row: Amy Pham, Beth Voussan, Taylor Fung, Rachel Schmitzer, Sarah Trifitt, Jess ca Xiao, Laura Crockart, Emma Meilraith, Melinda Pisano, Isabella Tran, Emma Shizuka

Back Row: Mrs. S. Curl, Jordan Chaney, Robin Berdit, Christopher Pullen, Joshua Cosgrove, Navid Cina, Nicholas Watson, Phillip Kerr, Kane Whitrow
Middle Row: Azhar Jamal, Ronnie Raphia, Matthew Gough, Janina Hammersley, Emily Cheeseman, Emma Privett, Sunny Garg, Daanish Faiz, Julian Widjana
Front Row: Madeline Klemmer, Michelle Brown, Ka'issa Kendall, Chloe Sing, Claire Topsom, Yooroo Woo, Ashley Chan, Lisa Forbrig, Michaela Ralla
Back Row: Mrs L. Wright, Hamed Shafiei Masoleh, Micah Whitrow, Alex Stepanyan, William Wachsmann, Joseph Hwang, Feix Cho, Anoop Tanda, Stuart Kim, Jacob Molloy, Visheut Ravindran
Middle Row: Edmund Tran, Joathan Hull, Mohammed Shafiei Masoleh, Gabriela Cristina, Rhiannon Ershova, Rachel Chen, Leo Lin, Anas Li, William Topsoon
Front Row: Charmaine Won, Shanteel Bhat, Emma Timmins, Tina Kordroostari, Sarah Brown, Avril Crockart, Kayla Kennedy, Amy Hwang, Romalka Gamage, Alex Vousden
Back Row: Omeed Cina, Joel Timms, Quin Filipains, Kelly Arndell, Janet McSpadden, Tina Panetta, Tom Marwick, Oliver Bromley, Zachary Cristin, Mrs J. Lorence
Middle Row: Mrs J. Forsyth, Darren Ho, Tyler Chart, Bradley Green, Victor Martin, Joshua Balding, Tom Crockart, Daniel Forbriger, Thomas Gough
Front Row: Carina Mitchell, Jemima Drake, Katie Arriel, Marta Malchevski, Kristie Megg, Yui Matsuzawa, Jessica Theuerjahr, Lisa Tran, Rachel Goodhue

Back Row: Mrs K. McWilliams, Jamie Muscat, David Blackmore, Matthew Parker, Michael Sturridge, Jason Privett, Stephen Goh, Carl Gaffney, Stephen Bennett Borobi, Lionel Kerr
Middle Row: Sue Lee, Kristina Balf, Nina Kim, Sarah Rose, Kirsty Herbert, Elly Burton, Fiona Hall, Mary Nguyen, Laura Vertelini
Front Row: Mao Shizuka, Melanie Rondeniya, Michelle Forsythe, Mayssar Dandan, Sarah McNaught, Louise Schmitzer, Ashleigh Griffin, Leona Mitchell, Simone Ngo, Vivian Lam
Absent: Mikaila Wells
1877-2002

Back Row: Miss S. Chiddy, Matt Laybut, Josh Hedger, Daniel Zammar, Karim Mouhib, Jaemin Park, Nicholas Maurer, Peter Beale, Andrew Rumpel, Jason Izard
Middle Row: Matthew Chong, Aaron Razzah, Jessica Teasdale, Sherwood, Rebekah Boichesca, Katerina Kraft, Augustine Cho, Geoffrey Pollen
Front Row: Elara Russell, Kate Loene, Sarah Blackmore, Nicole Bowen, Michelle O'Shea, Laura Broadhead, Ellen Macintyre, Cassie Sloane

Back Row: Mr S. Warn, Teni Forrest, Alex Chen, Jessica No, Lesley Laurie, Elly Marwick, Jade Milne, Hannah Voudsen, James Lim, Dylan Crickart
Middle Row: Ben Lackie, Brad McDermott, Joshua Vaughan, Eric Smith, Kevin Lee, Kerry Owens, Daniel Timms, Nikita Papastamatis
Front Row: Bridget Wright, Vanessa Leung, Natalie Berdlt, Bianca Molloy, Agnes Hwang, Jenny Crossby, Renee Honeybrook, Estelle Felix, Emma Shutleworth. Absent: Jordyn Jones, Mitchell Hennessy, Hamish Welfson
2002 STAFF

Back Row: Maureen Hordern, Jill Lorenc, Maria Lewis, Karen McWilliams, Sue Chiddy, Jeni Lansdown
Middle Row: Jenny Ross, Tracy Latchford, Larissa Wright, Sylvia Carl, Anne Cooper, Janeen West
Front Row: Jackie Forsyth, Sandra Cullcott, Elisabeth Rowe, Stuart Anderson, Steve Warn, Kathy Shannon, Laraine Dawson

North Ryde Public School Celebrates