

NEWSLETTER



Volume 6 No. 4
President 3350 2874

P.O. Box 416, Chermshire Qld 4032

August /September 2003
Secretary 3359 3022

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Beverley Isdale

Thank you to all those members who contributed, whether by bringing items to sell or hosting our stand, at the Mountains to Mangroves Festival in July. We had a display on site in 7th Brigade Park and many visitors were interested in the photos. The school building was open for the day but it was a bit too far from the action to encourage many people to visit. However, we made some useful contacts in both places.

The plaque for the re-dedication of the Memorial Gates at Marchant Park has arrived and we plan to have a ceremony at the Park Gates on 30th August at 10am. We would like our members to come to this important event. Pat O'Shea did the research to restore the names on the gates which were vandalised in the 1970s. The State Government Gambling Commission grant enabled the names to be replaced on the tablets and we are very grateful for this assistance.

Our morning tea with Sharon and Chris Hearle at Kedron Wavell was very successful. They entertained us with memories and music of the 1950s and several members danced as if they were teenagers again. And the morning tea was very nice too.

Another date to remember is 1 November. We plan to hold a reunion for people who attended Chermshire School in the 1930s and 1940s. This was the largest group at the school centenary celebrations in 2000 and we might even fill the school and the Milne Bay

Memorial and Research Library. If you know anyone who might be interested, please let them know.

THURSDAY LECTURES Aspley Uniting Church

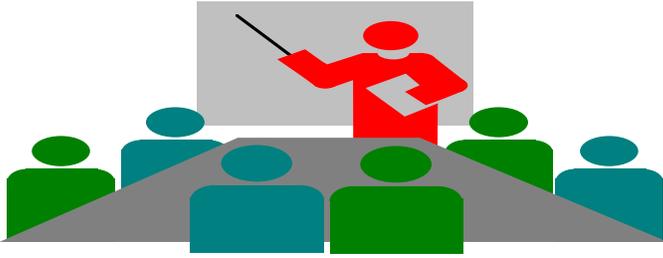
- 7 Aug "To work for the richest man in the world"
Speaker: Alan Heaton
- 14 Aug "My life as a Journalist"
Speaker: Mike O'Connor, Courier Mail
- 21 Aug "The French in the Pacific"
Speaker: Brian Randle, State Library
- 28 Aug "The Battle Fields of France"
Speaker: Vic Nurcombe
- 24 Sep "My love affair with an F111"
Speaker: Mal Lancaster
- 11 Sep "Seven Years of mission work in PNG"
Speaker: Major Thelma Robinson

Advertisement:



C & S Hearle
Painting & Paperhanging Specialists
Interior & Exterior Painting
& Decorating
Free Quotes

70 Denham Street, Bracken Ridge 4017
Mob: 0417 775 749, Tel: 3269 7931



QUEENSLAND EDUCATION 19th - 20th Century

by Pat O'Shea

Teacher Training in the 19th Century Queensland developed in response to the growing demand for education and was designed for the frontier environment.

In 1862 the Brisbane Normal school set up in the grounds of the Brisbane Boys and Brisbane Girls Primary Schools. The new building was to be a *“training centre where pupil teachers could see the best and most efficient teaching methods in operation”*.

The Normal school could only teach a fraction of the teachers needed in Queensland so the rest were trained in the ordinary schools by the head teacher before and after school. It was called the Pupil Teacher system and children as young as 14 were enlisted as apprentices. Supervised by adult teachers they worked in class during the day as teachers. This system continued till 1914 when a Teacher's Training College was established in Brisbane. The old system was gradually phased out between 1923 and 1935.

James Youatt (First Head Teacher of Chermside State School) trained as a pupil teacher in England for five years from 1867 to 1871 starting at about the age of 14 years. He had two more years training at Westminster Training College. His son, Herbert Youatt Gold, who taught at Chermside State School from 1900 to 1907 may have been trained by his father.

All of the teachers at Chermside State School before 1916 would have been trained as pupil teachers and some of them may have been trained at the school.

So far we have been unable to find any records from these early years to verify this possibility.

Since Chermside State School was in a well settled semi-urban area it was always classed as a State School and was built by the Colonial Government even though the local people had to contribute part of the cost.

Other schools called Provisional Schools were organised to provide some sort of education to the scattered population at minimum expense. They could be opened with a minimum of 15 pupils (later reduced to 12). The local people had to provide the building so that they were often of a very low standard.

The general idea was that if the settlement prospered and grew a full State school would be provided and staffed. Often the locality died and the school died with it. Teacher salaries were low and the teachers were often poorly trained so the education was often of a poor standard.

By 1900 children in State schools received a compulsory free Primary education from the age of 6 to 12 years. Thus by that time most Queensland children could read, write and compute (arithmetic).

The basis of the curriculum was the “3R's” with object lessons (show and tell), drill and gymnastics, and vocal music. The standard varied greatly depending on the skill of the teacher or teachers. Later geography, needlework, grammar, history and mechanics were included. In 1905 nature study was introduced and included elements of agriculture, botany and biology.

In 1911 a Medical Branch staffed by travelling doctors, dentists and ophthalmologists was created to help raise the health standards of the pupils.

The Scholarship exam was introduced to give gifted pupils the opportunity to attend Secondary school but was later broadened to include the majority of pupils. Scholarship was first introduced about 1912 in 5th Class, in 6th Class, then in 7th Class by 1930. Finally 8th Class in 1952 as the school system became more intensive as the economy developed. The last Scholarship exam was in 1962 and Grade 8 was transferred to Secondary in 1964.

CHERMY

by Colin Tune

I was a Chermy Boy. A title worn proudly, emanating as readily in common conversation as your name, your address or the occupation of your father. As a child, I was raised in Chermside on Brisbane's northern suburbs. Ten kilometres from the city central, this was an outer suburb in the late fifties and early sixties.

I was the classically stereotypical "baby boomer". The title given to children born in the decade after World War II, a time when folk simply wanted to 'settle down' in peace, with children, on twenty-four perches in the suburbs.

Bisected by Gympie Road, Chermside was a grid of streets, a dormitory suburb.

Chermside streets were dusty happy places with children everywhere, playing, riding, walking, throwing stones, yelling, skipping, running and riding trolleys. Vendors plied their wares from the trays of trucks; green grocers, bakers, rubbish men, night soil removalists, ice cream vendors and the Raleighs man, Mr Styles.

Everyone had a backyard cricket game with singular rules, adapted to each uniquely shaped area. Everyone had a cubby house. Everyone had a tree to climb. We all owned bicycles, liberating us to roam as nomads in search of adventure, every boy had some secret 'bush' somewhere. We were fit and free. Families had two parents. Mums were domestic engineers. Luxuries were simple, created by our imagination. There was no concern for the safety of wandering children.

Our house was actually located in Wavell Heights (a posher suburb than Chermside). The residence was on the border so Mum and Dad lobbied the Post Office to be the only house in Barker Street to be officially called Chermside. They won.

I went to Chermside State School. '18 Barker Street' was closer to Wavell Heights State School however, my enrolment there was unthinkable.

My grandfather was the first pupil at Chermside State School in 1900. All of my maternal uncles and aunts were past students as were both of my parents. Yes!

Unthinkable it was that I should attend any other school. So daily, I walked down Pilba Street waving to Mum outside Macleans then ascended the hill to Gympie Road, whose two traffic thoroughfares, central rose beds and dual tram tracks were crossed before entering the school grounds.

Just about everyone walked to school, no one was driven and only a few rode bicycles. 'Baby Boomer' schools were of a thousand enrolments. Adjacent were Wavell Heights, Nundah, Stafford, Windsor, Wooloowin and Kedron State Schools. All were high set weather board pale yellow buildings, with 'wings' each of about six rooms clustering parallel, joined by verandahs where school bags hung outside rooms.

In Grade One my teacher was Miss Peasey. I thought that she was simply the most beautiful woman in the world. As a six-year old, I would wander in my thoughts of her loveliness. I admired her ample bosom. As she moved past me along the aisle between desks, her palely floral pleated skirt swayed as it hung and swirled from the flow over the curve of her bottom. She was a first year teacher. On 'breaking-up' day, I gave her a white and yellow brightly painted wooden flower brooch. I was enraptured the next year when I happened to see it worn.

We sat on long 'backless' forms. A 'strong' boy was seated at each end so that the pair could lift the brute onto the desk at the end of the school day. Our desks were one piece, seating about eight – the same length as the forms. Slates dropped into a slot at the top of the desk. We rarely wrote on paper. Our school day was spent, forty of us, chanting spelling and tables and attempting to write with thin slate pencils. The atmosphere was repetitive, secure and reverently respectful.

In the playground, we discovered interesting properties of a large tree. Sheltered by its shade, industrious little hands dug with fingers and sticks to the roots, breaking off thin specimens and savouring over and over that the wood had the sweet strong smell of sarsparilla.

In Grade Two my 'professorial pedagogue' was Mrs Kinnon. She was quiet with the usual plumpness of a sixty-year old. She wore a conspicuous red circle of rouge on her upper cheeks.

Rainy days were a joy. Firstly, I was allowed to 'wear' bare feet. Because all our recreation time was

spent shoeless, the soles of our feet were leathery tough. One would leave for school early so that every puddle could be dabbled and gutters still slimy from the open discharge of bath and sink water could be slid along. We made dams in the gutters with dirt and clay, continually pursuing the conquest of allaying the rising water until a final collapse of the wall prompted squeals of delight. Sometimes, we wore mole skin raincoats. 'Big Lunch' at school meant racing boats; bits of stick and drinking straws, bent closed at each end, along the myriad of open gutters, framing each classroom block.

First recess, known as 'little lunch', heralded morning milk. The vendor delivered a thousand third pint glass bottles in wire crates usually stacking them in the sun. Seldom was the milk chilled. Daily, we were chastised as we carefully removed the foil lids undamaged, flicking them with dexterous masculinity we would vie for the extra bottles allotted to the absent students and show off to the girls by guzzling several rapidly. Gary Rose walked daily to Lusk's Corner Store across Gympie Road before school and in a glass jar with a lid sealed by greaseproof paper, purchased 'tuppence' worth of flavouring. After he had added to his, we formed a queue to be drizzled a 'smigin' of the sweetness.

Bread was not baked in Brisbane on Saturday or Sunday. The 'staple of life' was packaged in wax paper, which was not totally airtight. By Sunday, bread was stale and by Monday basically inedible. To enable children to enjoy fresh bread, tradition dictated that Monday provided the busiest trade at the school Tuckshop, which opened on other days offering less extensive wares. On sale were salad rolls, pies, pasties and potato flakes as well as sweet delicious morsels now not 'politically correct'. Cream buns, cream donuts, soft drinks and a broad assortment of confectionery (we called them lollies) guaranteed that the eventual visit to the dentist would be painful.

In Grade Three my 'emanator of edicts' was Mrs Martin. We were no longer regarded as infants so the rooms had the 'new' screw down two-student desks. Mrs Martin was a large haughty woman in her forties. Unfortunately, she was an acquaintance of my mother's so any classroom misdemeanour was reported home. She was strict and we listened in fear. Our day passed trying not to 'catch her eye'; trying not to be noticed.

The school year trisected into three terms. At the end of each, examinations for Grades Three to Eight were conducted. In a wing, with walls, which opened, four classrooms became one huge area. All of one year-level presented, while the Headmaster, Mr Haupt administered the exam.

First on Monday morning were tables, each test twenty at a time, followed by 'applied tables', then 'weights and measures'. The examination lasted three days and included spelling, word building, vocabulary, Latin and Greek roots and reading comprehension. Social Studies, Science and Art were completed in our home-rooms also perused by "Haupty". After each twenty number facts, your teacher would call the first alphabetical name on the roll. That person then yelled out his/her mark. Each student was expected to know his/her position on the roll and respond accordingly in the correct sequences. With four classes bleating simultaneously, the room was a cacophony of random numbers, called from voices of many timbres.

A Report Card was issued each of the three terms. As well as marks and percentages in every subject, the paper folder also nominated 'place in grade'. As a result, we sat across the room in rows in our academic ability order. I was under enormous pressure to be in the first five in the class. In Grade Four in the first term exam, I came seventh and my life at home was almost intolerable, because of the family disgrace that I had wrought having this shameful result known publicly.

Sitting in class in 'place in grade' order was fun as the best looking girls are usually smart and I was among them. They were also organised so I was able to borrow resources, which I had invariably mislaid. By the end of Grade Three, in 1957, my behaviour was beginning to spiral downwards.

To be continued.....

Θ

I would like to thank our members for their wonderful contributions to this paper while I have been editor.

Carol Cunningham