
The Struggle to Obtain a Permanent Building

On November 2, 1927, when the net enrollment had risen to 474, St. Mark's Church Hall (40 ft. by 20 ft.) was rented at 30/- per week for school purposes to relieve overcrowding, and was occupied until February 24, 1928. Miss Caroline E. Dalton, Acting Head Teacher at the time, quoted figures to show that, although Albion State School had just recently opened, 3113 still suffered from acute accommodation problems. So in June 1928 an additional pavilion classroom was removed from State School 3146 Clifton Hill and re erected at Sunshine. This method of alleviating the overcrowding was severely criticized as "*a poor temporary expedient*" by E. Hargreaves, Secretary of the Shire of Braybrook, by F. W. Scott, secretary of the ANA, by George Nicholson, Secretary of the Sunshine Progress Association, and others. They strongly protested that such make-shift measures were "*very bad for the children and unfair on the teachers*" and that it "*should seriously consider the erection of a new school at Sunshine*". Pressure was exerted through the local M.P., the Hon. G. M. Prendergast, on the Minister of Education, the Hon. J. Lemmon M.L.A., to erect a brick building to accommodate even as many as 1200 children. The Department favoured providing for only 600 children. Greatly to the disappointment of H. Skewes, who continued to urge the erection of a building for 800 pupils, the Department Heads, Martin Hansen, and James McRae, acting on

the advice of Dr. J. A. Leach who visited the school, decided to continue using the old building for the senior classes, and to erect only a Junior Section, or "School for Infants", to accommodate 300 pupils. Councillor H. Skewes was disgusted when he heard that the "*patched up job of the present buildings*" were to remain. The Department stressed the necessity for economy in its reply, and added that "*the old building could still be used for some time to come, and the design of the new building would allow for further extensions*".

On 18 December 1928 the Minister of Education received a deputation at which it was agreed to erect the new building facing Hampshire Road "*both for the purpose of the most effective lighting and in order to make the best use of the playing space*". It was decided to plan a brick building to accommodate 600 children, with provision for future extensions to accommodate 800, at a cost of £11,000. The plans for the new building were completed in July 1929.

Meanwhile the overcrowding at the school had become more and more acute. The net enrollment had risen to 530 and based on the allowance of 12 1/2 sq. ft. per child the school should only be accommodating 370 pupils. The spread of measles and other infectious conditions was also cited by the Head Teacher Mr. E. M. Barr.

Things become so bad that the St. Mark's Parish Hall was again leased from October 14 1929 at the same

New School Required

rental (30/- per week, and during vacations 15/- p.w.) In this unsuitable building 70 children of third grade were given their schooling. The situation was made worse by the "*woefully inadequate sanitary facilities*". The Shire Secretary, E. Hargreaves, and the local Member, G. M. Prendergast continued to put pressure on the Minister and the Department, hoping thereby to expedite the calling of tenders and so hasten the erection of a

new building. They described the old wooden classrooms in phrases such as "*far too small ... deplorably dirty and dilapidated ... badly in need of painting ... rotted spoutings ... lake of water collects beneath floor infested with rats ... no heating appliances whatsoever all vestiges of asphalt in the yard have disappeared*". Edward M. Barr wrote many similar distress letters.



The Brick Building

In May 1930 the school buildings were condemned by the Medical Health Officer, Dr. John Adamson, as they had been earlier by many other prominent citizens. Plans were being made for another deputation, this time a very large one, when news came that at last funds were available, that tenders would be called, and that building operations would commence forthwith. Messrs. Foy and Gibson, whose contract price was £11,268, were given the job. The new brick building was officially opened on 11 April 1931, but it was not handed over for occupation until 4 May 1931, on which day St. Mark's Hall was vacated. No plans of the new school appear in the school building file, but at the bottom of a document dated May 8, 1931 are the following brief particulars:

Brick 8/26'6" x 24', 1/29' x 24', 2/53'6" x 24'

Office: 16'3" x 14'6"

Teacher's Room: 19' x 13'7"

Caretaker's 4 room cottage.

During 1932 and the old school buildings, which still stood in the Technical School grounds, began to be badly damaged by vandals, until steps were taken to keep out intruders. In 1933-34 all the rooms were gradually dismantled and re-erected elsewhere.

One room was removed to S.S. 890 Greenvale, two rooms to S.S. 4160 Footscray, and another two to S.S. 3885 Preston West. After that the site became vacant again until 1937 when the Girl's Technical School was erected.

During the 1930's and early 1940's much effort was put into draining, filling, levelling, gravelling, and generally improving the school grounds. Much correspondence took place over the question as to where the boundary line between the State School and the Technical School should be set, and whether a fence should be erected. Problems arose when the Baths were used by both older and younger children at the same time. In fact there were differences of opinion as to whether the older Technical School children should be allowed to use the Pool at all, as it had been built by the Primary School. Harold Betteson, who while Acting Head Teacher in 1936 had improved the school grounds by planting "over 50 flowering gum trees, 30 standard roses, 15 bush roses, and 36 shrubs", was naturally in favour of erecting a dividing fence. The teachers who followed him requested it, but the Department not only continued to maintain that a fence between two Department schools was unnecessary but it also remained unwilling to incur any such expense over a matter which it considered involved disciplinary decisions by the Heads of the two schools. It was also H. Betteson who, in October 1936 after the demolition of the old caretaker's house on the corner, requested that the vacant area be "*concreted or asphalted to form an assembly ground for the Infant Department*". He also kept strongly advocating the erection of a division fence.

Class Photographs 1930's



Through the Forties and Fifties

Seven years later in August 1943, again because of conflicting interests and disputes as to which area was primary and which technical, the Primary Head Teacher A. S. Esler, asked that *"the boundary line between the Technical and the Primary Schools should be defined - the immediate question is not one of a dividing fence"*.

So it was decided that a "15 ft roadway" would be the boundary between the two schools, the use of certain facilities such as the basket ball court being a *"matter for arrangement by the Heads of the two Schools"*

In the early 1940's Reginald T. Spowart, the Correspondent for the School Committee, made it one of his many activities to try to persuade the Department to restore and remove to the new Primary School site *"the old rotunda-shaped shelter pavilion"* which it had erected years before for the infants when their school was on the Technical site. The school file fails to mention whether (or when) this plan

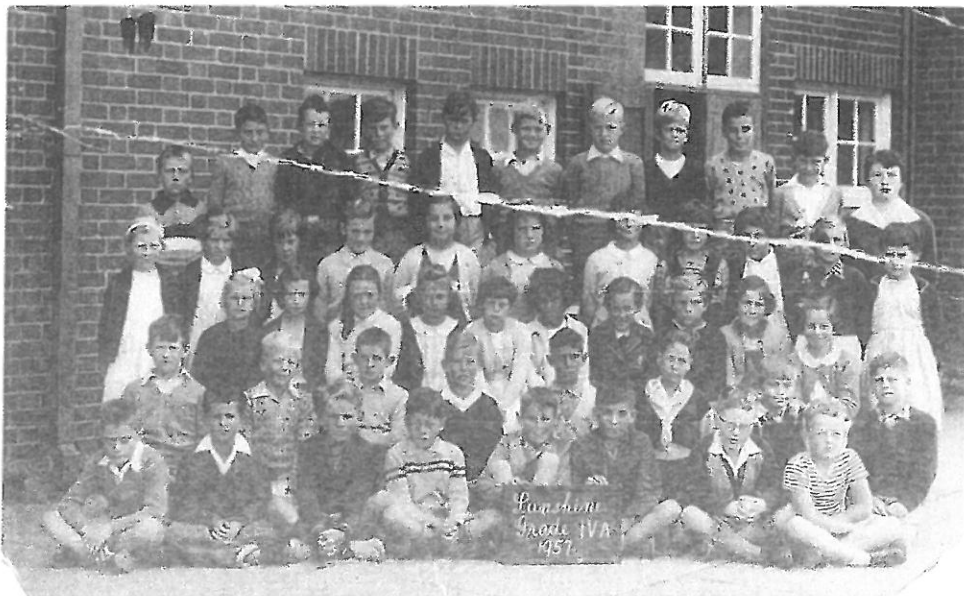
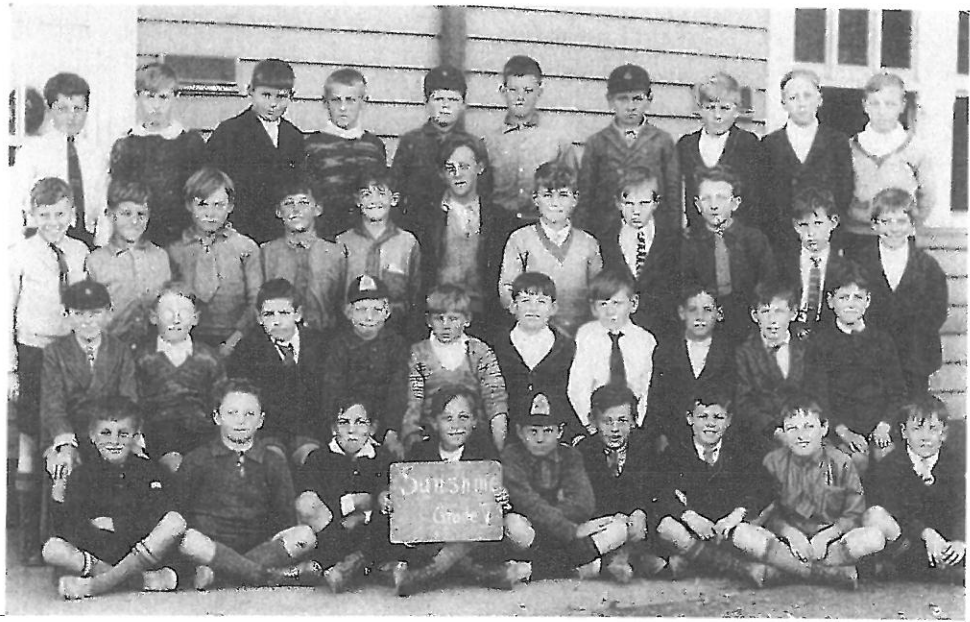
was carried out.

On February 3, 1953 portion of the Victorian Railways Migrant Workers' Hostel at Tottenham was leased by the Department for school purposes at a rental of £45 per month. About 100 children were conveyed by bus each day to the hostel. When State School Tottenham North opened on May 26, 1953 this scheme was discontinued, as all pupils transferred to it.

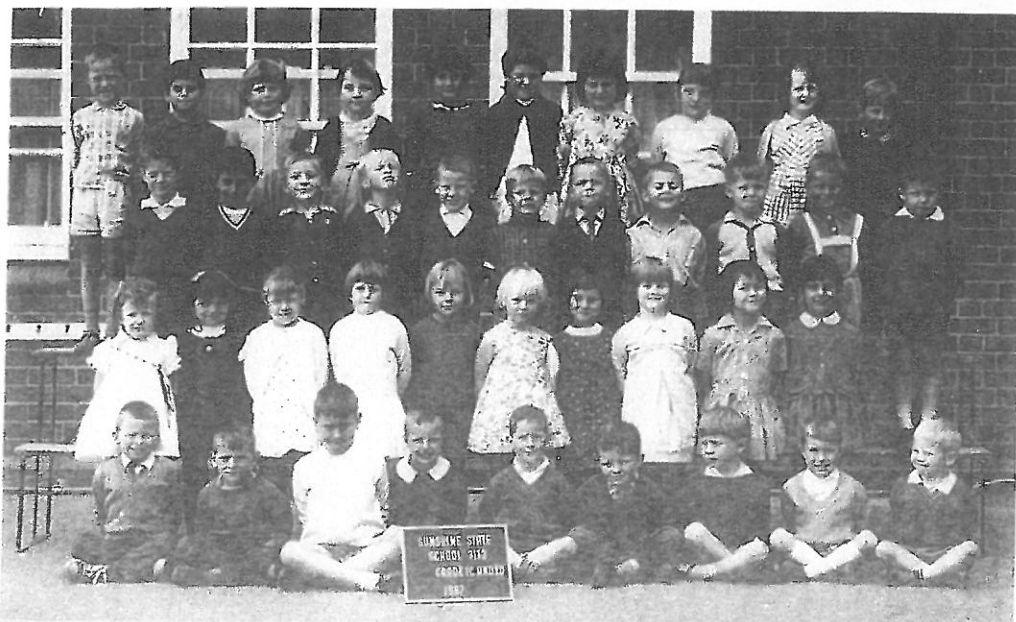
In 1954, 794 pupils were enrolled at the school which again became severely overcrowded. The H. T. George W. Baty worked assiduously to overcome acute accommodation problems, and through the Minister of Education, A. E. Shepherd, eventually obtained additional sanitary facilities, and other long needed amenities.

In 1957 the down stairs cloak area was converted into the men's staffroom and first aid room. The following year, 1958 the bicycle rack was erected with a capacity of fifty bikes.

Class Photographs 1940's and 1950's



Class Photographs 1960's



Nineteen Sixties

During the sixties the numbers remained between 500 and 600 pupils. Due to the lack of playing space the yard was divided into boys and girls playing areas. The boys' yard was to the rear of the toilet block and the girls' in front.

In 1965 the upstairs cloak room was converted into another room and Room 10 became the library, with a librarian appointed in 1966.

In 1967 the single globe lights were replaced with fluorescent tubes and stainless steel drinking troughs

were installed in the playground.

In 1968 an application was made to the Education department for two additional rooms in line with the new staffing schedule of 16 rooms for 540 pupils, the numbers in 1967 were 548, 1968 the enrolment had increased to 568 and was estimated to reach 590 in 1969, this increase did not eventuate and the decade finished with 507 pupils.

The new classrooms, office, store room and corridor were completed and ready for use by the commencement of the 1969 school year.



Nineteen Seventies

Sunshine Primary School began the 1970's with an enrolment of 526 pupils and 24 staff members. Every year during the 70's saw a decline in pupil numbers. There were only 312 pupils in 1979.

November 1972 saw the dawn of an exciting era for hundreds of children attending Sunshine Primary. Ashbourne Camp came into being. During 1971 the School joined with several local schools to establish the camping facilities at Ashbourne formally an old primary School located near Woodend. Army huts were moved in to use as sleeping quarters, a recreation area and dining area. The actual school building was converted into a kitchen. A toilet and shower block was also built. The whole area was set in thick bushland. For many pupils this was a chance to experience a rural environment for the very first time. For others it was simply there first time away from home or their first time away with a group of children of their own age.

In 1975, after placing a submission with the Supplementary Grants Committee the school received \$14,833

from the Federal Government. These grants were made available to help redress the disadvantage experienced by certain schools. Supplementary Grants Programs included Camping, Mathematics, Physical Education, Music, Environmental Studies and Language as well as the employment of a Teachers Aide. This program is now called the Disadvantaged Schools Program and has continued to be of vital importance to the education of the children at Sunshine Primary right up to the present day.

In 1976 an Art Room was established in a spare room in the Prefab. building. Only half classes were taken due to lack of space. The program was established with the help of Supplementary Grants funding. 1978 saw the Art Room relocated to the downstairs double classroom. In 1979 the Art Room was finally moved to its present location in the upstairs double classroom.

The downstairs rooms were then used as a Community Centre and Multipurpose Room.

Class Photographs 1970's



Nineteen Eighties

In 1980 the library moved from upstairs in room 10 to the prefab building where a dividing wall was removed to open up two classrooms. Carpets and curtains were fitted.

The greening of Sunshine Primary also began with the development of a garden bed in the corner of the yard at Hampshire and Derby Roads.

During 1981 the school underwent cyclic maintenance when the platforms were removed, rooms were carpeted, smoke detectors and the security system installed, the stairs were repaired and the school painted. The old toilets were pulled down and temporary toilets brought in and remained until the new toilets were completed in 1985.

1982 saw the arrival of a new Principal, George McCourt who played the major role in developing the grounds as they are today.

In 1983 the ground works continued with the development of the barbecue area and the laying of instant turf in the area formally occupied by the caretaker's residence, which had been demolished in 1982. The parents and children of this time spent many hours planting hundreds of trees and shrubs around the school grounds.

The shelter shed at the edge of the netball court was demolished in 1985

and the amphitheatre established. The garden beds around the school were constructed by George McCourt and the caretaker Keith Suffolk, with the help of many willing children.

By this time the remaining houses in Leith Avenue and Hampshire Road had been acquired and demolished with the exception of 59 Hampshire Road which became the caretaker's residence.

The physical layout of the school completely changed in 1986 when the prefab building containing the library was moved and relocated running parallel to Hampshire Road, south of the main brick building. The Bristol building was demolished, three portable classrooms were brought in and butted together to form the present infant block opposite the library. A car park was also constructed as a part of the project. This area was then landscaped by the State School Nursery.

During 1988 the construction of the oval began, this involved installing an automatic sprinkler system, drainage, top dressing and seeding, landscaping the boundaries and moving the adventure playground.

The oval was eventually opened in 1989 after many delays and named the McCourt Suffolk Oval in recognition of the work done by these two men.

Class Photographs 1980's



GRADE 4/5/6A
 Row 4 (L-R) Shannon Cormack, Umar Ismail, Marcin Kloss, Jessica Gray
 Row 3 (L-R) Dallas Coleman, Marina Kurablis, Penelope Micholson, Jason Altard, Melanie Fane, Kylie Manning, Thanh Vu
 Row 2 (L-R) Robert Artzyovsk, Richard Diaz, Samantha Gahan, Gulay Sul, Emma Jane Corbett, Rhea Rudall, Tami Billings
 Row 1 (L-R) Leslie McMillan, Daniel Duma, Lupco Kolevski, Seville Sokour, Bill Seiferter, Giuseppe Bullo, Aylia Jury
 Principal: Mr. Peter Robson
 Absent: Jose Marroquin, Guizado Ibrahim
 Teacher: Miss Pauline Ashton

"CLASSIC"



STAFF
 Row 2 (L-R) Graham MacOrkell, Isabella Polonsky, Joan Morris, Warren Hale, Jane Reid, Pauline Ashton, Nora Heard
 Row 1 (L-R) Gary Smith, Eric Richardson, Helen Barry, Kate Kobler, Tony A'heath, Judith Muijen, Gloria Miller
 Principal: Mr. Peter Robson
 Absent: Margaret De Bono, Toni Mills

"CLASSIC"

Nineteen Nineties

The cricket pitch and a jumping pit were put on the oval during 1990. The covered walkway from the main building to the toilets were also completed in that year.

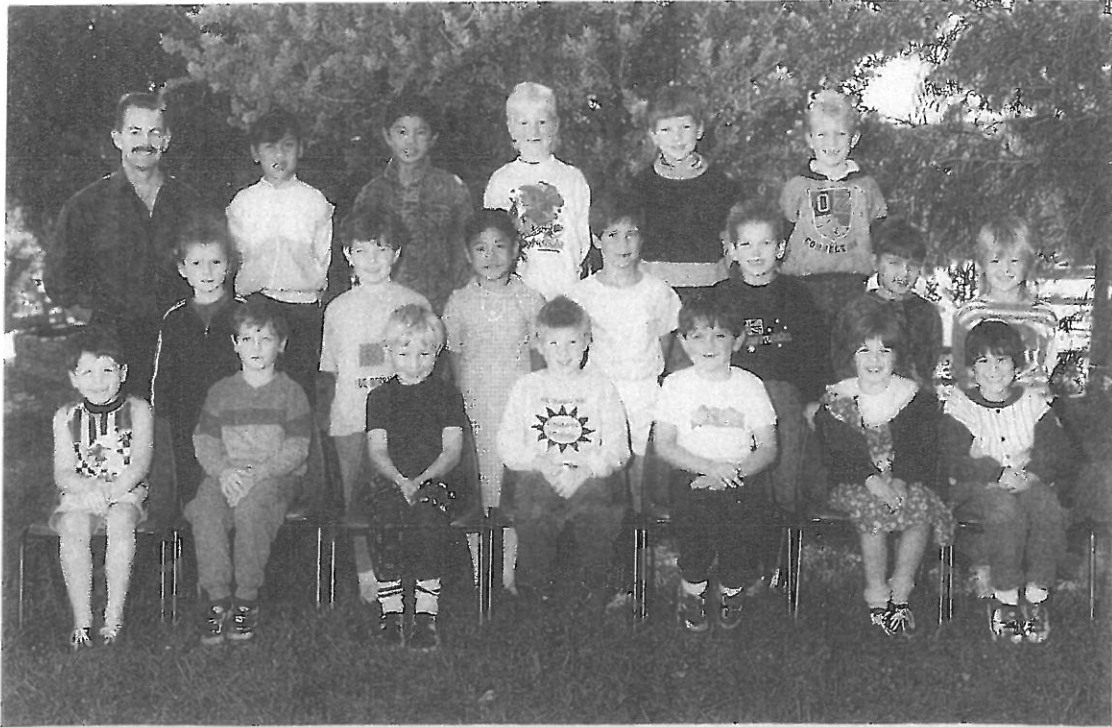


L to R
Row 2
Front:

Sunshine Primary School Staff 1990

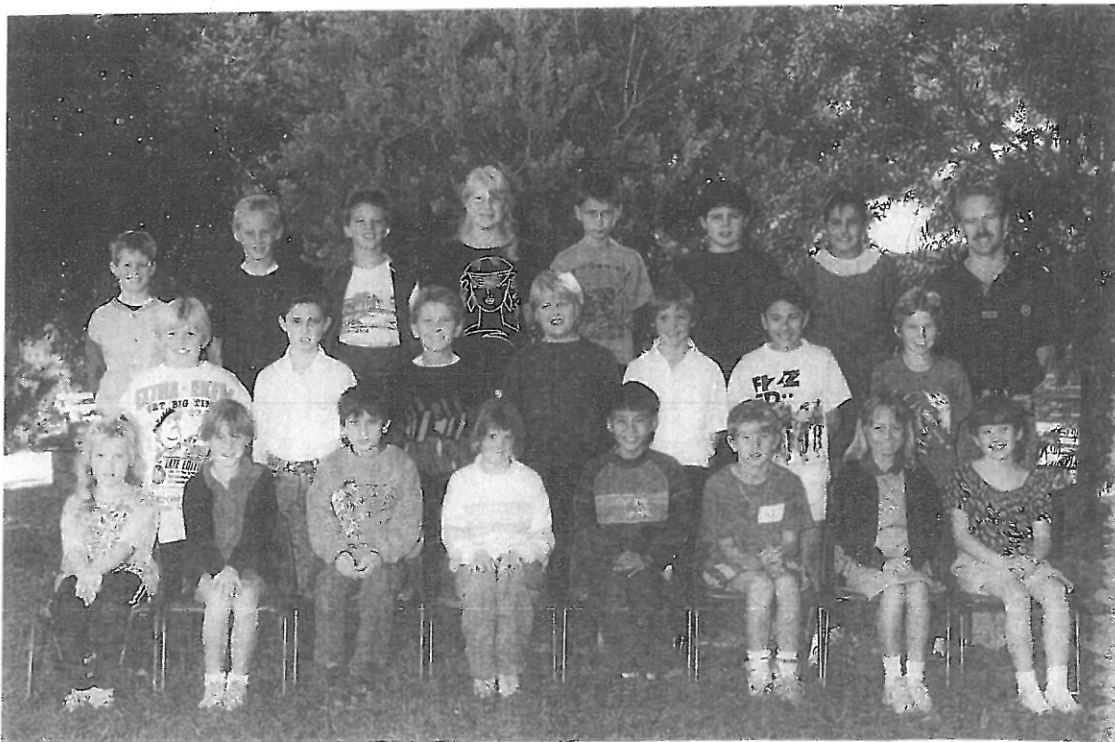
Karen Hickey, Helen Hardy, Anne Buff, Pauline Ashton, Joan Murray, Isabella Poloni, Eri Richardson, Joyce Refalo, Gloria Milicic
Judy Murdoch, Warren Hales, Trevor Jury, Peter Robson (P), Gary Smith, Graham McCorkell, Pauline Suffolk

Class Photographs 1990's



Sunshine Primary School Grade 1M 1990

L to R
 Row 3: Fetuli Tania, Pa Rissetto, Shannon Percy, Matthew Hoszko, Robert Willett
 Row 2: Tabita Botezatu, Christina Platten, Lisiua Mesui, Jordan Allison, Anthony Vignogna, Sharlene Rapa, Teagan Ultridge
 Front: Benjamin Gilmore, Peter Karikas, Andrew Taylor, Mark Aisbett, Chris Gaffner, Helena Djuric, Erhan Ismail
 Absent: Nathan Elliott, Jason Kiernan
 Teacher: Graham McCorkell



Sunshine Primary School Grade 4/5H 1990

L to R
 Row 3: Damien Galan, Robert Matthews, Darren Burke, Valentina Ardzijovski, Michael Dubinski, Troy Gifford, Selda Sukkur
 Row 2: Damien Percy, Jamie Cannovels, Lesley Galan, Daniel Palm, Ashley Moore, Adam Kowar, Justin Milne
 Front: Melissa Russel, Belinda Brown, Brock Morgan, Emily Preston, Nha Hoa Nguyen, Jacob Cook-Holby, Erin Gray, Kylie Hutchinson
 Teacher: Mi Warren Haies

Memories

Mrs. Glad Crick (Nee Day)

Started school 1913

We had two new rooms built on to the school and the older girls had to try and raise money for pictures for the walls, one way we raised money, we made fruit salad, cut the oranges in half cleaned them out and filled them with fruit salad, they sold well.

Edith C. Fletcher

Edith Roach, daughter of Mr. W. Roach

Mr. Roach taught from a large pavilion building, seats stretched across the walls and steps lead up to the top row near the ceiling. There was a blackboard on an easel and pupils used slates and chalk.

Alice O. Clues (Nee Mc Gregor)

I lived in the lower end of Hampshire Road, when it was all open paddocks and berry bushes. We were quite happy to play hide and seek.. One of the nicest memories is when the land opposite the school was full of beautiful wild flowers. There was only the old potteries there then, they were burnt down and later built up again.

Dorothy Mc Neill (nee Mc Kay)

Attended from 1916 to 1921

Mr. Roach (Cocka) was Headmaster and stressed the teaching of mental arithmetic, spelling and grammar each day. We all had to know our tables and weights and measures. The older children were often sent to mind the infants if the teacher was busy or away and also to mind Mr. Roach's class if he

was called away. Mr. Roach had a heavy strap which he used if the boys played up. We played cops and robbers in the lanes at lunch time and bought beautiful home made pastries from Mrs. Gamble for 3d. She also made delicious icecreams in a churn for a penny a cone. I have never tasted better.

Valda George (nee Spurling)

My brother, George and I attended the school in the early 1930's and walked each day from Una Street, East Sunshine, across Durham's paddocks, over a creek to Devonshire Road, climbing over stone walls, dodging magpies and the occasional snake, and the cows owned by Mr. Durham. If the creek was flooded, we had to go the long way round on the roads.

Violet Mc Kay

Attended school 1918-1923 approx.

The school assembled and the flag was saluted each morning, classes marched into school. School was in Derby Road Sunshine opposite Mrs. Gambles Shop where she sold lovely pastries for 4d and 1d, 3d and 6d icecream hand made in a churn. It was delicious. It was a favourite place for the children for drinks sweets and other food. Discipline was strict. The strap was used and sometimes the boys would be sent to the headmaster. Swimming was taught as well as rounders, cricket and football.

Memories

May Mulholland (Nee Thompson)

Attended 1928 to 1933.

I remember moving into the new school which seemed rather grand compared to the old one. When I was in third grade we were located in St. Mark's Church Hall. When we were small and in the old building there would be impromptu concerts at "play time", a group would gather outside the one of the rooms, Pearl Mitchell was one of the main performers, she often sang "When its springtime in the Rockies!" There was a small vegetable garden and the boys would tend it, the girls would do knitting or sewing, if the weather was good we would sit in a round shelter shed. Not many parents had cars at that time, even the teachers all came by rail, and we always liked to get to school before the " teachers train" came in.

Les Huggins

Attended 1929 to 1935

One memory worthy of mention is that on each Monday morning the Headmaster (then Mr. Barr) would gather the school around the flag pole at the front of the school. We would sing God save the King and chant I love God and my Country etc. On one particular morning when the flag was raised it stuck at the top. One Jack Drake, an elder student, shinned up that tall pole, which had developed quite a bow and un-furled it. Jack was the hero of the school for us 2nd year kids for that day. Unfortunately our Jack Drake was killed in action on a Navy ship 1939-44.

I like to think with the same bravery shown on that school day.

Merlie Clayton (Nee Tarr)

Memories of a seven year old in 1943

Air raid shelters in the school ground. Elation the day the war ended, it was a Religious Instruction day, so we said a prayer and had the rest of the day off. My cousin Hector took great delight in laddering Mrs. Felstead's stockings with a compass or other sharp object as she walked between the desks.

Shirley Carns (Nee Simmons)

Started school in 1935

My sister and I would walk from the far end of Durham Road (now called Monash St.) and would be known to climb peppercorn trees which grew in the railway reserve on the way home in the afternoon, and go home with our clothing torn and filthy. I remember buying the "School Paper" at the Corner shop. The "School Paper" was one penny at that time- a penny was sometimes very hard to find in the Depression years. I remember the fires in the class room, the red coals which made you feel warm and cosy after the cold playground.....We used to take our slippers and a change of socks to school in our bags as our shoes would be wet from walking to school. I remember the free milk issued at morning recess, also prior to the Christmas break-up we were allowed to bring our younger brother or sister of pre school age to school with us.

Memories

Don Webster

During 1942/43 a housing estate of 250 houses was established in East Sunshine to house the families of people involved in the defense industry. I was one of these children, transferring from Ararat to commence in Grade 5 at Sunshine at the start of the 1943 school year. My first impression was that it was a treeless, overcrowded and noisy place but soon got used to it. As my time at Sunshine was during the Second World War there was some effort to support the Red Cross War Effort. This was the collection of scrap metal mainly aluminium and as a fund raiser the Friday film show- three pence to get in. Also in my two years at Sunshine there were two air raid drills both being abandoned, the first because the air raid shelter was flooded and the second because there was a tiger snake in the shelter.

Carmen Glowacki nee Catania

Attended 1966 to 1973

A fond memory is the school bell, which used to be rung manually by pulling a rope a certain number of times. (I was a bell monitor at one stage) and of the introduction of the electronic bell. Another great memory was Mr. Gibby's corner shop across Derby road. He was a great man who ran his shop on his own and I recall kids yelling out Gibby! Gibby! till they got his attention, He sold everything, lollies, Sarsaparilla drinks, Blue Heaven in glasses; bike parts on the other side of the shop, tiny thin balloons that were

very hard to blow up. He was such a friendly person to all the children.

Allan Hoare

Attended 1966 to 1972

Mrs. Felstead reading a chapter of *The Magic Faraway Tree* or *The Wishing Chair* each afternoon before going home. Being among the first group of students to attend the school camp which was at a place called Ashbourne.

Daphnee Stirzaker (nee Douglass)

Attended 1934 to 1940

When cherries were in season, the children used to dry the cherry bobs (or pips) and put them under their lift up seats. The class had to remain standing when the teacher entered the room and when she said "Class sit" all the cherry bobs went madly pop all around the room.

Lenis Brown (nee Douglass)

Attended 1938 to 1944

I used to talk a lot in class and as a punishment I was sent out of the room where I had to learn a poem by heart and I was only allowed to return when I could recite the poem. I got sick of this one day and decided to sneak over to the technical school where my sister, Daphnee was playing sport, she was a very good runner. I remember crawling on my hands and knees keeping low so as not to be seen from the windows and ran off down stairs to see my sister run.

