

LUX

THE BRANCH SCHOOLS

SYDNEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BOWRAL-MOSS VALE

Country Branch

The first mention of the founding of the Sydney Church of England School for Girls was made as far back as 1890, though it was not until July 17th, 1895, that the suggestion materialised at 65 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst, when the school was opened by the Primate of Australia. The school progressed under Miss Badham, and in 1906 and 1911 two sister schools were established, one in Bowral and the other in North Sydney.

Foundation of the School

The Bowral School was located in the chief residential street of Bowral, known as Merrigang Street, and for the first year was comfortably housed in an attractive home, now occupied by Dr. Watson, half-way up the street, on the side of the "Gib," until it moved to the opposite side and established itself in the large house known at that time as Yerenbah, standing on the top of the hill. The house was a comfortable country home standing in four and a half acres of ground. The school Council built a classroom section behind the large brick house, attaching it to the back verandah of the main building, so that the children could move from the residence to the classrooms and remain under cover. Later, a cottage was added, and in this cottage the mistresses had their rooms and the large central space around which the rooms were built was utilised for the kindergarten and primary school necessitated by the day-school connection.

The school was essentially a home school, taking at most twenty-five boarders and some forty, day pupils of whom half were kindergarten and primary school pupils. Miss Constance Smith, from S.C.E.G.G.S., Darlinghurst, followed Miss Langley, daughter of the late Bishop of Bendigo, and later Mrs. Deuchar, as Headmistress of the school, and remained in the school until the appointment of Miss Muriel Hammond, an Englishwoman, who graduated and trained at the London University and before her appointment obtained experience in South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. Through Miss Constance Smith the school may proudly acknowledge a close connection with Miss Badham, the foundress of the triple endeavour, since it was through her suggestion that Miss Smith applied for the position of Headmistress.

During Miss Smith's headmistress-ship the school was regarded in the light of a country home with some teaching, and the pupils were not expected to sit for public examinations or to compete in inter-school competition and sport. It was not until 1927 that the pupils started to sit for public examinations and the school was registered by the Department of Education. Initially up to Intermediate standard and then to Leaving Certificate standard.

In 1927 there were twelve boarders. The school was not paying its current expenses. In 1928 Mr. Peter Tait, of Queensland and Bowral, kindly guaranteed the school for two years against loss.

Renovations to the house were effected to the sum of 600 Pounds. The house was repapered and painted, inside and out, and the use of rooms re-organised in such a way as to bring the classrooms, apart from the kindergarten department, already referred to, into one section of the building, thus separating residence and school. The usefulness of the grounds was extended by concentrating its purposes and uniting sections of the playing fields by the removal of the hedges which at the time were separating them.

Under these improved conditions the school gradually filled and met the expenses, and Mr. Tait's kindly generosity was not called upon.

In February, 1930, the school moved to its present site at Moss Vale and again found itself with twelve boarders owing to depression conditions.

The new building surpassed all expectations: the open playing fields, the cubicles and fine sleeping out verandahs were a joy to all. To usher in the new regime and as the enrolment increased, the house system was inaugurated and MacCallum and Tait pupils played against one another in the increased sports activities - cricket, baseball, tennis, hockey and netball. For the first time one felt the school had come to stay.

Educational Progress.

In 1928 the school was registered by the department to Intermediate standard, and in 1930 for the Leaving Certificate; in 1936 the Leaving Certificate candidates sat for Honours and obtained First-class Honours in Botany and fourth place in the State, and Second-class Honours in Mathematics, History, Latin and Greek. In August, 1932, the school entered for the first time in the All School Sports and competed with the larger schools in running, hurdling, and in team games, winning a third place in the junior championship of the sports meeting in 1936, and a cup for the senior Ball Competition in 1937.

School Enlargements.

Shortly after our arrival at the new school in 1930, minor extensions were made to the little cottage set aside for the mistresses and demanded by the increase of pupils, which necessitated the use of Sir John Lackey's cottage for the junior children. Two rooms were added and four were enlarged.

Some years later, on the Easter Saturday of 1936, the foundation stone of a large and beautiful wing of a second school house, planned and designed by Mr. Kenneth H. McConnel, Arch., F.R.L.B.A., was laid by His Grace the Archbishop of Sydney. Mrs. Mowll, Miss Macarthur Onslow, and the school's very kind friend and benefactress, Lady MacCallum, with Sir Mungo MacCallum, were present. On Easter Monday, 1937, the Wing was opened by Lady Whiskard.

The wing consists of a headmistresses' flat, comprising bedroom, bath room, spare room, and lounge, dormitory verandahs with study dressing rooms for the senior girls, and arranged to sleep twenty-eight girls, fourteen on each floor, bedrooms and bathroom for two mistresses, also arranged to be self-contained, and a large, airy and very attractive art room. This room has enabled the school to make a special feature of applied art, and the course includes spinning, weaving, pottery, and china painting.

The new building is the body and one wing of the second school house, and it is hoped that the school will continue to progress so that before very long the second wing will be built and the house completed. The second wing is to be arranged so that it may be quickly adapted for isolation purposes. One of the many attractions of the new house is the built-in furnishing supplying a wardrobe, drawers, cupboards for hats and shoes, and a writing desk for each pupil. The bright colouring of the floor covering harmonises well with the waxed wood, buff curtains and bed-spreads, and tones in with the shutters which have been put up in the opening of the sleep-out verandahs. The charm of the architecture of these verandahs is that they are under the same roof as the dressing cubicles, thus becoming part of them. The

beautiful line of the staircase set at the back and the side of the hall is an additional attraction to a house planned and executed with taste and the whole arrangement provides a quietness for the administrative and professional sections of the house that is not often found in a school.

The finances for this building were kindly assisted by Lady MacCallum, who not only raised a loan herself, but also, solicited a similar kindness from Mr. H. P. Christmas, whose interests in the school she tried to arouse.

The school residence now provides separate houses for junior girls, middle school and senior school.

The School Farm.

A special feature of the school is to be found in the development of the farm, which, starting with two gift cows, a sow, a boar and their litter, has now developed into a well-established farm and registered dairy, with 300 acres of grazing and arable lands attached to the school carrying 75 head of cattle and young stock, pupils' saddle ponies, pigs, poultry and three acres of vegetable garden. At the moment, sixty acres of ground is under cultivation, and varied crops are grown for the feeding of the stock.

For the past three years the farm has developed under a woman expert, who has had extensive training and experience in agriculture and horticulture (Reading University), both in England and America. The progress being made is obvious, though further development is required before the farm can be regarded in the light of a model farm.

At present the object of the farm is to supply fresh, wholesome food to the children, with plenty of butter, fresh eggs, and milk from tuberculin tested Jersey and Shorthorn cows, but it also opens up big scope for future developments, and it is hoped at some future date it may be possible to offer a course of training in such vocational subjects as floriculture, dairying, and poultry keeping.

In addition to these activities the farm supplies the conditions and the ideal setting that makes the school, as its title suggests, a country school. Children coming from the city unconsciously familiarise themselves with the life surrounding them, and it remains to be proved how far later on, the contact with the activities surrounding them will prove helpful to city girls moving to and making homes in the country.

The Aim of the School.

The aim of the school is to develop the pupils of the school in such a way that they may become effective members not only of society, but of the world in which they live, with a balanced outlook based on a careful threefold training of the human personality - body, mind and soul. It is believed that a mature character and personality can only be developed through a religious basis, shaping thinking and therefore action in the direction of a Christ-like reaction to the increasing demands made by life. To this end much time is given to Bible study and the children are encouraged to regard the Bible as a living monument of men and women who lived and struggled and aspired, as part of a whole, as we live and struggle and aspire to-day, until a perfect human manifestation was reached in the divine personality of Christ Himself.

Classes in musical appreciation are supplemented with concerts given by visiting artists and the children are encouraged to attend concerts in Sydney during the holidays.

To assist in the creation of home-makers, the arts and crafts classes already referred to are supported by the attractive and carefully-chosen colours of the school furnishings and by the flowers and general upkeep of the school buildings and gardens.

The school has come to stay; may it be a force for good in the community, training generation after generation of the future mothers of Australia who in their turn will train mothers and citizens not only of Australia, but of the world, citizens trained for the public good and contributing to it, mothers realising their privileged responsibility who in their turn will train the parents of a later generation; and by so doing may the school move the world one step nearer the goal that Christ would have us reach.-"Australian Church Record," 30/9/37.

From "Lux," June, 1906.

BOWRAL LETTER

Dear "Lux,"

Out of the mountain mist and cold your shivering relatives at Bowral wish to greet you. Of course, we don't always shiver, as we have lovely big log fires and tennis and walks; still it is when we sit down to write letters that we realise that we live in `a cold climate.

"Woodbine" is a great improvement on "Warwick," and we quite deserve your congratulations on the Council's choice of a house. It is a long, low house, with a verandah running round on all sides. The schoolroom is a big airy room, with very large windows, which look out over the garden to the Gib, a big mass of rock on the northeast. Towards the west, whence come bitter breezes, there is a mass of great high pinetrees, and these shelter the house splendidly. The garden is old-fashioned, and, in the spring, will be perfectly lovely. At present the trees are beginning to look very gaunt and bare. All their pretty golden dresses are lying over the paths to be the constant trial of the gardener's life. We have twenty-seven pupils, two boarders, two governesses, several servants, a man, some fowls, and only one cat-not a stately, dignified cat, but one very black, with yellow eyes, and habits of nocturnal rambles, from which he returns covered with mud and often lame. We can only guess at the fight, as we do not see the other cat.

Every Friday, Mademoiselle, who is our veritable link with Barham, comes to talk French at us as hard as she can from 9.30 to 12.30, and we very much enjoy Fridays. We have a tennis club and hope that we may have some matches before the end of the year. We are all delighted to hear of the victories of the Sydney girls, and wish them all success.

Bowral is a pretty little town, and we have lovely walks, and sometimes on Saturdays we all go shares and drive to some pretty place for a picnic.

Our work is somewhat like that at Barham, but our standard is only up to Remove, and not like the present Remove either. Still, we are very young yet, and soon we shall be able to compare ourselves with the old school, to which we are very proud to belong.

We want to thank the girls for the message sent on Ascension Day, which we gladly return and remain,

Your schoolfellows at "WOODBINE."

MISS CONSTANCE SMITH

First Head Mistress, 1906-1925 (Died 2/5/43)

It was with real regret that we who knew her heard of the death of Miss Smith, "Smuttie" as her girls lovingly called her. If ever a woman lived she did, and still does in many memories. She was like no one else, she was just "Smuttie." Stockily built, plain, with a plainness that called for a caricaturist, she had the "one touch of nature," a keen sense of humour. Her face just broke, and a jolly laugh made everyone feel it was good to be alive. How well suited she was to the school Miss Badham planned, a school for delicate city girls who needed fresh mountain air and home surroundings, and how they hated leaving when the time came!

A loyal Church woman in every sense of the word. She was also in her own way a woman of the world, ready and willing to hold her own in the Bowral community. During the First World War, she was heart and soul of the Red Cross Branch in Bowral; a good all-around sport, her particular interest was golf, and she thoroughly enjoyed a keen game of bridge.

In her little sulky, with "Tommy" in the shafts, and her dog beside her, she was for many years a well-known Bowral identity. But latterly she transferred her affections to a car. "The most popular woman on board," was the verdict of those who traveled with her to England in 1924.

I still remember how homesick my first visit to Yerenbah made me; I was greeted by a cosy meal by her log fire in the friendly sitting room, where small girls were wont to gather on Sunday nights for hymn singing, for a story, or just for a chat! Next morning we inspected her domain, until she left me to discuss matters of importance with the farm hands. Then we "did" Bowral in her sulky. In the afternoon she had arranged an expedition up the Gib, and a picnic tea at the top, and I seem to remember the class rooms being cleared for a fancy dress party in the evening with "Smuttie" just in her element, as first one group and then another claimed her attention.

For several years before being transferred to Bowral she was Senior Resident at Head School under Miss Badham, and before that, for five years, she had charge of the little boys at St. Gabriel's.

Sister Hilda, of whom she was very fond, spoke of her as a good teacher, and of her help with the Divinity work. I cannot imagine her otherwise; and I am quite sure she was always stimulating. After her resignation she lived in Bowral for some time, then she returned to England, to a brother who had lost his wife. When he married again she drifted to London. At first I heard from her from time to time; lately I have often wondered whether she escaped the blitz, and whether she was still there.

MISS MURIEL HAMMOND

In 1927 Miss Muriel Hammond became Headmistress of the Bowral School; full of enthusiasm and energy she was determined to build a great school in the district. From Miss Smith's happy school for invalid girls she was able to create in her ten years' careful guardianship a school well able to take its place alongside other secondary schools both in the academic and in the sporting world.

In 1930 an opportunity came for the School to move from "Yerenbah" in Bowral to roomier and more spacious buildings and grounds at Moss Vale. Miss Hammond set herself the task of establishing the School in its new setting, running the school farm with its cows, sheep, horses,

vegetables and fruit, and laying out the Sports Field and Tennis Courts, so as to make the most of the 382 acres of land attached to the School.

Stern and forbidding as, perhaps, Miss Hammond was upon first acquaintance, her pupils came to respect and love her as they themselves became part of the school and realised the pride and whole-hearted interest which their headmistress felt in the school and in every member of the school.

The first years at Moss Vale were by no means easy years; there were staff troubles and farm problems to be met before the school was established in its new home; there was also the problem during those years of depression, of increasing the number of pupils to fill the new building. Thus the unique position arose in 1932 when new girls outnumbered the rest of the school by two to one. Those of us who were at school in the first term of that year will remember with a smile how Miss Hammond and her staff sorted out the horde of newcomers and saw that each girl had her name pinned on her tunic. It was certainly an achievement that so many new girls had settled in within a very few months and had become part of the school unconsciously absorbing its ideals and traditions and coming to feel something of Miss Hammond's pride and love for it.

The year 1937 saw some of Miss Hammond's ambitions realised in the opening of the new wing, which had been built near the oak-tree overlooking the lake. This was the first of the buildings actually planned especially for the school but Miss Hammond sometimes used to speak of her vision of the school in years to come complete with Hall, Chapel and Gymnasium. She knew these things would not come about in her time but yet she strove to make ready for the day when it would be possible.

It is difficult to choose from among the thousand-and-one memories that come crowding in of those years at the Moss Vale School; yet in each one of them we find Miss Hammond has a part. We will remember Miss Hammond hurrying down, the Covered Way on her way to the Class Rooms, her green-black gown billowing from her shoulders; Miss Hammond (with a twinkle in her eye) barracking, as she always did, for the Old Girls, on those memorable Foundation Day week-ends; the traditional Birthday Parties when the Birthday Girls for the term sat on the platform with their cakes and the candles burning brightly in the darkened Dining Room-how one's knees knocked if one had to make a speech : . . "Miss Hammond, the Staff, and Girls!" Perhaps some of Miss Hammond's happiest moments and those which endeared her to her pupils most were informal Sunday afternoons. The whole school gathered in her sitting room on the chairs, the sofa and the floor, and, maybe with the baby of the school on her knee, she would read some book or story well chosen for its interest and appeal to little ones and seniors alike.

And so one could go on - each of us will have her varied memories of Miss Hammond in many different moods but as we sum up our impressions of those years we are aware that foremost among them all is respect for Miss Hammond's high standards of character and conduct. Those of us who were with her in 1936-37 will never forget the inflexible determination of purpose with which she stuck to her post and faced the pain and suffering which resulted from a motor accident.

Able thus to give herself whole-heartedly to the School Miss Hammond expected each girl to give of her very best. Whether it was in the classroom or on the sports field the standard set was the highest possible and had to be attained; Miss Hammond's personality was such, that these standards were usually reached and rewarded by "The Head's" unmistakable pleasure and pride.

MISS STEEL

When Miss Steel was asked to take the position of temporary headmistress of S.C.E.G.G.S., Moss Vale, in 1938, she agreed only after some hesitation. She little knew that she would be in charge for the next six years, even when, after several months, she realized it was an essential part of her life's work," and agreed to stay on.

We have often laughed as she told us the story of the rather frightening experience of driving through the school gates for the first time, and of meeting the seemingly overwhelming number of new charges . . . We, too, were a little apprehensive at the idea of a new Head!

Everyone who has known Miss Steel can easily believe that it took her virtually no time to become an integral part of the school, and to gain a place in the heart of all with whom she came in contact-whether they were privileged to be under her care and guidance, or were among the Old Girls whom she met when they came up for week-ends.

Miss Steel had a way of blending all the activities of our school life into a perfect pattern; we never had too much of one thing and too little of another.

I can still picture the library on a summer morning, looking out on to the rose garden, the flats, and the lake beyond, fresh in the morning sun, and Miss Steel's voice ". . . and the clear day dawning through the little leaded panes . . ." Somehow after that the day seemed even brighter.

Lessons with Miss Steel were never dull text affairs. She loved to teach, and she made her subjects live. She taught us through the fullness of her own experience, and wove into her lessons a philosophy which in the years to come we found of inestimable value in the problems met in adult life.

All branches of the school were linked together more closely, and the rough places smoothed over, by Miss Steel's never failing sense of humour. We still have memories of "Christopher Columbus," the faithful old Vauxhall panting up the drive with Miss Steel grimly at the wheel, would she make it this time?

In the dark days of 1942, when invasion seemed so close, she somehow managed to reorganise the school so as to accommodate the huge influx of new pupils. A house was taken in Moss Vale to provide extra sleeping quarters; and the girls came to school every day by car. Preparations were made in the event of an air raid and we all practiced drill for such an emergency. We can only thank God, and wonder why we in Australia were spared that terror.

The girls readily took up extra war jobs to cope with the staff shortage. Miss Steel led us in this as in everything else. We would see her going about her "Dom, Duts." on Saturday mornings, when we also were doing ours.

In spite of all her extra worries and duties, Miss Steel still had time to spend with us out of school hours. It was pleasant to gather in her cosy sitting room on Sunday evenings, grouped snugly about the Esse Stove, blissfully ignoring "Winds of these uplands blowing" while Miss Steel's voice carried us away to the enchanted world of books.

Miss Steel was really interested in every individual, and was always ready to lend a helping and friendly hand to those who found difficulty in adopting themselves to community life. Every one, from members of the staff to the youngest girl, could go to her study with their problems, and be sure of an understanding and sympathetic hearing.

Extra worry and overwork could not but take toll on Miss Steel's health, and when she told us that she must give up her position as headmistress, each girl felt it as a personal sorrow. But to quote Miss Steel's words, "The school must go on".

Although Miss Steel has been relieved of an active part in the school's affairs, she still has a lively interest in its progress; she has become an **Honorary Member of the Old Girls' Union**, in which her advice and support will be invaluable.

I think we all agree that Miss Steel is not only our ex-Headmistress, but also, as she always has been, our intimate friend.

HOUSE CAPTAINS					
	MacCallum	Tait		MacCallum	Tait
1930	G.L. Allnutt	J.E. Glasgow	1938	E.B. Gaden	E.M. Savage
1931	E.G. Wheeler	M.R.A. Gray	1939	J.M. Thomas	D.M. Young
1932	M.J. Maughan	B.V. Walter	1940	A. Humbley	N. Graham
1933	S.A.M. Maior	P.C. Dent	1941	J. Bray	W. Solling
1934	L.J. McKeown	M.J. Park	1942	M. Brookes	M. Morris
1935	J. C. Wickham	J. Cater	1943	J. Oatley	B. Williams
1936	M. Gwilliam	P.M. Graham	1944	R. Hume	S. Thomas
1937	P. Gelling	J.M. Cordeaux	1945	B. Jones	M. Monckton

HEAD GIRL			
1927	L.D. MacPherson	1936	H.G. Wheeler
1928	J.H. McFarlane	1937	L.J. McKeown
1929	I.M.A. Gray	1938	P. Gelling
1930	J. Clarke	1939	S. Park, P. Lett, B. Roberts (I term each)
1931	G.L. Allnutt	1940	S. Park
1932	N.P. Vine-Hall	1941	L. Polson (Dux)
1933	M.E. Christoe	1942	J. Blacket (Dux), E. Purchas (Snr Prefect)
1934	M.P.S. Unwin	1943	J. Oatley (Dux), W. Solling, J. Bray (Snr Prefects)
1935	P.C. Dent	1944	E. Williams and I. Kurt (Duces)

UNIVERSITY RESULTS

Pat Dent, B.Sc.
 Joan Graham, B.A. (Honours, Latin)
 Phyllis Graham, M.D.V.S.
 Nancy Graham, B.Sc.
 Helen Wheeler, B.A.
 Jean Wickham, B.A.
 Audrey Twynam, B.E.
 Molly Lusher, M.A.
 Beryl Brooks, B.Sc.
 Pat Gelling, B.Sc.

Masseuses.
 Judy Fussell.
 Marcia Maycock,
 Quentin Bradley

Social Studies.
 Elizabeth Howard.