

1906-1956: What Changes There Have Been!

By Miss D. Wallent, Headmistress, Newcastle Girls' High School

The past half century has wrought great changes in social patterns and not the least of these is the position of women in the world today. How many careers are there now for women and how do they vary from those of the earlier days? Those are the questions I have been asked to answer.

In the total, the performance of ex-students of Newcastle High School and Newcastle Girls' High School would equal those of any other great and long established school, but at Jubilee times attention is focused on the individual schools.

From these came girls who went to the university and gained degrees, usually in Arts.

Today Science almost rivals Arts in popularity and women win Master of Science and Doctor of Science degrees, as Beryl Scott did.

Probably the pupils of earlier years had to fight harder to get their chance and there were not so

many avenues of employment. Mainly those with degrees became teachers. A few went into medicine, but the woman doctor of that era was still a pioneer in her profession.

The First World War brought women out of the home into the world of business and in the years between the two World Wars girls made very good use of the opportunities for higher education. Many of them are outstanding successes of today.

Margaret Telfer did her tertiary education in the

twenties and Marjorie Rouse in the thirties.

The Second World War advanced the status of women in the scientific sphere and in the Armed Services. Women in uniform were an unheard of thing 50 years ago, but today there are many openings in the W.R.A.N.S., W.R.A.A.C. and W.R.A.A.F.

Still there was the feeling that it was a choice between a home and a career. The employer still wondered whether a girl

would even wait till she completed her training before she married and left her position.

Unfortunately the economic strains of these post-war years have given many women a career and a home. Nowadays the field of employment is wide open to any woman who has the ability and training to fill the particular job. Some positions do not appeal to the majority of women, but, even so, there have been women engineers and radio engineers.

While the percentage of a man's pay that a woman earns has increased over

the years to equality in some positions, it is still not a universal fact.

Teaching still seems to be the main career for girls after five years in high school, though judging by the falling percentage of women secondary teachers the graduate of today finds other fields more attractive.

Women doctors today are freely accepted and run their own hospitals. Pharmacy is extremely popular, dentistry, law, veterinary science and architecture

have their qualities, possibly not so many as one would have expected. Popular belief never expected accountability to be popular with women.

Nursing has always attracted women and now, with increased public recognition and improved conditions, even more so. The big expansion in women's opportunities has come in those fields of general world development. A Leaving Certificate is generally desirable and often essential to enter the more interesting careers.

No field has widened more than that of domestic science. Long despised, like Cinderella, it has

come into its proper place as home science or home economics, with many an opportunity in food and nutrition, interior decorating and allied careers.

The enormous growth in the volume of knowledge over these years has made the library of today very different from that of yes-

tising play a much greater part in our lives now than 50 years ago.

A whole new field and one that seems peculiarly suited to women is that of personal administration. It might well develop into a women's domain.

In the world of commerce women have built a secure ladder leading from typist to confidential secretary to men in important positions and to have careers as economist, company secretary, methods engineer, while outstanding Science graduates may become research workers at universities and many become bio-chemists, or work in the laboratories of large industrial concerns.

The aeroplane, which has made our world shrink in size, has not only provided a glamor job for the air hostess, but, in making the



Miss D. Wallent.

teryear, not so much on the fiction side, but on the scientific. Many scientific foundations, hospitals, and research establishments have their own library of technical treatises and the librarian must need to be an Arts or Science graduate.

Allied with nursing have come careers in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, dietetics, pathology and others, while teaching has its counsellors, careers advisers and psychologists. Connecting with both are the Social Service and Child Welfare work, all of comparatively recent origin.

The world of opportunity opened up by radio and being opened by television, is almost without limits—acting, decorating, script writing, and, of course, commercial art and adver-



world smaller, has created the need to know more of how the other half lives in every way, and so has given to many another profession by providing both the need to travel and the means of travel.

To my way of thinking the basic difference between then and now for girls at school is the present-day admission that a girl, too, has a right to the best and most opportunity to get at least some secondary education.

Not everyone even yet appreciates that no education is ever wasted, but it ensures the development of the individual, ready to meet the opportunities and emergencies of our world.



These senior students at a recent Girls' High Speech Day face a world of vastly-widened opportunities to girls in 1906.

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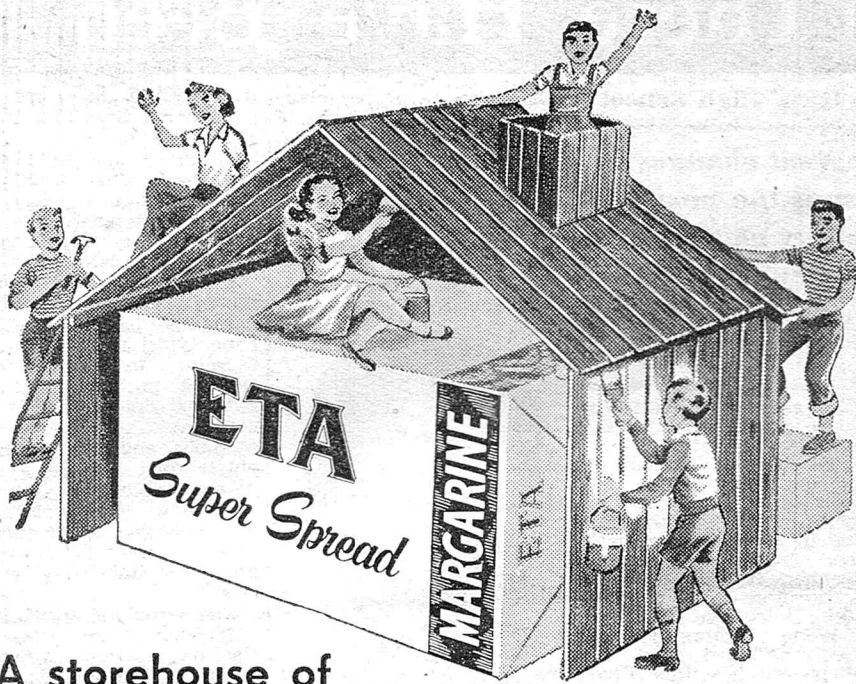
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YOUNG AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE MARGARINE

Training Was Hard In 1906

(By Miss S. L. LESLIE, former teacher N.G.H.S.)

The sight of gay, well-fed, well-clad groups of young people who throng Union-st. during the Newcastle Teachers' College sessions, has often caused the retired Newcastle teachers to reflect sharply and poignantly—but not nostalgically—how different things were in their day.

The Newcastle Teachers' College is not 10 years old, but already its existence is taken for granted by students and parents in the district it serves. The long wait for it and the amenities and opportunities it offers, are seldom realised.

Fifty years ago the probationary method of teaching students was commenced in N.S.W. and this was one of the reasons for the opening of the Newcastle High School. This school whose jubilee is now being celebrated was really the first teacher's training college here.

Training was an academic matter, with a large curriculum as at present, but it did not include educational theory or practice, or elementary psychology, or clerical work. Courses were two years or one year according to the entrance examination. Students who had done secondary work generally took the second examination.

A small money grant was

given monthly and there was an issue of books. After the completion of the course an examination was held for entrance to the Sydney Teachers' College.

There was, of course, an examination for entrance but numbers were limited. Only a proportion of probationary students went to college.

Probationary teachers were supposed to receive teaching instruction from principals but this was a haphazard and chancy business as some headmasters were competent and willing and had time for this, but many had not.

Prior to 1906 boys and girls who wished to be teachers, sat for the pupil-teacher examination and were posted when they were 16 years of age. They could otherwise satisfy the Department of Public Instruction that they were of an educational and personal standard to teach in small country schools—or

Different Life



This recent picture of trainee-teachers at Newcastle Teachers' College illustrates the strong contrast in styles between those of today and those of 1911, pictured below.

at two of them. Quite a number became interested in the land and combined farming and part-time teaching.

These pupil-teachers taught full hours, but were supposed to be helped by teachers who had classes above or below them, or had special art or singing qualifications. This again was a chancy affair and there was a great difference in degree of assistance given. But, for half an hour before 9 a.m. and after 4 p.m. each day, the pupil-teachers were taken in hand by the principal, who coached them for the Training College Entrance examination. Most of the study had to be done at home at night and these short periods were devoted to directing this, allocating time and making suggestions.

Those luckless youngsters who had left school at 14 and then had been in shops or offices for two years, found the work of imparting elementary knowledge hard enough, but, in addition, they had to master a second set of subjects for their own advancement.

In a few instances the girl teacher had also to do some sewing to satisfy the teacher's wife, who had taught this subject in smaller schools.

The pupil-teacher salaries were £25, £35 and £45 for each of the three years. These sums correspond roughly to modern living costs to from under £2 to slightly over £3.

Those who did not make the Training College at the end of the second or third year were sent to the country as ex-pupil-teachers and then commenced to study for third class and, later, second class, teachers certificates, for which subjects could be taken in



The last of the probationary students passed out from Newcastle High School in 1911. Pictured here are L. McCurley, F. E. Armstrong, J. Hogan, J. McCloskey, Dorothy Howie, Zilda Lewis, Elsie M. Hutchins, Doris Raysmith, Agnes Sneddon, Grace Dalling, K. Hogan, Margaret Douglas, May Blakey, Fanny Gilbert, Annie Dent, Mr. J. W. Hayes, the first headmaster (Mr. C. R. Smith), Miss Niau and A. Glover.



twos and threes over a period of years. Passes were of two grades and the teaching mark for efficiency had to be obtained, in addition to scholarships. To make the two match sometimes took a dozen years.

The last pupil-teachers in Newcastle were also probationary students. Because of the shortage of teachers they were asked whether they would leave their course to go out and teach.

Present day students, with their supervisors and lecturers, demonstration and practice schools, sports and parties, libraries and cultural aids, freedom from financial and mental strain, have little in common with the junior teachers of 1906.

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MUSIC, DRAMA PART OF SCHOOL LIFE

Music and drama have always had an important place in the half-century of high school life in Newcastle.

A 1915 edition of the school magazine, "The Novocastrian," published the picture reproduced here and in later magazines there is plentiful evidence of constant activity in both spheres.

Newcastle Girls' High formed a dramatic society in the first year of its separate existence, and since then dramatic production has been part of the school life with school plays and play days, lunch-hour concerts and public performances being featured.

From time to time the girls wrote and produced their own plays and, as



Mr. Fred Smith.

well as plays in English, have taken part in French, German and Latin plays, or adaptations of nursery rhymes and fairy tales. Each year the third-year

students produce the Intermediate Certificate Shakespearean play. All members of the staff cooperate in the production and most of the rehearsals are done out of school hours.

Much credit for the excellence of these productions is due to staff member, Miss L. McKenna. Former students will also remember the interest and help given by Miss I. Paradise, who recently retired from the teaching profession.

Play days and dramatic performances have long played an important part in the life of Boys' High.

Play days have been held regularly since 1924, and a number of old boys still

figure prominently in amateur productions in Newcastle.

From 1950 to his death this year a wonderful contribution to drama was

made by the late Mr. Fred Smith.

Mr. Smith had a great love for drama and he was an inspired producer. Two of his outstanding productions were "Arms and the Man" and "School for Scandal."

He also had a capacity for stimulating a love of all literature and school-boys regarded it as one of their greatest privileges to be associated with him in his classes and productions.

Mr. Smith's brothers have presented the school with a desk in his memory

Pictured above are A. Symes, J. Donald, C. Preston, J. Craig, R. Lydon, L. Sussman, J. Henery, A. Thomas, J. Kempster, A. Erskine, W. Cummings, M. Buxton, N. Brooks, D. Chadwick, I. Saunders, A. Stove, A. Ostinga, J. Dixon, E. Harvey, K. Chalmers and W. Broadfoot.

and students at the school have already had his photograph framed, inscribed and hung in the school hall.



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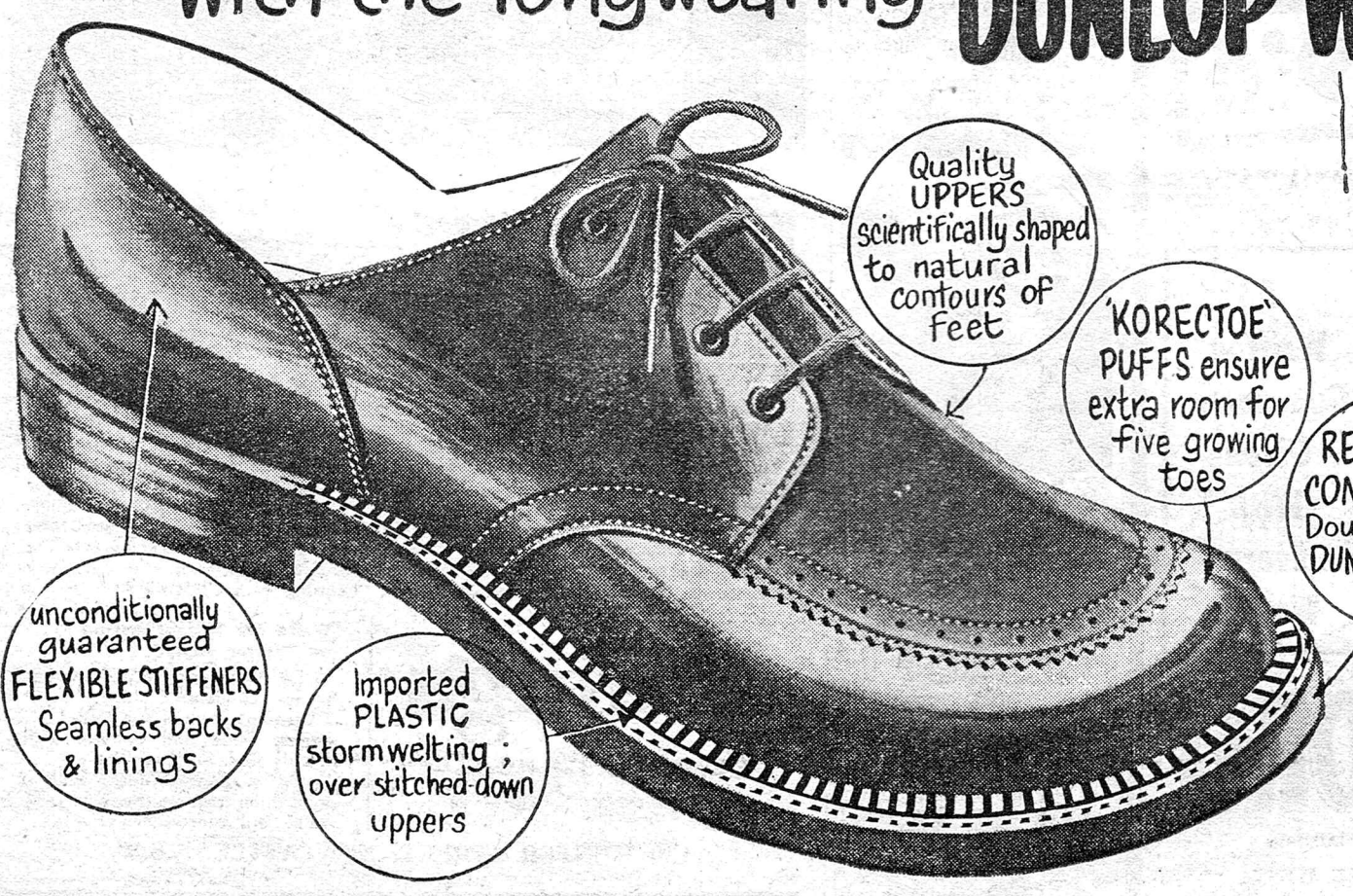
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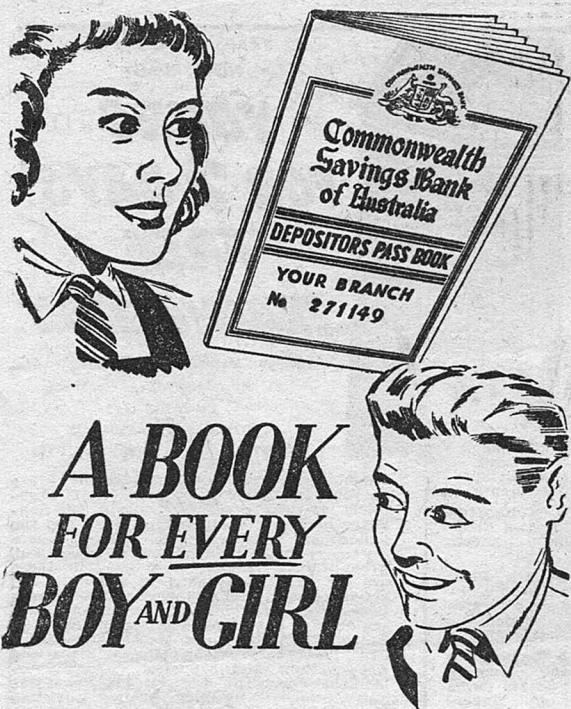
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"Swassc"—Newcastle Boys' High Welfare and Social Service committee, controlled the students themselves, by weekly collection—raises up to £200 a year for Stewart House,

Legacy and other purposes. Recently the boys made a gift of £100 to a fellow-student who lost a leg and gave more than £100 for flood relief.

They Brought Honor To Their School

High Mourns Its World War Dead

At Newcastle Boys' High School, Honor Rolls of all old boys who enlisted in two World Wars are among the school's proudest possessions.

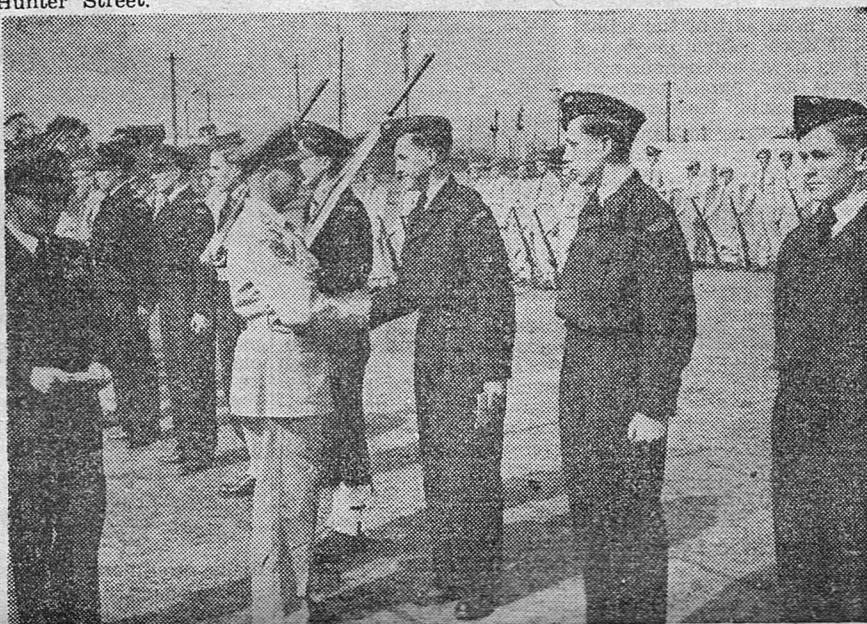
The World War I Memorial, constructed of marble, was brought from the old High School on the Hill and is now on a wall in the assembly hall. Stars indicate those who gave their lives, including Capt. Clarence S. Jeffries, V.C., who, at the age of 20, was killed at Passchendaele. The Honor Roll of World War II is a bronze plaque forming part of the Memorial Entrance to the school. It lists the names of 94 young men who were killed before they had much chance to become widely known in the professional, commercial and industrial world, although many showed great promise. At the end of 1915, a

ceremony was held at the High School when photographs of the first men from the school to fall in the 1914-18 war were unveiled. They were Lieut. T. Cadell, Lieut. F. G. Smith, Lance - Corporal Eric Mulvey and Corporal Pierce Morrisby. Commemorative trees have been planted at the school for the fallen of World War I, by Mrs. B. Jeffries, and the fallen of World War II, by Mr. T. Crossman. Girls' High played its part in the second World War and 54 ex-pupils are known to have joined various branches of the women's services as nursing sisters, A.A.M.W.S., W.R.A.A.F., Anti - Air-

craft, W.R.A.N.S., A.W.-L.A., and A.W.A.S. In addition, the school made liberal contributions to all war appeals. Groups of fourth and third-year girls accompanied a staff member every Thursday for kitchen service in the tiny R.A.A.F. canteen at the old Technical College in Hunter Street.



Newcastle Boys' High still has on its staff two members who served in World War I. They are careers adviser Mr. A. E. Denham and Mr. D. Davies.



The activities of Newcastle Boys' High School's Army Cadets and Air Force Training Cadets are a major feature of the life of the school. Passing-out parades at the end of the school year are very colorful and impressive ceremonies. This picture was taken at a recent passing-out.

P. And C s. Big Aid To Schools

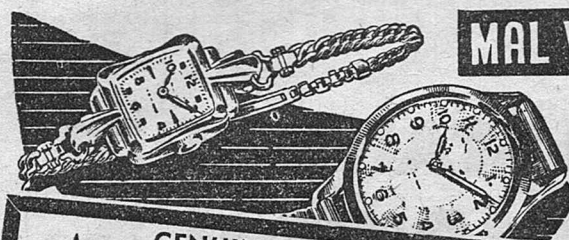
Enthusiastic parents and citizens' branches, attached to Boys' High and Girls' High, and assisted by women's auxiliaries, have spent many thousands of pounds on school amenities.

A High School P. and C. was not formed until 1927. When the girls moved to the new site in

1930 this association worked for both schools. At that stage its membership was only 39, but it spent £111 on the new Girls' High School in the first year of its existence.

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Mr. G. Owens, president, Girls' High P. and C.

In 1931 a separate P. and C. was formed for the Girls' High. In those days of the great depression, when schools no longer received books from the department, its first effort was to help establish a text-book hire system.

Over the years, both schools have been equipped by the P. and C. with pianos, amplifying systems, film projectors, tape recorders, typewriters, rub-



Mr. L. Warland, president, Boys' High P. and C.

ber flooring, renovation of stage furnishings and surfacing of tennis courts. The associations have helped with sporting equipment and expenses, as well as the text-book problem and have provided captain, dux and honor boards, erected flag poles and contributed annually and generously to the libraries and prize funds.

The Girls' High Auxiliary and the Bar Beach and Waratah Auxiliaries, attached to the Boys' High School, have also raised a considerable amount of money.



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