“Reading, Riting and Rithmetic”

Glebe, Forest Lodge, Leichhardt, Orange Grove, Five Dock Public Schools 1930-50’s

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Production: Esma Holmes, Terry Antonio, Reg and Harry Wagland, Hugh Walker, Robert Natoli, John Brown.

The primary purpose of the publication is to record the social history and heritage of some of Sydney's inner suburbs Public Schools during the 1930-50's.

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Struggles often create meaning and purpose,
the challenges involve attitude, choice and grit.

Acknowledgement

This publication *"Reading, Rriting and Rrithmetic"* was the result of the Ibrox Park Boys' High School Reunions for 1960-64 students. The *"Old boys"* were encouraged to bring along memorabilia: photographs, certificates, newspaper clippings and personal narratives for the production of the *"Ibrox Park BHS 1960-64 Year Book"*. Memorabilia also included Public School photographs from Glebe, Forest Lodge, Leichhardt and Orange Grove Primary Schools. These photos are a historical record of the 1930-50's and a keyhole view of what it was like to live in Sydney's inner suburbs. School life was not a *"bed of roses"*; it was *"hard living on clay-street".*[1] The benign memoirs in some of the references have recorded a one-sided rendition reflecting social standing rather than a representation of working class children.

The photographs express another reality - thanks to the children of those times:

> Esma Holmes (Dale); Glebe Primary School - Class 1B 1937, Class 2B 1938, Class VI 1943 and Forest Lodge Primary School – Class IV 1940, Class V 1941 and Class VI 1942.
> Floyd and Aileen Pickles; Glebe Primary School – Class V 1942.
> Terry Antonio; Forest Lodge Primary School - Transition Class 1953, Class 2A 1955 and Rugby League Team 1959.
> Reg and Harry Wagland; Leichhardt Primary School - Class 3A 1953 and Class 6A 1958.
> Hugh Walker; Leichhardt Primary School - Teachers 1950's, Class 4A 1957, Class 5A 1958.
> Bob Natoli; Orange Grove Primary School - Class 4M 1957.
> John Brown; Five Dock Primary School – Class 3A 1954.

A thoughtful look at the individuals in the photographs and the setting reveal some of the challenges they faced. Many children had it tough and survival was far more important than education. The disruption of the *"great depression"* and two world wars brought a lingering hardship that cannot be understated. The photographs include individuals with their own story - expressions, dress and postures reflect an image of their family life and for some, personal struggles. The boys with disheveled hair, bare feet and ragged clothes depict a difficult life *"making ends meet".* The girls with dour and withdrawn expressions, awkward pose and scrappy clothes tell of families struggling from *"week to week"*. The treasured porcelain dolls in one of the photographs are a reminder that toys were scarce and valued.

Class sizes were typically 40 plus students. It would have been just about impossible to teach a stringent curriculum to such large classes. A teacher's performance assessed at annual inspections was based on *"obedience to instruction*" principles, administered largely by caning. Uncontrolled student behaviour was a major failure for teachers. Balancing rigorous teaching and individual students would have involved teachers who taught outside the system risking admonishment and employment.

Despite educational drawbacks, many students thrived. For them, it was not just about education; it was their strength to "*never giving in"*. Parents said, "*You're not a genius… what makes you think you are better than anybody else."* Teachers would say, *"You will never amount to anything."* Demeaning comments meant to keep children in line. Some children became defiant, while others resolved, "*I am just as good as them"*, strengthened their attitude "W*ho do they think they are?"* and with determination to succeed "*I'll show them*"…and they did, through persistence and their grittiness.

People respond with different motivations and resilience when faced with tough times.[2] Resilience is a personal matter - a mixture of genetic and a range of environmental influences. We try to place ourselves in other peoples' shoes but we do not really understand how they cope with family and personal struggles. For me, resilience comes down to attitude, choice and grit.

TCR

[1] RYAN, Terrence. 2011. *"Ibrox dreaming… A Leichhardt Boy"*
[2] GOSS, Richard. 2010. *"Psychology – The Science of Mind and Behaviour"*. Page 790.

Foreword

Looking back to the 1930-50's we recall how Public Schools struggled with education. It was the determined few who exceeded academic expectations. Most were headed to manual and domestic work. Despite the guiding principles *"without sectarian or class distinction"* of the 1880 Public Instruction Act [1] Public Schools and the inner suburbs of Sydney were stigmatized [2] by an entrenched class system that favoured private education and employment. The same challenges exist today. David Gonski, who recently reviewed school funding for the Australian Federal Government, found class distinctions exist within what he describes as *"haves and have-nots education.*"

> *"When I went out to have a look at so many schools what upset me was not everybody got the same opportunities and that's why we embraced very early on in my review the concept that where you are born, what's available to you... should not designate what education you're going to get."* [3]

As in the past, the school/s-funding inequality continues to haunt New South Wales Education. Private Schools have become bloated with opulent facilities: aquatic centres, sporting facilities, teaching terraces and vertical connection pods while Public Schools are struggling with basic accommodation, good teachers and learning resources. It would seem the class system of the past is alive and well in the 21st century.

We think it is OK to be penalized with indifferent learning and being poor is the fault of those who are not prepared to work hard - it is claimed it has nothing to do with where you are born, family circumstances or the school you attend. It is a pretentious claim based on a notion of a *"level playing field"* and a justification for the status quo. And believe it is alright to provide funds for *"Hallowed Halls"* with ostentatious structures imitating ivy-league universities and ignoring the basic needs of Public Schools. A comparison with the Public School's facilities makes us cringe with pathetic excuses. The gap between the *"haves and have not's"* schools is wider now than ever before.

The state of the nation's education system is a bit like Sydney's 2018 traffic. It has reached a stage where the road system no longer works during congested times and we pretend everything is OK – we just need more roads without understanding the big picture. The privilege few contend with the traffic congestion by living close to employment and selective education and for the not-so-privileged living in Sydney's outskirts deal with concessional tidbits for excessive work travel times and not-so-selective education.[4]

What is needed is to stand outside the existing Schools-funding debacle and introduce a funding rationale that no longer reflects outdated class systems and addresses the education required by Australia's children is fair *"without sectarian or class distinction"* regardless of *"where you are born."*

TCR.

[1] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009. *"Glebe Public School"*. City of Sydney
[2] SOLLING, Max. 2007. *"Grandeur & Grit: a history of Glebe.", page 252 – Brian Stanwell recalled felt they belonged to the 'other side', and their parents lived with pain of class stigma".*
[3] GONSKI, David. 2013. *"Join the Dots for a Picture of Disadvantage."* The Sydney Morning Herald, March 16-17, Sydney, Australia.
[4] GONSKI, David. 2013.

Contents

Public Schools - Early Days

In the early days of New South Wales (NSW) most children did not receive any schooling. Limited education was provided by some churches. In 1848, the NSW Governor Fitzroy established a Board of National Education based on the Irish National System. A denominational School Board managed government funds for church schools. The dual system was later abolished by the Public Schools Act 1866 that established the Council of Education to manage denominational and national schools.

The Public Instruction Act 1880 established NSW government with the full responsibility for Primary education based on a principle of *"without sectarian or class distinction".*[1] The *"Department of Public Instruction"* inherited a mix of denominational, public and church schools held in halls and homes.

Schools reflected social values that emphasised discipline and order. Caning was a daily ritual for even trivial matters; not standing up straight; talking; homework not done; spelling mistakes; not listening and not lining up properly were treated as matters deserving up to *"six cuts of the cane"*. The cane was a master of fear resting on a mantelpiece above a coke fireplace; it ruled the class and often named; it became a member of the class.

"If nobody owns up... the class gets it."
"Keep quiet… Mr. Cane is watching!"

However, Mr. Cane's frequent use diminished its fearfulness; it became an accepted way of school life. For many students, getting the cane was part of their daily education; it was a way to revere their toughness and for others to show their reddened hands as badges of courage.

"Frankie got six...Wow!"

Reading, writing, arithmetic and treeless playgrounds were part of school life. School uniforms were more a hope than a reality - tunics, long socks, shirts and ties were mixed with students wearing *"street clothes"*. Some students were barefoot. Students appearance in class photos told many stories, particularly struggles with unspoken family hardships.

"Can anyone give Frankie a sandwich for lunch?"
"Frankie where are your shoes?"
"I dunno."

Education was impeded by life's struggles and the need to survive as a family. Students involved with challenging circumstances were labelled as *"un-teachable"* and *"non-academic"* and suitable for *"manual work"*. The plight of these students meant limited education and manual work. They were largely unprepared for life's journey.

"Work was a job… it wasn't a career."

"*Getting a job*" became the reason for education; boys learnt trade skills; girls *"domestic science".* Most students left school aged fourteen with the hope of finding work barely able to read, write or understand arithmetic. Years of struggles left their marks and some were scarred for life. Their moment of glory left behind in the schoolyard or sporting field. Some students were taught humility in the face of despair while others developed positive attitudes to move forward.[2]

Students who attended Glebe, Leichhardt, Forest Lodge and Orange Grove Public Schools share common memories. Some have discovered they lived in the same street, same class or attended the same event.[3]

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[1] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009. *"Glebe Public School"*. City of Sydney; The Glebe Society; Glebe Public School. Sydney, Australia. ISBN 978-0-646-52313-2
[2] GOSS, Richard. 2010. *"Psychology – The Science of Mind and Behaviour".* Freewill verses determinism. Pages 792-800.
[3] Students include Esma Holmes (nee Dale), Terry Ryan, Terry Antonio, Reg Wagland, Hugh Walker, Robert Natoli and Brian Stanwell. See ACKNOWLEDGEMENT for details.

The history and culture of these schools are almost identical:

> Poverty was widespread evident by the number of organisations providing relief, clothing and food. The lack of uniforms and manner of dress in the 1930-50's class photographs depict a mixture of social circumstances and degrees of hardship.
>
> The impact of two world wars and *"the great depression"* were particularly hard for widows, single mothers, siblings and children. The stoic nature of these people was a way of coping with loss and perhaps for some, a way of showing others they were managing. In reality, the mood of this time lingered across generations for decades. Those who returned home from war were expected to get on with life and *"get a job"*.
>
> Common events such as the Coronation and subsequent visit of Queen Elizabeth (1953) saw students attend Parramatta Road or Broadway to wave as the Queen passed by in an open car. It was a grand affair - flags waved, children cheered, streamers flown as the Queen waved at the mesmerised crowd. In 30 seconds it was all over. The students had performed their patriotic duty in the hot Australian sun and were happy they saw the Queen.
>
> *"It was so hot I nearly fainted...we didn't wear hats or have water in those days"* [4]
>
> Annual rituals included Empire Day (Cracker Night), Wattle Day, May Day and ANZAC Day. Schools flew the Union Jack, marched around playgrounds in their *"Houses"* and singing patriotic songs (*"Rule Britannia, Australians All"*) at special assemblies to mark occasions.
>
> *"Cracker Night – the best time of all".*
>
> All students were educated using *"rote learning"* techniques for arithmetic, particularly the *"times tables"*. Despite the criticisms of rote learning, students learnt how to mentally calculate and were generally good at mental arithmetic. In hindsight, it seems numeracy and literacy was better taught in those times compared to present day standards.
>
> Excursions outside the classroom were few. Most students attended the Annual Swimming Carnivals at the Elkington Baths (*"Balmain Pool"*), Drummoyne Baths, Domain Baths and North Sydney Olympic Pool and in later years, Victoria Park and Leichhardt Swimming Centre.
>
> Sports were played at various local parks that included Cricket, Women's Basketball now known as Netball[5], Men's Basketball, Football (Rugby League, Rugby Union, Soccer), Athletics, Tennis, Softball, Rounders, Tunnel Ball, T-Ball, Vigaro and Captain Ball.
>
> Playground games ranged from skipping, hopscotch, marbles, cigarette cards (made from folded cigarette packages into flat cards that were flung against a wall – the closest won), marbles, knuckles (knuckle bones from the butcher dyed with food colouring). Games included *"Simon says", "What's the time Mr Wolf"*, Statues, Cocky Laura, Elastics, Yo-yo's and Chasings.

Most female teachers in the 1930's were older women mainly due to the *"Great Depression"* and two world wars. As a result, limited employment for teachers was available and male teachers were preferred. The 1920's NSW government policy stipulated that *"A women could not be made permanent if she was married or over 40 years old".*[6] Many women were dismissed from employment. The policy partly explains why so many public schools had so many male teachers. Other reasons included social attitudes towards males being the *"breadwinners"* and females being the *"home-makers"*.

In one case, a deserted married woman was refused permanent employment in a public school. In 1934, the NSW government was challenged by the Teachers' Federation to provide equal

[4] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009, page 27.
[5] Women's Basketball: In 1901, the first rules for 'Netball' was published in England.
In 1970, Australia and New Zealand changed the name to 'Netball'.
[6] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009, *p*age 42.

employment. The challenge was refused on grounds that *"1,100 student teachers need work and there are 294 on the waiting list ... and the Married Women Act could not be repealed"*.[7]

Most students have fond memories of their teachers. Although there are some who carry old grudges. Good memories include *"being treated with respect"* and encouraged *"to do their best"*. In many ways, these teachers were more like role models, even though some were not much older than the students.

Prior to 1906, most teachers were young and untrained. Most started their career as a *"Pupil Teacher"*. Pupil Teachers were engaged at the minimum age of 13 and articled to a qualified teacher for 4 years. It is hard to imagine a 13-year-old teacher in a class of 40-50-60 students and maintaining control. No wonder many young teachers dropped out because of stress, low pay and travelling between schools.

The 1913 Public Inspection Report, *"Medical and Sanitary Inspection"* of the Glebe Girls' Department where class sizes ranged from 48 to 79, stated:

> *"Sanitary arrangements and water for drinking and lavatories were sufficient, the playground was small and without shade and the light in class rooms very bad and remains unchanged since previous reports"*.[8]

It was found that 102 student were examined: 32 had bad eyesight; 14 bad hearing; 16 disease of the throat; 9 had teeth problems. Subsequent inspections revealed that the natural class room lighting was from the wrong direction (presumably a southern aspect); drainpipes choked; ventilation poor and the "*boys' urinal was a mere groove in the cement floor"*.[9]

It would be reasonable to assume the state of repair for Leichhardt, Forest Lodge and Orange Grove Public Schools faced similar problems.

Assemblies were out in the hot blistering sun with *"tar bubbling under your feet"*. In 1922, milk vendors started delivering daily milk to Sydney's poorer schools. The milk was not refrigerated and left in all sorts of places, notably in the sun. Morning recess was a race to find milk that had not *"gone off"*. Students remember with the same grimace when they drunk unpalatable milk.

> *"I haven't been able to drink milk since."*

The 1930-50's social history is revealing compared to contemporary education and practices:

> *Individualism verses collective education:* individual diversity cannot be addressed by a collection of people defined by class, culture or religion. The studies from this time claim that children from poor families where parents are uneducated have lower intelligence than those from upper/middle class families would have influenced teaching practices in Public Schools. Despite these practices, many students with poor families thrived not through the level of education but by their determination. Modern-day studies now credit work ethic and resilience as more important for achievement than intelligence alone.
>
> > *"Our potential is one thing, what we do with it is quite another"*.[10]
>
> *Collective learning and rote learning:* Repetitive learning for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) require a conditioning of the brain that depends on repeated interactions and explorations; it is a process described as strengthening neural connectors between various parts of the brain. It has been found that repeated experiences are a core activity for brain functioning and learning.[11] The extent of repetition is different for each person - some require limited repetition, others need a greater degree.

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[7] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn, page 42.
[8] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn, pages11,12.
[9] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn, page 13.
[10] DUCKWORTH, Angela. 2017. *"Grit – Why passion and resilience are the secrets to success"*. Pages 14-17
[11] WUNDERLICH, Ray C. 1970. *"Kids, Brains and Learning."*

Class sizes 40-50-70 students compared to classes of 20-30 students: Large class sizes reflect institutional requirements (shortage of accommodation) rather than individual students' needs. Clearly, small class sizes are more effective for learning. It has been found that learning involves changed behaviour linked to socio-environmental factors, a genuine understanding of students' needs and a real connection between teacher and student. A student's choice to learn is influenced by student-teacher interaction, circumstances, resources and individual capability.

> *"Learning is developed through changed behaviour linked to socio-environmental factors".*[12]

Educational curriculum verses insight and knowledge: The task of teaching is based on insight and knowledge; it is not about a dogmatic adherence to a curriculum – it is a *"living interplay"* between teachers and students.

Knowing Your Place

"Knowing your place" influenced values and shaped attitudes towards education and employment. To aspire to the hierarchical middle/upper classes of Sydney was beyond most students' dreams. Acceptance of *"place in life"* was an inherited value. Feelings of self-worth were linked to their place of belonging and associated laden-valued rules; it was part of being accepted into uncompromising communities. *"Knowing your place"* was continually reinforced by educational policies that limited educational opportunities and employment within an implicit class structure.

To find a job with limited education and a working class mindset, determined life's opportunities.

> *"Gotta spare bob, mate?"* was an often heard by-line for some who were between jobs or a way to avoid being seen as *"down and out"* or *"desperate for a beer"*. After all, if a *"shilling"* was spare, it wasn't needed.
>
> *"Haven't got a bob will a zac do?* It was all an illusion; behind the shaggy face, bleary eyes and ragged clothes told another story; a story about a spent man returned from war to find civilian life had its own challenges.
>
> *"Dishing out"* a sixpence was hardly enough for a *"digger"* but *"it would do"*.

The *"down-and-outers"* had learnt to accept what life had *"dished-up"*. As young men they rushed off to wars with a sense of patriotic duty without really understanding what they were heading into and how it would impact their lives. For those who returned home, they received great fanfare. However, the glory of a returned service person was short-lived. Adjusting to *"civilian life"* was an understated challenge. There was little if any support and they were simply told to *"get a job", "get on with life"* and *"leave the past in the past"*. For many, they were not prepared for the next stage of life's journey - providing for a family and working in successful employment.

Looking back, the 1930-50's students accepted what education had *"dished-up".* The guiding principles *"without sectarian or class distinction"* of the 1880 Public Instruction Act [13] were not entirely achieved. Teaching practices, corporal punishment, extremely large class sizes and low-grade facilities reflected entrenched values towards Sydney's working class.

For many, dreams were limited and ambitions directed towards manual work. Aspirations for professional careers requiring tertiary education[14] was determined by family support, social network and underlying societal expectations, described at the time as *"knowing your place"* [15]

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[12] WUNDERLICH, Ray C. 1970. *"Learning is an active process produced by voluntary participation of the child in interaction with objects and people. Children learn for a variety of reasons: seeking a reward, fulfilling an inherent love of learning, searching for stimulation. Learning occurs when a child is free of conflict."*

[13] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009. *"Glebe Public School"*. City of Sydney

[14] RYAN, Terrence. 2011. *"Ibrox dreaming… A Leichhardt Boy"- tertiary intake estimated to be 1-2% of the initial intake of students.*

[15] RYAN, Terrence. 2011.

Glebe Public School

In the 1850's, Glebe was on the outskirts of Sydney; heavily timbered with a dirt track used by drays. Wentworth Park was a swamp and Jubilee Park a mangrove flat. In 1858, the Glebe Public School opened its doors in Francis Street with two students. Until 1862, the school was known as *"Bishopgate"* a likely association with a local church.

Along with the Glebe Public School there was also the Glebe *"Raggard School"*. *"Ragged Schools"* were a feature of Sydney's crowded inner-city suburbs during 1860-1920's.[1] The first Ragged School opened in Sussex Street in 1860 and by 1910 the privately-run philanthropic Schools were located at Millers Point, Glebe, Surry Hills and Woolloomooloo with a mission to *"improve social welfare and public education".* Over its sixty years of their operation, about 18,000 children attended Sydney's *"Ragged Schools"*. By the mid-1920's, *"Ragged Schools"* were regarded as obsolete.

The *"Glebe Ragged School"* in Bay Street provided clothing, food and moral instruction from 1862. There were no fees or charges. Its mission involved providing care for families *"suffering from unemployment, illness, desertion and drunkenness from the pubs on nearly every corner"*. Even when education was free and compulsory, the *"Glebe Ragged School"* continued to care for *"neglected, dirty and unshod children"*.[2]

The Glebe National School started in 1862 along with schools at Balmain (opened in a tent), Petersham (renamed in 1874 as Leichhardt), Cleveland Street and Fort Street. At this time, there was no New South Wales Department of Education and no compulsory schooling.

Like many inner Sydney Primary Schools, enrolments steadily increased in line with employment opportunities. At the time, it was thought about 15% of enrolled students stayed at home – absenteeism was a problem for all public schools. In 1880, the Glebe School had 622 students and turning infants away as there was limited accommodation. The job's growth in Sydney's inner suburbs attracted workers and families to the area. To cope with the *"overflow of students"* at the Glebe School the Forest Lodge School was built in 1883.

The education curriculum focussed mainly on the basic skills for reading, writing and arithmetic. Grammar, geography, drawing and singing were also taught. The starting age for students was five – although there were many exceptions as children aged three started school.

The education curriculum, practices and references included:

> *Reading: The Irish Board of National Education's First Book.*
> *Writing: Using ruled slates starting with the letters i u n m o a c e v w r.*
> *Arithmetic: Starting with counting, writing and adding numbers up to 12*.[3]

The Teachers were required to pass examinations based on Thomas Morell's works on grammar, Davidson's *"Practical Perspective"* for drawing and Prankhurst's *"The Stepping Stone to Music"* for singing.

> "*School holidays involved three weeks at Christmas, two weeks mid-winter, the anniversary of the colony (26 January), Queen Victoria's Birthday/ Empire Day (24 May – cracker night), Good Friday and Easter Monday."*[4]

Apart from absenteeism, training and maintaining good teachers were a challenge. Discipline was a perennial part of school life - it was the fabric that held the school together probably due to the very large class sizes, limited teachers and *"militaristic bearing of the times"*. Corporal punishment was rife with frequent use of caning mainly for boys. Those teachers who did not carry a cane were the target for uncontrolled behaviour and disruption. An Inspector during an annual visit to the school claimed that school discipline was unsatisfactory – a blight on the headmaster's record and a lasting admonishment on the teacher for not carrying a cane.

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[1] HENRICH, Eureka. 2013. *"Ragged Schools in Sydney."*
[2] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009. *"Glebe Public – The Story of a School"*.
[3] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009, page 9
[4] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009, page 9

> *"The government is mild to a fault, and fails to affect prompt and thorough obedience and attention to instruction... careful, but superficial instruction produced poor results in grammar, geography and arithmetic... class assessments ranged from tolerable to fair".*[5]

In the early days of the Glebe School, discipline and *"obedience to instruction"* provided the teaching ethos. Corporal punishment was a universal solution for order and control. Students' needs were not considered and hardly acknowledged. Teaching was limited to a set curriculum and restrictive educational practices were designed for a collective education and ultimately controlling students.

Education was more about students fitting into a rigid system rather than individual learning. Balancing systemic processes and individual needs were left to enterprising teachers who taught outside the system risking admonishment and demotion. Teaching students with learning difficulties or disability was not part of the system. These students languished in lower classes involved with limited teaching and manual duties such as gardening and rubbish collection. Teaching troubled students and conforming to a curriculum created challenging dilemmas for many teachers still evident in today's public schools.

In 1947 there were about 20,510 people living in Glebe many with large families raised in rented terrace houses. However, with the decline of factories and service industries in the 1950s, the opportunity for employment also decreased leading to dramatic changes of Sydney's inner suburbs. In 1945/46, Sydney was heavily industrialised that depended on the working class. Glebe factories employed 4,496 people. [6]

> *"Life was hard, but we knew no better way. We accepted things as they were; we were loyal to our school, our parish, our country, the Balmain football team and the Labor Party."* [7]

Students at Glebe Primary School fell from 1,311 in 1937 to 700 in 1958.[8]

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The 1930-40's Glebe School teachers included: Miss Arthur (Fourth and Fifth Classes), Miss Cavanaugh (Six Class), Mrs Clarke (First Year), Miss Dyer (Second year), Mrs McClaren (Headmistress), Mrs Meeney (Headmistress), Miss Shaw (Sports, Second Year), Miss Shirley (Headmistress) and Miss Stone (Six Class).[9]

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[5] COLLINGWOOD, Lyn. 2009, page 9.
[6] SOLLING, Max. 2007. *"Grandeur & Grit: a history of Glebe.",* page 247.
[7] SOLLING, Max. 2007. *"Grandeur & Grit: a history of Glebe.",* page 247.
[8] WALKER, Glenn - Principal, Glebe Primary School. 1997. Page 12
[9] Esma Holmes (Dale). 2018. *"Recollection"*.

157. Glebe Primary School
Class 1 B, 1937, Infants' Entrance
4th Row: Ronnie (10R)
2nd Row: Jessie McDonald (3R), Esma Dale (4R), Margret Laycock (6R)

Source: Esma Holmes (Dale)

158. Glebe Primary School
Class 2B, 1938
3rd Row: Ronnie (5R)
1st Row: Shirley Cahill (1R), Margaret Laycock (3R), Esma Dale (4R), Marjorie Read (5R), Daphne Warby (6R), Maxine Sewell (7R)

Source: Esma Holmes (Dale)

159. Glebe Primary School
Class V (5), 1942
1st Row: Esma Dale (1R)

Source: Floyd and Aileen Pickles

160. Glebe Primary School
Class VI (6), 1943
4th Row: Shirley Walton (1R), Margaret Laycock (2R), Shirley Jones (3R)
3rd Row: Shirley Shore (2R), Joan Spears (3R), Ingar Pearson (4R), Patti Best (5R), Marjorie Renoff (6R), Beryl Marshall (7R), Jean Costin (10R), Aileen McNamara (11R)
2nd Row: Brenda (4R), Esma Dale (9R), Daphne Warby (10R), Ruth Byrne (12R)
1st Row: Noeline Fazio (1R), Laurel Stone (4R), Florence Graham (5R), Maxine Sewell (6R), Patti Woolferdem (7R)

Source: Esma Holmes (Dale)

Forest Lodge Public School

The suburb Forest Lodge took its name after an estate and house name built in 1836 by Ambrose Foss (1803-62). Foss was a Chemist, Grocer and Dentist in colonial Sydney. Foss was also an Alderman and a Church Deacon in the N.S.W Congregational Church, which he co-founded.

The Forest Lodge estate was originally a Crown Grant made to Ambrose Foss. The estate had an area of *"thirty-one acres, two roods and fifteen perches"* granted by Sir George Gipps, 8 March, 1840. Foss' home was named after the surrounding "*great trees".* A real estate advertisement in 1848 described his home as a *"delightful residence at the Glebe…consisting of seven rooms, pantry, storeroom, kitchen, coach-house, stable and other detached offices."*

The original meaning of Glebe was *"land owned by the church"*. The suburb of Glebe was referred to as *"The Glebe"* until the early 20th century. In 1846, Forest Lodge was owned by the naturalist and surgeon Dr. George Bennett until 1865. The land was purchased by the department store founder David Jones. The original house on the land demolished in 1912.

Forest Lodge School was established in 1883. The old sandstone entrance to the school in Bridge Road is known as the *"Girls' School Gate".* The gate entrance is part of the school's history and retained for its heritage value and a reminder of a time when the school had three departments: Boys Primary, Girls Primary and Infants. When the school was first opened, it was a Boys Primary and Infants School. In 1885, enrollments were over 400 students and there was a need for a Girls Primary School.

In 1886, a large schoolroom (19.5m x 7.5m) was built to accommodate the Girls' School. The schoolroom seated 200 girls and during this time the *"Girls' School Gate"* was built. The Boys and Infants entrance was located in Ross Street. The boys could also enter the school through the gate in Charles Street. With the addition of the Girls' School enrolments increased to over 1000 students.

Like many other Public Schools in the area, there was a high rate of truancy, classrooms could not accommodate the large number of students, *"Lessons were held in hat-rooms, weather-sheds, corridors and outdoors"*. In 1913, extensions for 19 classrooms for a *"manageable"* average class size of 50 students were built.

School discipline involved austere rules based on *"obedience to instruction"* principles. Strap and cane used to control classes. Annual inspections of the school focused on a teacher's ability to manage classes up to 50 students and expected to carry a cane as a visible reminder to those students who *"stepped out of line"*.

A Forest Lodge 1941 *"punishment book"* kept a record of the students who were caned for a misdemeanor and how many *"strokes of the cane"* were administered. Students were caned for swearing, stealing, cheating, truancy and hitting. The *"punishment book"* recorded particulars such as *"belting a girl with a thong"*, *"rubbing chewing gum into boy's hair", "spitting water through window into classroom", "letting off crackers", "playing two-up" and "misusing fire extinguisher"*. Boys were the usual culprits and girls occasionally caned.

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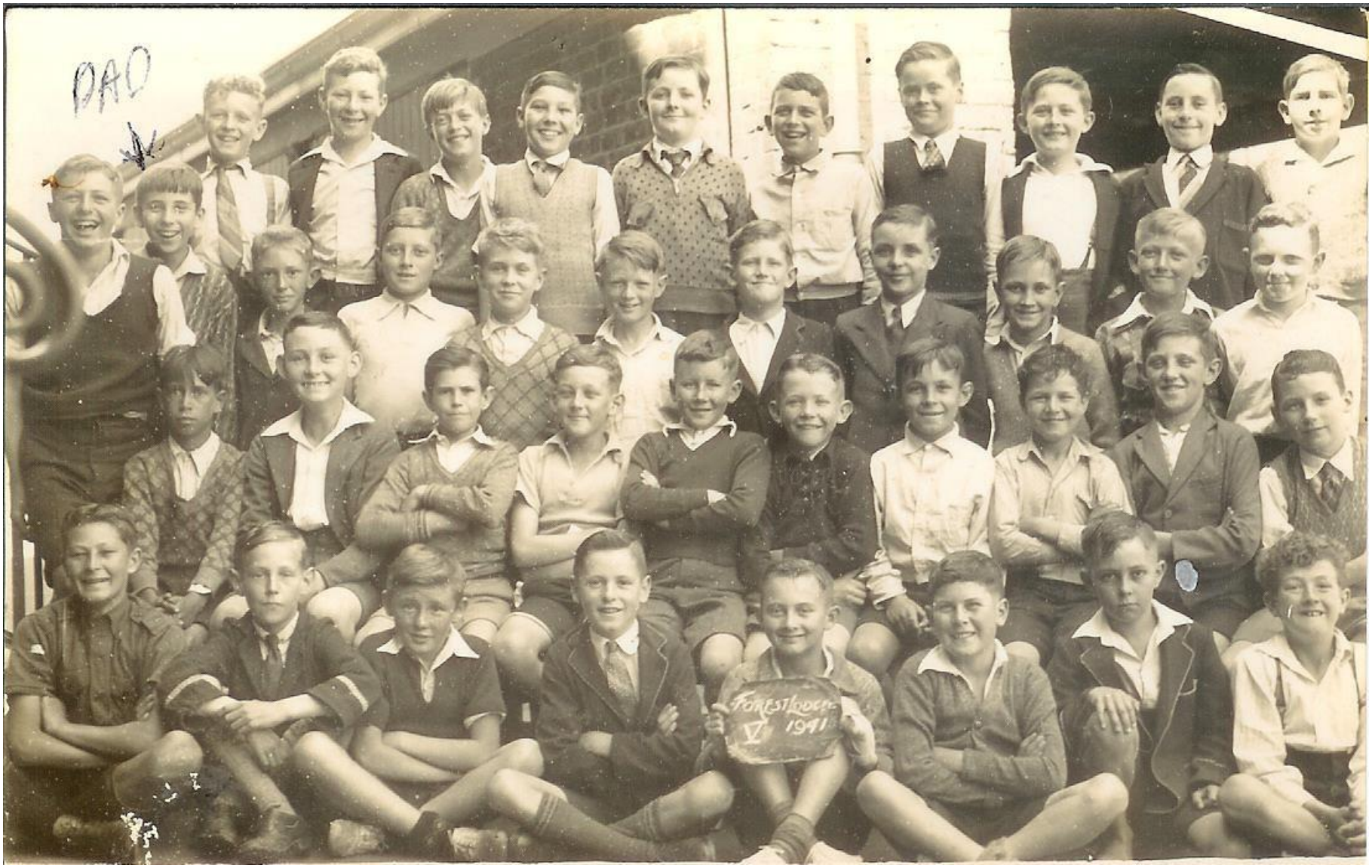
161. Forest Lodge Primary School
Fourth Class, c.1940
2nd Row: Eric Holmes (11R)

Source: Esma Holmes (Dale)



162. Forest Lodge Primary School
Fifth Class, 1941
3rd Row: Eric Holmes (2R)

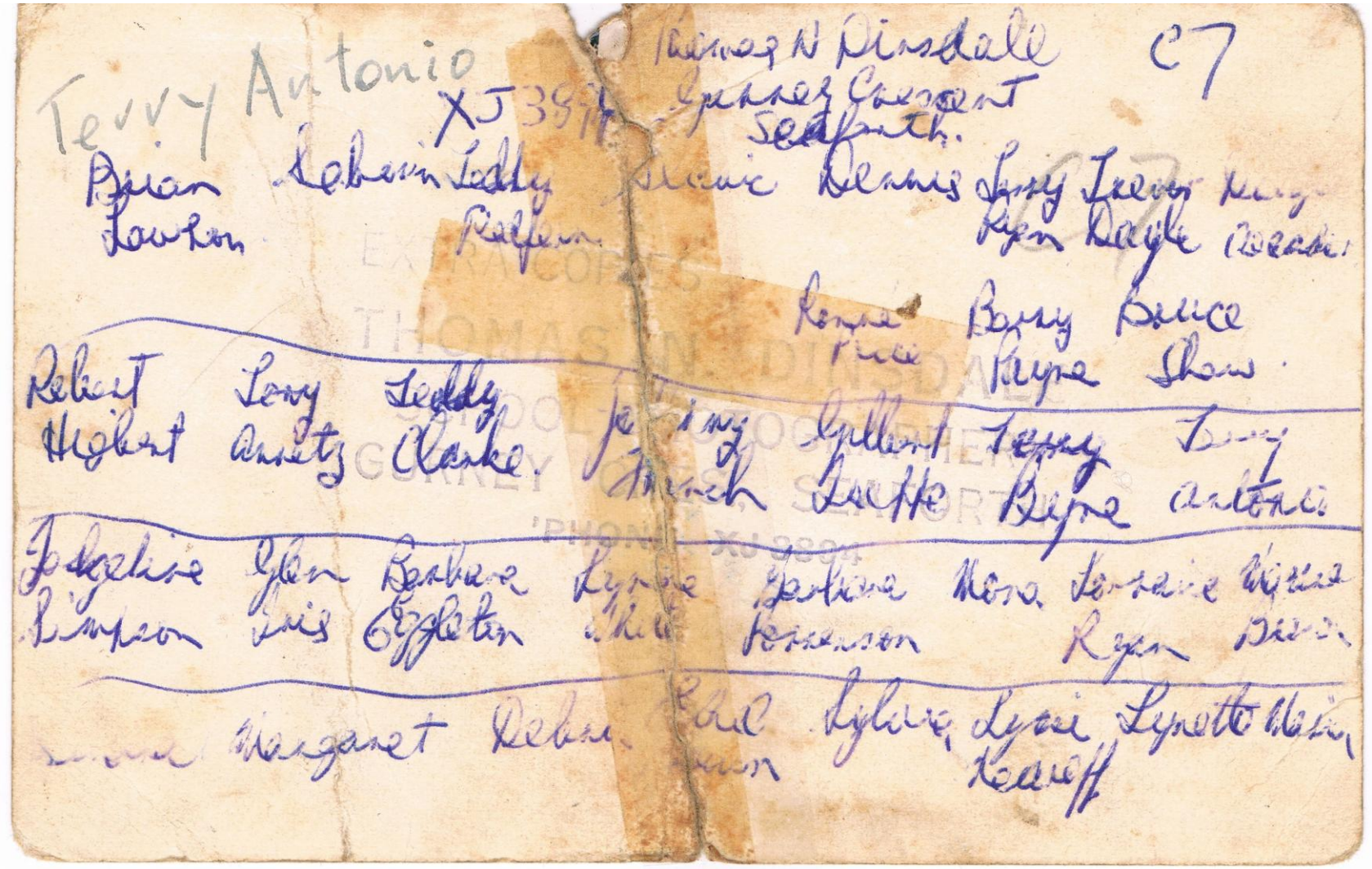
Source: Esma Holmes (Dale)

163. Forest Lodge Primary School
Sixth Class, 1942
2nd Row: Eric Holmes (9R)

Source: Esma Holmes (Dale)

164. Forest Lodge Primary School
Transition Class,1953
3rd Row: Terry Antonio (1R), 4th Row: Terry Ryan (6R)
Further names see next image

Source: Terry Antonio



165. Forest Lodge Primary School
Transition Class,1953
Student Names (L to R)

Source: Terry Antonio

166. Forest Lodge Primary School
Class 2A,1955
2nd Row: Terry Antonio (5R)

Source: Terry Antonio

167. Forest Lodge Primary School
Rugby League Premiers, 1959
2nd Row: Terry Antonio (5R)

Source: Terry Antonio

Leichhardt Public School

The history of Leichhardt Public School started from the early days of the New South Wales colony. In 1794, a Crown Land Grant of 100 acres, north of Parramatta Road that included Balmain Road, was granted to J. T. Prentice. A second Crown Land Grant of 30 acres was granted to Thomas Biggers. This Grant was north of the Prentice Estate that would eventually include the future Ibrox Park B.H.S site. Further Crown Land Grants were granted in subsequent years.

The subdivision of the large estates commenced in 1841. The following auction notice appeared in *"The Sydney Morning Herald"* on 14 March 1842.

> ***By Auction***
> ***The Piperston Grant, Petersham***
>
> *... forty one choice suburban allotments, surveyed in quantities varying from two to six acres, arranged to meet the wishes and means of every class of purchaser.*
> *Mr. Stubbs announces the honour of being instructed by the proprietor to sell by public auction, this day, the 14th March 1842. At the Mart, King Street Sale at Twelve. All the important and valuable property as surveyed by Mr. Knapp, situate between Elswick, the estate of James Norton, Esq., westerly; Robert Johnston, Esq., of Annandale on the east and bounded northerly by those of S. A. Perry and Ryan Brenan, Esqs., and Lloyd's grant; south-east by the properties of Titterton...*[1]

The subdivision plan of the Piperston Estate included the future site of Ibrox Park B.H.S., which was part of the *"Bagshot Park"* to be later resumed by the Western Suburbs Electric Railway. Mr. Walter Beames bought almost the whole Estate, a Sydney merchant, who named his purchase Leichhardt presumably after his friend Dr. Ludwig Leichhardt, the ill-fated explorer.

It is interesting to note that the site for the Leichhardt Public School in 1862 was initially part of the large estates, elaborate English styled homes and rough tracks leading from Parramatta Road into mostly uncleared bush land. Nobody knew or perhaps the grantees knew otherwise, that Leichhardt would develop into a densely populated suburb with thousands of factories providing employment for the working-class of Sydney.

Leichhardt Public School was first known as the National School of Petersham in 1862, presumably named after the Parish of Petersham in the County of Cumberland. The school was located on Balmain Road about 200 *"yards"* from Parramatta Road near the Norton estate. The initial enrolment involved 29 boys and 27 girls who were accommodated in an eighteen by thirty feet class room.

With the increasing number of students, a new building was opened in 1869. The site was part of the Elswick Estate situated on the corner of Norton and Marion Streets.

In 1874, the name of school changed to Leichhardt Public School. However, with the growing settlement in Leichhardt, the number of students increased and further classrooms were required.

Year	Enrolments
1872	99
1877	195
1880	345
1882	635
1885	1,112

[1] TULLY, R.M. 1969. *"The Ibroxian – Ibrox Park Boys' High School 1960-69",* page 8.

During the 1880's the school comprised three distinct departments: Infants, Boys Primary and Girls Primary. Leichhardt Public School was managed as a three departmental school. In 1885, the school became a *"Superior Public School"* – a Public School with post-primary classes.

Leichhardt Public School Site, 1880's

Source: Leichhardt Municipal Map, 1880's

A brick two-storey extension was built in 1898 to cater for the growing number of students. However, enrolments continued to increase resulting in the need for further accommodation at the Church of England Hall, Presbyterian Hall and Petersham Public School. In 1952, there were about 2,000 students enrolled at the school.

During the 1950's, another school site was required. There were two likely sites: near the Parramatta River (now Leichhardt Olympic Pool) and another used as a soccer field adjacent to Balmain Cemetery (now Pioneers Memorial Park). The second site was chosen as it was close to transport and held a central position. It became the new location of the Junior Technical School and named Ibrox Park Boys' High School.

School excursions were rare.

> *"In 1959 the 6th Class students climbed into a double-decker bus bound for the newly constructed Warragamba Dam. It was a wet cloudy day and it was their first excursion. To say they were excited was an understatement. Warragamba Dam was big news and to be a part of that was thrilling.*
>
> *Despite the dire warnings from teachers to behave during the trip, many students were uncontrollable. The thrill of travelling through unknown territory, gawking at people and*

places, the rumbling and jerking of the bus along busy roads and the expectation of visiting the Dam was all too much for most students – they were beside themselves.

All the way to Warragamba, teachers yelled and threatened the students until they were hoarse; it was an impossible situation to think they could manage the unmanageable. As some sort of recompense for all their threats and re-establishing authority it was declared on arrival at the Dam viewing site that students seated downstairs on one side would stay in their seats as a form of punishment for misbehaving.

After all that travelling from Leichhardt, the students meekly accepted their fate. In spite of the rain and the long trip, students peered through the fogged up bus windows for a glimpse of the Dam. For them, their one and only school excursion came down to going on a bus ride on a rainy day." [2]

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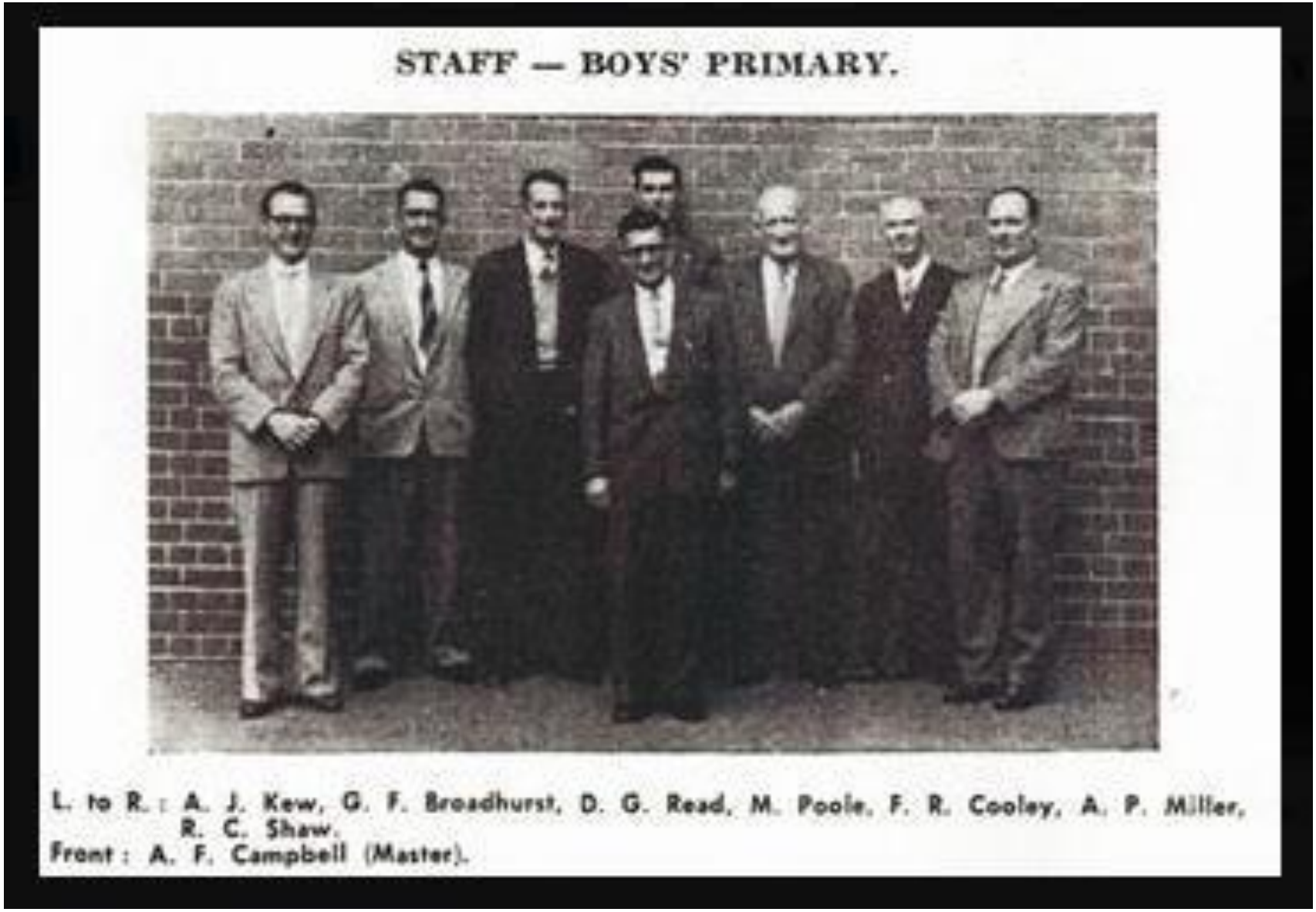
[2] RYAN, Terry. 2018.



168. Leichhardt Primary School
Teachers, 1950's

Source: Hugh Walker

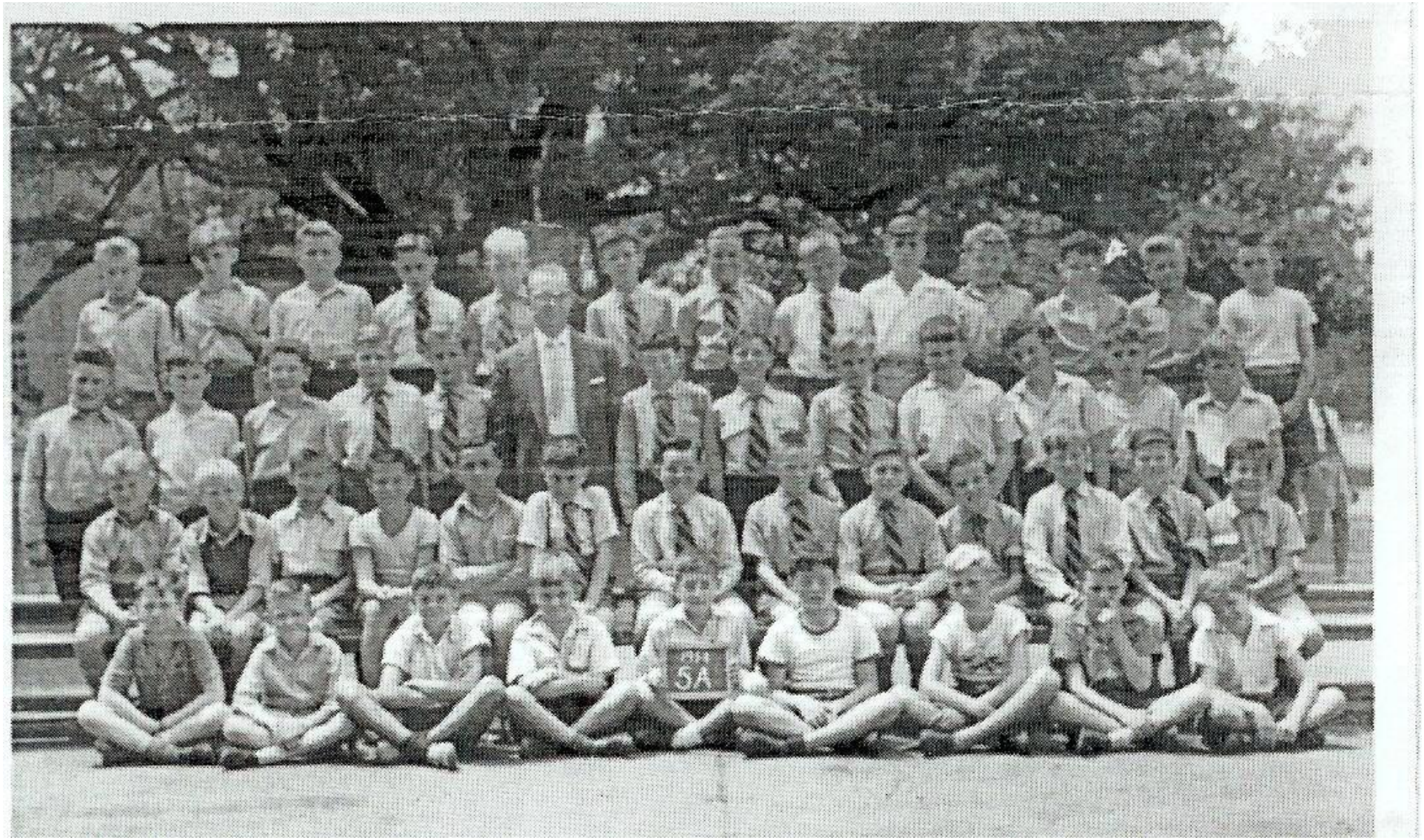
169. Leichhardt Primary School
Class 3A, 1953

3rd Row: Reg Wagland (8L)

Source: Reg Wagland

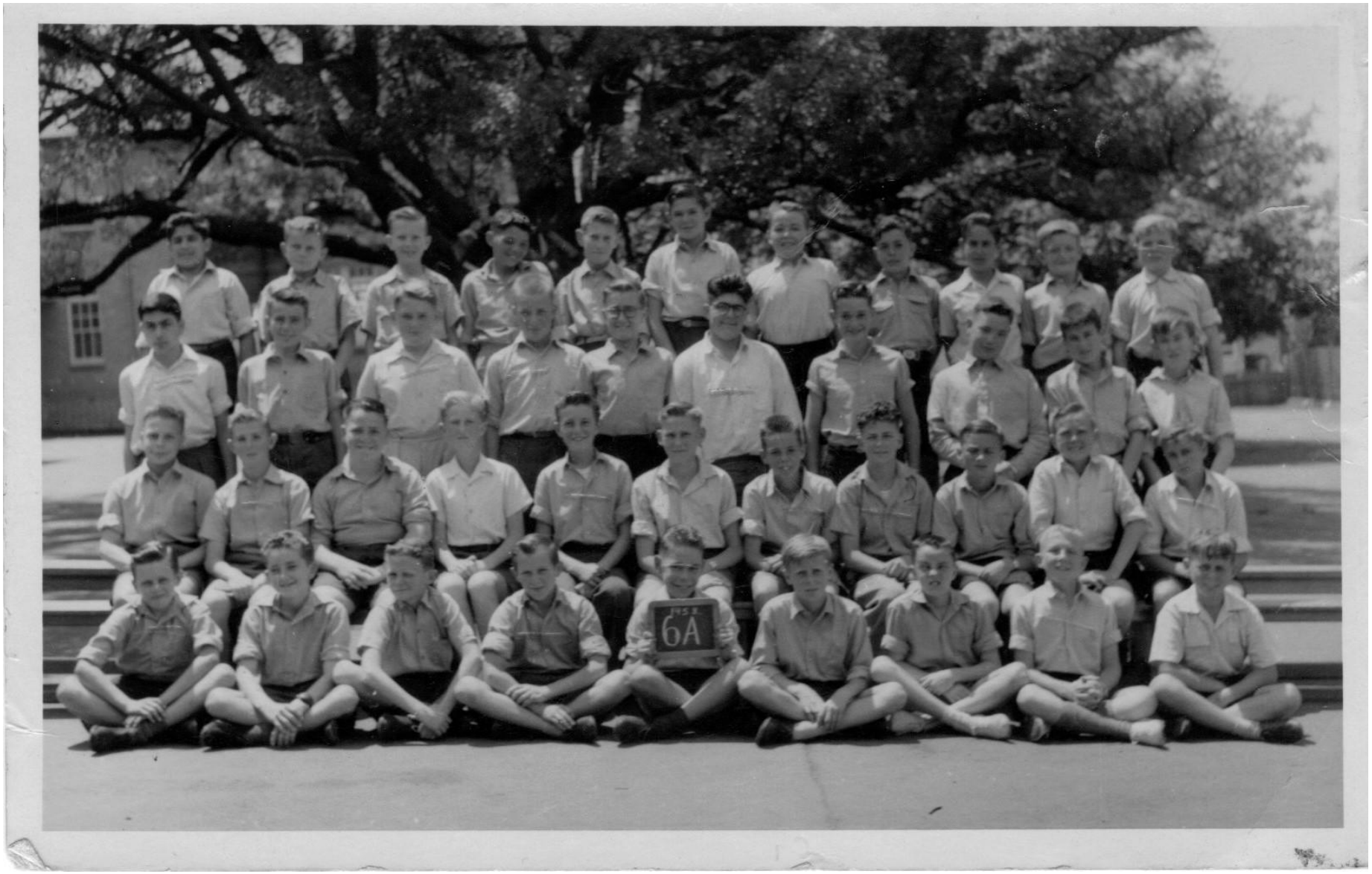
170. Leichhardt Primary School
Class 4A, 1957

Source: Hugh Walker



171. Leichhardt Primary School
Class 5A, 1958

Source: Hugh Walker



172. Leichhardt Primary School
Class 6A, 1958

Source: Harry Wagland

Orange Grove Public School

Despite the opening of a Leichhardt West School now known as Orange Grove in 1882, the opening of Kegworth School in 1886 and a number of denominational Schools, Leichhardt schools continued to grow in line with the increasing employment opportunities located in Balmain, Rozelle, Leichhardt and Lilyfield areas.

Brick making was a major industry reaching its peak in 1882 with 14 brickyards. Industries also included: pottery, boot factory, soap works, meat-preserving and furniture factories, confectioners, timber and broom factories, iron and brass foundries, wool, flour millers, coal merchants and three breweries.

Orange Grove in the 1880's was located in a working-class area. The area was largely comprised of modest wooden and brick cottages with a westerly aspect of Iron Cove Bay and an easterly outlook of a distant Sydney town. The cottages built on narrow blocks close to employment. The sound of shunting trains from the Charles Street Goods Siding broke the silence and distant sounds of Shipwrights working around Iron Cove Bay were heard on a northerly wind. Workers at the end of the day would gather for a pint or two at one of the many pubs in Balmain Road.

Orange Grove Public School, 1880's

Source: Leichhardt Municipal Map, 1880's

The Orange Grove Public School at those times reflected strict social values based primarily on discipline and order. Caning was a daily ritual for even trivial matters; not standing up straight; homework not done; spelling mistakes; talking; not listening and not lining up properly treated as serious matters deserving the cane.

> *"The classes contained a mixture of students from different backgrounds. Some students were rough and others aspiring and some timid. The rough students controlled the class. The aspiring students kept to their thoughts. The timid students kept out of the way of the rough. Lessons controlled by maintaining discipline and sorting out teacher-student relationships. The 'stronger' the teacher, the less likelihood the class would get out of control."* [1]

[1] RYAN, Terrence. 2011. *"Ibrox dreaming… A Leichhardt Boy"*.

The 1950's past students have fond memories of teachers and time at Orange Grove. Their memories included being treated with respect and encouraged to do their best. However, the 1880's teachers' pedagogy was largely based on *"obedience to instruction*" practised at all State Public Schools. Annual inspections of the school assessed the teacher's ability to control students through corporeal punishment. Teachers were expected to carry a cane to dissuade wayward students.

Prior to 1906, many teachers were young and untrained. Teacher training involved an article practice similar to other professional disciplines. A young aspiring teacher would start as a *"Pupil Teacher"*. Some started at the minimum age of 13 and articled to a qualified teacher for 4 years. It would have been a challenging time controlling classes of 40-50 students, travelling between schools and low pay.

Most children started in Infants aged five, although there were many exceptions.

The curriculum at Orange Grove focussed on **r**eading, w**r**iting and a**r**ithmetic known as the three R's. Singing was part of the school day and practiced for special occasions: Anthems (English/Australian), Anniversary of the Colony/Australia Day (26 January), Queen Victoria's Birthday/Empire Day (24 May - cracker night), Easter (April) and Christmas.

Nineteenth century schooling involved boys and girls who played separately; emphasis on obedience and respect for authority; the three R's[2] were repetitiously drilled; blackboards, chalk, steel pen nibs dipped in inkwells; sewing was compulsory for girls; subjects included enunciation, notation, dictation, slate arithmetic, poetry, mental operations, parsing, writing, history, scripture and geometry.

***

[2] Three R's: **R**eading, w**R**iting and a**R**ithmetic.

173. Orange Grove Primary School
Class 4M, 1957
1st Row: Bob Natoli (2R), Kevin Swadling (4R)

Source: Bob Natoli

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Afterword

The early history of Glebe, Forest Lodge, Leichhardt and Orange Grove Public Schools involved struggles and a determination to face life's challenges. Struggles included inadequate facilities, treeless playgrounds, overcrowded classes, stringent teaching curriculum, lack of resources and a working-class stigma.

Sydney's class structure dominated educational and employment opportunities. It was at the forefront of political policy, teaching pedagogy and social standing. In short, power and privilege pervaded life's offerings, particularly societal and educational.

Despite the limiting social culture many students from these working-class schools were successful with further education, business ventures, prosperous employment and valued community involvement. In hindsight, it was their determination to overcome hardship and a *"never give up"* grittiness that lead to remarkable achievements.

Simmering class distinction has produced relegation, rejection and stigmatization - all major outcomes of being devalued by a class of people.[1] The trigger for devaluation involves negative perceptions resulting in physical or psyche wounds that has led to dependency and rivalry. As experienced by other countries, if left unattended it will cripple our egalitarian country.

The photographs and narratives evoke memories and a snap-shot view of life during the 1930-50's. One lingering thought stayed with me - the debilitating result of Sydney's entrenched upper-middle-working class hierarchy on vulnerable people and its continued influence with the present New South Wales educational funding. It led me to write the following dissertation.

A legacy of the photographs leaves behind more than just an image of children; it reminds us they should have been given a *"fair go"*.

***

On Class

"Class differences overtly denied and covertly practiced."

Australia's class system started with the original grants of Crown land in New South Wales particularly in Sydney's inner urban areas close to the city centre. The first Crown Grant was made in 1791. There were some discretionary costs associated with the grants however costs to the grantee were largely tokenistic. As an example, one of the grant conditions included an annual *"quit rent"*.[2] William Dawes and David Burton carried out the surveys of the early grants under the direction/supervision of Augustus Alt.[3] Land grants were subsequently subdivided into portions for industrial sites, public services and working-class housing close to factories and manufacturing areas.

As Sydney grew the inner suburbs became overcrowded. Commencing from the 1840's land grant holders sold or sub-divided their estates into smaller and smaller allotments. The sale or rental of properties added to the development of Sydney's inner suburbs that created significant wealth for the original landowners and families. The allotments were either sold or used for the construction of houses suitable for *"every class of purchaser"* including modest wooden cottages built on narrow blocks of land.

> *"... forty one choice suburban allotments, surveyed in quantities varying from two to six acres, arranged to meet the wishes and means of every class of purchaser."* [4]

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[1] WOLFENSBURGER, Wolf.1992. *"A Brief Introduction to Social Role Valorization as a High Order Concept for Structuring Human Services."*

[2] HALLMANN, Frank M. 1973. *"Legal Aspects of Boundary Surveying as apply in New South Wales"*.Quit Rent – Early grants required an annual payment that 'quit' the tenant of any form of service.

[3] KASS, Terry. 2008. *"Sails to Satellites: the Surveyors General of NSW (1786-2007)."*Augustus Alt appointed Surveyor General 1787 with authority to grant land. Alt's name appeared on plans based on surveys carried out by Dawes and Burton.

[4] The Sydney Morning Herald. 14 March 1842. Extract.

The narrow fronted allotments were designed for high-density living and *"cheap housing".* Houses were built on rectangular allotments, many backing onto rear lanes. Houses were either sold or rented to working-class people. The downside of high-density housing caused immeasurable social disruption for families living in squalid conditions with little or non-existent services and paying exorbitant rents. Families who rented homes were at the *"mercy of landlords"* that exploited the situation with escalating rents, unsecure occupancy and no tenancy agreements. Families who missed paying one week's rent were subject to threats of eviction and house calls. The difference between take-home pays and rental costs meant there was little money for food, clothes or education.

Despite the promotion of the benefits of Sydney's *"grand estates"* close to employment and services, the estates failed dismally. Working class families struggled with employment, education, health and day-to-day living. Families *"battled"* with low wages, cost of living and inadequate services. There were claims the Government had turned a *"blind eye"* to the poor. There was insufficient employment, long working hours, hard manual employment and non-existent job security. Employees competed for limited positions and could be fired with little or no notice. Work was often short-term, piecemeal and lasted until factories closed or work was no longer *"coming through"*. The competition for employment added stress and strain of family life. Men who lost their jobs sought relief and advice at the local pub. Some went to the cane fields of far north Queensland, while others turned to less than salubrious activities such as gambling, selling stolen goods and *"living off the land."*

> *"Geez mate, you won't believe what fell off the back of the truck."*

Wealthier classes gradually moved away from the overcrowded inner suburbs to prime topographical sites about Sydney harbour, along coastal cliff tops, forested ridges and places with rail and transport routes. It was the beginning of Sydney's exclusive suburbs. Blue-collar boundaries were defined by limited income, low education and implicit social constraints from *"knowing your place".* White-collar boundaries wavered between changing wealth, level of education and social standing. The unspoken boundaries between rich and poor shifted with changing demographic circumstances influenced by birth, marriage, death, geographical location, economic advantage and land availability.

The distinction between working, middle and upper classes was defined by social and economic standing and the tacit denial of its existence. Class differences were overtly denied and covertly practiced in employment, education, sport, housing, clothes, manner of speech and *"secret hand-shakes"*.

Class prejudice is a duplicitous belief lurking behind Sydney's society that strenuously claims to be classless. Yet, class distinctions are made based on wealth, employment, education, social network, ethnicity and where people live. A pretentious few flaunt their wealth, others depend on *"who they know"* and some engage with activities to gain entry into an exclusive hierarchy.

High-end employment creates power and influence with those in privileged positions. Education alone is not sufficient without connections to *"influential"* people. Social network is sought after by those *"who need to be known"* – a bastion for those with *"talent and little else"*. Home address is more than a *"door-opener"* for those striving for prestige and exclusivity; it is an associative statement saying *"I live in your area."*

Class prejudice is an age-old story stretching back millennia well before the *"patricians and plebians"* of ancient Rome.[5] Like it is today, it begins with the *"haves and have-nots"* largely defined by wealth, privilege and their geographical location. For Australia, hierarchical classes grew out of imported values from European occupation and industrialization. In the early days of New South Wales, factories and service industries were located in the outskirts of Sydney a few kilometres from the central business district. As Sydney grew and industries expanded, so did the population of the working class. Sydney's inner suburbs became over-crowded, polluted and run-down. They lacked public amenities, substantive housing, health services and adequate schools. The resultant

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[5] CALDWELL, Wallace Everett. 1962. *"The Ancient World."* Patrician the nobility derived from *patres* (father). Plebians or *Plebs* meaning filling or the mass of people.

development produced Australia's first slums riddled with social, environmental and economic challenges.

Underlying the challenges of Sydney's inner suburbs was an acceptance of the plight of people defined by a hierarchical class system. In simple terms, the working class was at the bottom of society and generally treated with contempt and seen as *"factory fodder"* requiring little or any education and controlled by appropriate institutions. It was an accepted belief that flowed through the ranks of Sydney justified largely by power and circumstance demonstrated by privilege and wealth. It is a paradoxical belief that defies the basic human value of *"all that is* good" and contradicts the emerging doctrine that *"greed is good"*.[6] The hypocrisy of this belief goes against the grain of rational philosophies and Australia's paradigm that *"all people are treated equally"*.

However, there is a growing discontent amongst Sydney's *"battlers"* about the gap between the *"haves and have-nots"* widened by the *"big-end of town"* that largely benefited Sydney's elites who are stakeholders or managers of many large corporations. The 2018 Financial Services Royal Commission confirmed what has been known for years – predatory treatment of customers, criminal behavior, bad financial advice, unfair charges (rip-offs) and share market manipulation through illegal cartels. By implication, the beneficiaries have gained increased wealth through greed and privilege; it is a sorry state of affairs that can be seen as the continuing exploitation of Sydney's *"uneducated poor"*. It is not good enough for CEO's and Executives to be paid millions of dollars in salary while families are unable to pay for day-to-day expenses or attend Sydney's best schools.

> *"Paying paltry interest on hard-earned savings while big banks played hard and loose with our cash and trust"* [7]

It is not OK to be penalized with indifferent education and believe that being poor is the fault of those who are not prepared to work hard. It has been claimed that the level of education has nothing to do with where you are born or family circumstances. In reality, it is a pompous claim founded on false notions that education is based on a *"level playing field".* In the minds of the *"have-nots"* it is not alright to provide funds for Private School's *"hallowed halls"* with ostentatious structures imitating ivy-league universities and ignoring the basic needs of Public Schools. A comparison between Public and Private Schools makes us cringe with pathetic justifications based on hypocritical beliefs.

Education funding is the tip of the class iceberg. It reflects the protection of the few who know how to work the system and exposes the unprotected many that depend on the government to improve their way of life. The unprotected need government to provide equal services across society and they depend on political fidelity based on integrity and reliability.

> *"All children should have the same chance to advance."*

The privilege few over the decades have adapted to the challenges of meritocratic leadership by ensuring that education provides necessary ability and achievement required for sought after positions. Sydney's elites spend whatever is needed to send their children to the best schools, providing tutors for personalized assessments into prized places of learning and ensuring they can outcompete rivals for future workplace positions.

Meritocracy has become something that protects privilege; it is no longer the safeguard for opportunities and advantages based on ability rather than wealth or societal class. Australian meritocracy is snuffing out the egalitarian dream of *"fair go"* under the guise of a *"level playing field",* which is no longer true as evident by a recent review of the Australian school funding.[8] The review identified the educational opportunities and differences between *"the haves and have-nots".*

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[6] KEANE, Anthony. 2018. *"Bank out of Order"*. The Dailey Telegraph, Sydney, Australia. Attributed to Gordon Gekko's memorable speech in the *"Wall Street"* movie - along with *"Greed is right; Greed works; Greed clarifies and cuts through the essence of evolutionary spirit"*.

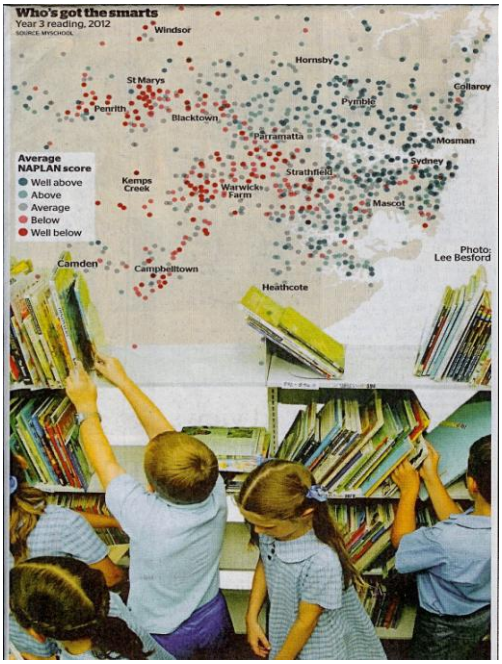
[7] KEANE, Anthony. 2018. *"Bank out of Order"*.

[8] GONSKI, David. 2013. *"Join the Dots for a Picture of Disadvantage."* The Sydney Morning Herald, March 16-17 2013. Sydney, Australia.

The review of the Australian Educational Funding produced alarming results. It confirmed what has been known for decades. Sydney's elites are able to send their children to prized schools located mainly in privileged suburbs as shown by an analysis of spatial data.

The not-so-privileged suburbs included lesser schools struggling with facilities, family circumstances, quality of teachers, less effective learning practices and lack of personal leadership development. Families in these areas cannot afford tutors, extra-curriculum activities and personal mentoring available at privileged schools.

The academic results from the Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations are used to rate students for limited tertiary places. Despite the inequality of learning, the weighted ranking of results that accounts for the school's location, equalization using statistical distribution allocations for each school and minimizing social influences, schools are not competing equally. It is overly complicated and naïve to aggregate HSC results, rank students and claim it to be fair – it is not.



Analysis of Spatial Data.
"Join the dots for a picture of disadvantage"
Source: The Sydney Morning Herald, 2013

For a fair academic competition between all schools, education funding must address personal/family circumstances, facilities, resources, adverse peer pressures, mediocre teaching, grouping of similar schools for tertiary ranking, funding advantage and geographical location.

There is a growing understanding of the needs to breakdown class systems preserved by an entrenched meritocracy. Disillusioned politicians, frustrated educationalists, despairing care workers are moving towards building accountability by strengthening democratic processes that attract bipartisan support. Blueprints are being prepared for public service reform, fairer tax structures, community good budgets, lasting skilled employment and stronger regulatory financial safeguards.

Australia must end the undeclared class wars and look towards leaders who are prepared to direct our frustration rather than exploit it for political advantage and point scoring between *"the blue and red political parties"* - leaders who can unite constituents rather than continue to divide the present upper-middle-working classes.

Australia still faces issues of class and clings to egalitarianism as an article of faith. Australians are befuddled with the dichotomy of accepting or denying the existence of class distinction. Sadly, it does exist from the early days of European occupation to the present times involving employment, education, sport, housing, clothes and manner of speech. It has a spectacular presence in the funding of public schools.

Australia has a history of having to hit *"rock bottom"* before sociological changes take place. There is a growing unrest in Sydney that supports the need to make systemic changes so that disadvantaged schools can compete on a truly *"level playing field"* and that children have the same chance to advance.

And like the parable of the *"king with no clothes"*, class distinction is hardly recognized except through the eyes of innocence. For some, it is uncomfortable to talk about and politically untenable to see the class wall. It has been left to a few Australians, such as authors Hugh Mackay, Tim Winton and Christos Tsiolkas to portray the drawbacks of class distinction.

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150. Leichhardt Primary School, Class KB, 1953
4th Row: ? Smith (1st R), Hugh Walker (2nd R), David Jack (4th R), Billy Short (5th R)
2nd Row: Glynis Giles (4th L), Kay Dickinson (6th L}
1st Row: Bill Stiff 3rd R)

Source: Dave McKeough, Hugh Walker

151. Balmain Primary School, Class 1B, 1953
4th Row: Max Siano (2nd R), Garry Devine (3rd R), Trevor Stutchbury, Adam Hall, Ray ? Peter Nairn, Ian Chapman (11th R)
3rd Row: Helen Bright (10th R)

Source: Max Siano

152. Leichhardt Primary School, 1951
Transition Class

Source: Dave McKeough

153. Leichhardt Primary School, 1951
Class 3A

Source: Dave McKeough

154. Leichhardt Primary School, 1953
Class 5A

Source: Dave McKeough

155. Leichhardt Primary School, 1958, Class 4A
Fourth Row (L-R): Glenn Walker, Dave McKeough, ?, ?, Dennis Cottam, ?, ?, ?, Les Francis, ?, Terry Monk.
Third Row (L-R): Peter Rudd, ?, ?, ?, Humpries?, Teacher?, Geoff Thomas, ?, Elliott Gilchrist?, Brian Brown, ?.
Second Row (L-R): ?, ?, Merv ?, ? Dalton, Jim Donaghue, Ian Hird, ?, Alan Foster, ?, Bill Stiff (?).
Front Row (L-R): ?, ?, Trevor Why, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?.

Source: Dave McKeough

157. Five Dock Primary School, 1954 Class 3A

Fourth Row (L to R): 2nd John Paull, 5th Ron Ellis, ?: 7th John Brown, 11th Grahame Goodsell
Third Row: (L to R):1st Barry McKenzie, 2nd Alfie Sheppard, 3rd Lyle Cranch, 6th Ron Slade, 8th Richard Godden:
Second Row (L to R): 1st Kerry Finucane:
First Row: 1st Wayne Stewart, 3rd Eric Phillips, 6th Leslie 'Mickey' Ridge:

Source: John Brown

Looking back... it wasn't much
but we had it all and it's not coming back.