WOLLONGONG SUPERIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL

I attended the school in 1913 and the girls in primary school used the rooms alongside Church Street, the higher class facing Smith Street.

One of our teachers - a Miss Tresidner was affectionately known as Granny Tresidner as she had taught the mothers of some of our girls in the class. She always wore a black skirt and white blouse with the fashionable high neck with bones on each side of the neck.

We were very well taught with Spelling, Dictation and Grammar and, of course, Arithmetic and our tables with Geography and History.

We had a Miss Rose Reid who was a Headmistress. She was very kind but very strict and later I remember Miss Moister and Miss Downing. We had a Miss Davies as sewing teacher who taught us all the stitches in general sewing and joins and patching and altogether we had a very good sample.

Some girls in our class of 32 or 34 travelled by train from Shellharbour, Dapto and Unanderra and others walked from Figtree, Mt. Keira and Keiraville. We would assemble in lines at the front of the school facing Smith Street on the western side of the Bell Tower and march into our classroom with music played on the piano by one of the girls in our class.

On some mornings we would line up and have drill before going into school. One year we had Dumbells and another year we had Clubs, and it was quite a feat to be able to turn the clubs successfully.

When I was in 5th class, we had a special day once a week to learn Domestic Science and used the kitchen at the back of the Technical College opposite the school in Smith Street. We were taught how to make scones and cakes and to prepare meats and vegetables, cook and serve. To test the temperature of the oven, we put flour on a tray in the oven for three minutes and by the colour of the flour would judge the heat of the oven. We had to wear a holland dress and white apron and a blue apron for cleaning. In the afternoon we were taught how to launder the different cloths, make the different starches and how to iron frills, etc. also how to treat stains and marks on the washing and folding, and how to set a table for dinner or a party. I remember gaining a prize for table setting.

The girls playground was at the back of the school up the steps. The boys school was on the opposite side of the building with the same number of rooms on the eastern side of the school. The boys playground was separated from the girls by the weather sheds.
The ground between the back of the school and the steps was as I recall for use of the Science classes. They were the pupils who had passed their O.C. Exams and wanted to continue on to University or further education. They used the two classrooms each side of the Bell Tower. I can recall a few names such as Finlayson, Wiseman, Figtree and Miss Pucky, who became well known doctors and other professions. They had two years at this part of the school before going on to University or further education.

I remember during the First World War, 1914-1918, there was a flu epidemic and all the school children (and others) had to be vaccinated on our left upper arm, and some of the girls had very sore arms and carried them in a sling for some time and never lost the scars for the rest of their lives, but I was a lucky one. The vaccination on my arm did not take and it was said if you were in contact with cows you were immune and I was milking a cow night and morning and that was the reason.

The school put on a concert in the Town Hall in aid of the War Services and our class did the Floral March with hoops covered with paper flowers to match the colour of our dresses. The different colours were red, white, blue and yellow. Other classes put on items and the concert was such a success that it was repeated again the following week.

In the summer time, the teacher would take us one afternoon a week to the Ladies Baths. They are situated at the northern end of South Beach and the lighthouse at the sea edge, and as there are a lot of rocks the two baths were cut out of the rocks and were only filled at high tide. We had no sports in these years.

Hannah Nethery (nee Brown)

WOLLONGONG PUBLIC SCHOOL - A TEACHER REMEMBERED

Although this personal note owes its origin to the July Bulletin's summary of Mrs. Ward's historical talk on Wollongong Public School, there is no nostalgia in it, because this commentator has never subscribed to that dubious concept of schooldays being the happiest of your life. Rather it is prompted by admiration for the supreme ability of children, little short of genius, to fit people with brilliantly descriptive nicknames.

In the early 1920s our class emerged from the cosiness of the Infants' School into the somewhat frightening reality of the 'Big Boys' School. Assemblies there were usually conducted by a little man named Richards who had apparently never allowed himself to forget the stiff, soldierly movements of the parade ground in World War 1. Symbolically-