

New Block Memories



1. Cast Iron Stoves



About 1946 or 1947 the four new classrooms were built between the main school and the sports fields. These were not connected to the central heating, but had a large pot bellied cast iron stove in each room. They worked very well when treated properly. However, when certain more daring pupils filled them to the top with coke they literally glowed bright red from overheating. Many scorched desks told the tale. I don't know if that situation still exists.

Leighton Smith

2. Fragments



I don't remember the pot-bellied stoves, but my memories are very fragmented. Perhaps someone can develop them for me from the following. In my first year at the school (1955-56) in 1c, Miss Collins was the Form teacher. Our Form Room (23) was in the New Block to the right of the Ice Cream/Tuck Shop as you looked at it from the front.

From my report book:

Mr. G.O. Young taught us Maths.

Miss. Collins, English and Religious Knowledge.

Mr. Dodd, French - he called me Gerard as everyone was given a French name.

Mr. Sale, Science. **Mr Sale has contributed several articles to this web site.**

Mr. Leonard, Geography and Physical Education - taught in the wall-barred Assembly Hall as the New Gym was under construction. Do you remember the very noisy little dump truck with steering wheels at the back?

Mr. Combs, Art - for the first term I think.

Miss. Carter, Music.

Mr. Colley, History - From Ur to Rome was the textbook (first published in 1936)

Mr. Atack, Woodwork.

More than anything I remember the smells of the time - the leather satchel, the books, ink, pencil shavings and dubbin (the latter on rugby boots with nailed leather studs). That year we had a smoked glass for looking at the eclipse of the sun.

Dave McKenzie

The New Block Ice Cream Shop/Tuck Shop.

The photo comes
from Sid
Kenningham.
Thank you.



3. Comment



Dear Dave,

The New Block rooms 21 (nearest the main building) to 24 were traditionally the form rooms and bases of classes 1A, B, C and D respectively. All lessons apart from Music, General Science and of course PE and Games were taught in the form rooms. I vaguely remember there still being these classes when I returned to teach at HGS in 1964, with the introduction of "Romans"...etc a year or two later, though I note that another entry on the web site suggests they were introduced somewhat earlier. Room 21 was also the base for the Assistant Prefects at break and lunchtime, when not on duty.

Frank Morley

4. That first year of ours in 1955.



Dear Dave,

You ask for memories of that first year of ours in 1955. I have remembered most of the teachers who started me on the journey through School. In 1B, Miss Hampshire was our form teacher, and she taught us French also. We sang 'Frere Jacques', and the carol, 'Il est nee, le divin enfant'. We even tackled the French National Anthem!

Monsieur et Madame Mercier and children were our typical French text-book family. Miss Ward spent a lot of time with us, as she covered English, Geography and History. Mr. Collins took Geometry and Arithmetic, leaving Algebra to be embarked upon later in the year, I think. Mrs Blatherwick (who was previously Miss Parkin) did the PT lessons in the Assembly Hall as well as out on the playing fields. I used to love those indoor lessons, when she would have all the apparatus out. The ropes were pulled across the middle of the room like a curtain splitting the area in two, and the wall bars and beams were swung into position and bolted firmly into the parquet floor, giving the opportunity for climbing and balancing. Crash mats were arranged in groups together with benches. (Were these kept underneath the stage?) We used to play a game called "Pirates", where one or two 'catchers' would pursue the rest of the class across the apparatus. The idea was that one should not touch the floor at any time as this was imagined to be "the sea". To travel from one piece to another, wooden hoops were designated 'safe stepping stones'. When anyone was caught by being touched by the

catchers, they dropped out of the game, and the winner was the last person still free. I sometimes won this game, which is probably why I remember it! (Nothing sticks better in the mind than success.)

There was a distinct "smell" which pervaded our year in the "New Block". Not an unpleasant one, but quite memorable. It was like silicone desk-polish crossed with orange ice-lollies, and the smell of new leather satchels. All our clothes were also new, and I remember my mother buying 3 yards of blue quarter-inch gingham, 36" wide, from the School - outfitter shop down in the village (**what was their name?**). This then had to be taken to a local dressmaker so that I could present myself in the correct dress of the Summer Uniform at the beginning of the Spring Term. Gymslips, shirts and ties out, dresses in! This was when we girls could abandon our suspender belts and lisle stockings for the freedom of short white socks. We also changed our outer-wear from the navy gabardine mac to a blazer with a School badge on the top left-hand pocket - also purchased from the gingham shop. Hats were compulsory with both summer and winter uniforms.

The manners of those times dictated that we should stand when a member of Staff entered the room - a noisy routine, sometimes. We always added the word "Sir" when replying to a male member of Staff, and used the female teacher's full name likewise. This applied to all ages in the School. We had our own cloakrooms and toilets in the New Block, and the fact that we could "go for a walk" at playtime meant that we tended not to mix with older boys and girls until the second year, when we were based in the Main Building,-- and that's another story!

Sheila Kelsall

Dear Sheila,

I read your reminiscence under the heading of "New Block" memories. Just to remind you that the school outfitter in Hemsworth was Jackson's.

Geoff Govier