

MAYFIELD EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL.

Mayfield East Public School is among the oldest Public Schools of New South Wales. It had its origin in the year 1858, ten years after the Government commenced to exercise control of education in the State.

In the year mentioned there were only 104 schools under the Board of National Education which was then the controlling body of State Education, and the total attendance of pupils was 7,916. It is of interest to compare these figures with those of the present when there are over 3,000 schools with an enrolment of about 355,000 pupils and when the cost of education runs to about 4 million pounds.

Educationally the State was in a poor condition at the time when Mayfield School came into operation. Many districts had no school facilities whatever and children were growing up in utter ignorance. Where schools were provided the course of instruction was often of a poor type and the teachers were untrained and inexperienced.

On 5th May, 1858, a Local Committee made a formal application to the Board for the establishment of a non-vested school at Waratah. This type of school was common at the time and usually meant that a school house and teacher would be provided by local residents, and the Board would grant aid to the school in the form of lesson books and payment for the teacher. The school committee at Waratah comprised Rev. W. Chaucer, Thomas Grove, John Robertson, Peter Crebert.

The school was opened in a small slab building containing three rooms, the school room being 26 ft by 13 feet and having a slab floor "sufficient to accommodate 50 pupils" reported an Inspector.

It is not ascertainable from the records when the school was actually opened but it appears to have been

*Prepared for  
minutes for  
official opening  
25.6.1937*

probably  
MARIA

shortly after the application was made to the Board for assistance. Miss Marion Christie was appointed as teacher. The Inspector said that she could read and write fairly well but her knowledge of Geography was poor.

Miss Christie appears to have continued teaching at the school until December 1861, when she was succeeded by Mr. A. Magnay. Mayfield East, or Waratah, was the nearest Public School to Newcastle at the time.

The school continued in its rented premises until the year 1874 when an application was made to the Council of Education (the Public Education authorities established under the Schools Act of 1866) for a permanent building. This application was granted, and, by the end of 1874 the building was completed by a contractor named Mr. John Ash at a cost of £729. The residents supplied a portion of the cost - about a fifth apparently - while the Council furnished the remainder. The school committee at this particular period comprised Messrs. Richard Bell, A. McNulty, Peter Norgard, Peter Crebert, Robert Ingall and John Williams (Secretary).

Mr. James Kilgour was headmaster when the new building was opened in January, 1875. The attendance for that year was 81.2.

Since then the school has grown to its present proportions.

The new infants' building meets a requirement that has been felt for over 8 years. In 1928 it was pointed out by the Parents and Citizens' Association that the classrooms for the infants were inadequate, and additional accommodation was urgently required. Delays occurred, however, for various reasons, and it was not until last year that definite steps could be taken towards providing a new building.

In order to provide for the new building an additional area of land was acquired in 1935. It comprised

1 acre 15 perches and was purchased from Mrs. E. Woodcock.

The tenders for the work of erecting the new building were invited in August last, and the contract was let to Mr. W. Stronach.

The new building is of brick construction with tiled roof. The main building is of two storeys, the upper floor and staircases being of fireproof construction.

Accommodation is provided for 448 pupils in seven ordinary classrooms and a kindergarten room.

There are separate rooms for headmistress and staff, and the necessary hatrooms and storerooms are provided.

Weathersheds, lavatory accommodation etc. have been arranged in one block, single storey, designed to harmonise with the main building.

Paths and assembly areas have been tar paved, and new gateways formed in fencing to give access to the building.

The work has cost approximately £8450.

Mayfield East is a School of three departments - Boys, Girls and Infants. The enrolment at the end of last term was :-

Boys -	342
Girls -	302
Infants -	318
Total	<u>962</u>

Mr. V. A. Murray, (Classification 1A) is headmaster, Miss M. A. Butler is Mistress of the Girls' Department, and Miss R. J. McIntosh controls the Infants. The assisting staff comprising 21, making a total of 24 teachers at the school.

Mr. H. H. Laird is Inspector for the district.