

2.2/8/60

History of Ringwood Technical School.

A survey of the future requirements of technical education in the Eastern suburbs, Melbourne during 1957 showed the necessity for another school to supplement the schools at Ferntree Gully, Burwood and Box Hill. The survey committee recommended a site at Mitcham, but difficulties over the acquisition of land led to the decision to place a technical school in Heathmont Road, Heathmont. The school was named Ringwood Technical School and in 1958 the first ninety-six boys enrolled.

The principal was Mr. G.M. Veitch B.A; B.Sc, B.Ed and the staff consisted of Mr. F.C. George 1 Hon, T.T.C, D.T.S.C, as headmaster Mr. D. Donaldson B.A, Dip. Ed. in charge of English, Mr. S. Powell B.A, T.P.T.C, in charge of Social Studies, Mr. B. Hird Dip Civ. Eng for Mathematics and Science and Mr. L. Brittingham T.T.I.C for woodwork.

It was proposed to place the school in temporary accommodation at East Ringwood Drill Hall. This proposal was rejected by the principal and was followed by a very generous gesture from Mr. R. Atkinson, Principal of Ferntree Gully Technical School. Mr. Atkinson restricted the growth of his apprentice classes to make accommodation available for the Ringwood Technical School boys. Also, he supplied instructors in sheetmetal and music from his staff. The experiment was a complete success; co-operation and friendship between two schools being of a high order.

It was proposed to call tenders for the erection of the first stage of the building in September, 1958. However a decision at high level was made to commence the first composite technical school of girls and boys at Ringwood. Previously girls' and boys' schools had been in separate buildings under the one principal. As no plans for such a school were in existence there was a long delay before tenders were called in July, 1959.

An Order - in - Council was made on 14th November, 1958 for the formation of the first school Council. These gentlemen were invited by Mr. Kelly, Town Clerk of Ringwood to submit their names to the Governor - in - Council. The principal's choice of Mr. Kelly whose knowledge of the citizens of Ringwood was profound was a very fortunate one and the inaugural School Council has proved to be enthusiastic in the cause of technical education in the district.

The members of the School Council are:-
 Major General L.E. Beavis, C.B; C.B.E.
 Mr. F.R. Lucas, C.E; A.M.I.E (Aust).
 Mr. A.J. AIRD
 Mr. P.D. Jarman
 Mr. A.H. McPherson, B. Mech. E.
 Mr. L.D. White
 Mr. H.W. Hopkins; B.A, B.Ed; District Inspector
 with Mr. G. M. Veitch as Secretary.

Since its inception, the names of Cr. D. Baxter, representing the Ringwood City Council and Mrs. I. Sowerby representing the Parents have been added.

A total of 210 boys spent 1959 in temporary accommodation at Lilydale and 75 girls were placed in rooms at Box Hill Girls' Technical School. The assistance rendered by Mr. C. Rommeril at Lilydale and by Miss M. Deehan at Box Hill made conditions very congenial, and the co-operation given by the civic authorities at each place was marked.

Tenders for the construction of the first stage of the school in Heathmont were advertised on 2nd June, 1959; the successful tenderer being P.M. Versteegen and Sons, the total cost being £90,270. The contract for electrical installations was secured by Mr. K.R. Phelan, the cost being £7,990. Mr. Versteegen proved an admirable contractor, and it was possible to admit girls to the school on February 3rd, 1960. and the boys a week later. The total floor area of the first stage is 36,000 square feet and the second and third stages will add considerably to this floorage. The enrolment in 1960 remained steady at 500 and in 1961 the enrolment should be 700. The enrolment should stabilize at around 800 pupils; 320 girls and 480 boys.

The co-operation of the Ringwood City Council in the use of municipal sports grounds; in planting of trees; in traffic signs; and all matters brought to its notice has been marked. It has supplied a valuable Scholarship to the school. The Ringwood Co-operative Cool Stores Limited has provided two valuable cups for perpetual competition amongst the students. Other donors of trophies have been Ferntree Gully and Box Hill Girls' Technical Schools.

The Ringwood Technical School serves a large area; the boys come from as far away as Healesville and the girls from Mitcham, Croydon, Ferntree Gully. However the popularity of the school is such that very soon the available accommodation seems likely to be filled from the Ringwood schools as this table will show.

	1958	1959		1960		1961 est.	
	B.	B.	G.	B.	G.	B.	G.
Ringwood schools.	40	50	5	58	29	99	56
Others	58	70	67	86	43	71	41