

It could be said that five sites have been involved in the history of Ringwood State School. Antimony mining (ore was first taken out in 1869, but the main shaft was sunk in 1874) and brickmaking brought people to the Ringwood district, and, after the passing of the 1872 Education Act, there being no schools nearer than Birt's Hill (not a government school) and Vermont (S.S.1022), Ringwood S.S.1451 was opened on September 10, 1874. This school, on Whitehorse Road, Ringwood East, beyond the mine, became known as 'Cass's School', and existed as a separate school under the same head teacher, Mr. Edward Feehan Cass, until July 31, 1893.

Under the amalgamation scheme of Mr. Peacock, the minister, of the school's 72 pupils the senior classes from then on had to go to Ringwood S.S.2997 with Mr. Cass as an assistant to the H.T., Mr. John Sweeney, while the infant classes attended a leased hall near the Club Hotel because of the long walk that would have been necessary. This annexe was closed in 1894. The unused building of S.S.1451 was moved to Mount Dandenong S.S. in 1900, but one acre of the original 5-acre site remains Education Department property, not far from the present Ringwood East S.S. 4180.

Market gardeners, orchardists and woodcutters at West Ringwood were able to persuade the Department to establish a school there (despite protests from further east) on February 1, 1880, mainly owing to the willingness of Mr. William Witt, a chemist who conducted a general store at the corner of Heatherdale and Whitehorse Roads, to lease a wattle-and-daub hut at a low rental for a trial period of four months. This school, known as S.S.2242, Nunawading North, was held in these quite unsuitable premises until September 3, 1885, when a new school building, with attached residence, was opened further west in Whitehorse Road (it was later found to have been built on the wrong block—lot 13 instead of lot 15!). The head teacher at the time of its closure on November 29, 1889, was Mr. Sweeney, who then became the first head teacher of the new S.S.2997, Ringwood, which opened in Ringwood Street on December 2, 1889, near the railway station (in fact, it was officially designated 'Ringwood Railway Station S.S.' to distinguish it from the then existing 'Ringwood S.S.1451'). This name reveals the *raison d'être* of what became the main Ringwood State School, because it came into being as the result of petitions and agitation by the population that had grown up around the railway station, led by the station-master, Mr. John K. Turnbull, and Rev. R. L. Reed. The foundation stone was laid on August 15, 1889, by Mrs. Turnbull with a silver trowel presented by Cr. Thomas Grant (who, with his brothers, had sold the land to the Education Department for £100). This foundation stone, with the active encouragement of Ringwood Historical Research Group, was re-erected by the School Committee in 1962 in the garden of the present school in Greenwood Avenue.

As the one-acre site in Ringwood Street lacked a head teacher's residence, the closed Nunawading North S.S. weatherboard building was moved in 1892 for this purpose to a block adjoining (it) on the north boundary, bought for £107-18-6 from Ringwood Township Estate Co. Ltd. The school was of brick, 50 ft. x 20 ft., with the infant grades accommodated in a gallery that was later removed when alterations and additions converted the school into a 3-classroom building. Following Mr. Sweeney's death, and a two-year term as H.T. of a big, tall Scotsman, Mr. James McGregor, Mr. Alfred Hocking took charge on October 3, 1898, and remained Head Teacher until February, 1917.

During this period there were some pupils who later achieved outstanding success in their careers, notably Professor Stanley Porteus, who earned an international

reputation in clinical psychology at the University of Hawaii (still living in retirement in Honolulu), Sir Ronald East (retired chairman of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission), Allan Dawes (leading journalist who became famous as a war correspondent) and Arthur Aird (recently deceased former legal assistant for the Police Department in the Crown Solicitor's office), who before joining the public service was from 1912 to 1914 a teacher at Ringwood S.S., ^{later as a parent} and Chairman of the School Committee from 1938 to 1952.

* Mr. Mooking was succeeded by Mr. William Broben, who was H.T. from 1917 to 1931. In the early years of this period the enrolment was increasing, until overcrowding necessitated the hiring of first the Mechanics' Institute and then a Methodist Hall as well. The smallness of the site (and its value as shopping sites) resulted in the rejection of plans to build additions to the school, and the consequent purchase of a 3½-acre site in Greenwood Avenue for a new school. This was part of a 15-acre orchard belonging to Count von Horn (a German migrant who had been shire president at Warragul, and had become a respected resident of Ringwood). He was paid £500. Later, more land was bought from Mr. Arthur Greenwood to give more frontage to Greenwood Avenue. Several years were to pass before a fine brick school of eight classrooms was built for £8713.

The foundation stone was laid by Sir Alexander Peacock, Minister of Public Instruction, on October 21, 1921, with a silver trowel donated ^{to the school} after his death by Lady Peacock (to the school), [where it shares a place in a trophy cabinet with many cups and shields won for sporting excellence, marching, etc.] 339 pupils were transferred from Ringwood Street with Mr. Broben and his staff on July 24, 1922. The bare grounds have over the years been transformed with many trees, shrubs, gardens and lawns.

In 1942, in order to rationalize the shape of the schoolground, and to enable the creation of a special area with play equipment for the infant pupils, the Minister, Mr. (afterwards Sir Albert) Lind authorized purchase of lot 74 at the south-east corner for £90, and a visit to declare the new playground officially open was made on October 1, 1943, by his successor, Mr. T. T. Hollway (later Premier of Victoria).

In 1947 the Music and Speech Training staff chose Ringwood S.S. for the introduction of the first recorder band in any primary school in this State, because of the keenness of the pupils with their fife band under an enthusiastic teacher. [Other teachers visited Ringwood for instruction so that this instrument with better musical possibilities could be introduced into their schools also.]

Consequent on the post-World War II influx to Ringwood of outer suburban commuters and the growth of local industries, orchards began to give way to housing, and the school enrolment rose from under 500 in 1949 to a peak of just under 1000. Relief was gained temporarily with the hiring of church halls and permanently with the construction of extra classrooms and establishment of new schools. Two rooms were added in 1950, three in 1952, two in 1954, one in 1957, and four (the present detached Junior Department building on a higher level) in 1958. Opening of Heathmont S.S.4688 and Eastwood S.S.4702 eased pressure from the east. Early in 1956 the new Norwood S.S.4736 admitted 200 pupils from Ringwood S.S.2997, while further relief came in the west from Antonio Park S.S.4844 and Heatherdale S.S. 4904. Since many pupils were transferred in 1965 to the new Southwood S.S.4857 it has been possible to convert some of the classrooms for use as central library, art and craft room, and divisional remedial centre. The net enrolment in 1965 ^{was} 555.

In 1964-65 tapes, letters, etc. were exchanged between Ringwood (Victoria) and Ringwood County Junior School, Hampshire, England, and with Eleanor G. Hewitt School, Ringwood, New Jersey, USA.

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In recent years the school has taken an active part in Education Week displays at Eastland shopping centre, and this is doubly appropriate as the site of the former school building and of the head teacher's residence is now part of the parking area of Eastland. The post office and State Savings Bank occupy other parts of the site.

Space will not permit mention of the many fine headmasters the school has had, but one outstanding teacher cannot be overlooked. Miss Daisy Paddock first taught at Ringwood S.S. in 1927 as a female assistant, class V, and remained there until 1941. She returned to the school ten years later as Infant Mistress, and served with great distinction in that capacity for a further ten years, retiring in December, 1961.

In 1956 Miss Paddock was honoured with the award of the Lillian Horner Memorial Prize, which she presented to the school, where it serves in the I.M.'s office as an inspiration to her successors. Miss Paddock earned a unique place in the esteem, respect and affection of pupils, parents and the Ringwood community generally. She is guest of honour at the annual reunions of 'The Club 2997', composed of former pupils of the period 1923-1931 dates of admission. She still resides in Ringwood.

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now deceased