

OPEN NIGHTS / INFORMATION DAYS

It is the norm these days for independent schools to hold Open Days. These days allow schools to showcase their facilities as well as allowing prospective parents the opportunity to discuss matters of interest with staff and meet current students. The first known Open Days at Townsville Grammar occurred during the headmastership of Alan Morwood [1973-1992].

Prior to 1975 any prospective parent wanting to enrol their son or daughter at the School would have to rely on the School Prospectus or to have a quick visit to the School. In the early years of the School's history a visit would not have been easy. Distance and a lack of transport would have worked against the concept of an Open Day. The only occasion parents had of touring the School would occur on Speech Day which was usually held on the last day of the school year. On these days the School presented excerpts, in English, French and Greek, from classic plays and the choir would also perform.

FOUNDATION AND SURROUNDINGS.

TOWNSVILLE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, which stands on a portion of the Queen's Park, was opened in 1888, under the provisions of the Grammar Schools Act, 1860, and is the only Government Grammar School in North Queensland, drawing its pupils not only from Townsville, but from Charters Towers, Ravenswood, Cairns, Cloncurry, Mackay, Thursday Island, and from the pastoral districts throughout the north of the State. The School Reserve comprises an area of ten acres and extends along a lower slope of Castle Hill, commanding a view of Cleveland Bay and Magnetic Island. The buildings occupy a cool and healthy position, and the Park forms the playing ground.

For teaching purposes there are the "Big School" and two adjoining Class Rooms. The rooms are lofty and the windows very large. The ventilation is so good that the building is always cool to work in. The health-record of the School is excellent.

The School Dining-Hall and Laundry are contained in the Headmaster's house, which forms a separate building.

COURSE OF EDUCATION.

The School Course aims at fitting boys for their work in life, whether they are to enter the professions or adopt commercial or pastoral pursuits. The majority of the pupils are completing at the Grammar School the education begun at the State Primary Schools.

The regular Class Subjects are as follows:—

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE	HISTORY	NATURE STUDY
ARITHMETIC	GEOGRAPHY	SINGING
ALGEBRA	LATIN	FREEHAND DRAWING
GEOMETRY	GREEK	GEOMETRICAL DRAWING
TRIGONOMETRY	FRENCH	BOOK-KEEPING
CHEMISTRY	GERMAN	

Young boys are placed in a Preparatory Class, while special arrangements are made for boys who, owing to exceptional circumstances, are backward for their age.

Boys whose parents wish their sons to obtain the full advantage of a Secondary Education, are strongly recommended to send them to the School before they reach their fourteenth year.

There is a Science Laboratory, fitted with all necessary appliances, and special attention is devoted to Practical Chemistry, for which there is no extra charge. Boys are encouraged, under proper supervision, to make their own experiments.

A modern education is provided for boys who are intended for business, special attention being given to English subjects, Letter-writing, Book-keeping, and Arithmetic. A limited number of girl day-pupils is taken. For these there is a special Recreation Room set apart in the Headmaster's House. The School's experience of this partial "Co-Education" has been most satisfactory.

EXAMINATIONS.

In the ordinary School Course pupils are prepared for the Sydney University Junior and Senior Examinations. The sound educational work done by the School is proved by its consistent examination successes, and by the careers of past pupils at the Universities and in business throughout the Commonwealth.

Boys are prepared for the Legal Preliminary, the Entrance Examinations for the Board of Pharmacy and the Dental Board, the Civil Service, and the Bursaries and Entrance Examination of the Queensland Agricultural College, Gatton.

There are regular School Examinations twice a year—at Midwinter and Christmas.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE AT THE SCHOOL.

Scholarship benefactions have been presented to the School by the following:—Mr. H. F. Henlein (scholarship for three years), Dr. Humphry and Mr. W. J. Castling; Mr. J. T. Critchell, Messrs. Hollis Hopkins, and Mr. A. W. Macnaughton; The Cleveland Masonic Lodge; The St. Andrew Masonic Lodge; Mr. J. N. Parkes, Mr. J. Leu, and the Old Boys' Union.

One Goldfield (Charters Towers) Scholarship, annually awarded, and is tenable at the School; as are State Scholarships of the annual value of £16 16s. for three years.

State Bursaries of the additional value of £50 per annum for three years.

Trustees' Entrance and Continuation Scholarships are awarded to promising candidates as circumstances permit.

TUITION FEES.

For each boy under twelve years of age, £3 3s. a quarter.

For each boy over twelve years of age, £4 4s. a quarter.

(A reduction of 10 per cent. each is made for two or more brothers.)

For each boy for Gymnastics, Swimming, Drill, Games Subscription, and School Magazine, an inclusive charge of 5s. per quarter.

The 1909 Prospectus (left) offers an interesting insight into the type of education offered at that time. The choice of subjects follows the liberal education offered by schools in England with an emphasis on classic languages, mathematics and the type of subjects a gentleman of that time would study: nature study, singing and freehand drawing. Book-keeping was an interesting addition to the curriculum but many of our students at that time did not go to tertiary education but entered firms such as banks and insurance companies. It is also interesting to note that the School prepared students for examinations to the legal, dental and pharmacy professions as well as for the civil service.

For the first half of the twentieth century Queensland students spent the first eight years of schooling at a primary level and then, if they wanted to, four more years of secondary education. At the end of their primary year students wrote a scholarship examination and, if successful, moved on to secondary education. As the Prospectus shows, students were provided with £4 4s a quarter, this amount was the same as the school fees which were £16 16s per annum. Other scholarships were available and were largely provided by Masonic Lodges.

Two interesting extracts from the introductory section mentions that the health-record is excellent and that the School Dining Room and laundry is situated in the Headmasters' house. Health was an important issue in 1909 and every

School Prospectus - 1909

Speech Day Report in the early years of the School's history had a health report. Dengue fever was a big problem at that time and of concern to parents. Until a dining-room was built in the 1920s boarder meals were provided by the Headmaster and his wife. There is no mention of boarding fees in the Prospectus but all fees were paid to the Headmaster and he would run the budget for providing food for the boarders.

It is interesting to note that no mention is made of lighting in the School and of showers. Power was only provided to School House in 1926, prior to that, gas lighting and lamps were the norm. No hot showers were provided for boarders until 1970. Until that year boys would line up, the showers would be turned on and they would run through, wetting themselves. At the other end they would soap themselves and then run through the showers before drying themselves. It is, perhaps, not surprising that a School Prospectus would not mention these practices!

MR BILL MULLER
School Archivist