

YATES AVENUE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Established 1958

A History of our School and its Community



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List of Principals

1958 - May 1962	R. S. Clarke
May 1962 - 1966	L. S. Chalker
1967 - 1969	K. J. Carpenter
1970	C. L. Blogg
1971 - 1972	K. M. Miller
1973 - 1975	A. Eggins
1976 - 1980	A. R. Taylor
1981 - 1987	G. B. Ware
1988 - 1989	B. Cluff
1990 - 1998	P. Jux
1999 - 2008	A. Faulks
2009 – 2010	B. Pecar
2011 -	T. Lee

Our Beginning in Pictures



Our School's land in 1957. Taken from Yates Avenue, looking across to The Ponds Creek, Bain Place and on to Perry Street.



Construction starts on our School in 1957. Photo taken from Yates Avenue, looking across towards King Street. Plum trees from the former orchard are still evident.



The first School buildings are almost complete - 1957.



School children and parents line Yates Avenue as the Queen Mother approaches on her visit to Dundas in 1958. The road had been swept for the occasion.



And there she goes.....

Time Line

In the beginning	Lava wells up from the Earth's centre to form the blue metal of the Dundas quarry.
38,000 B.C.	Aborigines came to Australia. The Wallumede tribe eventually settles along the Parramatta River.
1788	Parramatta founded by Captain Arthur Phillip.
1789	Smallpox epidemic kills half the Aborigines in the area.
1791	Settlers occupy land at The Ponds, Field of Mars, now called Dundas. The Ponds was so-called because of a chain of waterholes which extended from the quarry to Subiaco Creek.
1792	Matthew Everingham settles at The Ponds - a grant of 50 acres located behind the former Army Signal Barracks.
1794	20 th February - Thomas Tilley granted 30 acres of land to be known as Tilley Farm - a small portion is now Yates Avenue Public School.
1794	3 rd October - Reverend James Bain granted 100 acres to be known as Cornish Hill - the area adjacent to Tilley Farm is now Yates Avenue Public School.
1794	December - Bain sold his grant to John Macarthur.
1796	Samuel Marsden selected 100 acres, called Dundas Farm, near Thompson's Corner.
1799	The name "Dundas" first appears in land grants, possibly for land north of the present Dundas.
1800	William Cox purchased 14 farms in The Ponds area, including the Bain and Tilley grants and formed Brush Farm.
1800	1 st February - Joseph Holt takes up management of Brush Farm.
1801	First Brush Farm homestead was built.
1801	Flag signalling system between Sydney and Old Government House, Parramatta, via One Tree Hill probably commenced about this time.
1804	William Cox in financial difficulties - a portion of Brush Farm auctioned by Simeon Lord and sold to D'Arcy Wentworth.
1805	Remainder of Brush Farm sold to D'Arcy Wentworth.
1807	5 th February - Gregory Blaxland bought Brush Farm.

- 1813 New road made from Parramatta to Dundas and on to Kissing Point - still known as Kissing Point Road.
- 1813 May - Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson crossed the Blue Mountains.
- 1816 Gregory Blaxland planted grapes in a vineyard at Brush Farm.
- 1821 About this time the official flagstaff was erected on One Tree Hill for flag telegraph between Sydney and Parramatta.
- 1822 Gregory Blaxland exported wine to England; the track known as Blaxland's track ran from Brush Farm along the ridge to Kissing Point (Ryde); a road to cart sawn timber and produce from Pennant Hills, Castle Hill and Dundas, to Parramatta River, passed along the ridge near Brush Farm (Marsden Road). Everything was sent to Sydney along the Parramatta River.
- 1825 Methodist Church on Marsden Road built.
- 1828 Growing wheat had become unprofitable - reported by Governor Darling.
- 1829 George Spurway transported to New South Wales and assigned to Gregory Blaxland at Brush Farm.
- 1830s Some large properties subdivided and fruit growing became an important industry for more than 70 years.
- 1831 Blaxland sold Brush Farm to his son-in-law, Dr. Thomas Forster.
- 1832 Major Thomas Mitchell located the outcrop of rocks at Dundas; the quarry was opened to extract blue metal.
- 1840s Adderton Estate advertised as 140 acres, eight-roomed house, extensive gardens and orchards, occupied by Captain Moffat.
- 1847 Flag signaling system to Parramatta ceased.
- 1848 Public education introduced by Governor Fitzroy who appointed the Board of National Education to setup, staff and administer national schools.
- 1853 Gregory Blaxland and Thomas Forster died. Eliza, Blaxland's daughter, inherited Brush Farm.
- 1860s Orange trees attacked by small white insect and diseased trees were grubbed out and burnt. Severe drought set in and lasted about 7 years.
- 1861 Post Office opens on Kissing Point Road - it was called Pennant Hills.
- 1865 Last Aboriginal corroboree held in area.
- 1866 Public Schools Act places national and denominational schools under the Council of Education.
- 1867 Post Office on Kissing Point Road changes its name to Field of Mars.

- 1869 St Paul's Anglican Church opened on Marsden Road. First Dundas School opened by Henry Parkes.
- 1876 Eliza Forster died - her son, William, inherited Brush Farm.
- 1881 Secondary school education introduced with Superior Public Schools offering post-primary courses.
- 1882 William Forster died. Brush Farm sold to John Bennett and Lancelot Threlkeld.
- 1884 Baptist Church near Dundas Council Chambers built.
- 1889 Municipality of Dundas established; first elections were held on 18th May.
- 1890 First Dundas Town Hall built. Post Office on Kissing Point Road changes its name to Dundas.
- 1891 Ermington and Rydalmere secede and form new municipality.
- 1894 The State of New South Wales rented and later bought Brush Farm. At about this time the former Bain grant was separated from Brush Farm and was subdivided into small holdings.
- 1902 Railway to Carlingford opened; subdivision of land into building blocks commenced.
- 1914 About this time the quarry was abandoned and filled with water.
- Mid 1920s Arthur Yates and Company commenced experimental seed farming in Dundas.
- 1923 About this time Mr. Len Farlow purchased the land on which the school is built.
- 1933 Hume Pipe Company re-opened the quarry.
- 1943 School leaving age was increased to 15 years.
- 1946 Quarry closed once again.
- 1947 Housing Commission placed cover on land in Dundas Valley.
- 1948 Lottie Stewart Hospital opened. Dundas Municipality amalgamates with the City of Parramatta
- 1950 Housing Commission resumed land.
- 1955 Housing Commission subdivided 300 acres in Dundas Valley; native timbers cut down; sites set aside for churches and schools.
- 1957 First Dundas School closed.
- 1958 Yates Avenue Public School opened.

Our Earliest Settlers

Wallumede Tribe of the Eora People

On 29th April, 1770, Captain Cook disembarked from the “*Endeavour*” in Botany Bay and planted the Union Jack on the shore, claiming the new territory for Great Britain. A ten year old Aboriginal boy watched the proceedings from the safety of the bush, unaware that these actions marked the beginning of the disintegration of his ancient culture. Fifty-four years later, he showed the Governor, Sir Thomas Brisbane, exactly where Cook had landed so a brass plaque could be placed. As an adult, this Aborigine was known as King Harry, the last Aboriginal King of Kissing Point, recognised by all for his courtesy and gentlemanly behaviour.

Harry was a member of the Walemeda or Wallumede Tribe. They were part of a larger people called the Eora. The Walemedas lived along the northern side of the Parramatta River from Lane Cove to Parramatta but were concentrated mainly in the district of the Field of Mars i.e., Dundas, Ermington, Eastwood and North Ryde. They called their land Walumetta.

The Walemedas were hunters and fishermen. The men hunted kangaroos, possums, wallabies, koalas, goannas and birds - bronzewing pigeons, ducks, parrots and gill-birds. These lived in the forests of huge trees which grew along the banks of the Parramatta River, extending inland as far as the Hawkesbury River. The women collected grubs, frogs, seeds and wild fruit. Both men and women fished. Fish was a very important part of their diet, so important that the children were sometimes named after the fish caught. The women often cut two joints off their left little fingers to enable them to fish better by winding the line around the remaining three fingers. The men speared the fish with "fizzgags" from rocks or canoes.

Before the age of three, children were taught to rub their bodies with oil to protect against insect bites - a very real problem living so near the river. It was not unusual for them to wear the entrails of fish on their heads. These would fry in the heat of the sun and the oil would run down their faces and bodies.

In 1788, there were estimated to be between two and three thousand Walemedas in the district but a smallpox epidemic, introduced by the white settlers in 1789, killed more than half the tribe. Two children, Nanbaree and Abaroo, lost their parents in the epidemic and Surgeon White from Kissing Point "adopted" Nanbaree. When the Aborigine died thirty two years later, he was buried, on James Squires' land at Kissing Point, as Andrew Sneap Hammond Douglas White.

Although the authorities wished to develop good relations with the Aborigines, the settlers at The Ponds in the Field of Mars, as was the case all over the colony, did not understand the impact their settlement had on the hunting, fishing and gathering territories of the Walemedas. The relationship between the land, spiritual beliefs, food gathering patterns and social and cultural aspects of the aboriginal way of life was never considered.

The settlers, whose grants were close together as a form of protection from the Aborigines, feared them as an ever present menace, but there is no record of any actual attacks. In fact, the children of early settlers often became friendly with the Aboriginal children, learning some of the main words of the language from their Walemeda playmates. There is evidence of Aboriginal women acting as nursemaids to settlers' children until about 1850.

By 1800, most of our area was occupied by colonists and the Walemedas were dispossessed of their land. When Governor Macquarie arrived, he strived to improve matters by holding annual "feasts" for the tribes of the surrounding area. No doubt some of the Walemeda people attended these. In 1814, he set up a school for Aboriginal children in Parramatta. In 1819, a 14 year old Aboriginal girl took the main prize at the annual school examination, sat for by 20 children from the "Native Institution" and about 100 white children.

The last recorded corroboree in the Field of Mars area was held in Linsley's Bush in Ermington Park about 1866. Most of those taking part were probably from other districts for, from as early as 1821, very few of the Walemeda people remained to carry on their ancient traditions.

Reverend James Bain

Most of the land on which our school stands today was a portion of a land grant received by Reverend James Bain on 3rd October, 1794. Lieutenant Governor Francis Grose granted him 100 acres in the Field of Mars, to be known as Cornish Hill. It extended approximately from Perry Street to Stewart Street and from Marsden Road to the Yates Avenue end of the primary school buildings. It adjoined Thomas Tilley's land.

Reverend Bain had joined the newly-formed New South Wales Corps in England in 1789. Before leaving for New South Wales, he had discussed with the Propagation of the Gospel, its proposal to offer £10 per year to schoolmasters to entice them to go to Sydney Town to teach children in the colony and hopefully raise the "standard of their morals". Although Major Francis Grose, the Corps Commanding officer, was given permission to appoint schoolmasters, the scheme did not appear to eventuate. It is, however, fitting that 200 years ago the original grant holder of our land should have been concerned about the education of the young.

Arriving in New South Wales on the "*H.M.S. Gorgon*" on 21st September, 1791, Bain was appointed for a short time to Parramatta. His signature appears repeatedly for a few months in the register at St. John's Church of England. He was the celebrant of marriages, baptisms and burials of the early settlers including some from The Ponds.

After briefly substituting for Reverend Richard Johnson in Sydney in January, 1792, he was sent to Norfolk Island where he acted as magistrate. He received praise from the governor for his work there in discouraging crime. In 1793, he went with Governor King to New Zealand to return two Maoris who had tried unsuccessfully to teach the settlers of Norfolk to manufacture flax. Grose recalled Bain to Sydney in February, 1794 and eight months later Bain was granted his land as a reward for his services to the colony.

Reverend Bain sold his land to John Macarthur only two months later and for health reasons decided to return to England. He left New South Wales on the "*Daedalus*" on 17th December, 1794, with Major Grose, but his name appeared on Army Lists as Chaplain for the New South Wales Corps until 1797.

Bain Place, which is on his grant of land, is named after Reverend James Bain.

Thomas Tilley

The strip of land running inside the front fence of the school is part of 30 acres granted to Thomas Tilley by Lieutenant Governor Grose on 20th February, 1794. The grant, which extended from the school to halfway along Fullford Street and from the creek in Curtis Oval to about Stewart Street, was known as Tilley Farm.

Thomas Tilley was a convict who came to New South Wales in the First Fleet on one of the six transport vessels, the "*Alexander*". He had been a labourer in the parish of Kinfare in the county of Stafford in England. On 2nd May, 1785, accompanied by Edward Parry and Thomas Ward, with force and arms, he stole six pieces of Fustian cloth, called Queen's cord, valued at £10 and 1 flaxen bag valued at 1/-, from John and James Harrison and William Topping. All these were brought before Alexander Lord Loughborough and Sir Beaumont Hotham Kent at the Staffordshire Summer Assizes on Wednesday, 27th July, 1785. They were found guilty and sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay for a period of seven years.

By the time he arrived in New South Wales, Tilley had already served 2½ years of his sentence. During that time he had been associated with a female convict named Mary Abell. At the age of 28, Mary Abell, a servant from Worcester, had been convicted of grand larceny. She had stolen one linen cloth worth 5/- and had been sentenced to seven years' transportation. Shortly before sailing on the "*Lady Penrhyn*", she gave birth to a son whom she registered as William Tilley. His baptism aboard the "*Lady Penrhyn*" on 20th August, 1787, was the first entry recorded in the civil records of the infant colony of New South Wales. Thomas and Mary married on 4th May, 1788, a couple of months after arriving in the colony. Their son William, however, who had been described at birth by Surgeon White as, "likely to do well", died at Sydney Cove on 26th May, 1788. Mary, herself, died just eight weeks later on 21st July. On 12th August, 1790, Tilley remarried. His new wife was Elizabeth Tilley, a convict, who had arrived on the "*Lady Juliana*" of the Second Fleet in June, 1890.

Here a slight discrepancy arises in the story of Thomas Tilley. His grant of land was only 30 acres, the amount normally allotted to a single man. His remarriage should have made him eligible for 50 acres. It has been suggested that there may have been two Thomas Tilleys in the colony at that time, but no evidence has yet been found to support that theory, so we have assumed that Thomas Tilley of the First Fleet and Thomas Tilley of The Ponds is one and the same person.

Tilley probably settled on his farm in 1794 and was still there in July, 1795 when he gave evidence on Monday 20th, at the trial of a James Barry, who was convicted of breaking and entering Tilley's house and stealing "goods and moneys". The prisoner was sentenced to one thousand lashes on his bare back with a cat-o'-nine-tails.

After this Thomas Tilley disappears from colonial records. There is no mention of him in the musters of 1802 or 1806 and Elizabeth Tilley is listed as a widow in the 1814 muster, but there does not seem to be any record of births, deaths or marriages in the name of Tilley from 1794 to 1800 in the register of St. John's Church of England at Parramatta, where The Ponds settlers normally went on such occasions. According to early maps, Tilley's property was incorporated into William Cox's Brush Farm of 1804, so it is probable that, like most of the early Ponds settlers, his farm was not successful and he sold it before 1802 and left the district.

Tilley Street, off Moffats Drive, is named after Thomas Tilley.



John Macarthur

For a little over six years most of our school property belonged to John Macarthur, one of the most controversial and best known personalities in Australian history. In December, 1794 he bought the hundred acres granted to Rev. James Bain and used it to run his sheep. In March, 1801 he sold the land to Lieutenant William Cox who had come to the colony two months earlier and had succeeded Macarthur as the colony's paymaster.

Born in Plymouth, England in 1767, he came to New South Wales with his wife Elizabeth and his baby son Edward, on the Second Fleet in 1790. Although he was a lieutenant in the New South Wales Corps, his main interest was agriculture. He had developed a love of the land while working on a farm in his late teens. At Elizabeth Farm in Parramatta, for a short time at the Field of Mars and at the Cowpastures, Camden, Macarthur established himself as one of the most successful farmers in the colony and laid the foundation of the Wool Industry in Australia.

In public life he was an ambitious, fiery, aggressive person continually in conflict with the various Governors. He clashed with Hunter, plotted against King, rebelled against Bligh and schemed against Macquarie. On the other hand, in his family life he appeared kind, thoughtful and loving. Although separated for lengthy periods, Macarthur and Elizabeth, his wife, worked as a team. She was his staunchest supporter. She successfully managed his properties when he was sent to England for a court martial in 1801 and again when he was away for 8½ years after the Rum Rebellion. Their five sons were sent or taken to England at about the age of seven to attend school. Some did not return until they were adults. Their eldest daughter, Elizabeth, went with her father and her brother John on one of her father's trips but the English climate affected her health, so she returned to Parramatta to be taught with her young sisters Mary and Emmaline. Their governess was Penelope Lucas who was the first woman to come to New South Wales as a teacher.

For 38 years John Macarthur fought to achieve his ambitions and at the same time helped to build a new nation. After helping to create the Australian Agricultural Company and twice being appointed to the Legislative Council, he deteriorated mentally. He isolated himself on his properties for two years and died on 10th April, 1834 at Camden Park where he is buried.



William Cox

In 1800, William Cox, a recent arrival to the colony of New South Wales purchased 14 farms in The Ponds, Field of Mars area and amalgamated them into the Brush Farm Estate. Included in these were the Tilley and Bain grants on which our school is built.

Cox, who was born in Dorset, England in 1764, joined the army at the age of 33. As a lieutenant in the New South Wales Corps, he sailed to the penal colony of New South Wales on the "*Minerva*" with his wife Rebecca and four young sons. Upon his arrival on 11th January, 1800, he relieved John Macarthur of the position of paymaster and also acquired from him the Brush Farm property.

After adding surrounding grants and buying much stock, he began farming on a large scale. In 1802, Cox's Brush Farm was described by visiting French naturalist Peron as having "a large and elegant mansion, surrounded by more considerable cultivated lands and covered by greater numbers of flocks and labourers, all indicating it to be the property of a rich and industrious owner". Mr. Cox had gone to meet Peron's vessel and urged him and his companion to spend the night at his home. While dinner was prepared they inspected the farm, "every department of which was a new surprise". Cox also had another farm at Castle Hill and the two properties were linked by a wide road of 6 or 7 miles on which a carriage could be driven. The combined area of the two farms was 860 acres on which were sown wheat, maize, barley and oats and grazed 5 horses, 3 mares, 27 cattle and 800 sheep. The mansion mentioned in the report was not the Brush Farm House standing today but the original house built by Cox close to the King Street entrance to our school.

In 1803 a disastrous rust attack ruined the Cox's wheat crops reducing its value from £4,000 to less than £20. Very soon he found himself in serious financial difficulties and in 1804 part of his estate was put up for sale to pay his creditors. The following year, the remainder of the estate was sold and he left the Dundas area. His family settled at Clarendon near Richmond and Cox himself returned to England where he resigned his army commission.

On returning to New South Wales in 1810, he was appointed magistrate at the Hawkesbury and was respected for his humane approach both in the courtroom and as an employer. His reputation as a builder of government buildings grew and his court house in Windsor, which he built in 1820, is still in good repair.

The work for which he is best known is the building of the first road across the rugged Blue Mountains. In 1814 it took him 6 months with the help of 30 convicts to build the 101 miles of road without any serious accidents. To recognise this remarkable achievement Governor Macquarie named the Cox's River after him and he was given the first grant of land west of the Divide. Besides his land near Bathurst, he and his sons took up holdings in the Mulgoa Valley and near Mudgee, where they grew wool of the highest quality. In 1820, his flocks were acclaimed among the six best in the colony.

Cox was a civic-minded man, being president and chairman of several local societies and politically he was active in supporting many reforms for the betterment of the colonists, including the emancipists. He died on 15th March, 1837 and is buried at St. Matthew's Church, Windsor. A window in St. Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney commemorates his life.



Gregory Blaxland

Our school's land changed owners five times in the first eleven years of settlement in Dundas. The fifth owner of the main portion of the school grounds was Gregory Blaxland. He bought the land as part of Brush Farm from D'Arcy Wentworth in 1806 and it was then kept within his family for nearly eighty years.

Blaxland was born in Kent, England, on 17th June, 1778. He came from a well-to-do family and was educated at Kings School, Canterbury. In 1799, he married Elizabeth Spurdon and they had seven children, four of whom were born in Australia.

Sir Joseph Banks, a family friend, encouraged Gregory and his eldest brother John to apply for permission to emigrate to New South Wales. Permission was granted, as the government wished to encourage "a certain number of settlers of responsibility and capital", who would set an example in the colony of "industry and cultivation". Accordingly they were promised free passages, land and convict servants.

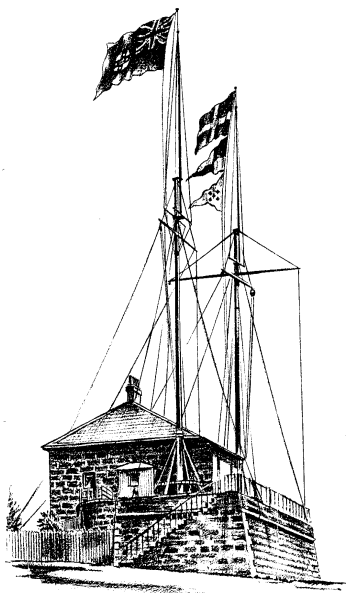
Gregory was the first free settler, not subject to martial law, to come to the colony. Sailing on the "William Pitt" in September, 1805, he was accompanied by his wife, three children, an overseer and, among other things, four sheep, two dogs, four bulls, a hive of bees, plants, seeds, sheets of glass, tools, hams, wine, spirits, medicines, a tent, a plough and £3,000. Soon after arriving he bought the Brush Farm of 450 acres for £1,500. He had already located 4,000 acres of land elsewhere in the colony and had been promised 40 convict servants.

Both Gregory and his brother John, who arrived in 1807, were particularly interested in raising cattle and were the real founders of our cattle industry. Their fixation with this caused conflict with the Governors who were critical of the brothers for refusing to grow grain, despite their large allotment of convict servants. To find more land to graze his cattle, Gregory set out, in May, 1813, to find a route across the Blue Mountains. With William Lawson and William Charles Wentworth, he successfully explored across the ridges of the mountains instead of following the valleys and on reaching the western side found "enough grass to support the stock of the colony for thirty years". However Governor Macquarie would not grant Blaxland land in the interior for his cattle and he was forced to sell much of his stock.

He then turned his attention to growing crops at Brush Farm. He experimented with grasses and tobacco, but his greatest success was with Black Constantia grapes from the Cape of Good Hope. These proved resistant to blight. From these he made a red wine which was the first wine exported from Australia and which was awarded a Silver medal by the Royal Society of Arts in 1823. When he visited England in 1827, bearing a petition from fellow colonists for trial by jury and taxation by representation, he took with him more of his wine which earned a gold medal from the Society.

In about 1820, Gregory built the Brush Farm House which still stands in Lawson Street off Marsden Road. This enhanced the estate, which at that time was described by Governor Macquarie as being a "very snug, good farm and very like an English one in point of comfort and convenience". In 1829, three years after his wife's death, he sold Brush Farm to his son-in-law, Dr Thomas Forster and his daughter Elizabeth and gradually retired from public activities.

From the day he arrived in the colony, Gregory Blaxland considered he was unfairly treated by the Governors and they in turn thought of him as a restless and dissatisfied individual. Perhaps it was the constant conflict that caused him to be a moody person who sadly took his own life at the Vineyard Estate, Parramatta on 1st January, 1853. He is buried in the grounds of All Saints Church at Parramatta.



*Fort Phillip Signal Station, Observatory Hill
(once originally) Flagstaff Hill, Parramatta*

One Tree Hill Flag Telegraph

Where Stewart Street rises to meet Marsden Road and Rutledge Street there is an area originally known as One Tree Hill. A lone tree growing on the farm of George Spurway gave it its name. The hill commanded views eastward along the Parramatta River and to Parramatta and the mountains in the west. As a result of this visibility range, One Tree Hill was used as a vital link in a communication system between Sydney Cove and Old Government House at Parramatta. Governor Phillip considered making Parramatta the capital of the colony and built a governor's residence there. As the Governors frequently resided at Parramatta, the need arose for a means by which they could be speedily informed of shipping movements in and out of the Port of Sydney.

Fort Phillip Signal Station, Observatory Hill, once called Flagstaff Hill.

From 1788, flags were used at Sydney Cove to communicate with visiting ships. In July of that year, Captain Phillip ordered that a flagstaff be erected to announce to the residents of the colony the arrival of the desperately awaited Second Fleet. In 1790, Captain John Hunter set up a signal station on South Head so that Sydney Town, eight kilometres away, could be made aware of approaching ships, although at that time they were very few and far between. By 1798, a flag signalling system, using a tall flagstaff, probably an old ship's mast, was working efficiently.

To defend Sydney from rebellious convicts and possible French attacks, Governor Hunter, in 1803, commenced building Fort Phillip on Flagstaff or Windmill Hill - now Observatory Hill. This was never completed, by about 1821 its eastern wall was converted to an official signal station with two flagstaffs. To the east, the flagstaff at South Head was clearly visible and to the west flagstaffs were erected on transmitting sites at Bedlam Point (Cowell Street, Gladesville), One Tree Hill (Dundas) and May's Hill (corner of Great Western Highway and Pitt Street). These were used to relay messages to Government House at Parramatta. It is thought there may have been another site at Pennant Hills, near Thompson's Corner, but the Hornsby Historical Society believes that this was not the case and the idea had developed because Dundas was at one stage known as Pennant Hills.

Although the official flagstaffs were erected in the 1820s, John Vaughan, the eminent Sydney vexillologist suggests messages may have been relayed from as early as 1801 or even before, possibly as soon as Old Government House was established. Certainly in 1805, Elizabeth Macarthur refers to the flags when writing from Parramatta. She was surprised by her husband's arrival on his return from England, for she "knew not that the colours were up". The visual telegraph system would need to have continued at least until Governor Fitzroy returned to Sydney permanently after his wife was killed when her carriage overturned in Parramatta Park in 1847.

The location of the flagstaff on One Tree Hill appears to have been within the area bounded by Marsden Road, Stewart, Carson and Miller Streets. It was possibly within the grounds of Lauriston House, built by Alexander Eyles in 1887.

At first all communications were by flags using English and local codes. These sent standard messages by the use of numbers. After 1821 the official flagstaffs, of about 75-85 feet, which had been erected, had two arms attached to the staff at different positions which enabled 48 different signals to be telegraphed. Messages could be sent from Sydney and received at Parramatta within minutes.

In 1832 Captain Nicholson, Port Jackson's Harbour Master, introduced a code of signals which combined the Marryat's Code of Signals for the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service and added the Colonial Signals, already in use in the signaling system between Sydney and Parramatta. These were descriptive and numerical flags and could be hoisted to describe, for example, that a ship with male convicts from Ireland has entered the harbour etc. This code of signals was set out in the New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory of 1833.



Brush Farm

From about 1795, the district around Dundas, as far as Thompson's Corner on Pennant Hills Road, was known as North Brush, because of the dense vegetation in the area. By 1800, the name Brush Farm was commonly used when referring to the James Bain grant, owned at that time by John Macarthur and officially known as Cornish Hill.

Brush Farm House, built in about 1820 by Gregory Blaxland

Almost immediately after coming to Australia in January, 1800, William Cox commenced buying land within the vicinity of the Bain grant and formed it into the Brush Farm Estate. The original grants acquired were from Bain, Wheeler, Campbell, Bride, Zadoc Pettit, Sarah Pettit, Patullo, Redman and Robbs, totalling an area of 455 acres.

Joseph Holt was an Irish convict who had been sentenced for his part in the Irish rebellion of 1798 and had sailed from Ireland under the charge of Lieutenant Cox. He was appointed manager of Brush Farm and settled there, with his family, on 1st February, 1800. He very quickly cleared 60 acres of land to plant wheat.

Cox rapidly expanded Brush Farm by buying more of the farms around him and soon it had grown to 1,380 acres - 400 cleared, 248 under wheat and maize, and stocked with 24 horses, 20 head of horned cattle, 1,000 sheep and 200 hogs. The labourers on the property did not have the luxury of a plough. They worked with large, thick-handled hoes about 23 centimetres deep and 20 centimetres wide. With these they turned the soil and left it to "rot" during the winter. In summer, because they were unused to the hot climate, they could not bear "any clothes on them in the heat of the day" while working in the fields. They were paid twenty shillings per acre for breaking up the ground, ten shillings for hoeing and planting, ten for chipping, sowing and covering and twenty shillings for reaping and binding.

The original Brush Farm homestead was built in about 1801, on a site very close to and probably on, part of our school grounds. It was on "a gently sloping piece of ground of about two or three acres in extent, fronting the streamlet (Ponds Creek) that meanders down the valley". In 1805, the homestead was advertised as having "four rooms on the floor, besides a kitchen, storeroom etc., an excellent garden of about two acres, well stocked with lemon, orange, pear, apple, peach and other fruit trees; a barn 60 feet long by 24, with a four-stall stable at one end and an ox-house at the other; a building 190 feet long divided into useful storerooms etc. and a loft over about 60 feet of it for granaries; with various other convenient out houses and yards complete for stock and is altogether one of the most eligible situations for a family in the colony".

On the night of 14th March, 1804, when Irish convicts staged an uprising at Castle Hill, the house provided shelter for Joseph Holt, his family and the Cox family. As they feared for their lives, it was necessary to secure the gates and the house with chains and to post guards for their protection.

Two weeks later, 14 farms belonging to the Brush Farm Estate were auctioned by Simeon Lord. D'Arcy Wentworth purchased five of these and when the remainder of Brush Farm was put up for sale on 14th January, 1805, Wentworth acquired more of the property. At about this time, some of the original merino sheep, brought from the Cape of Good Hope, were grazing at Brush Farm which also boasted the only English bull in the colony.

Just over two years later, on 5th February, 1807, the estate changed hands again and Gregory Blaxland became its owner. His Brush Farm consisted of Cox's original 455 acres and remained unchanged for almost the remainder of the century. Blaxland's family evidently settled there within a few years, for it is reported that four of the Blaxland children were born there between 1810 and 1817. The farm was used to carry out experiments in many fields of agriculture and animal husbandry, seeking to breed animals and crops appropriate for this strange environment. He experimented with cattle, sheep fodder, oats for hay and grasses, producing the first buffalo grass in the country. In his vineyard, another first in the colony, he developed a strain of grapes immune to blight and also raised 200 plants of a new variety from seeds so they would be "more assimilated to the nature of the climate". They flourished well and it may have been cuttings from these vines that Blaxland advertised for sale at Brush Farm in 1830. Those applying received fifty cuttings free and paid one shilling and six pence per hundred above that number.

Blaxland had built the present Brush Farm House in about 1820. At that time it probably consisted of a two-storey, four-roomed house with a separate kitchen area. In August, 1831, Blaxland sold the house and property to his son-in-law Thomas Forster, husband of his daughter Eliza. Forster had been a surgeon in the British Army and had served in India, Wales and Ireland before settling permanently in New South Wales. In 1844 the property was leased to his son William for a term of 40 years. Thomas Forster died in 1853 and the estate went to his widow, who lived until 1876. Upon her death, William and his wife Eliza inherited Brush Farm.

William Forster appears to have been an exceptional man of many talents. He was born while his parents were stationed in India and when they came to Australia he was educated at Kings School in Parramatta. He was a squatter, writer, poet and politician. In 1856 he served in the first parliament under responsible government and continued in Parliament until his death. He was Premier of New South Wales for a short time, colonial secretary and colonial treasurer and was a strong supporter for the establishment of a Public School system. After his death at Brush Farm in 1882, Freeman's Journal described him as "the boldest, frankest, least selfish and most honourable man who has ever taken part in our public life".

After William Forster's death, Brush Farm was purchased by Sydney theatrical manager, John Bennet and Lancelot Edward Threlkeld. In 1894, the New South Wales Government rented, and later bought, Brush Farm for use as an institution to house destitute boys. Until 1910 it was known as Brush Farm Home for Boys or the Carpentarian Reformatory (named after Mary Carpenter).

Mary Carpenter, an English philanthropist, founded free schools for poor children. These schools were known as Carpentarian schools, ragged schools, reformatories, or industrial schools and helped to rehabilitate delinquent and destitute young boys by providing them with instruction in vocational skills. At Brush Farm they were taught orchard work, blacksmithing and tailoring. After helping construct the first buildings of Mount Penang Training Centre at Gosford, the boys were transferred there and Brush Farm became a home for intellectually handicapped children and adults. The house has now passed from the control of the Department of Corrective Services and is now owned by Ryde City Council.

At about the same time as the Government acquired Brush Farm, the Bain grant and our school land were separated from the estate and subdivided into small holdings. Sometime before 1923 the school area was purchased by Len Farlow, a dairy farmer from Chatswood who used the property to graze his dry cows. Between 1926 and 1930, he rented it to Harold Sheaves, who lived with his family in a blue timber cottage, on the property in King Street. Mr. Sheaves kept dairy cattle and took them twice daily for milking, to sheds situated near the present Lottie Stewart Hospital. Quinces, plums and loquat trees grew on the farm.

In 1947, the Housing Commission of New South Wales placed a cover on land in Dundas Valley, including Mr. Farlow's property. It was resumed in the 1950s and in 1957 the Education Department built Yates Avenue Public School on what had been a portion of Brush Farm Estate for about a century.

The Pennant Hills (Dundas) Quarry

SIR THOMAS MITCHELL RESERVE

**THIS LOCALITY WAS PART OF THE PONDS SETTLEMENT
OF 14 SETTLERS WHO WERE GRANTED FARMS
BY GOVERNOR PHILLIP IN AUGUST, 1791.
LATER, IN 1832, A METAL QUARRY WAS OPENED HERE BY
SURVEYOR GENERAL SIR THOMAS MITCHELL, WHICH
SUPPLIED BLUE METAL FOR THE STREETS OF SYDNEY AND
SUBURBS FOR SEVENTY YEARS FROM 1832 - 1902.**

This notice stands at the Alexander Street, Dundas, entrance to the site of the former Pennant Hills (Dundas) Quarry. Football fields, now used by the Dundas Valley Rugby Union Football Club, cover part of this area which was identified by Major Thomas Mitchell 166 years ago.

Over the centuries molten volcanic lava had welled up from the earth's centre, pushing its way through sandstone and shale, fusing it to create an extensive flow or dyke. The blue metal extracted from this flow was of very high quality, acclaimed by many important overseas geologists who visited the outcrop. On 1st January, 1833, the *Sydney Gazette* reported:

"The dark stone now employed in repairing the roads of Sydney is well adapted for this purpose and when it once binds will prove of several years duration. It is obtained from Pennant Hills and we are happy to find there is abundance to supply the whole town."

Fourteen days later it stated:

"The roads of the principal Sydney streets are at length beginning to assume a very improved appearance. The stone being laid down being of a very desirable character and when once bound will be free alike from excess of dust in dry weather and from mud in wet. In thus studying the convenience of the public the Surveyor-General has evinced a degree of judgment and consideration that entitles him to great credit."

Until the end of convict transportation from Britain in the 1840s, convicts worked the quarry. They were housed in a stockade erected on land near the present Fullford Street, between Rope Street and Quarry Road. Herbert Rumsey, in 1910, wrote about an old convict telling of a tree with a horizontal limb, near the quarry, being used as a gallows. On the flat adjoining it the bodies of the executed convicts were buried. This was disputed by James Jervis in 1939. He states that convicts were not executed without a trial and that there is no evidence of any convict being hung at Dundas. He also regarded the story of the burying of convicts there as being doubtful.

When convict labour was no longer available the Government leased the quarry to the Sydney Municipal Council. Around 1900 a Mr. Barrett was contracted to mine the quarry, breaking the metal by hand and a Mr. Bayliss contracted to cart the metal. He took it by horse and drays over a very rough track, marked out in convict times from the quarry to the Government wharf at Ermington. There it was dumped into punts and taken down the Parramatta River to a wharf at the foot of Market Street in the city.



The Quarry Manager's House, built in about 1910 and demolished in the early 1990s

Before 1914, the quarry was managed by a Mr. Trevettin with a Mr. Phillis working for him. By that time the quarry was very deep, with water filling the lower levels. The men, working with a dray drawn by two horses took the metal from the lower levels up a very narrow road along the edge of the cliff face. One evening nearing knock-off time, the leading horse, anxious to reach the top with its last load for the day, missed its footing and pulled the dray and its team-mate over the edge, drowning them in the water below. Mr. Trevettin's own son was also killed while working in the quarry and soon afterwards the family moved away from Dundas to the South Coast. A timber manager's house on the corner of Quarry Road and Yates Avenue was built during Trevettin's time, sometime before 1910. The house was demolished in the mid 1990s to make way for a medium density housing development.

Before the commencement of World War 1, the quarry was abandoned and gradually filled with water, but about 1933 a company called Hume Pipe, reopened it, wanting the metal for use in making concrete pipes. A new manager, Mr. Bill Richardson, who lived in the manager's house, was appointed in 1938. Mr. Richardson grew up in Bombo and having worked in both the Bombo and Port Kembla quarries was well acquainted with how they functioned. At Dundas in those days, a small train working on a winch brought the stone to the top of the quarry. Much of the water had been pumped out but it was still quite deep. Once the first lip had been worked out it was necessary to get rid of the remaining water. Mr. Richardson felt the only way to bring it up was by using a crane with a winch and a $\frac{3}{4}$ ton bucket. His superiors disagreed and called in a consultant engineer from Melbourne who concurred with Mr. Richardson and the project went ahead successfully. Later on they were able to use a pump but the only type found to be suitable was the type used on windmills.



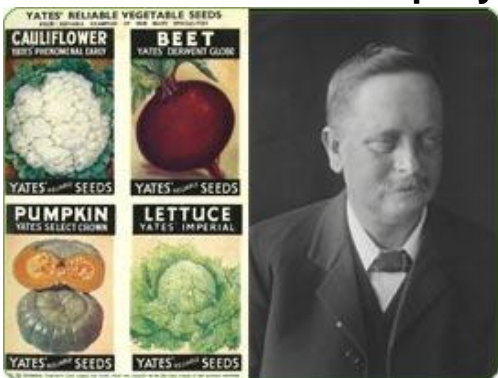
Quarry train containing blue metal being winched to the top of the quarry in the late 1930s

At this stage, the quarry was not a good quarry to work. It was very deep and it had too much overburden of top soil and decomposed rock. At any one time only six or seven workers were needed to work the quarry and sometimes as few as four. In 1942, the Water Board needed good quality metal for its works and this boosted business for a few years - the metal now being taken from Dundas Station by train. Mr. Hume died in 1945 and the quarry was closed the following year, once again to fill with water.

Because of its great depth, the stagnant water was very cold and anyone swimming in the quarry cramped very quickly. In an interview in 1988, Mr. Richardson recalled four deaths from drowning during his time in Dundas. In 1938, a Police sergeant's son, going for a Saturday afternoon swim, dived in and drowned. In the 1940s, two men committed suicide and after the Housing Commission came to the Valley a young boy drowned while swimming.

Late in the 1950s, using a floating pump which operated day and night for 3 months, the water was pumped out of the pit into the creek. Once dry, Parramatta Council opened it as the local rubbish tip. The resulting odours were not very pleasant for the local residents but the end result may have compensated for the inconvenience when eventually the tip was closed and converted into a football field and children's playground - a prospect undreamt of by the people who worked and died at the quarry.

Arthur Yates and Company



Yates Avenue, from which our school derives its named, was named after Arthur Yates and Company who ran experimental seed farms in the Dundas area for about 35 years from the mid 1920s. One site of 7 acres fronted Kissing Point Road behind the present day Army Barracks, running down as far as the gully. The other, of 40 acres, extended from about Telopea Public School to Moffats Drive and from behind the Telopea shopping centre and school to Kissing Point Road, stretching from the creek near Kirby Street to five or six houses past Sturt Street.

George Yates and his son, Samuel, had established a seed company in Manchester, England, in 1826. Samuel's second son, Arthur, left Manchester in 1879 because of ill health and settled in New Zealand, where he began his own seed business in 1883.

Arthur's health did not improve, so, seeking a better climate, he moved to Sydney in 1887 and again started a seed operation. The business prospered from the beginning and, after his marriage in 1888, Arthur built a substantial residence in Burwood. A family holiday retreat and cool climate trial ground was purchased in the Southern Highlands of NSW in 1900. This beautiful property is now known as "Invergowrie" and invites visitors as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme.

Prior to World War 1, the company imported most of its seed from Europe, America or other parts of the world. During the war years this became increasingly difficult.

At this time Yates purchased a property called "Derwentside" in the Derwent Valley of Tasmania. This enabled them to grow many of their own seeds, which were then brought to Sydney for packaging and marketing. At that time the company sold flower, vegetable and farm seeds like clovers, grasses, wheat, oats and maize. The trial grounds were established in Dundas in the mid 1920s to test the performance of these seeds.

On these new farms around 1,000 different varieties of flower seeds and 500 different vegetable seeds were grown. They conducted research and trials to determine the suitability of imported seeds for Australian conditions and to improve the lasting quality and appearance of flowers. They began to develop strains of vegetables that would grow all year round, to alter their shapes to suit the needs of food processors and their colours to appeal to the eye of the housewife. In general, they improved the quality of the plants and provided better seeds for Australian farmers and gardeners.

Water to irrigate the farms was obtained from a dam near the present Sturt Street. During dry seasons in the early 1930s, water was pumped from the water-filled Dundas quarry. The water flooded the nearby creek and ran naturally down to the gardens, filtering and cleansing itself on the way. In 1953 however, when drought hit again and more water was needed, the quarry water was unsuitable because of the lack of fresh water it contained at the time.



The Dundas Trial Seed Grounds in the late 1950s with approaching housing development

Arthur Yates had four sons, all of whom were involved in the company at some time. When he died in 1926 his four sons, Max, Guy, Harold and Phillip and his grandson, Peter, carried on the company. Guy's sons, Michael and Timothy, carried the family tradition into the 1980s but there are no longer any family members involved in the company. A local resident, Mr. Gordon Butler, worked for the company for 32 years starting in Tasmania and moving to Dundas and then to Castle Hill. He helped to compile some editions of the well-known Yates Garden Guide, which Arthur Yates first wrote in 1895 and which has advised the home gardener on all their garden needs for more than 100 years.

Gordon recalls, as do some other local residents, the beauty of the Dundas flower gardens in full bloom, providing a magnificent carpet of colour. Most of Yates' property in Dundas Valley was resumed by the Housing Commission and subdivided for housing during 1953. The other farms were sold by about 1960 and a new Trial Grounds and Research Station was established at Castle Hill. In 1977, the present day 30ha Research Station was established at Narromine in the Macquarie Valley.

Yates became a public company in 1951, but in 1985, just before their centenary, they were taken over by Cheetham Salt and a year later by Industrial Equity. In 1993, Yates was again floated on the Sydney Stock Exchange and became a public company once more. Although none of the Yates family ever lived in Dundas, their name and work will be remembered while Yates Avenue and our school remain.

Street Names

A walk through the streets of Dundas Valley is a walk through history. Of the sixty streets within the Dundas Valley area, at least forty-five have names of historical significance.

Aboriginal Words

Dandarbong:	very pretty.
Illarangi (possibly illa-langi):	camp on hill.
Melaleuca:	paper bark.

Ships of the First and Second Fleet

Sirius:	A warship of 520 tons. Flagship of the First Fleet commanded by Governor Phillip.
Supply:	An armoured tender of 170 tons commanded by Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball.
Charlotte:	Convict transport ship of the First Fleet.
Friendship:	Convict transport ship of the First Fleet.
Alexander:	Convict Transport ship which carried Thomas Tilley to New South Wales.
Neptune:	Convict transport ship of the Second Fleet. Arrived in June, 1790.

Important Places

Quarry Road:	Constructed to take blue metal from Dundas quarry to Government Wharf at Ermington.
Sir Thomas Mitchell Reserve:	Named after the Surveyor General who discovered and opened the quarry on which the reserve is situated.
Kissing Point Road:	A "kissing point" marked the limit of river navigation for seagoing ships. Their keels would "kiss" the shelving riverbed.
Ponds Creek:	Runs through the area known as The Ponds which extended from the quarry to Subiaco Creek, Rydalmere.
Curtis Oval:	Named after Henry Curtis who held an early land grant of 50 acres.

Early Land Grants

When convicts had completed their sentences, some were given grants of land to encourage them to take up farming. Some were in The Ponds, Field of Mars area. Other grants were given to marines or members of the New South Wales Corps.

Brand:	Curtis Brand, granted 30 acres in 1791, convict 1st Fleet.
Summers:	John Summers, 30 acres, 1791.
Varndell:	Edward Varndell, 30 acres, 1791, convict 1st Fleet.
Pedrick:	John Pedrick, 30 acres, 1792.
Tilley:	Thomas Tilley, 30 acres, 1792, convict 1st Fleet.
Warman:	James Warman, 40 acres.
Rope:	Anthony Rope, 70 acres, 1792, convict 1st Fleet.
Carver:	Joseph Carver, 80 acres, 1792, convict.
Seymour:	John Seymour, 50 acres, 1793, convict 1st Fleet.
Bain:	Rev. James Bain, 100 acres, October, 1794.
Manning:	James Manning, 80 acres, 1792, Marine Private
Simpson:	Percy Simpson, 90 acres, Assistant Surveyor.
Robbs:	James Robbs, 25 acres, 1797.
Curtis:	Henry Curtis, 50 acres

Early Land Owners

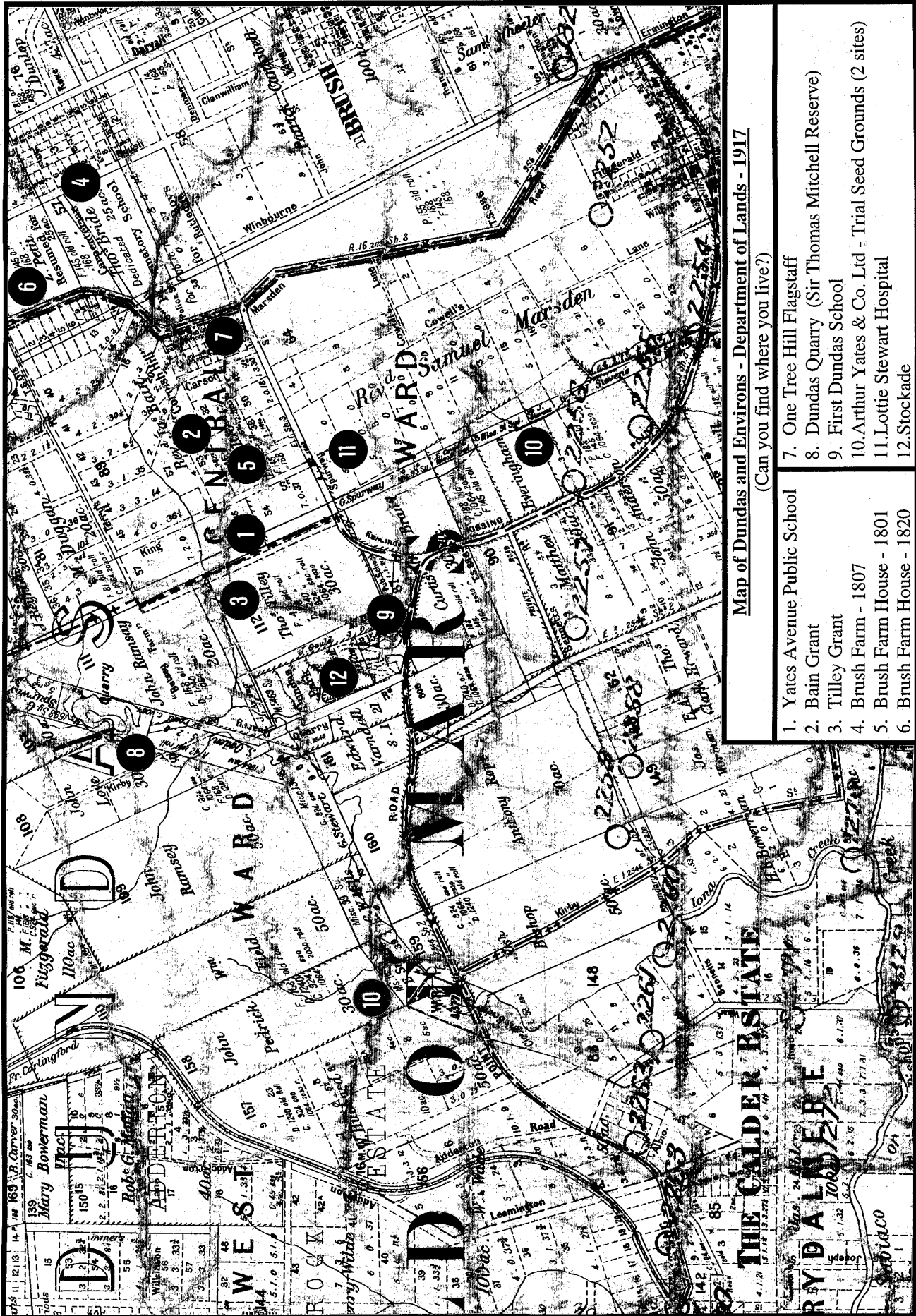
Marsden:	Samuel Marsden, 100 acres at North Brush (Thompson's Corner), 1796; 376 acres from One Tree Hill to Parramatta River, 1803.
Lord:	Simeon Lord, 200 acres of Brush Farm with D'Arcy Wentworth, 1804.
Cox:	William Cox, Brush Farm, 1800-1805.
Forster:	Dr Thomas Forster, Brush Farm, 1829-1853.
Spurway:	George Spurway and family, near Brush Farm beyond Spurway Street and south to Parramatta River, 1850s.
Moffat:	Captain Moffat, Adderton Estate, 1840s.

Explorers

Evans:	George Evans, opened up large areas of New South Wales west of the Great Dividing Range, 1813- 1818.
Sturt:	Charles Sturt, discovered and explored the Darling and Murray Rivers, 1827.

Important People

King:	Philip Gidley King, Governor of New South Wales, 1800-1806.
Perry:	Captain Samuel Perry, Deputy Surveyor General, 1835
Stewart:	Sir Frederick Stewart, resident of Dundas, Federal Member for Parramatta, philanthropist, whose home became Lottie Stewart Hospital.
Fullford:	James Fullford, first Mayor of Dundas, fruitgrower.
Ryan:	John Ryan, Alderman on first Council, 1889.
Adamson:	George Adamson, Alderman, 1889. Postmaster and storekeeper, Ermington.
Eyles:	Alexander Eyles, Alderman, orchardist, son of early land grant holder Jos Eyles.
Hart:	William Ewart Hart, native of Parramatta, pioneer of aviation and holder of first pilot's licence in Australia, 1885-1943.
Carson:	Thomas Carson, cook at Brush Farm, studied at night to become Town Clerk of Dundas.
Rumsey:	Herbert Rumsey, 1866-1956, historian. Owned nursery and seed farm near Telopea Station.
Yates:	Arthur Yates, owned experimental seed farms behind Lottie Stewart Hospital and around Telopea shopping centre from the 1920s-1960s.



Map of Dundas and Environs - Department of Lands - 1917

(Can you find where you live?)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Yates Avenue Public School | 7. One Tree Hill Flagstaff |
| 2. Bain Grant | 8. Dundas Quarry (Sir Thomas Mitchell Reserve) |
| 3. Tilley Grant | 9. First Dundas School |
| 4. Brush Farm - 1807 | 10. Arthur Yates & Co. Ltd - Trial Seed Grounds (2 sites) |
| 5. Brush Farm House - 1801 | 11. Lottie Stewart Hospital |
| 6. Brush Farm House - 1820 | 12. Stockade |

School Houses

Since its inception Yates Avenue Public School has been divided into four houses for sporting and service competition. Each is named after an important person in our local history - Samuel **Marsden**, George **Spurway**, Sir Frederick **Stewart** and Herbert **Rumsey**. Their stories now follow. The corresponding school sporting house colours are shown in brackets.



Marsden (green)

Samuel Marsden, the son of a blacksmith, was born in Yorkshire, England in June, 1764. Sponsored by an evangelical group within the Church of England, he studied at Cambridge, but before finishing his course he was recommended as assistant to the chaplain of the colony of New South Wales. He was ordained in May, 1793 and in the following July left England with his new wife, Elizabeth, to take up his post, arriving in Sydney Cove on 10th March, 1794.

After briefly visiting Norfolk Island, he was stationed at Parramatta in 1795. The following year he was permitted, as an officer, to select 100 acres of land at North Brush, Field of Mars, now

Thompson's Corner. He called his property Dundas Farm after the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas, Secretary of State for the Colonies. In 1803 he selected a further 376 acres which stretched from One Tree Hill (corner of Marsden Road and Rutledge Street) to the Parramatta River. Both properties had spectacular views. He was obviously a homesick man who never looked at the solitary tree on One Tree Hill without thinking of himself as a solitary Christian, deprived of the companionship of his youth.

Within seven or eight years he had become a wealthy landowner, a farmer and a prominent magistrate. He saw no conflict of interest between his religious calling and his acquisition of material assets, believing he had come to a country which was in a "state of nature and was obliged to plant and sow or starve". Governor King regarded Marsden as the best practical farmer in the colony. In July, 1803, the *Sydney Gazette* reported that Marsden had cultivated upwards of 20 acres using a plough instead of manual labour, setting an example for other settlers. He also bred heavy-framed Suffolk sheep and sold the wool in England but his wool production did not compare with John Macarthur, of whom he strongly disapproved.

Until the arrival of Lachlan Macquarie in 1810, Marsden's relationship with the governors of the colony had been cordial, but he firmly opposed Macquarie's attempts to civilise the aborigines and rehabilitate ex-convicts. Marsden was convinced that only rigorous discipline could lift the debased morality of the convicts and his severity as a magistrate earned him the reputation of the flogging parson. The rigid Marsden and the authoritarian governor frequently clashed.

Meanwhile, he carried on as pastor at Parramatta, opening a Sunday School, building a new church, taking an interest in the orphan house and school and trying to recruit more assistant chaplains from England. His moves to evangelise the convicts were constantly frustrated and his bid to convert the aborigines failed, so he turned his attention to taking Christianity to the New Zealand Maoris whom he felt were more receptive. Between 1814 and 1837, he visited New Zealand seven times and promoted missionary activities which prepared the way for European settlement.

Marsden died at Windsor at the age of 74 leaving a son, Charles and five daughters. He is buried at St. John's Church Parramatta. He is remembered both for the important contributions he made to the development of agriculture in New South Wales and the prominent part he played in the public affairs of the colony.

Spurway (red)

George Spurway was born in Shute, Devon, England in June, 1806. On 27th March, 1827, George, a labourer, at the age of 20, entered the property of his employer, James Newberry, and stole four sovereigns, two guineas and five articles valued at £1. He was tried at the Exeter Assizes in Devon, convicted of the offence and sentenced to death. This sentence was later commuted to transportation for life.

He arrived in New South Wales on the "*Claudine*" in 1829 and was assigned to Gregory Blaxland, the owner of Brush Farm. In 1838, while still working at Brush Farm as overseer to Blaxland's son-in-law, Dr Forster, he was granted a Ticket of Leave. It is quite likely that he often worked and walked on the land on which our school stands today.

George married Frances Johnson, also a convict, in April, 1835 at St. Anne's Church, Ryde. They had five children. He was granted a Conditional Pardon in 1846 and in the 1850s bought land extending from near Brush Farm to beyond Spurway Street and south to the Parramatta River. He built a house by the river near the end of Wharf Road, but lived mainly in one built where Lottie Stewart Hospital now stands. His son James, in later years, lived in "Riverview", the brick house which stands on the corner of Rutledge Street and Marsden Road. Frances, his wife, died in 1859 and two years later he married Ann Hughes, daughter of a school master. George and his three sons were orchardists and nurserymen. The Spurway orchards were the largest in the district, growing prize winning citrus fruits, almonds and quince.

In 1869 Spurway donated land to the Council of Education for the first Dundas National School, the predecessor of Yates Avenue Public School. George Spurway died on 30th April, 1885 aged 78. He was buried in St. Anne's Cemetery, Ryde. Some of his descendants were very successful in public life. His grandson Fred E. Spurway was Mayor of Dundas several times while another, James Spurway, was Secretary for Railways. Many others still live in Dundas and the surrounding districts.

Stewart (yellow)



Sir Frederick Stewart, after whom Stewart Street is named, was a respected philanthropist whose home and land in Dundas became, through his generosity, the Lottie Stewart Hospital.

He was born in Newcastle in 1884, joined the State Railways at the age of 16 and rapidly rose to an administration position. Obviously he was an enterprising young man. He had bought 50 acres of land at Chullora in 1919 and when the government of the day would not extend transport services there, he commenced his own bus service. His Metropolitan Omnibus Company ran between Bankstown and Strathfield, eventually carrying 16 million people each year. In 1931 he sold it to the State Government.

His accomplishments were many and varied. He helped finance Australian National Airways and was its first chairman. In 1933, he founded radio station 2CH for the World Council of Churches. He was elected to Federal Parliament as the member for Parramatta in 1931 and within months was appointed to the ministry, handling, over the years, the portfolios of Commerce, Supply, External Affairs and Social Services. For sometime he was Under Secretary for Employment and made a special study of unemployment and national insurance, became an authority on these subjects. He was influential in having legislation concerning these issues introduced.

He was also concerned for children who were undernourished and, with the Teachers' Federation and Health Department, established the Stewart Preventorium (now Stewart House) at Curl Curl, where these children could be helped. His generosity was not confined to Australia as he also established the Methodist Mission Stewart Hospital in New Britain. He was knighted in 1935.

In 1930 the Stewart family moved from Burwood to Dundas, to live in the Parramatta electorate. Frederick Stewart had purchased land, which had once belonged to George Spurway and earlier to Samuel Marsden, in present day Stewart Street. There he built their family home and called it "St. Cloud" after their Burwood house. Only the three Stewart girls came with their parents to Dundas, as their three older brothers were already working in the city. The eldest daughter, Mrs. Doris Payne, recalled that Dundas was thought of as being in the country in those days and seemed a long way from Burwood. She remembered this area as being a beautiful rural valley of rolling hills. Their property was a dairy farm and they bred white Berkshire pigs. A manager and a gardener looked after the farm.

Sir Frederick's wife, Lottie, died in 1943 following a long illness. He was a member of the Eastwood Methodist Church and gave his home and farm of 18 acres to the Central Methodist Mission. His wife's illness had made him aware of the needs of the terminally ill and he requested that a hospital be built on the site as a memorial to her. He donated a further £1,000 for furnishing and equipment and his family contributed another £1,000. The Lottie Stewart Hospital was opened in 1948 with 40 beds catering for "chronic and incurable cases of any age or sex". The family house was originally used as nurses' quarters, but when extensions were built in 1976, it was incorporated into a hostel for aged persons and named Tebbutt Lodge. The hospital maintains a high reputation of service to the community, fulfilling its aims to give dedicated physical and spiritual care to people in need.

Sir Frederick Stewart, who was described by his daughter as a dynamic man who always endeavoured to do good, died in 1961. His memory, however, will live on while the Public School children and teachers of New South Wales contribute to the support of Stewart House at Curl Curl and while our Yates Avenue Public School children play sport under the Stewart House banner.

Rumsey (blue)

Herbert John Rumsey, after whom Rumsey Crescent is named, was born in Leamington, England on 24th February, 1866. He came to Australia as a child and was educated at North Sydney Public School and Fort Street Boys High School. On April 7th, 1900 he married Mary Rippon in the Methodist Church at Bowral. They had two sons, Roy and Eric, and three daughters, Eva, Amy and Iris. In 1918 when Iris was only five years old, Mary died and Herbert was left alone to raise the children with the help of his eldest daughter, Eva.

Before his marriage Herbert Rumsey had been a stationer and newsagent in Parramatta. After marriage, he commenced a seed and nursery business at Tallong in the Southern Highlands and later moved it to Dundas. A service station now stands on the site of Rumsey's nursery and seed shop in Adderton Road near the present day Telopea Station. His major business concern was Rumsey's Seed Store in Church Street Parramatta of which he was the founder and remained the managing director until 1948, when he was 82 years old.

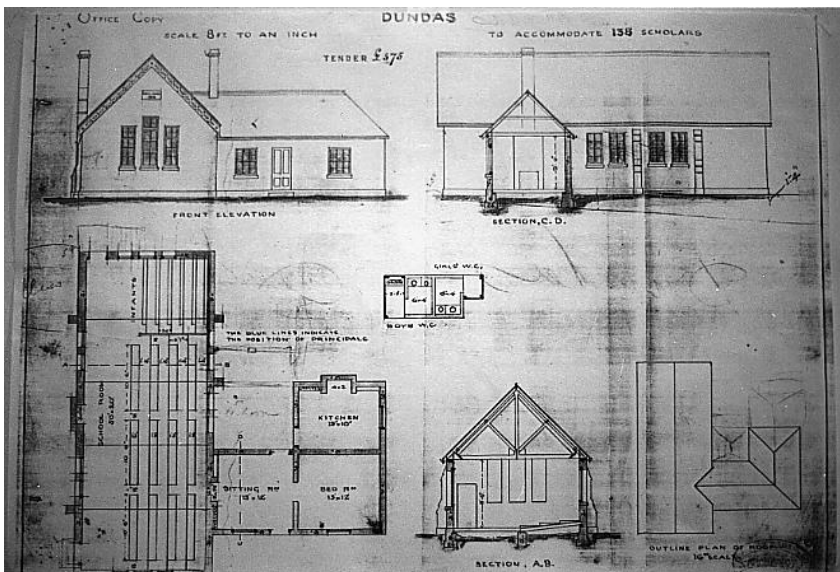
Horticulture may have been his livelihood but his greatest love was history. He was a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists (London) and was instrumental in forming the Society of Australian Genealogists (Sydney) in 1932. He was its first president and edited the publication "Australian Genealogist" from its commencement in 1934 until 1943. He was also a member of the Australian Historical Society. On September 23rd, 1910 he read before the Society a paper entitled "Some Notes on the Early History of Dundas" and in 1922 presented "First Ten Years of Dundas". It was from these two papers that we learnt the initial information about the origins of our area.

Rumsey was an author of both horticultural and historical books including one entitled "Pioneers of Sydney Cove", which was about families of the First Fleet. His article in the "*Farmer and Settler*" of 25th June 1924 is the earliest account of the origins of the Granny Smith apple.

Herbert John Rumsey, family man, business man, horticulturist, historian and author died suddenly at his home in Dundas in February, 1956, three days before his 90th birthday.

The First Dundas School (1869-1957)

Dundas Public School, Field of Mars, was the predecessor to Yates Avenue Public School and was the first of its kind in the Pennant Hills district. It was built on half an acre of land donated by George Spurway and stood on the north side of the present day junction of Stewart Street and Kissing Point Road.



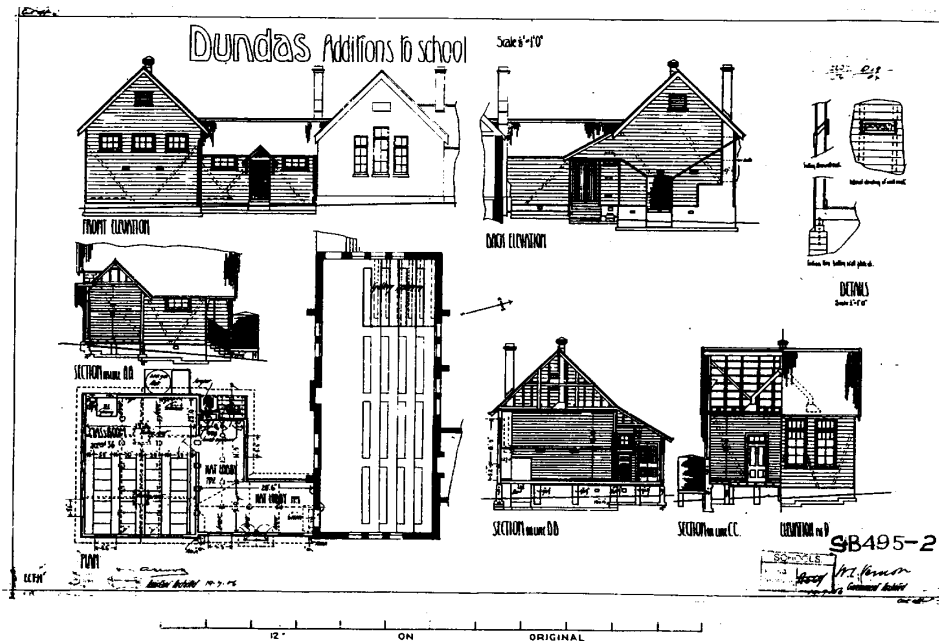
Original plan of the first Dundas School, 1869 - 1957

The official opening by Mr. Henry Parkes, on 23rd September, 1869, was attended by local dignitaries, many of whom, together with local residents, had contributed £149 toward the £596 cost of the school. About 70 children were enrolled and their first teacher was Jonathan Sharp.

Mr. Sharp had come to Dundas with seven years teaching experience behind him but life for him at the school was not always easy. Within five years his pupils numbered about 100 but he had problems with poor attendance. The children were frequently ill and the parents required the boys to work in the orchards and break stone in the quarry for 2 to 2½ days each week. The existing well, which provided the school and his family with water, became a threat to their health and he applied for a replacement. The parents disapproved of his assistant teacher who was eventually forced to resign. In 1882 his son Cecil was appointed as his pupil teacher but does not appear to have remained there. Sharp had indicated his desire to be moved from Dundas in 1880 but the move was never forthcoming. In 1887 his daughter Clementine (Clemmie) aged 17, became his pupil teacher, replacing Mary Cash who had been appointed in the previous year.

At about this time (1886 - 1888), the Education Department was involved in a battle with James Spurway, son of George Spurway. The Department wanted to acquire an acre of land adjacent to the school because the existing site was considered to be too confining for the children. Agreement on a suitable price could not be reached. Eventually, the Department resumed the land for the school and Spurway received 132 pounds 14 shillings as adequate compensation.

In 1889, Mr. Sharp became ill with asthma and was forced to retire in October, 1890, at the age of 63 years, because of his health. He had spent 21 years at Dundas. His request to close the school for one day in September to give the children a special "treat", possibly because of his retirement, was refused. Peter J. Wallace, from Goulburn, had come as assistant teacher during Mr. Sharp's illness and during that time applied for repairs to be done to the school during the holidays. The walls were very damp from recent rains and needed painting and several floor boards and the bell post were rotting.



Plan of the 1907 additions to the first Dundas School

In 1891, Alfred Sellars was appointed principal teacher. By now it was a Class 7 school with an average attendance of 50 children. Clemmie Sharp requested a transfer to Summer Hill, possibly to be with her parents, and pupil teacher Senior Warren McMahon replaced her. At this time the authorities were anxious for gardening to be included in the curriculum. A report to the department from Inspector Albert Gale suggested that a strip of land from the Tilley grant, now used by John Gould, be added to the school's 1½ acres to be used as gardens. He wrote, "At Dundas there is no provision made for giving the boys lessons in the management of the kitchen garden. The flower garden, after it is once put in order, should be exclusively the work of the girls and the production of culinary vegetables the occupation of the boys".

Pupil teachers were often very young when they commenced their teaching careers. Under the guidance of the principal teacher they taught the lower grades and at the same time received a general education and sat for exams each year. Christian Henry Reid was only 15 years 9 months when he came to Dundas from Castlereagh in 1892. The school numbers were rising again and by 1894 enrolments had reached 83. The staff consisted of Alfred Sellars, the principal teacher, Christian Reid, a male pupil teacher, and Katie McKay, a female pupil teacher. All taught in the one large room with some children using the weather shed. Mr. Sellars applied for new classrooms.

In 1894 Dundas was quite isolated and regarded as "the country". Urgent messages had to be sent by telegram, as on one occasion when a temporary teacher was needed. Both Mr. Sellars and Miss MacKay became ill, leaving the 17 year old pupil teacher in sole charge of 83 pupils. Gabriel Mardrop came from Stanmore for a few weeks to relieve but he found it expensive as he had to rent accommodation near the school while retaining his lodgings in Sydney. Even getting from Parramatta to Dundas posed problems. Pupil teacher Amelia Kelly, who replaced Reid in 1897, requested a transfer to Parramatta after only a couple of weeks at the school. She could find no place to reside in Dundas and had to hire a vehicle, probably a horse and sulky, to get to school. She had hired four different people, all of whom found it too difficult to drive back and forth from Parramatta to Dundas twice a day. Seventeen year old Lillian Weller, from Harris Park and Alice Bardsley, assistant teacher, had to walk to school and in 1904 Alice collapsed and was ill for weeks from a condition brought on by the long walks to and from her duties.

The Sellars family lived in quarters attached to the school room, but these were not always comfortable. A letter to the Minister of Public Education stated that "the teacher's dwelling is old . . . stands very low, is damp, unhealthy and white ant eaten . . . the lavatory is an open shed . . . it lays low and is a mud hole in wet weather". In 1902 water came from tanks, wood was used for heating and cooking and they had cesspits for toilets. The connection of gas in 1904 no doubt improved heating, cooking and lighting facilities.

By 1906 enrolments peaked at 132. Three teachers were still teaching together in the 50' x 20' x 12' room and the children were grouped in three blocks of desks and on the gallery, without desks. Eventually, in 1907, the long awaited additions to the school were carried out and water was laid on in 1910. Despite these improvements, in 1911, after 21 years at Dundas, Mr. Sellars requested a transfer to Narara. He was replaced by Mr. W. Hepburn from Wee Waa.

Mr. Hepburn, a quiet man, was assisted by Lillian Weller. She resigned in 1915, having taught at the school for 15 years. She was replaced by Rachel Sweetman. With only 69 children now in attendance, the school warranted only two teachers and Mrs. Hepburn as needlework teacher. Mr. Hepburn, who was receiving a salary of £496 in 1923, taught at Dundas until he died in 1926 after a short illness. Parents were given permission to hang an enlarged photo of Mr. Hepburn in the school, in honour of his 14 years of service to their children.

Electricity and John Timmins both arrived at Dundas school in 1926. Enrolments had fallen again and Miss Roberts, the assistant, was sent away on 6th August at one hours notice, leaving Mr. Timmins to teach 50 children of all levels in the one class. Mr. Timmins retired in April, 1930, at the age of 65. He was replaced temporarily by Mr. J. S. Anderson and permanently by Mr. F. Robinson until 1935. He was followed by Mr. W. Williams who remained until 1944.

In 1945, Mr. Mick Doolan became the last teacher appointed to the Dundas school which was closed in 1957 to make way for Yates Avenue Public School and the influx of children from the Housing Commission development in Dundas Valley. The first Dundas Public School was demolished in 1958 after nearly 90 years of service to the Dundas community.

Yates Avenue Public School – 1958 to the present

Yates Avenue Public School was opened on 28th January, 1958. On their first day over 400 children arrived to enrol at their new school. It is not difficult to imagine the turmoil involved in organising teachers, parents and children, one hundred of whom were four and five year olds commencing school for the first time.

The man who managed this mammoth task was Mr. Ronald Clarke, the first Principal. The staff members who supported him were his deputy, Mr. Mick Doolan, who had come from the old Dundas School; Miss Dorothy Marheine, the Infants Mistress; Misses Lambert, Morcome and Hall; the Kindergarten teachers; Miss Wilkinson on First Class; and Miss Marie Beetham on Second Class. Third and Fourth Classes were taken by Misses Lane and Pain in rooms in the present library building; and Mr. Kevin White and Mr. Ken Hinde taught Sixth and Fifth Classes, alongside each other in the same classroom for the first week or so, while finishing touches were put to their classroom.

Mr. Hinde, writing from his home in Canada in 1983, remembered Mr. Doolan as a kind, pleasant man for whom he had great affection. Mr. Clarke was a very firm Principal and from him he learnt more about teaching in two years at Yates Avenue than from anyone else in the 32 years of his teaching career. Mr. Clarke's influence must have permeated the entire staff, and the school as a whole, for by the end of the school's second year Mr. J. Thompson, the District Inspector, reported that, "Yates Avenue promises to be an outstanding school and all members of staff can take pride in the progress already made".

The school commenced as a Class 1 school. It was anticipated that numbers would grow rapidly as more young families occupied the Housing Commission homes being built in Dundas Valley. By October, 1959 the school had fully taxed the capacity of the buildings provided the previous year and an additional four rooms were needed to house the projected enrolments of the 1960s. By 1961, the 1958 numbers had doubled, and by 1964, the school's enrolments had peaked at 854. By this time, all the buildings we have today were in existence. The twenty classes occupied all the rooms except Room 12 which was used as a small primary hall.

The Assembly Hall, as it is now, was originally used by infants classes. Primary Assemblies were held out-of-doors in one of the quadrangles. On these occasions, they would salute the flag and sing "God Save the Queen". Ceremonies, such as prefect investitures and prize givings, were also held outdoors. By the 1970s, the school population had decreased and the whole school was able to share the Hall. A moveable stage was constructed and a parent, Mrs. McDonald, and neighbours made new pelmet curtains for the windows and theatrical curtains for the stage. This was the venue for several musical productions performed by the children as end of year finales. The best remembered of these would be "Oliver", "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Wallaby Track", all ably directed by Miss Carmel Bateman with Mr. Murray Buttsworth, Mr. Clive Robertson and his wife Margaret creating artistic backdrops for the shows. The "Wizard of Oz" was also produced with Mr. Tony Iacono, from the Infants staff, supporting the production team. Mr. Iacono was an American who had come to Australia in the 1970s on a two year contract, when a shortage of teachers in NSW forced the Government to recruit teachers from overseas. Miss Ruth Waters came to the primary under the same scheme. She fascinated everyone with her accent, her pumpkin pies and her Halloween jack-o-lanterns and she was delighted by the new homes in the Valley, the pride taken in the gardens and the flowers from them, which frequently adorned her room.

Our overseas teachers were not the only visitors we had in the 1970s. By 1971, our enrolments had decreased to about 560 and we had become a Class 2 school. Miss Miller, the Principal, opened the empty classrooms to the pupils from Murray Farm Public School, which was still being built. Children and teachers were brought daily from Beecroft by bus and housed in the present Library and OOSH Centre. They were quite independent and had their own playground and staffroom.

The uses for these rooms have changed over the years, from classrooms to specific purpose areas for such activities as maths, craft, television and computers. Previous to this, the girls were taught sewing in the present Pre-school building. Sewing and craft were both taught in the classrooms in the 1950s and 1960s. The needlework teacher, Mrs. Bona Whiteley, took sewing and the class teacher took craft.

The school library commenced as soon as the school was opened. Book accession numbers were recorded on 1st February, 1958. A small basic library was supplied by the Education Department but it had no room and no librarian. By 1964, a school library rated highly on the list of priorities and the Deputy Mistress had devoted considerable time to establishing one in the 6A girls' classroom. As enrolments decreased and rooms became vacant, Room 13 was converted into a library and in 1969 a librarian was appointed for five days a week for primary classes only. It was 1976, before Infants children were included and by then library days were reduced to three days a week. In 1977, the library was moved to Room 12 while Rooms 13 and 14 were transformed into the functional and attractive library we have today. At the end of 1978, as a parting gift to the school, 6th grade children commissioned Mr. Trevor Ledger, father of two of our pupils, to paint the Jungle Book mural on the Library wall. Mrs. McDonald once again provided curtains and the Parents' and Citizens' Association and Canteen Committee have continually, over the years, financed the building of our library collection.

The Pre-school was another bonus to the school, made possible by declining enrolments. The community as a whole benefited from the decision in 1974 to convert the spare second class, cum sewing rooms, to a modern, well designed Pre-school. It opened in 1975 with Mrs. Pam McLeod as the first teacher. It caters for 40 four-year-olds. They attend either three or two days per week. Mrs. McLeod, Miss Sandra Caldwell, Mrs. Barbara Thompson and successive teachers have developed it into an excellent unit held in high esteem throughout the district.

Another progressive step was the appointment of a community nurse whose office is in the old Infants staff room. A playgroup for mothers with younger children was established and until 1988 they met regularly in the Pre-school building, moving then to Room 18. The room they vacated was converted to house an Early Childhood Intervention Unit which helps children of the district who are suffering from delayed development or learning difficulties.

The school playground is Yates Avenue Public School's pride and joy. Even in 1958, with its stark new buildings and treeless grounds, the vast open spaces must have appealed to those who had come to the Valley from inner-city areas. Tree planting soon began to take place on all possible occasions. Arbor Day each year was appropriately commemorated by many tree planting ceremonies. By 1964, the school inspector considered the school grounds were "a delight to see . . . beautifully laid out . . . trees and shrubs growing . . . grass regularly cut . . . the whole area reflecting a pride in ownership". The trees along the driveway were planted by students in 1966 and Mr. Jim Hasick donated many of the Eucalypts in the flagpole area before he left in 1974. In 1986, the P & C Association donated and planted more trees in honour of our 30th birthday. It was 1977, before boys and girls played in the same playground. Until then they were segregated. In fact, for a short time, the primary school was divided into boys' and girls' departments and between 1961 and 1967 some junior classes were co-ed, but senior classes were mostly segregated.

The Yates Avenue Public School children of the 1950s and 1960s did not go on many excursions. National fitness camps and trips to the Newcastle Steel Works were rare treats for some of the senior children. After 1970, teachers began taking their classes on outings more frequently, visiting the Snowy Mountains, Canberra, museums, newspaper plants, book festivals, historic houses, the zoo, Old Sydney Town, Jenolan Caves and many other places which were educationally beneficial and entertaining. The annual picnic at the end of the year became a tradition in the 1970s and the primary children and their teachers had wonderful days at Patonga, Lane Cove National Park, Shark Island, Neilsen Park or the Basin.

All arrangements for these activities were, of course, carried out by the office staff - a clerical assistant and a teachers' aid having been appointed for five mornings a week in 1971. The office is situated in the administration block - the very hub of the school. It was renovated in 1981, converting what had once been 5th grade rooms, a small staffroom and a smaller office, into a sick bay, duplicating room, a spacious secretary's office, Principal's office, resource and interview rooms, toilets and a large comfortable staffroom - a far cry from the cramped facilities of the past.

Whatever they may be doing, their memories of primary school years are probably of camps or carnivals, final assemblies or Year Six farewells, maypoles or mufti days, talent quests or discos, bush dancing or book parades, pet shows or presentation nights, folk dancing or fetes, walk-athons or readers theatres, open days, sausage sizzles or Carol nights and the Salvation Army band.

Each child who passed through our school will remember it differently and they will have followed many and varied paths in life. They are all certain to be successful if they remember and always adhere to the Yates Avenue Public School motto - **"ONLY THE BEST"**

Old School Song & Current School Pledge

Old School Song from 1958

Yates Avenue School forever!
Sing it, oh sing it again.
Yates Avenue School forever!
That is our joyful refrain
History, English and Number
Handcraft, sewing and art.
These are the subjects we study
Working with all our heart.
Helped by our teachers and fellows
Playing the games that we choose
Striving to win without boasting
Learning to smile if we lose.
Sweetly lift our voices
Up to the skies above.
Sing, oh sing together.
Honour the school that we love.
Yates Avenue School forever!
Only the best will do.
Yates Avenue School forever!
Brings out the best in you.
Parents who come to the Valley
By long years of waiting depressed
Built a new home for their children
With happiness may they be blessed!
School friends we make in the Valley
True friends for life may we remain
Sharing our happiest memories
Easing our sadness and pain.

Current School Pledge

This is my school.

I pledge myself to make it a
happy and attractive place.

I'll do all in my power to take
pride in myself and my
school.

I'll always do my best.

I'll set a good example for
others to follow.

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