

150th ANNIVERSARY
COMMEMORATIVE FUNCTION

Wednesday, 11th May, 1966, at 2.00 p.m.

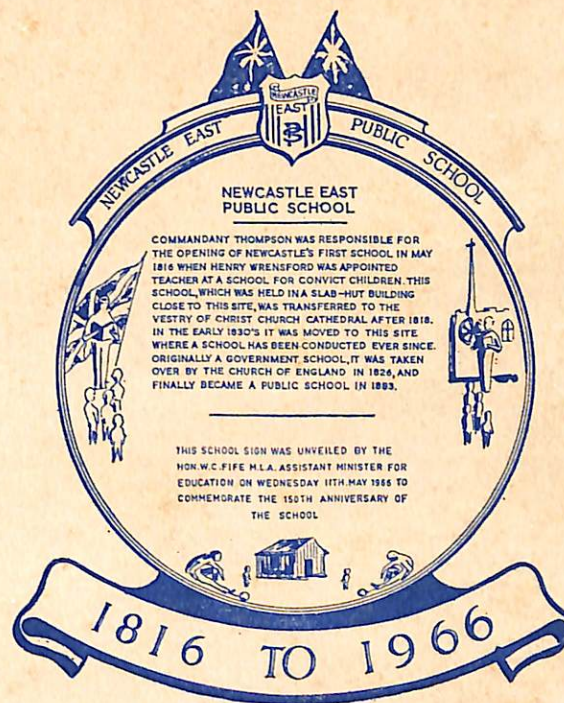
GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

- Welcome:** The Principal, Mr. M. Hall.
- Introduction:** The Chairman, Mr. J. J. Jenkins, President, Newcastle East P. & C. Association.
- School Choir:** "Land of Freedom," Furber and Adams.
- Welcome:** F. H. Hawkins Esq., M.L.A.
Ald. D. G. McDougall, Lord Mayor of Newcastle.
- Address:** The Hon. W. C. Fife, M.L.A., Assistant Minister for Education.
- Prayer of Thanksgiving:** The Right Reverend J. A. G. Housden, Bishop of Newcastle.
- School Choir:** "Hymn of Praise."
- Display:** Official Opening by William Dobell, Esq.
- Appreciation:** The Principal, Mr. M. Hall.
H. M. Morgan Esq., B.Ec., District Inspector of Schools.
Gavin Green, School Captain.
- Unveilings:** School Sign, City Council Plaque, Headmasters Board, History Corner.
- Inspection of School:** All guests.

FEATURES OF THE

150th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

- School Sign:** Designed and constructed by Mr. Robert Sheffer. Donated by Newcastle East P. & C. Association.
- City Plaque:** First of a series of Historical Plaques to be erected in Newcastle by the Newcastle City Council.
- History Corner:** A cabinet specially built for the display and storage of historical documents and articles. Designed by Mr. Frank Henskens. Donated by Newcastle East P. & C. Association.
- Headmasters Roll of Honour:** A list of the Headmasters since 1816. Designed by Mr. R. Sheffer.
- Display:** "International Display of the Work of the Children of the World", presented with the compliments of schools and children throughout the world.
- Book:** "From Convict Era to Modern Times. Newcastle East School, 1816-1966." Mr. Edwin J. Braggett, M.A., Dip. Ed., has combined his scholarly research and fluent pen to present an enjoyable history of both the school and the City of Newcastle.
- Historical Tour:** An informative coach tour of the City showing historical points of interest to all the children of the school.



THE SCHOOL -- A BRIEF HISTORY

One hundred and fifty years ago a young, ex-soldier convict commenced a small school for the children of convicts at the Newcastle settlement. It is not known when Henry Wrensford first arrived at Newcastle, but we do know that the school was in operation on 5th May, 1816, when seventeen children between the ages of three and thirteen gathered in a little white-washed slab hut, within one hundred yards of the site of the present Newcastle East Public School.

When Governor Macquarie was informed that the school had been opened, he expressed his pleasure and commanded that the school be continued. Two years later in 1818 Christ Church was constructed, and, with the approbation of the Commandant, Wrensford moved his class to the vestry of this church, where a school was conducted for over twelve years. It quickly acquired the name of "Christ Church School".

In 1823 the penal settlement at Newcastle came to a fortunate conclusion, and most of the convicts were moved to Port Macquarie. The population of the settlement fell to just over 200 people, and the number at the school dropped to 15 — the lowest recorded attendance in its 150 years.

Between 1823 and 1850 the number of inhabitants slowly rose once more as free settlers arrived at the township, and as coalmining developed in the area. In 1826 the school was converted to a Church of England establishment but it still continued to receive financial assistance from the government. Up till 1838 this was the only school in Newcastle, but in that year a private school was opened, and, in rapid succession, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist Schools were established within one hundred yards of Christ Church School.

The numbers attending this Anglican School rose to over 50, and the vestry of the church was found to be too

small for the class. Early in the 1830's, therefore, the school was transferred to a small building on the corner of Bolton and Church Street, where a school has been conducted ever since. It was then a little wooden building set amidst open paddocks, and bordered by two dusty, winding tracks, which are today main city thoroughfares.

In 1845 a stone building was erected to provide for the increasing number of children who were attending but even this accommodation was severely taxed when the gold rushes occurred early in the 1850's and considerable numbers settled in Newcastle. To overcome the problem, Bishop Tyrrell had an imposing brick building erected in 1860 and within a few years over 150 children were regularly attending. The school was fortunate in having a series of efficient and conscientious headmasters, and the school's reputation rose accordingly.

Major changes occurred when financial assistance was withdrawn from all Church Schools in 1882. When the Christ Church trustees realised that they could not keep the school open without state-aid, they offered to sell the school to the government. In 1882 the Department of Public Instruction acquired the buildings for £2000. The playground was immediately extended, and in 1891 further land was acquired by purchasing adjoining properties.

At the turn of the century there were plans to convert the Bolton Street buildings into a high school, but the primary school in Tyrrell Street was closed instead and the Newcastle East Public School remained as the only public school in the main city area. The present buildings were erected between 1908 and 1912 at a cost of almost £5800.

The city and the school, therefore, have grown together, and, after 150 years the school can claim to be the oldest school in Newcastle, as well as being the oldest school in operation in Australia.

E. BRAGGETT, 10/5/66.

150th ANNIVERSARY DINNER

WINNS' SHORTLAND ROOM

TUESDAY, 10th MAY, 1966

- Grace: Mr. F. Henskens
- Toast: The Queen.
- Remarks: Chairman, Mr. J. J. Jenkins, President, Newcastle East P. & C. Association.
- Book Release: Mr. E. Braggett, M.A., Dip. Ed., with introduction by Chairman.
- Toast: "The School," Mr. W. P. Clarke, ex-student.
- Response: Mr. M. Hall, Headmaster.
- Introduction: Mr. W. A. Gelfius, B.A., Area Director of Education.
- Address: Mr. O. R. Jones, M.A., F.A.C.E., Director of Primary Education.
- Thanks: The Chairman.