

Jean Butt

Together with my brother, mother and father I lived at 30 Church Street and 53 Bolton Street during the six years I attended Newcastle East Public School.

My friends at the time included; Peter Carruthers, Brian Hartnett, Twins of La Hay, Twins of Moore, Peter and Ron Walmsley, Joan Clarke, Eric Silva, Harry Marcus, Brian Wilson, Melvie Walton, Joan Cornelius, Robin Taylor, Margaret Allen, Les Davis, Lee Airey, John Martine, Lee Allingham, Margaret Bowen, Rosemary Brown-Parker, John Gardiner, Howard MacLean, Eddie Butt, Doug Ryan, Nettie Hodges, Jessie Black and Hughie Black.

The headmaster was Mr Hartnett. He was very kind and I really liked him. He was also very fair, but some of the boys who played up, did get the cane.

Teachers I remember include: Miss

Morrow (Maths, rather Scotty), Mr Blakely (very socially minded - politically - he was removed from the school because of his left wing politics), and Miss Fitness (very kind - I really liked her).

The best things I remember of school were, that it was close to home and everyone got on well. It was a very happy period in my life, except for air raid practice in the shelters, which were in the grounds of the Court House.

Lessons included Reading, Arithmetic, Writing, Geography and History. Quite a lot was taught about Australia's early settlement and great emphasis was placed on the British Empire. Scripture was also held. Rules included no cheating and no talking during lessons.

In the school grounds we usually played Skippy, Rounders and Hopscotch. We also played knock-knock. Being Protestant, we teased the Catholic kids.

To school we wore ordinary clothes, (shoes and socks in winter) sandals in summer.

I think also a uniform of tunic and blouse was worn in 5th and 6th class.

Sport consisted of swimming at Newcastle Baths, tunnel ball and other ball games in the playground (which was asphalt).

My worst memory is of being hit on the ahnd with the sharp side of the ruler whenever I wanted to write with my left hand. Everyone had to write with their right hand!! I was very much a left-hander!

After school and during the holidays we played in Fletcher Park, King Edward Park, went to the beach (more than anything) or went to the pictures Saturday afternoon. We went to Sydney and the South Coast for holidays by train.

Pocket money was spent on lollies,

chips, apples on sticks and ice-cream. I didn't have to earn it!

Characters I remember from that time in my life are; Johnny Douglas (he was always taking off his clothes), Gum Tip "Lilw and Black Harris. He was a well known identity around the waterfront and lived next door to me.