

Lifting the Outskirts - Twyford Revealed

I am not an historian as I lack the necessary discipline of reading, rechecking, rereading and checking and cross referencing - I just enjoy the human story and its personal contents.

Thus the chance to pen some personal aspects of a lovely school and district right on the outskirts of Hastings has given me the opportunity of allowing Twyford to shyly lift its petticoat and reveal a bit of leg - albeit the educational aspect of the district body.

I have taken liberally from the Twyford School Centenary booklet published in 2012 which endeavoured to give the human side which gave the district of Twyford its strength, its character, and its colour. Copies of this booklet are still available at the school office.

To find old maps of the district was difficult but we did discover a classic of a reverse print which showed some of the early landowners and their properties and also of the original beds of the Ngaruroro River as it flowed between Hastings and Havelock North.

History ...

These notes were penned many years ago and whilst we were not able to completely verify all the information herein they still contained so many historical aspects and items of considerable interest that they are worth sharing.

The Twyford District covers the area from what is now known as Omahu Road to the Ngaruroro River, and from Oak Avenue or Ormond Road to Twyford Road. The land on the west side of Twyford Road belonged first to Mr Gordon but was later purchased by Mr Dudley Hill. In 1866 3600 acres of land was bought from the Maoris by the Russell brothers. Twyford in the early days was known as Flaxmere as the lower portion was swamp-land with little growth other than flax and rushes. The many springs on the property evidently fed the swamp.

Practically the only bird life was pukeko, weka and duck. The top portion to about Thompson Road was the only arable land. Firstly the main drain was dug leading down to what is now known as Raupare. So boggy and treacherous was the swamp that those digging the drains had to be off the property by nightfall.

Later the land was ploughed and sown with ryegrass seed imported from Sutton's, England. This seed was the original of what was later to be known as Hawke's Bay Rye. At this time the property was able to carry 500 sheep.

The first Russell home, known as "Little Flaxmere" - built in rough timber – stood exactly where the "Little Flaxmere" home stands. The present "Little Flaxmere" is the third – the second, a two-storeyed dwelling, was destroyed by fire.

Floods were a constant source of worry, and after the 1897 flood a stopbank was built and willows planted. Also more drains were dug and these proved to be a great help in preventing the inundating of the land. As time went on and the land settled and hardened, logs showed themselves, revealing the fact that at one time forest had stood where later was swamp and flax. Nothing of this forest was apparent or had been known to the purchasers when the land was taken up. Once the haunt of moa, as the subsequent discovery of bones indicated, this virtual no-man's land lay undisturbed except for the occasional penetration of its Maori owners.

Later the land was divided into two portions, Sir Andrew Russell named his father's portion "Twyford", partly after Twyford in Hampshire, England, where he went to school and partly because there were two fords across the river, and Twyford was between them. Twyford really means "between the fords".

Most of the oak trees growing here, including Oak Avenue, were planted with acorns sent from England. In fact, most of the English trees around "Little Flaxmere" were planted from seeds sent from England.

Gradually the property was sub-divided into small farms, thus supporting numerous families.

Sir Andrew Russell was instrumental in planting the first peach orchard in the district – on the property at the corner of Jarvis and Omahu Roads. As time went on many more orchards were planted. Twyford becoming one of the leading fruit-growing districts in New Zealand.

For a period, approximately from 1900, dairy farming was fairly extensively carried on. The Heretaunga Dairy Company bought a small section, now a part of the lower portion of the school playgrounds, built a dairy factory, which for years did good service in the district. Later as motor lorries collected home-separated cream, the factory fell into disuse and was finally dismantled.

The Twyford Station buildings were situated near the road on the property owned by Mr N McGaffin on Thompson Road. They consisted of four cottages, a cookhouse, an office, a wool-shed, a large barn, as well as a combined implement and general shed. The last named stood until the 1990's. In years gone by the 'old barn' was the scene of many happy festivities, and there are those who may remember the jolly times spent there, but one bountiful season (I think the late 20's), when nature had been most bountiful, the settlers used the barn in which to store their grain. It stood on very high piles, and one windy night its age resented it being overloaded and at last it collapsed. Then there was born a need for a hall in the district.

In the 1931 earthquake many Twyford homes were badly damaged and residents slept in tents, sheds, etc. and used outdoor cooking facilities – such as were available. I think the largest camp in the district was that at Mr Jack McNab's in Jarvis Road, where over 40 residents, with their children, camped and slept in a large open implement shed. This shed afforded a great measure of comfort to all when the earthquakes came, one panicked less where doors were not.

On the property of Mr Tweedie of Raupare huge springs occurred from which flowed 1,000 gallons a minute. A miniature lake formed but after a week it gradually subsided. The springs, however, drained into a nearby ditch, continued for months. I believe some are still running.

Shortly after the earthquake, a Twyford resident, the Mr Lester Masters, called a public meeting of settlers to find ways and means to start funds for the Twyford and Raupare Hall. Twenty-four years later his dream came true.

Previous to the flood of approximately 1840, when the river changed its course from the top of Omahu Road, it flooded periodically, with the result that the Twyford land became gradually silted, thus laying the foundation for the productive cropping, general sheep and dairy farming and rich orchard land of the present day.

Notes by unknown resident – year unknown

As undoubtedly you will be well aware of the part the Russell family have played in the past history of Hastings it also important to emphasise the value that Sir Andrew Russell has offered to this district.

Sir Andrew Russell

Andrew Hamilton Russell was born at Napier on 23 February 1868. Russell followed in the family tradition and was sent to England to be educated, first at Twyford School, then Harrow School and then at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

Guy Russell, as he was known to his family, served for five years overseas, first in India, then after a brief period in England, in Burma. Russell did not like the garrison life and resigned his commission to go sheep farming in New Zealand. He joined his uncle, William Russell, Tunanui and Twyford first as a farm cadet and later as a manager. He assumed ownership of both properties in 1909.

On 5 April 1896 he married the daughter of a wealthy Hawke's Bay family and the couple were to have three daughters and two sons. Russell had a difficult time financially: he had to remit money to his father, now back in England, and needed to sell sheep to remain under his overdraft limit. In addition, the property suffered a severe flood in 1897 and was afflicted by plagues of caterpillars and grass grubs.

When the New Zealand Expeditionary Force was raised in August 1914 Russell took command of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade. This Brigade landed on the Gallipoli peninsula on 12 May 1915, without their horses, to act as infantry.

From there his war record became renowned and he was regarded as an astute and fearless leader who placed great emphasis upon discipline, training and his troops' welfare. He took the same risks as his soldiers and knew their capabilities. He was well decorated for his endeavours and after the war he returned to his farm.

He was widely read, fluent in French, an enthusiastic cellist, an opera lover and a brilliant conversationalist. He was a man of strong Anglican religious convictions, and was self-effacing and modest.

He died on 29 November 1960, aged 92, in Hastings.

Sir Andrew Russell is regarded by the residents of Twyford as a benefactor, a generous supporter and a man who had an eye to the future.

A need for a school ...

In 1866 3,600 acres of land was bought from the Maoris by the Russell brothers. This was later subdivided into two, and the late Sir Andrew Russell called his portion "Twyford", partly after Twyford in Hampshire, in England where he went to school, and partly because it was between two fords of the Ngaruroro River.

Gradually this land was subdivided into smaller farms, and later orchards were planted.

With the closer settlement came the need for a school. A meeting of householders of the Twyford and Raupare districts was called, with the result that there were enough children to warrant the building of a one-roomed school.

Sir Andrew Russell gave a piece of land next to the dairy factory, and tenders were called by the Education Board, the successful one being that of A G Scott with his price of £ 325. This was accepted in April, 1912, and on 16th September of that year the school was ready for occupation, but shortage of staff prevented it from opening.

On 1st October the children arrived for their first day at the new school, but no teacher came, so they all went home. The school finally opened on 7th October, with a roll of twenty and Mr Stagpoole as master.

A Fine Band of Men ...

Whenever a school is opened the Education Board demands that a committee of local citizens be formed to give the governance and support to the fledgling school.

Thus it was early in the life of the school when the first committee met and was chaired by Mr Thomas Tait with the secretarial duties allocated to Mr Steve Jarvis. Other members appointed to the committee were Messrs D Wilson, J Agnew and G H Thompson.

The first permanent teacher was Mr Fred Cook, who was appointed in 1913, and he recalled in his memories that the *"meetings were conducted in a spirit of co-operation"* and that his duties were *"to present a monthly report, keep the roster of committee attendances and attend to the sanitary needs of the school."*

It appears that electricity was not part of the facilities as the *"dismal proceedings were carried out with the aid of a flickering lantern in the sometimes gusty nights."*

This group of men ensured that the buildings and grounds were developed and maintained and with the inevitable need for money for facilities and equipment the inevitable fundraising was required. School and district dances were held in Mr Tait's barn and the music was provided by Mr Thompson and his accordion to aid the cause.

And so began a century of service to the school by its community.

“The Originals” ...

Somebody always has to be first and we are grateful that the families of these twenty children began the legacy of Twyford School all those years ago.

Their names will continue to be truly venerated as being “First Day Pupils” and again we honour them once more. A scan of the Admission Register gives the truth to their enrolment as well as an insight to the handwriting of the first teacher.

Those early pioneers were:

Isabella Innes	Gordon Heard	Mildred List
Ruth Bennett	Gladys Heard	Harold List
Amy Wilson	Ada Wharton	Angus Evans
Duncan Young	Gladys List	Thomas McNab
Eddie Tait	Janet Innes	Hazel Heard
Joyce Heard	Doris Thompson	John Wharton
Eric Evans	Mabel McNab	

Their Christian names in most cases, give an old fashioned air but their surnames also live on with the names of roads and streets within the district. Some of these families must have been the original and old time residents and created the pattern of life we took advantage of.

The Roll Grows ...

The district continued to attract the local children as the area became settled with orcharding, farming and cropping families as well as providing a rural aspect to many city children.

The Inspectors Visit ...

There has always been accountability and schools were no exception. In the earlier years an inspector, or a small team of them, would visit, test, check the paperwork, observe and report. This system was retained until 1989 when the Education Review Office (ERO) was created and the format changed.

Fear and trepidation was a feature of all inspection ... as it is today.

Henry Hill was renowned throughout Hawke's Bay and his authority carried huge respect and suggested remedial action usually was carried out shortly after.

The very first report for Twyford School from Henry Hill - December 1912. Some of his findings were -

"Hyloflake is fixed on the wall but a board & easel is required in addition ... There are 16 dual desks & a table. In one corner of the room a stove is provided. There is no chimney."

He also stated that... *"The grounds are fenced, but no roadways are yet formed nor any metalling about the buildings been done."*

He was concerned about the hygienic conditions and wrote... *"The closets require instant attention. Those used by the girls are dirty in the extreme, the pans are full to overflowing. ... The school room floor is dirty. It appears to have been occupied after completion without being scrubbed & no arrangements have been made for cleaning the room. The windows, like the floor, have not been cleaned. There is the semblance of a broom which the children use under the guidance of the master."*

There was concern about a lack of readers and that which was available are only ... *"historical and geographical"* but that class readers are essential in a small school.

However, all was not bad ... *"the singing is very promising and the progress made is commendable."*

But there were some warnings ... *"the children are well in hand, but it is desirable to keep boys & girls separate in the school grounds except in the case of the preparatory pupils. ... the children should leave & enter in marching order."*

He concluded his initial report with ... *"My visit was to study the working of the school & to offer suggestions to the master who appears to be an earnest & methodical worker."*

The visits continue ...

November 1913

Mr D A Strachan, Inspector, visited and noted the improvements made in both education and facilities but informed ... *"that gravelling or asphaltting the immediate precincts ... should be undertaken at an early date."*

He also suggested that requirements needed are ... *"a primus lamp for dairy work ... an extra chair, as a general rule a school should have at least two chairs ... 4lbs of plasticine."*

The school continued to grow ...

And so in April 1914 the roll was 58 but all the pupils were in the one room with two teachers. Despite this Henry Hill reported that Miss Bain *"is working under unusual difficulties. Is capable and adopts good methods. With fair conditions she will become a very successful mistress."*

His comment on Mr York featured *"A young teacher of tact, influence, spirit & good capacity. His whole heart is in his work. Given good working conditions they will have a fine school."* He thought that the organisation was *"good but effectiveness destroyed by crowded room ... the stove has been removed to make room for the children ... in consequence of the number of classes there is a tendency for the teachers to speak much too loud. The result will not be good for the children or staff."*

There were still some problems. The water supply brought the comment *"A well has been put down but the Master reports a lot of sand when the pump is used & sometimes the water is not fit for drinking."* He also suggested *"Another shed is required for the girls. The present one is almost useless during bad weather as it is exposed to the SW winds which drive in the rain."*

Later in the year Mr D A Strachan visited and gave a detailed report on all subjects, eg. *"Geography: Very Fair, S4 Good. Some useful weather charts are plotted."* but more attention was needed with *"Composition: Grammar – Fair. General English Satisfactory. Two pupils in S6 show much crude expression in the essay."* He also observed the grounds and wrote: *"Committee, staff & pupils have worked to good purpose during the past year. Fine shrubberies border the grounds along the lines of the frontage. Gardens have been dug, fertilized & sown in potatoes. Asphalt paths have also been laid down & everything is maintained neat & trim. If a gravelled square were formed about the school the pupils would find the benefit especially on dewy and frosty mornings."*

The Years Pass ...

In 1923 D A Strachan continued to visit and make his valuable comparisons. He again noted that *“organisation and management of the school are good. Order, discipline and tone are excellent in each division. In the Senior division a good standard of efficiency is maintained. The Junior division is not so satisfactory. S1 & 2 are good classes, but the frequent changes of teacher of late have militated against progress in the primer classes.”* He also considered that *“If possible, a probationer should be supplied ... I understand that suitable board is available. The general appearance of the pupils won favourable comment.”*

He suggested that a requirement is *“24ft of wall blackboard for the Infant Room.”*

1927 saw a new inspector visit and stated that *“This school is doing very sound work in both departments. There is an excellent working spirit. The pupils are unusually neat & clean. Physical exercises are well taken.”*

However there was a jarring note about the staff

“Mr V F Rigby is a very capable teacher who secures an excellent tone in his school. He carries out suggestions readily, but is not enterprising educationally. If he studied more he would be an excellent teacher.”

He went on about ... *“Miss A Morrison is an uncertificated teacher of long experience doing work of high quality that seldom varies. She will probably retire this year.”*

In 1933 the Senior Inspector, Mr T A Morland was very impressed and lavished praise on *“the school garden is receiving praiseworthy attention ... the grounds are well kept ... the buildings are in very good order and are properly supervised”*

whilst *“discipline, order and tone are very good.”*

But there was a disquieting comment, as there always is, that *“some scholars do not appear to be giving much promise of promotion.”*

During the war years inspection visits continued and Mr Lomas noted that *‘the standard in formal subjects is not very high ... it is improving & some of the younger pupils show distinct promise.’* Perhaps due to the war he was pleased to state that *“thanks are due to a member of the committee who teaches the boys boxing.”*

And so to 1955 a trio of inspectors reported *“That the Headmaster and his assistants are working as a team with the common objective of giving the children of their best.”* They *“commended the social training & manners reflected in the attitude of the girls and boys ... evident progress is being secured in basic skills ... intensive playing areas have been completed and are available for team games ... the parents through the School Committee are actively interested in providing equipment and amenities so that the school is able to develop modern methods.”*

They obviously were observant to report *“the supply of a Bell-Howell projector, Haytor mower and physical education equipment, including rompers for the girls and football jerseys for the boys.”*

Now that is priorities!

They also served ...

Mr Fred Cook - Headmaster 1913 - 1916

“I was appointed the first permanent sole teacher of the Twyford School, and took up my duties as such at the beginning of 1913. The Twyford Estate had just been subdivided by the late Sir Andrew Russell for closer settlement, and young families created a need for a school in the district. The roll stood at approximately fifty, and later Miss Ida Bain joined the staff as infant mistress and we worked together until I left for overseas war service in 1916.

In 1913 the “Three R's” and the Proficiency examination were the “core” of our educational system, and discipline was firm and sound.”

Miss Ida Bain – Infant Mistress – 1914 - 1918

“On 10th February, 1914, I arrived at the school to report for duty, and was much pleased with everything. A shrubbery was already well advanced in the front and side of the two-roomed building, and, for me, a room to myself. My department consisted of pupils primer one to standard one inclusive.

1914 was a most momentous year, for on the 4th August war was declared against Germany. ... Immediately the even tenor of our ways was disrupted: a flagpole was erected at the school and the ceremony of “saluting the flag” was inaugurated, and conversation, both in school and out, was of war, and rumours of war.

In spite of this, work in school went on, with regular inspection visits from the Board's inspectors to report on the work of the school. Mr Henry Hill, well known in Hawke's Bay education circles, always encouraged both pupils and teachers, and we always welcomed his visits.

Football for the boys, and practical agriculture, were a problem, but with advice from Mr S Jarvis at football, and real help from Mr Loten, the agricultural instructor, we managed to get by. There were no failures in the standard six Proficiency examination that year.

During this time, we young teachers were much indebted to the practical help given us by Mr Nichol, who was at this time commissioner for the school. He was "jack of all trades" and fixed broken desks, locks of doors, windows, etc., and kept our garden tools in order."

Miss Joyce Kater – a young teacher – 1928 – 1932

"I first went as a young inexperienced teacher. There were joyous days. I can still see the Red Indian suits, made of sugar bags and coloured fowl feathers, we concocted to correlate geography and handwork lessons, and I giggle yet when I think of the small boy occupants whooping and yelling so realistically as only boys can.

The concerts in Sparksman's shed were always a highlight and a special delight. Everyone helped so willingly to make it a joyous occasion for the children – the mothers with costumes, Dulcie Lowe and Mr H Burge supplying music, and dear old Mr Lowe, who gave of his time and manufactured ... whatever else we wanted.

They were grand days, the children entering so wholeheartedly into the tiring rehearsals in order to give of their very best ... and even though there were some last minute searches for some bit of costume that had strayed, the balloons that contrived to burst when there was no time to blow up others, and the paper frocks that would catch on something – they were wonderful times, and we loved them all.

Then there was the earthquake which few of us could ever forget – the swaying trees, the tank collapsing like a concertina and spilling its contents across the cracking tennis court, schoolrooms leaning at a queer angle with the steps ripped away, the scene of chaos inside with everything a tangled mass upon the floor, but above everything else there stands out in my memory the ashen faces of the children. Many times since I have breathed a prayer of gratitude that it was play-time and they were outside, where at least it seemed a little safer."

Mr C Arthur – Headmaster - 1929 - 1934

“The ambition of many teachers was to teach in Hawke's Bay; it's Education Board was noted far and wide, while the Hawke's Bay province was a land not of milk and honey, but a paradise of sun and fruit.

To encourage pupils to widen their school interests, a calf rearing competition was successfully organised. Certain rules governing the feeding and handling of calves were drawn up. Day after day the boys and girls led, trained and handled their calves until they were “as quiet as lambs”.

Another outside interest which was very popular was tree growing; hundreds of eucalypts and pines were grown in home made frames and sold to local nurseries. In this way an appreciable addition was made to school funds, whilst the pupils gained an elementary knowledge of tree growing.

This account would be incomplete without a reference to the birth of the Twyford Womens' Institute in 1930. The monthly meetings were held in the Twyford School in those days, and in many ways the Institute was a valuable asset to the school interests and activities.”

Miss H M Hayes – Assistant Teacher - 1937 – 1940

“In the junior room I had approximately forty pupils from primers to standard two. I was soon made very much at home by the kindly people of the Twyford district, and I thoroughly enjoyed my two and a half years at the school.

During the summers, as we had no school baths the children were taken by bus, once a week, to Maddison Baths, where I believe quite a number learned to swim.

An ex-New Zealand amateur featherweight boxing champion, Mr Len Knuckey, who was living in the school house, organised and ran a boxing class for the senior boys one night a week. These classes were very popular and proved most successful.

During the winter of 1938, my father sent me a kauri and a rimu from Northland. These were planted with great ceremony in what was then a shrubbery, and sack shelters erected for protection from frosts. After all the careful nursing, it is good to seem thriving so well.”

The Kauri ...

It is amazing how an action or an item can become over time a feature, an icon or a focus and this has happened with the renowned kauri tree.

Hawke's Bay was never a favoured climate or home for New Zealand's famous tree but the one planted at Twyford School in 1938, together with a rimu, from seedlings sent from Northland by the father of teacher Miss H M Hayes, and planted *“with due ceremony”* continue to prosper and retain their focal point.

In fact if you compare the photos of the school from the air you can chart the slow growth and development of the kauri over those 76 years.

Mr C G Warren – Headmaster – 1953 - 58

“I remember very well standing in the old small playground (small even though the horse paddock had been shifted) and discussing the necessity for extra grounds. Much argument and final agreement was made to purchase, level, drain, crop in beans and put in pasture.

“I recall, too, our pleasure in new equipment – in a radio that worked and from which we could relay programmes to other rooms; in a new movie projector; in a new duplicator; in new rooms. I can still see quite vividly the first of our bigger gala days – the feverish morning activity, the lovely day, the big gathering, the strident voices from the stallkeepers, the afternoon tea, the cake and sand tray competitions, and the pleasure we all felt when Mr D White solemnly announced that we had collected more than one hundred pounds.

“A particularly pleasant memory is that of the floats our school entered in the Blossom Festival. The first float was built in Jarvis Bros.' shed, and the second in Horrock's large new building. The childrens' contribution, the long earnest discussions, the plans, the engineering difficulties, the many evenings, the very critical judgement on a completed section, the banter, the warm companionship, the pride in the creation that finally took to the road. And, of course, I remember a very pleasant little party at the scene of our operation when we had won our prize.

The Schoolhouse

Mr T A Nicoll, headmaster from 1919 to 1925, reported that the school residence was built, together with the car shed, during his time in 1920.

Headmasters and their families lived in 'the house next door' over many years but gradually the house was let to teachers and eventually to residents, provided they *"brought their children to the school."*

However, in 1989, the new Minister of Education, decided that to help finance the cost of education he would sell off the school houses, and even tracts of school playgrounds which he deemed too large. Unfortunately Twyford came under his fiscal eye and he determined that the house should be sold, and the land thus lost.

After displeasure was expressed by the School Committee, particularly by committee member, Mrs Jan Ryan, it was decreed that *"the Government "will offer back – at a price – a school house and section to the family who donated the land in the first place."*

This further angered both the Twyford School and the Russell family who gave the land nearly 80 years earlier and it transpired that the Education Board *"had no idea the land was donated."*

The Lands Department eventual research had revealed the donation, and if the Russell family not wanting the land, it would be offered to the tenants living in it and if they turned it down it would be offered for public sale.

However, the head of the Russell family, the late Major-General's grandson, protested strongly at the bureaucrats' moves. He stated that they did not want the land but would donate it back to the school. He favoured selling the house for removal and leaving the school with the most valuable asset – the land.

The school was not interested in keeping the house but valued the land it stood on. Fortunately sanity prevailed and in 1990 the house was removed and plans were put in place to utilise the space.

Now the netball court, the administration block and the main entrance grace the area, thanks to publicity, doggedness and a clear vision and generosity by the Russell family.

An old-timer recalls ...

This handwritten note was found in the archives at the back of some shelves. Unfortunately it is not dated, not able to be attributed to anybody but it deserves to be published. It comes from the memories of the early 1920's due to its reference to Mr Nicoll, the head teacher appointed in 1919.

I suspect that it was developed from personal memories of past pupils for the 1962 Twyford School Reunion.

"Things some of us still remember -

"When the majority of roads of Twyford & Raupare were lined with weeping willows only to be removed when the electric power lines were put through.

When Jarvis & other roads were three dusty tracks made by the horse drawn vehicles.

The gates blocking Jarvis & Thompson Roads.

When the stop banks of the Ngaruroro River broke at the bottom of Twyford & Raupare, all stock being shifted to the polo grounds as the flood waters nearly reached the school.

Watching the hares travelling up the roads to higher grounds.

The dairy and pig farms slowly being replaced by orchards, field crops and poultry farms.

When the senior boys at the school held buck jumping contests and hurdle races during the school lunch hour. For hurdles, bars were placed from the fence to the telephone poles along Thompson Road.

When the peat fires burned for weeks in the Raupare area.

When Miss Bain rode a "Trusty Triumph" motor bike from Napier each day to teach.

The excellent school vegetable gardens in Mr T Nicoll's time and the numerous prizes we won at the HB A & P shows.

The traction engines and mills threshing the rye grass crops and the many rides enjoyed on the large sledges.

The hunts held at the polo grounds quite often having to be called off because the hare, hounds and followers became bushed in the orchards.

The four well fed and beautifully groomed Clydesdales pulling the road grader with Mr George Leslie as the cheery driver.

The squeaking windmills used to supply water to the homes and drinking troughs.

The birdnesting season when plantations were booked almost a year ahead and torn pants were the order of the day.

Being caught by Mrs Tait raiding her chestnut tree – both sides enjoying the ensuing wordy battle.

Being loyal to our school, no matter what.”

Then and Now ...

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus is believed to have said “Nothing is constant but change” ...

Styles, techniques, technology, standards, equipment and emphases are under constant surveillance and given the opportunity of improvement; and schools, materials and people are just as prevalent to those same forces.

This is just a sample of aspects of Twyford which have been adjusted, tweaked, tested and rejected and adapted as our civilisation has developed over 100 years.

The question for you --- where do you fit into this time scale?

Handwriting styles ...

Handwriting styles have developed over the years – some say you can judge character from them. Here is a sample of varying examples of our principals as taken from the Attendance Register.

Readers ...

The basic building block of all education – words – the reading of them, the writing, the spelling, getting the meaning and the expression of them.

Journals ...

These extremely basic booklets have been lauded over the years and have been the foundation – the envy of the world. Top authors and talented illustrators/artists first got their start with these and still they are produced, certainly more colourfully and creatively than before, but the same high standards remain.

In the earliest days each child had a journal cover, some with oil marbled prints, strings inside and at a regular interval a new journal was issued and kept individually. It was like a bible – all your learning emanated from them. Then in the mid 20th century the journal became a more substantial book with beautiful wood block prints as illustrations and these were supplemented by specialist bulletins and then in the 1960's colour began to appear with issues 4 times a year at differing levels with the same style.

Teacher Displays ...

Many teachers took immense pride in the presentation of their work in displays, whether it was a blackboard on an easel in the 1900's, a wall blackboard in the 1930's, and an overhead transparency or now as a computerised interactive display in the 2000's.

Copperplate writing, either printed, cursive and italic, took precedence as an example for pupils to emulate, wall displays to show off their students' work often took immense time and effort, the creation of attractive classrooms and working environments all indicated a teacher with the interest and devotion of their profession.

Sporting Uniforms ...

Sport is one of the two major spiritual aspects of a school which offers opportunities to students to excel, to shine, and to express themselves in ways other than academic.

There has always been a keen support by parents, the committees and the fundraisers over all the years to ensure that the teams are well equipped, attractively presented and keenly supported along the sidelines. This collection shows how our sporting uniforms have developed.

Statements taken from the Log Books ...

This is but a brief selection of log book entries from various years. It does now appear that the use of a log book/diary has fallen from use which is a tremendous shame. These old log books gave a wonderful canvas to the district, the children and the mundane happenings that often occurred.

I've linked them under the headings of ...

Major Events

Concern for Children

Trouble at Mill

And Humour

A district gains a strength, a depth, a personality and a vision to the future from the people of the past who have lived there, who have worked there, who have laughed there, who have danced there, who have played there and who have shared the hopes and the despairs of times, of each other, of the environment.

Over the years there have been some dominant families who have given so much to this quiet farming and cropping district and thus to Hastings as well.

Family names which have continued to be recalled and associated with Twyford include - Burns, Hope, Hill, Wellwood, McLay, Trotter, Parker, Evans, Griffiths, Peacock, Walsh, McNab, Flowers, Crasborn, Limmer, Rainbow, Shaw, McGaffin, Jarvis, Thow, Ryan, Bixley, Friis, Osborne, Bousfield, Carrington, McLeod, McGowan, Grenside, Horrocks, Nicholls, Yule, are perhaps some surnames you may be familiar with.

Each of these families has a story of their time and development - and of course they have memories of their residence and involvement. I am sure that they could tell a tale or two.

And in conclusion I would like to read my personal statement of memories.

Mr E M Hantz - Principal - 1987 - 2005

I remember ... with pleasure ... the very warm memories of a delightful school with exceptional children supported by co-operative parents set on the outskirts of Hastings. A school with urban opportunities within a rural atmosphere.

The children came to school for the right reasons and they, and their families, valued education, learning and relationships and it enabled most of them to succeed, and even excel, at their own level. There was a pride and a determination and this showed in so many ways – academic, sporting, culturally, socially, environmentally – and the involvement and support to all which was so readily available.

I remember ... with some concern ... initially having to dodge puddles and water, the continual difficulty of the drainage system; the boys who volunteered for “S” Patrol; “Checkpoint Charlie” and its heavy lid; the problem of getting the playing field cut and raked up and the massive grass forts and fights; the need for the provision of kindling for the classroom fires; but those negatives were overwhelmed by so many positives.

I remember ... with a smile ... the staff who gave great support, skill, humour and involvement; the extreme efficiency of the support staff; the effectiveness of the SKOPE programme; the sporting teams contesting so well; those great cross country races; “Bullrush” on the footy paddock at lunchtimes and no buttons on my shirt; standing on so many sidelines proudly watching our children; the wonderful stage productions; the “Rising Star” awards; “Dress-up Days”; youngsters coming into the office to share their success; cooking hamburgers on a production line; crispy lemon muffins and cheese roll-ups at morning tea; children delightfully hosting our visitors; writing positive newsletters; taking part in “Mystery Trips” and having to be secretive about them; losing sleep and home comforts whilst on camp but finding and enjoying the “Mintie Moments”; senior students striving for a “Special Award” stamp; bookwork of an extremely high standard; and being able to write positive final reports of the children leaving school.

I remember ... and reflect ... on a school which has evolved and developed with magnificent facilities, outstanding grounds and a learning environment the envy of many other communities.

I was so fortunate to have been able to serve ... just great memories! Oh, yes, I remember ... and ever so well!