

## From the Archives

It can be argued that the year 1905 was a watershed in the history of Townsville Grammar School. School House had been re-built after the devastation of Cyclone Leonta in 1903, P.F. Rowland was starting his long and rewarding tenure as Headmaster of the School and George Hall, the School's first Rhodes Scholar, was enrolled. Of particular interest, however, was the fact that Miss Effie Cairns Hartley became the first girl student at Grammar to be named Dux of Form VI [Year 12].

Townsville Grammar prides itself on being the oldest co-educational School on the Australian mainland, but for many years the co-educational aspect was nominal. Mr Hodges, the second Headmaster, was very much against co-education and resisted any attempts to enroll more than three or four girls at any one time. Mr Miller continued this policy during his period as Headmaster and evidence shows that Mr Rowland would have continued the policy had it not been for Miss Hartley and Miss Gladys Roberts whom he regarded as a refining influence in the School.

P.F. Rowland had no experience of co-education on his arrival at Townsville Grammar and was on record as saying that he was not supportive of the idea. On the other hand, however, he was extremely keen on developing academic ability and when Miss Hartley was named Dux he changed his views in a dramatic fashion. At the end of 1905 he approached the Trustees and requested that girl enrolments be increased to at least twenty a year. It was a major breakthrough in the history of the School.

Miss Hartley completed the Sydney University Senior Examinations as there was no University in Queensland at that time. She did extremely well gaining a First Class Matriculation in French and finishing fourth in that examination. Her results were Greek [C], Latin [B], French [A], English [A], Geometry [C], Algebra [C] and Trigonometry [C]. It is interesting to note that Mr Rowland taught Miss Hartley all the above languages as well as English. It is unclear whether Miss Hartley ever attended University. Sydney was a long way to travel for a girl in 1906. What is known is that she married in 1913 and became Mrs Ryan and lived on Melton Hill. Very little else is known of her life.

It is interesting to note what Mr Rowland had to say at Speech Day, December 8, 1905 about Miss Hartley. He stated:

*"In her the School offers a very real loss. No one has done more than she to render it possible the large increase in the number of girls attending this School should take place without impairing the efficiency of the work or the discipline of the playground. May her gracious influence long live as a tradition."* [sic]

In Chapter 5 of an unpublished book written in the 1930's Rowland states the following about the increase of girls at the Grammar School:

*"There were several girls' schools in Townsville, and we discouraged the attendance of girls who were not ready to work. The arrangement as a whole proved satisfactory. Discipline was easier and with few exceptions, if boys were inclined to love affairs, the object of their affection were usually girls at other schools. It is not easy to be in love with a girl who is beating you in the class places every fortnight."*

The Grammar School thus owes much to the influence of girl students such as Miss Hartley and Miss Roberts. As Rowland remarked in 1905 their gracious influence would become a tradition in the School. It is interesting to note, however, that Miss Hartley was the only girl to be Dux during Rowland's thirty-four years as Headmaster. The next Dux was Miss Patricia Shann in 1941.

As a side-line to the history of girls at Grammar it is interesting to note that girls were always referred to as Miss [then surname] until the arrival of Mr Alan Morwood as Headmaster in 1976. Until that time boys were always referred to by surname only.

*(Mr W.J. Muller)*