

FROM THE ARCHIVES

JOYCE GRIMSEY (1939-42)

Mrs **JOYCE LAND [nee GRIMSEY]** was a student at Grammar from 1939 to 1942 and was head girl in 1942. Her time at the School saw the start of Mr Whight's period as Headmaster 1939-1946, the outbreak of World War Two, the closing of the School at the end of 1941 and the reopening on the Rosslea Campus in April, 1942. The following is an edited version of her memories of the School. In 1940 Mrs Land's father, H. Grimsey, presented the Grimsey Cup for best House in Girls' Sports. This Cup is still awarded on an annual basis.



Mrs Land writes: "1938 saw the fiftieth anniversary of TGS and the retirement of Mr Rowland. Mr Whight took over and I remember his wife and two toddler daughters. The Dovecot was the centre for girls and was situated in the Headmaster's garden. No male was allowed to enter. All girls rode bikes to school and stabled them outside the Dovecot. We sat under trees for lunch and swapped our home made eats – no tuckshop was available. In the morning we walked over to Call Over [Assembly] and then classes and as pointed out to us girls at one of the House concerts in a mannequin parade put on by the boys, hitching up our stockings as we walked. These stockings and ties were a challenge. The etiquette was for girls [always referred to as Miss ...] to enter the classroom first and the boys followed. Mrs Whight organised the girls to run a stall each Friday in aid of Red Cross: this was very popular with the boarders and on Sports Days the girls made toffee apples. On Saturdays, when Grammar played schools from the Towers we were all expected to support the teams.

Mr Whight introduced Houses [Rowland, Hodges and Miller]. Interhouse sport was a high priority. The girls played basketball, vigoro and tennis. St Anne's were our opponents mainly. We always entered one or two teams in the YWCA sports carnival. Our uniform was black pinafore with yellow shirt which later was a white coat frock. A grade teams wore gold bandannas while the B grade wore black. We had a pass to the city baths included in our fees and these were much used in summer. Mr Whight would inspect our homework books to see that we were balancing our lives with encouragement to participate in outdoor activities before tea. School dances were held each year. The Boarders' supper was held at the end of the year with female prefects invited.

Call Over with its special reading was part of the day. As the war progressed we were advised of war casualties that included many Old Boys, some of whom had been school friends. We could find names carved in the desks and seats we were using. We also celebrated their achievements as well. Call Over was held in the new building [1940 and now the Maurie Blank Administration Building]. The building also had a new library and bookroom run by Mr Blank. Special maths and writing pads were introduced with the school badge on the cover.

In 1942, after Japan had declared war, all coastal schools were closed and arrangements were made for TGS to take over the School of Mines in Charters Towers. Girls were to board at Blackheath College and the boys went to All Souls. TGS students were mainly boarders and 'family' and many letters passed between the students and the All Souls group who would come over to Blackheath to check up whether the courses were tying up with the TGS curriculum - my Physics wasn't. The All Souls group organized a morning tea at Blackheath for a Saturday morning but during the week the government re-opened the coastal schools. We had to catch the train that Saturday morning to be in Townsville to start at Rosslea on Monday morning. **Nobody missed that train!** We were made very welcome in the Towers but the TGS bond was predominant with the students. Parents who visited took out groups and all we wanted to do was to walk miles after being couped up inside a fence.

The desks that had been packed up to go to the Towers were immediately moved to Rosslea. Students were arriving all the time and boarders turned up without notice. It was great to be together again. The stable at Rosslea became the science laboratory and rooms were turned into classrooms. We would sit under the trees when we had a spare lesson. The boys would practise high jumping in their socks and were reprimanded by the girls as they had to do the mending. Tommy Whight put on his list of things taught: **'Girls taught to darn and nag.'**

We had air raid drill and slit trenches. After the bomb fell across the river from the School there were quite a few broken nights spent in the trenches and we were sent home each day to go to bed: never mind the homework. End of the year came and we sat for Senior. **NEVILLE WELLER [1942]** missed first in Queensland by half a mark. Some had exemptions to do Senior but had to start their military service the day after.

While at Rosslea we did have a few Saturday nights when the boarders were asked to come to a party in the homes of the day students. The boarders were housed in ordinary houses which had become vacant in the area and they liked to get some home cooking. There was a tennis court at Rosslea and some basketball was also played. It was a difficult time but the TGS spirit was nurtured and even today knows no boundaries-mates from School now in their nineties are still close friends and remember their school days with pleasure."

MR BILL MULLER
School Archivist