

1932-43

NEWCASTLE CENTRAL DOMESTIC SCIENCE SCHOOL

A new school was built on the Dumaresq Street site and Newcastle Central Domestic Science School started at the beginning of first term in 1932. It was opened by the Minister for Education, the Honourable William Davies. Its motto, Nobility, Courage, Service, was based on the initials of the original school, Newcastle Central School. Other traditions soon followed with the new school song adopted in 1934 and the poem "The School Colours". The Poem was written to commemorate the 35th Battalion, known as "Newcastle's Own" because they were raised and trained in Newcastle and from which the school gained its colours of chocolate and green a symbol of honour and service.

THE SCHOOL COLOURS

These, borne in battle, knew the flame
And smoke of death, and waved above
High deeds of valor in their name,
And the white sacrifice of love.
No tarnishment they know, nor stain;
Honour is theirs, and to our care
That Honour passing shall remain ----
A sacred trust, a ceaseless prayer!
To those high things for which we live
We pledge our youth, that worthily
The services of our years may give
A fuller, fairer destiny.
Their honour shrined may make more real
The gifts of those whose labours cease,
That we, still striving, may reveal
The tranquil loveliness of Peace.

This poem was written to commemorate the granting of permission, in 1924, for this school to use the colours of the Newcastle Regiment.

At the beginning of 1932 Miss K. Gunnell, A. Mus. A., after testing the girls' voices individually, formed an outstanding choir which gained recognition through its performances in the Newcastle Eisteddfods and similar competitions.

The plans, as originally drawn up for the new school, were never fully realized. It was a Depression building, with no frills such as blinds or fireplaces, but was visited frequently during its construction by Dorothy Henson, as she knew she was to be the Headmistress. Her staff of 22 taught English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Commercial Work, Science, Art, Needlework, Cookery, Music and Physical Culture. Miss Henson fought hard for minor comforts (a drying room) and for essentials. Initially her office had no power point.

At the beginning of 1933 the school had over 900 pupils and was gazetted as a first-class school.



The move to new premises meant leaving behind many library books and so a new library had to be established. After much fund-raising a new reference library was opened by the Mayoress of Newcastle, Mrs. Griffiths, in 1937.

The new school had a tuck shop detached from the main building. Initially it was run by a staff member assisted by senior students until 1938 when it was finally agreed that it be leased from 1939.

When the first pupils arrived, the school had no cleaners and no caretaker. The cleaning was first done by the students and it wasn't until after the official opening that cleaners were appointed. Due to the financial constraints of the Depression, a resident caretaker was not appointed until the mid-1940s.

The school uniform was of course the navy serge tunic, white blouse, and blazer worn with a panama hat in summer and a felt hat in winter. A school tie, gloves, black stockings and (sensible) black shoes completed the outfit. For sport and PE classes, a three-box-pleat tunic and green bloomers were worn with the white blouse. Cookery classes required a white crossover cotton uniform, a white triangular headscarf and green apron.

The war years brought some changes for both staff and pupils. A Social Services Club formed by Miss Henson, made clothes, knitted socks and scarves, cooked and raised money for the war effort. This was a fine example of the school giving expression to its motto of 'Service'.

The geography of Newcastle meant that there was a real danger of attack and so preparations were made. The school gained a stretcher, a first aid kit and an air raid trench in the grounds. Regular air raid drills were conducted, and everyone had to practice walking home in case an attack crippled the public transport system.

In 1944 the school had another name change when Newcastle Central Domestic Science School became Newcastle Home Science High School.