

STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVES:

AN EARLIER JUNIOR SCHOOL

In February 2018 we are to open a new Junior School, Hamilton. Years of careful planning have ensured that this new facility will serve our young scholars well in the 21st century. Yet the opening provides an opportunity to review how the site has been used over the past century or so.

Rugby House (also known as Red House) stood on the site in 1906, the year College Council purchased it for £1200.00. Ten years later it became the home of the Vice Principal, Dr E. Neil McQueen.

During World War II the house was used by the RAAF, who requested the College to house a RADAR unit. When the College returned in 1946, boarders occupied the building and it was re-named Hamilton House.

In late 1963 Hamilton House was demolished and a Primary Branch was built. For more than five decades this was the Junior School for PLC Sydney.

The Primary Branch was officially opened on 20 March 1964 by Dr H.S. Wyndham, the Director-General of Education of NSW. Miss Whitlam was the Principal and Mr F.L. Thompson was the Chairman of College Council



The official party at the opening, 20 March 1964

Newspaper articles of the time reported that the new £45,000 primary school would accommodate 150 pupils and that the Building Committee and Miss Whitlam had “visited the latest departmental schools in search of new ideas and improvements.”



The completed Primary Branch, 1963



Junior School students at the opening, 20 March 1964

The architects, Laurie & Heath, planned the school “as a compact group of buildings, integrated with a grassed playground, a paved games area, and a courtyard recreation space”. Facilities included five classrooms, a junior library, an assembly hall that could be used for art, drama and music lessons, a cloak room, and modern toilets.



Each classroom boasted a blackboard that could be rolled up or down as required, a large map of Australia and a public address system. And thanks to the Ex-Students' Union, there was a television in the junior library!

The facilities that were “state-of-the-art” in 1964 became outmoded and the Primary Branch – Hamilton – was demolished in 2015 to make way for the “new” Hamilton we open in 2018.

