



The view from the old office. We had morning tea under that last awning which will make way for a new building.



Our old Senior School, (opened 1 September 1920) now Fewings Building (previously called A Block).



The second flight up to the office. Where the girls once did art classes. The marks which look like wings on all the doors, read "Honour Before Honours". The stairs down from the office and then up to modern toilets. I don't remember there being a room up those stairs. To be truthful, I don't think I remember the stairs.



Miss Taylor's Office. Where the old gym/toilets were and now part of the Seniors' Study with kitchen facilities.



The seating at the other end of the Seniors' Study. The wall mural adds a nice touch.



Here I am, pointing to my “brick” and look who sits beside me!! How serendipitous is that!!

I had a wonderful two hours at Somerville House as I was invited to the opening of the Fewings Building.

I took photos for you all and have included a couple of pages from the Foundation booklet.

The clock is still in place and going up the stairs just behind the entrance. Miss Taylor’s office is now a cosy little room looking out onto the quadrangle. The first flight has old photos of “Life at Somerville House” on the wall. And of course, you remember where we had “our formal” in the Assembly Hall. It has shrunk in size - or so it seemed to me. Now there are divided classrooms all tastefully refurbished. Miss Morrison wouldn’t know where she was. I could see her conducting up on the stage. Even the Teachers’ Staff Room has gone.

Oh! All the memories and it was so interesting to listen to the newer Old Girls reminiscing “Oh, we did this here in this room, or that room” ... so different from our time.

Diana Downes (nee Ray), Class of 1958



School Gymnasium, c.1927



The Origins of 'Senior School'

In 1920, architects, Chambers and Powell, designed 'The Educational Block' as an L-shaped two-story extension to mark the Silver Jubilee of the School. On the ground floor was an Assembly Hall - with a stage and sets of folding doors which allowed it to be divided into three rooms. The Geography Theatre was along the west side with six classrooms, music rooms and a room for commercial work on the upper level.

In its day, this building was regarded as a superior learning asset with purposefully designed facilities.

Extensions completed in 1926 to mark the Silver Jubilee provided additional facilities with a new, beautifully lit gymnasium, with Swedish wall-bars, horizontal ladder, balancing pole, Roman rings, floor mattress, with dumb bells, clubs and wands displayed in wall clips.

Well equipped Chemistry and Biology laboratories seated twenty students with broad verandahs enclosed by casement windows.

Works undertaken as part of this renewal project:

- Eight spacious, light filled, flexible classrooms.
- Courtyards blend seamlessly with outdoor learning areas to create an historic façade.
- Generous foyers and verandahs enhance student interactions with alcoves and dedicated breezeway lounges.

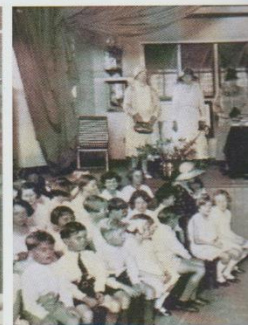
Specialist areas for Art, Science & Technology, from the original design, will be housed in the new Senior Precinct with the two year construction scheduled to commence in early 2024.



Dolls Stall at Fete, 1921



Boarders, c.1940



Junior School Prize Distribution, 1931

A New Story Unfolds within the Heritage Heart

The only exterior changes took place during World War II when, in 1942, under General MacArthur, the School became United Army Forces Far East Headquarters, until 1945.

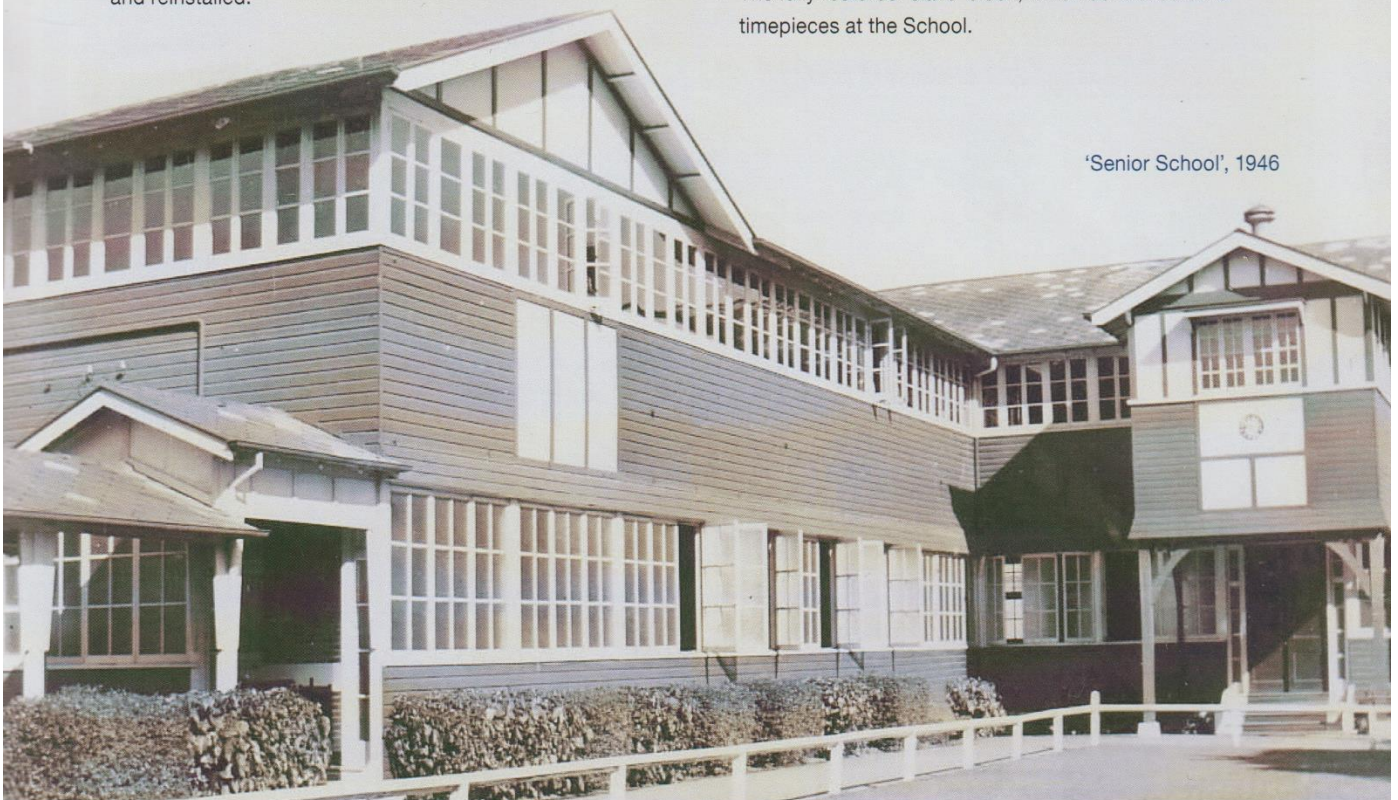
At this time the US Army installed windows along the second story verandahs - as can be seen in the 1946 photo of the 'Senior School' below.

Cara Phillips led BSPN Architecture in devising an imaginative plan that blends architectural ingenuity and urban design with the conservation of our unique history. Agile learning domains with state-of-the-art facilities will frame a rejuvenated space where students will be inspired to learn in aesthetic environs.

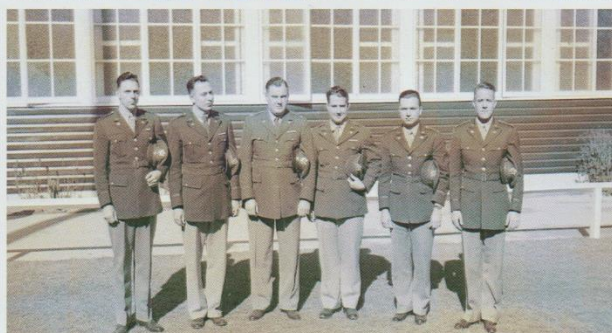
Much of the historic façade has been retained.

➤ Three hundred and sixty original casement windows, in storage for a number of years, meticulously restored and reinstalled.

- Coalbrookdale chairs from the turn of the century await restoration.
- Original VJs line classroom walls.
- Beautifully restored original timber flooring on the upper level with pavers from the 1920s reused on the ground level below.
- Timber staircase cladding removed to reveal an impressive and historic stairwell.
- Skilled bricklayers recreated the Flemish Bond brickwork which features across all four Heritage Heart buildings unifying the iconic and irreplaceable.
- The distinctive pattern in the original brickwork, obscured over time, would once have been in keeping with the Chapel, Cumbooquepa and 'Chambers'.
- The fully restored 'slave' clock, which controlled other timepieces at the School.



'Senior School', 1946



Signal Officers of Base Section 3, 1943 Courtesy of NARA



Senior Students, c.1959