

School Life: An interview with Denny Smeathers

Group School 98

Where did you attend school? I went to school number 98 which is the school furthest south of the Northcliffe settlement. It is located on the Windy Harbour Road. Closed in 1940.

Did you go away for extra schooling? No, I left my school when I was nine and then I completed the rest of my schooling through correspondence.

How far was it to walk to school? It was approximately 2 miles for me to walk to school but lucky for us because some of the kids in my class had to walk about five miles which is the maximum that school allowed for kids to walk to get to there.

Did any of the kids wear shoes? No they didn't because the families couldn't afford it, so most of the kids had bare feet.

Who were some of the previous teachers? Was there more than one teacher at the school? At my school there was only one teacher for 13 kids. One of the famous teachers was Mrs. May Moore who was the first female teacher, and she rode a motorbike. My Teacher was Rick Lee.

How many students did they have in a class? There were about 9 to 12 students in a class most of the time monitored by one teacher who had their own cottage supplied to sleep in.

Who were your teachers? I only had one teacher, and his name was Rick Lee.

Did you know Mrs May Moore? (First female teacher) Yes, I knew her very well both as a friend and as a teacher.

What punishments did they have for breaking the school rules? There was a flat cane which hurt very much. But most of the canes they had were round ones made out of bamboo.

Was there any kind of uniform at the school- daily or sports? No because the children's parents were very poor and they didn't have many clothes and every bit of scrap material was used none was wasted.

Did you compete in sport events with other schools? Yes I did not very often, but enough times for enjoyment for the children.

Did you have any camps or excursions anywhere? No. Because most of the time the school would need that money that would have to be put forward into a camp or excursion.

What did you take to school for lunch? Just home made bread and jam, nice and easy for

our mums to make so it was fresh everyday.

What did other kids eat? They ate the same thing, sometimes it may be a different jam but it was always simple.

What games did you play at recess and lunch times? Mostly it was rounders, cricket and soccer because it was something that was quick and easy to prepare in a short time.

Did you keep in contact with the other people you went to school with? Yes, I still keep in contact with Archie Jackson and before Mrs Moore passed away I kept in contact with her too.

Interview conducted By Josh and Sophie