

INDUSTRIAL ARTS RECOLLECTIONS PROJECT

SOME EXCERPTS

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Peter Smith/Arch Park/Geoff Hogan

PETER:Well I had a very good Woodwork teacher and also a good Metalwork teacher and I had aspirations, I suppose, of Teaching Woodwork and Metalwork like them. Dan Dockrell was my Woodwork Teacher and Peter Zebba was my Metalwork Teacher. I spoke to Dan DockrellI think it was called Manual Arts back in those days, the late 40s, and he said, "Well try and get into the Diploma Group if you can. I would have given my socks to do that course." That was the first time I knew there was a diploma course so I moved to Sydney from a farm called Rhones Creek, via Macksville.....

The Head of the Industrial Arts Department was Stimpson the various other teachers there were Allan Broady. Prettimen and Wade. Unfortunately we didn't know first names back in those days. Stimpson was on the Panel when I was interviewed in Margaret Street.We did three years at Sydney Technical College for most of the subjects and went to Teachers College for PE, Music and I might say I don't think I ever saw the Music lecturer as he was too busy playing the bells at Sydney University.

ARCH: The qualification that you ended up with ASTC.....

PETER: ASTC from Sydney Technical College.

GEOFF: That is, an Associate of the Sydney Technical College.

PETER: That's right and we did the Dip Ed in our fourth year at Sydney Teachers College. So there were lectures held at Sydney University such as History of Education by Professor Connell and various other subjects such as Educational Method, Theory of Education Statistics, Educational Psychology and Industrial Arts subjects as well. We had the opportunity of selecting options, I selected Sculpture and Art. I actually had Rafazel who was quite a famous identity in the Art world.

John Gibson/Arch Park

ARCH:when you talk about CAEs, they were really a direct transfer from Teachers College to CAE and then when they became CAEs they absorbed a number of different Departments like Business Studies, PE and that sort of stuff and then were so broad they were like a mini University rather than a simple Teachers College, weren't they?

JOHN: Well, that's true they broadened out in their scope of offerings and as far as Teacher Education is concerned probably the most important of those moves was to provide Degrees and Post-Graduate Degrees but of course, with the whole absorption of the CAE system into The University System, those offerings didn't last for very long.

ARCH: Youtrained at The University of NSW.

JOHN: We did courses at the University of NSW and at Sydney Teachers College so out at the University we did the University courses, Engineering Drawing, Engineering Design, Metallurgy, Geology, Psychology, Education. Then we would go back to Sydney Teachers College, within the University Sydney grounds, where we did courses there on Industrial Arts Teaching method, Industrial Arts Practical Teaching Approaches where all our practice teaching was centred and organised from. So the best way to look at it, is the Degree was a four year Degree that

was really equivalent to a three year Undergraduate Degree followed by the Diploma of Education but we never got the Diploma.....

My first appointment was Wellington High school.....They were really good people. My classes at Wellington were mainly 7 and 8. Year 7 Craft and Years 8 to 10 Wood Technics, that's alright for a metal worker isn't it? Serious lesson that I learnt whilst I was there was you don't keep children in country schools in after school mainly because many of them have to catch a bus to go home and when you do keep somebody in after School and they miss their bus you have the nice duty of driving them home,

Garry Winter/Trevor Host/Geoff Hogan

GEOFF: Before we move on to the next topic are there any other things you would like to say? Field visits?

TREVOR: Field visits were infrequent because of the cost. As I said before, we serviced the whole State. It was very expensive to travel to the Far West, not like you can do on a regular basis in Sydney, but they were interesting and I will leave Gary to talk about some of those occasions because he has been on a few more than I have.

GEOFF: We might actually talk about them now because they are part of how you delivered education to the students.

GARRY: Well I went on two fairly long-distance Field Service Visits. One was to Albury doing the schools down in the Riverina. I went with George and also two Language teachers visited a whole range of schools on our way through. It was a five day Field Service excursion. It allowed us to actually meet both the supervisors who in some cases were teachers and the students who were in schools or they were at home. We could actually revise a lot of the stuff, especially in the senior courses.

The other Field Service Visit that was really good was with Trevor. We went out to Broken Hill, down to White Cliffs and then across to Tibbaturra and that was mainly 4-wheel drive only. We went right out to Cameron Corner. It allowed us to view what we were actually teaching these students who were isolated; seeing what facilities they had, what they were doing and how the parents were reacting to the materials we were sending out. It was wonderful to find that it was not just the students who were actually reading the materials but also the parents. We suddenly realized that not only were we educating the students but we were also educating the bush and that was something that we hadn't even thought of. So when we came back we started to look at some of the materials and made sure we had expansions or extensions that could be useful.

One of the other things we found out from that excursion was that some of the teachers here in other subjects weren't familiar with the isolation. For example, the problem in a Commerce assignment when one parent asked, "Do they really want us to go to the nearest supermarket which is in Broken Hill?" This was in the Cameron Corner area and it was a half a day's drive to Cameron Corner and then three days to Tibbaturra and 300kms to Broken Hill, just to go and do some price checking on different products.....

Geoff George/Arch Park

GEOFF: I feel that I served Industrial Arts during the golden years of education and as an Inspector of Schools. I was very much involved for a period of time in personnel. That was the period when teachers who sought promotion or transfer or had personal reasons to receive a transfer, when the Industrial Arts Inspectors of Schools Panel were able to take personal responsibility for that.....

..... When I came into the role (Curriculum Consultant), the trial schools had already been selected from the non-Government System and the Government System, country and city, central schools, agricultural, specialist schools and also, some schools were selected because they knew the school would fail and some schools were selected because they knew that they would be very successful..... They also did select some schools that they thought, well this will really tell us what the problems are going to be and they really did. I must also add that one of those three schools who were selected and were supposedly doomed to failure, was very successful.....

Now I think a very important aspect of the development of Technics was the inservice training that was available. Arch has already mentioned that a lot of it was after school and a lot of it was done by teachers, practicing teachers themselves and I think that was why it was so successful..... We had I think some really great Head Teachers in Industrial Arts during that period of time. We always have had, but in that period of time we had some really great ones who threw themselves into it in a big way, came to the conferences, went back to their staff and tried to gender up that enthusiasm that was needed to introduce the new approach. It was a big change, a very big change.....

Now just one other point that I would like to make about Technics. We talked about staffing earlier, we had a number of teachers who came in at various times that were called Artisan teachers, in other words from Industry. I know I have two here with me. That is why I want to mention this because they often were the ones that helped us a lot with Technics with their special experiences and skills that they had. I have always said this, if it wasn't for the Artisans, I think we would have been in trouble with Technics

Kevin Dodds/Arch Park

ARCH: (First Appointment) When you were appointed to Asquith and how long were you there?

KEVIN: I was there for six months. It was a brand new school and the buildings hadn't been finished, hence we started in the Home Science buildings of the old Hornsby Girls Home Science. We taught theory for the first six months then I was appointed to Dapto the very day they marched up to the new buildings.....

ARCH: So you went straight from Asquith to Dapto?

KEVIN: Yes, I was rung up on the Thursday. The Inspector asked the Principal, "Is Mr Dodds doing the Manual Arts Diploma?" The answer was no. "Is he married?" no. "He starts at Dapto High School Monday morning" I was there for a year and a half. The first year I decided I wanted to get back to Sydney because that was where all my friends were. I applied for transfer and didn't get it. Then I got to like it, so the next year I applied for retention and I got transferred back to Sydney. I had started the Diploma and with the limited subjects available in Wollongong, I was transferred back to Sydney to complete the Diploma. I was appointed to Kingsgrove High School where I replaced Bruce Leadbeater while Bruce was seconded to prepare projects for the new Craft.....

Before I went to Kingsgrove they put me between Vaucluse and Enmore Schools. Enmore was three days and Vaucluse two days..... Only for the first term..... I then went to Sefton High School where I remained until 1971. In that time I was inspected for my First List. The First List was really just a statement of efficiency of a teacher which I gained the first time. I was also inspected there for my Second List which I also passed in 1966.

ARCH: What you are showing there in the lists of Schools that you gave us was how the Department moved young single teachers around.

KEVIN: Yes, they moved them around because they were given a Bond by the Education Department. The Scholarship that you were awarded paid four pound sixteen shillings while we were at College.

ARCH: Kevin did you object to being moved around a bit?

KEVIN: It was just accepted. That was the procedure.

Mick Ecclestone/Arch Park

MICK:I think I became Chairperson of the Syllabus Committee about 1981 or, thereabouts. I can remember some fairly interesting meetings where we could see that we were being ignored, or obstructed by the Board of Studies. We had some enemies on the Board of Studiessome were Principals who were there probably as Teachers Federation Representatives,some were University people who were a bit vague on anything and not supportive,we had some Board of Studies people that were just so precious of the HSC and University accreditation and so on that they just didn't want any idea of any sort of a practical course. I remember going to a Board of Studies meeting where we argued the case for a 2Unit HSC practical course and so on and basically got belted around the head.....we could see that it was going to be a very hard road to break through the Board of Studies.

ARCH: They kept inviting us to the meetings to present our case and we would do that and they would say, "You haven't done this". We would go away and do it, be invited back to the next meeting and they would say, "You have done that but you haven't done this". It was this progression through the secret information they were holding back on and releasing through a drip, drip, approach. Totally obstructive.

MICK: Finally,.....I can remember going to a Board of Studies Meeting where we had been through hoops that many times that we went along not convinced one way or the other of what would happen, we just thought we would get rolled again.....They asked a couple of questions about something to do with the practical side of things.....They wanted to know if it could be practically examined. We said we could do this, this and this and then we could moderate it and they said, "That's alright then". I think in some of our documents we might have called it "Practical Assessment" but as soon as we said "Practical Examination" we had used the term that they lived with.

ARCH: Examination, the magic word.

MICK: "That's alright then no problem". We walked out of there after about ten minutes thinking, well what happened? Obviously some pressure had been put from the other side, to the Board of Studies, rather than us bashing our heads against a brick wall.

ARCH: You and I walked out of that meeting, we walked a hundred metres to the traffic lights, we didn't say a word to each other, we were waiting on the lights changing and I looked at you and you looked at me and we said, "What the hell was that about?"

MICK: We realised that there had been a significant shift in the planet; it had just moved.

GEOFF: One of the rumours Arch, and you might like to elaborate on it, was Brother Matthew had had a meeting with the Minister for Education.

ARCH: Brother Matthew (a Marist Brother from Auburn and a Consultant in the Catholic System), was a very quiet operator and we were very fortunate to have him in our operation in Met West and also in this one. When I was speaking to him later I said, "I just don't understand what is going on they just approved it without any argument. It was very sudden and short" and he said, "Well, I had dinner with six or seven Labour Members of Parliament most of them Ministers from my area yesterday in Parliament House". I asked had he discussed anything, "Oh yes, we discussed a few things".

MICK: Well it certainly worked it certainly worked. Really, I think the impetus of the whole thing and the reason why it came to be was the Met West push. It wasn't going to happen anywhere else around the State. It wasn't going to happen anywhere else around Sydney. It wasn't going to happen through the Teachers Federation. It happened because you and others in the Met West Region pushed for it and the benefits of it became obvious once we got started and all got involved and everything sort of linked together.....