

70 Years of Sedley memories

Compiled and edited by Sheila Glasswell
Introduction by Allan Brigham

70
years
of
Sedley memories

Commemorating the life of Sedley Infants School
at its closure in 2002

CONTENTS

Editor's note, Mrs. Sheila Glasswell	4
Acknowledgements, Mrs Triss Driver and Mrs Margaret Owen	
Sunshine, whistling wind and daffodils, Mr. Allan Brigham .	5
Early Sedley Days,	18
The School Year	22
Do you remember the Rose Queen?	28
Royal events	39
Sedley war years	41
Health of the nation	44
Spot your teachers	49
Additions to the buildings and grounds	53
International School	58
Inspections over the years, Mrs. Triss Driver	62
Down Memory Lane, from those at the beginning	64
Wartime Up Memory lane, your wartime memories	83
Just round the corner to Memory Lane, the 40s 50s, 60s . . .	97
In Memory Lane, living in the 70s, 80s, 90s	119
Today's memories, today's staff	131
Today's Children Remember	143
.	
And finally, from the Headteacher, Mrs Triss Driver	157

Editors note

This book about the history of our school and the memories of its Staff and Pupils has been written with the support of many people.

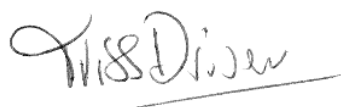
Thankyou to: -

- Staff and pupils, past and present who have sent in their memories. We have been fortunate that so many have contacted us with a contribution for the book - little did we know how much interest would be generated when the idea was first suggested! Extracts from all the written contributions have been included - the many hours of fascinating conversations we have had could not be of course, and had all the photos been included we would have needed to publish many volumes!
- Allan Brigham, local historian, who has written a section on the history of the area and the need for a new school to be built in 1932. He has also given us a great deal of support and encouragement.
- Arthur Cooper, pupil at Sedley on the day it opened, 19th September 1932, and Vice-Chairman of the Governing body for many years, who has helped with his wonderful knowledge of the social history of this area in the early part of the 20th century.
- The biggest thank-you must go to Sheila Glasswell, teacher at Sedley for 14 years. Sheila has worked very hard to produce this fascinating book which we are sure you will enjoy reading and we hope will give many people a great deal of pleasure.

We have of course done our very best to ensure that the information in the book is correct, but we may have made some mistakes. If so we are very sorry.

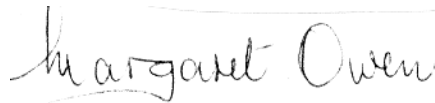
We are very grateful to everyone who has made this book possible -and to the generations of Sedley's very special children to whom this book is dedicated.

Triss Driver



Headteacher

Margaret Owen



Chair of Governors

Sunshine, Whistling Wind & Daffodils. **The Sedley Council School**

The Early Years.

November 1926

'The managers of Romsey Council School desire to call the attention of the Education Committee to the need that must shortly arise for a new Infants School in the district owing to the large increase in population as a result of the new estate that is in the course of construction and would urge the council to take immediate steps to purchase sufficient ground for the purpose while it is available'.

Miss Smith, Romsey Council School

September 19th 1932

'I, Grace Annie Pleasance opened this School today. 105 children were transferred from St Philip's C. E. Infants, all of whom live on the south side of Mill Road. 48 children were enrolled on Friday 16th making 153 on the roll.'

Log Book of the Sedley Council School.

Introduction:

'It was a new area. It was fantastic!'

'We lived in Salmon Lane. It was a very small cottage in a very small lane just behind Fitzroy Street. The lane is still there, but the houses are all gone. We moved to 78 Hobart Road when I was about 18 months old. It was a new development, all council houses. It was a new area. It was fantastic!'

Arthur Cooper (b.1927)

James Cooper moved with his wife and three young children from the densely inhabited streets of central Cambridge to Hobart Road in the late 1920s. His son Arthur still lives in the area, one of the first pupils at Sedley School, and now one of the longest serving School Governors.

When James Cooper was born at the opening of the 20th century Cambridge had a population of 38,000. When he died in the 1970s the population had more than doubled to 100,000. The story of Sedley School is part of the story of how Cambridge adapted to population growth and ever-changing standards in the 20th century.

“The Slums of Cambridge are a disgrace”.

‘If the Council looked at the Report they would see what difficulties they were in, in the matter of health owing to the poor housing condition. They produced overcrowding and all the ill effects. It was said recently at a public meeting what a great many slums they had. That was true. But they could not help having slums as long as they did not have sufficient houses to put people in.’

Cambridge Daily News: 19.05.1922

An example of an old Cambridge yard
(Cambridgeshire Collection)



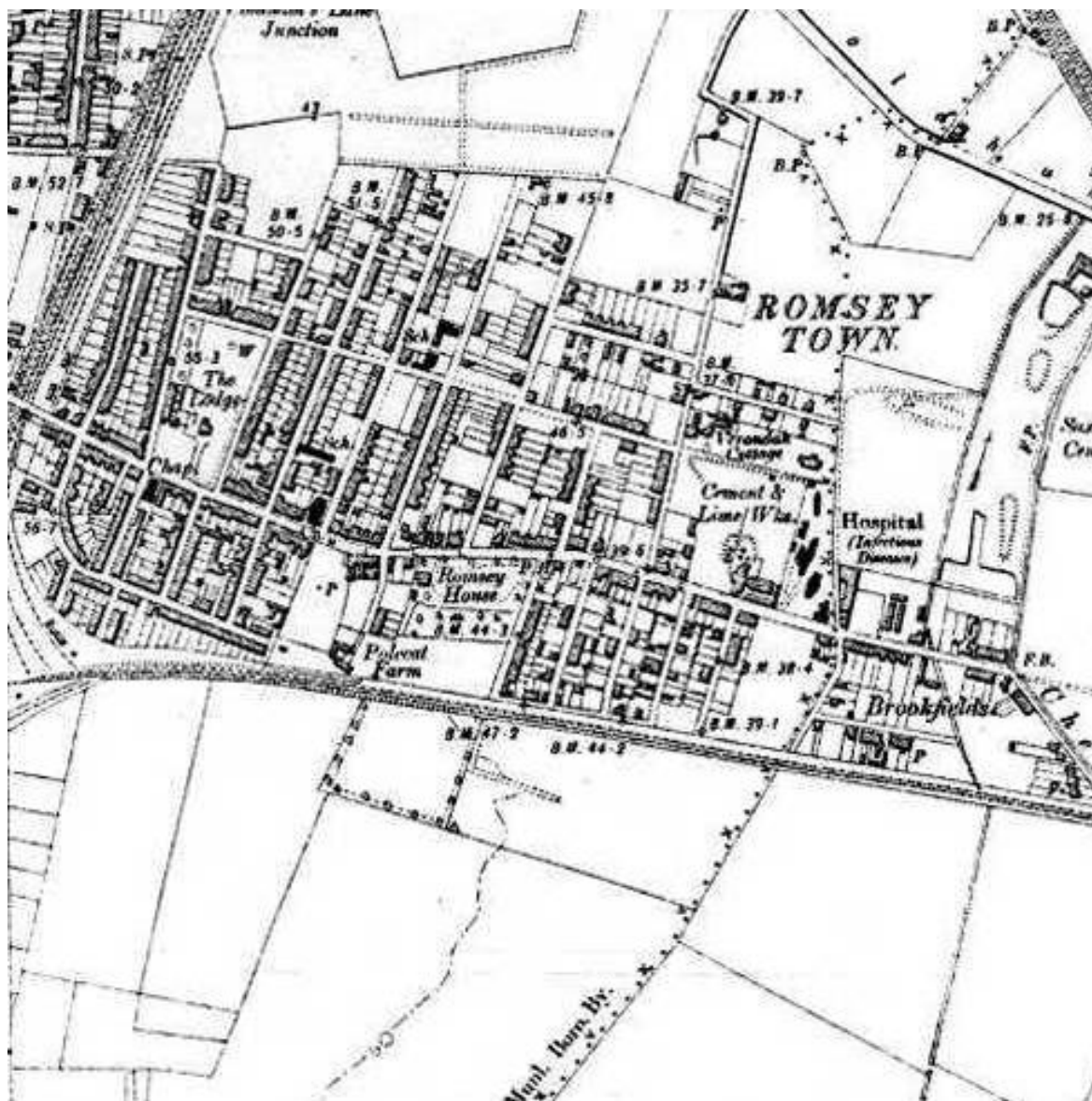
Five years before Arthur Cooper was born, Cambridge Borough Council declared that the slums of Cambridge were a disgrace and should be abolished. An ever-increasing population was living in houses hastily erected in the 19th century in the streets that clustered off East Road and Newmarket Road. Children were still being born into families where 6 or 7 slept in the same room, where there was poor ventilation and no gardens. Salmon Lane was one of these condemned streets.

Everyone acknowledged the need for more and better quality houses. Finding the land to build them on and the money to pay for them was the problem. In the five years after 1919 only 61 houses had been built for working people; it was estimated that 878 new dwellings were required. In the meantime the former First World War Hospital in Burrells Walk provided temporary homes for many.

Then in February 1924 Jesus College offered the Council a building site on land in Romsey Town on the south side of Mill Road adjacent to Marmora Road. By September plans for 202 houses had been approved and in March 1925 the tenants of the allotments on the site were given 6 months notice because the land had been purchased ‘for the purpose of the erection of houses for the working classes’.

Romsey Town was a railway community. Built in the 1880s and 1890s its terraced streets ran in straight lines off Mill Road, home to an army of railway servants – drivers, guards, boiler makers, plate-layers, fitters, firemen. It was then a solidly working class enclave on the outskirts of Cambridge. It had tightly defined boundaries, cut off from the town by the Great Eastern Railway Line and

terminating at Brookfields Isolation Hospital, where Mill Road ended before Perne Road was built. To the south the rows of terraces ceased at the branch railway line that then ran along Marmora Road, with the nearest houses across the fields on the distant Cherry Hinton Road. To the North fields and allotments lay between the terraces and an uninhabited Coldhams Lane. Beyond Brookfields a footpath stretched across open countryside towards Cherry Hinton.



Romsey Town in the early 20th century.

A working class enclave on the edge of Cambridge.
Suez Road & Hobart Road ended at the branch railway line running along Marmora Road. The new Council houses and Sedley School were built on the fields to the south of the railway.

'Bringing up bright, healthy children'.
Houses for the working classes:
New Romsey (or the birth of Coleridge).

"I feel it should be the utmost endeavour to get townspeople now existing in Burrells Walk out of these hutments and into council houses... While the huts served a useful purpose years ago they were never intended to be permanent abodes of civil population. For young people with families the cramped conditions did not make for bringing up bright, healthy children".

Cambridge Daily News: April 1927

Between 1926 and 1929 Hobart and Suez Roads were extended onto the former Jesus College land and local builders 'Brignells,' erected 170 three bedroom houses and 32 two bedroom houses, for the Borough Council. The price per house was £424, and the total price for all 202 houses was £85,554 -3s-6d.

Eventually nearly 1000 people were living on the new estate. One of the first residents was Elsie Allsop: 'When we first came here we were all young people here', she recalled. Elsie and her husband Arthur moved into Suez Road in February 1927. Like many of their new neighbours they had previously been living in the huts in Burrells Walk where the conditions were cramped and sanitation poor. The Allsops had been living in this 'temporary accommodation' for four years and welcomed the move to the new homes with up to date facilities, bathrooms and big gardens.

The building of the Suez and Hobart Road estate was part of a major expansion of council housing in post war Cambridge that was mirrored across the country. Encouraged by government subsidies it marked the recognition by local and national politicians that private enterprise had failed to build houses of the quantity and quality expected at rents that working class families could afford.

The Coopers moved into Hobart Road shortly after the Allsops came to Suez Road. James Cooper was a builder's labourer and Arthur remembers as a child being sent by his mother to look out for his father returning from work: 'She used to say *'Go and see if he's got his tools on his bike'*. Cars were unheard of in those days! His tools were a shovel, pick and hod – the hod was for carrying bricks. If they were on his bike it meant he was out of work, it meant there was no money next week'. If there was a frost, or if there was bad weather, the labourers would be laid off. There was no guaranteed weekly wage and they had to go and 'sign on' at the Labour Exchange where there was a three-day wait before they received a subsistence payment. *'He was a hard working man, he really was. We were very, very poor, but he did try very hard to make us as good a home as he could.'*

This is a detailed black and white map of Homsey Town, showing streets, buildings, and landmarks. The map includes labels for 'HOMSEY TOWN', 'Brookfields Hospital', 'Norman Cement Works', 'Hilton Brook', and 'Hilton Hall'. It also shows various farms like 'Sandy Farm' and 'Vendras Farm', and a 'Recreation Ground'. The map is oriented with North at the top.

The branch railway line has disappeared, and the former fields between Mill Road and Cherry Hinton Road have been developed for housing. Sedley School nestles in the midst of the new council houses in Hobart Road.

'Space & Light': The Origins of Sedley School

'My very first impressions of Sedley were space and light. I had spent a short time at St Philip's in a gloomy room with high windows which we couldn't see out of, so the contrast was enormous. Everything was new with modern facilities which most of our homes did not possess.'

Mrs Joan Hawkes



When the Coopers moved to Hobart Road they already had three children. Two more were to follow. It was an estate of young families. The likely need for a new Infants School in the area had been recognised as early as 1926 by Miss Smith of Romsey Council School. But it wasn't until November 1929 that it was acknowledged that the number attending the existing Infants School at St Philips in Catharine Street was already *'greatly in excess of the recognised accommodation'*.

At the time education provision in Cambridge was undergoing a major review following the publication by the government in 1926 of the Hadow Report: 'The Education of the Adolescent'. Heavily influenced by R H Tawney, the Labour party spokesman on education, it recommended the establishment of secondary schools for the 90% of the population not then provided for. It was recognised that implementing this locally would eventually lead to a complete reorganisation of the Cambridge schools. But Councillors felt that the situation in Romsey was so acute that a new Infant school should be built before the review was completed, and suggested as a suitable site allotment land already owned by the council between Hobart and Coleridge Roads. At the same time they identified a similar need in Chesterton where yet more council houses were being built in response to the post war-housing crisis.

The building of what were to become Sedley and Shirley Schools became a joint project. Both shared a common design and similar internal features. By July 1931 they had been approved by the Board of Education. Tenders of £13,556 were accepted from 'Kidman & Sons' for Sedley School and of £13,350 from 'Johnson & Bailey' for Shirley School.

The design of both schools reflected the concerns of the 1920s and was very different from that of the older Victorian schools in either area. The 19th century model of a central hall with classrooms opening out from it, all under the watchful eye of the headmaster and surrounded by a desert of asphalt gave way to something new. It had been acknowledged that mass instruction in large classes took no note of individual differences or of family background. It was also recognised that if children weren't healthy they weren't going to be at school and they weren't going to learn anything.

Lots of fresh air to stop the spread of epidemics, and smaller class sizes with space for group or individual activities, were features of Sedley and Shirley. Both schools were built on secure sites away from the main roads. Grass was an important element of the setting and at Shirley single storey ranges were built around a grassed central courtyard. Sunlight was important too, and the classrooms, opening off an unenclosed corridor that ran around the courtyard, had as many windows as possible to let in the light.

Joan Hawkes remembered the contrast with old St Phillip's where she had started her schooling: *'My very first impressions of Sedley were the space and the light'*.

Peter Wright, another early pupil, was equally struck: *"My impression of my first classroom was of its vastness and how light it was as it had very large windows on either side looking over grassy areas"*.

But for Arthur Cooper, one of the first to attend the new school, it was the exposed corridor with its healthy fresh air that stood out seventy years later: *'I always remember the corridors, they weren't enclosed in those days, the wind would whistle down the passageway. Now of course it has been enclosed, it makes it much better and warmer'*.

The New School: 'Everything going on very nicely'

Sedley School was named after Mr Sedley Taylor, a founder of the School Dental Clinic who had begun the dental inspection and treatment of schoolchildren in England at Cambridge in 1907. The local paper stated that after Alderman Starr proposed the name at the Borough Council committee meeting, he added: *'I remember that in my younger days I strongly opposed the Dental Clinic as too socialistic'*.

The Alderman's colleagues laughed gently, and the name was adopted. That laughter reflects the changes that had taken place in the half century since the first terraces were built in Romsey Town. When St Philip's School was built in Catharine Street in 1886 for the children of the new community, pupil welfare was

not seen as a responsibility of the education authorities. Forty-six years later Sedley was built around the belief in pupil welfare.

What had once been seen as socialistic meddling had become conventional wisdom. Some believed that health was everyone's right. Others feared that an unhealthy, undernourished nation would not be able to defend itself. But whichever ideological direction they came from, both groups acknowledged that environment mattered, and that government had a duty to intervene. The same impulses that led the Borough Council to condemn slum housing and build the new estate in Hobart and Suez Roads with three bedrooms, a bathroom, and big gardens led the local authority to build the new Infant School around a grassy courtyard with plenty of sunshine. Commemorating the founder of the School Dental Service in the name of the school rather than a Christian Saint reflected the spirit of the age.

The school opened on 19th September 1932, a dedicated Infant School for children up to the age of 7. It was ten years since the Borough Council recognised that low quality, overcrowded housing led to poor health and had begun the re-housing programme that led to the expansion of Romsey onto the former green fields on the edge of Cambridge. It was nearly six years since the managers of Romsey Council School had written to the Borough Education Committee urging the council to take immediate steps to cater for *'the large increase in population as a result of the new estate that is in course of construction'*.

152 boys and girls. 105 children, most of whom lived in the new estate, were transferred from St Philip's, and 43 new pupils were accepted. They were taught in four classes whose sizes ranged from 24 to 46. Infant teaching was still seen then (as today?) as a woman's job, and the only man on the premises was the Caretaker, Mr Bennett (as today, seen as a man's job?). The all-female, all unmarried, teaching staff consisted of Miss Allen, Miss Ceadel, Miss Tricker and Miss Smith. They were helped by a nurse attendant, Miss Norman, and presided over by Miss Pleasance, the Headmistress.

In that first autumn term the four top classes assembled each morning in the Hall for prayers, walking in softly to the music of Handel's Largo or Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words'. An experimental timetable was used, and exercise referred to as "drill" was taken outside whenever the weather was suitable. On November 11th *'the silence was kept at 11.00,'* in memory of the fallen in the First World War, with special lessons on 'Peace', and handiwork to illustrate them. No-one then suspected that there would be another world war before the end of the decade, and Arthur Cooper never dreamt that the brother he played with as a child would be killed before he could fulfil his calling to enter the Church.

Two months after the school opened the School Inspector visited. His comment as he left was that *'everything was going on very nicely'*.

Before the war:
'Will be watched with interest'.

Sedley was Grace Pleasance's school. *'She was a small woman, as pleasant as her name, with a firm but gentle way of encouraging children. Every morning as she arrived on her bicycle there would be a competition to meet her in the driveway'* (Joan Hawkes). She was an experienced local teacher who remained unmarried and spent the rest of her career at the school. Pat Phillips knew all about her even before she enrolled: *'She had taught my mother and three of her sisters in the earlier part of the century in the East Road area. I knew that she was a very nice kind lady who would tell me everything I needed to know. BUT if I didn't sit still, keep quiet, work hard and do what I was told, the gentleness would turn to strong disapproval'.*

The first term had broken up for Christmas with games, sandwiches, cakes and tea. The day before, all the mothers had been invited to come to a performance in the school hall. Fathers were presumed not to be interested, and probably at work. There was dancing, singing and plays, and everyone had something to do.

This attempt to stretch out beyond the school into the new community that it nestled in was repeated when Grace Pleasance instituted what was to become the annual Open Day. At the end of the first school year over 200 parents came to watch dancing before being given a guided tour of the school. The dancing in later years became the Maypole dancing, which is remembered with a mixture of delight and confusion by all former pupils (normally delight by the girls and confusion by the boys!). There was no tradition of Maypole dancing amongst the railway workers of Romsey Town but this revival of an (alleged) folk custom marked an attempt to weld the pupils of the new estate into a community.

Trying to involve the families of the children in the school and in their children's welfare was an acknowledgement of the importance of the home environment, not recognised when many of the parents had been at school themselves. Addressing 45 mothers of the nursery children the following year Dr Laird reminded them that *'home surroundings and parental influence were the greatest factors in the lives of children'.*

Despite the 'whistling winds' in the corridor, and the sunshine, and the underfloor heating in winter (another innovation!) absences due to illnesses now forgotten were frequent. Whooping cough, Scarlet fever, tuberculosis, diphtheria were all recorded. Some died. An influenza epidemic closed the school for nearly two weeks in February 1933 with teachers ill and 112 out of 207 pupils sick.

'Fresh air' was the cure of the age. Everyone rested on camp beds after lunch, placed outside in summer. *'Going to bed,'* was Peter Wright's strongest recollection of his first year at the school: *'You were expected to go to sleep for an hour: I was a very restless child and rarely slept, and therefore I used to lose out*

on the reward for sleeping which was a barley sugar'. But the children were also regularly visited by the Medical Inspector, immunisations were given against diphtheria, their hearing tested by a new machine, their heads examined by the 'nit nurse', and their teeth by the dentist (in 1933, 96 out of 195 children needed treatment).



Under-nourishment was common. Arthur Cooper remembered the daily ration of milk in 1/3rd pint bottles: *'We always looked forward to that, and to the malt parade. We all had our own spoon and used to go along for the malt ration. I particularly liked malt, I've always liked sweet things! It helped to build us up in those days, because we weren't particularly well off, and anything like that would help to build the body'*.

The milk rations, the medical inspections, the illnesses and the absences were all noted down in the school Log Book by Grace Pleasance. Her concern was for the mental and physical welfare of the children. She also cared about their surroundings. In April 1933 she recorded that *'the daffodils and shrubs were looking very pretty in the front border'*, and that the Caretaker had cut the grass for the first time with the new motor lawn mower. Five days later she wrote: *'for the first time the children played games on the grass this morning. It was a great joy to them'*.

Sedley had been designed to give the children a better environment than that available in the older, 19th century schools in the area. The absence of asphalt deserts, and the Headmistress's genuine pleasure at seeing the children at play, express the ethos of the new school. In May 1934 the school inspector reported: *'It is evident that a successful start has been made. The Headteacher has a clear idea about the possibilities of the excellent premises and has also the skill and energy to make full use of them. With the close co-operation of her staff she has the school working smoothly in keeping with modern Infant School practice'*.

The Inspector commented on the attention to the individual provided by the new system of records for each child, *'which promised to be of great value in following the progress of children from the beginning of their school life'*. And he commented on the school surroundings: *"The cleanliness of the premises as a whole and the condition of the borders and lawns are deserving of praise"*.

The Inspector concluded: *'Under the present Head Teacher the school should continue to develop on thoroughly sound lines, and will be watched with interest'*.

Conclusion

The opening of Sedley marked the beginning of the major overhaul of educational provision in Romsey. It was prompted by the population influx that came with the new houses built 'for the working classes' on the green fields that had surrounded the area.

Eventually the reorganisation of 'education for adolescents' recommended by the Hadow Report would also lead to a new senior school close by. But there were many alternative proposals first.

St. Philip's Boys School in Ross Street, at the time taking boys from 7 to 14, nearly became a Senior Boys School, and the Romsey Council School nearly became the Senior Girls School. After much debate it was recognised that none of the older schools were suitable and the new Senior School for 640 11-15 year old boys and girls was opened in Radegund Road in 1937.

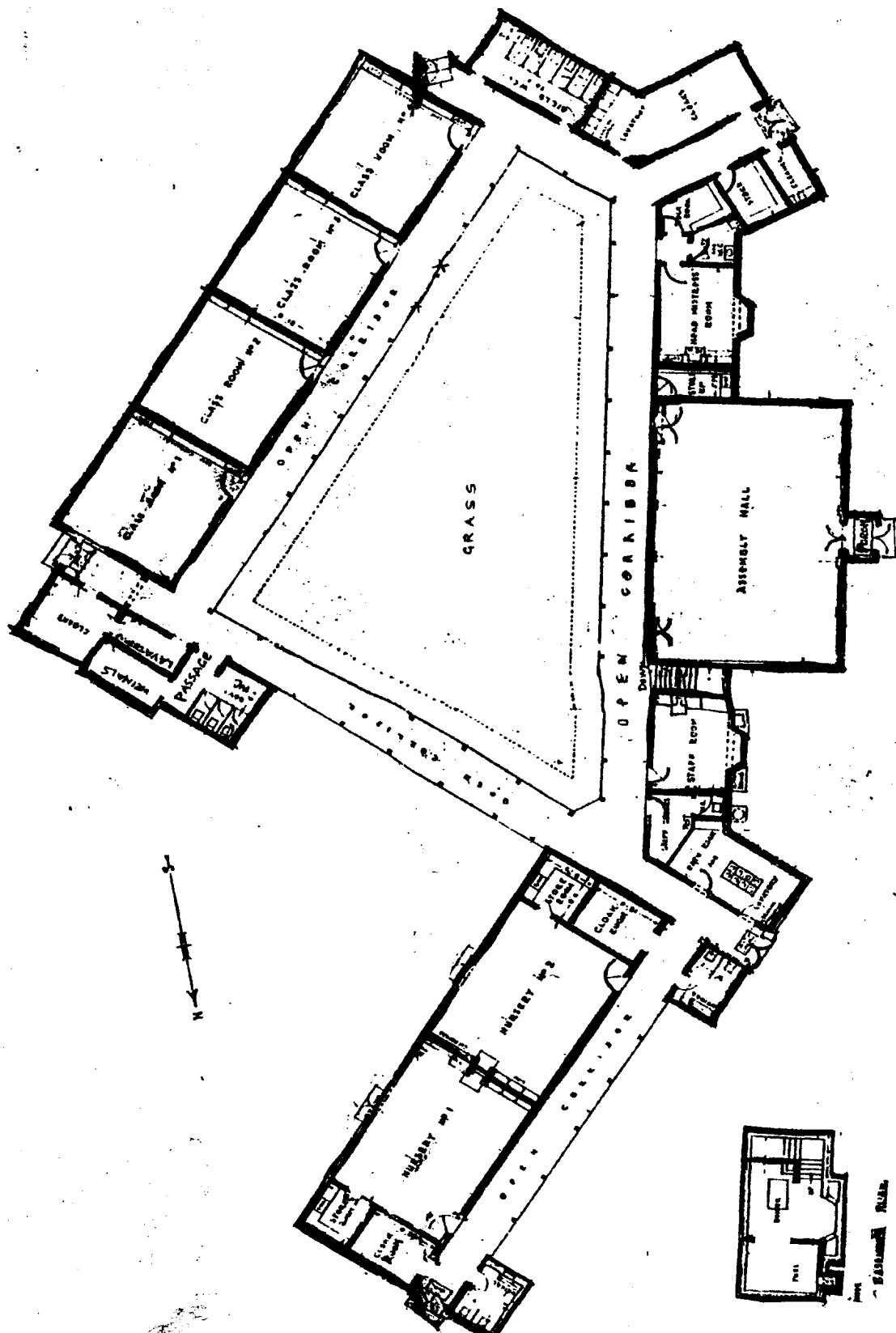
The building of Sedley and Coleridge Schools marked a new stage in the growth of Cambridge and in the development of educational facilities for the people of Romsey. Their origins were linked and the merging of the two schools onto a common site in 2002, together with the former Romsey Council School in Coleridge Road, marks the next stage in that development. It is ironic that the merger is at the expense of the open space that was so valued in the 1920s.

Allan Brigham:
April 2002.

Allan at Sedley,
showing the Year
2 children how to
be responsible
with packaging.



Map of the original school - 1932



[illegible]

Early Sedley Days

Every morning the children "answered the register," and marched into the hall, usually to the tune of "Country Gardens" or Handel's "Largo," on the piano. The headteacher would talk to the children, they would sing a hymn and say a prayer. Occasionally the vicar would come in and speak to the children. He would officiate at Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter and the Leavers Service. For many years the vicar, Reverend Phenna, from St. Martins' Church, gave an award, a shield, to the child who had tried the hardest in school. This shield was given in memory of his late wife.



Then the children returned to their classes for their lessons on the 3Rs. The children sat in rows facing the blackboard. Resources were in short supply so there are not many pictures, or children's work on display. Indeed, the children are supposed to be facing the front, watching the teacher so distractions are not recommended! It wasn't until 1973 that boards were erected in the classrooms for displaying pictures, notices and the children's work. Then in 1978, display boards were put up in the Hall too.



Initially all the female teachers were single. When women married, they usually left the work force to concentrate on domestic duties. (An exception was one lady, Mrs. Grace North, who came in for 24 years, part-time to play the piano. She left in 1971.) Maybe this is why traditionally children still call their women teachers "Miss" even when they are married?

A little bell was used by the Headteacher to summons a child from the top class, to do little jobs for her.

Another remnant from the original school is a tall chair. We believe it was the "naughty" chair. For many years now Sedley has used this high chair to seat the Rose Queen, so that she can be higher than her attendants.

Class sizes were enormous, compared to today's standards. Until the mid 1970s it was normal to have 40 or more children in a class. There was a waiting list as Sedley was over-subscribed. No wonder, this school was light and airy, compared to other schools in the area, and from year to year more interesting play facilities appeared outdoors! As early as 1938, Sedley's grassy areas had been improved and a sandpit, garden, slide and see-saw were added! From year to year there were interesting additions; swinging tyres, little hills, climbing frames, and eventually an Adventure Playground and a Secret Garden.





Daily life of the school, in the days when girls wore dresses and boys wore shorts. Very different to today, no plastic equipment either.



What a find! The letter which Miss Foster sent out to all new children before they started here!

The Sedley School
Cambridge

July 1964
Tel; 48301

Dear *Graham*

If you will ask Mummy to bring you along to school on *October 19th* at 10 o'clock, I think we shall be able to find room for you.

Would you please ask her to see that you have

- 1) A pair of crepe-soled sandals (in wet weather, and in wintertime, when you wear boots or heavy shoes, would you bring your sandals with you so that you can change when you get here?)
- 2) Two small towels, with loops for hanging. (We like you to have two so that there is always one in use and one is in the wash. You will bring the towel home for washing each Friday)
- 3) A hankie, and a pocket to keep it in. This is very important.

Would you also ask Mummy to see that your NAME is on ALL you belongings?
School hours are 9-12, and 1.30-3.30. We like you to come punctually.

At first you will probably find school so exciting that you will be quite exhausted by dinnertime. If so, we think it would be a good idea if Mummy would let you rest in the afternoons for the first few weeks, until you get used to it.

School dinner is available and costs 1/- per day, but we suggest that Mummy lets you get used to school a little before you stay all day.

There will be a little bottle of milk for you each day, and a straw to drink it through. If, at any time you have to stay away you can have your milk if Mummy or some other grown-up will collect it for you. (We do not let little Sedley children carry home bottles of milk for other children, as we would not like them to fall down and cut themselves).

We hope that you will always eat a good breakfast before you come to school, then, with the bottle of milk, you will always be alright till dinnertime. We prefer you NOT to bring lunch.

We have a National Savings Group, and we encourage all the children to bring money for stamps each Wednesday morning. We hope you will join and learn to save a little each week! You will stick in your own stamps, and we will take care of the book until it is full, or until Mummy asks for it.

We hope you will attend regularly. If, at any time, you have to stay away, we should appreciate a message.

Would you tell Mummy that she will always be welcome at school, but that the best time to have a little chat with me or with your teacher is either first thing in the morning or directly after school in the afternoon, or if it is urgent, by appointment.

I think you will LOVE school, and we look forward to seeing you on *October 19th*

With love from
"Miss Foster".

The School Year

September

At the beginning of the school year the **Harvest Festival** was celebrated and the offerings were sent home to the children who were sick. After many years the produce was sent to Children's Homes and Orphanages in the area, then to the elderly.

October

There was usually a **Jumble Sale** and a **Road Safety** Week. Sometimes there was a film show, a marionette show or a conjuring display. For many years Sargent Ives, followed by Uncle Denis and Auntie Jean, came to conduct the Road Safety Week, and reinforced this with the use of puppets and films.

In October music students used to come from the University to entertain the children.

November

We have often celebrated **Eid** and **Diwali** in this month. Armistice Day/**Poppy Day**/ Remembrance Day. Even the youngest children have observed the silence. When the vicar was a regular visitor, this used to be accompanied by an Act of Worship. As Christmas approached there has often been a theatre production in our school. Do you remember the production of "Thomas the Tank Engine?" or "Baby Love?" The later was all in Japanese!



Celebration of Diwali in 1997



Mr. Chris Kostecki's magic show

December

Christmases have always been magical times for children.

Parents have come into school and helped to organise food, fetes, raffles, fun days and shopping days. There were parties, even during the War! Until the 1980s Sedley had to have 3 parties, as there simply wasn't room for all the children in the hall at the same time. Father Christmas has always visited the school and since 1951 there has been a Christmas tree. For many years there has been an internal Christmas Post which has been sorted and distributed by the children themselves.

The children have always entertained their parents and guests, with a traditional Nativity play, and also a concert. The oldest children still sing to the elderly at Ditchburn Place and St. Martin's, entertaining them since the 1970s. We have been very fortunate to have Mr. Chris Kostecki, one of our parents who is also a magician, come and entertain the children at Christmas for almost 20 years!

Since 1984, the children have annually provided the Nativity tableau at Great St. Mary's Carol Service in aid of the "Save the Children Fund."

Sedley children have often invited Romsey children to join in the fun when we have had an entertainer or theatre production at Christmas or indeed at any other time. The present children have seen a pantomime every Christmas.

Recently we have even celebrated a **Snowman Day!**

January

Do you remember that for many years there was a **poetry reading** competition at this time of year?

The millennium was marked not just by our quilt and "millennium hopes" display, but in January 2000 the mayor came to school to give each child a **millennium** medallion.

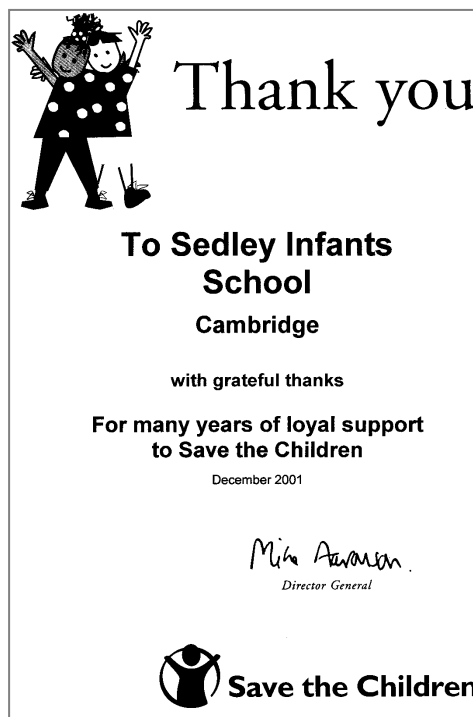
February

What fun we have had celebrating the Chinese New Year. Do you remember being under the long dragon, visiting every part of the school?

"Nearly every child joined the lending library. Books are getting into every home," wrote Miss Duffy in 1974. That year there was the first of many exhibitions of new books for the children to buy here. There were over 400 books in school. Every year since, there has been a Book Week at about this time to try to promote books in the home. There have been Book Shops, Book Clubs (run by parents), Home Books and an opportunity for every child to borrow library books from school. The children visited Mill Road Library until its sad closure, and Mr. Richard Young, the librarian, visited the school. Now we have links with the Rock Road library, which welcomes us each year for our visit. The librarians also come to tell stories to the younger children. Our school must be one of the best- stocked schools, where books are concerned!

Every other year we have had a **hobbies day** and an **old-fashioned school** day. I'm sure the children will remember these, and were maybe a little scared!

Mr. Allan Brigham has made an impact on Sedley as he has worked interactively with the children on the theme of waste reduction and **recycling**, often during a week of waste awareness.



March

March heralded the Cambridge Borough Schools **Music Festival**. Sedley contributed significantly to this from 1949 onwards, for many years. Children performed Music and Movement, they sang, and played in the Percussion Band. One of the best celebrations ever, was the year the whole school learned about "Grandparents". We not only had an **Olde Thyme Music Hall**, an Old Fashioned Tea Party for our Grandparents but also celebrated our own Tea at the Ritz!

April

If it's **Easter time** then we look out for Easter Chicks or the Easter Bunny! Both are regular visitors! All the children make Easter bonnets for the Easter Celebration. They make nests of all kinds, hoping that some Easter eggs will mysteriously appear before school finishes!

For the last decade it's also been the start of the S.A.T.s.

May

Since 1975, Mr. David Bass came annually to entertain and educate the children about various musical instruments. He came with other musicians and gave the children an interactive concert. This tradition continues today except that Mr. Bass himself no longer comes, but the Cambridge Music Agency does. There are two groups of musicians, a string and a brass one, sometimes accompanied by percussion. Since we have had regular topics, including "Sound and **Music**," we have fitted this into our curriculum and invited other exciting performers to listen to as well. This has included a harpist, a rock group, a guitarist, a bagpipe player, clarinettist, Mr. Nick Penny with his unusual instruments, a tuba player, the recorders and wind instruments from Coleridge and Romsey schools and the many instruments which the teachers themselves have played.

June

Its crazy, but some May Queen and Rose Queen celebrations have taken place in June! At this time of year the children from Year 2 have visited Upware Field Study Centre. For those of you who have taken part in this experience it will be unforgettable! Do you remember anyone in your year falling in the pond?

At this time the weather is usually ideal for the exciting outings we have to farms, zoos, paddling pools and parks.

July

This has been the time of year when most of our **Jubilees** have been celebrated. The biggest of these so far has been our Golden Jubilee in 1982. There was an exhibition; a party and many "old" children came to join Sedley's festivities. There was a Punch and Judy show. All the children were given a button with the Sedley Golden Jubilee printed on it. In 1992, our 60th anniversary, we gave everyone a celebration mug with the past and present badge printed on it. For many years there was a **Bible Day** in July. Everyone brought their Bibles and shared stories. When Princess Elizabeth (our present Queen) was engaged to Prince Philip in 1947, prayers for the happy couple were incorporated into the Bible Day. There was a Bible reading competition,

where the children read psalms and had a prize for the best reading. Some of our ex-pupils remember this and still treasure their prizes.

At the end of the year there was a **Leavers service**, an act of Worship, led by the vicar. Each child was given a book, with an inscription inside it, to remember the school. **Sports day** would be followed by a **picnic**. In Mrs. Driver's time, the **end of term picnic** has been themed, (e.g. a rainbow picnic) and the Sports have been non-competitive.

The Leavers Service has been replaced by a **Goodbye Assembly**, and for many years we had a **Thankyou Assembly** to acknowledge the enormous debt of thanks we owed to so many people who came in to help us.

After school clubs.

Who could forget the after school clubs that Sedley offered in the nineties? Do you remember the wonderful Art club, the French club or the Gymnastics Club which produced the finest display to entertain the rest of the school? Were you one of the children who joined the recorder group, which played at the Christmas or Easter Assembly?

Although these groups no longer exist, there is still a club in the form of "Top Sport" which works once a week with one age group per term.

Round the world

One year Sedley took for its topic an international theme. Each class learned in depth about one country. At the end of the term the hall was used as an Airport, each child had a "Passport" and "travelled" to all the other countries, learning about its customs and trying its food! We learned about the flags, stamps and money from each of these countries and made our own artefacts as we "visited" each class/country. We even used some foreign dances when it came to the Rose Queen celebrations!

School uniform

In our logbooks there has been mention of the children's smart appearance and indeed in your letters to us, we read of how proud you were of your uniform. It was amber and black. Although we have seen the blazer badge we don't actually have a description of the uniform. We imagine that there must have been a white shirt and striped tie, with black shoes and shorts, for boys, but what did the girls have to wear? Gymslips and thick tights have been hinted at.

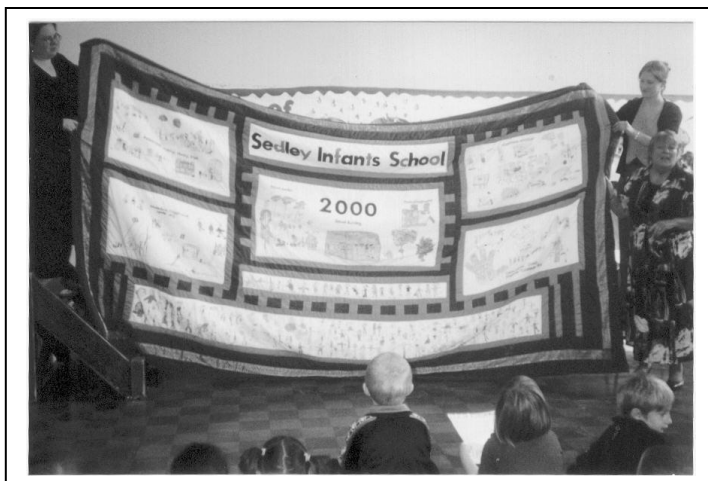
In recent years we have had assorted colours of sweatshirts and T-shirts with the Sedley Smiley Logo.

And on to Romsey

From the earliest times Sedley has tried to make the transition to the Junior School as smooth as possible. In earlier days the teachers actually took the children to Romsey on the first day. Today the Headteacher and teachers from the Junior school visit the children in their classes, the Year 3 children from Romsey visit for a chat and lastly the children are invited with their parents to Romsey for a more formal introduction.

Quilts

We have been unusually privileged to share the talents of a local quilter, Ms. Carol Hutton, who has also taught at our school. She helped to put together a wonderful **quilt** drawn by the children showing the months of the year. This was featured in the "Quilter" magazine (No.37 winter 88) and was displayed in the National Patchwork Championship! For the year 2000 we made a Millennium quilt, with Ms. Carol Hutton's help again. This is still on display in the corridor near the Hall. It is a celebration of all the activities enjoyed by Sedley children; religious, social and educational. Every child and adult at the school at that time was on it!



The teachers' play

For several years now the teachers have entertained the children for Book Week, by putting on a play, especially for the children. Who could forget the play of Goldilocks, The Enormous Watermelon, or the Gingerbread Man? You will of course remember Mrs. Driver in the star role, but can you ever forget Mr. West as Daddy Bear? Or Mrs. I. Smith as the Giant? Often these "productions" have been completed with a treat for the children, such as a gingerbread man each. or some

The Friends

In 1983, there was the first meeting of the "**Friends of Sedley**" who have over the years organised themselves into fundraising and supportive roles wherever the need has arisen. They have run fetes and jumble sales, sales or work and Christmas Fayres. This industrious band of parents and supporters has raised funds for particular needs, for example an Easter Tea was established to raise funds initially for the piano. At a time when there were many parents working in the home, it was a very strong group. Of recent years this group has been smaller, as most parents have been at work all day and have had less time to help.

Animals in School

Remember the pets; the tortoise, the stick insects, the silkworms, tadpoles, guinea pigs, fish, the owls from the Raptor Foundation? You may remember when Mrs. Owen's grandson brought in his snake, and the hedgehogs from St.

Tiggywinkles. For the last 20 years we have been allowed to pet the magician's rabbit. We have had cats and dogs, fish by the hundred and the controversial piglet! One year, Class 3 had an unofficial visit of a day-old ratling, when a child brought it in to show it off.



Do you remember the May Queen / Rose Queen?

1934 Patricia Butler	1935 Lorna Mee	1936 Audrey Coe
1937 Daphne Bunton	1938 Phyllis Gooch	1939 Margaret Legge?
1940 Margaret Andrews	1941 Anne Fenn	1942 Pauline Thomas
1943 Jane Unwin	1944 Barbara Frost	1945
1946	1947 Jacqueline Willis	1948
1949 Pat Green	1950 Jennifer Curtis	1951 Caroline Dobson
1952 Margaret Tipple	1953 Sandra O'Dell	1954 Ann Catlin
1955 Sylvia Twinn	1956 Patsy Mawer	1957 Rosemary Parsley
1958 Irene Clark	1959 Susan Mills was sick, so, Susan Ferguson	
1960 Angela Piggott	1961 Diane Wilson	1962 Lynda Ferguson
1963 Julie Heather	1964 *	1965
1966 Jane Eusden	1967 Janice East	1968 Catherine Flowers
1969 Louise Foulger	1970 Shirley Maskell	1971 Davina Isaacson
1972 Sarah Bristow	1973 Megan Pontin	1974 Rachel Phenna
1975 Vanessa Middleton	1976 Clare Collier	1977 Karen Haigh
1978 Lorraine Beecroft	1979 Helen Doggett	1980 Mary Phenna
1981 Emma Cullum	1982 Katie Magill	1983 Zoe Garner
1984 Bonnie Brown	1985 Emma Kurc	1986 Natasha Bowen
1987 Sasha Watson	1988 Hayley Pickering	1989 Hayley Simpson
1990 Donna Bennett	1991 Anna Hart	1992 Nicola Dennis
1993 Laura Davison	1994 Harriet Brown	1995 Kara Chapman
1996 Sui Huong	1997 Bettina Patel	1998 Melana Zunino
1999 Amy Cuttle	2000 Toni Willis	2001 Fifi Campbell
2002 Jennie Davison		

* Mrs. Betty Jackson and Miss Thynne both recollect that "the boys rebelled and demanded a May-King" in 1964, so no May Day ceremony was held. "The following year the rebels would have moved on," writes Miss Thynne.

The May/Rose Queen festival

The essentials of this happy day can be seen right from the first May-Queen celebration here at Sedley in May 1934, but also today. A few days before the Mayday, all the older children meet with the headteacher to vote. They are reminded of what to look for; kindness, honesty, helpfulness, a hardworker, a good friend. After a secret ballot, their Queen, her Banner Boys, the crown bearer and her attendants are chosen. Some years there were girl trainbearers; other years there were boys. Some years there was a specially designated crown-bearer, sometimes he was a page. In 1950, 12 attendants and partners were specified. The youngest children strewed rose petals, which in the early days were collected from school flowers.

We have been sent many photos of the celebrations throughout the ages and notice that sometimes all the children carried flowers, in the form of posies for the girls, and displays for the boys that were mounted on sticks. In some photos we see the boys carrying little bells on sticks, reminding us of Morris dancers! When Mrs. North played her accordion, or Mrs. Glasswell her fiddle, the Morris dancing scenario would be more evident, but usually the piano was played outside by the May Grass. When Miss Thynne retired Mrs. Cooke's daughter played the piano for us. For the last 2 decades however, we have heard the piano on the tape recorder.

It was considered such an important occasion that the mayoress was invited to crown the Queen. When Mrs. Amey was ill, the former headteacher, Miss Pleasance, was invited to do the honours. In 1951, Miss Pleasance returned a second time to crown the Queen, and 400 spectators were there! The following year, when Mrs. Amey was able to officiate again there were 400 to 500 people! Astonishing! Gradually it became customary for the former headteacher to return, to crown the queen, except for 1981 when one of the school managers, Mrs. Sargeant, did it. This changed again, for the last time, when Mrs. Driver became headteacher. She has invited the previous May Queen to come back to Sedley to crown the new one, each year.

While all the children danced for the Queen, with their own class, only the oldest children in the school did the Maypole dancing. Many people look back fondly on this skill. Indeed the actual dancing wasn't just performed on Mayday; it happened at Christmas too in the earlier years, and they danced to open the Cambridge Festival in 1976 on Parkers Piece!

*This Tuesday 16th May
into the morning half we went
voted for the Queen the Diane
May Wilson votes. ✓ had the most*

Paul Harris wrote this in 1961!

Photos we have of the May Queen



Patricia Butler 1934



Lorna Mee 1935



Audrey Coe 1936



Daphne Bunton 1937



Phyllis Gooch 1938



Margaret Legge 1939?



Margaret Andrews 1940



Pauline Thomas 1942



Jane Unwin 1943



Barbara Frost 1944



Jennifer Curtis 1950



Caroline Dobson 1951



Margaret Tipple 1952



Sandra O'Dell 1953



Ann Catlin 1954



Sylvia Twinn 1955



Patsy Mawer 1956



Rosemary Parsley 1957



Irene Clark 1958



Susan Ferguson 1959



Angela Piggott 1960



Diane Wilson 1961



Lynda Ferguson 1962



Julie Heather 1963



Jane Eusden 1966



Janice East 1967

The photograph on the right was donated by Colin Fakes.
He is the banner boy on our right. 1954.



The photograph on the left was sent by Mr. Malcolm Campbell.



Catherine Flowers 1968



Louise Foulger 1969



Shirley Maskell 1970



Davina Isaacson 1971



Sarah Bristow 1972



Megan Pontin 1973



Rachel Phenna 1974



Vanessa Middleton 1975



Helen Doggett 1979



Karen Haigh 1977



Mary Phenna 1980



Katie Magill 1982



Zoe Garner 1983

The May Queen
1976

Everyone is asked to stand, and remain standing until
the queen is crowned.

The Banner Boys (Rowan Lloyd and Andrew Gyton) announce
the arrival of the Queen.

The Queen enters with her Trainbearer (Patrick Chalklin)
and her Page (Nicholas Tingley),
and proceed to the throne.

The Maids of Honour and their Partners make their way across the
grass
to curtsy and bow to the May Queen, Clare Collier.

All sing "All Things Bright and Beautiful."
(Please join us in singing this hymn)

The crowning of the Queen, by Miss Foster.

An interval to allow for any photographs to be taken.

Maypole dancing by Miss Thynne's class.

A collection for Save the Children Fund.

Maypole dancing by Mrs. Cooke's class.

Final procession.



Bonnie Brown 1984



Emma Kurc 1985



Natasha Bowen 1986



Sasha Watson 1987



Hayley Pickering 1988



Hayley Simpson 1989



Donna Bennett
1990



Anna Hart 1991



Nicola Dennis 1992



Laura Davidson 1993



Harriet Brown 1994



Kara Chapman 1995



Sui Huong 1996



Bettina Patel 1997



Melana Zunino 1998



Amy Cuttle 1999



Toni Willis 2000



Fifi Campbell 2001



Jennie Davison, the last
Rose Queen, 2002



Mayday festivities always used to take place on the enclosed lawn. This was decorated beautifully, the May Queen's throne was thick with flowers both around and behind it. In 1950 there were hanging baskets attached to the cloisters. This grassy area became known as the Maygrass, until in 1992, the lawn was transformed into a Secret Garden.

If you take a look at the many photographs through the years, you notice the changes in what the children wore, but not in what the May Queen wore. The May Queen's dress and train are the same, and the style of her crown is the same too. However the girl attendants at one time used to wear white cotton bonnets, white socks and shoes, with fresh white dresses. Boys wore dark shorts and white shirts, sometimes with a bowtie! Some ex-pupils remember their mothers making their dresses especially for the occasion. In the year of Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation, the children wore crowns. Only in the last 20 years have girls worn trousers and trainers! As we look at the videos made in the last few years we see Asian clothes too. Whether traditional, ethnic or leisure wear has been worn, the children have usually worn coloured ribbons across their bodies, sometimes matching the maypole ribbons.

The Mayday celebration changed its name to Rose Queen (as it had rarely taken place on Mayday) in 1982. After the cloisters were enclosed the larger playground was used.

For the past 30 years at least there has always been a collection taken for people less fortunate than ourselves, ranging from local to International causes, especially the Save the Children Fund!

The crowning of the May/Rose Queen has been the one event that just about everyone who has ever been to Sedley remembers fondly, how they voted, whether it rained or not, whether they were the May Queen or not, whether the Maypole fell over or not!

What other schools offer these kinds of shared memories?

Royal events



When Sedley first opened, King George V was the king, with his wife, Queen Mary. They were much loved royalty, and the marriages of their children were often referred to in our Log Book, especially if a holiday was declared!

The Commonwealth and the Empire were celebrated with pride, and the National Anthem sung in school for royal and patriotic occasions, including the end of the War.

When King George and Queen Mary visited Cambridge to open the University Library in 1934, there was a halfday holiday. On this occasion, it was considered too far for our children to walk to watch this event. In the same year, the king and queen celebrated their Jubilee. There was a holiday, the children were each given a tin of toffees and a little book. There were also fireworks.

Miss Pleasance wrote the following year, "All came to school saddened by the news of our king's death". There was a picture of the king and of the new King, Edward the VIII. The staff and children prayed together and sang the National Anthem. Some children stayed at home when the funeral was relayed on the wireless.

King Edward VIII was not referred to again, but the coronation of his brother, King George VI and his wife Queen Elizabeth was certainly celebrated. Our children enjoyed the Children's Day, which included a religious service, entertainment, tea, games and races and of course the singing of "God Save the King".

Each child was presented with a silver-plated spoon.

When the king and queen visited Trinity College in 1946, with the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, Sedley children greeted them in Station Road.

Two more holidays followed, courtesy of the royal family; the Royal Wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Prince Phillip, in 1947, and then the King and Queen's Silver Wedding Anniversary, the following year.

When our present queen, Elizabeth II, was crowned in 1953, the school was again closed, and a Children's Day again followed. The school was decorated with red, white and blue flowers in hanging baskets around the cloisters, a cedar tree was planted by the Mayor, and a coronation service of praise and thanksgiving was held. Miss Pleasance herself entertained the children with a puppet show! There was a coronation tea, Mrs. North played the accordion, and a portrait of the queen was purchased and hung in the Hall.

At the end of the afternoon each child was given a souvenir beaker and a small packet of Smarties!

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visited Cambridge in 1955, and sixty Sedley children took up their places again, in Station Road, to welcome them, IN THE POURING RAIN. The rest of their school- mates had a holiday!

There were two further closures in term time; for the Queen's Silver Wedding (1972) and Princess Anne's wedding to Capt. Mark Phillips in 1973. Other weddings followed but they were not in term time.



The day I saw the
queen

I was excited and cold
as I waited. It was
raining. The queen was
in red and had a
funny umbrella. I gave
The queen some flowers
and she smiled at me.
I was happy and
I waved a flag.

The Unit went to see the Queen and Prince Philip again when they visited Mill Road. Then again in November 2000 Year Two was invited to line the road when Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Phillip visited Cambridge. The weather was identical to the previous occasion, when it poured with rain. I wonder if she remembers Cambridge as a wet place? Or that the Sedley children cheered so enthusiastically, come rain or shine!

In our final term we celebrated the Queens Golden Jubilee, with a Royal day, finishing with a Barbecue and disco. Each child was presented with a commemorative mug.

Sedley War Years

"Mr. Hitler, the Fuhrer of the German Third Reich is causing an unsettled international outlook." wrote Miss Pleasance,

In June 1938, the air of international uncertainty reached Sedley, as Air Raid Precautions were planned. Trenches were dug in the gardens for Air Raid Shelters, "in case of another crisis".

Serious modifications to school life were inevitable. In September, in addition to Air Raid practices, the staff helped to fit and distribute gas masks, and explained how and when they might be used. The masks were inspected every month and had to be carried at all times.

The possibility of accommodating evacuees from London, was definitely on the cards too.

Then;

WAR DECLARED SUNDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 1939.

Thousands of London children evacuated to Cambridge. Sedley teachers are involved at Billeting Centres, so the school is not open until 20th September. Under fives no longer admitted, because of the large numbers of "School aged" children. 140 children and their teachers arrive at Sedley from London. These Rotherfield children are allocated their own classrooms, and Sedley theirs – all in the present building, including 2 classes in the Hall.

Sedley had never been so crowded! The teachers accompanying the London children, were very grateful and fitted in very well. That Christmas the Rotherfield children gave the Sedley children each a present of a handkerchief. They had no idea that they were going to be with us for any length of time.

When Holland and Belgium were invaded, all our teachers were directed that they had to stay in Cambridge for their holidays, as there could be more work for them. In the event of a "Blitz," Sedley would be needed as a Rest Centre and the staff would be "on call" to help man it. The London children were disappointed that they were not allowed to go home for the holidays!

The ARP Warden came to give some ARP Practices. He thought that it was very good that 260 children managed to disappear into the shelter in just 2 mins and 10 seconds. And in an orderly sensible manner. Air Raid practices became a way of school life; lessons could be interrupted at any time and for varying lengths of time.

January 7th 1941, there were 3 Air Raid warnings all in one day!

Because of U-boat warfare, evacuation to Canada was no longer possible. The long summer holiday was staggered and the children attended Holiday School here. Even in these holidays, the classes were "quite large enough" with classes of 47, 48, 47, 49 and 51! In the second September of the war, the official evacuee children were absorbed into the classes. These classes were inevitably very crowded, and rose to even larger numbers! There was also a waiting list of 30!

20 December 1941

HMI Miss Power called to ask what was the effect of the war on the children's progress and stability. The upper classes do not seem to be retarded but the lower groups show the lack of nursery training. As we try to give this we do not tackle the 3Rs so easily. Children are rather more excitable perhaps but otherwise seem to accept the conditions of this "war world" in a philosophical manner.

(Miss Pleasance, Log book.)

Come Harvest Festival, clothes were donated as well as food! The evacuees were given gifts and so were our children who had fathers in the Forces. More children arrived. This time from bombed areas in London, Hastings and Colchester. Another class from Rotherfield Juniors arrived and was given the empty Nursery room.

Towards the end of the war, with the advent of pilotless planes, there was yet another flux of evacuees from Bromley and Pinner.

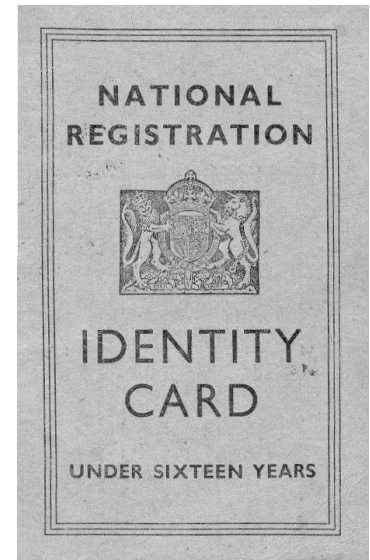
Families supported the war effort by contributing to National Savings: - stamps were sold at school. November 1940 saw a procession of tanks, fire-fighting apparatus and ambulances down Mill Road and our children were taken to see them! Targets were set to pay for specific items; for example a parachute and rubber dinghy were paid for with £75 raised the following year. During the "Wings for Victory" campaign the target of 6/- per head was soon exceeded.

Families learned to live with rationing, and even managed to contribute towards the Harvest Festivals, school parties, and Christmas, which took place as usual. Parents contributed generously from short supplies themselves.

Machinery began to break down through wear and tear and it wasn't always easy to get replacements or repairs. Our boiler was such a casualty in 1944. Until it was repaired we had to do without heat. When it was really cold in February, the children stayed at home for 3 days, until the boiler could be repaired. Fuel was already in short supply and became expensive. Heating Oil had become very expensive. In 1932 we paid £7 for it. Now it cost £22 for the same quantity. But at least it was available and it arrived on time!

When the local Bottling Plant broke down in 1941, the school milk, which had been delivered in thirds of a pint, now came in pints. It now took one and a half hours for each class to come in, share the milk out and drink it. The government raised morale by allowing a small ration of tea, milk and cocoa to be given to the staff at playtimes!

Eventually Sedley had Victory to celebrate. Victory in Italy. Victory in Europe and then Victory in Japan. The blackouts and fireguard ladders were removed. There were Services of Thanksgiving here in the Hall. We sang Anthems, read Bible readings, marched around the premises, sang hymns and had parties here and in the streets around Romsey Town. Flags were strewn across the roads, across the hall, around the cloisters. The National Anthem was sung, along with "There'll always be an England," and Thank-you songs. The Cambridge County Council gave everyone a Victory card at their Thanksgiving ceremonies. Each child was given 1lb of Canadian Chocolate Milk Powder as a gift, although food was still rationed for some years after the war.



As fathers returned from the war zones, and prisoner of war camps, Prefabs were quickly erected to home them, in Golding Road and then Lichfield Road.

Evacuees and their teachers returned home. The children of Sedley had to adjust to routine and normality. Their school was their own again. Sadly eight evacuee children had to return to either no home or no mother!

Health of the Nation

Sickness

Tuberculosis, rheumatism, pneumonia, asthma, polio, dysentery, German measles, jaundice, anaemia, whooping cough, chicken pox, mumps, and scarlet fever. These are all cited as reasons why children were away from school in the early years of Sedley and indeed some of these diseases proved fatal.

Every Harvest Festival until 1948, the children sent their Harvest fruit and vegetables to their sick friends, or to the Children's Home in Ross Street.

Children with tuberculosis were sent to the Open Air School, and there was a hospital in Mill Road specifically for infectious diseases. The school attendance was poor initially, as these diseases were rife and there was neither immunisation nor antibiotics to control them. The school had to be closed in January 1933 for 2 weeks as the staff and pupils were struck by a 'flu' epidemic, and only 44% of the children were fit enough to come. In 1936 the government provided free immunisation against diphtheria and the majority of parents were only too willing to protect their children this way.

Fresh Air

Sedley was built on the principle that open air in itself was a very health promoting quality, indeed many visitors came to see this remarkable school which was so light and airy. (A month after it opened, a lecture was given in which Sedley was held to be a modern school building!) It promoted a very healthy life style. (The fact that the children often got cold and wet moving from their classrooms to hall seems of no consequence!) The nursery children had a sleep each afternoon in little beds with blankets. In the summer this was outside on the veranda!

Exercise in the open air was an essential part of the school curriculum. Sedley was a model school where P.T. was concerned! Visitors, particularly students and their tutors were regular visitors here, watching the benefits of such a healthy regime. Homerton students and their P.T. tutors established an annual Teaching Practice here and demonstrations by their tutors or Sedley's teachers took place, from the very beginning of our history. Play equipment was put up in the playground to stimulate the children, who needed no explanation as to how to use it. This ranged from the climbing frames in the earlier years and tyres in 1949, to the adventure playground in 1986.

Health visitors

It is not surprising that dental health was a high priority, given that the school was named after an initiator of the School Dental Service! Every morning and afternoon the children washed and cleaned their teeth. A number of children bought toothbrushes from the school at 6d. each. (1933) School dental treatment took place in the staff room and the Dentist came annually. Sometimes this was made extra exciting, for example when Pierre the Clown came and showed the children how to care for their teeth in 1971!

There were annual health checks by the doctor, and the school nurse (certainly until 1995!) checked hearing, sight, weighed the children and inspected their

heads for nits. This was a particular worry for the school, as the children could not stay at school with nits in case others caught them. Indeed the Authorities were informed every time an infestation of head lice occurred!

Milk

Cheap school milk was on offer right from the start. It was a halfpenny for a third of a pint! Sometimes it was warmed for the children. Those families who couldn't afford the milk were given it free. By 1936, this was a quarter of the children! When war broke out, milk was subsidised to the extent that ALL children were given it free, alongside Cod Liver Oil and Malt! It was discontinued in the early 1980s.

Miss Thynne remembered collecting halfpennies from the children for their school milk. The children were expected to bring 2-and-a-half pennies on a Monday morning. The staff took it in turns to order milk for the whole school. They had to put out the correct money for the milkman every morning!

Midday meals

The children's health was commented on during the war, when the school doctor said that most children were healthy and well nourished, but a few would benefit from a free midday meal. Considering food rationing, this was very good. Many of the children were now eating fresh vegetables from their allotments, as it was cheaper to grow your own. As a result of the doctor's report, five little girls were sent to the British Restaurant (the Labour Club on Mill Road) for a free meal each lunchtime. The evacuees and their mothers were also sent there. If they could, their families paid 5d. a day. Five local schools used this service and between them they provided adult supervision for the school children.

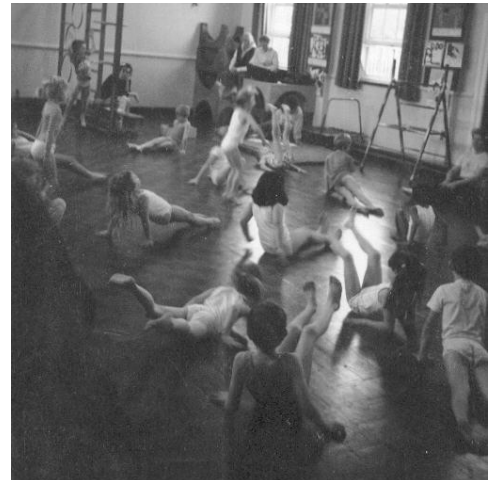
All the other children had a 2-hour lunch-break so that there was time to go home and eat. The possibility of eating on the school premises was discussed at length, but most mothers were at home to provide good wholesome meals for their families, there was no suitable place in school to serve the meals, and nowhere to wash up. Eventually in 1946 it was decided to get a prefabricated canteen to accommodate the meals. School meals had become free to all who wanted them and the parents were quick to take up the offer. After the war the meals were no longer subsidised so heavily, but some families were allowed free school meals on grounds of income. And some families still qualify. The erection of the canteen did not happen without problems. For one reason or another it took two years before the canteen was up and operational in October 1948!

When asked for her memories, in 1981, (Miss Thynne was leaving) she said she could remember the canteen being built and opened. Miss Ebdon, the then Meals Supervisor came and cut a ribbon fastened across the door. Previously Sedley used the facilities at the Romsey canteen opposite their school). Teachers continued to supervise the children right through until 1985, when dinnertime staff were officially appointed. With the changing role of women in the 20th century, fewer families depended on their womenfolk to provide lunch, as they were often part of the work force. Subsequently more and more children stayed

at school at lunchtime. Combined with the need to save fuel and salaries, the lunchtime was shortened in 1977 and the schoolday finished at 3.15.p.m.



Simply
enjoying the
exercise;
outdoor and
indoor play,
gymnastics,
and Sports
days.



It was very fortuitous that the canteen had been built, because in 1952, the rising birth rate meant that an extra class was necessary – it was located in the canteen until the crisis abated!

Cloisters

For many years the problems of moving around the school in wet and windy weather had been concerning headteachers of Sedley. Every time the enclosing of the corridors had been proposed it had been turned down, until 1985, when Mrs. Driver was successful in persuading the Authorities of the benefits of an enclosed corridor. This improvement has not only provided a dry carpeted place for the children but also a quiet area outside the classrooms which has enhanced the appearance of the school with display cases and storage areas, especially for the children's cloaks. The finishing of this project was later than expected....1986.

The Unit



In 1959 there was a proposed Unit for the Deaf to be built here at Sedley. A teacher was appointed and she had to go out and find those children who were at the time in ordinary schools. All the best equipment was ordered. Until the extension was finished in 1960, children were taught in an ordinary classroom. Even at this stage Sedley attracted many visitors who were given talks, and an explanation of all the latest equipment! Speech therapists, health visitors, teachers and nurses came; even a Missioner for the Deaf attended!

In 1975, the Deaf Children Unit moved on to Mayfield School, but the "Unit" at Sedley continued. Its use was modified to specialise in "Children with communication difficulties." This has continued in the fine Sedley tradition, providing a specialism in which we all benefit, the staff and pupils alike, as it enhances and integrates with the main school. It has also accommodated a Speech Therapist for some years. At the end of Sedley's history the "Unit" is officially called, "The Speech and Language Centre."

1960
July 14th
(cont.)

Lady Temple and Mrs Wrey, Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Commonwealth Society for the Deaf, spent most of the day at the school.

Unfortunately the teacher in charge of the Unit was off sick, but the visitors were able to see the Unit, and the equipment. They were also delighted to see the Unit children integrating with the hearing children. They partook of school lunch, chatted after rounds with the Staff in the staff room - and, during the afternoon, met Mr. Scott, Dr. Hargreaves, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Dow, Mr. Roney and almost everyone connected with the Education of the Deaf in the City. They also very much appreciated the opportunity to meet and talk to the parents of some of the deaf children in the Unit.

Head teachers and Deputies:



1932
Miss Annie Pleasance.



1947
Miss Doris Foster.

1972
Miss Ann Duffy.



1977
Mrs. Pat Holmes.



1984
Mrs. Triss Driver.



Miss Freda Thynne,
Deputy Head.



Miss Edith Allen,
Deputy Head.



Mrs. Susan Haynes who became
Mrs. Susan Hamilton. Deputy Head.

Mrs. Liz Stark, who became
Ms. Lizzie St. George. Deputy Head.



1977 Mrs. Malmstrom (one term only),
1984 Mrs. Helen Cunnington (one term only)

Spot your teachers!

Class teachers: (Deputy heads in Bold)

Miss Edith Allen

Miss Beatrice Ceadle
Miss Kathleen Tricker
Miss Florence Smith
Miss Gladys Riche
Miss Elsie Minty
Miss Kathleen Brigham
Miss Agnes Hard
Miss Doris Perry



Mrs. Elizabeth Blodwen	Miss Grace Moore	Miss Agnes Rose
Mrs. Helen Flack	Mrs. Alice Tipple	Miss Freda Thynne
Mrs. May Pryke	Mrs. Kathleen Bull	Mrs. Nora Gugeon
Mrs. Mary Patterson	Miss Barbara Johans	Mrs. Ceinwen Lewis
Mrs. E. French	Miss Nora Hinkins	Mrs. Agnes Cro
Miss D. Middleton	Mrs. Vera Morley	Mrs. Thompson
Mrs. Ann Bennett	Mrs. Betty Cooke	Mrs. Margaret Dover
Mrs. Susan Haynes who became	Mrs. Susan Hamilton	Mrs. Frend
Mrs. Betty Miller	Mrs. Winifred Lyn	Miss Julia Sinclair
Mrs. Jean Marriot	Mrs. Maureen Mrowicki	Miss Barbara Rix
Miss Powell who became	Mrs Ridgeon,	Mrs. Seal
Mrs. Grace North	Mrs. Sage	Mrs. Gwen Lait
Mrs. Cafferney	Mrs. Stevens	Mrs. Marion Young
Mrs. Jane Jones	Mrs. Papamichael	Mrs. Heather Smith
Miss Dunne	Mrs. Liz Stark who became	Ms. Lizzie St. George
Mrs. Pat Roberson	Mrs. Alison Brooke	Mrs. Kathy Thomas
Mrs. Julie Hyde	Mrs. Katherine Thorley	Miss Carol Hutton
Mrs. Bronwen Moyes	Mrs. Heather Lowe	Mrs. Peggy Daynes
Miss Clare Randall	Mrs. Sheila Glasswell	Mrs. Rosemary Ashley
Mrs. Alex Freeland	Mrs. Rosie Lesik	Mrs. Lee Robertson
Mrs. Liz Heazle	Mrs. Gayle Webb	Miss Abigail Read
Miss Rebecca Mercer	Miss Koren Richards who became	Mrs. Koren Call
Miss Christina Reeves	Miss Sarah Neville	Mrs. Louise Walter
Mrs. Helen Pearce	Miss Amanda Chapman	Miss Anthea Bishop
Miss Kate Travers	Miss Michelle Oppen	Miss Carolyn Fleming
Miss Sarah Gee who became	Mrs. Sarah Gillan	Miss Rachel Howard
Miss Emma Cole	Miss Eleanor Windle	Mrs. Emiko Ray

Sedley teachers in 1974

Back row; Freda Thynne, Betty Cooke, Janet Storrow, Barbara Rix
Front row; Susan Haynes (who became Susan Hamilton), Ann Duffy, Jeanne Marriot, Margaret Dover.



Sedley staff in 1988;



Support staff, the unsung heroes;

Miss Vera Wenham	Miss Elsie Wilderspin	Miss Ruby Furlong
Miss Mary Kirby	Miss Irene Powley	Miss Jean Curwain
Miss Molly Green	Miss Joan O'Dell	Miss Joan Norman
Miss Grace Platt	Mrs. Joyce Jackson	Miss Janet Stephens
Miss Mary Wedd	Mrs. Cornish	Miss Constance Northfield
Miss Hazel Morriss	Mrs. Webb	Mrs. E. Hall
Mr. Wells	Mrs. Wells	Miss Margaret Carter
Mrs. L. Clarke	Miss. Diana Aldridge	Miss Winifred Lyon
Miss June Kitley	Mrs. Porter	Miss Elizabeth Over
Miss Kathleen Hewitt	Mrs. Lynne Gray	Miss Mary Page
Miss Margaret Rogers	Mr. Dartford	Mrs. G. Fordham
Mr. Mehew	Miss Dawn Threadgold	Miss Barbara Herma
Mrs. Elsie Nightingale	Mrs. Jean Ferguson	Mrs. Kentchingham
Miss Brenda Paige	Mrs. Kath Beaumont	Miss Janet Harding
Mrs. Sheila Ostler	Mrs. Beth Haigh	Mrs. Susan Spittle
Mrs. Betty Jackson	Mrs. Pat McDonnell	Mr. Michael Gordon
Mrs. Cheryl Coxall	Mrs. Reed	Mrs. Greta Smith
Ms. Cheryl Ward	Mrs. Nitsa Sanami	Mrs. Glenda Brown
Mrs. Pat Greenwood	Mrs. Sarah Odell	Mrs. Terry Murphy
Mrs. Susan Moffat	Mrs. Carol White	Miss Chris Westgarth *
Mrs. Sherie Palmer	Mrs. Maralyn Dew	Mrs. Linda Neville
Mrs. Mandy Merwiak	Mrs. Nahia Djazmi	Mrs. Golshana Chowdhury
Mrs Heidi Beecroft	Mrs. Shona Wick*	Mrs. Ann Driver
Mrs. Karen Foreman	Mrs. Ellie Green	Mr. Don Joyce
Mrs. Annie English	Mrs. Vi Ladlow	Mrs. Linda Bye
Mrs. Lynn Souter	Mr. Maurice Gill	Mrs. Jane Clarke
Mrs. Pam Hayes	Miss Parzana Khanom	Mrs. Ann Coburn
Mrs. Sylvia Reed	Mrs. Sandra Blakemore	Mr. Barry West
Mrs. Pat Perry	Mr. Arthur Coulson	Mrs. Fiona Attlesey
Mrs. Jackie Keenan	Miss Ruth Mellows	Mrs. Jane Anstee
Mrs. Emily Murfitt	Mrs. Ellen Pink	Mrs. Rosemary Sayers
Mrs. Janet Roberts	Mrs. Jamilla Shabbir	Mrs. Amanda Parker
Mr. Maurice Gill	Mrs. Glennis Dewey	Mrs. Antonella Byer
Mrs. Isabel Smith	Mr. John Reid	Mrs. Caroline Hollington
Mrs. Pat Day	Ms. Jane Turner	

*These members of staff also contributed in the "Unit"

"Unit" staff;

Mrs. Elizabeth Franks	Miss Louise Holland	Miss Janet Storrow
Miss S. Roberts who became Mrs. Leonard		Mrs. Wendy Francis-Wood
Miss Yvonne Yost	Miss A. Skevington who became Mrs. A. Havell	
Mrs. Bucktrout	Mrs. Kate Harker	Mrs Jean McGowan
Mr. Bell	Mrs. Jean McLeman	Mrs. Margaret Hodges
Mrs. Carol Faulkner	Mrs. Kathleen Hamilton	Mrs. Alex James-Best
Miss Claire Vincent who became Mrs. Claire Stonehouse		
Ms. Charlotte Rivington		Miss Gillian Jameson



Photo of the majority of Sedley staff in the year of our closure;

Back row; Emiko Ray, Eleonor Windle, Jane Turner, Emily Murfitt
Middle row; Isabel Smith, Jane Anstee, Rachel Howard, Sheila Glasswell, Glennis Dewy, Louise Walter
Front row; Shona Wick, Charlotte Rivington, Jamilla Shabbir, Triss Driver, Susan Hamilton, Antonella Buyers, Rosemary Sayers

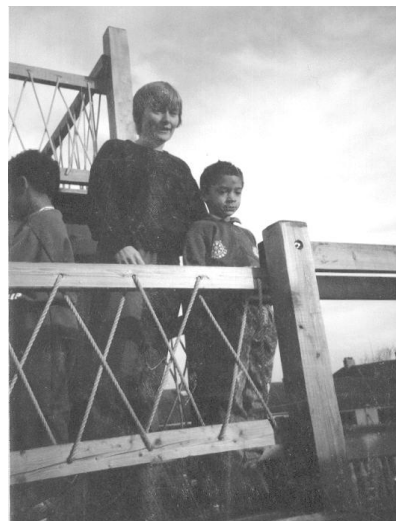
Additions to the buildings and grounds

Apart from the canteen in 1948, the first addition to the school itself was in 1960. This was an extension in the form of an extra, custom-designed room added to the school; i.e. the "Unit." It was built and furnished in such a way as to aid the deaf children with a special ceiling and wall surfaces, which are still in evidence. A small room was attached to this, especially for the Speech Therapist, and the children's own cloakroom and toilets.

In 1973 there was a secretary's room to the north of the Head-teachers room, and a toilet room and stockroom to the south. Once the new covered corridors had been established in 1986, there was no need for children's cloakrooms as their coats were now conveniently outside their classrooms. The large cloakroom near the Unit was converted into a bigger and better stockroom. The previous stockroom (which was next to the Head's room), together with her personal toilet were converted into an office. (This was further extended in 1994, to include the storeroom next to the caretaker's room). This in turn released the previous office. It was converted into a children's Cookery room by Mrs. Greta Smith, an assistant and parent, and her husband David. On inspection of the Cookery room you can still see the hatch between it and the Head's room, which had been there for the secretary and Head to communicate through. Today it is used as a cupboard to store cookery ingredients.

The other obsolete cloakroom near the entrance was easily converted into a Television room. Today is still called the TV Room but is used to store and view videos and the book club (also dating from 1986) which is run by parents.

Our school had been oversubscribed for many years. (In 1941 the classes were of 49, 48, 48, 50 and 52, with a waiting list of 30! Even after the war, in 1951 there were 276 children on role, an average of over 50 per class.) In 1986 we were at last allowed to have another classroom, as teaching methods could no longer be effective with classes of 50! The new classroom came in the form of a temporary mobile classroom. Its arrival was delayed and caused difficulties as the teacher and children had to wait for its delivery and refurbishment. Meanwhile



Children's own ideas in play project

THE children at Sedley Infants School, in Cambridge, have two very good reasons to feel rather proud of their new adventure playground. They have had a major hand in designing it and raising the money to pay for it.

The youngsters, aged between four and seven, tried their hands at a spot of architecture and put their ideas for the play equipment on paper.

Second-year students from the university's department of architecture went along to look at the designs and came up with a set of plans incorporating many of the children's ideas.

Finding £2,000 to pay for the project was the next hurdle — but, undaunted, the children set about a sponsored "stick in" to raise cash.

Now, pots of glue and reams of paper later — they

were sponsored for the amount of pictures they could each stick on four sheets of A4 paper — they think they have raised around £300.

The Friends of Sedley have also raised hundreds of pounds and help and support has been provided by Ridgeons Wood Merchants.

Now the adventure playground — built voluntarily by the student architects — is all but complete, although more money is still needed to add the finishing touches.

"It's been a marvellous effort all round," said Sedley's head teacher, Mrs Triss Driver.

"None of it would have been possible without the efforts of the children and the Friends of Sedley. We are also very grateful for the support of David Ridgeon, who has taken a personal interest."



Children at Sedley Infants School can't wait to get to grips with their new adventure play equipment — if only head teacher Triss Driver and Standard pub landlord Arthur Cooper, who raised almost £200 towards the project, will let them!

they worked in the hall for a month, and no other class could use the hall. This class eventually settled in, and it became known as Class 9.

There were now 2 classes for every age group in the school.

What a busy year 1986 was! In January there was a proposal to build an

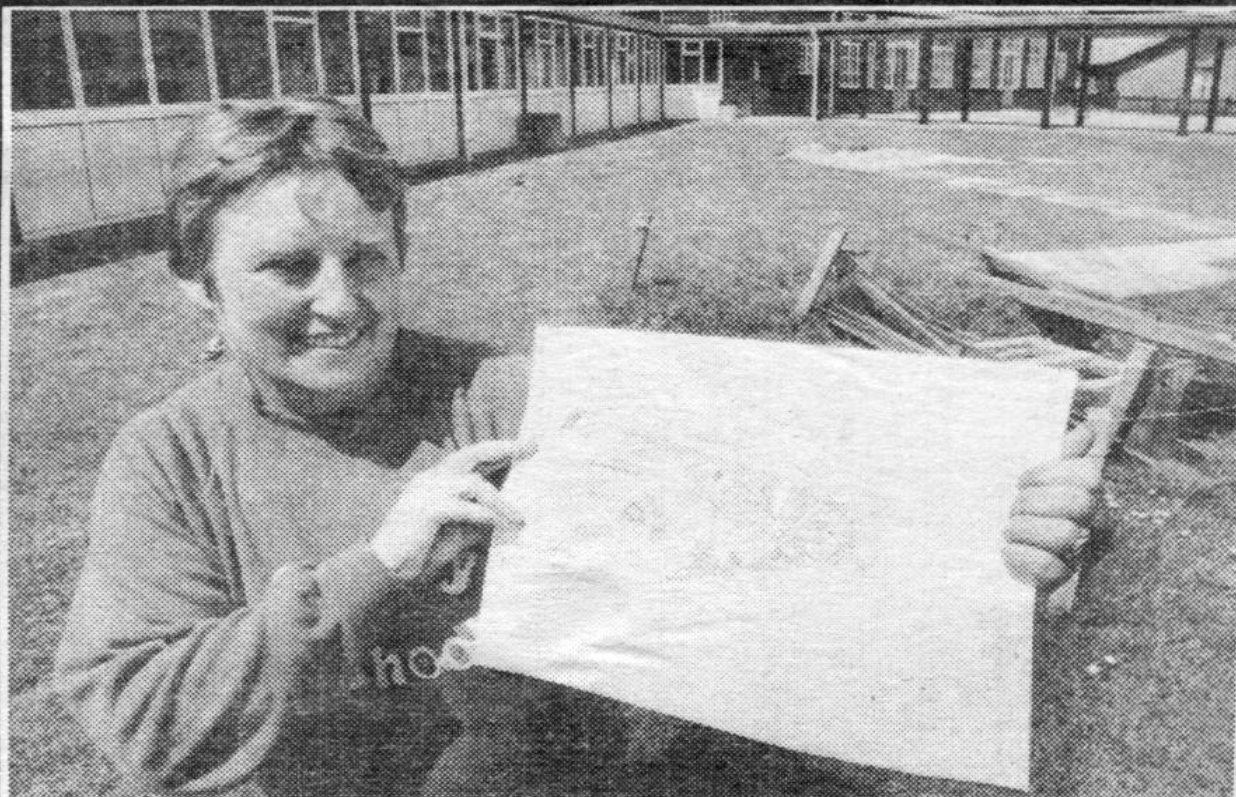
Adventure Playground in our grounds. In September the Cambridge University Architecture

Department sent representatives to Sedley and discussed with the staff and children what they would like. Second Year students from the University offered to construct the Play feature by the following Spring, with Sedley just providing the cost of the materials! There was an exhibition by the children called, "My Ideal Adventure Playground," showing the different ideas they had. By February 1987,

a specific plan was chosen by the Headteacher, governors and parents. Thirty students began work, and in just 2 weeks the

dream was realised. The opening ceremony took place in March with the Mayor officiating. Mr Arthur Cooper joined us, as he was not only an "Old Boy", but his pub, "the Royal Standard," raised a lot of money to support the project. Now that the cloisters were filled in, the Maygrass was no longer used. In 1989 it was proposed that we might improve this area by creating a garden; a secret garden. The Sawston and District Rotary Club visited the school with a view to developing the grass into a Secret Garden! Again, the children were involved, making suggestions and

PUPILS GET A GARDEN



Mrs Triss Driver in the area that will become a garden.

37049110A

WORK has begun on a "secret garden" for pupils at Sedley Infant School, Cambridge.

Two hundred youngsters are being treated to the new recreation area by members of Sawston District Rotary Club, who have offered to give part of the playground a facelift.

The scheme's co-ordinator, Mr Bryan Beech, said: "The idea is to change a dull piece of grassy land into a play area of beauty and imagination."

The site, which has lain empty and unused for several years, is to be completely landscaped. It is hoped the addition of features such as a pond, benches, paving stones, trees and shrubs will give

the children a creative retreat.

The headmistress, Mrs Triss Driver, believes the new area will encourage the pupils to use their imagination.

She said: "It will be a quiet spot where they can come out from the rough and tumble of the normal playground into an environment which is calmer and more conducive to quiet and creative play."



offering ideas about their dreams of an ideal garden. They wanted a pond, bushes and little quiet corners. They wanted a wishing well and bird feeders. They had ideas about trees and picnic tables. The work was completed very quickly, in 1992, and the children were involved as much as possible. In the event, they actually got all they asked for and more.....pretty arches, stone animals, stepping stones.

In 1991 there had been a presentation of an outdoor seat in memory of the Headteacher's mother, known to the children as "Grumpy." She had supported the school and was loved by all. Her seat was added to the Secret Garden and a rose bower erected around it.

Another seat was added to the garden when Mrs. Short died. Mrs. Short was a neighbour and friend of the school and died aged 106. Her double seat, suitably inscribed, occupies the corner where the wishing well used to be.



Our large school had a very large staff and the Staffroom seemed to be full to overcrowded most of the time. In 1995 it was extended by knocking down the wall to the staff cloakroom, using this as a utility area and making way for more chairs. The staff cloakroom was relocated outside the reception class 6.



The most recent extension was to each of the main classrooms 1, 2, 3 and 4. By adding just 2 metres from the playground, the classrooms have become light and modern. There is a linking door between each one, each classroom has its own "wet"

and "dry" areas and the main classroom areas are carpeted which makes for more quietness.

More schools...

As Romsey Town, Queen Edith's and Cherry Hinton became more densely housed, all the schools got more crowded, including Sedley. It was clear that more schools at every age level would be necessary. As they were built the headteachers of all the existing schools went to the Opening ceremonies. Our various headteachers have attended the openings of;

Coleridge Secondary School in 1937
Homerton Nursery School in 1941
Queen Edith's School in 1953
St. Matthew's School in 1965
The Grove School in 1966
Cherry Hinton Infants in 1970

If you were at school in the earlier days of Sedley you will be amazed that children have been out to such diverse places, as "going out" could not be afforded and was looked upon as a treat rather than a part of your education!

School Trips.....

Which of these places did you visit on a school trip?

Mole Hall, Banham Zoo, Linton Zoo, Audley End on the train, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Kilveston Park, Museum of Technology, Wandlebury, Stapleford on the train, Valance Farm Ickleton, the Pet shop and the vets, Wimpole Hall Farm, Marshall's airport, Great Gransden Airfield, Willer's Mill Wildlife Park on the train, Cherry Hinton Hall, the Garden Centre, Sedgewick Museum, Lilford Park, the Royal Mail Coach, Chatteris Museum, Snettisham, the Toy Museum in Stansted, Cambus, Standalone farm, St. Mary's bell tower, Sainsbury's, the Fudge Shop and King's Parade, Midsummer Common, Mill Road library, March Museum, Ramsey Farm Museum, Ridgeons, many churches and the mosque, and many more places.

We walked to the Botanical Gardens quite a few times in the history of the school.



International School

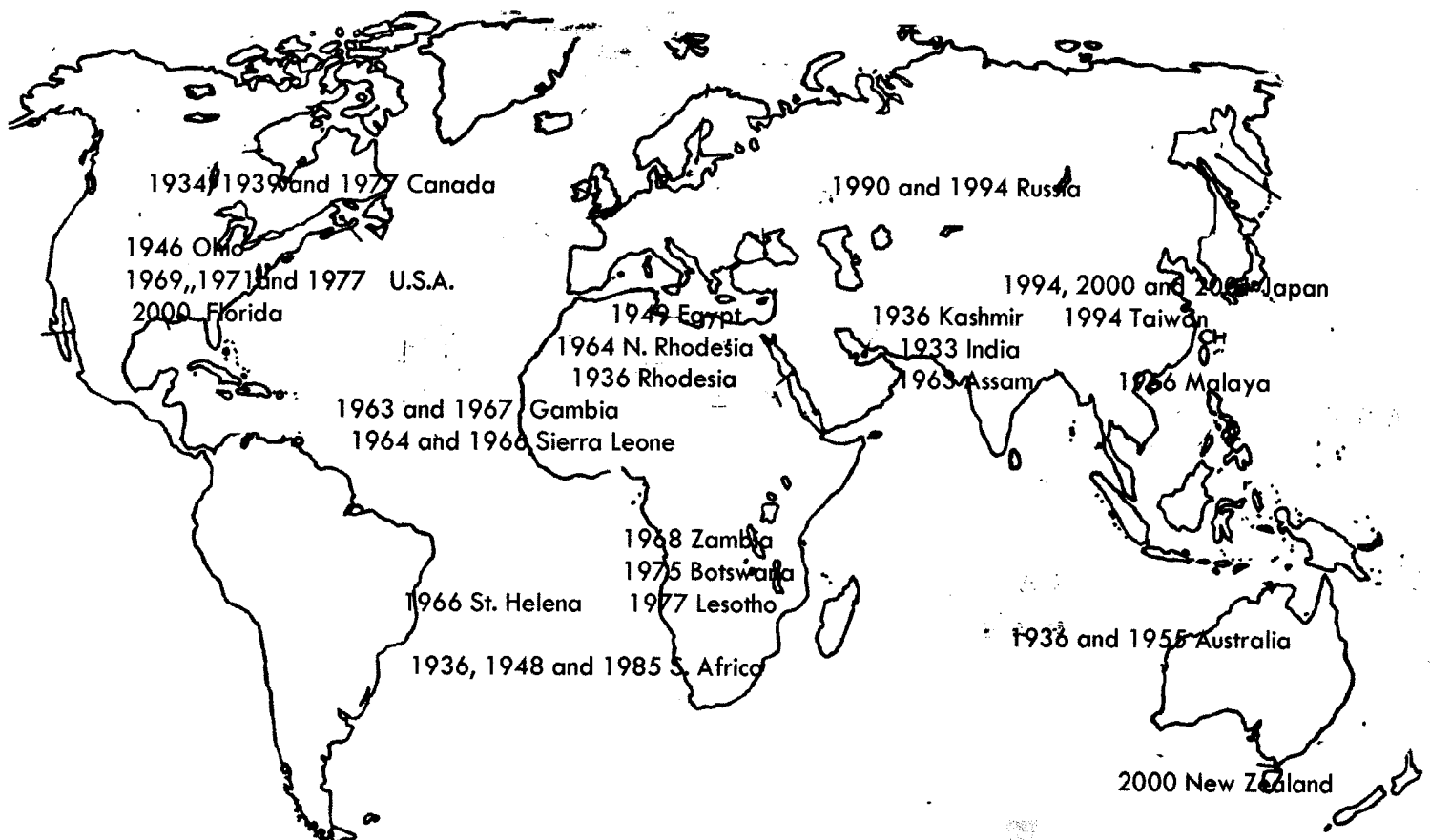
From the very beginning, Sedley attracted a steady stream of visitors from overseas. Our log book tells us how impressed our visitors were. The map below shows where our visitors (students and teachers) came from;

Scandinavia:

1934, 1937, and 1954 Norway
1946 Sweden
1966 and 1993 Finland
1968 and 1971 Denmark

The Caribbean

1964 and 1969 the West Indies
1969 St. Lucia
1979 Barbados



Europe:

1933, 1935, 1966 Switzerland
1934 Holland
1935 Austria
1935 Scotland
1948, 1951, 1955, 1968, 1969, 1987 and 1999 Germany
1951, 1966 and 1978 France
1966 and 1994 Belgium
1971 Italy
1992 Czechoslovakia and 1998 Albania

Pacific Islands:

1965 and 1968 the New Hebrides
1967 and 1969, The Gilbert and Ellis Islands
1968 Fiji
1972 The Solomon Islands

In a similar vein, many of the Sedley teachers went abroad (usually in their own time) to study the education systems abroad.

The first mention of such an initiative was when Mrs. Driver and Mrs. McLeman visited Germany in 1986. Mrs Driver went with Mrs. Bennett to Russia in 1989, to Czechoslovakia in 1992, to America and Japan in 1994, to Albania in 1998 and Estonia in 2001.

Mrs Smith visited India in 1993 and went with Mrs. Driver and Mrs Shabbir to Bangladesh in 1999. What a lot they learned!

In 1993 Mrs Glasswell visited Australian schools. In 2000 she went with Miss Fleming on an International exchange to Eastern Germany.

Back at Sedley, there has been even more of an international flavour, as many festivals from different cultures have been celebrated. We have had children from many many countries and cultures over the years. Recently, the Bangladeshi mothers have been dedicated to a weekly meeting in schooltime, to help themselves and their children learn. They have earned awards for their English and their First Aid.

It is hardly surprising that in 2000 Sedley was successful in its application to be accredited as an International school! It has been one for most of its history but it was still a great honour! However, after much hard work, the Award was given to us by the Central Bureau of Education, to recognise the international dimension of our fine school.

Schools' bridge bonanza

CAMBRIDGESHIRE can boast its own version of The Magnificent Seven - because seven schools have scooped awards for building international bridges.

The schools have won prestigious awards in recognition of their work in fostering international understanding.

To qualify, schools had to include an international dimension in their curriculum to raise understanding of different cultures and communities by linking with schools overseas.

Just 47 schools across

Britain have gained the distinction, accredited by the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges.

The Cambridgeshire Schools which have gained the awards are: Sedley Infant School, Cambridge; Bar Hill Primary School, Newnham Croft Primary School, Cambridge; St Anne's Primary School, Godmanchester; Green Hedges Special School, Stapleford; Spring Common Special School, Huntingdon and City of Ely Community College.

Bettie Sweet, Cambridge-

shire County Council's International Education Support Officer, said: "The scheme recognises schools' achievements with an international community which enriches the school ethos and raises awareness of the world and the international community within Cambridgeshire and around the world."

Awards will be presented by Andrew Baxter, the county council's education director, in a ceremony at City of Ely Community College.

The presentations will be on Wednesday, October 18.

Oct 9th 2000



Mrs. Heather Smith with the Asian Women's Group, meeting in Class 4.



The Asian Women's group and Mrs. Jamilla Shabbir, receiving their certificates during a Friday assembly, along with children who are receiving their Smiley certificates.



The Women's group at Sedley Infants school.

This group has been working for 4 years now. Hilary Sutton from CRC is their tutor (seen above with the visitor's badge), and Mrs Shabbir behind her. They are pictured here in Class 4.

The Bangladeshi Women's Group writes;

It's not only children who come to learn at Sedley.

We are a group of mothers from Bangladesh. We started coming into school to work with our children. Now we come in twice a week to improve our English. We have more confidence now and better English enables us to help our children too.

When we come to Sedley we feel very welcome in school. The teachers are all supportive and friendly. We love the Rose Queen ceremony which is so special. We would like to thank Mrs. Driver and all the staff for making us so welcome.

Our memories of school in Bangladesh are rather different. Sometimes we went to school by boat. Our teachers could be very strict and if we were naughty the teachers sometimes pulled our hair or made us hold our ears!

Inspections over the years

Sedley has, like all schools, been inspected several times over the years, by Inspectors from the Governments Education Department and by the local Education Authority.

These extracts are from the inspection papers: -

Local Authority Inspection, April 1934

"It is evident that a successful start has been made. The Head Teacher has a clear idea of the possibilities of the excellent premises, and has also the skill and energy to make full use of them. With the close co-operation of her staff she has the school working smoothly on lines in keeping with modern Infant school practice. The system of individual records promises to be great value in following the progress of children from the beginning of their school life.

Under the present Head Teacher the school should continue to develop on thoroughly sound lines, and will be watched with interest.

The cleanliness of the premises as a whole and the condition of the borders and lawns are deserving of praise."

Ministry of Education. November 1949.

"This school of some 200 Infants is a friendly place, reflecting the sensitive care for happy personal relationships shown by the Head Mistress and all the members of her staff. During her first two years at the school, the Head Mistress has done much to implement her own interpretation of Infant Education. She is unsparing of her time and energy and takes pains to interest the parents in her aims and methods by frequent meetings, formal and informal. Her staff of six assistants are, with one exception, fully qualified teachers and combine to form a hardworking and harmonious team.

Special mention should be made of the contribution of the school Caretaker to the very attractive appearance of the school and the grounds. His willing co-operation does much to ease the organisation of the varied activities in the classrooms. The dinner supervisor is also an integral part of the community and helps in many ways to keep the domestic side of the school running smoothly and satisfactorily.

Altogether, one is confident that if it is school continues to work out the ideals underlying the present scheme of work, it will be affording a rich background for the healthy growth and development of the children."

Department of Education. March 1965.

"The headmistress and two of her colleagues were working at the school in 1949, and the most recent appointment (that of the teacher of the partially hearing unit) was made five years ago. The headmistress is convinced of the rightness of progressive methods of Infant education, and the quality of her leadership is shown by the very infrequent changes in her staff and by the energy and loyalty with which the assistant mistresses attempt to emulate the principles she so clearly illustrates in her own teaching with the 145 boys and

girls who attend the school. The pupils are divided into five classes (not including the partially hearing unit) so that each stays in the care of one teacher for at least a year. This year an experiment in family grouping is beginning. The strength of the school lies mainly in the sensitive care for every boy and girl shown by the headmistress and her colleagues. The happiness of the children is of great concern to them, and they seem highly successful in their efforts to enable every child to establish himself as a secure and accepted member of the community."

OFSTED (Department of Education) March 1997;

"Sedley Infants School is a good school, which offers a high quality of education for all its pupils, including those in the Speech and Language Centre.

The school offers a broad, rich, balanced and interesting curriculum, which is generally well matched to the needs of the pupils. The provision for teaching English is particularly good and is supported by high levels of teacher expertise and confidence. Strategies for assessing pupils' attainment are good and are well linked to future work plans.

The leadership of the school and the Speech and Language Centre is strong and effective and there is a shared vision which fully reflects the aims of the school. The Headteacher is enthusiastic, caring and highly committed and is well supported by governors and senior staff.

Teachers work hard and are also very committed to the school.

The governors, Headteacher and staff have made the improvement of the accommodation a priority and have been very successful in creating a garden for enjoyment and learning, and extending classroom spaces very effectively. The high quality of the environment, including pupils' displayed work, supports learning and celebrates pupils' achievement.

Partnership with parents and the community is good and significantly enhances the quality of the provision.

The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is also strength. Pupils are happy, hard working and enthusiastic about their work."

As these extracts from Inspection reports show, Sedley has provided a high standard of Education in a caring environment for all the children who have passed through during its 70 years.

Mrs. Triss Driver

Down Memory Lane, **letters from those there at the beginning;**

We have a memory from **Mrs. Olive Shepherd (nee Spilman)** who remembers the school being built!

I lived in Coleridge Road as a child and I think I was about 6 or 7 when the school was built. I did not go to Sedley Infant School, but my brother and sister, who were twins, did go there when they were about three years old. That would have been 1932/33. Their names; Audrey and Alan Spilman.

My memories of that time, playing on the big rocks on the construction site of the school as it was being built (a scar under my chin to remind me that I fell on them!), fetching my brother and sister from school sometimes, the big “butterfly bush” in the corner of the school grounds, opposite our back gate, that attracted more butterflies than any bush I’ve seen since – and Vera Wenham, who worked at the school who was so nice to me.

And a warm letter from one of many “first day” pupils, **Mrs. Olive Wenham (nee Saunders)**, entitled “Happy Days at Sedley.” She has been in to school many times to help us in our research;

It doesn’t seem possible that it is 70 years ago that I started at Sedley when I was 4 years old. What I remember most was the afternoon nap on Camp beds. I had a blue blanket with a white rabbit motif. (I never used to go to sleep. I used to pretend.)

The Headmistress was Miss Pleasance, a lovely lady, I can still remember her hairstyle, it was plaited and wound round the top of her ears like earphones. Miss Pleasance remembered my father when she taught him at school in East Road.

I was absent from school in 1933 with whooping cough, and in 1934 I had Chicken Pox and in 1936 with Mumps.

The Silver Jubilee of Queen Mary and King George V were celebrated in 1935 and a book was presented to us by Sedley, which I still treasure to this day.

We used to celebrate May Day with dancing round the Maypole in the quadrangle, and took posies of flowers to school. I think Daphne Bunton was May Queen one year.

We used to have free milk which I disliked, so I gave my quota to a friend.

The school dentist used to call once a year to inspect our teeth. I always had a blue form which meant I needed treatment.

My two sons and my daughter attended the Sedley in the ‘60s when Miss Foster was Headmistress.

I shall be sorry to see the Sedley School closed, but hope the children will be happy on the new site in the grounds of Coleridge.

Mrs Vera Houghton (was Miss Wenham) shared her memories with Mrs. Driver;

Mrs Driver spent a pleasant afternoon with Mrs Houghton, talking about her time at Sedley. Mrs Houghton came to join the staff at Sedley in September 1933. For 2 years she was a monitress- the first one the school appointed. She earned 5 shillings a week (25p). After 2 years Mrs Houghton was promoted to the post of Nursery Attendant, and her salary was doubled.

As monitress Mrs Houghton divided her time between the class of 3 year old children and the class of 4 year old children- there were 40 children in each class. Her role was to support the teachers and this covered a variety of duties. She had to change children's clothes if they had an 'accident', cleaning them up in the bathroom which is now the room used for the library. One of them was collecting the milk money which she said was 1p for each bottle. Some children were entitled to free milk. She also had to deal with all the cuts and bruises which happened, and to take children to Auckland Road Clinic if medical attention was needed. She would be required to walk there and back with the children and this happened 2 or 3 times a week- a long walk for young children. During the later part of her time here she was given a bus ticket to go to East Road corner- but the walk from there was still a considerable distance! Mrs Houghton had to run errands for teachers and prepare materials. She joined in the children's games and activities to support them in their learning. She had to ensure that the equipment was in order and clean – sink inspections took place so everything had to be kept spotless. Another of her responsibilities was to put out the beds which were kept in the class storeroom and so many of our ex-pupils remember –with blankets embroidered with motifs which matched those by the children's coat pegs. The children had a sleep after returning from home after lunch (no school lunches in those days!) and Mrs Houghton remembers that although some slept sound and had to be woken others did not sleep at all! Mrs Houghton remembers the singing, and the times she had to play the piano for the class –or sometimes for the whole school. Hearing old favourites such as 'English Country Garden' and 'I hear Thunder' still take her back to those days!

After 2 years Mrs Houghton was given promotion to Nurse Attendant –there were two of these in the early classes and Mrs Houghton remembers that it was usual for these girls to be from the County or Perse school. They would work as Nursery attendant for two years between leaving school at 16 and going to train at one of the London Hospitals at 18. She remembers that one girl came from Fowlmere each day in a chauffeur driven car- obviously from a 'well-to-do' family! The May Queen is obviously another memory – the wreaths of flowers - all the parents watching around the green - the dancing (and having to help ensure that it was properly directed!)

Mrs Houghton remembers that children's behaviour in those days was less challenging than it is now, and much more respectful. If children were naughty they sometimes had to stand in the class kitchen (now a storeroom) for a while

away from their friends. Parents always supported the school in disciplining children – and if a child was in trouble he or she knew that when the parents were told the punishment would be reinforced at home. Everyone pulled together to help the children gain the most from their time at school.

Mrs Houghton remembers all the teachers well; - Miss Rule, Miss Allen, Miss Minty, Miss Ceadle, Miss Brigham, Miss Tricker and of course the Head teacher Miss Pleasance. Note that they were all Miss, and referred to by their surnames by all the school community. At the end of each working day Mrs Houghton had to go to see Miss Pleasance to ask if there were any more duties for her to do before she was able to go home.

After 2 years as Nurse Attendant Mrs Houghton left Sedley to be a dental Nurse at Auckland Road Clinic (this time trebling her salary- 30 shillings a week).

She looks back on her days at Sedley as being a great deal of fun. She worked hard doing the best she could and taking her duties very seriously. However she recalls that life was 'one long laugh.'

Mrs Houghton is remembered with great affection by many of Sedley ex-pupils. She still lives in the area and when she is out she is often approached by someone who will be so pleased to have a chat with 'Miss Wenham' –as they still call her!

Mr. John Coe was a first day pupil, who also remembers Miss Wenham!

Hearing of the closure of the Sedley school brought back 1 or 2 memories of my time there, as I was one of the first boys to attend on its opening day, which now seems a very long time ago.

The school was just outside my back gate and I liked to watch the lorry delivering the fuel for the heating system.

Memories of my first schoolteacher; Miss Allen, who was very kind and patient with me. The Headmistress was Miss Pleasance, who I also remember well, was more strict and firm but still a very nice person. The caretaker was Mr. Bennett, who was always there and always spoke to all the children.

My days at the Sedley were happy ones, apart from the days when the school dentist visited. I always remember Miss Wenham who acted as the dentist's receptionist, very good looking, all the boys liked her.

Naturally I remember May day and dancing round the Maypole, the climax of all that practice in the hall.

Each morning, we had a third of a pint of milk to drink and took turns in putting the empty bottles out for collection. After dinner, in the early afternoon, we had a sleep on small collapsible beds for about half an hour, covered with a blanket.

Some of the friends I made at this time are still friends, but some have gone to that big school in the sky!

In later years, my 2 children also attended the Sedley, so the closure of the school will be a part of my life gone forever. The school will be sadly missed as it will be another part of lovely Cambridge gone forever.

Another letter from an original pupil, this time, Mr. Derek Cassidy;

I attended the Sedley School from its opening day until the end of the summer term 1935. I was born in 1927 and my earliest education was at St. Philips Junior school in Catherine Street. As my family lived in Suez Road I naturally transferred to the new school as soon as it opened.

I felt very proud of my brand new school uniform with cap and blazer bearing the Sedley badge which I recall was embroidered in yellow with a rising sun with radiant beams and the monogram.

At our very first assembly, our headteacher Miss Pleasance explained that the school was named in honour of the Alderman Sedley Taylor, who had given such distinguished service to the town.

I shall always remember the morning Assemblies presided over by Miss Pleasance with her plaited hair arranged in "earphones." She had a glove puppet (I think it was a little bear) which occasionally used to peep out of her jacket whispering all sorts of amusing things into her ear. We children were captivated by the little creature and hung on every word it said, relayed of course, by Miss Pleasance.

Secondly, Miss Pleasance used to give us each day an instalment of her account of her recent trip to Canada. I remember that her Atlantic voyage was by Union Castle Line, and that upon reaching Canada, the liner sailed up the St. Lawrence River to Montreal. All this was a very detailed account and I particularly remember her description of the icebergs she saw, which were not iceberg coloured but a vivid shade of blue!

I was assigned to Miss Allen's class; she was a kind and very effective teacher. I can only now remember one or two of my class-mates names; Ronald Hardy, Arthur Cooper, Dennis Watson, Ken Bishop, Dennis Sharp and George Witt (what an excellent footballer he was!).

I remember that finances were tight, because for drawing we did not have ordinary paper but squares taken from books of old wallpaper samples. They were perfectly alright unless you were unlucky enough to receive an embossed sample which could make drawing a bit tricky, but this didn't happen often. We used to use wax crayons, which inevitably wore down, until in the end we each had only boxes of small stumps. I clearly remember the excitement when one day we all received new sets of coloured pencils! We were a particularly happy class that red-letter day!

What else? Oh yes, I remember one day Miss Allen read us from St. Luke's Gospel about the poor widow who anointed Jesus' feet with her only valuable possession; precious ointment from an alabaster box. We were then asked to write an account of this story and afterwards I was sent to Miss Pleasance with my composition. Although this was some 68 years ago I still remember the glow I got from Miss Pleasance's warm words of praise for my effort and the inclusion of the word "alabaster" even though I had spelt it "balabaster." Happy Days!

I also remember our instruction in dancing around the Maypole, which always stood in the central grassy area and the patterns we wove with our ribbons passing under and over. I believe the first May Queen was Patricia Butler, from Hobart Road. She looked very pretty in her May Queen dress and beautiful floral crown surrounded by her attendants.

My younger brother Terence Cassidy, who was born on Mayday 1931, joined the Infants section in 1934. The infants had to go to bed every afternoon, and I recall seeing the rows of low camp-type beds set out and the fact that we older children had to be quiet whilst they were resting.

My brother Terry and I walked daily to and from Baldock Road and the Sedley School including a return home for lunch. Quite a walk for Terry at such a very young age, but of course there was very little traffic on the roads in those days and he never complained.



Miss Short lived just across the road from our school gates and took a keen interest in the comings and goings. Not surprising as she had seen the site when it was allotments, when it was built and through each of its headteachers! The children loved her. They made a card for her at her 100th birthday and each of her birthdays until she died just before her 107th birthday. Her family put up a seat in our Secret Garden in her memory.

Barbara Crowe (nee Booth) wrote from the U.S.A.;

I was one of the first to attend opening day. I was 5 years old – how bright and fresh everything looked. The quadrangle was open in my day, so I'm sure you will know how cold it was, worse still if it rained, we got wet.

A few years ago when I was visiting friends and family, Mrs. Driver invited me to a May Queen day, and there stood my beloved Maypole. I enjoyed my day of dancing around it with all the lovely coloured ribbons.

I remember the first Christmas, we had a boy dress up as Father Christmas, all very exciting as it was my brother Bazal. We still have a photo of him – Happy Days.

She remembered when Alderman Amey planted the big cedars to commemorate the Coronation of H.M. Queen Elizabeth in 1952. It rained and the whole school had tea in the hall!

She remembered the Queen and Prince Philip coming by train to Cambridge to open the Veterinary Labs, in Madingley Road. The royal car met them at the station and Station Road was lined with children. We took our middle and top Infants along and they all carried a Union Jack. The Queen looked lovely in emerald green.

She remembered the little girl who rushed into school one morning too excited to speak. Her mother had just had triplets!



A letter from **Freda Thynne**, who started her career at Sedley as a newly-qualified teacher and left 40 years later to retire, after becoming **Deputy Head**;

I was appointed to Sedley in 1941. The school was only 9 years old and still had a “new” feel about it. Heating was provided through an oil- fired central heating system, the hot water pipes running under the floors. This was cosy for the children to sit on, and no-one suffered from cold feet!

Classes were large –35 or so. After the war, numbers rose to about 45 with a class in the canteen as well. The children were seated in heavy duty dual desks (with holes for the inkwell!) so there was little room for any other furniture or equipment. And of course there were blackouts at the windows.

Milk was provided at the cost of a halfpenny per third pint bottle. The children brought their two and a halfpennies on Monday mornings and the teachers kept records. I believe that the milk was free for children of poorer families; later it was free for all and eventually discontinued altogether.

On Wednesday mornings, during the war, the children brought money to buy Post Office National Savings stamps in support of the war effort. 6d stamps were green and the 2/6 ones were red. There was a national savings week drive held annually with titles such as “battleship week.” The children were exhorted to buy extra stamps during these special weeks and could bring savings money every day. There was considerable rivalry between the classes to see which could raise the most and many targets were “smashed.” The teachers held the children’s savings books and were responsible for sticking in the stamps.

For malnourished and under weight children there was free cod-liver oil and malt. The monitress toured the classrooms daily armed with a large jar of the substance and a good supply of spoons. On two afternoons each week, children with suspected health problems could be taken by the monitress to see the school doctor in Coleridge Road. For those who were particularly pale or lacking vitality, “sunshine treatment” was available.

As can be imagined there was a shortage of cash for school equipment of all kinds. All materials had to be used with great care and nothing wasted. This was particularly felt regarding paper. For painting, newspaper was sometimes used to eke out the supply.

To conclude; one little anecdote which always makes me smile. In the days when milk was provided, children who were unwell could have their bottle taken to them at home, provided that it was carried by a responsible person (not an infant). One day, the then head, Miss Foster, heard a knock on her door and in came a little white-haired lady. Thinking that she had come to collect a child’s milk, Miss Foster remarked, “Good Afternoon, and whose granny are you?” To which the visitor replied, “I am Miss Rees, one of Her Majesty’s Inspectors!” After a little embarrassment they both laughed. Miss Rees was a very gracious lady and became a good friend to Sedley.

And from **Miss Daphne Bunton**;

I started at Sedley School when I was three-and-a-half to four. My earliest recollection was having to lie down in the afternoon on a little bed. We each had a blanket and mine had a large sun in the middle. There were two classrooms with small chairs around the sides where we sat as soon as we arrived. My friends were Alan and Audrey Spilman (unfortunately they have both died). One day

(I must have been talking), I was put behind the kitchen door (the door was left open, and another lady was in the kitchen). I can remember it as if it was yesterday, feeling very sorry for myself. I remember Miss Wenham – a helper. Later on I remember Miss Allen, Miss Brigham and Miss Riche. The Headmistress was Miss Pleasance. She had a large box of toys in her room. My mother told me, when she took my older sister to be enrolled (of course I went too), Miss Pleasance turned to me and said, “And when will this little dear be joining us?” I wanted to go the next day. (I think it was the box of toys I wanted to play with) We used to march into the Hall for prayers in the morning to the tune “English Country Gardens,” played by Miss Riche. I still keep in touch with Miss Riche. Friends I remember were Audrey Harding, Jean Avis, Olive Saunders, Jean Curwain, Beryl Carter, Gwen Humphries, Beryl Turpin, Beryl Stanley and June Parr (died). My sister Audrey Buntton was Maid of Honour when Pat Butler was May Queen. I was May Queen a year or two later.

And memories from **Mrs. Joan Hawkes**;

1. *My very first impressions of Sedley were space and light. I had spent a short time at St. Philip's in a gloomy room with high windows, which we couldn't see out of, so the contrast was enormous. Everything was new with modern facilities which most of our homes did not possess.*
2. *Regarding the staff – Miss Pleasance, the Head, was very popular with all the pupils. She was a small woman, as pleasant as her name, with a firm but gentle way of encouraging children. Every morning as she arrived on her bicycle there would be a competition to meet her in the driveway and carry her briefcase into school.*
3. *After the registers had been taken in class we marched into the Hall to the tune of Country Gardens” by Percy Grainger. Whenever I hear that tune I am back in the Sedley School.*
4. *The class teachers I remember are Miss Brigham and Miss Ceadle. To me they both seemed very strict and kept us in order. My close friends were Lorna Mee (who was May Queen) and Joyce Leeke. Lorna went on to work in medical research in the U.S.A. Joyce now lives just outside Cambridge and is the aunt of the present Vicar of St. Martin's church in Suez Road.*
5. *My favourite lessons involved reading and writing. I remember spending part of an afternoon talking instead of making neat stitches in silk on a piece of cloth. Towards the end of the class I realised I had to produce some work so I cobbled together a few stitches. Miss Brigham was not amused. I had to stay behind while she took the other children to meet their parents at the end of school time. While they were gone I got out of a window and went home across the back field and into Marmora Road. When I got home I couldn't get in as my mother was waiting at Sedley to pick me up! Imagine the panic – a neighbour took me back to school to face the music!*
6. *I remember too, enjoying the maypole dancing, though it was always touch and go whether the patterns worked out. The boys I knew hated it and thought the whole business rather sissy!*
7. *Also have vivid memories of the “Nit nurse” who flicked through our hair at regular intervals looking for visitors. I once told the nurse that “my mother said she will give you a sixpence for every one you find.” – repeating a comment between my parents which I had overheard! I believe that caused some amusement.*
8. *We also had the ritual of drinking our milk before break. Some children disliked it but I never minded. Others had to have a spoonful of malt as well if they were undernourished. They all said it tasted fishy so I expect cod liver oil had been added. They loathed it and took some persuading!*

Memories sent to us by **Peter Wright**, 1935-1938

I started school at the Sedley over 60 years ago when I was 4 years old. I have no recollections of that first day except that my teacher was Miss Hard.

School lasted from 9a.m. to noon and from 2p.m. to 4p.m. everyone went home for the dinner break as there were no school dinners. School holidays were longer at Christmas and Easter but shorter in the summer; we had no half term holidays except for Whit-Monday. I have a vague memory that in the summer term we used to have Thursday afternoons off from school.

My first classroom was vast and very light. It had very large windows on either side looking over grassy areas. At one end of the room was a large open fireplace surrounded by an equally large fireguard. I can remember sitting around a blazing fire in the winter listening to stories. There was a very large cupboard in which were kept all the toys. We used to sit at very small tables.

On joining the class every child was allocated an identification symbol, I can remember mine was a pear. This symbol was used to mark anything personal to the child such as their clothes peg in the cloakroom.

My strongest recollection of that first year of school was having to go to bed in the afternoon. Each child had a camp bed, which was set up in the classroom or, during the summer, out on the verandas. You were expected to go to sleep for an hour; I was a very restless child and rarely slept and therefore I used to lose out on the reward for sleeping which was a barley sugar.

My next teacher was Miss Mintie. In this class we had desks in rows. Although the school was only four years old the desks were in a poor condition. I can remember a boy cutting his head open after falling onto a piece of protruding metal on one of the desks.

The highlight of that year was the celebrations for the coronation of King George VI. The school was decorated and a party was held in the hall. During the proceedings the Mayor arrived to distribute silver plated spoons to every child. He was an awe-inspiring figure with his red robes, black tricorn hat and gold chain. Little did I imagine that I would be wearing that very same chain some thirty years later.

My final class was taken by Miss Keedle who to me was the typical stereotyped Ma'am. She seemed to be very old with glasses, grey hair drawn back into a bun and she wore what we thought were very old-fashioned clothes, generally blue. She was a strict disciplinarian but a very good teacher. It was in her class that I had my first introduction to numeracy and literacy lessons. I can remember we had to cut out pictures from the newspaper and describe to the class what they portrayed.

In this year we danced around the Maypole and had our May Queen celebrations. The class had to vote for who they wanted to be the May Queen and for who would carry her crown. In my year Phyllis Gooch was May Queen and Malcolm Wolfe was the crown bearer.

Whilst in Miss Keedle's class every child acted as monitor for the week for the Headmistress, Miss Pleasance. You used to be summoned to her office by a bell, which rang in the classroom.

Every year we had to visit the school dentist. The dentist was located in a caravan on the site of the Romsey canteen. You also had to visit the school clinic for medicals and inoculations. The clinic was sited in Auckland Road, off Newmarket Road, so it used to be a very long walk.

I suppose my most vivid memories of the school were the Christmas parties, when all the classrooms were decorated and the concerts which were given for the parents each year.

Going back and forth to school used to be a great adventure as there was so much going on and so much to see. There used to be so many interesting characters, ranging from the smithy in Suez Road to the Rag and Bone man who gave you small chicks for the rags.

I can honestly say that I enjoyed my days at Sedley.....



Activities you mention in your memories. Do you recognise some of your friends in these photos?

We still use a “pretend” birthday cake and sing to the children when it is their birthday. The child in the birthday picture even appears to have some cards.



Rosalyn and **Roland Gibbons** wrote to Sedley saying that they were both there in the 1930s. They, like many, refer to the school as Sedley Taylor School. (Although the school **was** named after Alderman Sedley Taylor, it was named "The Sedley School." We have no record of a change in name.) They remember the Maypole dancing and that the school was quite new when they were there. They have written to us several times and here follows one of their letters;



Regarding Sedley, we both remember the headmistress Miss Pleasance, who lived up to her name in every way. She was a lovely lady. However, Miss Ceadle presented rather a different impression in our recollection, being extremely strict and feared – we would have to sit with our hands on our heads for long periods if she identified any wrongdoing! Every afternoon we had to collect straw mats and try and sleep lying on the floor – it must have been standard practice in those times. We remember the Maypole dancing when all the Mums were invited to come and watch, but we were instructed not to wave to them. Roland remembers disobeying this. We practised very hard for the Maypole dancing, to perfect the weaving in and out – woe betide anyone who went in when they should have gone out and spoiled the whole pattern. As there were two classes to cover the age range for each year, Rosalyn was in the lower class because of her later birthday. Therefore she didn't have Miss Ceadle but an unremembered named teacher who was of a kind disposition and seemed quite plump and cuddly. Her class did a separate Maypole dance and a lucky person was chosen to be the "spider in the web."

Daphne Kidman (1933-1936) wrote to us, telling us that when she was taken to school on her first day she promptly took herself home again and sat on the doorstep! When her Mum saw her, it was a quick slap and taken back! After that it was a very happy time, what with the Maypole etc. she thinks she was a chatterbox and joined in everything going, which would be accepted with 3 older brothers.....

Mrs Joyce Giddens (nee Leeke) sent us news of their 2 generations of Sedley pupils;

Myself Joyce Giddens (nee Leeke) started the day it opened 19th September 1932 aged 5. I believe the mayor performed the opening ceremony by opening the main door in the side of the Hall, and my mother was invited to be the first parent to go through it (because she happened to be sitting nearest!) My main memory is of Miss Pleasance, Headmistress, thumping away at the piano the tune "Country Gardens" while we danced into assembly.

My son, Richard Giddens started Sedley exactly 25 years later aged 5, and was picked to light the candles on the 25th Celebration cake. His best memory is that Miss Foster, the then Headmistress, gave him a Bible, which he still has, inscribed, "To remember to Harvest 9.10.58 when you read Psalm 148 so beautifully."

Another 5 years on, my daughter Alison Drake (nee Giddens) started Sedley. Her most precious memory is Miss Foster. In her last year, when the nativity play was performed, Alison read the Bible passages, standing at the lectern, in her school uniform, when everyone else was dressed in "Nativity" clothes, to make up for this, Miss Foster gave her a little china Angel. She still has it.

Later, Alison married Paul Drake, who also went to Sedley, Romsey and Coleridge, so we do as a family have a strong connection with Sedley.

My friend Lorna Mee was one of the first May Queens (I was a main attendant).

As with good buildings, the most important thing is its foundations, and we all feel that our time at Sedley gave us the best foundations to our education and life that we could possibly have had.

Miss Gladys Riche was a teacher at Sedley during its early years.

Miss Riche started teaching at Sedley in 1934. She is remembered with affection by her pupils who were here during her time, particularly for her singing and her piano playing. So many of the pupils recall going in to the hall for assembly to the sound of her playing, "English Country Garden." When the school had its 60th birthday celebration in 1992 Miss Riche came to the tea party and much to the delight of the ex- pupils she played the piano for us. Many songs were a joy to hear, but of course the favourite was "English Country Garden," and everyone from that era joined in the singing – the words remembered after all those years! Many of the people present, were amazed that Miss Riche remembered so many of her students by name and was able to recall stories of their time in her class. During the war Miss Riche was a Billeting Officer, placing evacuees with local families. She was a very active member of the community and is remembered for the care and support she offered children and their families. Miss Riche kept in contact with Sedley – particularly during the past 10 years and has been very generous in her support for our children.

It was Miss Riche's intention to write a contribution for this book but sadly has been unwell in recent weeks. She is going to move into a care home in Luton to be near her brother and his family and we wish for her remaining years to be comfortable and peaceful.



This letter arrived from **Mrs. Pat Phillips (nee Butler)**; our first May Queen;

My first impression of Sedley was one of space. I had attended St. Philips School for the first 2 terms of my school life where one room had been divided into 2 classrooms by a curtain and where exercise in the winter was confined to marching around the corridors.

The buildings

There was a central open area with the classrooms surrounding it. There was a grass play area as well as a hard one. The hall too seemed immense to a 5 year old, particularly if one went into it alone when it was empty. There was a rocking horse in the hall, although to my knowledge nobody ever rode it, and there was a piano. The hall had a large round clock on one wall and a child was sometimes sent to look at it and report back on the time. "Look at where the little hand is first and then the big hand."

The staff

I knew all about Miss Pleasance before I was enrolled at the Sedley. She had taught my mother and three of her sisters in the East Road area; I think at St. Matthew's. I knew that she was a very nice kind lady who would tell me everything I needed to know.

BUT if I didn't sit still, keep quiet, work hard and do what I was told, the gentleness would turn to strong disapproval. Miss Pleasance was a small and active person, her hair plaited and arranged in two rows running behind her head from ear to ear. She had her own room in which she kept some fairy dolls in different colours, presumably to give to a child in distress. I don't know what any distressed boy got.

As for the rest of the staff, there was Miss Brigham. The impression I have of her is that she was a somewhat large lady with a lot of dark coloured clothing. There was Miss Cheadle and Miss Minty, taller, fragile looking. She too had plaits, but hers were arranged in earphone style. I remember Miss Allen; sturdy, down to earth, with a rosy face. I remember too, a monitress who used to supervise us in the cloakrooms, helping us in and out of our coats and wellies. Lastly there was the caretaker Mr Bennett. The younger of his two sons distinguished himself by saying his name was Bennis Dennett!

The rest

I remember one girl had to be sent away to a clinic, presumably a TB clinic, because we had a little talk about lungs, which could be damaged. Another girl had her fingers badly squashed by a drain cover in the alley in the front of the school. She had dropped something down the drain and had tried to retrieve it but the cover had fallen back onto her hand.

We played rhyming games in the hall. There was "Oranges and Lemons", "In and Out the Window", "The Farmer wants a Wife". We all joined vigorously in "We all pat the dog."

We had a Christmas party in the hall, where I first saw and touched tinsel. Each window ledge in the hall had a strand laid along it. There was rest time, arms folded on desk, heads down on arms, and is there a vague memory of lying down on collapsible cots in the hall? There was a weather chart on the wall, which we filled in daily.

There was the year I was May Queen – the first one. I remember the robes being of blanket like material. The crown was magnificent. The penny I spent at Martin's, the little corner shop at the junction of Suez Road and Marmora Road, on a new slide for my hair, was wasted as the crown completely covered most of my hair and head. The class voted for the May Queen, and in the end I managed to collect one vote more than Audrey Bunton, but we remained friends for all that.

It is strange to think of the Sedley as being down for demolition; it still seems to me a new building. The two years I spent there were happy ones.



Back row: ?; Audrey Harding; Jean Avis; Daphne Bunton; Olive Saunders;
Jean Curwain.
Front row; Beryl Carter, Gwen Humphries, Beryl Turpin, Beryl Stanley, June Parr.



Mayday 1937; names remembered here are
? , Colin Avis, Pam Middleton, Daphne Bunton, ? June Parr, Colin Pettit in the
back row, and Beryl Carter, ?, Pam Langley in the front row.



Mrs. Philips names the people in her photo;

The member of staff is Miss Minty. In the back row, second from the left is Max Wieland, and standing next to Miss Minty is Ray (Snowy) Minks. On the next row down, the boy second from the left is Willie Coe, and the boy fourth from the right is Cyril East, but I'm not sure of that. In the front row, the girl at the very left edge is Mary Shepperson, my oldest and dearest friend, now unfortunately dead.

This letter came from **Audrey Coe**, the May Queen in 1936, recalling how the school was built;

A few Memories

I think I watched every brick of the Sedley School being laid. At 4 years old I spent my days with my head pressed to the railings watching everything that went on. I could not believe how slow they were when the one thing I wanted was to start school. There was a buddleia tree in the corner of the railings, which was smothered with the most beautiful butterflies.

Once the school opened a few things come to mind. Miss Wenham always played the "Country Gardens" march when we went out of assembly and since we lived so close to the school my mother always knew when lessons were about to begin. Miss Pleasance had a tin of boiled sweets in the cupboard in her room and one went there to receive a sweet when one had done especially good work. There was an annual play performed and I can remember being in one of them as a girl with a father or grandfather who had a long white beard but I have no idea what the play was. We all learned to dance around the maypole, which was a lovely experience, especially the unwinding. Some people, especially the boys, never did get it right.

The May queen was not chosen, or at least not told about it, until the morning of the ceremony. I remember going to Miss Pleasance's room and she took this white bundle out of the cupboard and informed me that this was the May queen's dress. She was quite sure my mother would cope with it. When I arrived home my mother was hanging washing on the line. She was appalled at the state of the dress but there was no time to do anything about it except iron it. In addition it had an enormous hem on it and was really too short for me but it had to do. It was a wonderful day and I thoroughly enjoyed the procession and the crowning.

Another first day pupil, **Mrs. Barbara Grant (nee Clark);**

After the first term of my school life spent at St. Philip's Church of England Infants department, with its dreary walls, stairs and corridors, high windows and almost no heating, the first day at Sedley was in sharp contrast. Brightness and warmth greeted the Opening Day pupils and a lovely headteacher by name of Miss Pleasance; a name most apt for a kind and welcoming person. The cloakrooms were well fitted with low toilets, pegs with benches underneath, each peg with a child's name. My first day was only marred by the fact that my mother had given me a rosy red apple and I left it on the cloakroom bench and the teacher asking whose apple it was but I was too shy to claim it. I've always wondered who it was that had the pleasure of eating my apple.

In April 1957 our son Richard was welcomed by another Sedley head teacher namely Miss Foster. Like me, his memories are also happy, including the day he with others danced around the Maypole. I remember the day he came home and said Miss Foster had asked if anyone had lost a gold link bracelet, I realised it was mine and went to school to claim it, unlike my lost apple!

We had a visit from **Mr. Robert Moore**, who attended Sedley 1936-39. He still lives in the area and enjoys reminiscing with Mrs. Houghton (formerly Miss Wenham), who also lives nearby. One memory he has is drinking milk from a bottle, but it is not the milk he remembers as much as the milk bottle tops! They were made of cardboard and each had a Road Safety slogan printed on, such as the warning about Jay Walking. The bottle tops were collected by many of the children, who were keen to see what was on their bottle each day and hoped that those missing from their collection would be given to them by other children. Mr. Moore wondered if they were a kind of forerunner to the Pokemon cards!

Mrs Joan Harris (nee Turpin) sent us some photos with this letter;

I started at Sedley in 1935, at the age of 3 and a half. My 3 sisters and younger brother also attended there. We lived in Hobart Road, so didn't have far to go. In the first two nursery classes, we each had a little fold up camp bed; we had to have a nap every afternoon for about an hour.

I remember the King's Jubilee in 1937. We had a concert in the hall; a clown kept falling off the platform, which made me cry as I thought he had hurt himself. We were each given a spoon, a book of the Royal family and a lollipop. I still have the spoon.

I went on to Romsey, just as the War started. My 3 daughters also went to Sedley. Miss Foster was then Headmistress. When my daughter Susan was Mary in the nativity play (1960) Miss Foster compiled a little book for her to keep.

Here is a letter full of less happy memories from **Trevor Dickinson**;

I'll be 70 years old on November this year. That means attended Sedley School in about 1934, some three years after its opening, having for some unknown reason, assumed for a long time afterwards, that it was called The Sedley Taylor School.

I confess that my memories of my time there were not happy.

Living at Hobart Road, with a clear view of the School from our kitchen window, my first memories are of the Nursery, where the key recall is of being confined wide awake to what seemed to me to be cage-like beds where we were expected to fall briskly to sleep.

I remember the tight golden bun of the hair of Miss Pleasance, the headteacher. She seemed to me then a gentle soul. Less attractive are my memories of Miss Brigham and Miss Ceadle. These two teachers lived together in my waking and sleeping hours, Miss Brigham with her battleship bosom and needle-like Miss Ceadle. I remember as if yesterday the illusion of Miss Brigham coming giantess-like close to me and then receding dot-like into the distance. The one comfort is that when I used to see her later on Mill Road she always responded in a friendly fashion to my obsequiously raised County School cap, and seemed pleased to pass the time of day.

Another key memory is of my total and unhappy confusion at the mystery of the Maypole dance.

Sedley is fixed in my mind also because with the outbreak of World War Two. There were shelters built in the grounds between the school building and Hobart Road. So night after night, my mother and I, responding to the gloomy wail of the siren, would make our way past our own less substantial Anderson shelter, to the concrete chill of a few Sedley hours. If my father was not fire watching or on night duty he would be there with us too.

It's interesting to me that, as someone who has spent pretty well his entire life involved with education – as teacher, advisor, as HMI – I have no recall of learning anything at all at Sedley!

I took Triss Driver by surprise about ten years ago, and called unannounced. She gave me a brisk tour of the school and I was deeply impressed by the changed atmosphere. There was all the brightness, colour, energy and quality that a modern parent would hope to see in a good primary school. That present outshining of the past makes it seem all the more sad that Sedley is now doomed to die!



One of the unnamed and undated May queen pictures! Do you know who is here?



Margaret Legge. Was she the 1939 May queen?

The mystery of the 1939 May Queen – was it Margaret Legge?

Hector Legge – a Sedley pupil who was transferred here in 1936 and was here for one year, thinks it was his cousin Margaret Legge who was our May Queen in 1939. He gave us her address in Canada where she has lived since 1957. We contacted Margaret (now Margaret Barlow). Although she has memories of her days as a Sedley pupil during the late 1930s, and of the May queen event, she does not remember having the star role! She does however have memories of standing under the Maypole singing “Will you come into my parlour said the spider to the fly!”

Margaret’s friend, Janet Blows (now Janet Chapman) also remembers the event and she lent us some photos of that year. Janet now lives in Houghton. She doesn’t think Margaret was the May queen but can’t remember who was! Margaret’s photo of a May Day celebration shows herself sitting second on the left in a plaid skirt. The year is not indicated. The mystery of the 1939 May queen remains unsolved!

Mrs. Elsie Nightingale (nee Beddall) was an early pupil, mother of pupils and before she retired a much-loved member of staff. She came in recently and shared her memories;

Elsie's family moved from Bedford, into a brand new house in Suez Road. Her neighbours were the Mann family. She started Sedley in 1937, as did her friend Joan Auger. Elsie and Joan's first morning must have been a difficult one for them because Elsie remembers that by playtime they had both had enough and they decided to go back home! Elsie's mum soon sent her back and told her she had to stay at school!

Elsie remained in this area when she married,

and both her children Graham and Andrew came Sedley. Both her sons have written to us.

When Andrew started at Sedley Elsie waited with him in the cloakroom on the first day. He was going into Mrs. Bennett's class. She was recognised by another Sedley pupil, John Wyatt, who was waiting with his son Trevor. Much to Elsie's embarrassment John said "Hello. I used to to bed with you in the afternoons!" Elsie went very red and wondered what the crowd of mothers in the cloakroom would have been thinking. They wouldn't have known that John was referring to the time when they were 3 years old and had to have an afternoon nap in the Sedley Nursery class!

In 1973 Elsie became a general assistant in the Deaf Unit. After several years she moved to the main school where she was a general assistant until 1977. She remembers these years as being very happy days with lots of fun and laughter, although there were embarrassing moments. One was when Elsie helped on a school trip to Ely. After the children had finished their picnics in the park and were on their way back to the station one boy, Andrew Jarman – realised that he had thrown away his bow-tie with the remains of his lunch. Elsie ran back and hunted through the bins, much to the astonishment of anyone in the park who must have thought she was destitute!

Elsie has so many happy memories of Sedley, and although she is enjoying her retirement she still misses the children.



Elsie looking at the camera. "We are helping the teacher, Miss Allen to tidy the sunken garden. I wonder who the young lad is?"



to

go

This photo was taken on the day we said Goodbye to Elsie, when she retired.

War time, Up Memory Lane, Your letters

Mr. Dennis Crowe wrote to us from Walthamstowe. He and his brother were evacuated with their grandparents to Cambridge during the war, their London home was bombed and his parents luckily were out at work at the time.

I started at Sedley on 21.7.41, my 5th birthday. I remember crying and did not want to go in, to get to school from my Grandmother who lived in Perne Road. I hated having to sleep in the afternoon. I remember dancing round the Maypole until somebody behind trod on my heel and half took off my plimsoll which caused me quite a problem.

Also, clothes were on ration and my parents got me a new pair of shoes with a strap across which buttoned up. This made me upset because the other children said they were girls shoes and kept trying to take the Mickey!

To give us vitamins we had to go to the teacher who had a big tin of Cod Liver Oil and Malt, who gave us all a big spoonful. It was like sticky toffee but with a funny smell. We all used the same spoon.

The thing I looked forward to most, was about once a month my mother and father would come for the weekend. I would rush out of school to look through the railway to see if they were there.

My grandmother was very strict. If we did anything wrong she had a flyswatter with a bamboo handle which she used quite freely...

Another war-time memory from **Gwendoline Maskell (nee Bell)**;

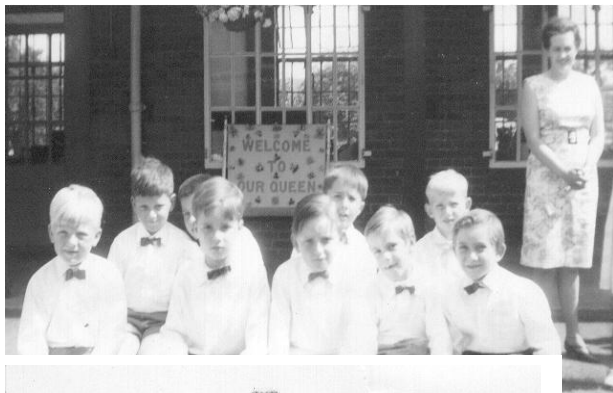
I was at Sedley School from 1937 to 1940 and have many happy memories of my time there. Miss Pleasance was a much loved Headmistress and I remember her glove puppet, which she would often have in the schools morning assembly.

Miss Brigham was the rather formidable teacher who taught us Maypole dancing. We were all rather in awe of her.

I can remember taking my gas mask to school 1939 onwards and Miss Pleasance teaching us to sing, "London Bridge is falling down" which she hoped would not come true!

In due course my children Alan, Rosemary, Hazel and Shirley attended Sedley. Shirley was May Queen in 1970. Because Mrs. Amey (the councillor's wife) was ill that summer, she was unable to crown the May Queen and Mrs. Tipple did the honours. By then she had been widowed and re-married and was Mrs. Alice Broom. She was a favourite teacher and taught reception class – I never heard her raise her voice but she was an inspiration to her pupils. She instilled into our son Alan, a love of birds and animals, making a career working with them at various zoos. We still keep in touch with Alice Broom, now in her 90s!

Miss Foster was Headmistress when our children were at Sedley and we all loved her and kept in touch with her until she died.



You should be able to see the Wind, Web, Gypsy tent, and Plait if you look carefully at the ribbons. One of these is the "odd one out" as it was not taking place on the May Grass. What a very smart collection of boys are wait to dance! And there's Mrs. North with her accordion!

Another local, **John Wyatt**, wrote to us, again with wartime memories;

1938 I started Sedley – as my Mum was expecting, Coleridge Road was most beneficial to her – out of my back gate and I was in school – I couldn't have lived much closer – so no school run for her!

Miss Allen was my first teacher, a lovely lady who knew how to coax new entrants on their first days at school. Her classroom had an open coal fire, which was stoked regularly behind a huge fireguard. It was a whole new world to me.

Outside our classroom was a large sandpit, alongside was a large mound to run around. After lunch I vividly remember the little camp beds set out for us to have an afternoon nap. Sedley School was a total new era in buildings and learning, with its beautiful open, airy and light rooms. A very special first was “under floor heating” powered for the first time oil and not coal.

Within a short time of my starting school the Second World War started. Vivid memories of excavators digging up Sedley's back lawn to make way for a series of underground Air Raid Shelters. We always had to take our cardboard box with our gas mask everywhere we went.

Excursions away from Sedley were unheard of (not even to Coleridge Rec.).

When things looked bleak for this country, I remember my Mum saying that Sedley invited Mums and Dads to school to explain emergency procedures. The problem was that Mr. Bennett just had a bucket and a stirrup pump (a touch of Dad's Army) for action. Another problem was our view through the windows was to be obscured. Thick mesh/ netting was stuck on the insides to avoid bomb blasts shattering them.

We had weekly practices to disperse to Air Raid Shelters with our Iron rations and gas masks. The gas masks were checked thoroughly, as you breathed in you had to be able to hold a sheet of paper over the nozzle without it falling off.

A huge problem arose after war started with the influx of London evacuees. They needed to be absorbed into the local schools somehow. For several months Sedley educated us locals during the morning sessions and the Londoners took the afternoon periods. We didn't mind too much as it meant going to school for only half days. Eventually every child was absorbed into overflowing classrooms and back to full-time schooling.

Toys, books and equipment were quite limited; it usually meant books between two children. We did lots of cutting up and sticking of odds and ends to create a magical product.

We had morning assembly every day in the hall. Birthdays were special – Miss Pleasance had a wooden box with candles, which she would light. Children with a birthday were invited onto the stage and the whole school would sing “Happy Birthday.” It would be difficult to forget the “buzz” at Christmas time – the concerts and the children singing carols. Although I now work in Kings College Chapel when we sing “Away in a Manger,” on Christmas Eve, I flick back to my Sedley days!

Another first at Sedley was we had the school dentist here, in a room next to the hall. This was before the clinic opened in Coleridge Road.

Mayday was always a very special occasion, so important that the mayor would attend.

I had a great respect for Sedley and Romsey, and we decided to move to our present address so that our children could avail themselves of the same schooling.

One last friendly gesture, at the end of our 3 years at Sedley, the head-teacher walked us down to Romsey and introduced us to our new teachers. With all due respect she was like a mother to us.

Even after all these years I can remember all the teachers names. One was Miss Riche. On coming to your 60th anniversary day, I was aware of an elderly lady staring at me. I went over for a chat – and it was Miss Riche, who remembered me by name over 50 years on!

Mrs Shirley O'Brien (nee Smith) found the maypole dancing quite difficult, (as some children still do today)!

I started school in 1941. My brother Michael followed me two years later, my youngest brother Shenton in 1947 and my sister Pamela in 1951. Shenton didn't seem to understand that school was all day. Minutes after our mother had left him in the classroom in the classroom he would run home. Our poor mother would then have to return him to school. I think he finally got the message. Shenton couldn't understand why he wasn't allowed to bring the school's toys home. Almost every day something had to be returned that he had brought away with him. I remember the headmistress, Miss Pleasance. She was a lovely lady. Miss Pleasance enjoyed listening to the pupils reading to her, she was patient and kind if we were stuck with a certain word. There was a lovely picture in her room. It was Jesus, and the caption said, "Suffer little children to come unto me." In the afternoons we were made to lie down for a sleep, on palisades. I wasn't very good at sleeping during the day, something I am still unable to do. I would lie there watching the other children, fast asleep, and I was wide-awake, wishing it was time to be doing something else. I also enjoyed the May Queen celebrations. I found it quite difficult when dancing round the Maypole, making sure the ribbons weren't in a tangle. The same maypole the children dance around today, (with different ribbons of course). Our mothers made sure we had pretty clean summer dresses for the day, with whit socks and plimsolls. How they managed to find the clothing coupons for the material I shall never know, it was wartime and everything was extremely scarce. The friends I made who started school with me at the Sedley all those years ago in the 40s went on as I did, to the Romsey, where we took our 11+ exam. Some of us were lucky enough to win a place at the Cambridgeshire High School for Girls, we were so proud. We still meet up, quite regularly and enjoy reminiscing. It doesn't seem that long ago now, and we always remember the good times we had.

Marion Fry (nee Baker) started in 1941, but didn't mention the war;

One of my earliest memories is of the day I started at Sedley Infant School. The date June 30th 1941 and I was just 5 years and 4 days old. I had been waiting impatiently for this day for a long time, as all of my friends, who lived in nearby Greville Road, were already at school and I couldn't wait to join them. As I remember, we were shown to where our pegs were in the cloakroom. Each one was marked with a different symbol. I believe mine was a lamb, but I couldn't be sure of this. However what I do remember very clearly was a little girl, looking very forlorn, crying, "I want my Mummy, I want to go home." I immediately went up to her, and put my arm around her, saying, "Don't be upset, school is a lovely place, you will love it." (Of course, I was quite confident of this, despite it being my first day too.) My new friend was Jane Unwin, who I discovered was 5 years old the previous day, June 29th, so, being all of three days older, I decided to take her under my wing and look after her. We shared many happy days, first at Sedley, and then Romsey, then Cambridgeshire High School (The County) together. After more than sixty years, Jane and I remain friends, and neither of us will ever forget our first day at Sedley!

Eileen Davenport (nee Neaves) was at Sedley just after the war;

I attended Sedley School from 1945-1947 when Miss Pleasance was headmistress. One day soon after the war ended my dad came to meet me from school, and Miss Pleasance remembered having taught him at East Road School and got him up on the stage.

I remember we used to have a spoonful of malt every day and we used to line up for little chocolate capsules, they must have been cod liver oil. Every afternoon we had a little sleep on camp beds.

Each year we had the Maypole and a May Queen. My brother who attended Sedley from 1960-1963 was a May Queen Attendant one year.

I can only remember one teacher. Miss Thynne.

I remember Auntie Jean and Uncle Dennis used to come and teach Road Safety using puppets and we used to look forward to this.

About three times a year some of us ex- Sedley and Romsey girls meet up for a meal!

A joint letter from **Chris and Mary Barber** follows;

As Sedley opened in 1932, the paint was certainly not wet when I first walked in, in 1937, but it had an air of light about it that I still remember. In those days one walked to school, and as I came from Catherine Street via Coleridge Road the school hid itself till one had gone down the narrow passage, when my mother could let me go, a child who was as far as I can recollect always glad to go to school.

Lessons were not onerous in any case, but I suppose I must have begun in the nursery class, because one of my more definite memories is the afternoon bed-rest! I could still find my bed today because the blanket had a pussy-cat stitched on it, and I'm convinced it is still there waiting for me if I ever need it!

What I really liked was the teachers, and my favourite was a young teacher in her first job. I am so happy to think that that dear teacher is still living and in fact came to the 40th anniversary of my ordination as a priest in the Church of England, at Ely Cathedral. Now we are both retired and are on a little more on an even footing, but I still find it hard to think of her except as "Miss Riche."

I have discovered (through marrying one) that really good teachers never forget their pupils however long ago they taught them, and Gladys Riche certainly lived up to that mark.

My other definite memory of Sedley before I left to go up to Romsey was having read every one of the books that were available and being offered "The Boys' Odyssey" – an unlikely volume for an Infant school, and I don't think I read it all, but perhaps it helped me tackle the real Homer's Odyssey in Greek in later years!

It seems incredible that the nice new school I remember has now got to the end of its days, but even if the building is to close, the life and traditions of "Sedley" will, I am sure, go on.

Christopher Bendall, (Left 1945, who wrote to Friends Reunited;)

Maypole dancing I remember was such fun. The pole was sited in the grass quadrangle with the covered walkways around it. This bright event took our minds off the war being fought in Europe.

Mrs Alice Tipple (1948-1969) teacher, who became Mrs Broom

Mrs Tipple taught at Sedley School from September 1948 to July 1969. So many of our former pupils remember her with great affection, having benefited from her excellent teaching and care. When she left the following entry was put in the logbook:

"23rd July. End of term parents meeting. This was a very special occasion. A large number of parents (of children past as well as present) gathered to say 'thank-you and goodbye' to Mrs Tipple who, for twenty-one years, had 'loved into learning' all the children who had passed through her Reception class. She herself had expressed a wish for no fuss at her going. Accordingly the parents had subscribed to the purchase of a really first class rocking horse for the use of the future reception class children as a token of their appreciation for all she had done for the children.

The rocking horse bearing a suitably inscribed plaque was handed over to Mrs Tipple, who then handed in over to the school.

The Headmistress read an appreciation of Mrs Tipple's work, and a parent, Mrs Atkin, arranged for one of Mrs Tipple's children to present her with a silver bracelet, subscribed to by the parents. Mrs Tipple leaves (retires and remarries) at the end of the term."



Mrs Tipple became Mrs Broom when she remarried. She had a very happy and long retirement, during which she kept in touch with the school. Her last visit was in July 2001 when she was a very welcome guest at the Rose Queen ceremony. Sadly she died in May 2002.

Mrs Broom's son David and daughter Margaret were both pupils at Sedley and have happy memories of their time here. They often reminisced with their mother about their Sedley memories. Margaret remembers that before she came to be in the class with her mother, there was a teacher shortage so her mother was allowed to bring her to school with her rather than not take up the post. Margaret had dinner with the staff. At one meal she corrected Miss Foster's table manners on the etiquette of dealing with a bowl of soup. She said that her daddy said you had to tip the bowl away from you, else it goes in your lap! Miss Foster was always so good with the children and never made them feel

uncomfortable. She complemented her on her table manners and did not appear to be troubled by being corrected by a 3 year old!]

David recalls one of his favourite stories as one which his mother told about the first day of a pupil of hers. The boy was about 4½ years old and he came to school on his first day clutching his father's hand and crying, "Why do I have to come to school Dad?" His father replied "So you can learn to read and write, and do sums -and be as clever as Daddy. Then when you are 16 you will be able to get a job and earn lots of money." The boy replied, still sobbing and now holding Mrs Tipple's hand, " You will come back for me when I'm 16, won't you?"

A lovely story -the pupil would soon have realised that his school days at Sedley with Mrs Tipple would be full of joy and fun, and he would be cared for in a very special way whilst he learnt all the things his dad wanted him to learn! It would be interesting to know what he is doing now -wherever he is he will surely be grateful for the good foundation to his learning given to him by his first teacher.

Margaret Ganthorpe (nee Andrews) was a former May Queen. She writes;

I must have been a pupil at the school at the beginning of the war years – around 1939-1940. I remember starting school rather later than I should have done as I had been ill for a while and after having an operation in the old Addenbrooke's Hospital can remember my mother taking me to school just to get my bearings as it were. I visited just for a short while with a large bandage wrapped round my head and neck.

One of my earliest recollections was having to rest each afternoon whilst in the infant class – of course we all returned home for lunch and at the beginning of the afternoon session. We had to place our rush mat on the floor and cover ourselves with a blanket – we knew our own as each blanket had a motif either stamped or embroidered on and that motif corresponded with the peg on which we hung our coat in the cloakroom. I had balloons on my blanket I remember but I didn't enjoy resting. Inactivity came hard and I rather begrudged the time spent relaxing.

I remember a spoonful of sticky cod liver oil malt being shoved into some unfortunate children.

I had the honour of being the May Queen – it must have been in the final year before being transferred to the Romsey school. I remember being chosen by a show of hands which was the voting method used at that time. I was extremely proud and no doubt rather a pain in the neck. When the big day came (the days when one looks back always seemed to be sunny and warm). I vividly recollect the bouquet of May blossom which I carried, which as you know has a very heavy perfume. Whenever I smell may blossom to this very day I still remember sitting on a stage attired in all my finery with the various attendants and nearly being knocked out with the heady perfume of the may. After the staging of the queen and her entourage, we processed round the grounds giving a royal wave to parents and visitors. To this day I have kept in contact with my blonde maid of honour. In fact we have both just lost our respective husbands within a few days of each other after 49 days of marriage.

I was talking to my brother who now lives in Spain and he remembers being dragged screaming and kicking into school and also remembers misbehaving and having to stand in the corner very early in his school life. Teachers in those days were allowed to punish children if they were naughty...



Mrs Sheila West (nee Bentley) sent us this photo. Her family lived on Mill Road and her father ran a Butcher's Shop. All the children (Roy, - who sadly died a couple of years ago - Sheila, cousin Jane, Pamela, John, Christine and Michael) went to Sedley. They had happy days here, although it was wartime and life, was very different. Gas masks and practising evacuation to War shelters were part of their school timetable, but in spite of this they had excellent schooling.

Mrs. J. Brett (Nee Ladds) wrote remembering the beds;

I was at Sedley Infants during the 1940s. My biggest memory is how we used to have a sleep on little beds. We had grey blankets, which were scratchy, and I had a sun on mine and also a sun symbol on my peg. I also remember dancing around the maypole on Mayday,
I am an auxiliary nurse at Addenbrookes. A few months ago we had a patient on the ward and I recognised his visitor as Miss Thynne, who taught at Sedley. I spoke to her – she remembered my younger brother, I think he was naughty! When I was at Sedley Miss Thynne seemed like a very old lady to me, but she was only 20 years older than me!
My time at Sedley formed the basis for a very happy school life.

Mr Patrick Mills; also remembered the beds!

*The school was founded in the year I was born in Great Yarmouth. My parents moved to Cambridge with my younger brother Jack and myself a few years later. I can clearly remember the Coronation of King George VI, I started at Sedley about then.
I think we used to sleep after lunch in a room with big windows looking on to the lawn.
I can clearly remember Miss Riche, whom I also knew as a piano teacher. The headmistress was Miss Pleasance. I remember the May Queen celebrations and also dancing around the Maypole.
My brother followed me, he had a teacher called Miss Minty.
It is sad to think of the school closing but I hope you will continue the good work on your new site.*

Mrs. **Wendy Waters (nee January)** sent us some photos for our archives. She also remembered sleeping in the afternoon. She is in contact with Peter Davison (through friendsreunited.com), Joan Giddings and Susan Fakes (her daughter's godmother).

Anne Fenn was our May queen in 1941. She had 2 sisters, **Veronica and Yvonne** who were also at Sedley. All their children came here too; **Corrienne Mephan, Michael Fenn, and Mandy and Cindy Bryant**. Veronica has been in correspondence with us. She said that Anne bravely died of cancer, just over three years ago. When she was widowed Anne came back to Cambridge to live with her two young daughters. Veronica said what a positive person Anne always was, and with such a love of Drama.

We were so pleased when yet another May Queen wrote to us,
Mrs. Barbara Bavester (nee Frost), 1942-1944;

If I dig around in my mind I can find lots of memories but hearing "Sedley School" evokes the following;

I remember being quite nervous on my first day – no home visits or induction days in those days! Mum and I were asked to wait in the hall where there was what appeared to a five year old to be an enormous rocking horse. How I longed to be brave enough to ride that magnificent "animal" perceived by me to be the possession of royalty and the rich only!

I loved school after that first day except for the dreaded afternoon rests for the first year children. Most children went home at mid-day for lunch and when we returned there they were - rows of little camp-style beds with a pillow and blanket bearing an individual logo. I think mine was two balloons. We were expected to lie down and sleep. I could not, however hard I tried. Purgatory!

Miss Perry was one teacher and then we went up to Miss Thynne's and Miss Allen's.

In 1944 I was chosen as May Queen. Jane Unwin was May Queen the previous year. It was a democratic decision! The top class, later to move up to the Romsey Junior School, voted for the Queen and amazingly I was chosen. I loved doing the Maypole dances but as queen I was otherwise engaged!

My Dad was in the Army, as it was wartime, and could not attend. He did however come to meet me from school one day in his soldier's uniform. Miss Allen let me out of school a few minutes early because she said, "We can't keep the King's army waiting, can we?" that was the proudest moment of my time at Sedley School – I was ten feet tall as I left the classroom!

Over the intervening 58 years I have looked back on the Sedley School as a little gem of a school, and the Headmistress – Miss Pleasance - as a special person, with her plaited hair in a sort of "Headphone" style. I was happy to hear this gem has survived so long, though I guess a lot has changed since the 1940s.

A letter from **Mrs. Gill Stallings** in Huntingdon;

I entered Sedley in September 1943, just before my fifth birthday. What happy memories I have with hardly anything to tarnish the joy of school days. I particularly remember the unusual architecture, with the classrooms round the quadrangle, giving us I am sure a secure feeling. I remember at first rest hour after lunch, on little beds with blankets to cover us. Of course Mickey Mouse gas masks in our own case. May Queen celebrations with everyone dressing up in their best clothes and taking lots of tea roses and flowers from our garden to help decorate. Playing triangle and tambourine in our little band. – hey-ho I loved it all!

Mrs Anne Fielding (nee Martin)

wrote to us recently;

I remember the May Queen every May 1st and dancing around the Maypole, we all enjoyed that day. Also the third pint bottles of milk daily. It used to have a waxed cardboard top with a little hole in the middle for the straw. We didn't have to pay for it.

It was very quiet, not like today with all the traffic.

We used to have our teeth and our heads checked in school and we used to be sent to the clinic if there were any problems.

We used to paint and play with plasticene.

I think children do much more these days. We didn't have all the practical things that they have to help with reading, writing and maths.

Mrs. Margaret Shelley (nee Storey)

visited our school one afternoon, lent us some photos and left this happy collection of memories (right)

As I first went to Sedley before I was 4 years of age, it was to the nursery that I was admitted. I do well remember we each had our own face-flannel and handtowel, also a blanket used when we had to lie down in the afternoon on camp beds for a compulsory rest period – each child had a different motif on these items. Mine was a bunch of 3 balloons.

Sedley was a familiar building for me. My mother would wave to me from the back bedroom of our house in Suez Road during our playtimes. The caretaker/gardener was a Mr. Bennett who kept an eagle eye on the gardens that surrounded the playground and woe-betide anyone who trod on his precious plants and flowers, or left any litter. Milk was served daily in third pint glass bottles.

Miss Pleasance was the headmistress at the time and she would always preside over the daily morning assemblies in the main hall and we were marched in, crocodile fashion, to the strains of the piano accompaniment of tunes such as “English country Gardens” or “Rose of England.”

Every year one of the main events was the celebration of the May Queen on the 1st May when we had a picnic and the May Queen and her Maids of Honour, all carrying posies of flowers, paraded around the school and grounds for the eventual crowning of the Queen ceremony, followed by Maypole and country dancing. The entire school sang songs – “Now is the month of Maying” and “Come Lasses and Lads, take leave of your Dads and dance to the Maypole high.”

Another memorable day was the Coronation of King George VIth and Queen Elizabeth in 1937. Patriotism was alive and well then, the school was bedecked with Union Jacks. This event was celebrated at Sedley by a visit from the Mayor and Mayoress of Cambridge, Alderman and Mrs. Briggs. Every school child in Cambridge was presented with a silver coloured spoon. I can remember most of the girls had a broad ribboned red, white and blue sash and hair ribbons.

My recollections of The Sedley are happy ones, sunny joyful days, appropriately depicted on the school badge.

Mrs Judith Kock (nee Barrett), who also remembers the cod liver oil and malt!

I was a pupil at Sedley from about 1942 and then Romsey. Although we were such a short time at the Sedley I have many lovely memories of the school. Of course the day that sticks in my mind is Mayday with the Maypole. My sister was the gypsy because of her dark eyes and dark ringlets, and I was very sad that I couldn't be when my turn came (no ringlets), but I did dance around the maypole in a new white dress trimmed with red which my mum had run up for me for the occasion. We sang a song "Won't you come into the parlour said the spider to the fly?"

It was the wartime when I was there and we were given a daily supplement of Malt and Cod Liver Oil. I loved the malt but my best friend Adrienne hated it, and I have a vivid memory of her being chased around the quadrangle by the headmistress, Miss Pleasance I think, with a spoon of malt in her hand. I would have gladly eaten Adrienne's malt too. Miss Pleasance, incidentally, was a perfect sweetheart.

One year we kept silkworms. We fed them carefully and when their cocoons were full of silk the bigger children sat on the lawn and painstakingly wound the silken threads onto cotton reels. I think it was sent off to be woven.

There are lots of happy memories, but Miss Brigham terrified us. When she lost her temper, she would shout, "By Jove, I'll wipe the floor with you."

There are lots of other intangible memories, like the smell and sounds of the school, but the overall impression is that it was certainly a lovely, cosy little school and I feel honoured to have attended it.

A letter from **Mrs. Chris Bushel**, remembering how she learned joined up writing;

I remember sitting at a table "writing" on a sand board. How frustrated I was with this activity. Looking up I could see "the babies" having their sleep. Later on I can remember a teacher demonstrating on a blackboard how much quicker it was to do "joined up writing."

I also remember dancing around the Maypole. How I longed for a pretty-pretty dress like some of the other little girls. My best dress was navy with white spots. I also remember the class vote to choose the May Queen. In my year Barbara Frost was chosen. I remember this as my first act of sheer jealousy.

One of my most vivid memories is also the most unlikely. During the summer of one year, for whatever reason, school was cancelled on, I think, Thursday afternoons. My mother forgot all about this and duly sent me off back to school in the afternoon. On arriving I couldn't open the door to get in. I can remember pushing at it. I looked through the glass and there on the mat, was the caretaker. I wonder if he had a drink problem, or whether he was simply having a nap!

I have never returned to the Sedley since the day I left. I remember it now as a block of buildings around a square of grass.

I would relish the opportunity to visit.....

Stephen Frank Wilkinson must have been in the same year as he also wrote that Barbara Frost was their May Queen;

During the 2nd World War I lived in Perne Avenue and we all walked to school. The worst bit was between Rhadegund Road and Suez Road as at that time it was only a muddy trackway. All the streetlights were off to save gas and to make the town less vulnerable to air attack.

I remember the headmistress Miss Pleasance very well – small with her hair in a “bun”. Miss Brigham was a formidable lady – we were a bit frightened by her. Other teachers who we loved were a Miss Allen and Miss Dines.

Some friends I can recall during my time include Christine Ashman, Marie Northfield, Janet Sharpe, Jasmine Clements, Paul Ison, Graham Twinn, Brian Billing, Patrick MacLaren, Graham Cubberley, Josie Flack and Valerie Taylor. Barbara Frost was our Rose Queen whilst I was at Sedley.

Two things that stand out clearly are 1) We learned to write by putting sand on slates and tracing letters out with our finger and 2) Having to stand in the corner facing the wall after an “incident.” Several of us were larking about and a cap was thrown which landed on the speared railings. I tried to retrieve it and in doing so tore the lining. No justice in those days!

Other things I recall- but I am unsure of the date sequence: -

- a) What little food remained uneaten, had to be put in a bin separate from other rubbish. When these bins were full they were collected and the contents boiled up and fed to pigs as swill. The smell in the summer months was terrible.
- b) We used to collect silver paper etc., for a Spitfire Fund – there was a model Spitfire which went up to a marker with the more we collected. The Germans used to drop short lengths of silver foil to confuse the radar systems. This usually happened at night and in the morning we collected this and took it to school.
- c) In the afternoons we used to rest on camp beds in the playground. When the weather was bad we moved to the Assembly Hall. I cannot remember actually ever going to sleep and on occasions our rest was interrupted by air raid warnings.
- d) Memories of the dental treatment remain with me vividly to this day. The clinic was opposite Romsey. The lady dentist operated the drill by foot power, so had varying speeds and when it hit the nerve all Hell was let loose. Remember in those days there were no anaesthetics! I seem to remember there was a card system if you needed dental treatment. The teacher used to come in with the cards and if your name was on a coloured one you had to have something done, if it was a white one you were OK until the next visit.
- e) There used to be a bakery somewhere. A man with a delivery bike used to come round and you could buy four hot rolls for one (old) penny. We used to get milk in third pint bottles mid morning. In the hot weather it had often gone sour.
- f) I played in the percussion band. I remember the bird whistle in the band, which had to be filled with water before playing and singing a song called “Golden Slumbers.”
- g) Further along the road lived Nurse Dorrington. A familiar figure on her bike with her big black bag. We used to get visits from the “Nit nurse” at school and were given doses of Rose hip syrup and Virol. At Christmas a bag of chocolate powder was donated by America. I used to eat this raw – it never reached home.
- h) I remember the rocking horse although I don’t think we were actually allowed to ride it.

j) Maypole dancing took place on the grassed area in the middle of the quadrangle. We did a display at St. Philips Church Fete where the vicar was a Rev. Hunt who, because of a gammy leg, rode a funny bicycle and the bell-ringer was a Miss Bottle. My mother was a founder member of the Mothers Union at St. Philips...
My cousin Alan Robinson also attended the Sedley a few years after me.

Mr Malcolm Smith wrote to us with memories of 60 years ago;

Sixty years ago but I do recall one or two memories;

1. Classes were mixed, boys and girls.
2. We had gas masks in cardboard boxes – mine was a red Mickey Mouse type. It had a nose.
3. Milk had to be drunk every day.
4. During the afternoons we had a sleep – grey blanket covers with a motif. Mine was a kite.
5. We had to take a container to school every day so often for an issue of chocolate powder – I had an old Ostermilk tin. Some of the powder never reached home. It was sent from Canada or the U.S.A.
6. Before moving to Romsey I recall having a reading test – words on a board – one had to read out as many words as possible in a certain time. I'm sure this was part of the test to determine whether you were in Class 1A or 1B when starting Romsey.

Mrs Knock phoned to tell us about her son **Graham** who sadly died last August (2001) just after his 60th birthday. She said Graham had very wonderful days at Sedley. She remembers Miss Pleasance the headteacher and Mrs. Allan, a teacher. Graham had to have a sleep each afternoon after lunch when he was in the nursery class, and his bed had a Golliwog on the blanket. He enjoyed dancing around the Maypole and he had a lovely singing voice – he was always asked to sing solos at the Christmas concerts. His singing was greatly encouraged there and one teacher in particular took an interest and wanted him to go to singing school. When he was in the Navy, he sang all around the world. He set up the 9 Lessons and Carols in the Falkland Islands.

Graham's love of singing all started at Sedley School where he had very happy times.



Mrs R.G.Oliver (nee Janet Cock) wrote;

Our memories.

1. *Dancing round the Maypole.*
2. *Resting in the afternoons. We had our own symbols instead of names on our pegs and blankets. Mine was the moon.*
3. *Looking after the school tortoise.*
4. *Carrying gas masks everywhere with you and air raid shelter drill.*
5. *I can remember Miss Pleasance cutting flowers from the shrubs, in the school grounds for my mother to make my Mayday head-dress.*
6. *When the evacuees came to the school we were very overcrowded, sometimes sitting two to a desk with chairs in the aisles.*

Mrs. June Sapsford (nee Wilson) was the 1946 May Queen. She remembers the fun of going into the air-raid shelter!

I have many memories of my days at Sedley Infant school, these include dancing "the Spider's web" round the maypole, afternoon naps on camp beds, morning milk drinks in tall mugs, and a spoonful of cod liver oil! I was May Queen in 1946.

I also remember that we used to have a Health Medical, when we had to stand in our knickers and the nurse would check chest, legs, teeth, etc. I did not like this at all.

I think the Headmistress at the time was Miss Pleasance.

I also remember going down an air-raid shelter because the siren sounded. To small children, who did not realise the dangers, this was great fun.

Just round the corner to Memory Lane **Your letters 40s, 50s, 60s.**

Rosemary Mitchell, who left in 1949, wrote to Friends Reunited;

I can remember the school as a very happy one. Some new gym apparatus had just been installed and we were all so proud of it. Just after the war we found a lot of pleasure in simple things. I can remember Miss Thynne as a teacher who was very kind.

Do you remember wearing slippers in school? Or cleaning your teeth?

•

Ruth Born (nee Sizer) seems to have been in trouble with Miss Foster!

I began attending Sedley Infants school in 1947 when I was almost 5. My brother Victor was already there, being a year ahead of me.

We were used to having our dinners at school, and then there was time to play, of course. One day my brother said why don't we run home after dinner and see my Mum and Dad and baby Alan. So that's just what we did. We ran home, sat round the dinner table with Mum and Dad as they ate their dinners, no doubt getting a mouthful or two – and then ran back to school. To me this seemed tremendous fun, a bit like an adventure, never entering our heads that we were doing anything wrong in any way. Imagine my surprise then, when after a good while "adventuring", I was taken to Miss Foster's office. She asked me if I went home after my school dinner. "Yes," I said. Then she put me in her little toilet room next to her office and told me to wait there because she was cross with me. I stood in the dark little toilet completely bewildered, and quite unaware of how I had made Miss Foster angry. I don't know how long I was there – long enough to feel frightened, I know. What happened next and the subsequent outcome is, unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, lost from my memory. What has remained over the years was that I must have been bad, but I was never told why or how.

This is just a strange little episode which I obviously look back on now with amusement. Far more memorable is my fondness for that pretty little school. Big memories of sitting cross-legged in the hall, with the sun's patterns through the tall windows. I can see it now and hear the singing – "Daisies are our silver," and "Summer sun's are glowing, over land and sea."

These are fantastic evocative childhood memories of happiness. Thanks, dear little Sedley!

Mrs Ann McLeod (nee Read) 1946 –1948, sent us photos and the following letter;



I entered the school following my very clever brother Richard, who was 6 and a half year my senior. My father had only just returned from India, after the war, and I had very little contact with other children my age. We always called the school the “Sedley Taylor Sunshine School” because of its open quadrangle.

I remember my first day very clearly. When I entered the classroom I was given a pale blue reading book, with seagulls on the cover, by a girl wearing a black gymslip and thick black stockings. We had a nap after lunch in fold-up cribs. I had a miserable time and wanted to go back to my mother. They had to lock the classroom door for 3 weeks to keep me in.

One Christmas I was dressed up as a cracker with crepe paper and we all had to jump out of a box. I think dancing around the Maypole was one of my favourite things.

Unfortunately as a child I suffered from bronchitis and I wasn’t supposed to run around the quadrangle in just my knickers during the winter. Miss Foster would not allow me to wear my cardigan so my very angry father went to see her.

The teachers all had my brothers work to show how things should be done and the stress this caused me meant that I reached the end of my last term still unable to read, write or do maths. Mrs. Chapman gave me the Orange reader when I left and told me to try to learn to read during the summer holiday as I would find it very difficult when I moved on to Romsey. I am pleased to say that I managed it and devoured every book I could lay my hands on after that.

Mrs. Betty Jackson, was a pupil at Sedley and eventually a member of staff;

My brother and I started at Sedley in the 1930s and Miss Pleasance was the Headmistress. Then we moved to Romsey. Our names were Betty and Ronald Blee.

Our son Graham started at Sedley in October 1961 when Miss Foster was Headmistress. He then moved on to Romsey in 1963. He is now a teacher in Woodley Berkshire near where he lives.

I then returned to Sedley in September 1966 to help with dinners and cloakroom assistant. I stayed 'til October 1984 when I felt it was time to retire. By then my name was Betty Jackson.

Mr L. H. Stone wrote to us, capturing the cold winter of 1946/47:

The roads were empty, nobody was walking along the pavements and even the still damp November air was silent. Because of the mist, we couldn't see the houses in the distance as Mum and I made our way from the fields at the bottom of Birdwood Road to a new school on the first morning away from our new home. This was so different from the high street where I had been born. The journey was long and fearful, though lightened by the sight of the modern houses, the bricks of which looked as though they were made of cake. We eventually arrived at the Romsey, but were soon told that unlike where I had come from, my six years did not qualify me to attend. I would have to go to the Infants' school!

Unlike the Romsey, the Sedley was light and a more normal height, not like a school at all. The woman who met and welcomed us wasn't much taller than me and had the comforting name Miss Pleasance. Her room was just a room, not with a distant high ceiling, nor with doctor's-surgery-pills-and-pale-green, but just a room. The whole school was as quiet and calm as the autumn day, with no fear in the air, just calm and contentment. The buildings had the colour of brown bread crust. Mum now retreated, and with a terrible feeling of abandonment and emptiness, I was taken by Miss Pleasance to my classroom across the grass and under an outdoor corridor on legs which seemed to be called the Gloisters.

On entering the last room on the right, where children were busy with brushes, colour and large pieces of paper, I was greeted by Miss Allen who said I could sit next to Roy Turpin who was good at painting. Whether I was given my own baking tray of powder paint or whether I shared his, I can't remember, but I do recall the powdery, gluey smell and intense colours. The session ended at playtime, when we all tidied away and put our long brushes into large Marmite jars.

One of the first jobs to be done was for Mum to make me a bag for my slippers, now to be known as plimsolls, and not dabs as at my other school. It was made out of a piece of blanket with red stitched edges, and with my name embroidered at the top it took on the importance of a ceremonial garment. I was filled with wonderment at the place. The way the school was run was so considerate for us children, with a complete absence of threat. (Though the ridicule of my speech by some schoolmates meant that within two weeks I had changed such that my parents were no longer able to understand me.)

In one assembly during the hard winter of 1946/47, we were told of the need to turn down the heating to conserve oil. Birthdays were marked by the appropriate children sitting on the platform behind a wooden block with candles, to the singing of "Happy Birthday."

I can recall only one fragment of any teaching. It concerned the unexpected spelling of the first number....O. N. E. To ensure we had all absorbed the point, G.C. was invited to the blackboard to write it large in chalk. I was aghast when he wrote W.U.N.

Christmas for me in this new setting was really wonderful. It seemed to be celebrated with more joy than I had known before. There were even new carols such as "We will rock you," and "I saw three ships." In the nativity play, as a king, I was lent a very beautiful and elaborate piece to present to the baby with the words "and I bring you myrrh."

Milktime was the first pause in the day and involved drinking a manageable quantity of milk from a bottle with a straw, which for me gave the occasion a party feeling. We didn't have to drink it from an enamel mug, and this spared me the awful smell as the mug neared my face. In my old school, the only time I had been caned was when I left some milk because I was revolted by the smell.

The cloakroom was also novel in that there were indoor toilets and not across the yard and combined with air-raid shelters. They were also kept much cleaner and fresher. While the equipment provided for us was much the same as at my last school, playtime seemed more playful. The nursery children were provided with swings of motorbike tyres suspended by rope from the cloister roof, and a sandpit. During the summer of 1947, many of us collected milk-bottle tops bearing road safety slogans. It was many years before I found out what the warning "Beware jay walkers" meant.

The summer of 1947 was memorable for the May Queen event. We had all been trained in the intricacies of the various dances, such as "snakes" or "weaving", and for the benefit of the parents in the audience seated in the cloisters, Sydney Taylor skipped around the circle bearing a title card for each dance. The girls were much prettier than at my earlier school, especially A.H. and J.W. But when I expressed my admiration, evidently with more passion than delicacy, the girl pushed me to the ground in anger.

I remember our leaving as a crocodile on the first day of the autumn term to go to the Romsey, which was to be another rich experience. Four years after that we returned from the top class with Mr. Granfield our headmaster, to stage a puppet play. The next time was with my six year old daughter Catherine to measure the mighty Maypole, which I found had shrunk greatly in twenty years. In 2000 a number of us who had been together in those early years returned for the Rose Queen celebration as it is now called, and enjoyed it greatly. The only regret I felt was on hearing that the school will be moving to a new site in a year or two. Ah, well, nothing stays the same, not even our old school mates, who are all out there somewhere within ten miles of the place!

Mrs. Alma Walker (nee Pargeter), wrote to us, saying that **Christopher** and **David** both live abroad, but **Margaret**, who was at Sedley from 1948-1950 remembers the head, Miss Foster. She mainly remembered her pudding basin hair cut with a fringe. Also dancing around the maypole, weaving in and out. Her parents came to see it. She and her sister **Kay** remember voting in the May Queen, and being upset when she came second! She sent some photos and told us that sadly **Julia** had died suddenly, just 2 years ago.

Mrs Pamela Holland (nee Wyatt) also started school in 1948;

I started Sedley in 1948 when the headmistress was Miss Foster and my first teacher was a Mrs. Thompson. I remember all going into the hall and Mrs. Thompson being given a nursery chair and a teddy bear as she was leaving to have a baby.

I lived in Coleridge Road and my back garden came into the Sedley lane so my mother never took me to school. My first classroom was the far one on the front so my Mum would watch me from the bedroom window and wave as I went into my class. I remember the huge sandpit, which was great fun, and the beautiful big rocking horse, which I never got to ride because it was in the other classroom.

I went into Mrs. Tipple's class for a short time then moved up into Miss Cro's. I remember being rather fond of her maybe because she chose me to present a bouquet on Mayday to Mrs North who came to play the piano.

Mayday was always looked forward to. We would bring flowers from our gardens to decorate the Queen's throne and Mr. Dartford the caretaker would hang all the flowering baskets around the Quadrangle. In my last class we had to vote for who we wanted as May Queen. My teacher Miss Allen told us not to tell who we had voted for. I remember telling the **boy** I sat next to (David Thackster) that I had voted for him. He told Miss Allen that I'd told him who I had voted for and I promptly got a smack on the hand without ever being able to explain the joke. I wonder where David is today?

Jennifer Curtis was chosen as our May-queen and I was the Gypsy Girl who had to walk around inside the tent that the Maypole dancers had plaited for me. I remember it rained in the morning but was dry for the afternoon much to our relief.

My years at Sedley are very clear in my memory. Our children Alison and Christopher attended Sedley too.

Mrs Jennifer Brading (nee Hawkes) wrote in response to the Cambridge Evening News article;

I have fond memories of Sedley recalling the time we had to have a rest in the afternoon. Perhaps the teacher had one too! Our rest time was spent on canvas camp beds with a rough grey blanket which had Golliwogs embroidered on it. Whatever happened to Golliwogs?

I then transferred to the "quad" part of the school. My teacher's name escapes me but she was always the 3 Fs; Firm, Fair and Fun. I remember playing Hide and Seek and rushing into the girls Loos and standing on a toilet seat – both feet either side, confident I would not be spotted. However, it all went "down the pan" as I slipped into the bowl – luckily clear water – and spent the rest of the day in soggy sandals and socks. No sympathy from teacher or Mum or dad.

I remember Miss Foster and Miss Thynne.

I had a delightful chat with this really lovely lady at my aunt's funeral. The subject of Sedley came up and I mentioned how my husband David and I had been to see the Cambridge Collection. Sedley came tops, with photos of the 1930s onwards, showing May queens, Maypole dancing, classroom scenes etc.



So many people
have mentioned
the tyres and
slide they
played with
outdoors. Also
the caretaker
who pushed
them around for
fun in a
wheelbarrow!
Can you see
Miss Foster?



The daily malt seems to have made an impression on all who received it, including **Mrs. Shirley Caldicoat (nee Dean)**

Certain things stick in my memory, such as lining up for our daily spoonful of malt, which we thought was delicious, so much so that some tried to run round and get a second helping! There was the daily occurrence of class by class being taken to Miss Pleasance who would let us each have a cup and a spoon. At the bottom of the cup was a fantastic chocolate mixture (similar to today's Chocolate I would imagine)

Miss Pleasance lived with another lady in Magrath Avenue and on Friday mornings my mother would cycle from Suez Road to do spot of cleaning. During the holidays I went with her, and I don't know if it was just me, but my mother seemed to have a longer tea break than working as they just chatted non-stop. When I married, Miss Pleasance bought me a beautiful cut glass milk jug, which was my pride and joy.

I am very close to two other pupils, Joy Bramwell (nee Stubbings), and Ann Unwin (nee Hodge), and see them regularly. Every three months we also meet up with Eileen Davenport (nee Neaves) and Helen Smith (nee Cambridge) for a reunion meal. Other pupils who I see regularly are Brenda Goodall (nee Douglas), Rosemary Cullum (nee Fordham) and Bronwyn Hipkin (nee Dewey).

Mrs Vera Morley was here from September 1951 to April 1973. She remained in the area after her retirement often coming to school events. Her son David still lives locally. She died in January 2000. Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Tipple (Broom) were great friends during their years here and their retirement. Mrs. Tipple's daughter Margaret (now Margaret Graham) remembers that her mother said of Mrs. Morley,

"She never was heard to say an unkind word about any of her children in all her years as a teacher. Teaching was a vocation for her, and she said that even if she had not been paid for it she would still have done it."

Maureen Salter (nee Cassidy) was here from 1954;

I joined Sedley in 1954 and left to continue at Romsey Junior School. I want to add my thanks to the school for the wonderful memories it gave me, and the excellent teaching. I am only sorry that the school I remember will not be there for countless future generations. It is a loss!

I certainly enjoyed my time in that lovely old building. Especially May Days. I had the dubious distinction of being the only girl in my class not to receive a single vote for the role of May Queen! I never got to walk over or even scatter rose petals. But I pretended so often, at home, and of course I still got to dance round the Maypole!! (Haven't forgotten how!!) also as a treat, I was often chosen to play "Happy Birthday" to a classmate on the Tubular bells. (Those teachers knew how to even out the rewards!!!I am forever grateful.

Mrs. Eileen Todd (nee Cassidy) was one of **Mr. Derek Cassidy's daughters**, and heard of our closure through him;

I was visiting my father (Mr. Derek Cassidy) over the Easter holidays and he told me the sad news that dear old Sedley is to close. It led my sister and I on a trip down Memory Lane.

I started school in 1958, and was in Miss Morley's class. My first day was a bit frightening, as I had never been apart from my Mummy until then. Just before the morning playtime, the teacher was brought in a cup of milk coffee. As I had always had the same at home with my mother, I asked where mine was. Mrs. Morley explained that there wasn't one for me, only for the teachers. At this I remember crying my head off, and asking to go home. To help me settle in, every day for about the first week I was taken to the Headmistress, Miss Foster, and there I sat having a lovely cup of milk coffee with her!

Miss foster was such a very kind lady, but had rules that you would never dare to break, such as coming in to school wearing shoes that would scratch the floor in the hall. The morning assembly in the hall was such a joy that I really looked forward to every day. I still remember the songs we sang. Not all of them were conventional hymns. Anyone who had a birthday was sung to by the whole school to the accompaniment of tubular bells. These bells were played by whoever's turn it was that week.

My second year at school was spent in Miss Thynne's class. I adored her. I remember that to me at the time, she seemed very tall, and that she drove a large black Austin car that a few times she let me have a ride in on the way home.

I also remember the "Deaf Unit" being built. When it was finished the whole school was taken in to see the new classroom, and to try on the hearing aids. We were also told that we must speak clearly to all our new friends, or else they wouldn't be able to understand us.

Sadly we have moved away from Cambridge in 1960, and I had to leave. I have never forgotten the school, or the fact that I wasn't chosen to be the Maypole Queen!

Letter from **Colin Fakes**; which accompanied some photos, printed earlier in this book;

I was born in 1947 and was a young boy who carried the "Welcome to our Queen" banner. Stuart King who used to live in Birdwood Road carried the other pole. Both my older sisters Marion and Susan went to Sedley School. Marion was there in the late 30s.

I can remember the thrill of being allowed to cross out the date on the calendar especially on birthdays. My birthday was on 12 October and Richard Twinn the 11 October. We had long discussions between us as to who was the eldest. (Because 12 is more than 11!) My sister Susan had to spend some time in Miss Foster's room when I was born because my mother was in Mill Road Maternity Hospital and wasn't at home at lunch time. It seems in those days having additions to the family were kept secret until the happy day came along.



**Miss Foster's own memories.
She was Headteacher from 1947 –1972.**

I arrived as the new “Head” of Sedley in September 1947 at the end of one of the hottest, driest summers on record. The grass in the cloisters looked like a hayfield – waist-high and brown.
The 2nd World War was over but rationing and coupons were still the order of the day.
No petrol for motor mowers – therefore no grass cutting.

Christmas 1947 – we wanted an outfit for Father Christmas. Mothers with large families let us have clothing coupons. Another mother (with one child) made us the outfit – still in use!

Heating oil rationed – therefore caretaker switched off heating at 3 p.m. each day and came up to school at 6 a.m. next morning to switch on again! Teachers read classroom temperatures at 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. each day and recorded same on temperature charts. These had to go into Education Office each term.

Caretaker (Mr. Dartford) single-handed was responsible for cleaning the whole school, maintaining grounds and cutting grass. Sedley floors – (wax polished) pride and joy of the Education Committee.

No ancillary help – except one teenager “Monitress” who ran errands, took children to the clinic, etc.

On recommendation of S.M.O. certain children received daily “Multivite” pellets. Later these were replaced by “sunlight” treatment.

When school dinners came to Sedley the “dinner children” had a rest afterwards, either on little folding beds originally intended for under 5s (now no longer admitted) or on sea-grass mats used at other times for P.E.

After the war the birth rate rose steeply.

St. Thomas’s Square and Fanshaw Road council houses built.

Queen Edith’s estate houses also built – Morley School overcrowded – children living this side of Cherry Hinton Road told to come to Sedley. (Parents objected!) Sedley bursting at the seams! Class in canteen. Other classes over 50 on role.

1952 – Coronation Year. Sedley’s “visitor” (representative on Ed. Committee) was Alderman Amey – Mayor that year. He helped children to plant the cedar tree in POURING RAIN! Each child received a mug (Coronation) filled with “Smarties.” These Smarties were acquired by everyone collecting Brooke Bond tea packets for which so much per 100 was paid!

The furniture when I first took over was all wood and metal – nothing stacked! (poor caretaker!) the youngest children had chairs and tables – the older ones little heavy, solid, dual desks (the children loved them). Later all this was replaced by plywood and metal stackable furniture and later by horrid plastic stuff.

The climbing apparatus (outside) tyre, climbing frame, horizontal bars fixed in cloisters were popular. We had few accidents. Indeed fewer than when children ran aimlessly about playgrounds falling down, colliding with each other etc. Gymnastics thereon at times quite fantastic!

1957 – Sedley’s Silver Jubilee Sept?

Programme

1. Children’s service in Hall attended by many parents, grandparents etc. Names of first Sedley children read out from the register. Little boy (Andrew Giddings?) son of one of those first children lit the 25 candles.
2. Every child planted a bulb – unfortunately none of them (bulbs) liked the Sedley soil and disappeared.
3. Tea party in Hall – cake with 25 candles (from Markillie family) which were lit by Miss Allen who was also celebrating 25 years at Sedley.
4. Evening meeting for parents and other friends addressed by Mrs. Rackham (Chairman Ed. Comm.). Miss Allen reminisced. Several “old” pupils did the same. We were told
 1. that Sedley School was named after Mr. Sedley Taylor, a well-known benefactor to several good causes and a starter of the first school dental service. He used to go from school to school in a horse-drawn caravan with one nurse treating the children – all voluntarily and
 2. that Sedley school is built of the same bricks as those used for Long Road bridge (lead-weighted) and cost so much money that it was decided not to have an official opening in case there was a public out-cry about the expense.

The opening of the Unit for Partially Hearing children was another landmark. The Unit was one of the first in the country and aroused great interest and did very important work with children who hitherto had to be kept in institutions.

One of the things I remember most vividly is the decision to employ part-time teachers (usually married women) to cope with the “bulge” – i.e. the Ed. Authorities literally begged married women to return. Now!! _____? Several Sedley teachers who originally came to “help out temporarily” eventually became permanent and stayed many years – e.g. Mrs. Tipple, Mrs. Morley, and, later, Mrs. Bennett, (Mrs. Cooke?)

Then there was the Emergency Training Scheme after the war. “Mature” students were encouraged to take a shorter course of training in order to meet the demands for more teachers.

I started attending Sedley school in 1958 having moved with my family, Mum, Dad and sister, from Northern Ireland.

My first memory of the school is of my teacher Miss Cro. In her class we passed a bottle of milk around one child to the next, shaking the bottle then passing it on. Eventually the milk separated, curds and whey, fascinating. I think we were all given Smarties for this exciting task.

We practised for ages in preparation for the May Queen ceremonies. I was happy to be one of the maypole dancers. When the day arrived the May Queen developed measles and I was next in line for the honour. I think I can remember getting dressed, helped by my Mum. I know I had new white sandals. I do remember the opening procession with the Banner Boys carrying the "Welcome to our Queen" banner. One of these boys, Michael Lilley, became a doctor later in life and I did work with him for a while in the early '90s. The Petal Girls, The Maids of Honour, my page Bernard, the Gentlemen in Waiting. Nerve wracking! My parents, Grandmother and Great-aunt were all there too.

The Crowning ceremony was performed by Mrs. Amey, the Mayoress at the time. I enjoyed the maypole dancing that followed then it was time for a Final procession. Someone, I cant remember who, gave me a small envelope. Inside was a brooch, a tiny violin that I know I still have somewhere.

The very best memento from that day is a photograph album, made up by my Headmistress Miss Foster. At the end of the album is a most beautiful and inspiring poem, written for me, a seven year old. I read it every now and then, and remember and smile and say Thankyou for the experience.

A truly delightful snippet
from **Mr. J. E. Pocock:**

I started my education in 1948. The only things I remember clearly from that time are two ladies living nearby in houses respectively in Radegund Road and Suez Road who used to sell fresh baked bread rolls and delicious toffee apples to the children who passed.

Above these things however there is one abiding memory which has always stayed with me and for which I should thank the Sedley School. This was my first view of a girl's bottom. This came about as a result of a teacher deciding to take action over a very naughty young lady and pulling down her knickers to smack her bottom in front of the class. I suspect you might have difficulty getting away with this, today!

How **Susan Lord (nee Ferguson)** practised dancing for ages, before she was asked to step in as May Queen!

Malcolm Campbell (1958-1961); memories of Sedley School;

Time does play tricks on the memory, and much of my time at dear old Sedley has been forever lost down the years, and some events that I had convinced myself took place there, probably happened at another school!

However, some things are still very clear, and could almost have happened yesterday and in recalling memories of Sedley I surprised myself with the detail in what has stayed with me down the years.

It was a toss up who was sobbing most on 8th September 1958, Mrs Lily Campbell (mother), or son Malcolm (1 day short of his 5th birthday). For the first time she had left her infant at Sedley and returned home to Birdwood Rd. The tears turned to astonishment 15 minutes later when a knock on the door of No 112 revealed that I had made a quick exit back home hoping my school career was now over! Five minutes later the Sedley monitor arrived on her bike to take me back to school, they kept a close on my whereabouts after that!

Sorry it has taken 44 years to say, but I would like to apologise to the little girl whose dolly I stuffed down the girls toilet, that poor girl was so upset –so was I when they sent for my mum to join in the dressing down. Mrs Foster's office was an awfully unfriendly place that day.

However, I don't apologise to the boy in my class whose milk I was ordered to drink! I had already drunk mine and put the bottle back, many had left theirs half drunk and he grassed me up falsely to the teacher and nobody believed me. I can still see his grinning face as teacher stood over me until every drop of his milk had gone down my throat- I nearly threw it up! If only problems in later life were to be of that magnitude, but at that time this was a major miscarriage of justice.

I remember getting engaged at Sedley! Linda Costable and I were going to marry each other when we grew up, it was all sorted out. I backed up my proposal by voting Linda for May Queen, sadly it was the only vote that she got. For some reason that I can't remember the girls also had to vote for a boy (perhaps to be the May Queen's suitor or something), Linda voted for me –it was also the only vote that I got. I didn't care, she was still May Queen in my eyes. But true love never runs a smooth course and on 26th July 1961 Linda went to Romsey and I went to St Andrews (now St Albans), I never saw her again.

Apart from the occasion when, out of curiosity, I snipped my tongue open with a pair of scissors in class, my memories are just about complete.

What amazed me most, when I looked around the school recently, was how minute everything seems now and how large it looked when I was so small 44 years ago. The hall where Uncle Dennis and Auntie Jean entertained us with puppets teaching road safety has shrunk with age, the sandpit has been replaced with an adventure playground and the green in the centre, that hosted so many Maypole dances, has been replaced with a Secret Garden.

I think it is a fantastic job that you are doing in collecting and preserving the history of a lovely old school, thanks to your efforts, even when the building has gone the memories will live on.

Photos from Mr. Campbell;



A letter from our first secretary,
Mrs Jean Ferguson, who has sadly died this year.

I have had strong connections with Sedley right from the time our son and daughter attended there. Alan started in 1956 to be followed by his sister Lynda in 1958. Both went into the reception class and were taught by Mrs. Tipple, now Mrs. Broom. Alan was the trainbearer for the May Queen in his year. Lynda was the May Queen for her year. I enjoyed washing and pressing the same dress and those for the Nativity Angels year after year whilst I was working there. I eventually became the first secretary that Sedley had. I assisted Miss Foster because before I arrived Miss Foster, (even though she cycled to and from school each day from Trumpington), she coped with all the clerical work by hand, which often included hand written lists of the children's details. I remained in touch with her until she died. I continued working, this time with Miss Ann Duffy (now Mrs. Turnbull) and we still correspond yearly. Then came Mrs. Malmstrom followed by Mrs. P. Holmes, and really my service at Sedley was a very happy one. During my years there my husband was E.W.O. for Sedley, starting off on a bicycle. Our son Alan went on to teach at Romsey, his wife also.

And another secretary, **Mrs. Sheila Ostler**

My memories go back to the time when Adrian and Lorraine went to Sedley and Miss Foster was the headteacher. At this time I had no idea that one day I would be the school secretary; when asked by Ann Duffy if I would help in the office for 6 weeks as Jean Ferguson was ill, I was only too happy to oblige. Those 6 weeks turned into 13 years, busy ones but happy ones. I think staff and children alike remember the cold days when you stepped out of your room and froze, especially if it was windy, and the relief when the cloisters were eventually filled in. The day I moved out of my "cupboard" and into a proper office was a memorable one – all that space – although I did miss seeing all the children in the Hall during their various activities. I shall always remember the happiness and pleasure when the children bought presents for their families, and I was so pleased to read in the Cambridge Evening News that this tradition has continued.

After reading about our closure in the Town Crier, **Steve Webb** wrote to us;

I attended Sedley Infants and then Romsey Junior School as did my two younger sisters Tracy and Julia. Regarding memories of my time at Sedley, I guess it had to be when I was crown bearer for the May or Rose Queen, walking over scattered rose petals, with a crown on a cushion. I can still remember wearing my new black plimsolls and red bow tie.

Graham Nightingale (1964-1967) and his brother **Andrew**, are sons of Elsie Nightingale. She has shared her memories earlier, as she was here in the 30s.

Graham;

Having seen a request for memories of the Sedley in the Cambridge Evening News here are some of mine;

I was at the school between October 1964 and July 1967. I can clearly remember my first day in Mrs. Lyons class, where I spent two years before going into Miss Thynne's class for my final year. Another memory is being a shepherd in a Christmas Nativity production, and I remember my dad helping me make my crook out of a cane, a piece of wire and some raffia. I believe that crook was still in use at the school until fairly recently. I still have the "Ladybird" book presented to me when I left and it has a dedication from Miss Foster stuck inside the front cover wishing me well for the future. I then moved onto the Romsey School. All the teachers were dedicated and well respected, and I certainly still have fond memories of my time at the school.

Andrew;

Further to your article in the Cambridge Evening News on Friday 24th May 2002, I am writing to express my fond memories of Sedley School during my time there between 1970 and 1973.

In particular, I vividly remember the May Queen celebrations of 1973, my final year at the school before moving on to Romsey. Other memories include the triangular shaped cloisters, with the immaculate green lawn inside, the sand pit, Mr. Mehew (the caretaker), morning milk breaks, the Christmas Nativity play and playing football on the grass behind the school in the summer months.

I have been fortunate to keep abreast of the developments at the school for many years, as a result of my mother's employment as General Assistant until 1997. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well in your new premises.

Mrs. Julia Flutter (nee Sell) says we gave her a wonderful start (1964-1967) in life;

It was a warm, sunny day in September 1964 and my very first day at Sedley Infant School. I remember it clearly – the bright classroom with big windows and wide open doors leading out to the playground and the children busily occupied with exciting new things. There were coloured bricks being made into castles, heaps of sand trickling through little fingers, a water trough where endless cups of imaginary tea were being poured, a Wendy house with pink gingham curtains making a stage for young “mummies and daddies” to play out their domestic dramas. I felt frightened, lonely, perhaps more than just a little overwhelmed but also determined to be a “big girl” because, after all, I had turned four years old a week before so now I was a proper school girl not a “little one” who cries when their mummy leaves them.

Mrs. Tipple was my first teacher – a lovely gentle lady with a cloud of white curls and a kindly smile. She spoke in a quiet voice – I never once heard her shout or speak severely to a child – but she kept this busy hive of inquisitive children happy and productive every moment of the day. I learned to read in her class, speeding through the Roger Red Hat reading scheme and trying to beat friends who were on the next colour book a head of me. But being at Infant school was not only about learning the three Rs; we learned how to make and keep friends, how to sing and dance, to take a pride in ourselves and our achievements and so much more. When I think back to those distant, summery days it makes me realise what very special places Infant schools are and how much they influence and colour one’s life.

Miss Foster, the head teacher then, knew this well. She worked hard to make children aware of their abilities and potential, trying to build up their often fragile self-esteem. When the Mayday Queen was chosen, for example, many little girls were left feeling very disappointed – myself included! - And Miss Foster would make a point of having a “private word” with each little girl afterwards, complementing the on some beautiful feature, thereby healing the wounded pride. She was a wonderful lady and we kept in touch for many years after I left the school.

When I think back on my years at Sedley, how little has changed. The sandpit; the Wendy house. The reading scheme. The friendships made and broken. Patient kindly teachers who give young, vulnerable children a sense of achievement – these are the really important things, the things children value.

Thankyou Sedley, you gave me a wonderful start. Best wishes for the future in your new guise!

Mr. Warren Dosanjh sent us news of past pupils and a few memories;

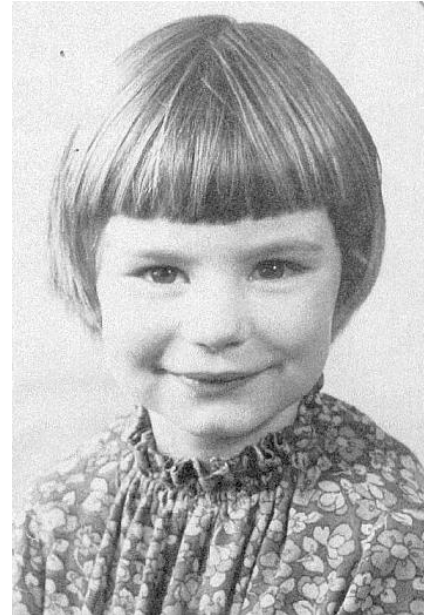
Naturally my memories of Sedley are very vague it was so long ago. Looking at the admission list prompted recognition of names. There are however four names on the list that I can be more up to date about; every week I see Michael Buttress walking to work at Leica, Derek Wright cycling to his job at the Guildhall, four or five times a year I bump into Paul Overton, while only last month I was talking to Anthony “Tiger” Middleton.

Other memories of the school are only snatches from times past – the Xmas nativity play, Mayday around the maypole with our parents attending, dancing the same day, the sandpit, and car tyres suspended under the quadrangle for us to swing in – last of all no unpleasant memories!

Also, emotional memories of my late mother, holding my hand and walking me to and from the school through the passage leading from Coleridge Road. Sad.

Memories of the May Queen in 1969, **Louise Foulger**;

I started school very late indeed as my birthday is in September which made me nearly the oldest in my year. My first teacher was a lovely old lady called Miss Tipple. Mrs. Thynne was another teacher I can remember; she was a tall elegant person and very kind. Miss Foster the Headmistress I recall was firm but fair. I had the honour of being voted May Queen in 1969 by my fellow pupils, I was very nervous and Miss Foster came round to my house in St. Philips Road to check whether I would actually do it. The day of May Queen came, my uncle brought along his new Cine-Camera to film. Mum and Gran also attended. It was a hot day, Mum had done a good job preparing the dress and the event went off without a hitch. One thing I didn't like at school was the lukewarm milk at break time, but I did like the rosehip syrup. On the whole I have very happy memories of Sedley.



E-mail from **Mrs. Ferguson's son, Alan**, who also went on to be a Romsey teacher!

I must have had a very happy time at Sedley because I remember it only with a soft-focus, rosy glow. Could it be that the sun was always shining? Did we spend so much time playing on the field?

It must have been a very caring environment because I remember vividly the fear I felt about the transfer to Romsey School. A big imposing building, all that tarmac and no grass, and all those huge children.

I suppose the memory that many of us carry is of the Maypole dancing and the May Queen. I had the honour of being the May Queen's trainbearer. For days before that we'd collect rose petals to be scattered in a path across the grass towards the Queen's throne. And of course the sun was shining.

Miss Foster, the headteacher, was both loved and feared at the same time. We all had a dread of being sent to her but knew deep down, that she had a great love of children.

I recall being in serious trouble only once. The dustcart used to come round once a week to empty the bins and it was usually around playtime. One morning, three of us waited until the dustcart was ready to leave and then we ran and sat on the bar at the rear of the vehicle. It drove off with us sitting on the back and we'd reached the end of the lane when the driver must have realised that something was wrong. Perhaps he saw something in his wing mirror or, maybe, someone shouted to him.

We were hauled back to school and given a severe telling off.

It's just as well we were apprehended when we were or we could have ended up anywhere. It's like the Great Escape!

The sun was shining on that day too!

Susan Symonds (nee Alderton), 1968-1970, wrote to us, remembering the Peter and Jane books!

I went to Sedley School part-time before I was 5 years old. Miss Foster sent me a postcard informing me that they hoped to find me a place before the summer holidays. The teachers I had were Mrs.Lait and Mrs. Cooke and the headmistress was Miss Foster. I lived in Coleridge Road between Romsey and Sedley schools; I only had to walk up the lane to Sedley.

When I left, I was presented with a ladybird book called "telling the time," from Miss Foster.

*Inside the book it says; " Life lies before you,
 What will you make of it?
 Dear little seven year old
 You must decide."*

You could always go to Miss Foster when you weren't happy or didn't feel well.

I can remember dancing around the maypole with the ribbons (Mum took photos of the May-queen, who was Shirley Maskell, and of me sitting near her and next to my friend Teresa Cullum.). All the girls had to wear little white bonnets and I can vaguely remember doing P.E. in the hall.

I can remember reading Peter and Jane books (I still have all 6 sets) and I can remember if I didn't know a word, I'd skip it and carry on with the story. The teacher would ask me what the word was, but I could never answer.

My brother John didn't like school, so he would run home down the lane and mum would take him straight back, crying his eyes out. John started there in 1970. His first teacher was Mrs. Lait. He used to get very upset in class and Mrs. Lait had to calm him down. Sadly he used to kick her.

I made friends with a girl called Sally-Anne Collins who had problems with her hearing and she had to wear hearing aids. I used to help her with her reading.

Whenever I go round my Mum and Dad's I shall miss hearing the children in the playgrounds.

Mr John Michael Coates left a memory on Friends Reunited, saying;

1970 – Mayday

I remember the Cloister classrooms, the indoor sandtray on legs. The outside sandpit, but most of all I remember May Day in our ?colour shorts and white shirts and also holding canes with wire loops attached. But who was May Queen?

Was it? Alan Ferguson's sister?

(Editor's reply; Although Alan's sister had been May Queen many years before it was Shirley Maskell, in 1970, sorry!)

Mrs Gwen Lait, teacher from 1966-1972;

I was a part-time teacher at Sedley Infants school from 1966 to 1972 and I have many happy memories of the time I spent at Sedley. The school was already known to me when I came to teach there as my younger sister and elder son had both attended the school as pupils in earlier years. Later my daughter was a pupil at Sedley.

Miss Foster was the headteacher throughout the time I taught at Sedley. She was a Christian lady who was always dedicated to her work and had high standards. It was a very happy school and I have some special memories of my time there. One memory is that Miss Foster always took the morning assembly herself with Miss Thynne playing the piano. This took the form of a short service. However it did not become just a habit, for each day she presented some new theme, story or idea. The children loved it and if it was a child or teacher's birthday, then we all joined in singing a birthday song – that was special.

The second thing I remember especially was the freedom the children were allowed. In classroom lessons we could use the cloisters as well as the classroom for activities – perhaps for a piece of craftwork that was noisy or messy, or needed more space. Then for outdoor activities and playtime there was the field.

Getting to know parents at Sedley was easy as mothers, fathers, and grandparents used to come into the classroom to collect their children at the end of the day. Miss Foster liked the teachers to make sure the younger or less able children were ready for their parents when they came to fetch their children from school. I still know a number of people that I first met when they came to collect their children all those years ago.

Perhaps, above all other educational things that are in my memory, the work in the partially hearing Unit based in Sedley School stands out. Miss Storrow, a teacher trained in work with deaf or partially hearing children, had a specially equipped room for the Hearing Unit. The Unit served children from further afield than the school catchment area. For part of the day the children from the Unit worked in their ordinary age group classes. The relationship between the children from the Unit and the class was amazing. At story time the teacher did not need to find a place near the front for the children from the Unit, the class had already done this. Miss Storrow was always available if a hearing aid failed.

Yes, they were happy years at Sedley.

Shirley Maskell, who was May Queen 1970;

On my very first day at Sedley, I had to sit in Miss Foster's office on the high chair, because I wouldn't stop kissing 'Little David' and I wouldn't leave him alone.

Before the cloisters were built we used to swing from the metal bars, our heads just missing the concrete floor by a fraction of an inch. My friend Bridget Foulger and I used to challenge each other to see who could go round the most times. We always landed up with very raw patches behind our knees, which bled in the afternoons and stuck to the wooden chairs. I loved Sedley, Mrs Tipple and Miss Thynne. What happy days!

Mrs. Jeanne Marriot, was a parent, then part-time teacher at a time when the Government was encouraging married women to return to teaching, and then full time. She tells of her experiences;

In May 1965 my husband and 3 sons and I moved left Nottingham to live and work in Cambridge. I met Miss Foster the morning I took Andrew – 8 years old – to Sedley to start school. The Authority at that time was urging headteachers to employ part-time teachers. Miss Foster said she was not in favour of this, but she offered me a part-time job. I think it was because I was a Methodist! So began my time at Sedley – nearly 13 years. There was a spare classroom so I gave extra reading lessons to small groups. David, my youngest son was just turned 4 and he started there as well even though the entrance age was definitely 5 years at that time! I think it was easier then to “bend the rules” and Miss Foster was a “law unto herself”. Bless her! She was a wonderful headmistress and I learned a great deal from her.

I have asked Andrew, [now a primary Head himself!] what he remembered about Sedley;

“The Unit for deaf children,” he said immediately. “The way they integrated with the other children in class but went back to their own haven in the Unit for comfort and specialist teaching (with Miss Storrow) was ideal.”

I also asked David (who was a little scamp) what he remembered. “Sitting on the naughty chair, in Miss Foster’s office, dreading the fact that Mum might come in and see me there!” N.B. He had no fear of Miss Foster. He also remembers climbing up a post to ring the Fire Bell!

May Day with the May Queen was very important – the weather and the dancing had to be perfect, and behaviour impeccable!

The annual Nativity Play was also a great event. Every year exactly the same play, the same costumes – always performed by the oldest children; - in Miss Thynne’s class, so that you travelled up the school hoping one day to be chosen to be Mary or Joseph, or even a shepherd or a king – but alas, most were only followers or observers. It reminded me of the Oberammergau Village play. It finished with the last verse of “In the Bleak Midwinter,” and whenever I sing it at Christmastime I find myself back in the hall at Sedley.

It was “all change” when Anne Duffy arrived (to be Head) after Miss Foster’s retirement. By now I was teaching full time in the reception class having taken over when Miss Tipple retired. We soon realised that methods were changing and we need to move on. Anne was the right one to do it and I thoroughly enjoyed the next few years working with her – keeping some of the Sedley traditions (e.g. May Day) but progressing with new ideas and lots of new equipment.

I left in 1979 when we moved to live near Bristol but have always felt proud to have worked at the Sedley School.

Another e-mail, this time from **Phil Johnson**, now a Consultant Occupational Physician in Hampshire;

Many memories! I joined the school in 1964 and spent 2 years in Miss Thynne's class. Miss Foster was the headmistress, and I remember long chats with her and reading to her. In our final year, the Nativity play included Richard Lait as Joseph, Susan Preston as Mary, and me as the innkeeper. The May-Queen that year was Jane Eusden, Janet Starling as the Maid and me again as Page.

Hated bottles of milk!

Most of all I remember the cloisters that we could walk round when it was raining.

Also, helping in the Remedial class where the children had hearing problems and some of us used to help with reading.

Mr Tony Weaver, who left in 1967, is father of **Andrew** (Year 2), and has some very interesting memories. He has written them down for us;

I remember at the age of about 5 or 6 climbing the big fir tree in the school yard one playtime and not being able to get back down. A teacher had to help me down. I got told off for that. I never climbed that tree again.

I remember playing a wise man in the Christmas play. It brings back memories when I see my children in the play at Christmas.

I think Mrs Tipple was my teacher. She was a nice lady. Her breath always smelled of coffee. My headmistress was Miss Foster. I can see her now. She used to wear a tweed skirt and jacket and brown shoes. She was quite a strict lady. When it was someone's birthday they used to come round with a pretend cake with candles on. Everyone used to sing "Happy Birthday" and everyone in the class was given a few Smarties out of a toffee tin.

I remember playing with a friend's James Bond car and pressing the EJECT button, and ejecting James Bond out of the car. We never did find him, so perhaps he is still somewhere in the class.

I remember skipping round the maypole.

The uniform I used to wear was grey shorts, grey socks, and a cap. I used to have a leather satchel with my name on a little square on the front.

The caretaker was I think a Mr Mehew. He used to dress up as Santa Claus at Christmas. He thought we didn't know it was him, but we did.

In them days we used to do wood work just outside the classroom. That is probably why I enjoy it now.

We used to have free milk in class. I was a milk monitor.

I remember riding the rocking horse.

I can honestly say that I have fond memories of my time at Sedley School. I am so happy that all five of my children have attended the same school as I did.

A big Thankyou to the school and all the teachers that have taught there. Thank you for all you have done for me and my children who have attended. May the new school be as successful as Sedley has been.

Kay Blayney (1969-1971) nee Coburn sent us her memories, via e-mail, as have quite a few people;

- *Dressing up clothes and the rocking horse in the corner of the classroom. New friendships, playing, sharing, and belonging – my first day at Sedley.*
- *New routines and a happy three years ahead. The Head mistress was Miss Foster, a small lady with short grey hair and a nice smile.*
- *Classrooms around the edge with grass in the centre. The hall on one side and ropes and tyres hanging at the other end. The building in the corner is where we would go and fetch the little bottles of milk – "Uh, Yuck!" it must have been at five years old that I discovered I didn't really like milk!*
- *Learning to read "Peter and Jane." I can see myself now standing by Mrs. Morley struggling to pronounce each word, but being encouraged at all times. Funny isn't it I don't remember how it all came together, but the seeds were set here at Sedley and my love for books and stories began to grow and grow.*
- *Seasons would come and go too. With each season came a celebration. Summer saw rose petals, fresh flowers, special visitors, frilly hats, bows and dancing around the Maypole.*
- *This time of year was also a time when we would play with water on the green grass area outside our classrooms.*
- *Autumn term would be a fresh start. New teacher and new friendships. During this term was the memory of all memories – The Christmas Nativity. Choosing and deciding who was going to be who. The shepherds, Kings, Angels, Mary and Joseph. Rehearsals would take place in the hall with the wooden polished floor. In my final year at Sedley I was the Angel Gabriel's assistant and had to say a few lines. We wore crisp white gowns with wings attached. (Is this where I developed my passion for drama?) Looking back I can see these events really shaped who I am today. The wonderful stories that we were told – "Imagination is everything" quote Miss Foster.*
- *Summer term and Miss Foster was leaving. She was retiring. I was off to Junior*

Another person who started that year was the teacher **Mrs. Betty Cooke (1969-1985);**

When I first started at Sedley, part-time in 1969 in Miss Foster's time I can recall being told off by the caretaker for sticking children's work up on the walls of the classroom – apparently not the done thing!

Then those school dinners when all the staff had to sit down with the children and have a school dinner with them – same size as theirs! But all the tables had a small vase of flowers – done by Miss Foster! The children were encouraged to help themselves from the jug of water and to politely pass it to others.

In those early days we had to have paint palettes and brushes washed outside on the veranda in a tub of water, prefilled before school started.

What a joy when sinks were put in the classrooms when Miss Duffy became Head.



In Memory Lane, living in the 70s, 80s, 90s

Mrs. Ann Turnbull (formerly Duffy) was headteacher here from 1972- 1977.

She writes;

I was both surprised and delighted to be appointed as Headteacher of Sedley Infant School. It proved to be a very happy and exciting period of my life and to this day I carry warm memories of all the people I met there.

To join the Sedley team of teaching, administrative and support staff was a great privilege for my first headship. Perhaps because of its situation, completely surrounded by the homes of the families who took a great interest in the school and its staff in their work of preparing children for their future lives, it was a happy supportive environment in which to undertake this task. It was a great pleasure to find that parents were always quick to give us their support and any event which we arranged was always well attended.

It was at Sedley that I first encountered the practice of job-sharing between teachers and I felt that this brought great benefits to us all. Having a class for deaf and partially hearing pupils as part of the school also enriched the school and gave both adults and children a wider perspective of life than one would normally experience and, I hope, made us all more aware of the needs of people with hearing impairment.

Another event which brought enrichment to the school was the arrival of the refugees from Uganda after their expulsion from their own country. These families gave us new challenges of language and culture and in meeting these challenges we all grew in understanding. I always felt that Sedley benefited particularly from the application to work shown by the children, and the high expectations of their parents.

In addition we were, for a brief period, privileged to have a Japanese family with us and learnt a great deal about Japanese culture and life from mother and son who showed a great capacity for informing us, with great fun.

Many other people made their own unique contributions to the life of the school. They very much enhanced the life of the school and remain in my memory and, in some cases, in continuing contact. I feel very privileged to have met so many supportive people during my time at Sedley, not least those from Romsey Junior School with whom I share a great deal. After my departure for Peterborough I was delighted to be invited to return to crown a May-queen.

I wish every success to the new school, which will be formed from the two existing ones in September 2002, and trust that it will enjoy the same support, which I was so fortunate to have experienced.

Vanessa Middleton (1972-1975) and her sister both wrote a little about their time here and what stands out in their memories;

Sedley still brings back many memories for me – from the warm school milk to the day I was making a dolly and I managed to sew it on to my dress. I also have very fond memories of the Maypole dancing and being lucky enough to be the May Queen in 1975.

Joanne Middleton (1973-1976) added;

I remember ringing the bell at the end of playtime and dinnertime. Everyone wanted to do it, so when the dinner lady chose me it made me feel special. I would walk all around the playground ringing the heavy bell. Until all the children were back in their classrooms.



Mrs Marriot lent us this picture of the nativity, taken in 1974. Christopher Squires played Joseph and Anna Marino played Mary. Also in the picture are Jim Morris and John Blows. Maybe you know some of the others?

Mrs. Atkin was a cook at Romsey, and her children **Ian, Elizabeth and Steven** came to Sedley in the 70s. She wrote to us telling us when she first started cooking at Romsey, the basic ingredients were delivered for them to cook, and a lot of ladies were in the kitchen preparing food. The dinners were sent out by van to four schools including Sedley.

Mary Thorpe and her brother **Tim** both wrote to us with their memories of the 70s;

Mary (1973-1976) writes;

I loved to dance and the May Queen procession is clearly etched in my mind. Oh, how I wanted to be May Queen! However I was pleased to dance around the Maypole and I really enjoyed taking part in the Tudor Fayre procession one hot, July Saturday, after which we danced around the Maypole to crowds of onlookers on Parker's Piece. Somehow or other the ribbons never seemed to tangle! Mrs. Cooke must have done a thoroughly professional job in coaching us! I can still see the pink dress and headscarf that bobbed about as we interweaved those ribbons. Always keen to show my turn of speed, I confess now that I delighted in careering around the cloisters full pelt, even though this was thoroughly disapproved of! Sorry! It was good to be able to channel my athleticism in more approved ways on Sports day on the nearby grass. Trying to balance an egg on a spoon demanded all my concentration. It was good to just let rip in the sprints! Less agreeable was the daily bottle of milk that was consumed at breaktime. It was either too cold or too warm. Ugh!

And **Tim** (1977-1980) writes;

*My memories from my time at Sedley are fond ones, although difficult to recall after 25 years have passed since I attended! The one event that stands out in my mind was, of course, the May celebrations and in particular, the May Queen. I remember Mary Phenna being our queen; I was flag bearer, together with Jonathon Balser. A lovely day, and lots of fun for the children. I enjoyed the maypole dancing. We would go as fast as we could to see if the girls would get dizzy! Besides the daily bottle, which was often more warm than cold, I remember Sports days outside. I always enjoyed the various fun events such as the egg and spoon and sack races and this may have influenced my tendency towards outdoor activities and my love of sport!
A fine school, with fine teachers and fine pupils!*

Mary Phenna, referred to above, sent us an e-mail;

Here are some of the things I remember about my time at Sedley Infant School;

- playing kiss chase
- eating lovely school dinners
- ringing the breaktime bell
- playing with Dawn Lucas, Sarah Mansfield, Tim Thorpe, Jonathon Balser and Jason
- being voted May Queen and doing maypole dancing
- making Valentine's cards
- reading to the Headmistress
- learning Maths
- walking to and from school
- being sad when it was time to leave Sedley and go to the Junior School

Another Sedley headteacher, Mrs. Pat Holmes, (1977-1984) writes her own memories;

My years at Sedley were very happy ones and I particularly valued the links and support that I received from the parents, governors and community. The relationship we had with the "Sedley Day Nursery" was a valuable addition to the life of Sedley School. Often the children from the Day Nursery would be invited to join in school activities such as special assemblies and other special events during the year.



The highlight of the year was always the crowning of the May Queen, who was elected by the pupils in Year 2, and the results often proved quite surprising. The dancing on the grass afterwards was a wonderful spectacle that was enjoyed by everyone and allowed the whole school to take part. The children enthusiastically took part in the maypole dancing. I so enjoyed watching their faces as they invariably became entangled in the ribbons, especially the younger ones. Our Silver Jubilee celebrations brought many former pupils and staff back to the school, and the exhibition of photographs evoked many happy memories. The establishment of the language unit added another valuable dimension, allowing pupils with language difficulties to access language therapy and providing the only "under fives" unit of its kind, at the time, in the County. I hope you find these jottings useful. I must say that I have found it difficult to recall specific events after such a long time...

Mr Alexander Nix (1978-82) remembers:

I attended Sedley School from the age of three between (1978 to 1982) and can recall a few things about that time quite well. In particular I remember things like the May Day celebrations with the May Queen and dancing around the Maypole, as May day is also my birthday and it would be a shame if this tradition is lost after the move to the new school. I also remember the wax birthday cake that was used on pupil's birthdays as well as my disappointment in finding out it was not real. Mrs. Holmes was the Head whilst I was at Sedley and I can remember being sent to sit outside her office for misbehaving on one occasion, although I don't recollect why I was so scared what she might do. I also remember that children who had been told of for kicking had to sit outside with no shoes. Mrs. Cooke was also a good teacher and I learned a lot in her class. Finally it has been good to see both my younger sister and brother grow up and pass through the school and watch them do the same things as me, like sports day and Mayday celebrations.

Mrs. **Ann Coburn** wrote that she joined the staff as a dinner lady, working with Mrs. S. Reed and Miss M. Conquest. The dinners were cooked at Romsey School and were brought over to Sedley. She spent eight happy years here until she left in 1982.

One of our Learning Support Assistants, **Mrs. Nitsa Sanami**, sent memories of the 80s;

Both my children attended Sedley. Helen during the years 1981-1985 and Alex during the years 1984-1988. They were both very happy at Sedley and I believe the dedicated teachers and staff at the school nurtured in each of them a desire for learning and to always put their best efforts to achieve as much as possible.

In 1986, I was asked to take on a temporary position at the school as a Learning Support Assistant to a pupil with special needs. The lady who normally worked with the child was off sick. Unfortunately this wonderful lady, Greta Smith, was unable to return to work and died soon after. Under such tragic circumstances I was taken on to support this child for the remainder of the academic year.

I loved working with the children at the Sedley and cannot praise the staff enough in their treatment of both my family and myself. I would particularly like to praise both Elsie and Beth, General Assistants at the school to whom I turned on many occasions for advice and assistance.

The following September, the child I supported was to go to Romsey Junior school, and Mr. Loades, the Headteacher, offered me employment as a Support Assistant there.

I was very sad to leave Sedley and on my last day I remember being presented with a bouquet of flowers and a very large card with the names and faces of every child in the school.

Jean McGowan, (speech therapist), sent us photos, including this one of a school trip,



and wrote to Mrs. Driver;

I've kept up to date with Sedley activities due to Chris Westgarth, but am sorry to hear of the closure of such a great little school. It has happy memories for me, as it was there that I made so many friends after moving south from Glasgow. I have only happy memories of the children and families with whom I was involved between 1983 -86. I was honoured to work in such a pioneering set-up as the "Language Unit" and the opportunities it offered the children of Cambridgeshire and the great support to the Unit from the other members of staff and of course yourself...



This photo was taken at our Golden Jubilee celebration in 1982. It features Miss Riche (sitting at the back), Daphne Bunton (sitting at the front), Mrs. Elsie Nightingale standing on the left, and Mrs. Betty Jackson on the right.

John Nguyen (1989-1993) and **Laura Davison** (1992-1993) sent us a combined letter;

We remember when we were at Sedley, there were some good times and some bad times, but mostly good times. The first thing that comes to mind, is the Adventure Playground. this monstrous structure, which seems so much smaller now, was home to many games of "Manhunt," "Kiss Chase," and the infamous "Capture the Flag," where you get into teams and try to get to the top of the Adventure Playground, and the first one to the tops wins(ta da,). The most memorable part was being chosen to place the flag right on top. We will always remember the fun we had while we were there.

Mrs. Rosemary Ashley started her teaching career at Sedley in the '80s and even remembers her interview!

I remember arriving for my interview and waiting in the staff-room to realise with horror that I still had on my tatty walking shoes. I quickly (and I thought subtly!) changed them into smarted interview ones. Of course once I got to know the staff better (after getting the job) I never heard the end of it – they had noticed after all! Sedley was a very happy place to be. The children were warm and friendly, even to strangers, and needed teachers to do more than teach. They were a joy to be with, and very rewarding to work with. I remember as a probationary teacher watching other staff in action – particularly Miss St. George teaching multiplication with conkers. As well as teaching, I learned a lot – Sedley being a multicultural environment, I found out all about lucky money, Divali and other unrelated things such as an acquaintance with Roger Red-hat and Billy Blue-hat! Did the staff ever twig that I made up several country-dances for the May-queen festival? I didn't know any! When staff left, we were sung to and what funny songs! All our mad antics over the years were brought up! Do you remember when we went to James Nguyen's dad's Singapore restaurant? We chose a selection of dishes to pick and mix. Yum – Satay sauce! I wonder who still works at Sedley who was there in my time?

Mark Souter, 1985-87, (whose mother is a governor, and worked at Sedley as a Learning Support Assistant), wrote to us about the building of the Adventure Playground;

I have some very happy memories of Sedley. There was great excitement because the Adventure playground was being built and we were allowed to go on it. I was one of the first to go on it. There wasn't a playtime that went by when I didn't go on that fantastic structure! It was also very interesting to hear about Mrs. Driver's life, when she told her stories in assembly. I remember that her favourite sandwich was cheese and pickle! My years at Sedley were topped when I was a banner boy at the Maypole dancing. It was an extremely good day. I spent happy times at Sedley School and it is sad to see it go.

Mr. and Mrs. Cullum, who live in Sawston, contacted us to say that all four of their children; **Teresa, Christopher, Mark and Emma** attended Sedley. They all have very happy memories and made very good progress while at Sedley. Emma was the Rose Queen in 1981, and they have told us that this was the first year that the title of "ROSE Queen" was used. The weather in May had often been poor and the event usually had to take place in June so it was decided to change the name. Emma was therefore, the very first Rose Queen!

We were thrilled to hear from **Mrs. Sue Moffat** (1987-1998), yet another of our secretaries!

Sedley was a very happy school and the children had lovely times in the Secret Garden looking for fish and frogs in the pond and playing on the Adventure Playground.

At Easter the children made lovely Easter bonnets and the Easter bunny, who, by magic appeared in the school grounds excited all the children. Some children thought it was Mrs. Driver but she was in the office with me, so I wonder! There were also numerous school trips during the year, very exciting days for the children coming into school with their packed lunches.



The Rose Queen was also a lovely event which took place every year. The maypole dancing was always wonderful after weeks of practice by the children and patience of the staff. The children bought flowers from their gardens on the morning of the Rose Queen Celebration and we made posies for the Rose Queen and her attendants.

Christmas at Sedley was very special. I remember the excitement for the children (and me), when Mrs. Driver asked me to order the Christmas tree at the beginning of December and the decorations went up. The Christmas Shopping Day was a special Sedley event where the children bought in a £1 or so and bought small gifts for their family and tried to keep it a secret until Christmas Day. There was also the Christmas Concert and Christmas Dinner where the children all made us hats and thanked us for looking after them. Mrs. Driver always gave them a satsuma and a small chocolate after dinner.

The only negative thought I have is balancing the dinner money on a Friday - the dreaded weekly task. Thank heavens for Mrs. Driver who always managed to sort me out!

The children always had such lovely things to look forward to at Sedley and the staff worked very hard to make it exciting for them especially, of course, Mrs. Driver. She constantly organised fun things for the children, like themed summer picnics (if it was hot she got the hosepipe out and sprayed them – they had wonderful times chasing her with the hosepipe!), summer trips to the local park and paddling pool, magicians on the last day of term, Easter Bunny, visits from Father Christmas, the list is endless and I could go on and on.

I feel certain that the children who have passed through Sedley School will remember their infant school days, their teachers and Mrs. Driver very fondly – I know I feel lucky to have worked there and been part of it.

Liam Lewis Taylor (1992-1996) enjoyed being at Sedley and sent this message;

I remember when I met the Easter Bunny..(a.k.a.Mrs. Driver), who helped us get a gigantic Easter egg down from the school roof. (I don't know who ate it though.) There were also little sales where you could buy gifts for the family at Christmas, like rubbers, brushes, pens and bath cubes, all wrapped up in frilly materials.

The only other thing I remember was my nametag had a lion on it. (i.e. Liam – Lion.)

P.S. Is the wooden tower coming to Coleridge?

Do you remember the school trips? **Mrs. Rosie Lesik**, one of our teachers, remembers a very exciting one!

I taught at the Sedley School from January 1989 until 1997, mostly in the reception class (in the mobile classroom) and Year One. Initially I was employed as a Supply Teacher for one term, then I was asked to complete the year. I became a permanent member of staff in September 1989.

I have many fond memories of my time spent at the school. In particular I remember the outings we took the children on; ranging from Cherry Hinton Hall, the local park, where some of the children had never been before, going on the train to Stansted Toy Museum, Snettisham Park and Standalone Farm by coach; to putting frogs, nurtured from tadpoles, back into the local stream or walking to the local Garden Centre.

One particular trip stands out in my memory more than any other. It had been arranged that the whole school would go to March, on a coach, on two separate days and visit the March Museum. We would also have a chance to look around the famous St. Wendreda's church, with its magnificently carved wooden ceiling, then end the visit with a fish and chip lunch in the local café. The first day of the trip arrived and it was a nasty foggy morning. Some parents were not so keen for their children to be in a coach for such a long journey into the fens so those children were kept at school while the rest went ahead with the trip. It was a successful day and the rest of the school was due to go a few days later.

On the day I went it was a fine morning and we were able to include those children who had missed out on the first visit because of the fog. When we arrived in March half the group began to look around the museum, with the other half going to the church. When we had been looking around the museum for a little while, the museums curator told me there was a bomb scare in the Bank opposite. When it was safe to do so we left the museum as if nothing was wrong...once outside the museum, we could see the Police, Army bomb disposal tanks and a great many personnel. The children obviously wanted to know what they were all doing and we had to be a little economical with the truth so as not to alarm them!

I can remember Mrs. Driver phoning the school to let them know that we were all right as she was concerned that parents might learn about the problem from the radio or television before we got back.

Having had the trip disrupted I think that many of the children were worried in case they didn't get their fish and chip lunch.



In fact by the time we walked up to the Town Hall the problem had been resolved and we were able to resume our original plans. We all walked back to the café, met up with the rest of the group and sat down to eat our eagerly awaited lunch. It turned out that someone had left a briefcase in the Bank saying it was a bomb! When we returned to school and talked about the trip next day, most of the conversations were about the Army vehicles, the Police and the lunch rather than the museum or the church!

My earliest memories are as a parent with two eager children delighting in all the new experiences of first school. There was always something going on and a good band of parent helpers at the ready helping with Summer fetes, Christmas fairs, Harvest Festivals, Fun days and building Adventure Playgrounds! They were always eager and willing, happy and smiling!

Fun was a big thing at Sedley, my memories as an employee are filled with it, Christmas shopping, excited faces buying presents for families, to wrap and hide away, parties and Fun days, hidden eggs, walks to the funfair, trips to Wimpole, pond dipping at Upware, paddling pools in the summer, to name but a few. But my fondest memory is of the children's faces when they saw the pink Easter Bunny hopping around the Secret Garden, popping up at windows and around classroom doors, they never knew it was Triss in that pink bunny suit!

In one form or another the fun ethos at Sedley is what I will remember most and feel the most important in a child's school life.. Sedley certainly got that right!

Mrs. Mandy Merwiak (1987-2000) was both a parent and assistant;



Venesha Whyne was at our school just 6 years ago, and is one of the few Coleridge children to write to us;

I really enjoyed Sedley School, I met all of my friends there. Here are the things I will remember;

1. *My teachers, all the games we played and even the books we used to read.*
2. *When we used to do cooking. We always made Chocolate Cookies.*
3. *Watching videos in the T.V. Room. My favourite one was Pippin.*
4. *Playing on the Adventure Playground and jumping off the bridge. We pretended we lived in it.*
5. *In the Secret Garden we made Daisy Chains and put them round our wrists or ankles. We used to play with the frogs in the pond.*
6. *The Rose Queen. I absolutely loved dancing round the Maypole making all sorts of patterns. I wasn't actually the Rose Queen. One of my friends Kara Chapman was.*
7. *We used to build sandcastles in the sand. We had lunch at the little tables.*
8. *Most of my year group would have races on the grass. The fastest runner was a boy called Benjamin. Me and my friends playing "What's the time, Mr. Wolf?"*
9. *When we were in the Nursery we had milk and fruit.*

I'm really sorry you are closing down, but because you're moving behind Coleridge I'm happy to say I will be with you again.

An ex-Sedley teacher, **Mrs. Gayle Webb**, wrote to tell us how she remembered the International Theme, at a time when the curriculum was less prescriptive;

One of my happiest memories was the whole-school topics. It was always interesting to see how different classes and age groups approached the same concept. My favourite one was "Around the World," during which my class studied Japan. We learned Japanese dances, phrases, origami, and customs from a local woman and had a go at drinking green tea and eating noodles with chopsticks. At the end of the topic the whole school gathered together in the hall. Everyone then had to "travel" to all the different countries. Each passport was stamped upon entry with a symbol of that country (a pagoda in our class) and everyone got to see what the other classes had learnt. A great experience!

The other great time was the "Old Time Music Hall" which Lee (Robertson) and Heather (Lowe) organised to celebrate the 60th Anniversary.

Imagine our delight when we heard from **Mrs. Linda Neville**, Cleaner-in-charge for many years who went on to run her own craft business. Her warm letter includes news of her family and these memories;

My memories of Sedley are all happy. I loved working with you. I was always included.

I remember sitting with Triss (Driver) over a cup of coffee, very early in the morning before everyone arrived and we would put the world to rights. I remember the pipes in the mobile classroom freezing over one Christmas and having to do a major mopping up job and as a result forgot to order oil for the boiler, so we had no heat either and the school had to be closed for the day. Triss very graciously said the dial on the boiler was faulty, just to make me feel better.

I remember running into Pat Roberson's classroom every Friday afternoon and we would dance around because it was the end of the week!

I remember Ann Bennett phoning in to say she was stuck in traffic, and was escorted through by an AA man. I remember the lovely end of term parties. I loved the Christmas decorations, the tree in the hall, and best of all my cleaning trolley! I remember talking dogs and teddies to Susan Hamilton. I remember the fish being stolen from the pond and me stepping on a rake and Chris Westgarth had to take me to the doctors.

I remember getting very cross one day when some naughty boys in Sheila (Glasswell)'s class threw wet paper towels onto the ceiling of the boy's toilets where they stuck! It got a mention at the assembly that morning.

We will definitely come to the last Rose Queen, as long as I don't have to put the chairs out!

Mrs. Pat Roberson wrote to us. She taught the children maypole dancing for many years; these are her memories;

I started teaching at Sedley School in September 1983, with Year 2 children. I was appointed by Mrs. Pat Holmes. Apart from the everyday teaching I inherited the job of helping to prepare the children for their Maypole dances. We had some very old musical scores, which we eventually put onto tapes. The dances were called Wind, The Spiders Web, and the Plait, the latter being very intricate. The children really enjoyed performing them on Rose Queen day, when all the parents watched. Some parents used to have a dance at the end of the ceremony much to everyone's amusement.

I enjoyed helping in the creation of the Secret Garden which has now developed into such a lovely area.

A great time was had by us all when the children designed the Adventure Playground. Mrs Driver involved the Architectural students who made models of some of the designs. Mrs. Driver and I went down to Trumpington Road and we talked through all the designs to select the chosen one. It was a great success and enjoyed by all the children. It has just been in the Cambridge Evening News that someone stole all the bark underneath! (Editor's note, we have had several generous donations following this theft.)

I stayed for 12 years at Sedley with a supportive staff, and on my retirement Mrs. Driver put on a great evening party at school, a lovely send off! I was given a lovely glass bowl engraved with Maypole dancers, golf clubs and lovely wineglasses. I'm sad to hear of Sedley's closure. Hopefully the children will be re-settled and happy in their new school. I wish them all the best.

Miss Amanda Chapman wrote to us, telling us how embarrassed she was to find herself singing a solo in the Christmas concert;

In December 1998 my Nursery class was chosen for a special Christmas picture in the Cambridge Evening News. We had a rehearsal before the photographer arrived. All the children sang "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," very angelically. When the famous moment arrived, all the children froze with stage fright and I ended up singing a solo!

I remember Fifi getting stuck up the climbing frame and Miss Ambrose had to climb all the way up and fetch her down!

Do you remember when Lee got his finger stuck in the hall door
and the Fire Service had to come to rescue him?

Today's memories

Memories from today's staff

Mrs Beth Haigh, longstanding member of staff, reminds us of the wonderful visit we made to the airfield at Little Gransden. She and her husband Michael had a group each, and in his enthusiasm for aircraft, Michael was seen helping the pilot to push a plane from a hanger, with a trail of children behind him.



It all started one bright sunny April morning when almost all of the Sedley children saw a "Smiley face" drawn in the sky. Most were convinced that Mrs. Driver had drawn it! The children from Year 2 wrote to the evening newspaper asking for information.

We found out that Mr. Mark Jefferies, a local pilot had drawn the face. Mr. Jefferies was asked to come to the school to talk to the children but he said, "Would you all like to come to my airfield to see the planes?"

We set off by coaches to Little Gransden airfield one bright day in July.

The children saw a lot of small planes and were able to climb in some of them. Mr. Mark Jefferies gave the children a great flying display which really thrilled us all!

After that we all moved on to Wimpole Hall for a picnic lunch, to pat the cows and let off steam.

The children who went on this trip still talk about it as one of the best, and it was certainly enjoyed by the grown-ups!

Mrs Heather Smith, EMAG teacher, writes about changes here, in 21 years;

I first came to Sedley in 1981, having just moved to Cambridge from London. I used to come every Thursday afternoon to work with a few children who were learning English. At that time Mrs. Holmes was the headteacher and Mrs. Stark (Ms. St. George) the deputy. I loved the friendly atmosphere at Sedley, there were always lots of interesting things going on and topics in the classrooms. It was especially nice for me as I lived in Ross Street at the time; sometimes I used to take the children shopping in Mill Road so I quickly made friends in the area. In those days the corridor wasn't covered over, so children undressed for P.E. in the classrooms and rushed through the rain and snow to the hall, through the open cloisters. The classrooms were often draughty and damp and cold. After some time of teaching in another school I found myself back at Sedley ten years ago. What a lot of changes there were!

Mrs. Driver was now the Head and Mrs. Hamilton the Deputy. The cloisters had become a light warm corridor with plants and places to sit in. plans for the Secret Garden were underway and it was soon a reality. The diary of social events, outings and celebrations was busy. We were also having to learn about the National Curriculum, SATs and Inspections.

By now there were children at Sedley with family members in many different countries, and some of the mothers started to come to school for English classes. Mrs Driver and I went to visit schools



**Memories of Mrs. Susan Hamilton,
teacher (1973 – 1989) and Deputy Headteacher (from 1989 – 2002)**

I started teaching at Sedley in April 1973. Can it be so long ago? I think of it then being cold and grey as every time the classroom door opened an icy blast of air entered from the cloisters often blowing papers off desks. Being responsible for Art in those days I remember spending hours putting up displays outside the staffroom and office only to find it had blown away in the night. Miss Duffy was the Headteacher, and she liked frequent changes. She often rearranged her own office, so that you would never know where she would be sitting if you went in to see her. If you were unfortunately away for more than a couple of days you would never be able to find anything, as she would have moved your classroom around!



Mr. Mehew was the caretaker and I was always in trouble if my children dropped anything on the floor. He especially hated sand in the classrooms. He was very fond of the children and loved to sit with them and chat at playtimes.

My first years at Sedley were also lonely ones. The staffroom was rarely used and coffee was brought to us in the classroom, usually by Mrs Jackson, the general assistant. You could go several days without actually speaking to another adult. Gradually Parent Helpers were introduced and I first met Mrs Haigh whose daughter was in my class. She came to hear children read and later joined the staff as General Assistant.

We were responsible for our own curriculum at that time before the National Curriculum arrived and we would teach the children through topics relevant to their interests and seasonal change. The reading scheme was set in the Village with Three Corners and I was very fond of the Blue Hats. We were responsible for our own class concerts at Christmas and Mrs Haigh and I spent many a happy time sewing costumes out of crepe paper.

The first time I organised a whole school concert we all performed The Nutcracker Ballet. I can still see all those pink crepe tutus. Our last Christmas concert was reminiscent of those early days seeing Mrs Haigh surrounded by snowflake and tree costumes.

Mrs. Holmes followed Miss Duffy. She was always beautifully dressed and quietly spoken. By now the staffroom was used more. The hall was used as a resource area and a library and more display areas were set up. The deaf unit became a language unit.

It was about this time that I introduced the Easter Bonnets at the spring concert. All the girls made a bonnet of flowers made out of tissue paper and the boys made top hats. . Mayday was still a very important event.

When I first arrived at Sedley it was only the top class that danced. It was quite a struggle to keep all the little ones amused, as it seemed to be only the older children having all the fun. I made a suggestion that perhaps we should all do a dance for the queen. Little did I know that that was the original tradition that we have followed ever since. I remember an occasion in Mrs. Driver's time when the red drape for the Queen's throne went missing. We spent days looking for it then we suddenly noticed it on Mrs. Roberson's wall as part of a display. Another year we went to get the same drape only to find a neat square cut out of it. Probably for an experiment or part of someone's class collage work. We use a different drape now, which is carefully stored with the dress and crown.

Class outings were becoming popular and I remember organising a class trip to Ely by train. Mrs. Haigh and Mrs. Nightingale came with me and we took bats and balls to play with in the park. I remember one little boy throwing away his bow tie with his lunch wrappings and we had to scour the bins to find it. I used to take the children swimming or paddling every week in the summer whatever the weather in the Coleridge Recreation pool and we would dry all their towels and costumes on the Maygrass. There is less time for these pursuits these days with the Literacy and Numeracy Hours, every minute of the day has to be time-tabled and stuck to with evidence and targets set.

The most dramatic changes came with the arrival of Mrs. Driver. After much campaigning she managed to get the draughty cloisters filled in at last! We had carpets in the classrooms and rooms were altered to make better use of space. We had a television room, a cooking room, and a reference library to mention just a few. Mrs. Driver also changed the May grass into a fantastic Secret Garden and organised the building of an adventure playground. Classrooms and the staffroom were extended. Sedley was buzzing with changes. The National Curriculum arrived and the S.A.T.s. I remember the first tests, when Mrs. Roberson and I were reduced to cutting off bits of vegetables to make them weigh the correct amount, only to find they had shrunk anyway by the end of the week and it took days for each child to complete all those floating and sinking experiments. We also put on pounds ourselves as Mrs. Driver gave us a chocolate bar each morning break time to keep us going, not to mention a dummy for Mrs. Roberson and a teddy for me! There was a great team spirit in the school and lots of laughter.

Sedley has been a major part of my life. I have watched it grow into a very special place where despite Government incentives children still have fun and enjoy learning. I hope all the children and staff who have been part of its history take happy memories with them as they move forward to new and exciting challenges.

Mrs Margaret Owen - Chair of Governors

Where does one begin I ask myself when I try to recall my memories of Sedley school? Having had five children attend the school, spanning so many years and having been a Governor, I have so many things to recall.

My first association with Sedley was as a parent, and in later years, as a Governor.

With my own children's time at the school and my time on the Governing body I have been actively involved for over 37 years. I have very happy memories of my children's school days, memories of making friends with other parents and joining in many events and memories of my time as a Governor.



I suppose when thinking of Sedley, May Day celebrations must be one of the most important events -May Day held on the grass area which is now the Secret Garden. The girls wore white dresses and bonnets (in later years these were replaced with combs decorated with flowers). I remember Miss Foster (then Head) keeping a brown comb for one of my girls as she felt it 'suited Rachel's red hair!'. I have memories of one May-day when the crown was too big and when placed on the Queens head it fell down on to her neck -little events such as these one remembers. The walkways around the grass, open to the wind and rain, not enclosed as they are now.

A Nativity play when for some unknown reason, two babies appeared in the crib.

Events, like the Easter, Christmas etc assemblies -these always come to mind.

Friendships made with parents too as we chatted whilst waiting for school to close at the end of the day.

As a Governor I have always taken a particular interest in the children in 'Class 5' - the Speech & Language centre, and I visit these children on many occasions. I was delighted be invited to share a special birthday with them recently. I also spend time with the other classes and it gives me great joy when I am recognised by the children out of school who always want to stop for a chat and share their news with me.

Memories such as these will be cherished by me, as by so many others, forever.

When I was approached to stand as Chair of Governors for the remaining year of Sedley School, I accepted without hesitation as I felt privileged to be able to express in some way my own personal appreciation of what the school has meant to my family.

Times have changed but not the education and welfare of the children in the care of the schools. We have been fortunate in having excellent leadership in our successive Head-teachers. The staff of the school work hard, not only in the education of the children, but caring for them, always giving their welfare top priority.

It will be a very sad day when Sedley ceases to be, but we must look forward whilst treasuring the many happy memories of the school that has served the community in such a wonderful way for so long.



Memories from **Mrs Ann Bennett**, a teacher at Sedley from April 1968 to July 1995. After her retirement she continued to be actively involved in the life of the school - both as a voluntary helper and a supply teacher.

The first time I visited Sedley, Miss Foster showed me round the classes and introduced her staff by the prefix, Mrs/Miss before their surnames (this practice continued until Triss Driver arrived). We then went to the staff room, which was in pristine condition with comfortable chairs, but had little signs of use. All this was explained when I started working at Sedley and found that playtime was at the discretion of the class teacher who chose her own suitable time. The children were called in again by the teacher clapping her hands & calling out "In Time." Consequently the staff monitored their own class and never used the staff room at all. Coffee was brought round to the teachers individually, in their rooms.

Dinner was taken in the canteen with the class teacher sitting with her own class. No-one was served until Grace had been said and the meal (which had been cooked on the premises) was then brought round by the Dinner Ladies. All the children either went home or had school dinner. This gave the staff and pupils time to talk together and to encourage social skills. No one was allowed to bring a packed lunch in those days. The 'May Grass' was never walked on or over. It was solely used for the Maypole dancing. This event was often held in early June (as May Balls!) As the cloisters were not filled in then all the parents were able to shelter from the sun, wind or rain under the canopy.

The Christmas Nativity play was also an annual event as it still is. All the girls in the oldest year group were dressed as angels in long white dresses with large white wings pinned onto their backs. They progressed into the hall and onto the stage very demurely with hands folded in front of them (with the exception of Mary of course). The boys took all the other parts, dressed appropriately. One of the many memorable events early on in Mrs Driver's time was the building of the Adventure Playground. The children all drew their own ideas of what they would like to play on, and the results were passed on to the department of Architecture in the University for a students project for the Spring term. The plans were discussed and displayed for the children. Eventually a 'ship' play-area became the theme with ladders and walkways, a prow and playhouse as well as a lookout tower on the top. On the day of the opening, all the children were gathered round it, whilst all the staff & students clambered up to the top of the lookout where a flag (the Sedley school smiley face) was hoisted. This was followed by a 'topping -out' ceremony with champagne donated by the students - in the staff room afterwards.

One of the off- shoots of this enterprise was that every Tuesday when the students came to build the ship they made mouth-watering soup in the staff room. On the final day the staff were invited to share the soup with them- this invitation was keenly accepted and about 40 people managed to cram into the one small room for a most memorable meal!

When I first started teaching regularly at Sedley I always felt as I went down the lane to the main entrance as if I was going down the rabbit hole to find Miss Foster (like the white rabbit) with a worried expression and watch in hand saying "Oh dear, Oh dear, it's getting late"- just like the white rabbit in Alice in Wonderland. Sedley School still has a different atmosphere to any other school; pupils and parents have often endorsed this during these 70 years. Its location is unusual, its grounds are wonderland for children, its pupils are delightful and welcoming and its staff is caring, considerate and dedicated. Sedley has given such pleasure as well as a good education to many generations of lucky people.

Memories of **Mrs. Sheila Glasswell**; (1988 – 2002, and onwards)

I returned to teaching in 1988, having taken a career break to bring up our children.

I was greatly supported by both Mrs. Driver and Ms. Lizzie St. George, who was Deputy head at the time. In my first year here, Miss Claire Randall was the Art Co-ordinator, and I found her very inspiring, especially her talent with displays.

** In my first term at Sedley I was presented with my first non-English-speaking pupil. He was also one of those children who screamed, and I mean S C R E A M E D when his mother left him every morning.*



** Our first lady caretaker was Mrs. Sherie Palmer, who turned her office into a parlour with a television, armchair and other homely touches possible in such a small room.*

** After a series of caretakers we had Mrs. Linda Neville. She was such a darling, such fun. We used to share tapestry and craft ideas. She made wonderful soft toys and eventually left Sedley to concentrate on her own business. Linda's son, Ian, was training to be a chef and went to the Cambridge Regional College. The staff enjoyed being fed at the college restaurant, for his final presentation that year, and two years later when my daughter, Catherine, also trained there!*

** A year or two later Mrs. Gayle Webb joined us and taught the other Year One, alongside me. By the end of the year, all the children in her class spoke with an American accent and called the earth, "dirt"!*

** I remember one year, our budget was so low that we had to take the wheels off any models the children made, before they could take them home, as we couldn't afford any more!*

** Do you remember Mrs Lee Robertson's really long interesting assemblies? One went on for an hour and twenty minutes!*

** I used to teach recorders to Year Twos. It was a joy to see children thrive on music, when they were maybe not so good at other subjects in class.*

** I once was bold enough to wear my Grass skirt (over a swimming costume) for the end of year picnic. (We were doing an international theme and my New Guinea clothes were, I thought, most appropriate!). I felt daring enough to start with, but I must admit I was distinctly uncomfortable chatting to the parents dressed like that! Who says standards of dress are declining!*

** At our Tea at the Ritz, Mrs Ann Bennett and I dressed up as Hinge and Bracket, to entertain the Grandparents with parlour music on the violin and piano.*

** Several Christian members of staff began to get together every week to pray for the school, its staff and pupils. We still do. In its time we have had students and other Christian visitors join us. We are members of the Cambridgeshire Christian School Staff.*

** Until I played "It" with Simon Beere and his friends, I used to enjoy playing with the children at playtimes. Then I broke my wrist badly. It was time to act my age not my shoe size!*

** I wonder how many present and ex-members of staff remember when we all went Ten Pin Bowling one evening in Newmarket? We were told we were too noisy and nearly got thrown out!*

Although I have reminisced mostly about the staff, the loveliest of times have been spent in the classroom. These days it has been such a joy to have another adult in the classroom most of the time, to share the children's experiences. I have so much appreciated the help and friendship of Mrs. Brenda Preston and Mrs. Ann Bennett who have given of their time so freely, together with the excellent support staff working alongside us. What good times we've had!

Ms. Charlotte Rivington, who is the present Speech and Language teacher, writes of the special relationship between the Unit and the main school;

Sedley Speech and Language Centre has enjoyed a special relationship with Sedley School since 1960. It has given many Nursery (and latterly reception) aged children from all over south Cambridgeshire the benefit of intensive speech and language therapy in an environment which boosted self-esteem and developed confidence.

Class 5, as it had always been known, joined in as many mainstream activities, productions and parties whenever possible, given that the children were only there in the mornings.

Speech and Language therapists who have left hardly believe that they ever worked in such a tiny windowless therapy room stacked high with all kinds of resources, but work they, and the children, certainly did!

The Centre was highly praised by the school's Ofsted inspection in 1997 which is a tribute to the staff working there at the time; Kathy Hamilton, Shona Wick and Claire Stonehouse.

Paget-Gorman, signing has been used, a logical and excellent system for supporting speech development.

Visiting parents were always pleasantly surprised at the school's atmosphere and appearance. The children all loved the smiley charts. Finding their way to Mrs. Driver's office, (let alone finding her in it!) and being given a sticker AND a biscuit was a real achievement and a treat.



Memories of **Mrs. Jane Anstee**, Learning Support Assistant from 1998 to the present;

From the moment I walked into the school, I hoped that I would be successful at interview. I met the school secretary, Mrs. Sue Moffat, and must have looked like a drowned rat, as my arrival was preceded by a heavy shower of rain! I was introduced to the staff at coffee time and they all made me feel incredibly welcome; one even wished me luck for the interview!

On my tour of the school I was impressed by the children's behaviour and ease with which they received visitors. The staff were kind and helpful. The gardens were lovely; it is an ideal environment for children to grow up in and explore.

I joined the school as a Learning Support Assistant, but over the years I have taken on additional roles, Clerk to the Governing Body, Mid-day Supervisor, and Secretary.

I have to say my efforts as School Secretary were not without incident – Mrs. Driver was incredibly patient with me and I made some vital mistakes, not least; -

- a) Mislaying the phone bill. We must have been the first school in the county ever to be “cut off” for a week.
- b) A special order of wood covering for the sandpit made to specific measurements was ordered twice by mistake.
- c) A gas bill payment that was delayed in the Authority. It prompted a Justice of the Peace to require the Headteacher for arrest for non- payment!

Mrs. Driver never made me feel I was incapable of doing my job and we have had several laughs since. I still undertake some of the duties in the School Office now.

During my first year at Sedley, I felt like a child at Christmas so many times, what with the Easter Tea, Christmas Fun Day, Shopping Day and all the celebrations that followed, Sports day, and of course the Paddling Pool fun with the hose on the Last Day of The Year. Staff and children alike were systematically called to “help” Mrs. Driver in the Secret Garden and were soaked. The children thought it was great!

There are so many things that make Sedley the special place that it is. It has been a unique experience in both adult's and children's lives, that I am certain no-one who walks through those doors will ever forget.

Mrs. Emily Murfitt, our present nursery nurse contributed;

I will always remember Sedley as being a very special place. I have loved working with all the Nursery children and have enjoyed seeing them grow up and change through the years! Other favourite times have been all the things children tell you when you are on Playground duty, cooking with the children, days in the sandpit and looking for frogs in the Secret Garden.

Shona's poems

What pupils won't know, is that whenever a member of staff leaves Sedley, Mrs. Shona Wick (and formerly, Miss Westgarth, when she worked with us) writes and performs a poem or song for them! The poems are witty, funny and very loving but often incorporate references to embarrassing moments in their Sedley careers! If this can be achieved by engaging another member of staff, and dressing up so much the better!
Thanks Shona!



Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we close!

Happy memories of my years
at Sedley Infant School.
Whatever can I write about
without breaking some rules?

There are, and were, some "fab" children
and many dedicated staff.
Far too many to mention
but their stories would make you laugh.

What is it that keeps us going?
Is it the discipline and rules?
Is it the strict curriculum
or the Head just playing the fool?

Nothing quite so formal,
I think you'll eventually find.
It's just that we're all "foodies"
and we're not fussy what kind!

Cakes and biscuits for birthdays,
gooey and creamy and rich.
Any excuse for the bubbly
and the coffee we all ditch.

Cheese, pate and salads,
lots of lovely French bread.
Masses of butter and pickle,
the workers just have to be fed!

Biscuits from France and Poland,
toffee from Scotland and Devon.
Treats from far off Bangladesh,
oh - it's just like heaven!

So if applying for a job,
we hope you like your grub.
But please don't worry if you can't cook,
we can always go down the pub!

Shona Wick

Mrs. Elbrow and Mrs Finchem, 2 parent helpers, have told us about their best memories of Sedley;

Our fondest memories of Sedley will be the wonderful school trips, which we were able to go on and help. A few of our favourites were, the trip to Ely Cathedral, Willers Mill Wildlife Park, but our favourite trip was Ramsey Rural Museum. All of the children and adults alike thoroughly enjoyed the day. We have been very fortunate as parents that every child in the school, including the nursery has had the opportunity to go on all of the school trips.

Mrs Driver and all the members of staff have always made a great effort to ensure all the children have fun events in school. For example: - The Christmas shopping day, where all the staff make sure that there are lots of lovely presents for the children to buy for their families with little cost. The Christmas Concert is always fantastic. The children do really well and enjoy themselves. They also have Fun mornings and other events, such as the Valentine Disco, Old-fashioned Hobbies day, Easter Concert and Tea and look forward to the dancing round the Maypole and the crowning of the Rose Queen. The staff have always been very friendly and have a great sense of fun. We have had some great laughs especially when Mrs Driver dresses up. We will miss the friendly atmosphere at Sedley. We have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to join in and help with the events. We will miss Sedley.



Christmas fun days and parties in the hall and the canteen.





More Christmas activities;

Nativity plays, stacking presents on fun day, singing around the Christmas tree in Nativity dress, singing to our elderly friends at Ditchburn Place, and the Tableaux at Great St. Mary's church.

Today's Children remember

Some extracts from the memories of **present Sedley children:**

The nursery said;

- I like making up stories – I was the prince starfish last time.
- I love playing with toys.
- I like looking at the interest table and picking up the lantern.
- I like painting.
- I like playing with Storm.
- I like playing with the trains.
- I like playing with the water when it's white.
- I love cooking.
- I like playing with my friends.
- I like it when Mrs. Driver comes to play with me – when she was a rabbit!
- I like to play with the puppets and in the sand.
- I like playing with the cars.
- I like being a crab as Nursery, he snaps in the water!
- I like playing on the computer.
- I like playing in the lighthouse.
- I like playing in the shops.
- I like fruit time.
- I like cutting.
- I like being a dog!

The reception class shared with us;

I like the Adventure Playground. It's my favourite thing. I like the balls and the sandpit. I will miss Mrs. Haigh. She looked after us at Ramsey Museum and Mr. Haigh was there too. (Daniel)

I like playing in the playground – bat and ball with my friends. I like the computer and painting and counting. Miss Turner helps me "colour in." (Jordan)

I like to play in the water and the sand. I like my friends. Miss Howard and Mrs. Anstee and Miss Turner help me to work. (Mia)

I come to school so I don't miss my friends. We have discos and we dance because it's fun. The grown ups dance as well. (Hannah)

I will miss the teachers. I will miss Mrs. Driver 'cos she is fun and she works in the office. I am going to miss her teddies. (Chloe)

I'll miss Mrs. Driver. (Tara)

I like the toys and the dolls. My best thing is making crowns and flags. (Shakrin)

I will miss the Adventure Playground. (Sherie)

I like getting certificates. I will miss the television room and the little classroom full of books. I write on the blackboard. (Sam)

I have lots of friends. I see them. I will miss the birthday cake. (Ashikoor)

I will miss the chocolate biscuits. (Dorota)

I like playing in the shop. I'll miss the Adventure Playground. I play with Stacey. (Jasmin)

I'll miss shows. The one that turned into a cat. I'll miss all the people. (Stacey)

I'll remember being a helper and sitting on a special chair. (James)

I like drawing best. I like assembly when Mrs. Driver reads us stories. (Marguerite)

I like doing jigsaws in the corridor. (Leena)

I will miss Mrs. Driver giving me a biscuit. (Ashley)

I like playing with Tara. I will miss the prams outside. (Chloe H)

I will miss Barney. Only the helpers hold him at story time, and Peggy the Penguin. (Lloyd)

I like working with my words. I'll miss the big sandpit and Mrs. Driver's biscuits. (Cain)

I like playing with Cain in the playground. I like the big Adventure Playground. (Imtiaj)

I will remember the Secret Garden and the frogs. (Aylwin)

I'll miss the office and getting biscuits. (Nilema)

I will miss Mrs. Driver's magic basket. (Katerina)

I will remember the chocolate biscuit story, and cooking in the little classroom. (Elise)

I will remember Mrs. Hamilton's singing apron. (Alex)

I like all the pictures on the wall. (Tasha)

I enjoy writing on Mrs. Hamilton's little board. (Joshua)

I'll miss having packed lunch in the canteen. (Steven)

I like the sticker charts. (Micah)

I'll miss Mrs. Hamilton. (Amina)



Dressing up days. Some of us go more overboard than others!

Year One children told us;

The Secret Garden is my special place because it has lots of bushes to hide under and a little table. (Asa)

I like having school dinners in the canteen. I like playing in the playground best when we play “It.” (Alec)

I like the big climbing frame and I play in the Secret Garden. (Ben L)

It’s a very fun school. I like painting, going to the sandpit, which I don’t do very often. I don’t like lunch group. I like all the school outings. (Ben A)

The school is special. I like the metal roof bars on the ceiling (in Class 3) and the sandpit and running around and using the metal climbing frame. I like the computer too. (Brett)

I like Mrs. Driver because she calls me “Precious.” (Chloe A)

The school is nice because it has toys and my friends play with me on the grass. (Chloe S)

I like school because it has a load of friends. The Adventure Playground and the cooking are special to me. (Finlay)

I like all the teachers because they are nice, they all talk to me. We have lots of toys to play with. (Jeannette)

I like P.E. because it is fun. Sometimes we get to play P.E. outside on the grass. I like the classroom and my teacher, Miss Windle. I like going on trips. (Joshua)

I like to hear stories in the hall. Fridays is for all the children and its secret. Mrs. Driver tells us stories about her and her friends when she was little. (Kyle)

We have lots of fun and we like having all these celebrations. I like the Rose Queen the Best. I like the Secret Garden, the arch is the best bit. (Leila)

I like the hall and the apparatus. I like singing old songs. I like “How much is that doggie in the window?” (Lele)

I like the Secret Garden and the disco and the Christmas shopping. It is really fun here. I like playing with my friends. I will miss Mrs. Driver because she won’t be here. (Masuma)

The metal climbing frame is special because you can swing on it and I do bear hugs with my friend. (Marie)

It’s been here a very long time and I don’t have to wear a school uniform. I like getting Smilies and special stickers. I like staying here before going to bed. It makes the day go quicker. (Nicholas)

The Adventure Playground and going in the sandpit and on the computer are special. My favourite outing was going to the old-fashioned museum. We saw a fireman with no head, and had fish and chips and played Duck Duck Goose afterwards. (Peter)

If you were in school on 10th June 2002, you should be able to find yourself here.



We look at books and eat dinner. I like dressing up as a fairy, but my leg got scratched and it was cold in the hall. I like being in the hall listening to Mrs. Driver's stories and I didn't talk. I like all my different clothes for school. (Nurshat)

Playing in the sand when it's nice and warm. I like cookery and the little cakes with Sam on top. I like the fun days we have and going to the hall and building all those presents up and bashing them over. (Sanim)

I like playing in the playground on the climbing frames and little houses. I like "Jammy Dodgers" when you get a treat and eat them outside. You don't get them for Smilies. (Rebecca)

I like the outside, playing with balls. I like the library trips. We do lots of trips. (Shakil)

My favourite place is the Home Corner and choosing when we have worked hard. We have a special cake with candles on for my birthday and everybody sings Happy Birthday in the class and in the hall and you get a sticker. (Shannon)

Sedley is a special place because of the metal climbing frame. I like playing. I like the sunny days. (Sharmin)

Every single thing about Sedley is special and I am going to miss it. I like everything – it as all my favourite. (Katie)

I like the Christmas tea at Sedley. I like Mrs. Driver reading stories and I like Miss Windle, she helps me with my work. (Naomi)

I like Sedley because I get to play with my friends. When it's a nice day we play in the sand. (P.J.)

The Year Two children wrote their own memories;

I remember when Mrs. Driver squirted us with the hosepipe because we were in the paddling pool and me and my friends went over to a sunny spot and sunbathed! I remember Mrs. Merwiak's last day. I had chicken pox. (Luca)

I remember in the Nursery, me and William played in the sand and the water. I like Floppy Lion and the Owl and the Squirrel. I will not forget "Where's Wally." (Andrew)

I remember when Martin first came and he couldn't speak English. I remember when Mrs. Driver dressed up as a Gingerbread Man. I will remember Floppy Lion because I love to hold him. (Sara)

I remember Mrs. Driver sprayed water at us. And I remember when we went into the Secret Garden and had a picnic. I remember when William tripped me and I went flying and spinning. I remember when Santa came. (Hadid)

I remember last year we had a Rose Queen day. It was a sunny day. We danced and we had some drink and a biscuit. I enjoyed our Christmas Nativity Play. I was a cat. I remember our trip to Ramsey Rural Museum. The good things were the trailer ride and fish and chips. (Sami)

I will always remember the trips of Sedley. I went on a coach to Ramsey. We took a train to Ely Cathedral. At Ramsey we went on a tractor ride and I played with my friend Layla and I was really excited. I remember dressing up with my friend Sara. I remember when I was six. (Jennie)

I remember when we had a photo on the climbing frame. I remember at Christmas I saw Santa. I like Floppy Lion because he has a fluffy tail and I get to handle him, and I remember when it was my first day at school and my friend was Layla. (Lucy)

I remember my first day at Sedley School. My first friend was Sara Park. I remember Mrs. Driver dressed up as a Gingerbread Man and the Easter Bunny. I will always remember Floppy Lion and Mrs. Glasswell. (Layla- Leigh)

I remember when I was in the Nursery. I played in the sand, I played in the home corner, I played in the water, I played in the dolls home. (Lisa-Marie)

I remember Sami and Shabbir. We play Hide and Seek in the Secret Garden. We see the frogs. We hide in the bushes. I liked playing with Lego because I made a digger. (Martin)

I can remember having a play. We all laughed at two men acting. I can remember Mrs. Driver squirting a hose at us, Mrs. Glasswell playing the piano, and I will always remember the Adventure Playground. (Kieran)

We went to Ramsey Museum. We saw the cobblers making shoes. I remember Floppy Lion, we used to hold him when Mrs. Glasswell read us a story. (Connor)

I remember in Class 3, I tripped up Hadid and he went spinning round and round and round. I remember fake Father Christmas. I remember the "Where's Wally" books in class 2. They were good. (William)



I remember when Father Christmas came to the hall and gave us lots of presents. I remember when Mrs. Driver was a chicken and gave us lots of Easter Eggs. I remember when Miss Oppen read us lots of stories. (Rashida)

I like Floppy Lion. I like Miss Oppen. Miss Windle is nice. I like Mrs. Sayer because she does cooking. (Kimberley)

I like Mrs. Glasswell because she is nice. I like cooking with Mrs. Sayer because she is good. (Naomi)

I remember when I got a splinter in my foot and we used to play Sharks with the parachute. I remember when Shaun drank some water from a puddle. (Zachary)

I remember when Mrs. Driver dressed up as a tortoise. I remember that Mrs. Driver used to get Amy and my names mixed up. Remember the Smileys and the teachers would draw a smiley face on it. (Ada)

I remember when I was in the nursery and they had a great big playhouse. I used to go upstairs and use the till and be shopkeeper. I remember when Mrs. Driver would squirt the teachers and once Duncan sprayed Mrs. Driver. I remember when the teachers would organise plays and act them out for the children's amusement. Sedley School was the place where I found my second best friend. (Daniel)

I remember when there was a pond with frogs in it. I remember when Mrs. Glasswell lost her keys for her moped. (Dominic)

I remember when I played with Mrs Driver in the sand. (Annalisa)

I remember when I fell in the pond! Whenever it was the end of the day Mrs. Driver would read a story to us. I remember the time when I have been upside down on the climbing frame. Mrs. Hamilton sometimes had a meeting or something like that and Mrs. Glasswell would read a story to us. I remember when Ricky's dad helped us do the Disco. (Robert)

I remember the time when I met Nahim and he taught me how to swing off the climbing frame. (Jackie)

I remember the day I meet my first best friend Rubina. If it hadn't been for Sedley I wouldn't have had a friend. (Shamima)

I remember the time when we did the Maypole Dancing...and when I was in the Nursery my cousin Rachel was there and we played together. (Megan)

I remember when I played on the wooden climbing frame and there was a smiley flag. (Nahim)

I remember Sedley School was the best. I remember we did cooking and it was tasty. (Mohima)

I remember when we got toys out of the shed. (Shobnom)

I remember when we had the Adventure Playground. I really liked it I had lots of fun on it. (Joe)

I liked to do all the fun stuff in P.E. and make models with Lego. (Shaun)



School outings;

We can have a lot of fun when we walk to Coleridge Rec. or Cherry Hinton Hall. Some of these pictures were taken at Upware Field Study Centre, where each Year 2 has been for very many years. Look how we love to see the animals at the animals at Willars Mill. The first picture is of the staff at the folly at Wimpole.

I remember the time when it was Thursdays and we had Sports Club after school. (Lisa)

In summer we did dancing around the Maypole. Some children at Romsey came round to eat biscuits. (Annie)

I remember when I badly hurt my leg and my friend Kain gave me all the help he could to get me to one of the teachers. I remember the time when I was very happy and I tried to do a cartwheel. Sedley School is one of my best schools I've seen. (Ben)

I remember the time when Mrs. Driver told us funny stories. One was about when she stole Smarties from her Mum's shop. I remember when Mrs. Hamilton dropped the honey. (Nayim)

I remember Sports Day when I did the Long Jump and I jumped 1 metre 24cms. I remember when we went into the hall and Mrs Driver told fake stories about when she was small. (Aneurin)

I remember the Lunch Time Group. I remember when Mrs. Driver was the Easter Bunny. (Louise)

I remember the time when I was in Nursery. Me and Shaun was the cleverest there. (Tristan)

I remember when we played rugby with my hat and I was good. Another memory was the frogs in the pond in the Secret Garden. (Ryan)

I like Mrs. Driver. She was very very nice to us because she gave us a biscuit. She was a very nice lady. She was very nice because she had a jeep. I remember when Mrs. Driver found out that people were putting oranges down the toilet. (Lee)

I remember the time we played in the sand. (Nadia)

My memories of Sedley school is when we were voting for the May Queen and Fifi was chosen. Mrs. Hamilton was the best teacher and she was our teacher. (Rebecca)

The packed lunches sat outside when it was sunny. (Rosie)

I remember the time when we had a barbecue in the playground. I remember going to Ely Cathedral (Ricky)

My memory is my first day when I went to Nursery. When I sat down Gabby came and sat next to me and we became friends and we still are friends. My next memory was when Mrs. Driver phoned me up when I was at home and said I was the Rose Queen. I was excited. (Toni)

The first day I saw Mrs. Driver I was scared. Then one day she was dressed up in a sunflower. We was running about in the school. She gave us footballs. I liked it when she used to tell us stories. She was the best storyteller ever in assembly. It used to make me get happiness and tears to my face. (Melad)

On Rose queen day we had to vote to see who was the Rose Queen and then we had to vote for the ones to hold the long thing behind her back. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday we had to feed the fishes. (Shabnaz)

My memory of Sedley is Sports Day, where you had these little books what you wrote your scores in. (Luke)

My memory is when Miss Gee got married and people gave her flowers and perfume. (Jishan)

My memory was the swimming Pool day and I was on the Adventure Playground and Mrs. Driver squirted me with the hose. Then I sneaked down and went in the pool. (Kiah)

My very first memory was when I had to read a book and I didn't understand because it was my first day. I really liked the Over and Under thing when Toni was the Rose Queen, and we got it correctly in the end. (Kreshnik)

My first day at school I was embarrassed. I had lots of kind teachers. I liked Maths. (Joseph P)

When I was at Sedley I remember when we went to Upware. We put a special machine on our head. The machine helped us to hear birds and other wild life. (Joseph H)

I remember being an important angel with a star on top of a silver stick and about 8 girl angels around me, and I was embarrassed. (Kim)

I remember when me and Melad went into Mrs. Driver's car to get some fish for the fish tank but one of the fishes had a really big head like a balloon. The first day I went to Sedley I was very shy but then I made friends with everybody. (Gabriella)

I remember my first day at Sedley. I enjoyed it a lot. We had to be careful in the garden. We had to do the Maypole Dancing. It was very hard. At Easter Mrs. Driver dressed up as a Rabbit and we had a special assembly. (Calum)

I remember when we got our certificates and we got biscuits and I really thank you all for being helpful to us. Thank you for doing helpful stuff. When I was 5 one of the teachers said, "You are good but when you get older you will be wise and fast." And she was right. I was wise and fast. (Ameli)

In the summer we had to do a dance round the Maypole and all the parents would come but this particular one was not like any other one, because the BBC News came to film it and we were on TV the very next day. One of the best memories was when we got to cook and the stuff was absolutely delicious. (Charles)

One of my memories is Sports Day when I did Long jump and fell down but the teachers were still clapping and praising my try. Sedley Infant School is where I met my first best friend Amy. If Sedley wasn't there we might never have met, so I really thank Sedley for that. I really liked Mrs. Driver. She was always there for you. She also had so many great ideas. (Pamela)

When you got about thirty smiley stickers you got a biscuit with an award on Friday. At Christmas we normally have a day called Fun Day when you get to do all sorts of things. (James)

In the playground there was lots of bushes and there was a big ground of grass and a hill. When break was over one of the teachers would get someone to run around with a bell. In assembly Mrs Driver would talk about when she was little. She was in a band or choir and she used to mime. She used to talk about God as well. (Jack P)

A good memory of Sedley is when I grabbed a frog and put it in Jamie's lunch box. Although he found out he didn't tell the teacher. Mrs. Driver would tell us boring stories about her life, Jesus and stories about certain celebrations. I really liked doing the Maypole dance because we were on the news a number of times. (Michael)

I remember when we used to meet in the Hall and sing songs and when we shared our pictures and writing with the whole school. I really enjoyed being a pupil of Sedley Infant School. (Fay)

The frogs laid spawn in the Secret Garden because it was peaceful. My favourite trip was to Upware. I liked searching for dinosaur fossils (Jamie W)

I didn't like the school dinner food in Sedley but I can't complain as I only had school dinners on a Friday. We had a super-doooper teacher called Miss Fleming. She was kind, friendly and helpful. (Danny)

When I first started Sedley I felt alone and scared and worried but I soon made friends with Rebecca, Alice and Maddie; they also comforted me. Very soon they were my best friends. Our teacher was Miss Mercer. She was a young lady. She had long beautiful shiny hair. She was also tall and thin. (Bianca)

One day in Year One, my friends were talking near the Secret Garden. We were showing each other cartwheels. I was wearing a dress with no knickers on underneath. I tried to do a cartwheel but my dress blew up and OH, NO!

Mrs. Haigh ran to get me some bright pink new knickers. (Rebecca)

On the first day I met my best friend Masum whom I knew already. At playtime Jamie and I had a fight. In some playtimes I put the flag on the big climbing frame. At each playtime someone would ring a bell to tell us that playtime was over. (Helal)

One of my memories, as far back as I can remember, is when we went to Willers Mill Farm. When we got there we decided to walk to the monkeys' enclosure. My mum didn't see a notice, which said to keep items like cameras away from the bars. This was because she was wearing sunglasses. She edged forward with the camera, then, SNATCH! One of the monkeys took her glasses. It crushed the frame into a ball and played with it. I was laughing myself silly. It took a while for the farm worker to retrieve it, in very bad shape! (Mariam)

One of my beat memories was when Lee and I made the best Lego model in the whole school. I remember seeing Louis, Ross and Jake playing football every day. (Masum)

One of my memories of Sedley is Sports Day. We had it once a year. There was about eight events in all. I remember all the boys in Year 1 and 2 once got sent to the Hall. I knew why. It was obvious. Some boys were throwing wet tissues on the toilet ceiling. Nobody owned up. (Ross B)

I remember at Easter, Mrs. Driver dressed up as a silly pink rabbit. When we were going into assembly she used to pretend to be asleep. I also remember I once bumped my nose and it bled so much I had to go to hospital. I used up three boxes of tissues on the way! (Alice)

One memory I have of Sedley is when at lunchtime if it was raining some of the children would go to the television room to watch a programme or video. Other children went to the Hall to play games. (Shubo)

The day of the Maypole. To start with they put all the elder girls names on a white board and everyone came and sat down to vote. Whoever got the most votes (out of the girls) would be crowned the Rose Queen. The boys then voted for someone to be the Crown Bearer.

When the day came all our parents came to watch. I remember that when I had to do it, it was the Spiders Web, we messed it up half way through, but luckily we managed to sort it out while still dancing. The group that I was in seemed to get a bigger applause. (Frankie)

An Incident in the Secret Garden. At Sedley, I was standing by the pond looking at the frog's spawn and the fishes. Coming down the pathway was Venesha, but because she was quiet I didn't notice her until, SPLASH! She had pushed me right into the pond. One of the teachers had to get one of the parents to get me some clean dry clothes. I began to get upset and stroppy. I was happy that Vanesha got punished for what she did. (Lorien)

I remember when Mrs Driver told us about the time when she was a child. Another time there were children who threw some wet paper towels on the ceiling. The teachers were very cross. (Michael M)

I dreaded Maypole Day Dances because I hated who I was matched up with. I used to be scared of the ribbons as I thought they were snakes! I also hated plays as all the parents laughed and pointed at me and my face turned red!

I remember a particular Sports Day and all the teachers said Michael Owen and David Beckham were going to be at school! But they were only drawn on cardboard, but everybody got a football so it was O.K. (Jake)

We all remember when Mrs. Driver sprayed us with the hose. Apparently I didn't get wet. Furthermore we had a football day and Mrs. Driver promised us that Michael Owen would be coming into school. There was someone coming and I really thought it was him but unfortunately it was just a cardboard picture of him. (Louis)

One thing I always remember was Mayday. Each class would learn a dance and perform it, but class 2 would do something with the maypole. The previous years May queen would actually crown the new one. I never actually saw our class on Mayday, as I was living in Italy for that year. Another thing was the reward system. If you collected a certain number of Sedley Smileys you would get a certificate. I got 3 of them in one year once. (Michael S)

The Maypole Dance. When we did the Maypole dance we had to wait 'til the end because the little children went first. When it was our turn, the girls went into the middle and got a rope and the boys went in too then we did the dance. The last dance was the Spider's Web. We did it all wrong because all of us went the wrong way. It was a laugh. I wish I could do it again. (Amy)

In Year One the class and I went on a trip to a farm. While we were on the train, my friend and I played I Spy. When we got there we all looked around and then it was time for lunch. During lunch a peacock was under the table and started to peck me. I felt like crying but I didn't. I started to feed it with some of my jelly and it stopped pecking me and went away. (Adam)

When I was in Mrs. Glasswell's class some Chinese visitors came and showed us some interesting things. There were a few ladies and they wore Chinese outfits. One had a blue long dress with flowers on it and a big bow on the back. I was really excited and happy. They kindly brought in some treats as well, some chopsticks and some Chinese paper that you can make animals with. (Ambea)

I remember when most of the times it was a hot day, we used to go outside and sit under the shade to eat. At dinnertime if it was raining most of the time we used to go inside and watch short programs. At Sedley I enjoyed painting, drawing and playing. (Ross P)

When I was in Year One, I can remember myself winning a certificate just for being good all week and collecting my merits. It was excellent. When it was time at the end of the day, I was too shy to walk up in front of the whole school to collect it. Everybody was clapping. (Kerry-Anne)

I remember when we had a competition to see who could fit the most objects into a matchbox. I won and got an eggcup with a chocolate egg in it. I was so happy. Ross Beecroft came second I think. When we had Christmas shopping I always bought Dad a screwdriver and my Mum and brothers a pen. (Lauren)

At Easter my friends and I were playing outside. Then suddenly a huge pink bunny came into the playground. Everyone knew it was Mrs. Driver. We all followed her and she gave us some Easter eggs. Next she shouted that we were all having an Easter egg hunt all around the playground. We all went hunting to find an egg. However the first eggs were in much easier places than the last ones. The last one was in...the SHED! Everyone cheered as Mrs. Driver opened it and there it was! The last Easter egg! (Lee)

Our trip to Upware. We went to Upware in Year Two. We arrived by coach and put our wellies on so we didn't get muddy. We walked to a pit with a wall of fossils. Frankie and I went first. Together we dug out six lumps of rock. However only four had anything interesting in them when we cracked them open.

We went pond dipping, there was a wobbly wooden path over muddy patches and as everyone was running over it the path began to wobble and a couple of boys fell off. No-one caught much – I only got some weed and a water snail. After lunch we were split into groups and began making photos of leaves and made horseradish sauce. YUK! (Maddie)

And finally from the Headteacher

My memories of 18 years as Headteacher of Sedley; Triss Driver

I consider that it has been a great privilege to be Headteacher of Sedley School since September 1984 – 18 very happy and busy years. These years have brought many changes to the education system and to the Sedley building and site but throughout my time here the joy of being with wonderful children at Sedley has been constant. I have so many memories to take with me when the school closes. Memories I will always treasure.



When I first visited the school I saw something quite different from the Sedley of today- the open cloisters with the children's lunch containers stored in cardboard boxes outside the classroom doors- classrooms which were filled with a cold blast of air each time the doors were opened on winter days - cramped rooms without enough space for the large classes they contained – many areas in need of improvement; but also a very dedicated and hard working staff and such welcoming and happy children. I was fortunate in having the support of the local education authority who somehow found the money needed to put my action plan of improvements into place and before long we had warm corridors in place of the draughty cloisters, a library, a proper stock room, an audio-visual resource room and eventually even extended classrooms. Some of this was at the cost of the Headteacher's private toilet, but this was a sacrifice I was prepared to make! The transformation of the outside area was also very exciting. The University Architects Department built the adventure playground with money raised by themselves, our parents, and Mr Arthur Cooper's customers at the Royal Standard public house. The Secret Garden was created by the Sawston Rotary Club and Ms Helen Seal, a garden designer who was a parent at the time. A special seat in an arbour was put in the Secret Garden, funded by the school community, in memory of my late mother who was a frequent visitor to our school. Seats and playhouses were purchased for the outside area and exciting games were painted on the playground. The Sedley site is now a haven for our children. I was pleased that the government inspectors referred to the school as 'The Garden School' when they inspected it in 1997, and told us that it was the most attractive school site they had seen. It gives me great pleasure to see how much the children enjoy the wonderful facilities so many of us have worked hard to create.

There have also have been many changes in the curriculum over the years. The implementation of the National Curriculum in 1988 was a very interesting time, and when the standard assessment tasks were introduced we (as teachers everywhere) all questioned the need for such stringent tests for young children, which take so much time to implement. However we all worked hard to carry out the government requirements, and now even the powers that be are questioning the validity of these tests – at last! Local management of schools in the late 1980's also changed the role of the Headteacher and my duties now cover financial issues which I had not imagined when I was appointed. The government introduced a new system of school inspections in the mid 1990s and in 1997 we had one of these inspections by OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education). We were pleased to receive an excellent report, which gave high praise to our work. Many changes to the management of schools have influenced my duties as head and endeavoured to take my time away from those central to the life of the school – the children! However the Sedley children are special, and their smiles and sense of fun have ensured that I have been given much relief from the pressure of the paperwork.

A recent achievement, which has given me great satisfaction, was being granted the International Schools Award in the year 2000. This was accredited to the school by the Central Bureau for Education, which is part of the British Council. The award gave recognition for our work on the international dimension of education. I have always had a very keen interest in this aspect of education having welcomed children and their families from many different cultures into our school as well as visiting professionals from all over the world to study our education system, and being fortunate to see education systems in many countries through my study visits abroad. I am proud of our achievements in this area of our work.

We have had lots of fun at Sedley over the years, managing to combine a very good education for the children entrusted to our care with enjoyment for all. My vision of education includes providing a safe, secure and exciting environment to which children want to come, in which they are keen to learn and are able to reach their full potential. If children are not encouraged in their natural inquisitiveness in the world around them and instilled with an eagerness for learning in the early years of their schooling they cannot grow in confidence and ability as we wish them to do. Therefore throughout the changes imposed on us, Sedley has maintained a truly child centred approach and all my actions have been with this in mind. I hope that when they recall their school years Sedley children will recount tales of exciting Christmas events, book weeks when staff joined in the fun and acted a play for them, visits from many theatre groups, dancing round the maypole, being soaked with water from a hose on a hot summers day, hearing stories about my childhood days which they were asked

to keep secret from the rest of the staff (well, it wouldn't be good for them to know the antics I got up to!), visits from the Easter bunny and the Easter chick, dressing up to themes such as pirates and clowns for the end of year picnic and then chasing round the grounds with me in search of some elusive item related to the theme, which we eventually retrieved (do you remember the huge spider full of smaller ones which were distributed to the children and were heard squeaking for weeks?!) - coming to see me with their smiley charts and having a biscuit from my Teddy biscuit barrel, - the list goes on and on! I hope they will also recall the fun they had in the Secret Garden, the excitement of the adventure playground, the anticipation when they saw my magic basket, looking after Rosie the big teddy, the jokes we have shared together and the times they have come through my (almost always) open door to share with me the things that are so important to them. I have always tried to find time to be there for them and they have always been my priority.

The community we serve in the Romsey town has changed over the years. There are still many local families who are proud of their roots in the area and are able to trace back several generations here. Families from many different cultures, particularly from Bangladesh, have now enriched the community. The children from all these ethnic groups come together at Sedley to learn and play together in harmony and friendship. Each one of them is special to me and I will remember and miss them all.

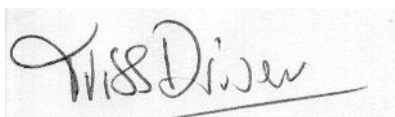
The staff has been a brilliant group of dedicated and highly professional colleagues to work with and they have shared my vision for the children and supported me in every way. Many of those who have moved on from Sedley have done so because they have been successful in gaining promotion following their time as part of our team. Throughout the years everyone I have been fortunate to work with; the exceptionally talented and hard working support staff, the highly committed teachers, two excellent Deputy Headteachers - Mrs. Liz Stark (who became Ms St George) and Mrs. Susan Hamilton - have all contributed so much to the life of Sedley and I am grateful to them all for their hard work and for making Sedley such a special place.

Although I have been fully supportive of the move towards a new primary school to cater for children across the entire age range, it is with great sadness that I will close this special place. In the early years of the last century the community in the Romsey town area was growing fast and a new school was desperately needed. 70 years later the catchment has changed. Estates have 'matured' with children growing up, moving on and not being replaced, a large number of houses which were family homes are now being used as student accommodation, and the birth rate in this part of the city has dropped. The reduction in numbers at Sedley (and Romsey) School has given the local education authority the opportunity to combine the two age groups for which

the schools cater and provide an all age primary school (currently under construction and to be called Ridgefield Primary School) This type of school is the authorities preferred option. The age and state of repair of the Romsey building is also part of the issue that has led to this development. Whatever the reasons, complex as they are, for this move towards a new school everyone involved agrees that as Sedley passes into history it is the end of a very special era for education in our city.

I am proud to have spent so many years as part of the Sedley team, and of having had the opportunity to build on the work of my predecessors to take Sedley through the last 18 years. They have been very happy years for me and I will take with me many wonderful memories of this unique school.

Thank you Sedley. And goodbye.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Miss Driver". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

