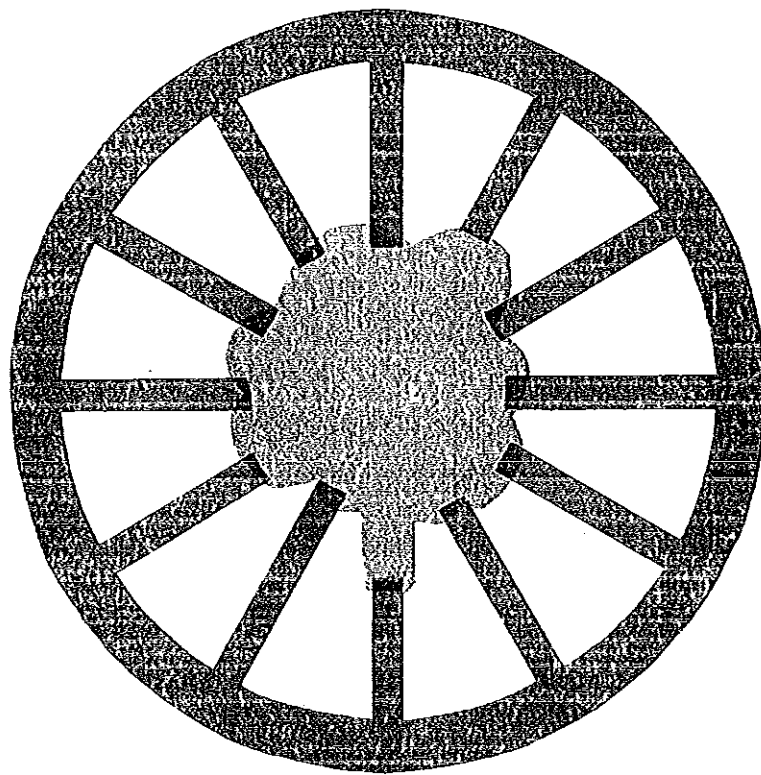


LIGHTWOODS

SCHOOL



1908 - 1983



LIGHTWOODS JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL
HEADTEACHERS

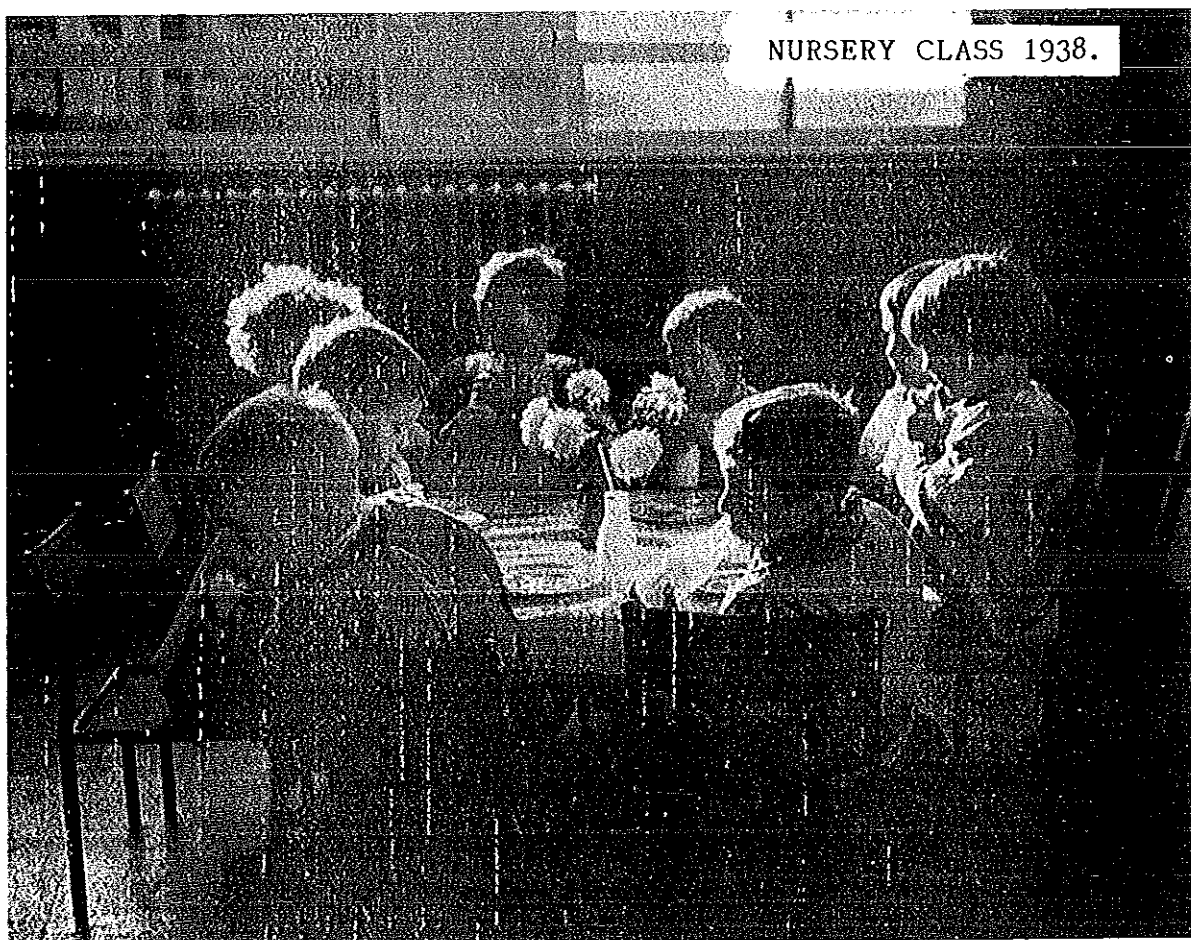
May	1908 - July	1909	Miss. M. Cobb
August	1909 - July	1910	Miss. E. Phillips
August	1910 - February	1913	Miss. M. Cobb
March	1913 - August	1930	Miss. E. Phillips
September	1930 - December	1951	Mr. J. H. Dearne
April	1952 - July	1975	Mr. T. J. J. Kilby
September	1975 - December	1978	Mr. J. Cooper
January	1979		Mr. B. A. Middleton

MY FIRST DAYS AT LIGHTWOODS

On Sunday I had to write my name on a piece of paper 15 times because on Monday it was my first day at Lightwoods. So I practised and practised all day. I read about Peter and Jane and I wrote all about Peter and Jane then it was bed time. I went fast asleep. It was next morning I went downstairs and not even thinking about school. I looked up at the clock it was half past eight. My Mom had just come out of the kitchen and shouted "Robert come and get dressed". "Hurry up" she shouted. "Then you can have your breakfast". I said "What are we having for breakfast?". "Never mind, just get dressed." I got dressed and went off to school.

My friend got told off.

By Robert Harris.



My first day at Lightwoods was a very shy moment for me. My very first teacher was called Mrs. Windmill. But I did not want to leave my Mummy, but I did not cry.

I went to Mrs. Windmill and she put a badge on me with my name on it. Then I went back to my Mummy and grasped her hand. I was very shy and frightened. I did not know what would happen next.

Then Mrs. Windmill took us into the classroom. We did some work which I thought was hard. When Mrs. Windmill left we had another teacher called Mrs. Woodhouse.

By Amy Greag.

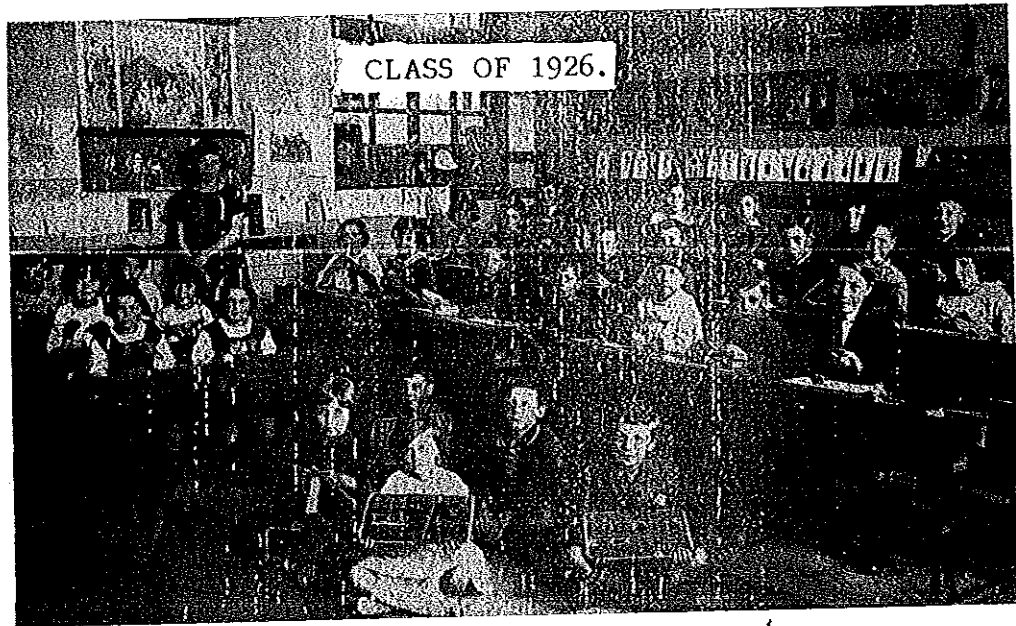
A TOUR OF LIGHTWOODS SCHOOL

"Welcome to Lightwoods School. We will go from Class One to Class Seven. In Class One here you see there are twenty-seven pupils. The teacher is Mrs. Jinks. The pictures on the wall are done by the children. Now we come to Class Two. In here there are thirty pupils. The teacher is Mrs. Ricketts. The age range is five to six. Here we come to class three. There are thirty-three pupils in this class. The teacher is Mr. Wheatley. This age range is six to seven. In these three classes they learn how to read and write. They also do sums. This room is where most of the P.E. equipment is kept. This is class four. Mrs. Greenaway is the teacher and has thirty-five pupils. Here is the Hall, where the children have assembly, concerts, P.E. and dinners.



CLASS OF 1926.

The ladies who serve out the dinners are Mrs. Gibson and Mrs. Facey. The supervisors at dinnertime are Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Ward. Next is our Library. Here the children can come in for books for topics and things like that. Some children come in to have a lesson with our part-time teacher Mrs. Antrobus. The next is Class Five. Mr. Bourne teaches this class and has thirty-five pupils. Now we come to the Junior Bay. There are various books in here. Now here is the stock room, the P.E. room and Mr. Middleton's room, our Headmaster.



JUBILEE



1977.

Here is Class Six. Miss. Parker teaches in this room. There are thirty-eight pupils in this class. Here is Class Seven our top class. Mr. Thomas is the teacher and there are thirty-eight pupils in this class. Classes Four, Five, Six and Seven are in Maths sets. If we go back towards Class Three we will come to the Infant Bay. If anyone is hurt one of the nursery nurses Mrs. Shanks or Mrs. Lovell looks after them. Here is the Staff Room and down there is the Music Room where some pupils learn to play instruments. I hope you have enjoyed it at Lightwoods."

By Louise Chibnall.

EARLY DAYS

Castle Road School opened on 8 May, 1908 with 79 scholars. The staff consisted of Mary E. Cobb, Mistress, Harriet L. Goode, Assistant and Jessie Jones, Assistant. The school was surrounded by fields. There were only one or two houses in Castle Road and a few in Lightwoods Hill. Most of the children came from Frederick Road, Gateley Road, Birch Lane and also Beech Lane. This is now the Hagley Road. Some children had to walk from as far away as Bearwood. Consequently in the early records a great deal of emphasis is placed on the weather. On 5 March, 1909 for instance, all the staff were present but the roads were too full of snow to allow any children to attend.

The first official report on the school in October 1908 said that it was in a suitable and well appointed building. The scholars were found to be very backward upon admission. The institution proceeded on good lines and was very promising. Some pictures were needed.

As in 1983 the Headteacher had to be prepared for the unexpected. On 3 July, 1908 four children named Hogg came to school after the register was closed. This was a very serious offence in 1908. Keeping the registers up to date and accurate was of prime importance and they were regularly checked by a member of the Council. On 20 March, 1911 Mabel Sillard returned to school after being absent since midsummer. She had had her eye poked out!

Some problems which are thought to be modern in origin existed even in the early days. On 2 April, 1912, a great effort was made to prevent children using bad language. In one or two cases parents were asked to co-operate with the teachers in checking it. One boy, after frequent warnings, was severely punished for using bad language to other children on the way to school.

Reasons for staff absences were often very interesting. On 18 September 1908, Mistress was absent through misadventure. Novels have been written about less! On 28 August, 1916, Mrs. Bennett was absent from her duties owing to her husband being ordered abroad with his regiment. She never appeared again and she was dismissed.

A great deal was made of the school's rural surroundings. There were frequent visits to the lanes to study elder trees or blue-bells and there were walks to the woods to look at sheep.

The school seemed to carry on in a fairly tranquil way until 1930. There were occasional closures due to outbreaks of measles and influenza and there were special holidays. On 13 June 1923 there was a day's break so that the children could watch the Prince of Wales open the Wolverhampton Road.

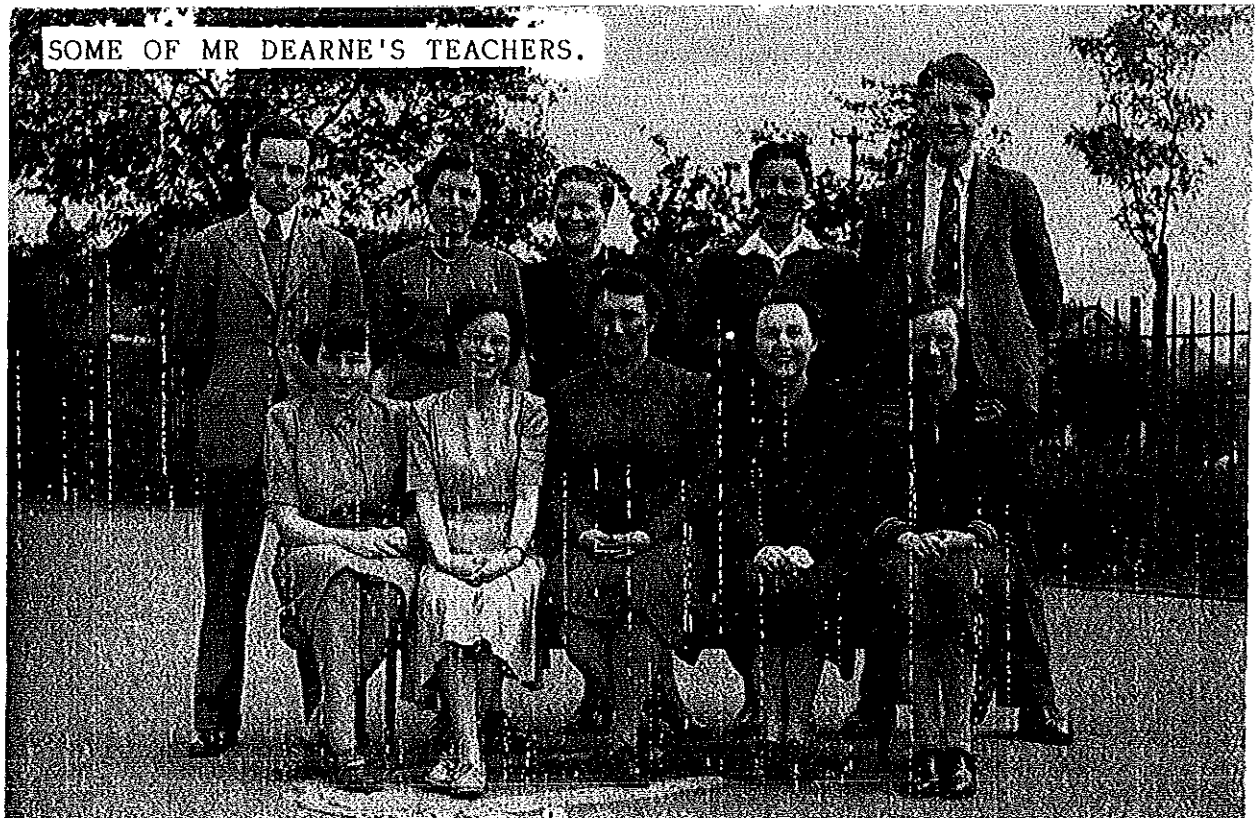
Miss Phillips retired as Headteacher in August 1930. She was presented with a matching brooch and pendant. Discipline must have been rather strict in her day. When the children walked into the hall for prayers the boys had to salute her and the girls had to bow.

YEARS OF GROWTH AND DISRUPTION

When Mr. Dearne commenced his duties in 1930 there were 225 children on roll. The opening of the Wolverhampton Road led to a large amount of housing development with a consequent rise in the number of children in the area. By 1931 there were 331 children in the school and wooden classrooms had to be built in the playground. In 1935 when there were 487 children the situation had become so desperate that two classes had to be taught in the Warley Woods Free Church and a further 76 in the school hall. The situation was eased to a certain extent by the opening of the new Bleakhouse School.

In April 1937 after a considerable amount of building work three new classrooms and a nursery class were opened. In addition the hall had been enlarged. An inspector's report for that year said that in more settled times it should develop into a really satisfactory Infant and Junior School.

Mrs. Walker of Hadzor Road recalls going to see Mr. Dearne about her daughter. She knocked the door and went in and she was rather suprised to see him sitting with his feet on his desk sucking an orange. After all the turmoil of the 1930's I think he deserved a rest. But his problems were not over. Worse was to come.



THE WAR YEARS

The following terse log book entry for 27 September 1939, heralded future events. "Miss M. Freeth, Mr. C.R. Eden and Mr. E.T. Willetts attended Oldbury Town Hall this afternoon to receive instructions in connection with Air Raid Precautions." Children were fitted with gas masks a day later.

On 4 September 1939, owing to the outbreak of war, children were notified by wireless not to attend school. Between 4 September and 23 October members of staff were engaged in various branches of A.R.P., First Aid and Clerical work in connection with the National Emergency.

From 23 October, 1939, senior children living in the Castle Road area and attending Bristnall Hall School had now to attend Castle Road School. As a result there were 494 on roll. The war emergency Education Scheme commenced on 24 October. Sixty children assembled at a time for half hour periods of instruction. Between each period there was a ten minute interval to allow children who had been dismissed to get well clear of the premises. Infants were taught in groups at home. This scheme carried on until January 1940 when normal school life resumed.

This school life continued to be disrupted by the war. A building to accommodate fire brigade equipment was built in the school grounds. Parents were invited to see the Air Raid Shelter and watch children carrying out Air Raid Drill. A demonstration to the parents of bottling and preserving fruits and vegetables was attended by Elsie and Doris Waters (Gert and Daisy of radio fame).

On 14 August 1940, only 40% of the children attended due to an Air Raid the night before. On 27 August 1940 the Air Raid Alarm sounded at 1.15.p.m. and the children were assembled in the shelters and were occupied with a programme of songs and games until the All Clear sounded at 12.p.m.

During the night of 12 December 1940, the school premises were damaged by enemy action resulting in the school being closed for four days.

After this for the rest of the war, life at Castle Road reverted more or less back to normal, with occasional interruptions for the distribution of ration cards or cod liver oil. The end of the war was marked by two days' holiday.

Post war excitement was of the type we are more used to today. For instance in February 1946 the school was broken into and all the teachers desks were vandalised.

After what can only be described as an extremely eventful time as Head, Mr. Dearne. retired in December 1951.

LIGHTWOODS SCHOOL By Mr. T. J. J. Kilby

I am delighted to have been asked to contribute to the commemorative brochure, which has been produced to mark the 75th Anniversary of Lightwoods School which also coincides with the 50th Anniversary of my entering the teaching profession, I have seen many changes over the half century and since I took up my appointment as Head of Lightwoods School, then known as Castle Road School, in 1952.

In 1952 there were eleven classes, two of them being in a large hut at the top of the upper playground, but the hut became unsafe and was demolished in 1963. There were well over 400 children in the school and there were thirteer teachers. Amongst the staff in 1952 were Miss. H. M. Freeth, the Deputy Head, who celebrated her 80th



birthday in February 1982 and I was very pleased to attend a small birthday party at the Poplars Nursing Home, but I regret to say she died six months later. Miss. F. N. Bradley, now in her early eighties is living happily with her sister in Monmouth Road, and we keep in touch; Mr. J. G. Davis became Headmaster of Moat Farm School and I see him from time to time in his retirement, Mr. O. B. Gregory became Head of a school in West Bromwich and is now living in Devon. Mr. Allison who was very keen on music and sport has also retired at Christmas 1981 and my wife and I were pleased to attend her farewell party in the Spring of last year. Mrs. S. M. Davies whose husband died in August 1981, is retired and living in Abbey Road and we keep in touch.

The condition of the main building in 1952 was good but the outside toilets which were sited in the lower playground were unsatisfactory and froze up each winter, and we were thankful when the present toilets were constructed in 1963. There was no meals servery, the present servery being an infant classroom and the meals were brought into



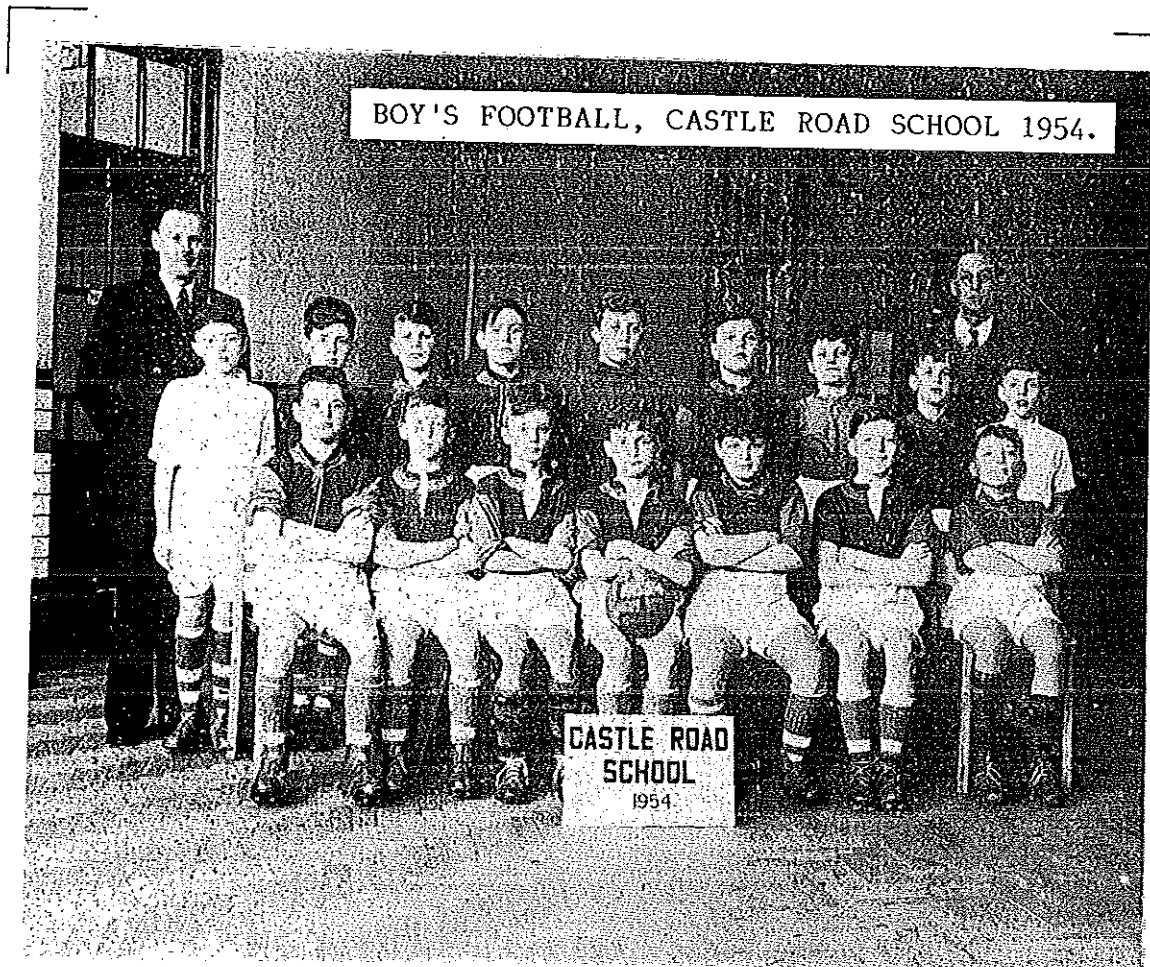
ASPECTS OF SCHOOL LIFE IN 1955.



the hall and the washing up was done in the large sink in the activity room near the staff room. There were no steps or entrance near the reception class and the porch at the top of the steps was a tiny room containing a single very small toilet for the use of the nursery class which functioned up to 1952. There was no music room and this was a very welcome addition in 1973.

Two items I well recall were the collapse of half the hall ceiling which mercifully occurred during a weekend, and the stripping and theft of a considerable amount of lead from the hall roof, this also happened on a weekend when heavy rain fell flooding the hall.

Lightwoods has always been a good school, the children have been well motivated with good home support and have received excellent instruction from talented teachers. Standards have always been high not only in academic achievement but also in cultural activities and music, and in the realms of sport. There have been trips abroad.



and I well remember the P & O cruise to Scandinavia in 1967 just when war was breaking out in the Middle East which made us all a little uneasy at the time.

Many of the children, both boys and girls, have subsequently gone on to the universities, including Oxford and Cambridge and have entered a variety of professions to become lawyers, both barristers and solicitors, medical practitioners, surgeons and consultant physicians, scientists, nurses, accountants and teachers, whilst others have entered industry to become highly skilled at their jobs as did more who entered commerce, insurance and banking.

I estimate that something of the order of 2,000 children passed through the school while I was Head, and in a school of 400 + but declining in recent years, it was possible to know the children individually and to know their strength and potential.

154, Elm Terrace,
Tividale,
WARLEY,
West Midlands,
B69 1TQ.

3rd February 1983

Mr. Middleton,
Headmaster,
Lightwoods School.

Dear Mr. Middleton,

In the course of a clear out I came across an old list of School Cricket Records for what was then Castle Road School, and I thought you might be interested to have a copy. I served on the staff of the school from 1950 to the end of 1962. I assisted with the sport from 1951, and took it on completely from 1953. In those days we were considerably handicapped by having no playing field (perhaps this is still the case). Practically all the football and cricket was played after school hours. We used the top playground for seven a side games, wearing pumps. For cricket we used old tennis balls. One was hit so hard and high that it lodged in the ventilator at the top of the gable end, and was there for many years. It may still be there! Occasionally we were able to play on grass at Lightwoods Park, but the snag with the football pitch was that it was (a) Very large (b) Usually very muddy (c) Sloped considerably end to end. Despite these problems we did have our successes. In 1961 no less than 5 boys from the school were chosen for the Oldbury Schools Representative Team, and served with distinction. In the same season we also won the B League (for smaller schools.)

As regards the Cricket Records, two names may be of interest. Robin Stubbs became a professional footballer, and played for Birmingham City and Torquay United (much to my regret, as he had all the makings of a very fine fast bowler.) Barry Kilby is the son of the Head. Mr. Kilby was a member of Warwickshire C.C.C., as I was (and still am).

I have retired, but would be interested to know if there is any footballer or cricket at Lightwoods these days. I enclose a copy of the Records 1951 to 1962.

Yours sincerely,

John H.G. Allison

11 Edward Road,
Oldbury,
Warley,
West Midlands. B68 0LZ

Dear Mr. Middleton,

My sincere congratulations on the 75th Anniversary of Castle Road/ Lightwoods School.

When my husband and I moved to Quinton, we were delighted to find that in the area there was a school which was described as 'quite a good one'. Over the years that I have been associated with the school I can heartily agree.

I have had the great pleasure of knowing the school in many ways. Firstly as a parent of two children who spent their formative years at Castle Road School as it was then known.

I know that they enjoyed their work and that they were very happy years and I always have looked upon the school as one with a very happy atmosphere which did not prevent all children being given an excellent grounding in all aspects of education in fact I am sure it helped.

For many years I was a Councillor and a member of the School Management Committee and as such I visited the school regularly attending school assemblies, and visiting classes also.

On another social occasion, concerts, prize-giving etc, I found that over the years this happy, busy atmosphere still prevailed.

My best wishes for a happy and successful Anniversary Celebration and to all who have helped to achieve this, and to all who will continue to maintain this for the future 'Lightwoods'.

Yours sincerely,

Eva Pine, M.B.E.

If I was Headmaster at Lightwoods School.....

.....there would be a tuckshop for buying sweets and crisps and I would have a maze for the children to play in.

Gayle Moore.

.....there would be a library with proper stampers and tickets and double-glazing.

Katherine Sholton.

.....I would organise an Adventure Playground, with swings, slides, a swimming-pool and lots of paths to go down.

Louise Brazier.

.....it would have a television room with a video-recorder, and the children could watch cartoons and films.

Lucy Hill.

.....I would make a room for people who have done good work to play in.

Vanessa Young.

.....There would be a beauty contest every month, including teachers.

Louise Smart.

.....on Saturdays, the teachers would meet their classes up at school, then take them to the Albion.

Robert Durham.

.....I would have a five-minute assembly each day, with two stories and one song that we all like.

Cheryl Livesey.

.....I would have a bigger Headmistress's room with a safe in it

Zoe Wilson-Neasom.

.....There would be five football teams, three chess teams, two cricket teams and six netball teams.

Matthew Jordan.

.....I would have a recreation ground built, and a squash court.

Robert Heaselgrave.

.....I would have school on Saturdays and Sundays.

Joanne Sylvester.

.....I would put up a sign on the notice-board and have a vote to see what we would do in school.

Richard Staniland.

.....The computer would mark all the homework, and there would be another computer to store all the phone numbers.

Mathew Robbins.

.....I would have a uniform for boys and girls.

Wayne Bayley.

.....I would have an extension, so that I would have room for 16 classes.

Joe Butchart.

.....school hours would be 7.a.m. to 7.p.m., but the children could have drinks whenever they liked.

Christopher Watkins.

.....I would have a gymnasium for girls (and boys if they want to come)

Rachel Sherwood.

.....to stop balls breaking windows, I would have reinforced glass.

Richard Baker.

.....I would knock twenty minutes off maths.

Wayne Jones.

LIGHTWOOD JUNIOR AND INFANT STAFF 1983.

HEADMASTER	Mr. B. A. Middleton
DEPUTY HEADMASTER	Mr. H. Bourne
TEACHERS	Mrs. C. Jinks Mrs. J. Ricketts Mrs. E. Wheatley Mrs. S. Greenaway Miss. G. Parker Mr. P. Thomas
NURSERY NURSES	Mrs. M. Shanks Mrs. J. Lovell
SCHOOL SECRETARY	Mrs. M. Leary
SCHOOL MEALS	Mrs. M. Gibbs Mrs. P. Facey
CARETAKER	Mr. L. Marks
CLEANERS	Mrs. L. Pegg Mrs. C. Corry
SUPERVISORY ASSISTANTS	Mrs. P. Roberts Mrs. A. Ward Mrs. J. Yates
CROSSING WARDENS	Mrs. L. Aymes Mrs. D. Thomlinson Mrs. L. Turner
SCHOOL VISITOR	Councillor W. Lunn