

# The slow process of modernising teacher training in music in New South Wales, 1920-1956

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## Abstract

The need for appropriately trained teachers to teach in its schools has been a priority for the Department of Education (hereafter referred to as the Department) since the beginning of public education in New South Wales in the 1850s. This paper presents an overview of the provisions made by the Department for the musical development of its primary teachers at both the pre-service and professional development stages of their teaching careers during the middle decades of the twentieth century. Teacher training in the second half of the nineteenth century culminated in education reforms in 1904, which set the scene for twentieth century teacher training in New South Wales. Gradual changes in teacher training and teacher professional development in music between 1920 and 1956 provided the basis of the contemporary teacher-training regime in New South Wales. Three main themes were important in this historical development: the mandatory music experiences provided to trainee teachers at Sydney Teachers' College; music in the teacher classification examination system; and Departmental professional development opportunities in music.

**Key words:** teacher training, Sydney Teachers' College, teacher classification examinations, William Wilkins, pupil-teachers, teachers' examinations, teacher professional development, Theodore Tearne

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## Background

A mid-nineteenth century inability to find enough trained teachers for New South Wales' state schools led William Wilkins, the most influential educator in New South Wales in the second half of the nineteenth century, to advocate successfully in 1851 for the introduction of the pupil-teacher system of training teachers that he had experienced in England. Pupil-teachers had two roles: each school day they taught classes of children under the direction of a qualified

teacher, and as students themselves received instruction from their head teacher as part payment for their teaching. With a minimum age of thirteen years at the start of their employment, pupil-teachers served a four-year apprenticeship<sup>1</sup>. The pupil-teacher system was an expeditious and inexpensive way of securing additional 'teachers' for schools. However, it had the potential to produce generations of teachers with a narrow range of professional knowledge and skills, as the professional preparation of pupil-teachers

was largely dependent on the expertise and commitment of head teachers, most of whom had themselves come up through the ranks of pupil-teachers.

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, in an effort to gain better-trained teachers, the Department of Education determined that pupil-teachers who sought to become teachers must pursue a period of professional preparation at its training school. In 1867, the training period was from one to three months. In 1872, it was extended to six months and then, in 1875, to twelve months for the most promising ex-pupil-teachers. In the 1870s, classes at which pupil-teachers could receive instruction were also organised in Sydney and elsewhere on Saturday mornings and later Wednesday afternoons. In 1883, Hurlstone House was established in Sydney as the training school for women, while men continued to be trained at Fort Street Training School<sup>2</sup>. Hence, in the latter period of the nineteenth century, the Department saw benefits in a more extended period of professional preparation for its teachers in a facility independent from schools and with instruction determined and controlled by the Department.

By the turn of the twentieth century, it was fully recognised that the pupil-teacher system had outlived its usefulness in NSW. At the end of 1905, spurred on by the 1904 education reforms in NSW, the Department closed the old teacher training establishments at Hurlstone and Fort Street, and converted Blackfriars School in Sydney into the training college, a facility where men and women could be trained together<sup>3</sup>. Details of the new provisions for teacher training in NSW are explicitly outlined in the *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for 1905*<sup>4</sup>. Entry to the training college was by competitive examination for applicants over seventeen years old. Trainee teachers completed a two-year professional preparation program at the college, rather than being apprenticed to a teacher. Trainees were also provided opportunities to observe good models

of teaching, and to practise their teaching under the critical supervision of an expert teacher. After two years, trainees who passed the college examination and were deemed sufficiently skilled in teaching were awarded a second-class certificate. Paradoxically, as a transition arrangement, trainees could exit after only one year, gain a third-class certificate, and be eligible for a teaching appointment.

The training college's first principal was the Scottish born and educated Alexander Mackie, the Professor of Education at the University of Sydney<sup>5</sup>, who was clear in his aims for teacher training. He declared that the training course would provide teacher trainees with a broad cultural education through the study of non-teaching subjects so teachers could avoid a 'narrowness of outlook and consequent impairment of efficiency'. His second, and principal, aim was to give teacher trainees such professional and technical knowledge of teaching that the foundations would be laid for them to impart a vitality and interest in their future teaching while efficiently teaching and managing children<sup>6</sup>.

While two years was the standard period for training as a primary teacher, and most trainees took two years, there were exceptions. Some students were chosen on merit to complete a third or fourth year, or to study individual subjects at Sydney University. Nevertheless, in 1911, a serious shortage of teachers for rural schools forced the Department to establish a six-month course at Hereford House in Sydney with a new cohort of teacher trainees beginning every six months<sup>7</sup>. Hereford House, an annex of the teachers' college, and its courses were published in the teachers' college calendar; both institutions had one principal, Alexander Mackie. The majority (66%) of men and women at the teachers' college in May 1911<sup>8</sup> were enrolled in the two-year course, although some would exit after a year to begin their teaching career (Table 1). The short course was the next most popular

course (22%). The remaining 51 (12%) men and women were spread across five courses, each with small numbers.

In 1918, the short course was extended to twelve months with, in that year at least, a doubling of enrolments to 360 trainees. Mackie argued that two years was too short to prepare a teacher properly. However, a shortage of teachers, initially due to the war and then escalating school enrolments, encouraged the Department to offer the one-year rural course continuously until 1931, and then again in 1936 and 1937<sup>9</sup>. For almost a quarter of a century many teachers began their teaching careers with a training course of a quarter or half the recommended length.

Stevens reported that music began to decline at Sydney Teachers' College in 1914, when the second year music course became optional, and then declined further in 1919 when music was no longer mandatory in the first year course<sup>10</sup>. This decrease and cessation of mandatory music was unsatisfactory, given that all primary teachers were expected to teach music. Teachers with limited or no music training were unlikely to have the skills or confidence to implement the music syllabus effectively, and thus children taught by such teachers would have a poor experience of music. During the 1920s, questions began to be

asked about the unsatisfactory standard of music in schools as the consequences of these changes became apparent<sup>11</sup>.

### ***Pre-service training of NSW primary teachers, 1920-1956***

Sydney Teachers' College was the major supplier of the state's primary teachers through to 1956 for two reasons. First, until 1927, Sydney was the only NSW teacher training college, and even when a second college was established in 1928 in Armidale<sup>12</sup>, it only took students from the rural north; its enrolments remained steady while Sydney's continued to grow<sup>13</sup>. Until 1973, control of all NSW teachers' colleges rested with the Department, which oversaw staffing, salaries, buildings, finances and curriculum<sup>14</sup>; the principal of each teachers' college was answerable to the Director of Education, who was answerable to the Minister for Education and parliament.

From 1920 to 1956, students were required to complete one of three training courses at a teachers' college. The two-year course remained the most popular option, although during teacher shortages until 1937, a one-year 'short course' was offered. A few students achieving outstanding results in the state Leaving Certificate examination (Year 11 external

**Table 1. Types of courses available, and the number of teacher trainees, at the teachers' college in May 1911 (source: Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, Report (Together with Appendices) of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Year 1910, 44).**

| Course  | Men        | Women      | Total      |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Short course (six months)                       | 45         | 54         | 99         |
| First year                                      | 65         | 102        | 167        |
| Second year                                     | 57         | 62         | 119        |
| Third year                                      | 11         | 3          | 14         |
| Fourth year                                     | 1          | 0          | 1          |
| University graduates                            | 0          | 5          | 5          |
| Attending Hawkesbury Agricultural College       | 10         | 0          | 10         |
| Infant-teachers taking Evening Extension Course | 0          | 21         | 21         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>189</b> | <b>247</b> | <b>436</b> |

examination) were selected to complete a degree at Sydney University, after which they could choose to complete a one-year 'professional' course through Sydney Teachers' College<sup>15</sup>. No statistics are available on the number of university graduates entering the one-year course to qualify for teaching in primary schools; anecdotal evidence suggests there were very few<sup>16</sup>.

While the entry requirements for each course were different, they remained consistent from 1920 to 1956. Students entered the two-year course on the basis of their Leaving Certificate examination, taken after five years of secondary study<sup>17</sup>. Entry to the one-year professional course was restricted to university graduates, although students could enter the one-year rural course with an Intermediate Certificate after three years of secondary study<sup>18</sup>. From 1932 to 1943, all applicants for primary teaching courses completed a basic music competency test, testing their ability to differentiate between musical pitches. While the intent was presumably to ensure that trainee teachers had the potential to teach music, little appears to have resulted from the testing, with those found to be 'tone deaf' advised to engage in appropriate exercises as sometimes this 'disability' could be overcome<sup>19</sup>. Almost all students were on a Department scholarship – a weekly allowance and, for those unable to reside at home, a 'living away from home' allowance. After training, they were bonded to teach for three years away from their hometown in a country school<sup>20</sup>. Teachers given a teaching position, even if they had failed one or more subjects in their pre-service course, were required to pass these subject/s at an annual teachers' examination<sup>21</sup>.

Both the one-year 'short course' and standard two-year teacher training courses at Sydney Teachers' College included mandatory music courses from 1920 to 1956 (Table 2). Students were required to specialise either in teaching five and eight year old children (called the Infants

or Lower Primary Division) or nine and twelve year old children (Middle and Upper Primary, Upper Primary, or Primary Divisions). The details in Table 2 are incomplete since: (i) a calendar was not available for every year<sup>22</sup>; (ii) calendars occasionally contained contradictory information; (iii) it was not always clear which cohort of students would complete which optional course; and (iv) some terminology changed within the calendars.

Between the wars, music was mandatory for the one-year short course Infants and Primary Division trainees and two-year course Infants Division trainees, but not mandatory for three cohorts of Primary Division two-year course trainees in the early 1920s. When music was mandatory between 1920 and 1923, it was more likely taught as part of a method course rather than as a stand-alone subject.

The Board of Examiners felt strongly about a perceived lack of mandatory music at the Teachers' College and, in November 1923, recommended that music be included as a compulsory subject<sup>23</sup>. Despite contrary calendar evidence, the Principal, Mackie, responded that 'it has always been the case that college students have received instruction in the method of teaching each of the subjects of the primary curriculum'<sup>24</sup>. Possibly both were correct: Mackie may have believed that music within a method course was sufficient; the Board may have felt that a remedy to growing criticism of school music was for music to become a stand-alone subject in all training courses. In 1924, change did occur, both for better and for worse. Music became a stand-alone subject in the one-year course, and an hour per week of choral practice became compulsory. However, possibly because staff were redirected to the one-year course, music decreased for two-year trainees: Infants' trainees only received music preparation in weekly choral practice, while Primary trainees received no mandatory music preparation. In 1925, Mackie reinstated music as a stand-alone

**Table 2. Mandatory Music in Sydney Teachers' College primary courses, 1920–1956 (source: Teachers' College Calendars, 1920 - 1956).**

| Year course began | Short course (12 months) to teach in small rural schools   |                      | Second year of rural course                                  | Primary   |  |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|--|---|--|
|                   | Infants  | Primary              |  | Infants/Lower   | Middle/Upper   |
| 1920–1921         | 2 hours/week of one of the following:<br>- Drawing<br>- Singing<br>- Manual Work as part of a Method Course of 10 hours/week | 1 hours/week         | This course was not offered                                  | 6 hours/week in both Year 1 & 2 as part of a Method Course  | No stand alone music time  |
| 1922              | As listed part of a Method Course of 10 hours/week   |                      | At least 5 hours/week music during English Appreciation time | 5 hours/week of one of the following in both Year 1 & 2<br>- Nature Study & Elementary Science<br>- Physical Culture & Hygiene<br>- Singing<br>- Gardening & Nature Study<br>- Manual Work<br>- Applied Art |  |
| 1923              |  |                      |  | 1 hours/week in Year 1<br>1 hours/week Choral Practice in both Year 1 & 2   | 2 hours/week in Year 1 & 2   |
| 1924              | 1 hours/week<br>1 hours/week choral practice   |                      | This course was not offered                                  | 1 hours/week Choral Practice in Year 1  | No stand alone music time  |
| 1925              | 1 hours/week   |                      |  | 4 hours/week of one of the following in both Year 1 & 2:<br>- Drawing<br>- Manual Work<br>- Music<br>- Games & Physical Exercises   |  |
| 1926              | 1 hours/week singing<br>3 hours/week of one of the following:<br>- Manual Work<br>- Art<br>- Music                           | 2 hours/week singing |  | 1 hours/week in Year 1<br>1hr/wk Singing in Year 2<br>3hr/wk in Year 2 of one of the following:<br>- Manual Work<br>- Drawing<br>- Music  | 1 hours/week in Year 1<br><br>3hr/wk in Year 2 of one of the following:<br>- Manual Work<br>- Drawing<br>- Music |
| 1927              | 2 hours/week   |                      |  | 1 hours/week<br>1 hours/week choral practice in both Year 1 & 2   |  |
| 1929              | 2 hours/week   |                      |  | 1 hours/week<br>1 hours/week choral practice in both Year 1 & 2   |  |
| 1930              |  |                      |  |   |  |

**Table 2 continued. Mandatory Music in Sydney Teachers' College primary courses, 1920–1956 (source: Teachers' College Calendars, 1920 - 1956).**

| Year course began | Short course (12 months) to teach in small rural schools |         | Second year of rural course | Primary  |                            |
|-------------------|--|---------|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
|                   | Infants  | Primary |                             | Infants/Lower                                    | Middle/Upper               |
| 1936-7            | No Calendar available                                    |         |                             | No Calendar available                            |                            |
| 1938              | This course was not offered                              |         |                             | Yes, music, but no details of amount of time     |                            |
| 1940-50,<br>1952  |  |         |                             | 1 hours/week in Year 1<br>2 hours/week in Year 2 |                            |
| 1954-1956         |  |         |                             | 1 hours/week in Year 1<br>1 hours/week in Year 2 | 1 hours/week in Year 1 & 2 |

*A one-year graduate entry Diploma of Education in Primary was also available during the 1920s, but given its small number of graduates, it has not been included in this table. No calendar was available for 1929–1930, but details of what was taught in music are available in a letter<sup>26</sup>. The one-year short course was reintroduced in 1936 to meet a staffing emergency<sup>29</sup>. Music in the one-year professional course has not been included in the table due to the very small number of students who chose this pathway and confusion in most Calendars about what the one-year graduate course contained.*

mandatory subject for all trainees; this remained at least until 1956. Nevertheless, music was also available as an elective through to 1956. While it is not often clear which cohorts of trainees had the opportunity to complete a music elective, those who did broadened their knowledge and understanding of music history, aesthetics, harmony and vocal music with studies which were more advanced than those in the core music course<sup>25</sup>.

During the short-course years, music training had two objectives: (i) to give trainees the technical knowledge and skills to teach the school syllabus<sup>26</sup>; and (ii) at least until 1925, to develop trainees' understanding of the value of teaching music, including music's extra-musical benefits (e.g. its ability to influence moral and social development and, until 1922, cultivate feelings of 'patriotism, industry and loyalty, etc.' to Britain<sup>27</sup>). There is no explanation for the 1926 removal of the value of music teaching; course designers may have assumed that trainees already understood music's role, or the curriculum may have become crowded with the addition of music appreciation.

From 1920 to 1925 the content of the mandatory one-year and two-year course music content was similar, and from 1926 all primary teacher trainees received the same mandatory instruction in music: a course aimed to assist them to teach the primary school syllabus. This course was divided into three sections: (i) 'The Equipment of the Teacher' (e.g. breathing, voice production, sight reading from both Tonic Sol-fa and staff notation, appreciation); (ii) 'The Study of Requirements, Methods and Principles' of the syllabus; and (iii) 'Cultural' (listening to lecturettes on the 'phonograph' and attending live music performances). The lecturettes were probably the series of *Music Lectures* recorded for use by schools by Walford Davies in 1922<sup>28</sup>. Mirroring the school syllabus, trainees in the new topic of music appreciation were introduced to music *via* the phonograph, and were encouraged to attend music concerts<sup>29</sup>.

In 1923 (at least), infants teacher trainees were required to pass a practical piano or violin examination before leaving college (this only appeared in the 1923 calendar, but probably continued at least until 1956). Trainees unable to

meet this requirement could apply to the college principal to be transferred to the Primary Division or to have the examination deferred up to two years after finishing college<sup>30</sup>. Trainees were also required to observe model or demonstration lessons taught by experienced teachers. In 1921, for example, Primary Division trainees had to observe two 45-minute music lessons for each of the third to sixth classes, and their attention was directed to songs sung on other occasions during the day<sup>31</sup>. They were required to record lesson observations in terms of: (i) the category of music used; (ii) the list of songs included; (iii) the purpose for which the song was used; (iv) effects observed; and (v) song books used with titles and prices.

During the Depression years, no college calendar was published until 1938, and thereafter music continued to be mandatory in the two-year course until 1956. The 1938 and 1940 music course content was virtually identical to that of 1927<sup>32</sup>, despite the course being reorganised in 1941<sup>33</sup>. The only modification after 1943 was that singing 'by ear' was added<sup>34</sup>, reflecting Supervisor of Music Terence Hunt's advocacy for this method, while 1949 saw an interesting change of focus, with music appreciation assuming greater prominence. Then, in a further diversification, reflecting for at least one year what was actually being taught in school beyond vocal music, men were taught the recorder while women studied eurhythmic-based musical perception, musical expression through physical movement, piano accompaniment for class work, simple improvisation and musical style<sup>35</sup>. Unfortunately for trainees and their subsequent classes of primary students, the course for 1950 to 1953 reverted to the one used before 1949, which was, in effect, the 1927 course<sup>36</sup>. No reason can be found to account for the 1949 change, or why it only lasted for one year.

A major change came in 1954 with a diversification of methods, when the course content reflected the 1952 music syllabus,

and contained nine main components to be covered in two years. Singing was still a major component, with songs taught 'by ear' or staff notation<sup>37</sup>. For the first time, however, Tonic Sol-fa was not mentioned as a method of presenting songs. The course included song interpretation, methods of teaching part-songs and methods of conducting. Within the theory component, the inclusions were elementary staff notation in relation to sight-reading, the use of French time names, hand signs and use of the modulator. Music appreciation, including repertoire, was another method presented to trainee teachers. The 1954 mandatory course, retained for 1955 and 1956, was marked by the emergence of six new methods: (i) the broadcast song lesson; (ii) recorders as both an instrument to be taught and as an aid to class teaching; (iii) melody writing; (iv) the percussion band; (v) the formation of choirs; and (vi) music in one and two-teacher schools<sup>38</sup>.

Serle's description of the interwar period in Australian education as a time of 'unadventurous uniformity'<sup>39</sup> certainly describes well the mandatory music courses at Sydney Teachers' College until 1938, indeed through to 1953, with the exception of the year 1949 when, for some inexplicable reason, music flourished. The few developments in music between 1920 and 1953 were minor, and involved reorganising existing material, the inclusion of music appreciation, and the minor addition of the new method of singing 'by ear'<sup>40</sup>.

### ***Teachers' examinations***

When Wilkins was appointed the inaugural Inspector and Superintendent of NSW National Schools in 1854, his first major task was to establish a teacher classification scheme based on the English model, where the efficiency of teachers – and hence their seniority and salary – was related to their position on the six-level classification ladder. Under Wilkins's scheme, a teacher's classification level was determined by the dual criteria of teaching efficiency (as

measured by an inspector) and attainment in an examination<sup>41</sup>. Wilkins's system was retained, largely unchanged, until 1942<sup>42</sup>.

There was a growing unrest, beginning in the mid-1920s, from the Teachers' Federation, teachers and inspectors over the burdensomeness of aspects of the classification scheme. In 1941, the Department established an internal committee, 'The Committee of Enquiry into Inspection', to make recommendations to resolve problems with the inspection and supervision of teachers<sup>43</sup>. In what Dugdale has described as the 'most significant innovation'<sup>44</sup>, Wilkins's nine-decade-old classification method with a Teachers' Certificate scheme was replaced in 1943. The main changes were: the amount of formal inspection was at least halved; reporting and supervision responsibilities were allocated to heads of schools and departments; secret reports on teachers were abolished; and the arduous examination and thesis-writing procedures in the promotions system was abolished<sup>45</sup>. With the introduction of the Teacher's Certificate scheme, teachers seeking promotion were no longer required to be examined in core and elective subjects, or examined by thesis. After 1943, only the teachers who still had subjects to complete from their teachers' college course were required to sit for subjects in the annual teachers' examinations.

Returning to the pre-Teacher's Certificate period, by 1920, music was largely an elective subject in the annual teachers' examinations. In 1921, music was only compulsory for Infant Teachers attempting the Class II teachers' examinations<sup>46</sup>, and only became compulsory for Class III teachers' examinations in 1924. There was, however, a loophole: while all candidates had to pass the two-and-a-half hour theoretical examination, those who could satisfy the examiner that they had no 'natural ability' in music could substitute another subject in place of practical music<sup>47</sup>. The two-and-a-half hour written examinations were demanding.

At the Class III level, the theoretical component required teachers to have a sound knowledge of the theory of music, including major and minor scales, and intervals and their inversions. Teachers also needed to transpose short melodic passages between staff notation and Tonic Sol-fa notation. They also needed knowledge of the history of opera and oratorio. At their practical examinations, teachers were required to sing major and minor scales, and to sight sing phrases in either Tonic Sol-fa or staff notation. They also needed to correctly sing intervals on the modulator, from a tuning fork, and the upper or lower note of an interval where the notes were played simultaneously. The Class II examination was at a more demanding standard than that for Class III.

### **Teacher professional development**

The 1904 educational reforms required teachers and inspectors to progress to a more advanced educational standard. James Dawson, the Chief Inspector at the time, reported one important consequence<sup>48</sup>:

*Teachers and inspectors busied themselves during the year with the work of mutual enlightenment. Meetings were held for discussion of aims and methods, papers on educational topics were read, lectures were delivered at various centres, untrained teachers were permitted to close their schools to enable them to visit well-managed schools, where teachers and inspectors showed how subjects should be taught, schools disciplined and organised so as to carry out the ideas of the Syllabus. ... In the near future classes for teachers will be formed at various centres, where specialists will give instruction necessary for effective work.*

A range of professional development opportunities for teachers were developed during the following half century: summer schools and evening courses, schools of methods, addresses and refresher days, demonstration lessons and post-college courses.

A summer school was a course offered during one or two weeks over December and/or January, for particular subject areas<sup>49</sup>. Teachers were advised on the details in the previous October, November and December issues of *The Education Gazette*. The summer schools were run during school vacation period to allow country teachers to be freed from their teaching responsibilities and potentially available to travel to Sydney to attend. Support came from the highest level. Once appointed as Director of Education in 1905, Peter Board encouraged summer schools as a way of keeping teachers, particularly from country areas, better informed about developments in teaching<sup>50</sup>.

Evening courses took one of two forms. Either they were offered on a range of topics, which may or may not have included music, or they were offered as stand-alone courses on subjects such as music. Evening courses were held in Sydney in weekly, two-hour sessions during school term time. Their evening scheduling meant that only metropolitan teachers could attend<sup>51</sup>. While the Department acknowledged that most teachers who attended the courses were candidates for the various teachers' examinations, it idealistically claimed that the purpose of the courses was to assist teachers to develop mastery of their subjects, rather than to prepare them for examinations<sup>52</sup>.

Every year between 1908 and 1948, teachers were offered a summer school in music<sup>53</sup>. When Theodore Tearne was appointed Superintendent of Music in 1909, he took personal responsibility for teaching professional development courses, and did so until a year before his 1922 retirement. Indeed, his major contribution to school music was his multi-faceted approach to teachers' professional music development<sup>54</sup>. No details are available on the content of the 1922 summer school, taught by Alfred Steel of the Conservatorium of Music<sup>55</sup>, but for the next three years, Herbert Treharne delivered the annual summer school in collaboration

with a well-known music educator. In 1923, he was joined by Frederick Hicks, from Brighton-le-Sands, in sessions on staff notation, Tonic Sol-fa notation, harmony and counterpoint, and practical work<sup>56</sup>; in 1924, Treharne's lectures on harmony and counterpoint were supplemented by sessions on Tonic Sol-fa by John Byatt, the Tonic Sol-fa proponent and Victorian Inspector of Schools<sup>57</sup>; and in 1925, his co-presenter was Donald Millar, who delivered sessions on class teaching<sup>58</sup>. Tearne's 1925 to 1945 summer schools in music were marked by a notable sameness, as he covered the same three topics of class teaching, theory of music, and harmony and counterpoint<sup>59</sup>. Nevertheless, since, these topics were part of the Class III and Class II teachers' examination syllabus, the summer schools should have provided teachers with good examination preparation. Further advantage lay, from 1920 to at least 1935, in a practical test, held at the conclusion of the schools, for those teachers wishing to take the practical music examination as part of their teacher classification process<sup>60</sup>.

Finally, in 1946, after two decades of curriculum inertia in the summer schools, an additional topic was added. Reflecting new methods in the 1941 primary music syllabus, instrumental training became a topic, with teachers participating each day in two-and-a-half hours' practical work for teaching involving the newly introduced percussion bands, recorders and school flutes<sup>61</sup>. The 1946 summer school was repeated in 1947 and 1948<sup>62</sup>. Less detail is available on the evening courses. Music was not available in the 1920 series of evening lecture courses<sup>63</sup>, although in 1923 and in most years until 1942, Treharne delivered a series of eight to ten two-hour evening sessions in Sydney for teachers preparing for the Class II and III teachers' music examinations<sup>64</sup>.

Reflecting an alternative approach to professional development, the 1920 *Inspectors' Handbook* was clear about the role of District Inspectors in the professional development

of teachers<sup>65</sup>. General Rule 21 stipulated that, throughout each year, inspectors were to arrange meetings for their teachers for lectures, papers and discussions on educational topics. General Rule 20 required inspectors to devote time and care to inexperienced and untrained teachers, and to bring such teachers together at schools where they could gain experience and training in better methods of teaching. Such an event was variously known as a School of Instruction or a School of Method. The 1920 *Inspectors' Handbook* also expressed the expectation that the Superintendent of Music would visit districts to deliver a School of Instruction to teachers. Such was the Department's commitment to professional development in music, that teachers attending a School of Method or teaching demonstrations could be relieved from their teaching responsibilities to attend, and where attendees came from small schools, the inspector had the authority to close the school for the day<sup>66</sup>.

The practice of inspectors bringing teachers together for professional development opportunities was not new. Chief Inspector James Dawson's 1909 annual report<sup>67</sup> described various inspectors updating teachers from isolated schools on new teaching methods by bringing them to a small school and focusing the instruction on the work of the school. The few years of District Inspectors' reports that have survived<sup>68</sup> reveal that the School of Method was still a form of professional development for isolated teachers until at least the end of the 1930s. In 1937, for example, Inspector William Allen, reported two such events he organised in 1937 the Narrabri district<sup>69</sup>, while Frank Ravenscroft, Inspector for the Bowral district, organised Schools of Method at his rural schools of Mowbray Park, Burragorang, Wingello, Kangaroo Valley, Hoxton Park, Mount Hunter and Campbelltown in 1938; he always included music in the program<sup>70</sup>. A School of Method was somewhat contrived in that, under the evaluative eye of their peers, teachers were required to each

teach a lesson as prescribed by the inspector, to a class of children they did not normally teach. However, the benefits for teachers were considerable.

Two other forms of professional development organised by inspectors were Refresher Days and educational addresses/lectures. Refresher Days differed from Schools of Method in that they were held in towns, hence making them accessible to both town and country teachers. They were delivered to teacher participants, in a lecture/workshop format, by knowledgeable and skilled teachers. Inspector William Allen organised Schools of Method in his first year in the Casino Inspectorate in the rural Far North Coast of NSW. While no details are available on his addresses, other than that they were held in the townships of Casino, Kyogle and Tenterfield, a report on the Refresher Day is available<sup>71</sup>. Music was valued in the assembly primarily for its extra-musical benefits, that is, for its ability to unify the children so they functioned as one, as well as for its ability to assist in instilling social, health and patriotic values. Music was also used to assist in the development of children's fine motor skills (through finger plays), gross motor skills, coordination and rhythmic skills (singing and marching, skipping and rhythmic breathing) and aesthetic sensitivity and imagination (such as tiptoeing 'like a mouse').

Music demonstration lessons were delivered to teachers by the Music Superintendent or by his assistant. Tearne took this responsibility seriously. In 1910 and 1911, in an effort to bring country schools up to the standard he had observed in the metropolitan area, Tearne received permission to travel to several larger country centres to instruct teachers and give practical demonstrations of methods<sup>72</sup>. However, unsurprisingly, given the multiple responsibilities of the Superintendent of Music in a state the size of NSW, both Tearne and his successor Treharne found difficulty in carrying out all their required tasks: Treharne found the requirements 'clearly

impossible without assistance<sup>73</sup>, and even when Treharne had an assistant after 1924<sup>74</sup>, the opportunity, particularly for country teachers, to observe music demonstration lessons was rare<sup>75</sup>. The rarity of such demonstrations is confirmed in a 1937 request to the Chief Inspector for music demonstrations on the Far North Coast of NSW. Inspector George Tompson wrote that he had 'been informed that it is the practice of the Education Department to grant the Supervisor of Music permission to visit various school inspectorates each year for the purpose of giving demonstrations in the teaching of music'<sup>76</sup>. While the request was approved, handwritten notations by Treharne and Chief Inspector Bertie Harkness on the suggested program established the expectation that Treharne's demonstrations would not be stand-alone events. There was an expectation that, during the visit, Inspector Tompson would observe some of the demonstrations and then 'follow up ... with practical help to teachers along the demonstration lines'<sup>77</sup>.

In 1938, the Director of Education, George Ross Thomas confirmed that country schools were being treated differently to city schools in terms of music supervision<sup>78</sup>:

*In music ... we are attempting to supervise the city schools with a supervisor and one assistant. This cannot be done adequately. The country is simply neglected, that duty being left to the Inspector, who in the city is relieved of it. Inspectors are not always experts in music ... hence the subject is frequently poorly handled in country districts, where the rights of the child are as important as those of the city child.*

In advocating for a second Assistant Supervisor of Music, Ross Thomas expressed the strong view that the 'niggardly attention' given by the state to this subject 'of special social and cultural value' meant children in NSW were gravely disadvantaged in terms of their inherent interests and capabilities, as well as their leisure activities<sup>79</sup>. Statistics provided by Terence Hunt, Treharne's successor, a decade later in 1949, indicate the

rarity of music inspections and demonstrations in NSW by then. Hunt advised that in that year only twenty-two of the states' primary and infants schools had been inspected. The only time music demonstrations were given was when Hunt was able to organise these to coincide with his inspections<sup>80</sup>.

Finally, in 1941, the Department initiated a series of post-college professional development courses for teachers<sup>81</sup>, which were, for their first decade, offered from Sydney Teachers' College as a series of evening winter sessions for metropolitan teachers and summer sessions for country teachers. An indication of the Department's commitment to this type of teacher professional development was the increasing range of education-related topics offered over the years in these courses, and the timing of the 1942 Country Teachers' Session. This first Country Teachers' Session was scheduled for the first week of Term 1 1942, thus absenting attendees from their teaching responsibilities<sup>82</sup>. Almost always, music was allocated a place in the post-college courses. Teachers at the 1942 Country Teachers' Session who chose the sessions on 'The Work of the Infants' Schools', for example, heard about 'Music Through Movement'<sup>83</sup>, the long-running wireless series by Heather Gell. In 1946, 'Music in the School' was one of twelve courses offered in the winter school, with sessions ranging from music reading to the relationship between psychology and singing, music and other school subjects, music appreciation, vocal training, and instrumental music<sup>84</sup>.

Beginning in 1952, in line with the Department's policy to decentralise education, the newer teachers' colleges also offered post-college courses to teachers<sup>85</sup>. In 1953, 'Music in the Infants' School' was a choice in the Newcastle course, with separate sessions on topics including singing, appreciation, theory, program planning and the teaching the 'musical backward' child<sup>86</sup>. In the following year, Newcastle's sessions were expanded to include percussion bands, melody

making, rhythm lessons and a consideration of possible music resources<sup>87</sup>. Music was also offered in the 1956 post-college course at Wagga Wagga Teachers' College, with sessions on sight-reading, appreciation, singing and music for enjoyment.

## Conclusion

While the need for appropriately trained teachers to teach in its schools has been a priority for the Department of Education since the beginning of public education in New South Wales in the 1850s, the appearance of modern-looking teacher education only followed the educational reforms of 1904. Nevertheless, there were only gradual changes in the form and structures of teacher training and teacher professional development in music during the early twentieth century, with processes between 1920 and 1956 providing the basis of contemporary teacher training in New South Wales. Three main approaches were significant; the evolving nature of music within the programs and curriculum at the Sydney Teachers' College; a significant change in the nature of the teacher classification examination system, and the role that music played in this process; and the later consolidation and implementation of music-based professional development opportunities for teachers.

A benefit of historical research is that through considering the human past, knowledge can be gained which may inform the present and future. This paper is relevant to today for it discusses a long period, now gone, when the music education of children was held to be of such importance that music had stand-alone subject status in teacher training, teacher professional development and in the education of children.

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