

ONE CLASSROOM 1936,1966 and2012

THEN-----

I arrived at St. Chad's on the 4th of May 1936,my first day at school.We entered through the big blue door and sat at iron –framed desks with a shelf beneath on which we kept a tin (mine was a Bluebird toffee tin) which contained our pencil and crayons. There was a big open fire which had to be kept stoked with coal, there was no central heating in those days.A big fireguard protected us from the burning coals and In the winter our bottles of milk were put to warm just inside the fire guard. The warm milk bottles were good for warming our cold hands.

My first teacher was Miss Guilfoyle whose job was to teach us to read,write and do sums. Our reading books had a picture on the top half of the page and key words and a sentence beneath. Our sum books had pages of adding and take away sums. On the wall was a world map with much of it coloured red showing all the British colonies. We had exercises on oval rush mats outside when the weather was warm.. If it was cold then we marched in and out in a spiral pattern.

Father Kelly was our priest who came into class frequently to make sure that we were learning our "Penny Catechism".

Outside there was a big beech tree which at Easter time was festooned with Easter eggs and at Christmas time we listened out for the sleigh bells which told us that Santa Claus was on his way .

I moved on , in the same building, to Miss Donnelly's class and was about to move up to Miss Bradley's class when war was declared and I had to leave St Chad's school.

LATER-----

Many years later in fact, in September 1966 I returned to the same class-room,this time as a teacher,appointed by Fr. Gaffney. The entrance to the class-room was no longer through the big ,blue door but through the porch at the back. This time there was no open fire but a

temperamental heating system. In a less than inspiring classroom we set to work to brighten it up with giant sunflowers climbing up the walls. We still concentrated on reading, good handwriting, spelling, arithmetic, tables and mental arithmetic tests weekly. We had history and geography topics, singing and games. The girls were taught needlework while the boys had football. Religious instruction was very important-our reason for our existence as a Catholic school

Later ,of course we moved into the “new” school and our class-room became part of the dining room.

WHAT NEXT 2012

Now sadly the Victorian school, a listed building stands neglected, waiting for new life. What form this will take, who knows?

