



# Life at Matlock College

Edited by George Wigglesworth



This is an attempt to collect together enough material to outline the history of the college and to give some flavour of the life there. I am grateful to the many people who have helped, including those who have trawled their memories to recount some anecdote to bring to it a personal

flavour. It is perhaps noteworthy that most are of social moments! That, however, probably reflects the happy atmosphere so many experienced and the acceptance of the courses devised for their professional training. Factual information is intended to be accurate. However it depends on memory or dates from printed sources and the latter don't always distinguish between authorisation, building commencing and the completion of buildings or between advertising, recruitment and arrival for the course.

I am indebted for information come by in various ways too numerous to list. Jean Lambert's thesis was a mine of precise and comprehensive material for times before 1972. Margaret McAdams and David Whalley made available a treasure trove of student magazines. In the early years they

had varied titles, Neriad, Mosaic and, once, The Peak. Most recently it was 'Matlock Musing' and this is available for consultation on disc at the Derbyshire Local Studies Library although publication has now ceased after twenty seven editions. It contains numerous photos and both short and lengthy articles on a broad range of subjects connected with the college and Matlock

George Wigglesworth

<b>Rockside Hydro</b>	<b>Residential/teaching</b>	<b>Wellington St.</b>	<b>1945</b>	<b>Art &amp; Craft Block (became Ed Tech and Language Lab 1971)</b>	<b>Chatsworth site</b>	<b>1955</b>
<b>Chatsworth Hydro</b>	<b>Residential/teaching</b>	<b>Chesterfield Rd/Wellington St.</b>	<b>1946</b>	<b>Arts (C) Block (History, Geography &amp; Education)</b>	<b>Chatsworth site</b>	<b>1958</b>
<b>Rockwood</b>	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Cavendish Rd</b>	<b>1957</b>	<b>Gymnasium</b>	<b>Chatsworth site</b>	<b>1963</b>
<b>Stoneycroft</b>	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Cavendish Rd</b>	<b>1959</b>	<b>Science and Maths block</b>	<b>Chatsworth site</b>	<b>1964</b>
<b>Westlea</b>	<b>Residential Block then Art</b>	<b>Chesterfield Road/Asker Lane</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>Staff and Students' residences</b>	<b>Cavendish Road/Wolds Rise</b>	<b>1966</b>
<b>Westlea stables</b>	<b>Diploma (Slow Learners)</b>	<b>Chesterfield Road/Asker Lane</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>Cavendish Sports Pavilion</b>	<b>Cavendish Park</b>	<b>1967</b>
<b>The Rowans</b>	<b>Principal's House</b>	<b>Cavendish Rd</b>	<b>1966</b>	<b>Studio</b>	<b>Adjacent Chatsworth Dining Hall</b>	<b>1967</b>
<b>Wesleyan Chapel</b>	<b>Closed Circuit TV studio</b>	<b>The Bank</b>	<b>1966</b>	<b>Music block</b>	<b>Cavendish Road/Wolds Rise</b>	<b>1968</b>
<b>Sherwood Hall</b>	<b>Recreation/bar/teaching</b>	<b>Drill Hall, Chesterfield Rd.</b>	<b>1966</b>	<b>College Hall:- Dining rooms, kitchen and bar</b>	<b>Wellington Street</b>	<b>1970</b>
<b>Oldhams Hydro (Woodlands)</b>	<b>Students Union, Curriculum Studies Centre</b>	<b>Wellington St.</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>Curriculum Extension to Science Block</b>	<b>Chatsworth Site</b>	<b>1976</b>

Existing buildings

New buildings

Following the end of the second World War there had been a national search for suitable houses, airfields, anything which might be used for the emergency training of teachers. In Derbyshire the Hayes at Swanwick and the American Hospital at Sudbury (now an open prison) had been considered. In the event a college was founded on Chatsworth and Rockside Hydros in Matlock. The latter, although bought first, needed more alterations having been an R.A.F. hospital during the war and Chatsworth (C&A Modes wartime Head Office) was therefore the first building used when a hundred students were admitted in 1946.

Rockside was in fact purchased for £30,000 on 18 Dec 1945 (£1 in 1945 = £ 30 in 2007), Chatsworth for £17,000 seven months later, sixty of the students being housed in the hotel at Lilybank in the interim. Rockside was initially furnished following a meeting approving the expenditure of £23,000 and minuted on 25 Mar 1947. Growth of the college was by a combination of adaptation and re-use of existing buildings together with new purpose built facilities. The original Science and Geography Block was built for a tender of just under £4,000. The purchase of Cavendish playing field was authorised in the summer of 1947. Both new and resurfaced tennis courts feature in the minutes.



Miss Skittery (PE)  
 Miss Saville (Art)  
 Miss Oakley (Divinity)  
 Miss Knight (Junior Education)  
 Miss Murray (Maths & Infants)  
 Mrs Brown (Art?)  
 Miss Wood (Librarian)  
 Mrs Westbrook (PE)  
 Miss Fowler (Sec Education)  
 Miss Allen (Principal)  
 Miss Briscoe (D.P., Eng Lit)  
 Miss Dawson (Biology)  
 Miss Campbell (History)  
 Miss Chelton (History)  
 Miss McAdams (Geography)  
 Miss Silverthorn (Craft & Eng)  
 Miss Palmer (Music)  
 Miss Lewis (Rockside Matron)  
 Chatsworth Matron

Staff 1949

*“The first students were a hardy lot, because the early part of 1947 was remarkable for the heaviest snowfall within memory. For weeks on end we looked out on deep snow which completely covered hedges and indeed stone walls and signposts, and came halfway up telegraph poles. There were drifts round college over twenty feet deep. It was miraculous that food (which was still rationed) and fuel reached us.”*

*Gladys Allen (1946 - 1967) in “Matlock Musings”*

*“I remember the occasion when the Derby College women invited our first intake of men to a dance and the Chatsworth students came to dinner clothed in black.”*

*Norah Oakley (1947 - 1967) in “Matlock Musings”*

Initially the Principal was Miss Gladys Elizabeth Allen, born in June 1902 in West Ham. She became a First Class Honours graduate in Physics at London University and subsequently taught at Roedean before the war eventually being headmistress at Merrywood G.H.S. in Bristol. The college was run in the manner of many women's colleges of the times. She assumed parental responsibility for the students. For instance, initially both lunch and dinner were formal, dances were chaperoned by staff. The introduction of male students (many of whom had served in the forces) and a growing proportion of male staff coincided with the disappearance of the latter.



Chatsworth

*I was resident in Chatsworth for two years and one of the duties was to patrol the corridors at 10pm and make sure that the girls were all in their rooms. When the men arrived, the duty meant that you had to see that the girls were in, the men out. (It was at that point that I asked if I could be non-resident.) In Miss Allen's day, the evening meal was formal. Students went into the dining room and stood at their tables. The resident staff assembled by the lift at Chatsworth and waited until Miss Allen (and Mademoiselle) appeared and then we all entered the dining room. After saying Grace, we all sat down and the students were not allowed to leave until Miss Allen had gone.*

*Connie Dove (1957 - 1981)*

As well as dances in Rockside there were more formal balls at Christmas and Commemoration at the "Pav," Matlock Bath. Students visited Loughborough, a PE and Technology college as well as the Brush Co. Apprentices' ball. I wonder how many spouses are engineers? It was the period of authority and austerity after the war and when the age of majority was twenty one. Miss Allen allowed two visits home per term as well as half term but also looked very favourably on Youth Hostel weekends for students to experience the beauties of Derbyshire. The ethos is perhaps illuminated by the authorisation of the purchase of a Union Jack, eighteen dozen pairs of cutlery for fish, £10 on Table Napkins and a butter-pat maker. Students brought sheets, pillow cases, quilt, table napkins and serviette rings. They could however put out one pair of shoes to be cleaned by the night porter.

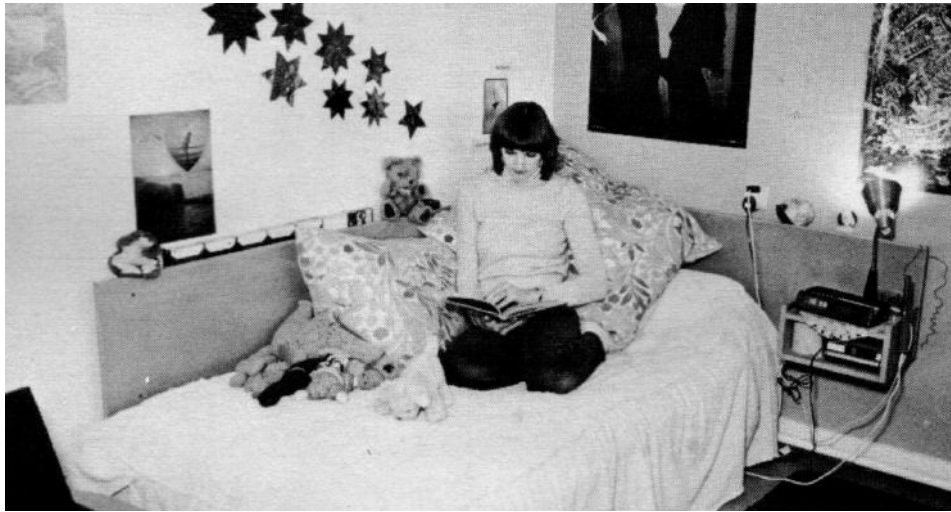


Snow from Rockside

*I had a short walk from Rockside hall along the path to the dining hall with lovely views of the countryside including that of Riber Castle out of the windows. Meals consisted of a hearty breakfast, coffee and biscuits mid morning, lunch, afternoon tea with sandwiches (including dripping sandwiches which were ignored by many students) and then the evening meal.*

*Clal (née White) Wahlich (1971 - 1975)*

College personal tutors were introduced in 1968 and there was to be a counselling service. Medical supervision, initially by Dr Souter then by Dr Wilderspin, was also important for routine ailments. But also catching and transmitting TB was then and as now important issue. Matrons and sick bay featured large. In fact student say a spell in sick bay was something to be avoided at all cost and sickness was seen as no reason for failure to catch the coach for teaching practice. One new member of staff recalls matron tapping her wrist watch to reprimand her for being late and the offer of sciatica as the reason was met by a statement that the only treatment was to remain active. Subsequent matrons were all much more sympathetic!



Bedroom

*For my first two years as a student I lived in lodgings down in the valley and was faced with a steep climb up Matlock Bank every morning to attend lectures. Coming from Hertfordshire, I wasn't used to the hills. My most vivid memory was when the River Derwent burst its banks in December 1965 and the valley was flooded to such a height that the goal posts on the Matlock Town football pitch were completely submerged. It was impossible to leave Matlock to go home that weekend*

*Pat Hey (née Wilkinson) 1964-67*

Miss Pilkington, who is remembered by many, was the Principal's Secretary, her appointment being made permanent on the 23 March 1948. Miss E Briscoe, was the first Deputy Principal, appointed on 22 June.

Initially almost all the students were in residence but shortly the growing numbers required some to be accommodated in "college approved lodgings". Later there were some day students living in their own homes. The relationship with the town was notable. The domestic staff were very skilled and loyal, many having been involved with hydros. The ancillary and secretarial staff identified closely with the work of the college. In life outside college the landladies took a close interest in their students. For the younger generation the students brought a liveliness to the town going beyond the Duke and Gate public houses. There were the dances, the Rag and its raft race, the present day festivity continuing the tradition.

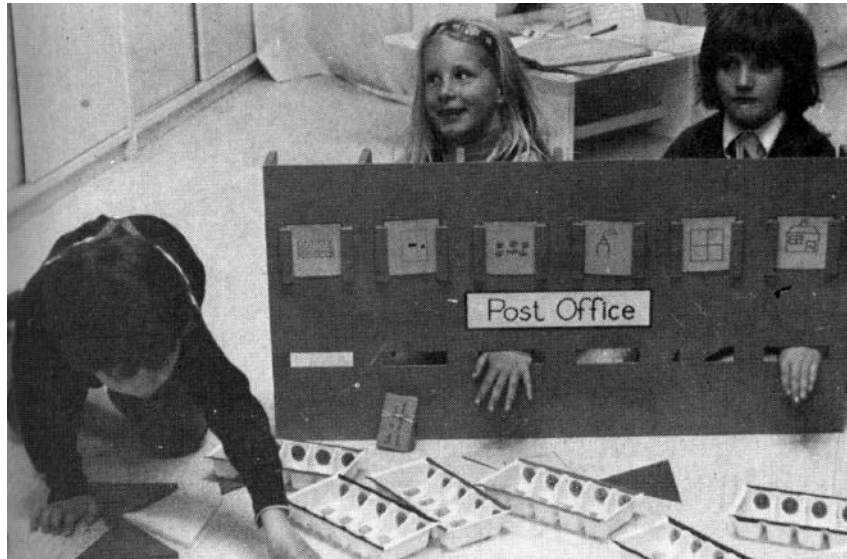


Rockside Lounge

*I was 2 years ahead of my boyfriend and was studying Infant Education with Miss Dibb while he was in Main Course Biology in the adjacent prefabricated hut. When we thought the lecturers were not looking we waved to each other - how romantic! Then Miss Dibb pulled down the blinds. It was also less hazardous than his visits to the Rockside 3rd floor via the outside drain pipe.*

*Rosemary (née Little) Helliwell (1960 - 1963)*

Students who “lived in” will no doubt be interested that 32 double beds were converted to single, 100 mattresses were bought for £2 each (“they served for a long time” I hear the cry). When new beds were purchased for Rockwood students were not allowed to sit on them! A contract for catching cockroaches, rats and mice was placed. Provision of adequate fire escapes was a concern but who was to use them and to go in which direction was not made clear. Drain pipes also served. A signing out and in book, together with male visitors being restricted to the lower lounge in Rockside, no doubt influenced the use of the fire escapes.



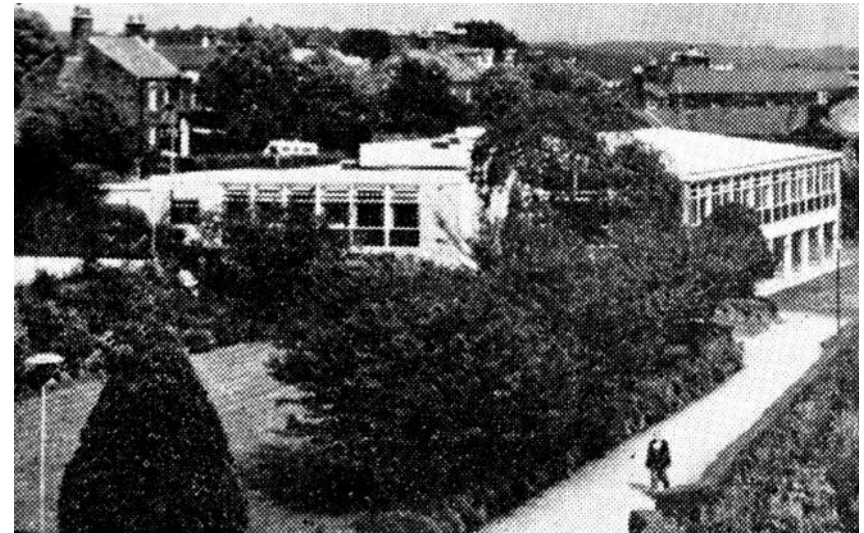
Teaching Practice with ‘less able’ children

*Even before the days of ‘Health and Safety’ we would have fire drills. To evacuate the end of the short corridor in Rockside there were a series of trap doors in the floors of the end room, connected by fixed vertical ladders. This eventually opened out through a door onto Rockside Steps, a public pathway. The students would have to then make their way up to Cavendish Road and assemble on the ‘Top Lawn’. By the time those on the third floor had got there, everyone else had gone back in!*

*Helen (née Hill) Burpee (1975-79)*

Various educational necessities feature in the original purchases:- a Banda duplicator (4 colours!), Film Projection Screen, a twin motor playing desk for records, percussion band instruments, two grand pianos and a viola (which latter cost £8).

Signs of the times are reflected in reference to the purchase of material to make curtains for Masson Wing of Rockside if it was coupon free. The planned renovations would not require “restricted materials”. Rockside’s electricity required conversion from 110 volts to 240 and the girls were not allowed to bring their own electrical gadgets, even wirelesses!



College Hall

*My most vivid memories are of the social events especially the Victorian Christmas party. This was a splendid affair, when Chatsworth Hall was transformed by the Art department using colourful and imaginative decorations, and the staff joined in the theme by dressing up in appropriate clothing which covered the military, as well as various levels of social strata. The boar's head was brought in with great ceremonial and the night ended with dancing. For most members of staff this occasion is an abiding memory. There were also staff activities to recall, like croquet on Chatsworth lawn at lunchtime and the badminton evenings in Sherwood hall and Chatsworth gym.*

*Judy Hubbard (1965 - 1983)*

The first “Commemoration” (at that stage “Opening”) which was to become a yearly event was addressed by Sir Charles Morris on 6th May 1948. At first the college concentrated on initial training of teachers. This developed with the introduction of men students and the national pattern was lengthened to be a three year course. Eventually staff meetings were replaced by an Academic Board following the Weaver Report with some, a minority of, elected members of staff together with three representatives of the student body. In 1972 the Governing body included the Principal and two members of the Academic Board together with the President of the Students’ Union. In 1966 the main subject range was widened, for example Outdoor Education became part of the women’s PE course.



Art on Teaching Practice

*Matlock College is the only place where I've played croquet. The lawn in front of Chatsworth Hall provided an ideal setting for what I soon realised was the most delightfully malicious and competitive game that I'd ever played, a very different sport to its 'Alice in Wonderland' image. The staff formed a club and on one occasion played against a team from the County Hall. My last act at the college was to defeat the Principal (a mean player himself) at croquet.*

*David Hey (1967 - 1969)*

From 1967 the college was formally associated with the London Urban Studies Centre in East London which served as a residential and study centre for teaching practice in London. Eventually in 1972 a four year B.Ed. degree which included teacher qualification was offered, being validated by Nottingham University (alongside the certificate). It had the possibility of an honours award and the certificate was eventually dropped. The students’ studies involved a Main Course, The Theory of Education and Curriculum studies which are about the process of teaching related to the age range it is proposed to teach. The students had twelve weeks of "School Practice".



Junior Field Club at College

*I wrote for “Matlock Musings” during my first vacation at Matlock “with Derbyshire’s Youth Orchestra practising ‘Rhapsody in Blue’ below me and scaffolding being busily erected outside my window, I’d much prefer to be with the ‘Matlock College Moroccan Expedition’ which is now (I hope) working hard in the Dades Gorge area.”*

*Robert Clayton (1967 - 1976)*

The courses attracted an increasing number of "Mature Students" and the academic entry criteria were lessened to make access easier for them to change careers even though the final assessment was the same for all students. Some well qualified mature students embarked on a shorter course. The collapse of Rolls Royce in Derby influenced many. These students were often day students. The group from Zimbabwe in 1980 introduced a different culture to the college. There was also, from 1972, a one year Post Graduate course for training teachers with a subject degree from elsewhere. A B Comb Studies/BA was inaugurated late in the college's life.



Educational television

*As it was a relatively small college everyone knew everyone else and meal times were like one huge family getting together. And like most families you had no privacy at all. If you turned up at the top of the steps into college hall dining room for a meal with someone three times in a row, it was assumed you were going out with them – conversely if you didn't you had broken up!*

*Helen (née Hill) Burpee (1975-79)*

From 1961 the college became more and more involved with in-service work. Frank Knight (the County's Senior Adviser in Education) was highly instrumental in this, the college being the only Higher Education institution run by the county. Initially it regularly ran courses in Science for Primary teachers to be followed by other subjects and age ranges. The county then organised a Science and a Reading Centre within the college in 1971.

The full time Bachelor of Education degree was modified to be offered as a one year full time course and two year part-time degree for qualified teachers, even running as far afield as Glossop (although that is within the county). In the early eighties a part-time Diploma in Outdoor Education was arranged for serving teachers which involved working with staff across departmental areas.



Vietnamese refugees using the language laboratory

*College accepted the suggestion that we train a group of a dozen Rhodesian students. They were all Mathematics students. When Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 there was great rejoicing. They were a most pleasant group even the one emotionally involved in politics. They were certificated to teach in Zimbabwe. The return visit of Siphon Ndlovu was occasion for a party of some of those he knew.*

*Ron Haydock (1963 - 1983)*

A full time, year long, Diploma course was offered for teachers of the less able and a Youth and Community course was introduced. The college continued to diversify and there were 20 alternative programs offered in the 1982 Prospectus

The college amalgamated with Derby and left this site in 1988 having been known as a Training College for Women, a College of Education and finally as a College of Higher Education. Over 9000 had passed through, the college always reaching its government intake target including the



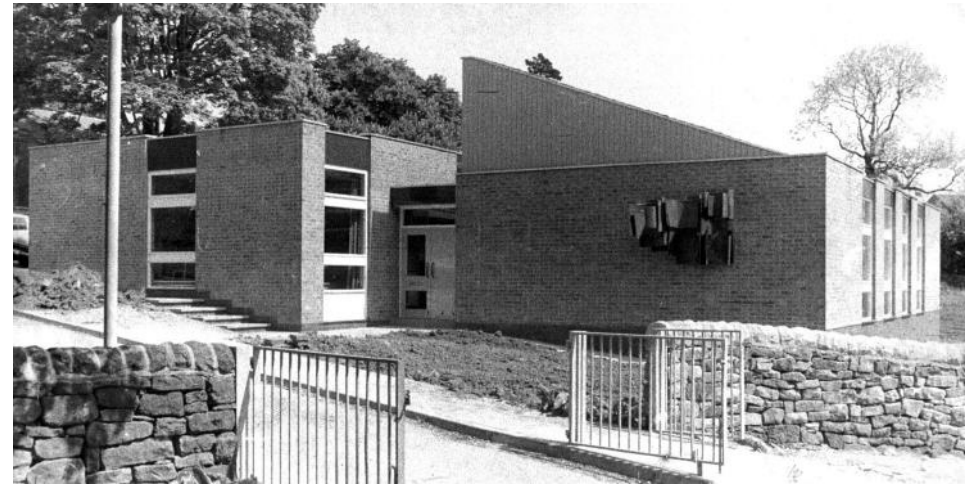
Staff and Student residences

*I remember the gentrified atmosphere of college, the wonderful lunches for staff on high table in Rockside Assembly Hall, the excellent morning coffee and afternoon tea gatherings in the Senior Common Room which often spilled out onto the lawn and gardens. I was extremely lucky to be given two years leave of absence to study barn owls for a PhD in Malaysia; I remember on my first morning back, after two years, standing in the coffee queue next to an elderly female member of staff who exclaimed "Oh! I haven't seen you for sometime, have you had a cold?"*

*Graham Lenton (1974 - 1979)*

shortage subjects of Physics and Maths. The academic qualifications on admission were above the national average.

The Chatsworth site was to be used by Derbyshire County Council. Rockside suffered a long time from dereliction but is now operating as flats surrounded by houses and some buildings such as the Cavendish Students' residences, the Music Block and College Hall have gone.



Music Block

*When students finished their 3rd year they had a "going down dinner" ( a posh event) for which the 4th year students used to act as waitresses. When I was a fourth year I was asked by the Catering Officer (Doug Osman) to get up a group and thought we could make more of the role. We decided to dress up as Bunny Girls and for some time before gathered what we needed for our costumes and made bunny ears, cuffs and collars. I can still see the look of shock on Donny's face as we came up the stairs to serve. It was a great idea, so much so that we were invited to stay on for the celebrations after.*

*Clal (née White) Wahlich (1971 - 1975)*



*I was on the domestic staff in College Hall and it was a jolly place to work, it was part of a way of life. Doug Osman was a wonderful person to work for and very professional. It was important to Matlock, the trade, the landladies and the folk that worked there. You met all sorts of folk besides the young students. There were Americans on music courses in the holidays. Disabled people and the deaf used the accommodation. Miss Allen used to give parties for the staff and their families. I worked there for twenty years but some did over thirty.*

*Emma Armshaw*

*One of my students who stayed with me as his landlady enjoyed the facilities and being out of college. I did the washing although men seemed to wear socks until you had to cut them off. I made breakfast when they got up. He asked if he could use our big dining room, I didn't ask him what for and I did said yes. Until that is I found him setting up a drum kit for the group he was forming. It was a horrid and loud noise, much too much for me with a four month old baby!*

*Jean Henshaw*



*Splendid, characterful, beautifully situated buildings and lovely gardens; friendly, mostly hard working well-motivated students; highly professional and committed staff (in all aspects of the college); I no sooner arrived than national reorganisation threatened to close our college; the struggle for survival; questions in the House and support from local MPs; Nottingham as a supportive and helpful university; excellent Drama productions; displays of work by the 'Bowler Babes'; regret when we lost the battle for independence and merged with Derbyshire College of Higher Education to become a Faculty. I am still convinced that closure/merger of small and highly effective colleges like Matlock did not serve the best interests of teacher education.*

*David Udall (Principal 1976 - 1988)*

*Nothing became the Matlock students better than the way they left the campus. The cleaners and the student union met together to discuss what should and could happen on the final night. Nothing was put on paper, no formal agreement was reached. However, there was no rowdiness, no taking of souvenirs, no damage, no falling out. The students went their way quietly and pleasantly – and everything was left in good order – left for the vandals. This quitting of the Matlock site, three years after amalgamation, was marked by a garden party and took place in surprisingly good spirits. Matlock town's brass band played, the sun shone, and there were fireworks at the end of the day: Many rockets. What goes up must come down. Something valuable survived.*

*Don Measham (1963 - 1989)*

The Bar

## Time Line

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1945 | Rockside bought  | 1967 | Miss Allen retired, Robert Clayton appointed                                  |
| 1946 | Chatsworth bought  | 1968 | “The Rowans” purchased to be the Principal’s house                            |
| 1946 | First hundred (female) students admitted in August                         | 1969 | The Instruments & Articles approved, authorising the temporary Academic Board |
| 1946 | Miss Gladys Allen appointed Principal in October                           | 1970 | 42 students were the first to be awarded B.Ed.                                |
| 1948 | George Tomlinson (Minister of Education) visited                           | 1970 | 40% of the intake were men  |
| 1950 | 1 year course for mature, experienced but unqualified teachers             | 1971 | “Mature Students” were 15% of those leaving college                           |
| 1951 | Florence Horsborough (Minister of Education) visited                       | 1972 | Post-graduate Certificate in Education instituted with 27 students            |
| 1954 | The College was granted a Coat of Arms                                     | 1972 | Supplementary Course upgraded to Diploma status                               |
| 1958 | Became "mixed" rather than single sex                                      | 1972 | 816 full time students  |
| 1958 | Rockwood (initially for females) and Stoneycroft opened.                   | 1974 | Part time inservice B Ed introduced   |
| 1960 | 2 year course became 3 in response to the McNair report                    | 1975 | Two year Diploma in Higher Education introduced                               |
| 1962 | One year Supplementary Course on the teaching of Backward Children offered | 1976 | Robert Clayton resigned as Principal to be replaced by David Udall            |
| 1963 | One third of students were in lodgings                                     | 1978 | Bachelor of Combined Studies offered  |
| 1966 | Full time B Ed in response to the Robins Report                            | 1982 | 75,000 volumes in Library, 300 periodicals                                    |
| 1967 | Student numbers reached 700, 2500 have attended                            | 1988 | Site Closed   |
| 1967 | Eight term intensive course started  |      |   |

*As a teenager, born and bred around here in the 1960's, Matlock seemed to me a more social and happy town. Rag week for example, all week long things happened, not only students but the local teenagers enjoyed themselves. Rag Mags were always a hit as was the student ball at the end. Matlock lost a lot when the college closed, not just the 'hot spots', shops and the people who put students up. I had lots of fun and I wish my girls could have the same as they grow up.*

*Frances (née Coote) Hurst*

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