

LOOKING BACK AT WHITLEY BAY HIGH SCHOOL



Above: Whitley Bay High School, 1963.

As we look forward to Whitley Bay High School's exciting future and new building, we wanted to look back on our school's story so far.

In 1908, Whitley Bay was a fast growing community. Schools in the area were becoming overcrowded and it was decided that a new secondary school was desperately needed. In 1911, £14,500 was granted for the construction of a school in the Monkseaton district.

THE FIRST SCHOOL

The construction of the school was interrupted by a mysterious fire in March 1914. A local newspaper at the time wondered if this may have been the work of suffragettes or just "some idle youths".

Despite this setback, in September 1914, just after the outbreak of the First World War, the Whitley and Monkseaton High School for Boys and the Whitley and Monkseaton High School for Girls were officially founded.

The schools were separate, but they were housed in the same building on Lovaine Avenue. This building is now Marden Bridge Middle School.

PROPOSED SECONDARY SCHOOL AT WHITLEY

Above: Article headline from The Shields Daily News 22/12/1908

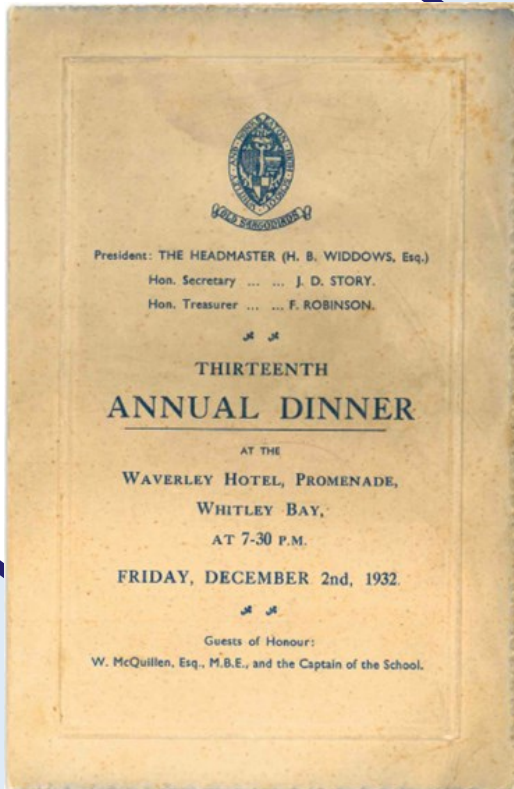
WHITLEY HIGH SCHOOL,

Mysterious Fire.

An element of mystery is attached to a slight outbreak of fire which occurred on Friday night on the new school being built at Whitley Bay. The Northumberland Education Committee. discovery was made by P.O. Whitfield, who endeavored to extinguish it unaided, and before much damage was caused. It was evident, however, that the conflagration had been caused by a quantity of inflammable material had been put together near a plank on the roof of the building. Was it the work of suffragettes or just "some idle youths"? The contractors are of opinion that the building has once previously been the scene of that character, but the

Above: Article from The Shields Daily News 30/03/1914

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In 1937, after the death of the girls' school headmistress, the two schools merged and in 1945, in response to the Education Act of 1944, the school became Whitley Bay and Monkseaton Grammar school.



Left: a signed program for an Annual Dinner for a group associated with the school called 'The Old Seatonians', dated 1932. The dinner menu included popular dishes such as Mock Turtle Soup, Roast Goose and Caramel Ice.



As the population of Whitley Bay grew, so did the school and wooden structures were added to create more space for the increased number of students, however it soon became clear that the Lovaine Avenue building was no longer suitable.

Below: staff photograph taken outside the Lovaine Avenue school building, May 1952

Front row, left-right: Stan Holmes; Miss Huntingdon; Harry Young; Kate Evans; Noel O Parry, George Worsley, Eileen Tinsley, Ted Jones, Morgan Hall

Middle row, left-right: Joan Bunding; Dorris Louet; Len Morrow; Charlie Russell; Jim Falkus; Robin Stewart; 'Tuffy' Seddon; Adelaide Youngsen; Madge White; Bill Porter; Fritz Biermann; Dennis Milner

Back row, left-right: Leslie Robson; Miss Harrison; Roly Neighbour; Harold Hardman; Leo O'Donnell; Mrs Lee; Monsieur Yeo

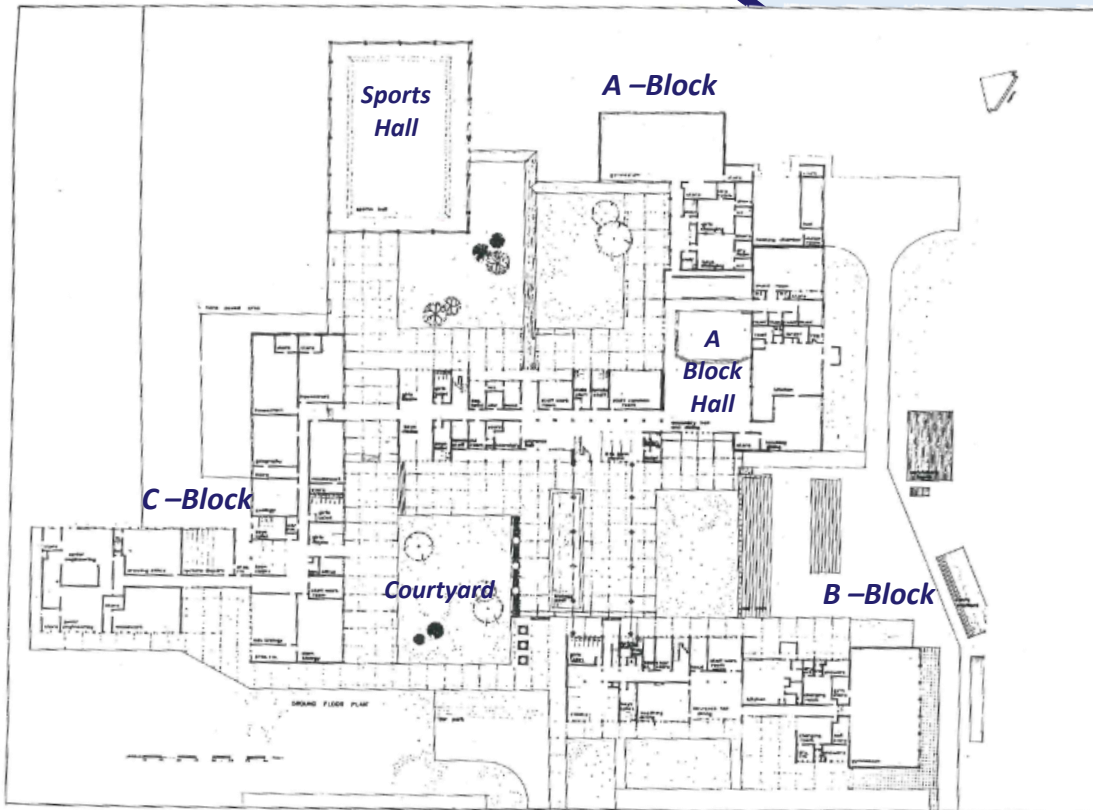


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A NEW SCHOOL FOR THE SIXTIES

In January 1959 a proposal to build a new school was put forward and on the 30th March 1961 construction of the new building on Deneholm began. The school was designed to accommodate 1080 pupils and to provide plenty of science and practical spaces. The total cost of the

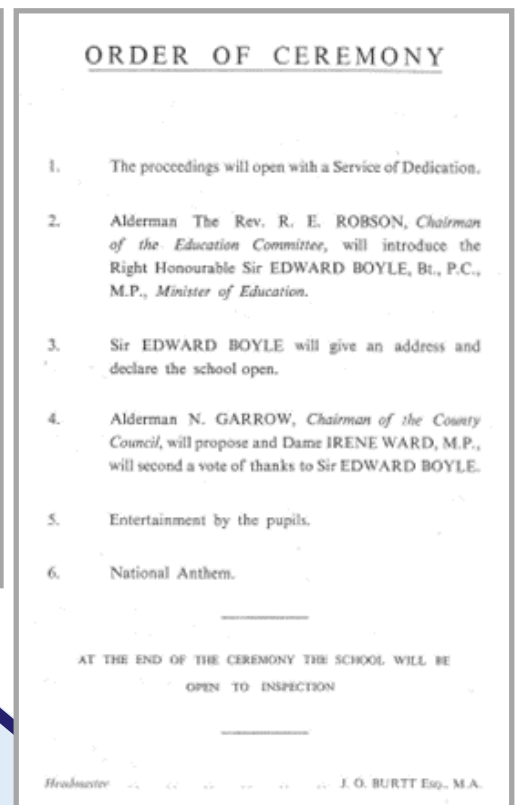
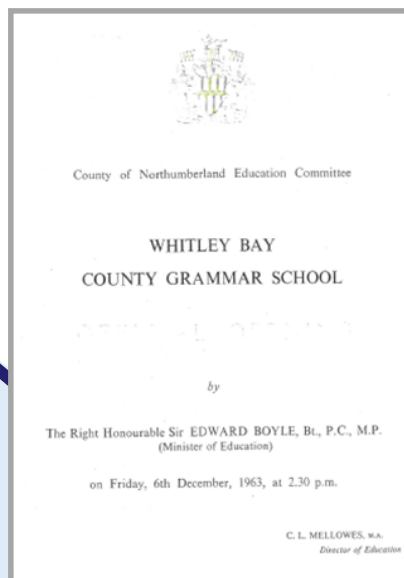
project was over £546,000, this would be equivalent to over £12 million today.



Left: a plan of the ground floor of the Deneholm building in 1962. The consisted of only three blocks, A, B and C. D-Block was not built until 2002.

Right: the program for the official opening ceremony of the building on 6th December 1963

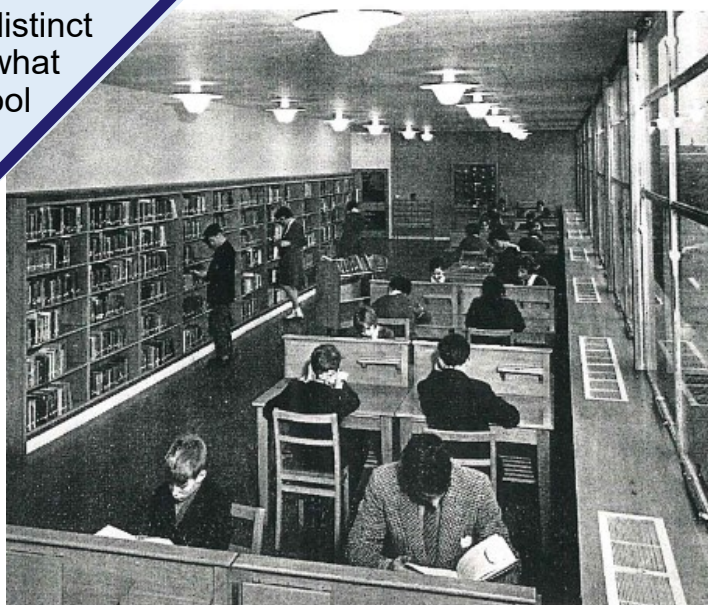
The building opened to receive its first pupils on Monday 10th December 1962. The big move was an exciting event involving all staff and students. Sixth formers were required to help with moving items between the two schools the week before and prefects were assigned to help students find their cloak rooms and form rooms on the day. However, it was nearly a year later that the building was officially opened by the then Minister of Education, Edward Boyle on 6th December 1963.



THE HISTORY OF WHITLEY BAY HIGH SCHOOL

The building was originally split into two distinct sections, with the lower school based in what is now known as B block and upper school based in A block with each having their own separate classrooms and dining areas. The library, which was originally located in the current sixth form research centre, acted as the bridge between the schools. Both upper and lower school students used the space for study and to borrow books.

Right The school library, c. 1963.



Below: A-Block ground floor, c. 1963



Above: music teacher and students, c. 1963

Left: students in A-Block Hall c. 1963.



Sixth-formers were provided with their own private study area, common room and tea-bar which was located, in what is now the main school staff room.

Music rooms were located next to A-Block Hall before moving to D-Block after its construction in 2002.

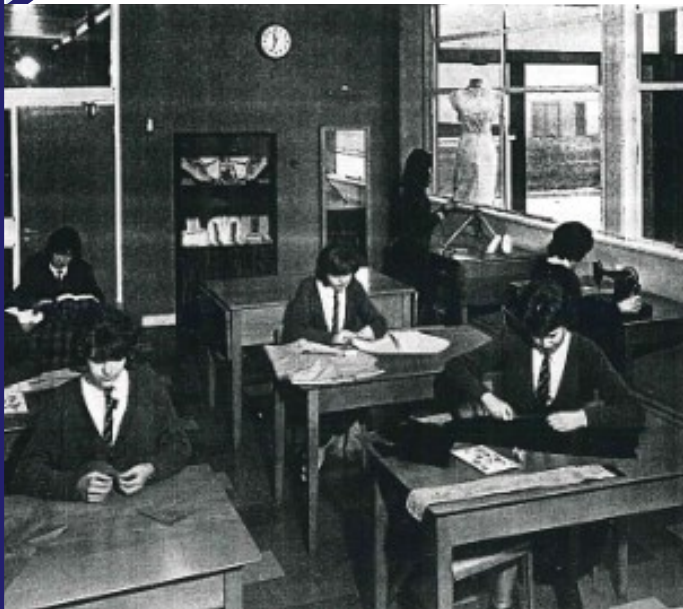
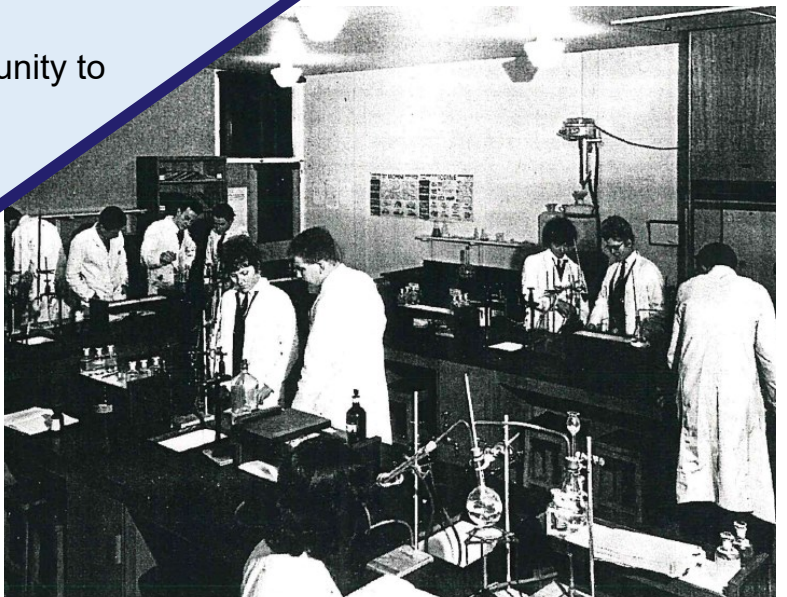
The hall was originally stepped, with a lower section in front of the stage. This was levelled after floods damaged the building in 2012.

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The classrooms were specifically designed to allow students the opportunity to study practical subjects as this was something the old building severely lacked. Science and technology classrooms were considered incredibly modern and cutting edge for the time.

Left: a science class in progress, c. 1963

Below: a needlework class in progress, c. 1963



Above: woodwork students building a boat, c.1963.

Left: a cookery class in progress, c.1963.



As headmaster from 1952-1970, Mr John Burt steered the school through its big move in 1962. An Oxford Graduate with a love of languages, Mr Burt spent time in India during WW2 and met Mahatma Ghandi on several occasions. The efforts of Mr Burt, his team of staff as well as local council members, created a school building that has been well-loved by students and teachers alike for over 60 years.

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FROM THE SIXTIES TO NOW

Since 1962, the school has undergone many changes, adapting to the needs of the students and the community. In 1973 Whitley Bay Grammar School officially became Whitley Bay High School following the end of the tripartite system. As student numbers have grown, So has the building, with the Addition of D-Block in 2002 and other smaller blocks later.



Left: The Whitley Bay High School Sixth Form group of 1972/1973.

Below: WBHS Sixth Form in A-Block hall, May 1987.



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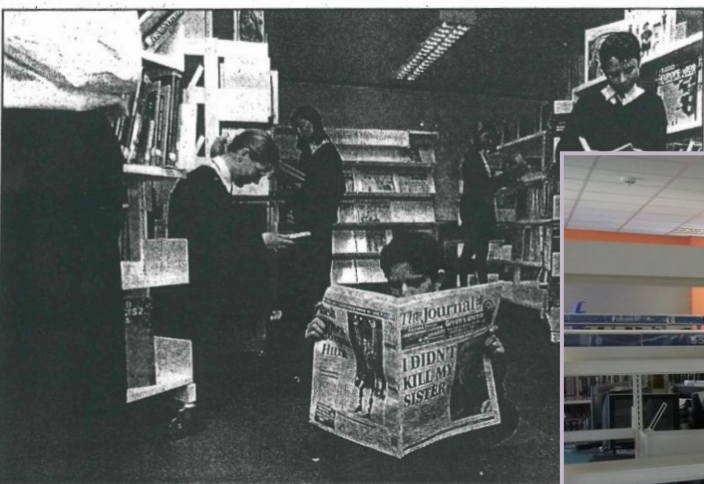
The school's growth is not the only reason the school has changed shape in recent years. In 1996, a mysterious fire badly damaged A-Block and the school's library. This ultimately led to a new library complex being built, costing £200,000. Flooding in 2012 caused more damage to the school and the stepped floor in A-Block hall was levelled afterwards.

*Right:
flooding in
A-Block hall, 2012.
The old stepped
floor is visible.*



Above: Polaroid photographs showing the damage caused by the 1997 fire.

Fire-hit school turns over a new leaf



Picture: Tim McGuinness

Right: a news article from October 1997 reporting on how the school was moving on from the fire and the opening of a new library. This was later replaced again after the construction of D-Block.

Right: the library during refurbishment, 2013.



LOOKING BACK AT WHITLEY BAY HIGH SCHOOL

Sport has always been a big part of student life at Whitley Bay High School. Hockey, football, rugby and netball teams have found success through the years and many students will have had memorable experiences in our sports hall or on the pitches.

SPORT AT WBHS

Right: a Whitley Bay High School football team from 1966/7.



Below: hockey team from an unknown year.



Get set for victory!

AN ATHLETICS team from Whitley Bay High School has won through to represent the North in the English Schools' Athletic Association regional finals.

The girls beat 12 other schools from all over the North at an athletics meeting at Washington's Usworth Comprehensive School.

hensive School.

Pictured are: left to right, back row, Allison Stenbridge, Lisa Andresen, Joanne Colton, Joanne Smith, Barbara Gray; middle row, Andrea Moran, Tracy Suman, Claire Wojtkowiak, Helen Jamieson; front row, Jackie Fairman, Tracy Wilkinson, Sara Hine and Rosalind Smith.

Above: newspaper article from 27th July 1981 about a WBHS athletics team.

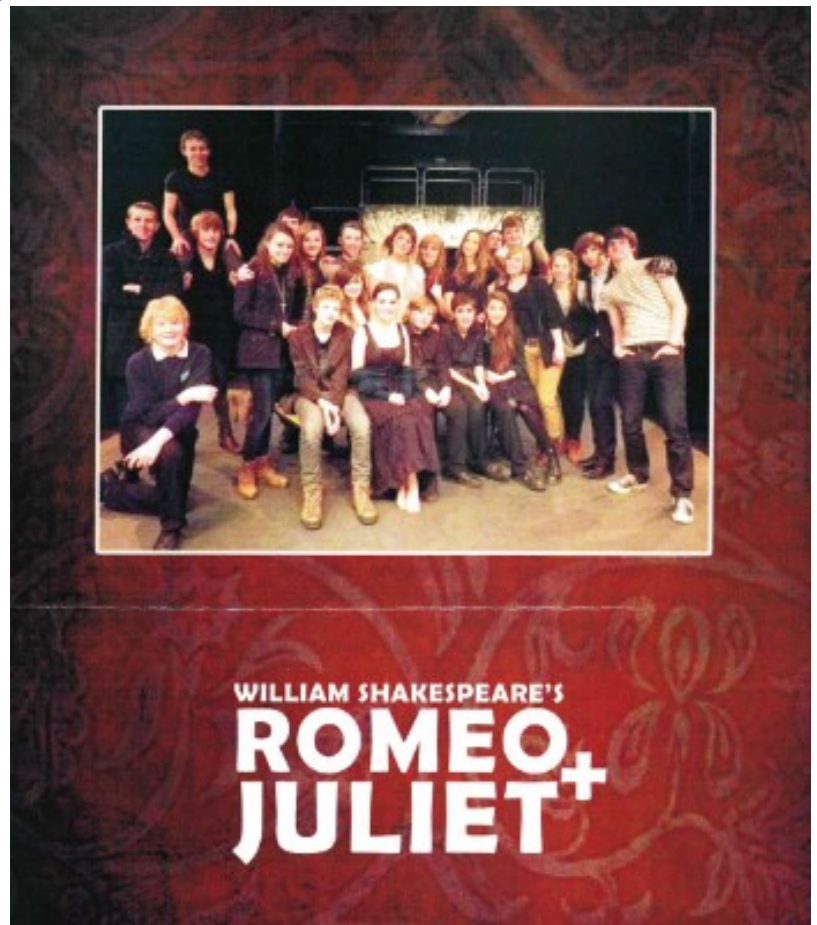
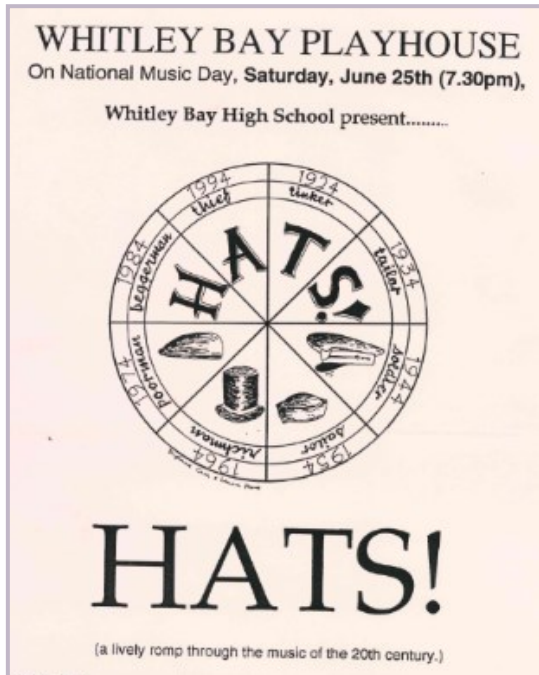
Left: netball team from an unknown year.

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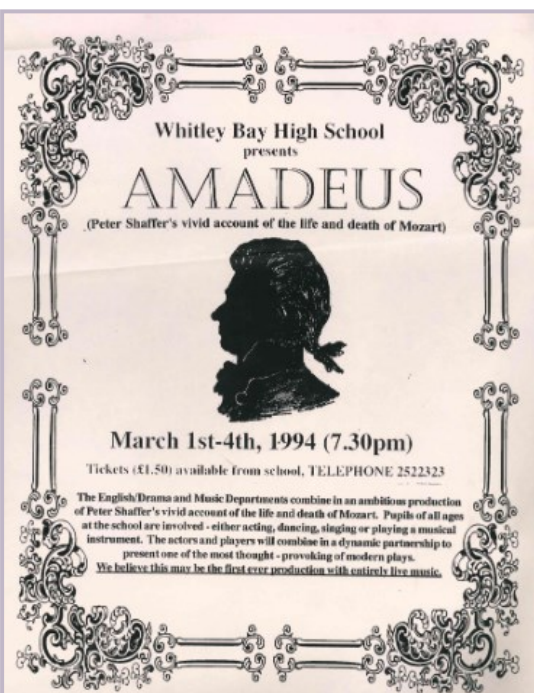
We have been lucky to have had many talented performers treading the boards at Whitley Bay High School putting on a range of amazing productions over the decades.

Below: poster for 'Hats', a musical following the fictional Tom Bowler as he wears different hats through his life.

DRAMA AT WBHS



Above: the cast of Whitley Bay's production of Romeo + Juliet, 2012.



Above: poster for the WBHS 1994 production of Amadeus. This production was shortlisted for the Barclays Music Theatre Awards, which are often known as the mini-Oscars.



Above: students in A Block Hall appear to be performing a version of the Adam and Eve Bible story, c.1960s.

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IN THE NEWS



Whitley Bay has hit the headlines on more than one occasion and has been featured in several newspapers and academic magazines. Our Innovative Special Educational Needs support was celebrated in 3 articles in teaching magazine *Special Children* in 1999. In 1995, a biology lesson by Elizabeth Pollock was even broadcast to the nation on Radio 4 as part of their *Eight of the Best* series.

Left: cover Of 'Special Children', Jan 1999.

Below: news article about Elizabeth Pollock's broadcast lesson.

Teaching lessons on the airwaves

TEACHER Elizabeth Pollock is swapping the blackboard for the airwaves as she broadcasts her lessons to the nation.

For years, her biology classes have inspired pupils at Whitley Bay High School and now they want everyone else to know she is one in a million.

Spurred

Mrs Pollock is one of eight teachers to be picked from hundreds of hopefuls to have their lessons played on air.

Former student Humaira Iqbal, 25, put her forward after her classes on capillaries and cartilage inspired her on to study medicine at Leeds University.

Mrs Pollock, 52, said: "I was very surprised and touched that a previous student had taken the trouble to nominate me. My class

By RACHEL ELLIS

and I really enjoyed the experience of being recorded for the radio.

"However, I am sure that many of my colleagues, particularly at Whitley Bay High School, could equally well have been nominated."

The 20-minute class will examine the human eye and how it works and the sense organs.

Mrs Pollock, who is also head of lower school, said: "The pupils took an active part in the lesson - there were a few discussions, group work and experiments."

Adam Chadburn, headteacher at the school, said: "The school is delighted Mrs Pollock's class was chosen to go on the radio."

The series, called *Eight of the Best*, a collection of eight excerpts of school lessons, will run once a week until Christmas.

The programme will be broadcast on Radio 4 on November 18.



Below: a selection of front covers from editions of the *Seatonian*. The cover on the left has been signed, likely by an ex-student or teacher.

Students at Whitley Bay have also put together their own publications. Published annually from 1915, the *Seatonian* was a collection of writing including articles, short stories and poetry all written by students.

