

CHEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL.

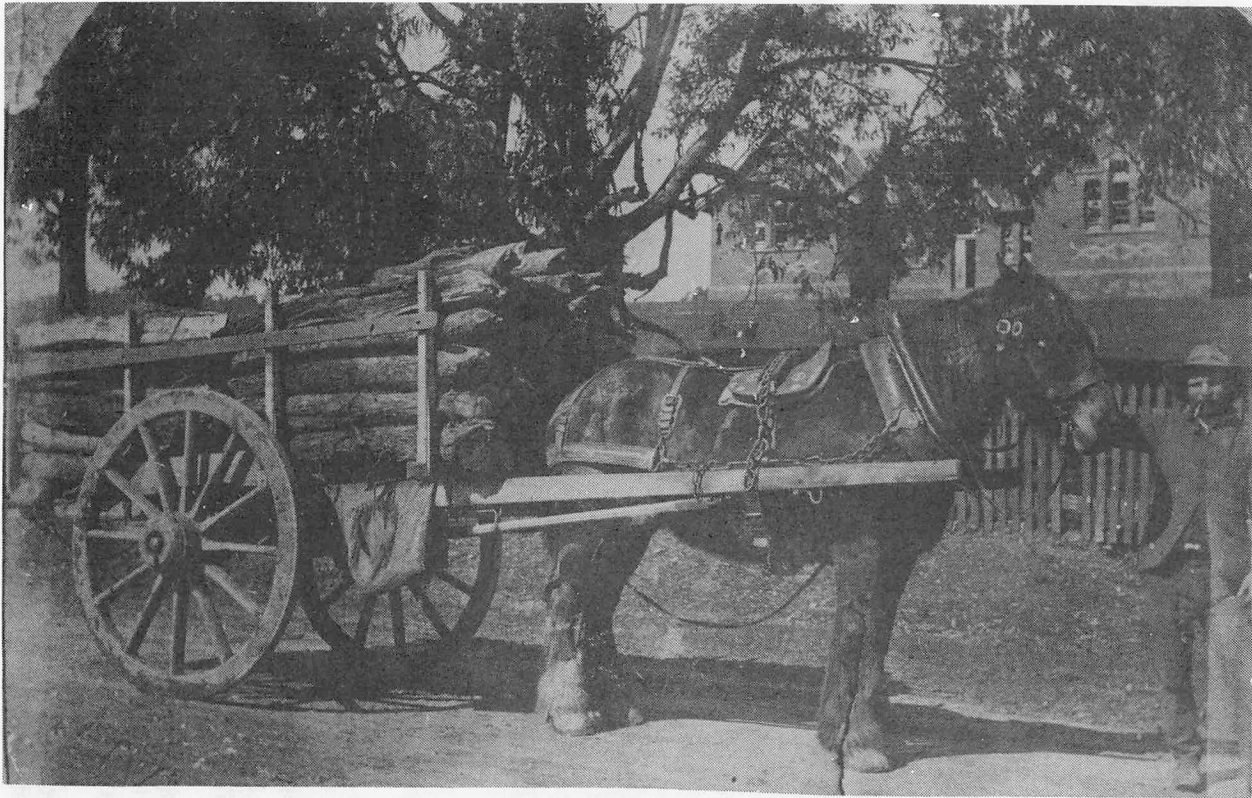


PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESENT SCHOOL

“For 100 years, children have been coming to Chewton State School and have left to serve the district, their country and the community in general.

My wish is that every child who comes to this school in the future will leave with happy memories of the days spent behind these memorial gates.”

John Bloomfield, Minister of Education, who officially opened the memorial gates at the Chewton State School on Saturday, October 20, 1962, to mark the centenary.



Ninian James Robb, taken in front of the school he attended at Chewton. His wife, the former Alice Archer, also attended the school.

The photograph was reproduced from the original sent from New Zealand by Ninian Robb's daughter, who attended Faraday School and left Australia in 1918.

It portrays the honest ruggedness of another generation while retaining memories of a school which served the community well.

CHEWTON SCHOOLS

The earliest schools in Victoria were denominational; Wesleyan, Anglican and Roman Catholic. In this area the first school was No 797, situated at Golden Point, two and a half miles west of Faraday.

In 1848 the denominational schools' board was established and as Government grants were allocated, the schools were numbered in the order in which these were received.

In the history of Victorian education, there have always been bodies of citizens, called boards or committees, which have assisted in the management of the affairs of the school.

Titles given were 1851-1861, Board of Patrons; 1862-1871, Local Committees; 1872-1910, Board of Advice and from 1911, School Committees.

The early Chewton schools were Church of England Common School No 139; Wesleyan Common School No 153 situated on the present site of the Methodist Church and Roman Catholic School No 286 at Golden Point, known as Catholic Common School.

First recorded local committee of the Catholic School comprised The Right Reverend Bishop Goold, Rev. J. J. Bleasdale and Rev. Patrick Smyth; Peter Kenny, Patrick Cohgalane, Thomas Ryan, Thomas Cooke and Benjamin McMahon. Enrolment was 92 pupils in 1862 increasing to 117 in 1864.

The year 1862 was memorable in the history of State School No 1054 at Chewton.

From an extremely humble beginning in the rollicking era of the gold rush days, emerged the three private schools which were to form the solid nucleus of the present school.

As we look back through the century and note the splendid achievements we remember former class mates

and teachers and the impact this beginning was to have on our future lives.

We also pay tribute to the work of the churches which organised the first education in this district 117 years ago. Their clergy and laymen set the pattern of our learning. It was at this time that the pioneers were divided on whether education should be controlled by the Church or the State.

On October 12, 1870 the Chewton Vested Common School came into existence — a new Building and a new system.

The site was apparently opposite the Town Hall. Pupils were from Common School 139, and at least, or probably most of those attending Common School 153; previously conducted by the Wesleyans.

On Monday, July 3, 1871, the State School 1054 at Chewton was opened by Mr J. B. Patterson, Member of the Legislative Assembly, at the park.

On Monday, August 20, 1877 State School No 1928, Chewton East was opened at Golden Point by Mayor, W. C. Smith; a representative of the Education system with J. B. Patterson, M.L.A., Minister of Public Works.

This was a public holiday in the Borough of Chewton, when 680 children from both schools marched from the municipal chambers to the new school. A lavish banquet was held at 5 pm.

The Mount Alexander Mail reports that State School No 1928 Chewton East was formed from the amalgamation of State School 153, Post Office Hill, the same number as the former Wesleyan Common School, Roman Catholic School No 286 at Golden Point; State School 193, Donkey Gully (Faraday booklet 195 Donkey Gully).

Head teacher was Mr C. Hardy, three assistants and two pupil teachers.

In September 1892, because of declining attendances, Chewton East State School 1928, was made an adjunct of

State School 1054. At that time there were 83 pupils attending Chewton East.

Senior pupils attended the Park School and infants at Chewton East, under the superintendent of the Master at the Park, according to the Mount Alexander Mail.

The present building Chewton State School No 1054, was opened on February 1, 1911, by the Minister of Education, Mr A. A. Billson.

Head teacher was Mr P. Whitfield who arrived in 1908 and departed soon after the opening to be replaced by Mr Dixon.

In civic life the Mayor of Chewton was W. M. Ebbott, who organised celebrations.

Here are extracts from the Castlemaine Leader: January 3, 1911: On Wednesday next, February 1, the new State School at Chewton will be opened by Mr A. A. Billson, Minister of Education. A luncheon will take place in the Chewton Town Hall at 12.15 pm.

Invitations have been issued by the Mayor, W. M. Ebbott.

The time-table has been arranged as follows: Opening of school 11 a.m. Address by several speakers. Luncheon 12.15 p.m.

Procession headed by Castlemaine Borough Brass Band leaves Town Hall at 1.45 p.m. for monster picnic in Purches Gardens.

And from the Castlemaine Leader, February 2, 1911: The opening of the new State School took place yesterday and the event made a gala day for the quiet little borough.

The previous year the Education Act had been passed and amongst the reforms was the abolition of Boards of Advice, which had supervised school groups. It was superseded by committees; one for each school. This co-incided with the opening of the new school as the Act came into operation in January 1911.

Those of us old enough will remember the school days at the original site. We shall recall friendships, strife, humor, adversity and the opening of the present building.

What a memorable occasion that must have been. A fine new building on one of the hill sites at Chewton.

And the amount of labour necessary to convert the diggings into a playground.

Remember the establishment of the pine plantation during the 1920's? How profitably it repaid the efforts of former trustees and scholars.

Today, Chewton Primary School carries on the fine tradition set by the pioneers in education. It has no special claim to fame except that it has served the community and the nation. Thousands of young Australian citizens have sat in the school desks and been assisted to prepare themselves for the unknown future.

Dedicated teachers, hard working parents' committees and sympathetic supporters have combined to keep alive a valuable part of the school's heritage.

Somewhere throughout this nation today there are men and women of all ages who will fondly recall the impressionable years they spent, under the watchful eye of authority, at Chewton Primary School.

Chewton has earned a rightful place in the history of Victoria, and the modest school, in its unpretentious way has contributed more than its share to that recognition.

May the school continue it's valuable work in the field of education.

GOLDEN POINT STATE SCHOOL

1900



Top Row (L to R): Stan Archbold, Norm Loder, Lila Rosewarne, Nell Hendra, M. Bray, Ada Scott, E. Madigan, S. Carthew. Centre: Jess Madigan, Alice Scott, Pearl Archer, Esther Madigan, Bess O'Connor, Bertha Archer, Martha McMillan, George McClenchy, Charlie Hendra, Florence Archer. Bottom Row: Arthur Madigan, Roger McMillan, Harry Bray, Nile Bray, Fred Loder. Teacher is Miss Horner. School Cleaner, Ethel Bray. Photograph from H. Ottery to Cr George Archer.

THE OLD BOYS' SONG

To the tune of "HOME TOWN WEEK"

Now that it's come October
Let's hasten on our feet
You ask us what's the hurry
We've folk that we must meet.

CHORUS

There'll be Jim and Jack
Also George and Joe
And a host of loyal coppers
Whom we all will know
At the old boys' reunion
Come sunshine or rain
And though all have now departed
We BLESS the pals who started
The old school boys' reunion
In dear old Castlemaine.

This booklet was compiled with the grateful co-operation of Paul Blanchard, Harry Ottery, Cr George Archer M.B.E., and former teacher at Chewton School, Mr. Alf Morter.