

*JUBILEE HISTORY*  
*OF*  
*YARRA ROAD PRIMARY*  
*SCHOOL No. 4219*



*1925 ~ 1975*

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SOME OF THE ACTIVE AND INTERESTED.

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- 1917 - EWEN CLEMSON: Requests department to establish school.
- 1918 - MISS V. THOMSON: Requests department to establish school.
- 1923-24 - MRS. W. KNEE: Active requests to establish school.
- 1924 - 4 acres obtained from Mr. Power to use as school site.
- 1925 - MR. C.S. SMITH: Active interest in proposed school.
- 1926 - MR. S.J. SMITH: Requests name change from "Croydon" to "YARRA ROAD".
- 1928 - MR. F.J. KNEE: Active interest in new shelter shed.
- 1950's - 60's - MRS. B. WARREN (~~mee~~ WALTON): Served Milo from school milk to children over fence.
- 1954 - MRS. R.M. ROBERTS: Active in school affairs.
- 1955-57 - MRS. H. GODDEN: Active in school affairs.
- 1957-60 - MR. HOAD: Transported up to 17 children from Warranwood to the school daily.
- 1962-64 - MR. B.J. McQUINIE: Active interest in new shelter shed.
- 1964-66 - MR. R.W.G. McDONALD: Active in ground alterations.

Unfortunately space does not permit the mention of the many others equally deserving, both past and present, who have helped make this school what it is.

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## HISTORY OF STATE SCHOOL No. 4219 YARRA ROAD

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1920's - 40's Mrs. A. Bates (Smith)

Yarra Road, Croydon, holds such wide memories for me. There were too many interests, but in confining my mind to the little school on the hill, it may be best to go back to before it came into existence.

For many years - we "nips" and our parents had trudged away out to Wonga Park S.S. One or two were lucky enough to own a pony - "Kitty" Elder for instance carried 3 passengers to the school door. No bikes then - so we walked!!

So the locals got together to work on the government for a nearer school. I'm quite sure that others would agree that one of the most ardent workers for that end, was my maternal grandmother, Mrs. Ammie Knee, who gave the district M.P. - a Mr. Everard, no peace until the new school was a reality.

An evening was given in a home at "Mayfield" - and Gran. was presented with a gift - a beaut crocodile handbag for her work. Poor Gran. was so overcome as she had been told that the evening was being held for another reason altogether.

For a short while, we had lessons in the front room, in the home of Jack and Emma Knee. We sat on kerosene boxes on the flat, and worked on kerosene boxes on the upright. Miss Alice G. Broad was our first teacher - we began each day with the prayer song "Father we thank thee for the night."

I remember one day Emma Knee had made a custard and had left it in the sink to cool. Then the thirsty students were let out to play, in the rush for water that poor custard was drowned. We were all later reprimanded in class.

Later we moved into the brand new school - one big room, with a small office and cloak room. The pranks of one curly red-headed boy, full of jokes and nonsense - Miss Broad would put him out, but that face would appear at the window and somehow command the school's

attention. In desperation he'd be locked in the office, but then his loud cheery whistle would be heard. Poor Miss Broad!! I hope that Les Rowe doesn't hold this against me - in telling it. Les had three sisters, also pupils there - Doris and Nellie have since passed on.

I remember that Euchre Parties were held to raise money, with Mr. Lou Francis (Sen.) usually as a very capable M.C. One night I remember that there was a shortage of men, so my twin sister May took the part of a man - she won the men's prize and I won the lady's.

Miss Clara Dillon followed Miss Broad. At the beginning of 1933, Miss Dillon came to ask if I would care to apply for the position of Sewing Mistress. I was delighted and enjoyed six years in the work. Soon afterwards the Mother's Club brought a piano which was really a great asset.

Miss Dillon's niece (Miss Muriel Dillon), a dancing teacher would come each Friday afternoon and teach musical "clubs" and "rods" with "Action songs". Two songs that I've never forgotten were the "Fairy Wedding" and "War Drums".

The Wedding Song was performed by fourteen little people, all dressed in pale pink - the "bride and groom" being Elsie Smith and Victor Lawrence. It was beautiful.

"War Drums" a pathetic play/song: I remember those girls, so many would break down and cry. We had a concert including these two songs - held in Ol. Knee's big shed. It was such a success, a repeat was given. The "Happy hunting song" and Maypole dancing were a real sight.

During Miss Dillon's term, one of our bright little lads, Malcolm Smith, died. I think that he was about six years old.

Now a word re. Miss Dillon. I've heard so many recall Miss Dillon's cane. I agree, that cane was a horror and many a tear I suppressed as I saw it in action - and yet, what a good woman she was! It was quite customary that under her direction, singlets for









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## 1940's - 70's - Mr. G. Collis

When Mr. G.G. Collis became H.T. in 1945, the school was raised from a fifth class school to a fourth class. His term as H.T. lasted to the end of 1950. During this period, keen interest was taken in sport and nature lore. Gould League and Arbor Day Concerts were an annual feature to which parents were always invited.

In 1947, the school won the native tree planting competition in the Lilydale Inspectorate, and the prize, donated by the great naturalist, the late Miss Winifred Waddell, was a suitable book added to the school library.

During these years Raymond Spencer won the 1st scholarship ever won by a pupil of the school. Several other pupils won scholarships about this time.

The children excelled in sport and three girls became very good cricketers indeed. One of them, Miriam Knee, went on to become one of the greats of Australian Women's Cricket. In International Women's Cricket, she has represented Australia many times, has had two trips to England - the last as Captain. Miriam learnt her cricket with the school chimney as the wicket she had to defend.

In 1948, the school residence was erected by trainee labour from the army, and was occupied in September of that year by Mr. and Mrs. Collis and their five children.

Miss Ruth Knee was the first Sewing Mistress appointed, and after her marriage Mrs. G. Collis succeeded her.

In 1958, the school was again raised in class, from a fourth class school to a third class, and Mr. G.G. Collis returned to take charge of his old school. He remained as H.T. for the next 11 years. Under his guidance and good hard-working, co-operative, and progressive School Committees and Mothers' Clubs, the school continued to hold its own in all fields.

The second room was opened for the beginning of the 1958 school year, and Miss Marjorie Burrows, an outstanding teacher, became the first assistant appointed

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to the school. Other assistants to follow her were Miss Ann Radden, Mrs. Margaret Clissold, Mrs. Elaine Grant, Miss Joan Healey (now Sister Joan of St. Joseph's Convent), Mrs. Perrin, Miss Mong, Mrs. Jackman, Mrs. Spapens, Miss Anne Hartley and Mr. Kevin McCoy.

Whilst Mr. Collis was on long service leave, the relieving H.T.'s were Mr. Alister Cannon, and Miss Margaret Bartlett. Mr. Norman Smith was also a relieving H.T. for a short period.

For five years in succession, the school won the District School Sports, as well as winning in other years. Two girls - Beverley Taylor and Vizma Rasa - were champion runners of the whole Lilydale district. These girls brought further honour to the school.

In 1966, Neil Barr won a scholarship to the new Church of England Boys School. Fifty-seven candidates from all over the district sat for this examination. Neil excelled and was 15% better than all other candidates. It was a very fine performance indeed.

In 1963, the pine plantation was cut and sold, and in its place Australian trees and shrubs were planted. Unfortunately, these had to be removed when the second playground was graded.

In 1969, the year after Mr. Collis left the school, 3 more classrooms were added as well as a teachers' room. Mr. Ken Rogers became H.M. for 12 months followed by Mr. George Spalding (12 months). Then came Mr. Reg. Loveland. During his term as H.M. (1972-74), outside facilities for the children increased greatly. The concrete area was extended in 1972, and the net ball court was built at the same time.

Mention must be made of the Melbourne University Graduates who spent all their primary years at this school. These are Peter Spencer, Lyndis McWhinney, and Anna Hall.

On the religious side, teachings from the Bible were given for years by Mr. Les Warren, and the children loved this man very dearly. Mr. and Mrs. Bill Leggatt gave wonderful service in this field also.



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With such happy and willing parents supporting the teachers of their children, it is no wonder that this beautifully situated little school is the envy of this district.

The present H.M., appointed this year, is Mr. Michael Dore.

Mr. G. Collis

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50 YEARS

JUBILEE

NOTES & ADDRESSES

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P R O G R A M - A P R I L 12th

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SATURDAY 12th. APRIL 1975

- APPROX. 10.30 a.m.      Enrollment of ex-students, well-wishers, etc., general get-together. Old photographs displayed.
- APPROX. 12 noon        LUNCH AT SCHOOL.
- APPROX. 2 p.m.        Welcome to ex-students.  
Opening of 50th. year Jubilee Celebrations by Mr. G. Collis.
- APPROX. 3 p.m.        Decade Assemblies.
- APPROX. 8 p.m.        SUPPER DANCE - WONGA PARK HALL

