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NEWSLETTER

No. 127 MAY, 2016

SCHOOLS IN THE BONANG AREA

Bonang (1887-1975), Dellicknora (1897-1972), Cabanandra (1905-1952)

This is Part 2 of a series featuring schools in the Bendoc and Bonang areas researched by Lois Crisp.

Our February Newsletter covered the schools at Bendoc (1873-1987), Hayden's Bog (1878-1941), Delegate River (1887-1956), Bendoc Lower (1896-1956), Delegate River Upper/Lower (1903-1947), and North Bendoc (1913-1941).

There is a correction to the February Newsletter: The last paragraph which reads "The later school site is in a paddock now owned by Doug Cameron . . ." should read "now owned by Ed. Sellers."

BONANG STATE SCHOOL No. 2808

According to *Vision and Realization* the residents of Bonang on the Bonang Highway north of Orbost were provided with education facilities as early as 16th of May 1887, when their school, in a leased building, was opened with W. Armstrong as head teacher. (refer, to Delegate River State School, February Newsletter). "He acted in this capacity for a period of about sixteen years. The school was then working half time with SS 2809 Delegate River. This school continues today". (published 1973).



THE GAP Magazine

BONANG SCHOOL

1922

In *The Gap* magazine, 1963, the following article submitted by the children and HT, Mr. A Rickard, reads: "The first school was Honeysuckle Cottage in the area called "The Range". The teacher was Mr. Armstrong." (The property, north west of the present Bonang settlement, is currently (2016) owned by Kelvin Ingram).

The **Bombala Times**, 15-1-1904, reported, "Mr. W. H. Armstrong who has held the position of state school teacher at Bonang for thirteen years has been removed. He was entertained by his friends at Cabanandra on the 8th and presented with a souvenir." (NB. William Armstrong had married Annie Simpson of Cabanandra who died in 1901 after giving birth to their third child).

David Ingram, who has lived all his life in the area, has been told that before Dellicknora School opened in 1897, the children from Dellicknora walked to The Range.

In September 1910, the **Delegate Argus** reported that the Delegate River and Bonang schools were then being worked half time, Mr. Buckland being in charge. Reginald Patterson was teaching at Bonang when he left to enlist in September 1915, as was William Arthur Morris who enlisted in January 1916. In the **Delegate Argus** 3-2-1916, the Bonang Correspondent reported, "School will open here this week. Our teacher Mr. W. A. Morris has been appointed here, but has enlisted and will thus be leaving in March."

In the WW1 service records there are at least eight enlistees who gave their birthplace as Bonang, Alan Clarke, George Morrison, William Richardson, Charles Spence, and Joseph Thompson, some or all would have attended Bonang School, plus Charles, William and Robert Hutchison, who attended Dellicknora State School after it opened in 1897.

After some years, Honeysuckle Cottage became unsuitable and another building was erected on a site south of the present township, well back from the highway on the west side. The Bonang road once was further west.

In 1922, Inez Mitchell, Gr. IV, contributed an article to **The Gap** magazine. "Bonang". "We have a small school, but it is a suitable size for the fourteen children attending. We have a nice garden." Others contributing to **The Gap** 1923 & 24 were Jack Clancy, Grade VI and Lizzie Mitchell, Grade VII, respectively, and D. (Doreen?) Mitchell, 11, wrote "A Pet Possum" for the 1925 issue.

'Delegate Argus', Thursday, May 10, 1923.

BONANG.

As has been reported previously, the local school, together with its contents, was completely destroyed by fire in such a manner as to suspect incendiarism; so far all efforts to find the culprit have been fruitless. School is being held in a room which was kindly placed at the disposal of the teacher by Mr. Clancy. This room is suiting its purpose admirably.

In the **Local Rag**, issue No.12, March 1980, there is a copy of a letter to **The Age**, February 25th 1980, with permission of the author, Aub. Richards, in which, he was calling together teacher graduates of 1930. He wrote that he went to a brand new school (1931) at Bonang, nearly 100 kilometres from Orbost and so remote that he had to catch a train to Goulburn, and another to Bombala, and then mail coach and car to Bonang. "The school was also brand new, none of the 15 children had been to one before, although the oldest was fifteen. The previous school was a slab hut, condemned years earlier." (Note: Second school burned down.)

Then, in the **Local Rag**, No. 27 June 1981, the editor reported on an interview with Aub. Richards. Mr. Richards recalled some of his pupils, Camms, Marriotts, Maree Ingram, and Ruth and Jack Legge. He also said that one of his predecessors, at the old Bonang school, in the paddock opposite Mitchell's old house, was Frank Williamson, who had a great fan in Mrs. Rich of Bonang West, "I think he taught her two sons". According to **Once Upon a Lifetime** by Anne Freeman, "Edward Smalley was teaching at Bonang when he had to drive his wife through a snowstorm to hospital for the birth of their second child." (That was September 1935).

The Orbost Shire Council received a letter from the Bonang School Committee at the November 1936 meeting, requesting repairs to the road leading from the main road to the school gate. Although this later school appears to be facing the Bonang Highway, it is accessed from a short steep road on its

Sapper REGINALD W. PATTERSON, son of the late Mr. W. T. Patterson, Kingsland, London, enlisted on the 20th of September, 1915, and embarked with the 9th Reinforcements to the 2nd Divisional Signalling Company. After training for some time in England, he joined the Wireless Section in France, and served with this unit at Messines and Ypres (1917) and the Somme Battles of 1918. He returned to Australia on the transport *Main* on the 11th of October, 1919. Prior to enlisting, he was teaching at School No. 2808, Bonang.



Private WILLIAM ARTHUR MORRIS, son of Mr. P. C. Morris, of Main Lead, near Beaufort, enlisted on the 19th of January, 1916, and joined the Army Medical Corps. On the 1st of September, he transferred to the Infantry, and embarked with the 16th Reinforcements to the 22nd Battalion on the transport *Nestor* on the 2nd of October. After training for some time in England, he proceeded to France, where he joined his unit on the 24th of February, 1917. He took part in the Bapaume fighting, and in the battle of Lagnicourt (15th April). On the 3rd of May, he was wounded in action at Bullecourt, and was invalided to England. He rejoined his unit on the 18th of August, but was wounded again on the 3rd of October at Broodseinde Ridge and invalided to England. He rejoined again on the 20th of April, 1918. He was wounded, for the third time, on the 19th of May, at Ville-sur-Ancre, and was again invalided to England. It severely injured his spine, causing complete paralysis. He returned to Australia as an invalid on the transport *Karoola* in January, 1919. He is now totally incapacitated. Prior to enlisting, he was teaching at School No. 2808, Bonang.



Left: In addition to a number of local residents, two teachers from the Bonang School, Reg. Patterson and Bill Morris, enlisted in World War 1.

south east side.

When David Ingram attended school in the 1960's, Mr. Kay and Sid Cooper were two of the teachers. As well as the Ingram's, pupils were from the Matthews, Cullinan, Murray (General Store), Billy Legge, CRB (Country Roads Board) employees, including Thompson, and mill workers families.

The numbers fluctuated widely between eleven and forty, mostly as mill workers came or left. During the 1970's numbers dropped, causing the closure of the school - according to "Tubbut – Notes prepared for the School Jubilee, 1941 – 1991", in 1975. The last teacher was Mrs. Sue Allen.



A recent photograph of the BONANG SCHOOL No. 2808 which closed in 1975. (Photo: Lois Crisp)

DELLICKNORA STATE SCHOOL No. 3292.

Dellicknora is situated 2 to 3 kilometres north along the Dellicknora Road from the McKillops Bridge Road, west of Cabanandra.

According to *Vision and Realization*, a school opened on the 6th of September 1897 in a leased building, the first head teacher being George Williams. Twenty-six children enrolled from the Cameron, Light, Davis, Cotterell, Hutchison, Hobb and Wait families. "In 1922 District Inspector, G. A. Osborne, stated that the building was neither wind nor rain proof, and an arrangement was made for the Education Department to pay £100, (10 years rent in advance), to help the residents provide a new school". (A new building opened in 1923). "During 1916, the school closed for some time, (WW1 shortage of male teachers?), and at other times worked part time with Bonang and Delegate River. It closed in 1952 and re-opened in 1965 and said to be still operating". (1973) ("Tubbut", notes prepared for their school Jubilee states that Dellicknora finally closed in 1972).

The following report from Dellicknora appeared in the *Delegate Argus*, 21st of April 1911, "A meeting was held in the state school to select a Committee in the place of a School Board Member ending in the selection of Messrs. Hutchison Bros., W. A. Hobbs, J. H. Ingram, and A. H. Wools-Cobb. A ball was held in the evening at Mr. R. Hutchison's where all who were present spent an enjoyable evening."

Thomas James Hutchison who served overseas in WW1, gave his birthplace on enlistment as Dellicknora. He was born in 1887, and his daughter Alma said he was one of those Hutchisons attending at Dellicknora State School in 1897, even though his name is not on a list copied from the PROV records

by members of the East Gippsland Family History Group. This list shows eleven names of pupils enrolling in 1897 whereas the Department records mention twenty-six pupils.

The report of a school concert held on the 17th of April 1911 named Miss Linda Hutchison, Master Hector Hutchison and Master Henry Cobb as playing leading roles in the main item. Looking through *The Gap* magazines, Gif (Geoffrey?) Hutchison, Noel Hobbs and Kate Ingram Gr. V1, combined to submit an article on "Wild Life at Dellicknora", to the 1921 issue, and Geoffrey Hutchison, Gr.V11, appears in the 1922 issue with an article titled "King John and the Magna Carta".



THE GAP 1923 Pupils of S.S. 3292 DELLICKNORA

The *Delegate Argus*, 7-11-1925, reported, "Mr. L. G. Dineen has been appointed temporary head teacher of the Dellicknora S.S. in succession to Mr. Eric Folks who has taken charge of part time schools at Hayden's Bog and Bendoc North."

Alma Angus, daughter of Thomas Hutchison, attended Dellicknora School in the 1930's. Alma and her sister were the only two pupils at that time whose names were not Cameron.



DELLICKNORA 1939/40 - Second School in Old Hall
Back: Alma Hutchison, Merle Cameron, Jim & Doug Cameron, (Teacher). Front: Gwen, Maureen, Alan, Peter, Una & Charlie Cameron (Photo: Sandy Cameron)

Mrs. Sandy Cameron, a resident of the area, said that in the life of the school, there were three buildings. The third being the Delegate River School, removed to Dellicknora. Carol Watson (nee Matthews) went to school at Delegate River and her sons, David and Dean Cameron, attended school at Dellicknora in the same building.

Schools in small towns were quite often the hub of the community – for example, *The Snowy River*

Mail, 16-4-1904, advertised the following: "Mr. Donald McCrae is a candidate for the East Gippsland Electorate and will address the electors as follows:- at Dellicknora School on Tuesday 19th of April at 7.30 pm", etc. And **The Delegate Argus**, 1-9-1927, reported that there had been a very enjoyable dance held in the Dellicknora School in aid of the Bush Nursing Car Fund. It continued, "At present the dancing space at the Dellicknora School is only 378 square feet, but the Committee hope to extend it to 600 square feet during the September vacation".

For some years after the school closed the building continued to be used as a hall but eventually became derelict and was pulled down.



DELLICKNORA PUPILS 1971 - Back: Julie, Pam, Chris & Stephen Cameron Middle: Lyn Cameron, Sharon Simpson, David Cameron Front: Daryl & Gary Simpson, Dean Cameron. (Photo: Sandy Cameron)

CABANANDRA STATE SCHOOL No. 3486.

Vision and Realization states, "Cabanandra School was located north of Orbost on the Bonang Highway not far from Bonang. This school opened on the 11th of February 1905 with Peter Kruckow as Head Teacher. Cabanandra operated on a full time basis and closed on the 8th of October 1952". (Actually, Cabanandra is approximately fourteen kilometres from Bonang on the McKillops Bridge Road - formerly Bonang to Gelantipy Road, - not on the Bonang Highway).

The **Bombala Times** 15-1-1904 reported that Mr. A. G. Bateman S.S. teacher at Cabanandra had been transferred to the Bendigo District! Did the Delegate Correspondent get the town wrong (Dellicknora, perhaps) or was the Education Department slack on the paper work?

Added to that, the **Delegate Argus**, 14-12-1939, reported, "A school has been opened at Cabanandra. There are 12 pupils." Was this a new building perhaps, or just a reopening after no teacher? There were certainly no contributions to **The Gap** magazines, (1920's), so it is likely there was no school operating then.

To quote from an article titled "**The Cabanandra State School**" by Gloria McMahon (nee Matthews), for the "**Matthews Family Milestones and**

Memories", (2004), referring to Cabanandra supposedly operating full time until 1952, "we know this is not the case. In the late 1930's the residents of Cabanandra and Bonang West felt the need for a school to provide an education for their growing families. Up until this time, their children's education had been by way of Correspondence school. The first teacher (at this new school) was Brian McGuiness.



CABANANDRA S.S. No. 3486

The first twelve children to enrol in December 1939 were John, Thomas, Zita, Carleta and Leslie Richardson, Veronica and Dorothy Matthews, Kenneth and Barry Ingram, Max Taylor and Reigh Rich. The parents had set to and built a school on land made available by one parent Roy Rich.

The last seven pupils were Barry Ingram, Reigh Rich, John Cameron, Thelma and Maureen Ingram, Gloria and Joy Matthews. This was 1949!

Teachers from 1940 to 1948 were John W. McCarthy, James P. O'Malley, Mary Moorman, Marion Steele, George Reid, Graham Brown and Douglas H. McKibbon.

Thanks to "Casey" McMahon for permission to use information from his wife, Gloria's research.



CABANANDRA PUPILS 1949 - Back: Barry Ingram, Reigh Rich, John Cameron Front: Thelma & Maureen Ingram, Gloria & Joy Matthews.

SOURCES: For Bonang, Dellicknora and Cabanandra: *Vision and Realization*, Trove Newspapers on-line, NAA WW1 Service Records on-line; *The Gap* Magazines; The Local Rag (per John Phillips collection); and interviews with Sandy Cameron, Alma Angus, David and Julie Ingram, Kelvin and Jamie Ingram, Special thanks to Sandy Cameron for photocopied material for our repository, and also to Alma Angus for her offer of photos.