

# The History of Elmore Primary School

## Assembled By Tom McCormick

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### **Introduction**

I would like to thank Bruce and Diane Anderson, who are proud and immersive members of the EPA and the community of Elmore, who have sourced many pieces of information and documents regarding Elmore Primary School.

As Bruce is a former student of Elmore Primary, from many decades ago who has witnessed the changes in the Elmore community as well as EPS.

This piece includes intriguing facts of Elmore Primary School, with the help of Bruce and Diane it has taken me under three weeks to construct this piece and it has been a pleasure talking to Bruce, I have many unearthed facts that I have not once heard of.

I would also like to thank Eliza McKinstry, for editing my work. Thank you.

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### **Mapping Out**

Across the midland highway, where all the old and rusted cars are parked, used to be a house, where the old principal used to live (within 1950-60), known as Bart Clancy. Bart was the appointed principal during Bruce's time at EPS.

Towards the east side of the portable used to be a shelter shed, made of mainly timber, used on stormy days. When these events occurred, the boys had to stay on one side of the shed and girls

on the other, the shelter shed would also be used for eating during lunch-time.

There also used to be a woodworking building, or a Sloyde building, also made of timber.

The school was not fenced and had no trees on the grounds until around 1889.

The boys' and girls' toilets were placed separately. The boys' toilet was towards the Cricket pitch, more towards the fence. The girls' toilet was amongst the group of peppercorn trees, in the centre of the school property.

Most rooms contained an open fire, they no longer exist. The older students chopped the wood and managed the wood. Today, due to safety policies, students no longer use tools in Primary School.

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### **The Establishment of Elmore Primary School**

According to a 'souvenir' publication by the EPA in 1990, says the original 'Elmore Primary School' in 1865 or previously a Common school used to be where the Memorial Hall was, the library and kitchen area were classrooms, these rooms were in place as classrooms until 1875. It was conducted by William Bruce. As I have mentioned, if you do not already know, 'Primary' schools were called 'Common' schools, this school was private.

In 1866 there were 37 students enrolled in the Common school. The Common School was moved from the Memorial Hall to 36 Michie Street, and as we all understand from signs around the school, Elmore Primary 1515, State School No.839, was built in 1875, the Education Department managed this school from the very day it was founded, unlike the Common school in the Memorial Hall. The first Principal was Mordecai Wilson, who was in a Principal position for a short two years, 1875 to 1877.

During 1875 the school had an entire enrolment of 161 students, this was when there were only the brick buildings and a few old timber sheds, and the school ground was only half the size as it is now, as where the playground and chicken pens are currently, were formerly owned by St Peters Anglicans Church.

The bricks to construct the school were from ‘Kershaws Brick works.’ All of the bricks were handmade.

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### **Annual Occupations and Aspects of the History**

For more than 50 years after the opening of EPS 1515, students would either walk or ride a pony to school.

The school had a maximum accommodation of 100 pupils for comfortable learning, in the brick buildings. Apparently, the school also had a night class, with an attendance of 22 students, conducted by Mr. Hamilton.

In 1932 the school was awarded second prize for tobacco leaf at the Royal Melbourne Show and the following year achieved first prize for cured tobacco leaf.

As we annually have athletics days in Bendigo with our cluster, in Bruce's time in EPS, the school had sports days with other schools in Bendigo at Tom Floods Sports Centre. They participated in sports such as running races, relay races. Kicking or hand-balling, etc footballs. Long jump, high jump, as well as tunnel ball and corner spry. As for the past 20 years Elmore has been attending a different group or 'Cluster' of schools. In 1948 and 1955 the school won the 'shield' at sports in Bendigo.

According to Bruce, on Fridays, boys would attend Bart Clancy's property, where they would weed the vegetable garden.

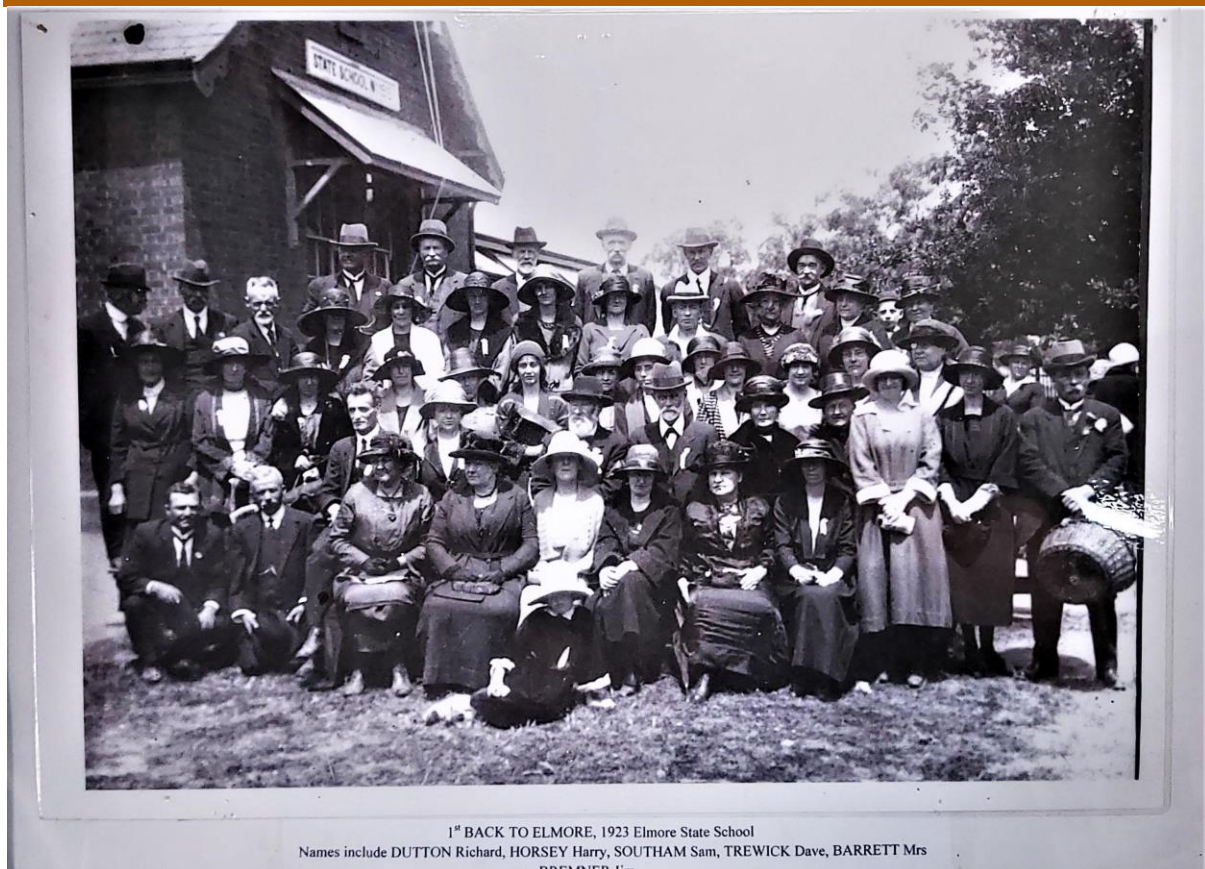
Two buses transported students to school.

During Bruce's time at EPS,(during the mid-1950s) he recalls a boy called Glenn Waterman, who rode his bike to school every day from a farm, six kilometres away. During the orange season, he would harvest oranges from the farm he lived on, and take a large bag to school, full of oranges, and share them between the other students.

Bruce also recalls a 'Bird lovers Gould.'

Students were also given a State Bank Account, this was, to encourage students to save money, the bank day was every Wednesday when students would take their money to the bank. The State bank is no longer standing, and further information can be found at the Elmore Museum.

Every Student was encouraged to drink milk. The older students were ‘milk monitors.’



**The First Back to Elmore of 1923, this image includes possibly the first students who in the image have now aged, of Elmore Primary School.**

There also used to be a Truant Officer, to check on student attendances, and interview parents if their child was unattended to school regularly.

Before the 1960s, there was no secondary college, Common or State schools, would have grades up to grade eight. Grade eight was a merit year.

Lunch hours would commonly run like this; students ate lunch in the shelter shed, kicked the footy, played cricket, played games of marbles, brandy, skipping, basketball.

In the early ages of the school, there were fundraising efforts, such as flower shows, concerts, movie nights, and costume nights, this was to raise money to construct the 'shelter shed.'

During the 1930s a EPS basketball team was formed, the seven best players of the school were chosen and played against schools in Echuca, Rochester and Goornong.

In 2014, in front of the school, on the Hervey Street side, a pine tree was planted, or a Lone-pine. The tree was planted from a seed from a tree called the Lone-Pine.

There was a famous battle in Gallipoli in 1915 during WWI, called the Battle of Lone Pine.

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