

---

# BORONIA

## PRIMARY SCHOOL



A brief history

1923 - 2005

---



This booklet has been produced to coincide with the official opening of new and refurbished buildings at Boronia Primary School.

You may be a student, staff member or parent who has enjoyed an association with us – whatever your connection, we hope you enjoy reflecting over your time with us. While we can appreciate the wonderful facilities we now enjoy, it's timely that we also remember that in order to appreciate our present, none of this has been possible without our past.



## **Contents**

In the beginning .....	3
1920's – 1930's	4
1940's – 1960's	6
1970's	9
1980's	11
1990's	13
2000's	15
 Look at us now in 2005	 18

## **In the beginning .....**

Prior to 1923, there was no school in the immediate centre of Boronia which was then a small rural community. The children of school age were obliged to attend either the school at The Basin or Bayswater.

The Boronia Progress Association, being a small band of enthusiastic residents anxious to see the area progress, decided to take steps regarding the establishment of a school. A petition was circulated throughout the district and presented at a meeting of the Association on February 26<sup>th</sup> 1921. At this meeting, the Honorary A. C. Chandler M.L.C. agreed in conjunction with Mr Frank Groves M.L.A. to present the petition to the Minister of Public Instruction.

A census taken at this time revealed that there were forty-four children of school age ready to attend a school in the township. On the 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1921 a letter was read at the Progress Association meeting, stating the Education Department was considering the petition and required further information regarding the numbers and ages of children likely to attend the proposed school.

This information was forwarded and a reply received on May 28<sup>th</sup> to the effect that the District Inspector, Mr Burgess, would visit the district and submit a report.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr Burgess met some fourteen residents and after a great amount of discussion, intimated that his report would be favourable, subject to suitable land being available. Mr Zeising, a local resident was approached, and agreed to sell three acres of land in Ringwood Road (now Dorset Road) adjoining the railway station on the northern side.

A committee consisting of Mr Chandler, Mr Ward and the secretary Mr Whittle, was formed to conduct negotiations with Mr Zeising. On October 1<sup>st</sup> the Association reported that negotiations for the sale of the land had progressed satisfactorily and the area was to be pegged out prior to survey and purchase. On November 5<sup>th</sup> the meeting was informed that the land had been purchased and the erection of a school would follow in due course.

It was on April 5<sup>th</sup> 1922, (the following year) that the Education Department informed the Association that tenders were being called for the erection of a school building.

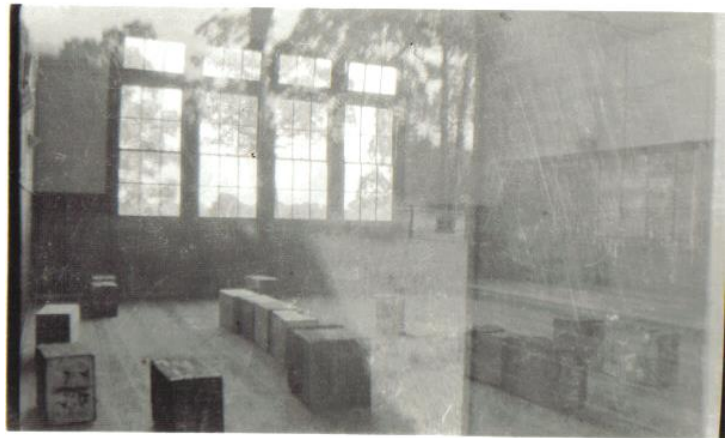
## 1920's – 1930's

A one roomed wooden building was erected on the site fronting Dorset Road and was opened on February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1923 with Mr Percy Jones as Head Teacher.

The attendance register shows that forty-one children presented themselves for admission ranging from Grade 1 to Grade 7, with many of them having attended schools in The Basin and Bayswater. The first student to be enrolled was Gilbert Elliott, son of a railway employee. Ethel Chandler and Frederick Ward are listed as the following two enrolments. The families of Chandler and Ward are well known in the area and in latter years, were to become the names of two of Boronia Primary School's "Houses."

The composition of the grades was as follows:

Grade 7	1 pupil
Grade 6	6 pupils
Grade 5	1 pupil
Grade 4	10 pupils
Grade 3	6 pupils
Grade 2	5 pupils
Grade 1	12 pupils



*This photograph was taken on Opening Day. The Head Teacher was disgusted at the lack of a blackboard and proper seating.*

The school continued to grow and in 1924, Miss Caroline Aitken was appointed Junior Teacher, remaining until 1925. Mr Jones remained as Head Teacher until 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1933. At this stage, enrolment had grown to one hundred and twenty.

The construction of three additional rooms making a total of four, was sufficient for the school population for some years.



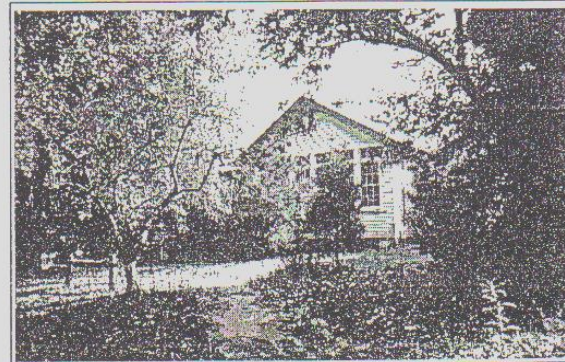
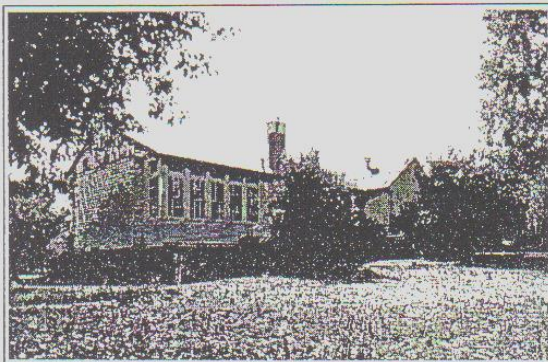
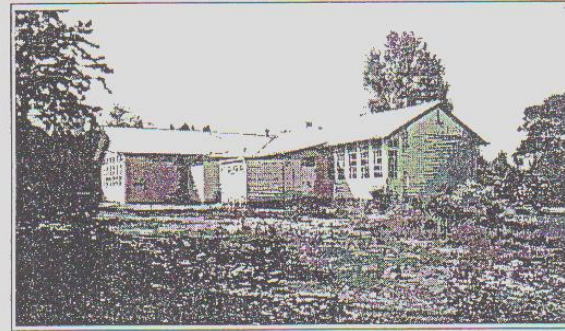
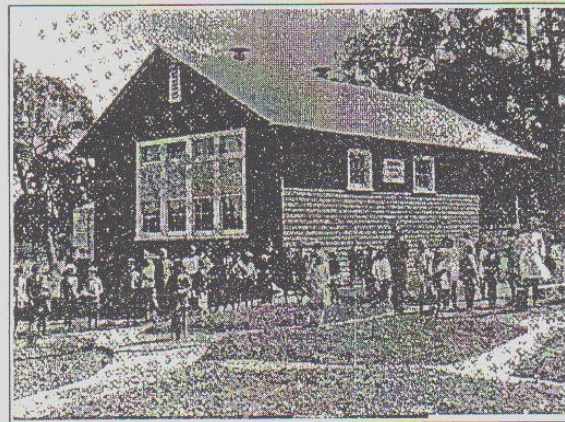
*1923 Boronia School  
Photograph, Opening Year*



## Boronia School- Past & Present

The Boronia School is located in Dorset Road, opposite Chandler Road and the Boronia Railway Station.

	(Photo: by Chris Boddy)
(KHS Archives- Nil no.)	Taken in the late 1920s. (KHS Archives- 1296)
Grades 1 - 4, in 1929	
Grades 4 - 8, in 1929	
(KHS Archives- 2684)	(Photo: by Chris Boddy)
(Photo: by Chris Boddy)	(Photo: by Chris Boddy)





## 1940's – 1960's

By 1943, the student enrolment had reached over two hundred.

During 1948 it became evident that the Dorset Road site would not cater for the rise in population following the post-war period. An area of vacant land of twelve acres running from Rangeview Road to Albert Avenue was under discussion as a new site and with the assistance of the local Member of Parliament, Mr G. Chandler M.L.C., this site was purchased.

As the population of the town continued to grow, the primary school in Dorset Road (now the site of McDonald's Restaurant) was bursting at the seams. In December, 1949 an application was made by the Education Department for use of the Church hall for school purposes.

In January of 1950, approval was given for the main hall to be used for classrooms "providing there was not undue interference with the church's own

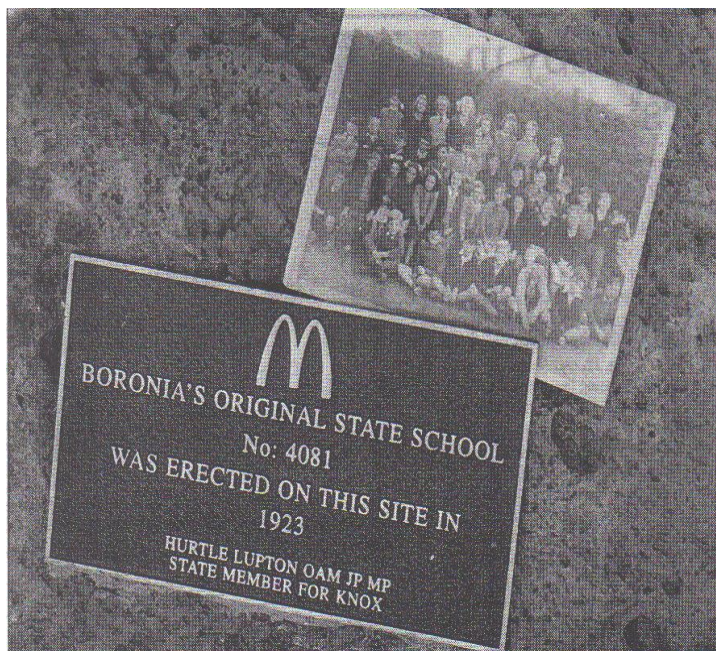
work." The suggested rental was two pounds ten shillings (\$5) per week!

In 1950, two Bristol units were erected on the site and part of the school was accommodated here. Later one more Hawker unit was brought onto the site.

The new school at Rangeview Road opened in 1951. The original school in Dorset Road continued to operate for some years, catering for children from Prep to Year One.

The school population continued to grow and additional light timber construction buildings were added until the number of classrooms totalled fifteen.

By 1953, the school enrolment was over five hundred.



Remembering: Hurtle Lupton is the fourth boy from the left (front row) in this 1950 Grade 6 photo. N45KN200

### School has a place in history

FOR the past 50 years or so, the site on the corner of Erica Ave and Dorset Rd, Boronia, has been a place where children have congregated.

It was once the site of the original Boronia Primary School. These days, there's a McDonald's restaurant there.

Last month, this piece of

Boronia's history was marked with a commemorative plaque and who better to unveil it than a former student.

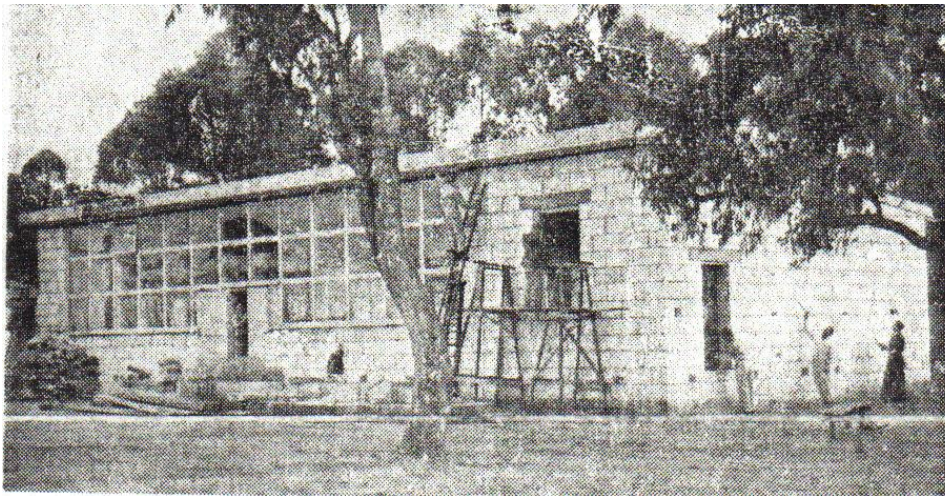
Knox MP Hurtle Lupton attended the school in 1949 and 1950.

"Boronia was just starting to grow and classes were being held in the Boronia Progress Hall, Boronia Church of Christ Hall, as well as the

state school where McDonald's now stands," he recalled.

Mr Lupton, whose three children also attended the school, served on its council from 1974 to 1976 and was the school council president from 1976 to 1982.

"It's imperative that the history of important sites in Boronia be recorded for future generations," he said.



*Parents erected this building of Mount Gambier limestone on Saturdays between 8 am and 5 pm.*

*The building consisted of a main hall, kitchen, entrance and stage. It was to be used for handwork, concerts, folk dancing and film screenings.*

During 1954, Mr George Maddocks (our longest serving Principal to date), was Head Teacher. Mr Gilbert Chandler played an important role in the negotiations for new buildings. It was decided to proceed with the erection of a building in Mt Gambier limestone with the estimated cost being £3000.

Under a special grant to the School Committee, an assembly hall and library were erected in 1955 by the residents, mainly by voluntary labour. This was opened in 1956 by the Minister of Education, the Honorary J. Bloomfield. The library was extended in 1964.

Towards the end of 1959 Miss W Waddell (Secretary of the Nature Plants Preservation Society) was referred to, to discuss the possibility of establishing a sanctuary for native flora within the school grounds. An area on the southern side was selected as a possible site as there were already numerous species growing there. It contained a large number of specimens of Heath Milkwort – a plant which was rapidly disappearing in Victoria, and it was also reasonably free from introduced species. Over the ensuing years, a concern was raised about this area being a fire hazard. In 1962, an application was made to the Education Department to have the area proclaimed a sanctuary for native plants.

From 1965 our records show that during this period, all staff members were required to enter the exact time of arrival to, and departure from school each day. This formality continued until 1973. It is interesting to note that during these times, most teachers had vacated school at the end of the day prior to 4.00 pm – something that is rarely seen today!



Week Ending 19<sup>th</sup> day of March 1966.

NAMES (In order of Seniority)	Position	Monday				Tuesday				Wednesday				Thursday				Friday			
		Date <u>14</u>				Date <u>15</u>				Date <u>16</u>				Date <u>17</u>				Date <u>18</u>			
		Arrival		Departure		Arrival		Departure		Arrival		Departure		Arrival		Departure		Arrival		Departure	
		H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.	H.	M.
L. M. Kerr	H/T					8	5	3	45	8	3	4	5	8	5	3	55	8	5	4	10
A. P. Hooper	I. M.A.					8	15	3	50	8	15	3	50	8	16	3	55	8	15	4	10
A. Theaton	II M.A.					8	13	3	45	8	30	3	45	8	25	3	45	8	30	3	37
J. Jeffeman	II M.A.					8	35	3	45	8	43	3	50	8	40	3	50	8	45	3	40
Madden	W. A.					8	25	3	50	8	15	4	10	8	20	8	50	8	25	3	45
R. McKinley	III M.A.					8	15	3	35	8	25	3	45	8	35	3	55	8	25	3	40
R. Fairley	MA III					8	35	3	55	8	20	4	-	8	20	4	20	8	35	4	15
G. J. Adanson	M.A.					8	30	3	55	8	35	4	5	8	35	3	50	8	30	3	50
D. Hight	MA IV					8	30	3	45	8	35	3	45	8	25	3	50	8	10	3	45
P. A. Friedler	T.W.A.					8	30	4	0	8	25	4	5	8	35	3	40	8	30	3	40
M. Carroll	W.A. IV					8	40	3	55	8	45	4	5	8	45	3	40	8	45	3	30
E. M. McLeod	WA IV					8	35	3	45	8	40	4	15	8	40	3	45	8	45	3	40
J. G. Barrett	WA IV					8	20	4	15	8	30	4	5	8	25	4	05	8	25	4	00
S. M. Bonnell						8	25	3	50	8	25	4	10	8	40	3	30	8	20	3	45
J. H. H.	M.A.					8	45	4	00	Monash				8	42	3	45	8	45	3	40
Sharonne Skarlon	WA IV					8	25	4	0	8	25	3	45	8	32	3	40	8	25	3	37
R. A. Matthews	T.A.					8	35	3	50	8	30	3	50	8	30	3	55	8	40	3	40

Example of 1966 Staff time sheet

## **1970's**

In 1972 the enrolment figures had reached six hundred and twenty-seven. All grades had class sizes of less than 38 with the exception of two grade sixes that each had forty-one and forty-two respectively.

During this time the staffroom had become overcrowded and one solution was for the Mens staffroom to be extended, making one large room. This plan was to cost \$14,000.

In June 1972, plans were put in place for the following year. Two new Vice Principals were appointed in non-teaching roles which would then lead to obvious alterations. Room 1 was to be divided into two small rooms – a storeroom and double office for the Vice Principals. Room 2 was to become a staffroom. The Ladies staffroom was to remain and the Mens staffroom to be a visiting staffroom. Five new classrooms and an extra room on the infant block with a passage running right through to the other end would now be needed.

A letter was written to the Education Department regarding a gravel footpath to be installed leading to the rear gate in Albert Avenue, stressing that approximately one hundred and fifty children lived east of the school and the present track was often muddy and slippery.

Plans for a canteen were also discussed with the shop opposite the school being informed of the proposed venture.

Boronia East Technical School was to be built in Mount View Road and was to be closely associated with Boronia Primary, combining in fundraising activities.

Marching Girls sought permission to use the assembly hall on rainy Saturdays and the basketball courts were hired at the rate of \$10 per court per season per club.

The school canteen opened in August 1972, serving one hundred and two lunches on opening day. \$25 was received. A wash basin was installed at a cost of \$89. Despite having our own canteen, students were still permitted to leave the grounds during school hours and make purchases from the shop opposite.

Letters from the Department and City of Knox stated that trees were available free to schools, to beautify their grounds. It was agreed that twelve large trees would be preferable to one hundred and twenty small ones.

Staff meetings were held fortnightly during lunch time recess.

In May 1973, staff members formed a committee to plan an adventure playground.

In August, Council stated that it was prepared to install a school crossing in Rangeview Road provided an undertaking was made to man the flags. Grade 6 children were given this responsibility. In latter years, Mrs Wendy Thomas supervised the crossing for many years, and still does so today.

From 1974, a full time secretary was to be employed. Mrs Marie Deason was to enjoy a long 20 years plus association with the school. A Remington typewriter was purchased in June at a cost of \$65, and was upgraded in December with an electric typewriter costing \$747. The canteen made a clear profit of \$400.

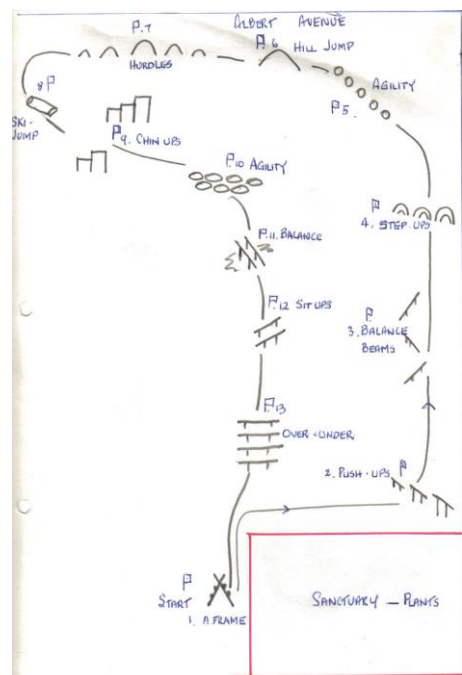
At the beginning of 1975, enrolment was six hundred and twenty-two. Boronia had eighteen class teachers, a librarian, an assistant librarian, two part time study leave teachers and two graduates from State Colleges.

A proposed re-organisation of School Council was introduced to include a Grounds Committee, Finance Committee and an Education Committee.

Concern about the need for additional sporting and recreational facilities in the Boronia area prompted the School Committee to approach the Education Department in October 1975, for permission to develop 2.5 hectares of unused area of grounds for community/school use. Before any concrete proposals were formulated, the plan was to seek the views of local sporting bodies, schools and the community at large to determine more specific needs for the district. The School Committee initiated a survey and from this, found there was a demand for a heated indoor pool, tennis courts, barbeque areas, jogging tracks, soccer pitch and cricket pitch. This list was somewhat reduced, with the following facilities being in use by 1979: tennis courts, a soccer pitch and a cricket pitch/football oval.

A school crossing in Albert Avenue was in place by mid 1977 followed shortly afterwards, by a fitness trail on the lower eastern area of the school. Barbecues were also installed.

In November 1977 the school (under the leadership of Mr Myles Gillson) sought financial assistance from the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation for the construction of this twelve station fitness trail. It would be for school and community use with an approximate cost of \$650. Council did not expect a contribution for labour as this would be donated by interested parents, but suggested that any support for materials would be most welcome. The Minister approved a grant of \$490.





## 1980's

The pavilion that you see near the tennis courts off Albert Avenue was built in 1981 to be used by soccer clubs and tennis clubs. In latter years it was used by the local Auskick club, and is still used by them today.

In June 1982, the subject of a Safety House scheme was raised. A brief report was presented on requirements. eg. number of people needed, insurance, size of committee etc. Following a questionnaire, thirty-five people responded offering their home as a Safety House.

Unfortunately, this program did not get off the ground until 1984 when Principal, Mr Vernon Wilkinson made a new and successful bid, ensuring that children could travel to and from school in relative safety. This vital program is still in existence today.

In 1983, a music room was erected in the form of a pine log cabin. To mark the occasion, each grade planted a tree in the surrounding area. A feature of the opening ceremony (September 27<sup>th</sup>) was the burying of a time capsule (to be raised 25 years later). This facility, together with its stage and amphitheatre has proved to be a valuable asset, being the focal point for many school functions.

Boronia Bright Lights originated from a suggestion by the then Principal, Mr Harold Bird, who thought that Monday assemblies should be seen to be more positive, meaningful and enjoyable than might otherwise be the case.

Aside from a few initial hiccups where too much was left to too few and not enough children were being involved, it was decided that all staff members should share in its operation and all children be actively involved in its presentation whether it be a dance or song, a poem, a short story or simply recognising a child's achievements in maths or spelling. The staff responded magnificently and the evolution of Boronia Bright Lights became a reality. (Mr Bird was to receive an 'Order of Australia' in 1994 for services to the Youth of Australia).

By 1984, an automatic sprinkler system had been installed on the sporting ovals.

The Equal Opportunity Committee was formed in 1986 at the request of the Parent Club where its aims were to assist the wider school community recognize discrimination in its many forms and to establish in children, an awareness of non-sexist ideas during their early years of education.

1986 also saw the Finance Committee consider the formation of a co-operative or an extension of existing loan facilities in order to raise \$20,000 for the purchase and introduction of computers into the school curriculum.

It was also suggested to School Council that it provide the fullest support for the Family Day with the objective of making this an annual event. Since that time, the event has grown from being a 'one day' occurrence to a weekly calendar of activities. Today it is known as 'Circle of Friends', where children are grouped together from all grade levels and share activities throughout the year. It is unique to Boronia Primary School.

Songs composed by Music teacher, Ross Paterson, helped raise funds which led to the completion of the amphitheatre in 1986.

He also produced a new arrangement of Advance Australia Fair to give new meaning to our school's patriotic ceremony on Monday mornings. "I believed that there was an urgent need to make available to schools throughout Australia an adaptation of our National Anthem which gave children the opportunity to demonstrate their love of Australia by being involved in the ceremony by either singing or playing or both."

This new arrangement (in conjunction with teachers Lynne Holland and Jan Donnelly) included a cassette and book of twelve specially arranged singing and instrumental parts, particularly suitable for primary school children. It was pitched in a key which could be sung comfortably and which used instruments that were readily available in many primary schools. Kits received endorsement from Yamaha and Rose Music and were promoted as part of the bicentennial celebrations, with many of these kits being packaged and promoted around Australia.



During 1987 the Boronia Primary School Building Fund was introduced for the purposes of improving the building and facilities.

A suggestion was also made to introduce information technology to the library, however it was not until the early 1990's that librarians, Mrs Joan Christians and Mrs Judy Nash had the whole school's resources fully automated through a computerized library.

At the beginning of 1988, the Outside School Hours Program was inaugurated at Boronia Primary.

The bike compound was also relocated to an area adjacent to rooms 1 and 2 during this year. The following year our school was supplied with a new storage shed together with concrete floor.

## 1990's

In 1991, during the leadership of Mrs Jan Campbell, Boronia Primary received approval to install ramps to accommodate integration students at a cost of \$3300.

The LOTE (Language other than English) Program was integrated into the classroom during 1991.

1992 saw the inauguration of the 'Rotary Citizenship' Award, an annual award presented to a Year 6 student who has displayed exemplary behaviour throughout his/her school life and who has been a role model and participant in the local community.

The 'Schools of the Future' Program was officially launched on July 27<sup>th</sup> 1993.

In 1995 a Marketing Plan was developed to enable Boronia Primary to communicate more effectively with the wider school community. A Publicity Officer was appointed, pamphlets were distributed to local shops and real estate agents, and the school adopted an 'open approach' where parents were regularly invited to events such as Education Week, Family Week and Bright Lights etc. Students also visited Glengollan Nursing Home and performed at the Boronia Mall. The increase in the Prep intake the following year (1996) was attributed largely to this Marketing Plan.

The Music room stage was extended in 1996 with cobblestones being relaid and railway sleepers replaced.

The school received a grant for \$500 to erect a fence around the sanctuary. In 1997 a new 'Maintenance Plan' covering the next three years was created to ensure that regular checks were carried out on all facilities.



After school uniforms were made compulsory in the early 1990's, annual surveys were conducted, indicating very pleasing results. They showed a high percentage of students (usually 96% +) were dressed in school uniform.

*Taking pride in our school uniform.  
The wearing of school hats in Terms 1 and 4 was made compulsory in 1996.*



An initiative of the Knox Historical Society Board was to relocate the original wooden section of the old Boronia Primary School in Dorset Road (now McDonald's site), to an area near Ambleside, probably at the back of the No 1 Olivebank Road property. Although Mr Hurtle Lupton had been approached for his help, the project was still in its infancy. It was thought that the 1920's era building would enhance the heritage image of the area. This building would be a better location than 1 Olivebank Road in the long term to conduct meetings and to hold small or temporary exhibitions. The school building would also be a great asset as an extra storage facility.

Unfortunately, the Board had to inform Mr Lupton and the Education Department that the Knox Historical Society would be unable to raise the \$50,000 required to move the old wooden Boronia Primary School building to an area next to Ambleside Homestead. It was hoped that it would be located either in the visitor's car park or at the end of the main drive-way.

The Board could not see how it could raise the required money and were worried about upsetting the neighbours and how the City of Knox would view the idea. Although other ideas for relocating the building were forwarded, the initiative was finally scrapped.

Boronia Primary received the very welcome addition of an Information Technology Laboratory in the late '90's, thanks in particular to the 'ground work' of Mr Clive Pontin (P.E. teacher/Computers) and the then Principal, Mr Keith Rae. This air conditioned computer room housed thirty-one computers and came complete with an instruction computer and projector screen. This facility was to play a major role in the school's curriculum and is used by all children from Years Prep to Six.

In 1999, a Year 5 student submitted an online project on Sir Douglas Mawson and won a trip to Antarctica. As well as it being a 'fully' timetabled classroom, this facility is used as a training centre for parents, teachers and others in the wider community.



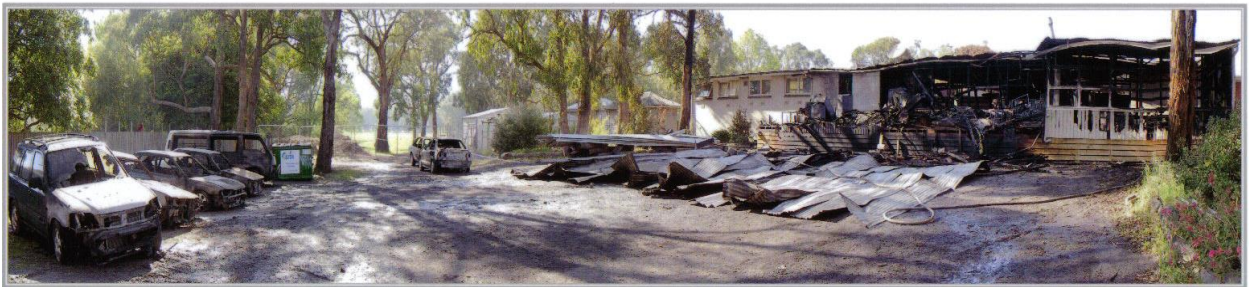
## 2000's

In March 2001, the school expressed interest in becoming involved with the Work For The Dole Scheme. A young man worked for thirty hours per fortnight over a six month period, hopefully gaining the confidence to become a fully employed member of society.

The school community was devastated in 2002 when a fire destroyed many of its buildings, including seven vehicles. This led to the establishment of a 'Working for the Future' Committee, a band of enthusiastic and dedicated staff and parents, led by Assistant Principal Robert Bates. For the next three years, they worked tirelessly to fundraise for equipment that had been lost in the fire. Special days were organized including Extreme Machine Shows and Golf Days.

Throughout the years, school funds have also been raised by many hard working committees consisting of parents and staff. eg. fetes, drive-in, disco, trivia nights, car boot stalls, chocolate/pie drives, 'a-thons,' etc. Extra funds are also donated to the school budget by other committees such as Parent Club, Canteen, Uniform and Outside School Hours.

The builders working on the Boronia Primary extensions prior to the fire, joined their union, The Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union to raise \$8000 for the school. This was just one example of the community coming together in a time of need.



James Tom Digital Photography

### Morning After

In 2003, the Bracks Government announced that Boronia Primary would receive \$1.769 million to rebuild the facilities it lost in a fire the previous year. The money was to be used to rebuild the art room and refurbish five classrooms, staffroom, administration area, student toilets and Outside School Hours building.

2005 has seen the much anticipated completion of all building works. The construction of a basketball sized stadium is a major highlight and is a facility enjoyed not only by staff and students at Boronia Primary, but by the community at large.



School promotion has played a major role in all schools over recent years and Boronia Primary has been no exception. Whether it's been through the school newsletter, website, assemblies, local media or in the school community, Boronia has diligently made a concerted effort to spread goodwill and promote its curriculum and facilities. eg. choir performing at K-mart, Art displays at local library and businesses, entry into the Knox Pride Awards and upcoming items advertised in local newspapers.



As you will notice from the "Significant Events" page, Performing Arts has played a major role in the school's curriculum for many years, as highlighted by the many productions that have been organised.

A great incentive for those involved in the performance of Jack and the Beanstalk in 2002 was the acceptance of a 'Youth Encouragement Award.'



As you near the end of this booklet, we trust you have found it informative, and hope that it has 'sparked' some memories of your association with Boronia Primary School.

***"Put your best foot forward,  
success will come your way."***



## Look at us now .....



*Classrooms / covered walkway*



*Art Room*



*Stadium*



**..... in 2005!**

