The future is here - Kindergarten 1995

Wee Waa celebrates 125 years of education

The future is here for Kindergarten pupils at Wee Waa Public School. Kinder kids of 1995 do all the traditional learning exercises - and enjoy themselves while learning on 1995 technology. In the picture, right to left, Emma Rose, Laura Maxwell, Niki Lee Penn and Sophie Burke are using new literacy software 'WiggieWords' on their Macintosh 575 computer. Wee Waa is marking the 125th Anniversary of Education in the town this week. When the Kindergarten pupils in the picture perhaps look back to 1995, they will wonder at the "primitive" Mac, as they carry out their HSC studies on computers the size of a paperback book.
Tom Brown enrolled at Wee Waa Public in January 1947, at the school still on the same site. Tom is pictured outside the 1937 main school building with current Year 6 students, left to right, Stuart Smith, Tiffany Jackson, Chloe Jackson and Jason Bartz.
Education in Wee Waa
now in its 125th year

(by Ian Thompson, President, Wee Waa Historical Society)

Public schooling in Wee Waa had its humble beginnings 125 years ago. An application for the establishment of a public school was made in March 1869 and in the following year on April 11, 1870, and signed by three local residents John Eoberry, Charles Trindall and George Whitten, another application was made.

Twenty-eight children were promised to attend. Meanwhile a small private school was operating in the township and had been for some time.

Education had not been considered a high priority among the early settlers.

The average length of schooling of children up to 1861 was a mere two years. Many of the outback children received no formal education at all.

During the 1860's, Narrabri grew rapidly at the expense of Wee Waa. The population of Wee Waa remained almost static with 100 people at the beginning of 1860 then in 1871 the population was 94 while Narrabri's population had increased to 400. This delayed the establishment of a public school in Wee Waa.

The Council of Education decided to assist with the establishment of a Provisional school at Wee Waa. From April when the application had been processed there were difficulties in finding a suitable teacher. Then in November 1870 all the efforts came to fruition and the School commenced.

The first permanent school building was erected at Wee Waa for 111 points in 1874.

The Council determined that this building should be erected on a reserved land by the Council at the corner of George and Cowper Streets (Section 11 - the site of the present school) but records show that the school building was constructed on vacant crown land.

The Provisional School was raised to Public School status in 1878, the enrolment was then 38.

The Wee Waa Public School was accommodated in the original building area erected in 1874. It consisted of a school room 30 x 15' connected by a common wall to an attached residence comprising three rooms and a verandah.

In 1884 the Department erected new public school on Section 16 (present site).

In 1937 a weatherboard building to accommodate 190 pupils was completed.

Cost was 2,770 pounds. This building accommodated the secondary pupils before the new Secondary school was completed.

In 1939, for 976 pounds, the present residence was constructed.

Since then Wee Waa Public's building and infrastructure has grown to meet the demands of a dynamic community.

New classroom accommodation has been matched with the latest teaching technology.

Active parent support has brought ongoing improvement to the school's facilities.
Four generations of pupils who attended Wee Waa Public School - Clare Madden, Dorothy O'Brien, Antoinette O'Neill and Shae O'Neill.