



Rossmoyne Primary School 50th Anniversary Newsletter

Friday 20 November 2015 will record a major milestone for Rossmoyne Primary School.

It will be 50 years and one day from when the school was formally opened in what was then the new, but rapidly growing suburb of Rossmoyne on the southern edge of the Perth metropolitan area. The



From this bush block in 1963...

Pic courtesy Rossmoyne Remembered

four-hectare school site was just bush when it was selected in 1955. Fred Carden's history of the City of Canning tells us that to protect as many of the native plants as possible before construction of the school commenced, the Canning Tree Society inspected the site and labelled the trees they believed should be retained. Carden writes that the school was built at a cost of £22,198 (\$44,396) and the first classes commenced in February 1964. In 1965 there were 160 children at the school under the keen eye of principal, Jack Moy and the enrolments quickly grew to more than 600 by 1972 to serve the young families who had moved to Rossmoyne. The only other primary schools in the region were Riverton and Brentwood. Shelley Primary was still another 10 years away.

In the school's early years students recited the Lord's Prayer at the start of each day's lessons, uniforms were optional and a number of children did not wear shoes. But thanks to a Commonwealth Government scheme that ran from 1950 to 1973, every child got a free third of a pint bottle of milk to drink each morning. About one third of the teaching staff was men. The blackboards, chalk and dusters that were found in every classroom have now been supplanted by electronic whiteboards and the desks, with their lift-top lids and inkwells, replaced by tables on which MacBook are used as much as exercise books and pens.

More than half the Rossmoyne Primary students who will be celebrating the 50th are from very different backgrounds from those who first entered the school in the 60s. In 1965 the White Australia policy was still firmly in place and the school population was almost entirely Australian or UK-born. Now, 52 per cent of the 420 children enrolled at the school have a language background other than English, their parents coming predominantly from India, Sri Lanka, China, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Consistent anecdotal evidence is that many of these families chose Rossmoyne before or after migrating to Australia because of the reputation of the primary and secondary schools. More than 3,400 students have graduated from Rossmoyne Primary since it opened, the majority going to Rossmoyne High School, and many then on to tertiary education.

...to this highly regarded school today

Have some
memorabilia
to share?

Let us know at
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