

Forest Station State School 1939 - 1965

Establishment of School

Although the children of the Amamoor Forest Station had always attended the Diamond Field School, many parents weren't happy with this arrangement. They were worried about their children's safety, as they walked to and from school. Their major concerns were the Lewis Crossing at Amamoor Creek which reached dangerous levels during sudden storms; the long distances travelled by the children and the amount of schooling lost through bad weather.

Finally, in 1936, parental concerns prompted the community to form a School Building Committee which consisted of Messrs J. Williams, W. Byram, R. Fraser, H. Hinchcliffe, P.J. Murphy, J. Coombes, R. Campbell, R. Pearce and J. Innis.

On the 3rd August, 1936, the secretary of the committee, Mr. P.J. Murphy, wrote to the Director of Education, Mr McKenna, making application for the establishment of a school in the area, and stated that twenty children were eligible to start. The community also enlisted the help of the local member, Mr. H.F. Walker, M.L.A. who gave his full support to the project.

The Department appointed the District Inspector, Mr. J. Farrell, to report on the feasibility of building a new school. (See notes re Inspector Farrell's comments in the Diamond Field State School History.)

Acting on Mr Farrell's submissions, the Department of Public Lands, on the 19th November, 1937, approved setting apart an area of 3.3 acres of State Forest Reserve R.435, parish of Amamoor, for school purposes, for a term of 30 years at a peppercorn rental.

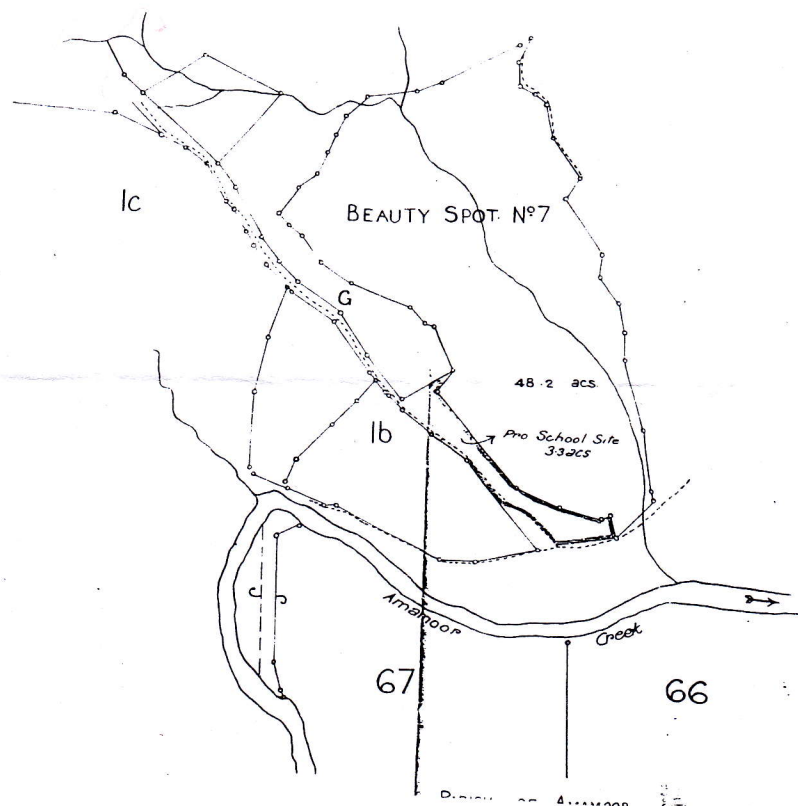
By August 1938 the Department decided not to proceed with plans to relocate the Diamond Field School building to Forest Station. It was felt that the cost in removing, re-erecting, extend-

ing and painting wouldn't warrant the cost and that a new building was a better proposition. The question of erecting a new building was referred to the Works Department.

Four months later, Mr. E.A. Arndt won the tender to construct the new school at a cost of four hundred and twenty-eight pounds. The Forest Station School was completed in early 1939. It consisted of one State School building of the standard type for 40 pupils with a classroom measuring twenty-one feet by eighteen feet and two eight foot verandahs, two new E.C. buildings (pan system) and a one thousand gallon tank. With the closure of the Diamond Field School, the furniture, garden tools and pot plants were transferred to the new building.

The Diamond Field School closed on Thursday the 2nd March and the new school opened for classes the next day, Friday the 3rd. with an enrolment of 24 pupils. The head teacher, Mr. Arnold Haugh, transferred from the Diamond Field School.

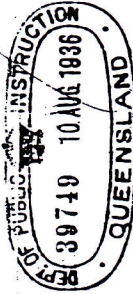
Three weeks later the school was officially opened by Mr H.F. Walker, M.L.A. and the celebrations took the form of a picnic with games and races, interspersed with plenty of cakes, lollies, fruit and soft drink. The day ended with a dance held in the school.



Map of Proposed School Site
Source 'Queensland State Archives'

*The Various
P. J. Murphy*

for estab. g new school at Forest Station



*Forest Station
Amamoor -
August 1936*

The Director of Education

Dear Sir

*At a meeting of Parents held at
the Forest Station Amamoor on July 18th last, it was decided to
make application for the establishment of a State School at or near
that station.
I would be pleased if you would forward me Application Papers
& any other particulars that are required in making such
application.*

*Yours faithfully
P. J. Murphy
Hon Sec
School Building Committee
Forest Station
Amamoor
M. V. Jure*

*Send the usual forms of application
lists like etc.*

8 AUG 1936

Application for Establishment of New School at Forest Station
Source "Queensland State Archives"

5381

DEPT. OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
57234
QUEENSLAND
NO. 1041837

AWAY

*M. S. Forest Station
Dec 1937*

Land Administration Board
Department of Public Lands

Res. 85-10

Brisbane, 19th November 1937.

Sir, Re site for proposed school

With reference to your letter of the 4th instant (Ref. No. 37/53687 N.S. Forest Station) in connection with the setting apart of an area of State Forest Reserve R.435, Parish of Amamoor, for School purposes, I am directed to inform you that it has been approved to seek Executive Authority to grant, in the name of Secretary for Public Instruction in Queensland, a special lease under section 179 (1) of "The Land Acts, 1910 to 1937" of an area of about 3.3 acres, in the position desired by you, for a term of 30 years at a peppercorn rental and subject to the conditions as set forth on the accompanying form.

In order that this action may proceed, you should forward, at an early date, the required amount of stamp duty, 12s. 6d.

A sketch of the land is enclosed.

Yours faithfully,

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Mrs Audrey Alford (nee Hinchcliffe) A First Day Pupil:

'I was attending Diamond Field and then one day I was told that I was to go to Forest Station as my school was closing. To my knowledge there was no discussion about moving schools. It just happened!

We had to help with the banking up of the trees and rubbish that had been cut down so the building could be built. We also planted trees. The forestry camps were opposite the school on the flat, now Amama Park.

Mr Haugh, the Head Teacher, held a raffle every Friday. His mother made lamingtons and this was the prize. Once a month the prize was a big apple. We had sport every Friday. I remember one game in particular where you had to crawl under a tarp and there was a tub full of



Pupils across from the School 1940



School Band 1941



Head Teacher Mr Bob Haugh 1941

water with apples in it. You had to bob for an apple and then crawl out. Only in the latter years of my schooling do I recall playing sport against Amamoor School.

Mr Haugh had been living with his mother, but when she died he partitioned off a section of the classroom as his living area.

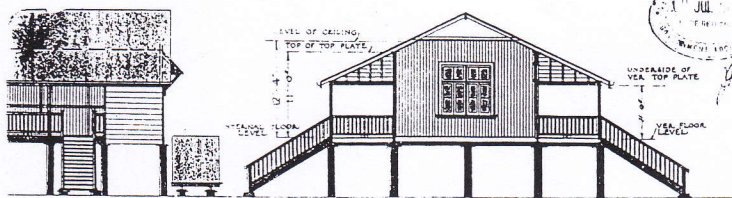
Mrs Collins came once a week to teach us sewing, then later on, it was Mrs Lawrence. Mr Haugh was very musical and could play anything, from the bagpipes to a mouth organ. He used to teach us music, using his own instruments.'

DETAILS OF CLOSETS

N O T E

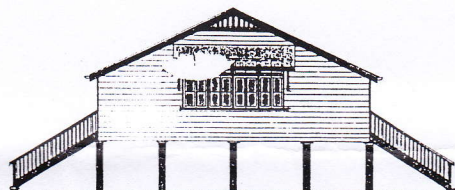
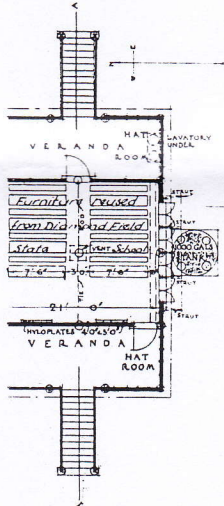
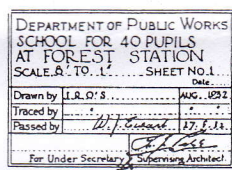
TWO BUILDINGS ARE REQUIRED - ONE FOR BOYS & ONE FOR GIRLS - URINAL TO BE OMITTED FROM GIRLS E.C.
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 SEEDS TO BE FRIED UNDER SCHOOL AGAINST STUMPS ENCLOSED WITH GALV IRON
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 TARGET SET OF CASUALTY WINDOWS FACE THE SOUTH
 ALL NORTHEAST WINDOWS ARE TO BE GLAZED WITH ACID OBTUSCURED SHEET GLASS

159-18-1

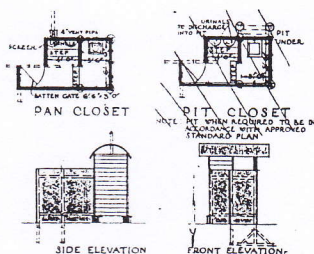


ELEVATION

SECTION. A-A



SIDE ELEVATION



4
SIDE ELEVATION

FRONT ELEVATION

School Side Elevation
Source "Queensland State Archives"



Forest Station School 1939

The school had been operating for 2 years when the head teacher made application to the Department for a new tank. The school tank was empty and the 34 pupils had to carry water to school. Apart from the obvious lack of drinking water the tank also serviced the vegetable project plot of 192 square yards, eleven trees, twelve roses, fourteen pot plants and two 13 square yard flower beds.

The Department replied:

"Water supply for school gardening purposes not arranged for by Department. The question of additional tank in respect of the requirements of the 34 children should also be made mention of in reply."

In a 1949 memo from Building and Sites regarding accommodation for the teacher, it was stated that the School Committee had written to the Department stating that the Head Teacher, 'lives in the school.' It also made a comment about the Head Teacher parking a motor car under the school building.

The recommendation was curt and to the point:

'Advise him that the Education Office Gazette of 3rd February, 1939, directs Head Teachers that motor cars must not be placed under school buildings. He should therefore discontinue forthwith, the placing of his car underneath the school building.'

But not a mention of what to do about the poor Head Teacher's accommodation!

The comfort of the pupils was obviously a priority for the local member, Mr Max Hodges, when he wrote to the Minister for Education Mr Jack Pizzey (later Premier) requesting a room heater be installed because of the very cold location of the school in the winter months. Hopefully the classroom atmosphere was enjoyed by pupils and teacher, and never became overheated!

The school in 1963 was in a rather run down state, when the District Supervisor of Works requested urgent work be done on the buildings. He wrote after inspecting the school:

"The existing girls' E.C. building has no provision for a door. A corrugated iron screen is provided with a batten gate, but does not ensure complete privacy of the building. It is considered provision of a T & G/VJ ledge door to this unit is a matter of urgency. Estimated cost, thirteen pounds and twelve shillings."

And in regard to general repairs:

"The existing padlocks to the girls and boys E.C. buildings are rusted and unserviceable; fly proof gauze to the cabinets has deteriorated; there is no provision for locking the school gates and guttering on the school building and birds' nests on the window shades require cleaning out."

Apart from the buildings needing a facelift, the Chief Medical Officer of the day also recommended the road in front of the school be sealed to prevent the dust from passing over the school. But a more pressing problem for the children were the mice which constantly invaded their lunch bags.



Sporting Group early 60's

Closure of School

By 1964 the pupil numbers had dropped to 10. When the Government decided against spending money on concrete rat proofing, the signs were there that the closure of the school was imminent. The School Transport Service was introduced two months later, and it was decided to bus the Forest Station School children to the Amamoor School, 3 miles away.

The school closed on the 24th January, 1965. The Special Lease for the site was surrendered to the Crown and a rent payment of one pound was received from the Land Administration Commission.

The School buildings were sold by auction for one hundred and sixty pounds to a Mr. M.J. Pringle of Gympie. The building is now a private home in Leonard Street, South Side, Gympie.

School Closures

All schools had to submit an annual report to the Department regarding reasons for the school closures during the year. Forest Station recorded the usual, though occasionally there were exceptions:

| | | |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1940 | June 23 Aug 29 - Sept 8 | Educational Weekend Teacher's Illness |
| 1941 | March 25 | Visit of U.S.A. Fleet |
| 1942 | Jan 27 - Feb 20 March 17 | Building of Air Raid Shelters Teacher's Medical Examination Car Trouble |
| 1943 | April 8 | |
| 1944 | Jan 24 - 28 Feb 1, 4, 7, 11 & 14 July 28 Sept 14 Dec 8 | Teacher's Illness Teacher's Illness Tyre inspection and visit to Doctor Attend Mr Murphy's funeral Car Repairs and Visit to Doctor |
| 1945 | May 9 Aug 20, 21, 22 | V.E. Day V.P. Day |
| 1947 | Jan 28 to Feb 6 Feb 27 July 21 Nov 20 | No Teacher Wet Day General Montgomery's Holiday Royal Wedding (Princess Elizabeth and Prince Phillip) |
| 1948 | Nov 19 | Royal Birth (Prince Charles) |
| 1949 | July 8 Oct 17 | Dental Treatment Petrol shortage |

Memories of Past Pupils of Forest Station School

Mrs Audrey Alford (nee Hinchcliffe), enrolled in 1939.

'My children, Sharen, Gary and Darryl all started school in the 60's at Forest Station. They had a very good teacher in Mr Lynch. During their time there, indoor bowls were played in the school. There was no discussion about the school closing, but it was no surprise, as there were only 5 families. There had been a steady decline in numbers after the Forestry camps closed.'

Mr Dennis Mitchell, enrolled in 1960.

'I remember going up the bush and cutting switches for the teacher. I think I'd worn out a few sticks already. All the pupils dug the ground and planted pine trees at the back of the school and they're still there today. Maybe we had to replace the trees I'd used for switches!'

Mr Powell played cricket with the students, but the minute he was out, it was back to class. We always made sure he stayed at the wicket for a very long, long time.'

Mrs Sharen Armstrong (nee Alford), enrolled in 1959.

'One of the boys swore at the teacher and was sent home, but rather than face his irate mother, he spent the whole day under a tree in the rain. One of the girls used bad language and Mr Powell attempted to wash her mouth out with soap at the trough under the school building.'

I had these beautiful triangular shaped red cedar rulers that Dad had made for me, but most of them were broken round one naughty boy's backside when Mr Powell would grab the ruler off my desk and whack the offender.

There was a lot of sport played at the school and we did very well at the Mary Valley Sports. Maybe it was because we all had to be involved, being a small school.'

Staff of Forest Station State School

| | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| Haugh, Arnold Robert | Head Teacher | 03.03.1939 | 11.04.1951 |
| McTaggart, Neil Innes | Temporary H.T. | 05.06.1946 | 13.12.1946 |
| Lynch, Vincent | Head Teacher | 02.04.1951 | 13.02.1961 |
| Powell, Lionel William | Head Teacher | 23.01.1961 | 25.01.1965 |