

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

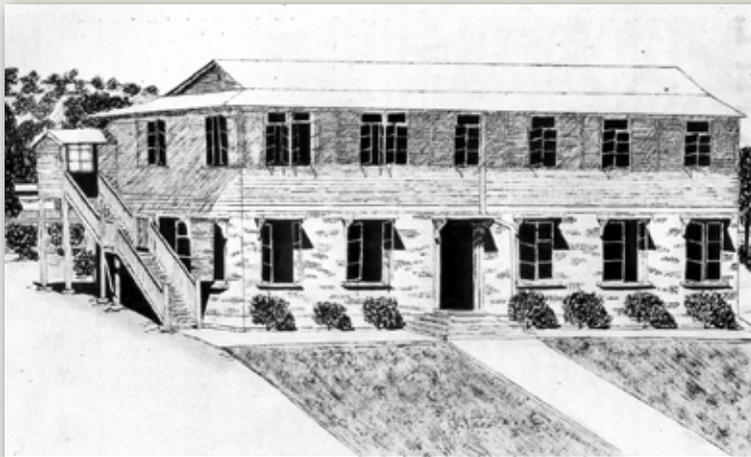
## SCHOOL HOUSE & MAURIE BLANK BUILDING

The oldest building at the School is **School House**. This was the original building completed in 1888. This building was destroyed by Cyclone Leonta in 1903 and rebuilt to almost the exact specifications as the original and opened in February 1904. Until WWII, the top floor was accommodation for boarders and the bottom floor was divided into two large classroom sections, named Big Room and Small Room. The majority of lessons took place in these rooms. With the growth of student numbers after the war both levels became accommodation for boarders. In the early 1990s the bottom floor was changed into the uniform store and finance department while upstairs remained boarding.

This year will mark a dramatic change to the future of our heritage listed building. Apart from two interludes [Leonta in 1903 and WWII] School House has served continuously as a boarding establishment. The building, however, is in need of refurbishment and because it is a heritage listed building it becomes a major project that cannot occur while it remains an active residential site. It is anticipated that the refurbishment will restore what has been a wonderful building to its former glory. [The accompanying architect's sketch is of the building in 1904]



The second oldest building in the School is the **Maurie Blank Building**. This building was opened in September 1941. The bottom floor is brick and the top floor is the former kindergarten centre at the West End State School which was donated by the Education Department in 1939. From 1942-1944 the building became the headquarters of Number 3 Fighter Sector and the top floor was given over to the WAAAF who set up a system which monitored and identified all aircraft in the region and initiated air raid warnings.



After the School's return to the main campus in 1945 the building housed the Headmaster's office, masters' common room, School library and several small classrooms on the ground floor while the top floor consisted of three classrooms. When fully opened, the three rooms became the assembly room. At night the rooms were used by the boarders to do their homework. There was also a wide verandah on the top floor where lockers were situated for day

students. The top floor has experienced minimal change over the years but the bottom floor has experienced many changes. It is now an administration centre, housing the offices of the senior members of staff but also displaying the many wonderful honour boards that reflect the long and varied history of the School. [The accompanying sketch of the building was drawn in 1953 by a student, G. Morris]

The **Maurie Blank Building** has suffered damage on two occasions from cyclones. In 1956 Cyclone Agnes blew the roof off the building, causing water damage to the top floor. On Christmas Eve 1971, Cyclone Althea raised the roof of the building causing severe damage. It is ironic that during these two cyclones no damage was incurred by School House, a testament to the architectural and engineering skills involved in the rebuilding of our heritage building.

**MR BILL MULLER**  
*School Archivist*