

Nunkeri

There was no spare land around Nunkeri siding for a hall or sporting grounds, but, one mile north of the siding a reserve of 25 acres had been set aside at McNamara's Bore. In February 1915 the Nunkeri Progress Association wrote to the Commissioner of Lands requesting land from the bore reserve for a hall - for school and social purposes. Ten acres was granted.

During 1916 the Progress Association approached the Education Department and began considering ways of financing the erection of a hall.

The trustees were successful in obtaining a loan (one of the first approved) from the Education Department under a provision introduced allowing the Minister of Education to lend money on mortgage for the erection of a building which would be used for school and other purposes.

Construction began in 1917, of a stone hall 36ft by 24ft, with jarrah floors. Nunkeri school opened on October 7th 1918 with Mrs Edith Sydenham in charge of 9 pupils. By 1923 there were 26 pupils on the roll.

In March 1922 the teacher complained to the Education Department that there was no satisfactory board available. The teacher was sharing a room with other children. The Chief Inspector of school made departmental policy quite clear to the school committee that if a satisfactory board was not found the teacher would be transferred to another school. No accommodation could be found and the teacher was transferred. Nunkeri school closed. This was not an isolated case. It happened frequently in many parts of the state, in the era of one teacher schools. Board was found a few months later and the school reopened.

Teachers who taught at Nunkeri were:	Edith E Sydenham	1918 - 1919
	Ida P Kelly	1919 - 1920
	Mary Leonard	1920 - 1921
	Ella A Cooper	1921 - 1922
	Mary E McCabe	1922 - 1925
	Linda F Verral	1925 March - September
	Leonard H Vickery	1926 - 1933
	Kathleen Evans	1933 - 1934 (death)
	Blanche Graham	1935 January - February
	Dorothy Sandford	March 1935 - 1937
	Ethel M Luhrs	1937 March - July
	W Flexmore Hudson	July 1937 - 1938
	Eric H Zanzow	1939 January - April
	James Dowling	April 1939 - Dec 1940

Dorothy Sandford is Mrs Clem Mickan of Karoonda.

Nunkeri school closed in December 1940 ready for the opening of Karoonda Area School in 1941.



Nunkeri School 1937

W Flexmore Hudson was the editor of *Poetry - a quarterly of Australian and New Zealand verse*. Some of his verse publications were *Ashes and Sparks - 1937*, *In the Wind's Teeth - 1940* and *Indelible Voices and With the First Soft Rain - 1943*.

A request from Mr E Allen the Superintendent of High Schools in South Australia in the early 1940's for a general selection of Australian verse for High School students, saw the printing of the anthology of Australian verse - *New Song in an Old Land*. W Flexmore Hudson had four of his poems in this book.

The Farmer

Star-mist was on the hills; the cows had been fed:
It was twilight, soft and windless,
and the trees in the west tipped with red.
I walked with the farmer through the brown ploughed
field,
while the dogs drove the sheep ahead.
We had to shout in that babble of lamb frenziedly
sniffing,
searching with strange little rushes,
and the rams turned to stamp at the dogs.
And though I had lived with the man in his home,
seen him a thousand times with his children and wife,
I had not known before such tenderness to come
into his face as he raised a sick lamb from its rest and,
folding its forelegs gently, carried it close to his breast.

Mallee Scene

On the death-still plain
two steel rails glare.
Then a lame scorched train
limp from the cutting's golden flare
as if each slow pant hurts,
and a sorry flock
of crows go up with a shiver of air,
and a faint hare spurts
from his squat on jerky limbs;
While thin clouds pass and pitilessly mock
the thirsting mallee scrub that the sand-drift
rims.

W Flexmore Hudson

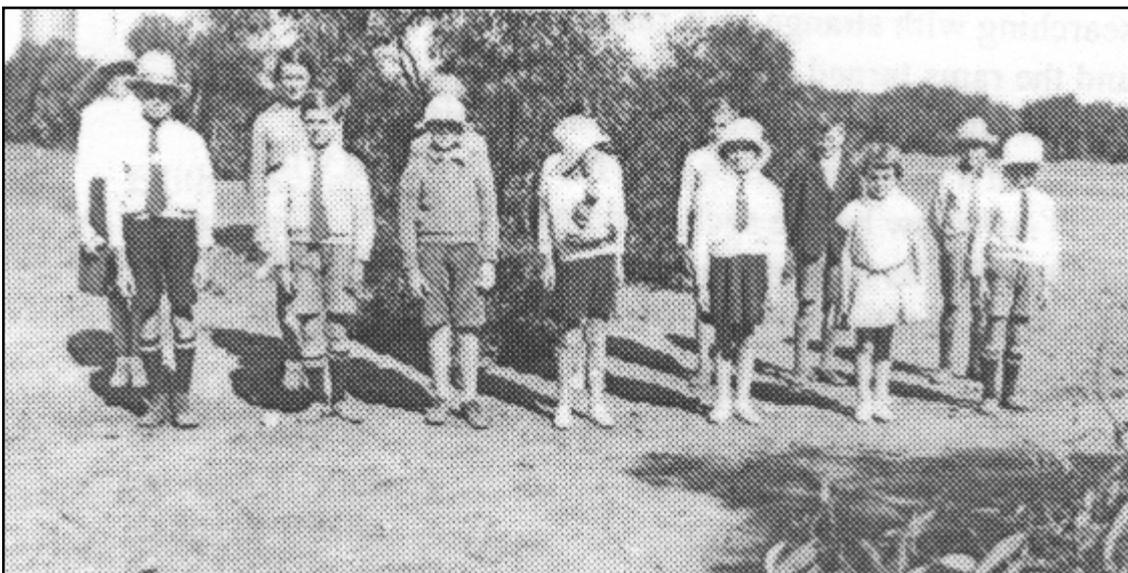
Isabel Longmire (nee Bruce) used to ride a horse (Dolly) to school. The horse was short-sighted and used to shy at rabbit holes and throw Isabel off. Dolly would then gallop home and leave Isabel to walk.

Dorothy vividly remembers how the boys used to put sleepy lizards in the toilet under the bags they used for sack races, and tell Isabel to shift the bags. Isabel was only in the junior grades and was terrified of lizards. This fear was made worse when one of the boys threw a lizard at her. She still dislikes sleepy lizards.

The daily ritual of the morning assembly and the checking of hands, shoes, hankies and the saluting of the flag is well remembered by students of Nunkeri.

In the late 1939's Bob Barr remembers that the teacher, who live in Karoonda, on occasions was not well enough to attend school.

The students, after waiting a reasonable time, would walk to the railway siding, where there would usually be an empty "Y" truck to the eastern end of the yard which was slightly more elevated then the western end. All would clamber on board and rumble off down to the other end of the yard - the oldest boy in charge of the brakes. By midday all would be exhausted. They would eat their lunch and head for home.



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