

**BARALABA STATE SCHOOL CENTENARY** ADVERTISING FEATURE

# School started its life in a tent

**FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO MODERN SCHOOL**

THE push to open what is now Baralaba State School started at a public meeting on September 25, 1917, only months after the official opening of the town and the railway.

A school committee was formed at the meeting but due to the unsettled state of local coal mines at that time the Department of Public Instruction could not approve a State School.

However, the department was willing to open a Provisional School if parents could provide a room in which to hold classes.

A tent previously used as a boarding house was erected and the department advised the school would be known as Baralaba Provisional School.

It was officially opened on August 19, 1918, with Edward C. Asmus as the head teacher and an enrolment of 16 pupils.

By September, 1921, the tent was totally inadequate and badly torn with more than 50 students attending



**TENT SCHOOL:** Local Baralaba artist, Kath Dunne, has done a rendition of the original tent school to feature on some of the memorabilia items for the school's centenary celebrations.

the school.

With further damage to the tent from a storm, students were moved to the railway goods shed.

The closure of the Mt Chalmers State School resulted in

its removal to Baralaba and in March, 1922, students began lessons in their first permanent building.

The school had setbacks but continued to thrive and develop over the years with

a secondary department officially opened on July 17, 1965.

A Centenary Gardens is being established to celebrate the significance of the centenary to the school and

local community.

The gardens will have two sections - a large section open to the general public and a smaller section dedicated to student learning spaces.

Both sections will feature bush tucker gardens, look-outs over the beautiful Dawson River, sensory gardens, local information and history plaques, picnic shelters and sculptures from local artists and our students.

Indigenous elders and locals will be actively involved in the planning of the gardens to ensure significant cultural elements are incorporated appropriately.

The bush tucker gardens will be used to educate Indigenous and non-Indigenous students about traditional ingredients and cooking techniques.

Sensory gardens will also provide a sanctuary for students to discover and stimulate senses they normally would not.

The centenary gardens will wrap around the edge of the existing oval, creating a beautiful shaded area for the current school students to explore and use as outdoor classrooms.

The public section of centenary gardens will provide an attraction for the town that many travellers through the town could access.

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