

Welcome to the 150th Year of West End State School

A Memorandum Of Understanding between the Board of Education and Builder Ebenezer Chapman was signed on January 1st 1875 to build a school house in West End on 5 acres of land that was originally gazetted to be a cemetery.

At noon on 16th August 1875 the West End Infants School, the West End Boys School and West End Girls School were officially opened.

West End State School has mirrored the changing organisational structures of education in Qld over the 150 years with the last restructure being the 1995 amalgamation of West End Infants (housed in the wooden buildings currently used by OSHC) and West End School (Year 3-7) located in the 1936 Heritage Listed Depression Brick Administration Building.

You can find out more about WESS History from the WESS 125th Anniversary Book 1875-2000 which is now available on our school website.

15 separate schools, each with their own Head Teacher, were officially opened on the original WESS site with children starting on that date.

We will be celebrating the 150th Birthday at our 150th Anniversary FIESTA on Saturday 16th August 2025, so make sure you put that Date Claimer in your calendars now so you don't miss the Fun at FIESTA.

[125th BOOK](#)

2025 Memory Morning Teas

Following our Memory Morning Teas held last year as lead in events to gather memorabilia and class photos, we will be continuing them this year as well as other events. Our first Memory Morning Tea in 2025 will be on Friday 28th from 10:00am – 12:00noon. This year we will also be including a tour of the school as well as looking at the school photos and memorabilia. If you have any class photos prior to 1970, we would love to see them as the school does not have complete records.

Check out what's happening on the 150th Anniversary Flyer.

[150th FLYER](#)

Memory Morning Tea November 2024



The Memory Morning Teas are a great way to catch up over a cuppa and reconnect with friends.

Alumni Irene Toumbas (Pappas) even brought along homecooked Honeypuffs to share.



Ruby Luder (Larkin) bought along some original school photos which were scanned, photocopied, enlarged and has a grid added on the day so everyone can fill in the names while they are chatting.



We are in the process of putting together A3 folders for each year that can be added to throughout the year, curating memorabilia and displays etc. We are having 150th Working Bees every Friday from 10:30am – 1:30pm in K Block Library (except our Memory Morning Tea Fridays) if you'd like to join in the fun....

Just email wess150th@gmail.com if you'd like to join us.



The Monthly Memory Morning Teas are a great way to catch up



Former WESS staff Judy Thompson, Carol Beck, Mary Skarparis, Sandy Cumerford, and current staff Cherly Barham.



Former WESS Parents Felicity Gutteridge, Amanda Chun, Cheryl Thacker



WESS Alumni and current parents William Troung and Minh Cheng



Alumni Despo Calogerakis (Carnavas) found a photo of her grandson (3rd generation Alumni William Lakeris – School Captain 2014) in the magazine article about the loss of the 1890 WESS Figtree in the storm.

TERM 1 WEEK 8 2025

Our first WESS 150th Memory Morning Tea held on Friday February 28th saw many new West Enders attending to check out the memorabilia and photo folders as well as catch up with former classmates. Many are organising class reunions to correspond with our Memory Morning Teas and then moving on for lunch later. They are bringing along class photos which we scan, photocopy, enlarge and add a grid for names to be added on the day so they can keep their original photo. The A3 sheets are then added to the individual year folder.



Following our group photo we went on a school tour. They are timed so that when the students are out for playtime, we walk the halls of school days passed through the Heritage Listed 1936 Depression Brick Admin building, so called because of the tax relief to pay unemployed relief labour on Government buildings during the Great Depression of the 1930's, and the former West End Infants wooden buildings.



As we toured the Infants Buildings, now used for OSHC and EALD classes, we checked out the original cupboards in what was Year 1 classrooms for many years, although the original blackboards are long gone, replaced by whiteboards. I asked the group “Stand in front of the cupboards if you remember being in this Year 1 classroom. So many stepped forward that they blocked the cupboards, so if you want to check them out yourself, come along to one of the Friday Memory Morning Tea Tours or the Saturday August 16th FIESTA.



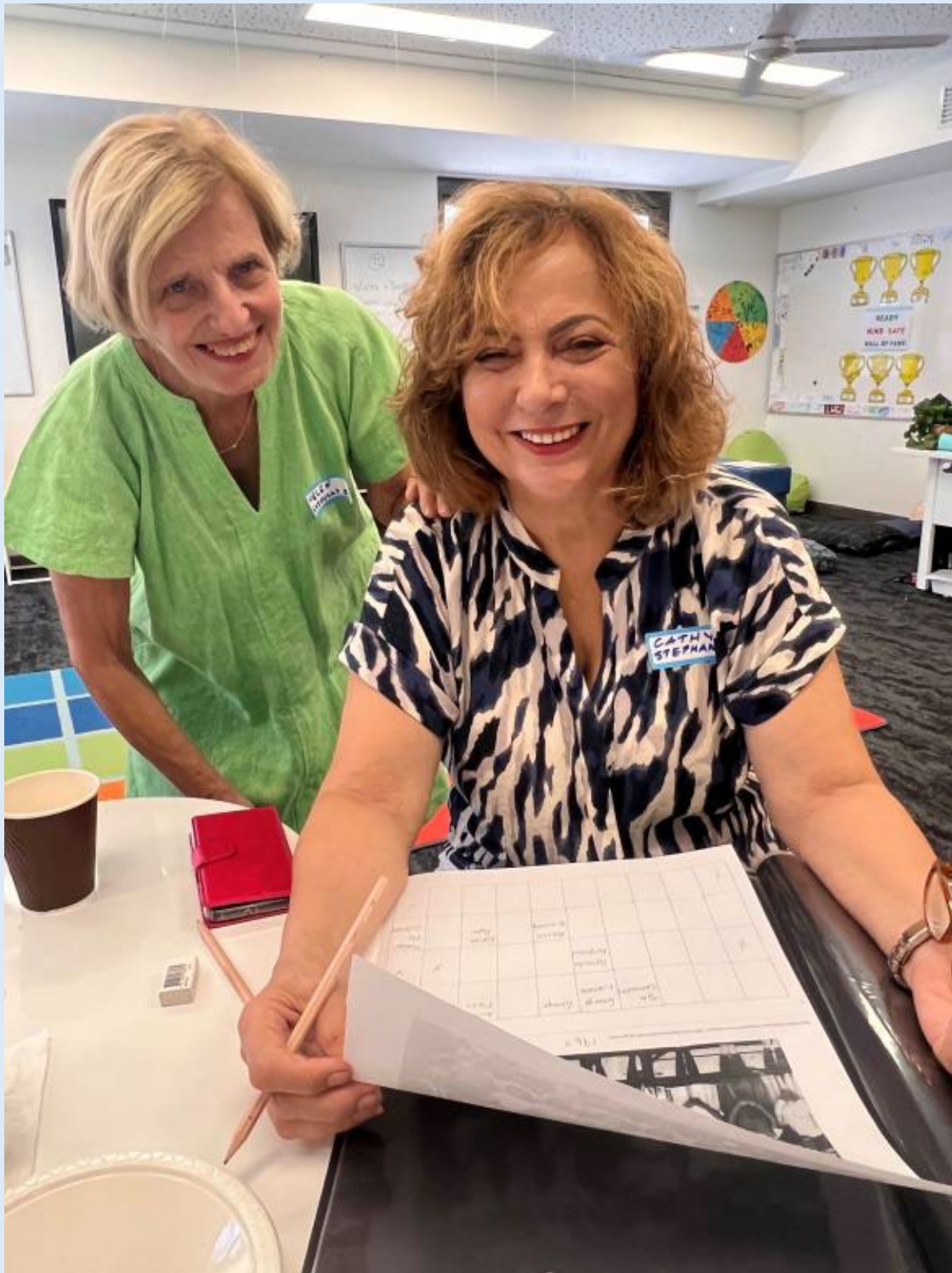
Irene Toumbas and Georgia Kiepe

We were in for a special treat for morning tea when Alumni 1955-1962, Irene Toumbas (Pappas) brought along homemade Spanakopita to share.



Elise Crimmons (1956-1963), Stephen Kazoullis (1956-1963) John Drakos (1955-1962), Irene Toumbas (Pappas 1955-1962), Christos Eglezos (1955-1962), Bill Cassimatis (1962-1962), George Janouris (1956-1964)

After Morning Tea, it's down to work filling in the names of classmates in the grids underneath the unnamed photos.



Helen Kazoullis (Innes 1961-1967) and Cathy Stephanos (Georgiou 1962-1968)

Our next Memory Morning Tea and Tour is Friday 28th March 10:00am – 12:00 in K Block Library. The WESS 150th Committee is also holding Working Bees every Friday from 9:30 – 1:30am in K Block Library compiling the A3 Photo Folders and Memorabilia Displays in preparation for WESS 150th Anniversary FIESTA on Saturday 16th August from 11:00am – 5:00pm. Drop in and check it out - there will be food as well as fun to be had...

TERM 2 WEEK 3 2025

We are welcoming new and returning attendees to K Block from 10:00am – 12:00pm to catch up over a cuppa and peruse our memorabilia each month this year.



March Memory Morning Tea attendees

We had a special guest at our March Memory Tea – Mrs Barbara Ollenburg who taught Year 6 at WESS through the late 1950's up to 1968. She was surrounded by her former students as they all reminisced about WESS Year 3-7 school life.



Barbara Ollenburg – Year 6 teacher surrounded by 1960's WESS Students

The Monthly Memory Morning Teas are also a chance for former WESS Infants and WESS Primary Mixed Year 3-7 staff to catch up with former colleagues and students.



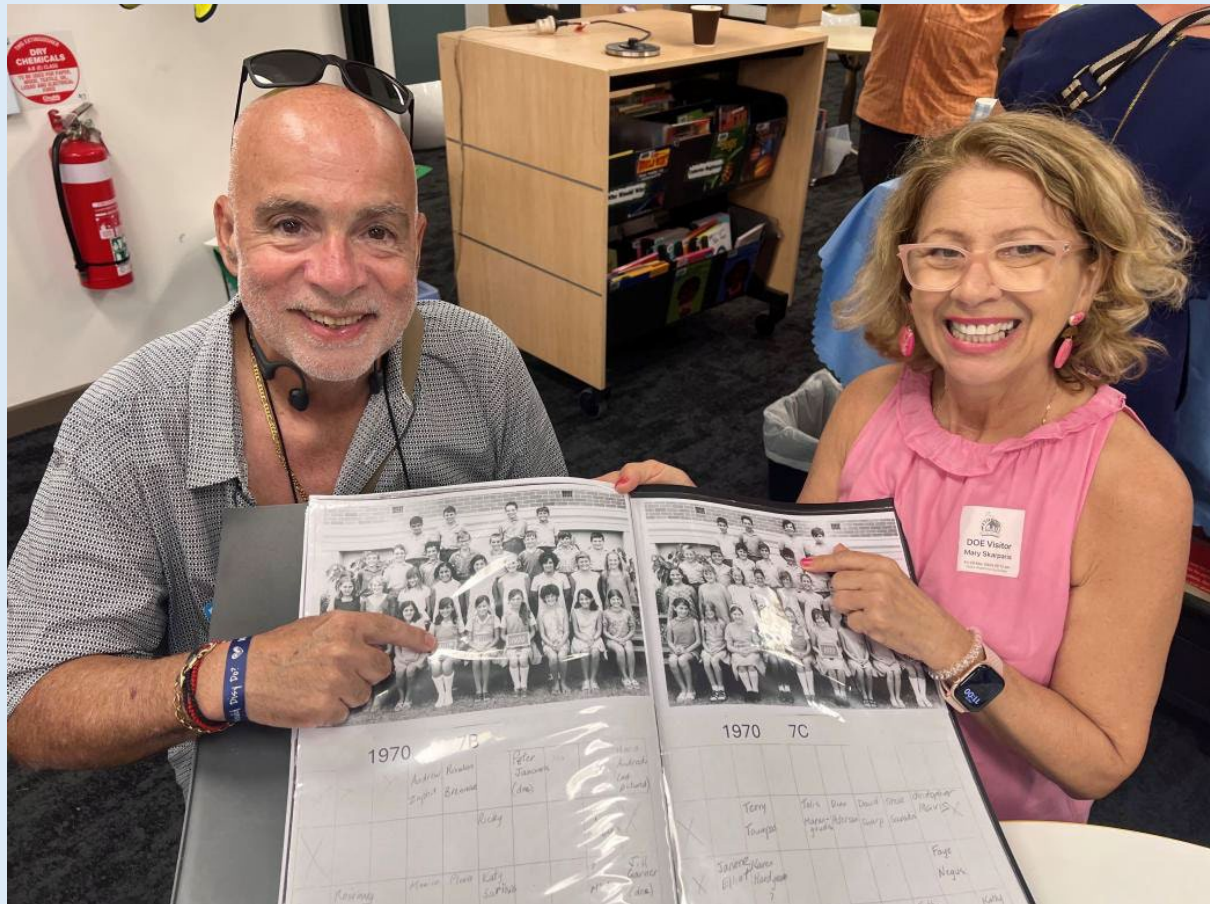
Nia Ikononou worked at WESS for 32 years from 1980-2012 and is still actively involved in the West End community, surprising us with a lovely homemade treat to share

As the school does not have any class photos before 1968, we are relying on past students, staff and WESS families to bring along or email any class photos so we can develop our archives.



Alumni Peter Edwards (1951-1959) has brought along his Year 8 1959 Scholarship photo taken out the front of A Block – Uniforms and shoes were optional in those days. The Compulsory school age was only 14 years old (from 1912-1964) and if you didn't pass the Year 8 Scholarship Exam (held annually from 1873-1962) at the end of Primary School, you had to go to work.

The WESS 150th Committee is developing A3 Folders for each year containing enlarged A4 class and extra Curricular photos with a grid beneath it so all attendees at the Monthly Memory Morning Teas and the 150th Anniversary FIESTA can add the names they remember. We will be located in the Hall at FIESTA.



Alumni Dino Peterson (1964-1970) and Mary Skarparis (1964-1970 Staff 1979-2025) have made a good start, pointing out each other in their Year 7 class photos.



The small group school tours as part of the Monthly Memory Morning Teas have several groups touring the old and new sections of the school site, with the old school bell ringing always a favourite.

WESS 150th Anniversary Official Launch – April 2nd 2025

The official launch, organised by the school, was held in the Performing Arts Complex at the end of Term 1. The Senior students of the school were joined by invited guests including 150th Committee, current and former Principals, School Council Chairs, P&C Presidents, First Nations/ASSPA Committee members and long-term staff (35 years plus) as well as current and former Federal, State and Local Government Representatives and Departmental Officials.



150th Anniversary Cake

		Awards and Recognition Mr Tony Makjoud Presented by The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP	
Program		Oldest Alumni Youngest Current Student School Principal Teacher Support Staff P&C President Community Service Leadership	
Pre-Program Strings Performance Bennett Chen (Year 5 student)		Greek Dancing Performance Year 4, 5 & 6 students, led by Mrs Maria Kastrissios	
Emcee Mrs Anastasia Hunter, Deputy Principal		Alumnus' Address Mr Max Chandler-Mather MP Member for Griffith	
Traditional Welcome Gaja Kerry Charlton & Uncle Lefe Charlton		Choir Performance Year 5 & 6 students, led by Miss Rebecca Hoole	
Choir Performance Year 5 & 6 students, led by Miss Rebecca Hoole <i>"Acknowledgement Song"</i> written by Jessie Lloyd		<i>"The Sounds of Brisbane"</i> Lyrics and music by Elizabeth Hynn and Rebecca Hoole, inspired by the words of West End State School students (Agasthya, Akane, Ashton, Hema, Jeremy, Lou, Sofia and Tomas) drawn from a sound mapping workshop collaboration with artist Ngia Lala and the Queensland Art Gallery Gallery of Modern Art Children's Art Centre for Asia Pacific Triennial Kids 2024. String arrangement by Gareth Mewes.	
Principal's Welcome Mr Tony Makjoud Video clip from classes SHD/ISSW With permission of Dr Doug Fisher (Source: Douglas Fisher, Inc in partnership with Education Futures Institute, Department of Education.)		First Nations Historical Perspective Aunty Isabel Tarrago	
Minister's Address The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP Minister for Education and The Arts		School Captains' Address Elise Coulter, Cayden Ngu, Lilah Beck, Penny Best	
Special Guest Comments and Historical Reflection Presentation Mr Peter Stewart with Henry Monks & Ariana Nosouhian (Year 6 students)		Regional Director's Address Ms Raquel Gibbons Regional Director, Metropolitan South Region, Queensland Department of Education	
		Cutting of the Cake Mr John Bann & Mr Nick Girdis with Scarlett Savers (Prep student)	
		School Song Choir Performance Year 5 & 6 students led by Miss Rebecca Hoole <i>"We're the Same When we Smile"</i> written by Joff Bush in collaboration with Dr Shelia Morris, Allan Melville, & West End State School students and classroom music teachers Please join us afterwards for light refreshments on the verandah.	

Official 150th Launch Program



John Paul Langbroek, Minister for Education and the Arts, presented awards covering a range of roles at WESS.

Left to right – John Paul Langbroek, Anastasia Hunter (Alumni, Parent, Teacher , Head of Curriculum, Deputy Principal) Leadership , Bob Pascoe (Longest Serving Principal – WESS Year 3-7 1989-1994, WESS Year 1-7 1995-1998) , Mary Skarparis (Alumni, Parent , Staff member) (Longest Serving Teacher -1979-2025), Nick Girdis, John Bann , Scarlett Savers (Official Cake cutting Party – Oldest Alumnus and Youngest student) Donna Stack (Parent, Fiesta Convenor 8 years, Longest Serving P&C Business Manager – Community Service) Aphrodite Nichles (Longest Serving P&C President 1997-2007)



Official Cake Cutting Party - Oldest known Alumnis and Youngest Student

John Bann (97 years old), Scarlett Sawers (Youngest Prep Student), Nick Glrdis (96 years old)

WESS Principals – WESS Infants, WESS Mixed Yr 3-7, WESS Yrs 1-7

West End Infants School, West End Girls School and West End Boys School operated as three separate schools on the same site from 1875, each operating independently of the other with their own Principal and staff. The Boys and Girls School amalgamated in 1936 and moved into the Heritage listed Depression Brick Admin block to become West End State Mixed School Year 3-7. The Infants School moved into the wooden buildings. The last major restructure was in 1995 when the Infants and Primary Mixed Yr 3-7 amalgamated to form West End Primary School Year 1-7 with one Principal and a merged staff.



WESS School Principals – 1980- 2025

Judy Thompson (2009-2016), Debbie Murphy (2001-2008), Betty Sainsbury (Widow of Les Sainsbury 1981-1988), Marion Shields (1998-2000), Bob Pascoe (1989-1998), Michael Zeuschner (1991-1995- WE Infants), Kim McNamara (2017-2023), Ross Rogers (1986-1990 WE Infants), Simon Bliss (Son of Michael Bliss 1980-1986 WE Infants), Tony Maksoud (2023-2025)

WESS School Council was formed in 1998 as part of the Leading Schools Program. WESS was one of the first in Qld to develop a School Council, which oversees strategic planning and policy development.



WESS School Council Chairs - 1998-2025

L-R Ian Cosier (1998) Megan Simons (2021-2023), Kerryn Newton (2011-2014), Katrina Lee Anthony (2023 -2025), Maria Koukides- Woodland (2002-2006)

Unable to join us on the day – June McCrorie (1999-2001), Noel Niddrie (2007-2010), Nancy Cole (2015-2019), Samantha Brown (2019-2021)

The forerunner to the current WESS P&C Association structure has been an integral part of WESS development since 1875, when parents had to contribute 1/5th of the cost of the school buildings under the 1875 Education Act. They raised 15 Pounds and 19 Shillings and made the deadline by 5 days!



WESS P&C Presidents 1991-2025

Many of these parents also served in other roles on the WESS P&C Executive and Sub Committees over many years in addition to the years listed as President.

Back Row L-R John Ide (2007-2008), Marilyn Trad (2010-2012), Bronwyn Gartside (Treasurer 1993-1999), Vanessa Bertagnole (2023-2025), Donovan Marsh (2020-2022), Patrick Van Weeren (2022-2023) Karen Czornohalan (2013-2016),

Front Row L-R Sylvia Cosier (1996), Lesley McFarlane (1992-1995), Aphro Nichles (1997-2007), Alex Ross (2017-2018)

Unable to join us / had to leave before photo - Helen Schwenke (1995), Jason Hilder (2009) Gina McIntyre (2019-2020)

Guest Speaker – Alumni Max Chandler Mather offered insights into his primary education at WESS, sharing that “Never did my Year 7 self ever think I’d be returning to West End as the Federal Representative of Griffith – Standing here at the 150th Anniversary is one of my proudest moments to know that anything is possible and the WESS Motto ‘ We All Smile in the Same Language ‘ is his favourite of any school and captures something important about the benefits of public education and the welcome,

respect and education by staff to students at WESS". He loved catching up with his past Principal and teachers.



Guest Speaker Alumni Max Chandler Mather and his former Principal and teachers.

L-R Antonia Bellas (Tambakis), Deb Murphy, Sandy Cumerford, Max Chandler Mather, Mary Skarparis, Maria Koukides Woodland, Cheryl Barham.



First Nation WESS parents Uncle Eric Blair and Aunty Isabel Tarago have worked for decades with WESS families, staff and students to offer support, education and awareness, providing advice and insight on policy and indigenous perspective through the WESS ASSPA Committee and other avenues.



Local Councillors

Former BCC Local Council Gabba Ward Representatives Helen Abrahams (2003 – 2016) and Tim Quinn (WESS Parent, Gabba Councillor 1985-2003, Deputy Lord Mayor 1997-2003, Lord Mayor 2003-2004) supported the school with many initiatives offered by BCC



West End Infants / West End Mixed Year 3-7 Primary schools WESS amalgamated staff 1995

Back Row L-R Sandy Cumerford, Georgia Barrosa , Antonia Bellas (Tambakis), Maria Woodland (Koukides), Carol Beck

Front Row Pat Xynias, Nia Ikononou, Bob Pascoe, Mary Skarparis, Alyson Brown

One of the most amazing and unique elements of WESS is the shared history, strong traditions, high standards and genuine love of the school community across decades by long term staff who have mentored hundreds of students and colleagues in 'The West End Way'. Many also become WESS parents when their children attend. Former staff continue to support WESS when and where needed in a variety of ways, for example Carol Beck, an Industrial Chemist who decided to become a teacher, started at WESS in 1993, developed a strong Science component throughout the school as well as being the English Key Teacher for many years. Although Carol retired in 2016, she has been volunteering for several hours daily x 4 days a week for 9 years, working with students requiring individual additional support in the classroom.

There are so many current staff who have devoted years of dedicated service to the students of West End, that unfortunately only those who have been at West End for 35 years or more were able to attend the Official Launch.

Come along and check out the school class photos from the 1980's to 2025 – it's a journey of fashion and hair styles as you follow the staff through the decades!!

150th Anniversary Committee

The WESS 150th Anniversary Committee was formed in February 2024 to plan and organise a range of lead in events last year and this year to develop opportunities for the WESS community to join in the 150th celebrations.



L-R Judy Thompson (Chair – Principal), Cheryl Barham (Pearce) Alumni / Parent/Staff Member, Alyson Brown (Staff), Mary Skarparis (Alumni/Parent/Staff), Ece Azman (Parent) Georgia Kiepe (Mizis) Alumni/Parent, Anne Olsen (Alumni) Not in photo Donna Stack (Parent/P&C)

Next EVENT: Memory Morning Tea - Friday 23rd May

Memory Morning Tea – May 23rd K Block Library 10:00am - 12:00pm including school tours.

Alumni of the late 1940's and 1950's have organised Alumni Reunion at this one. Already 22 are attending, so if you know of anyone who attended WESS then, please let them know.

There is plenty of room and A3 Photo Folders for all other decades, so come along on Friday 23rd May.

We are also having Fun Friday Folder Fun every Friday from 9:30am – 1:30pm from now until 150th Fiesta on August 16th preparing the Class and Extra-Curricular Photo Folders for every year.

We'd love some help if you've got an hour or so spare - there is food!!!!

TERM 2 WEEK 7 2025

Memory Morning Tea Friday 23rd May

Our Special Guests at our last Memory Morning Tea were a large group of Alumni from the Graduating Class of 1955 who were celebrating their 70 Year Anniversary of completing Year 8 (Scholarship) at West End State School.



Group of 1955 Alumni



1955 Class VIII a

They were joined by other Alumni from the 1940's and 1950's



1940's - 1950's Alumni

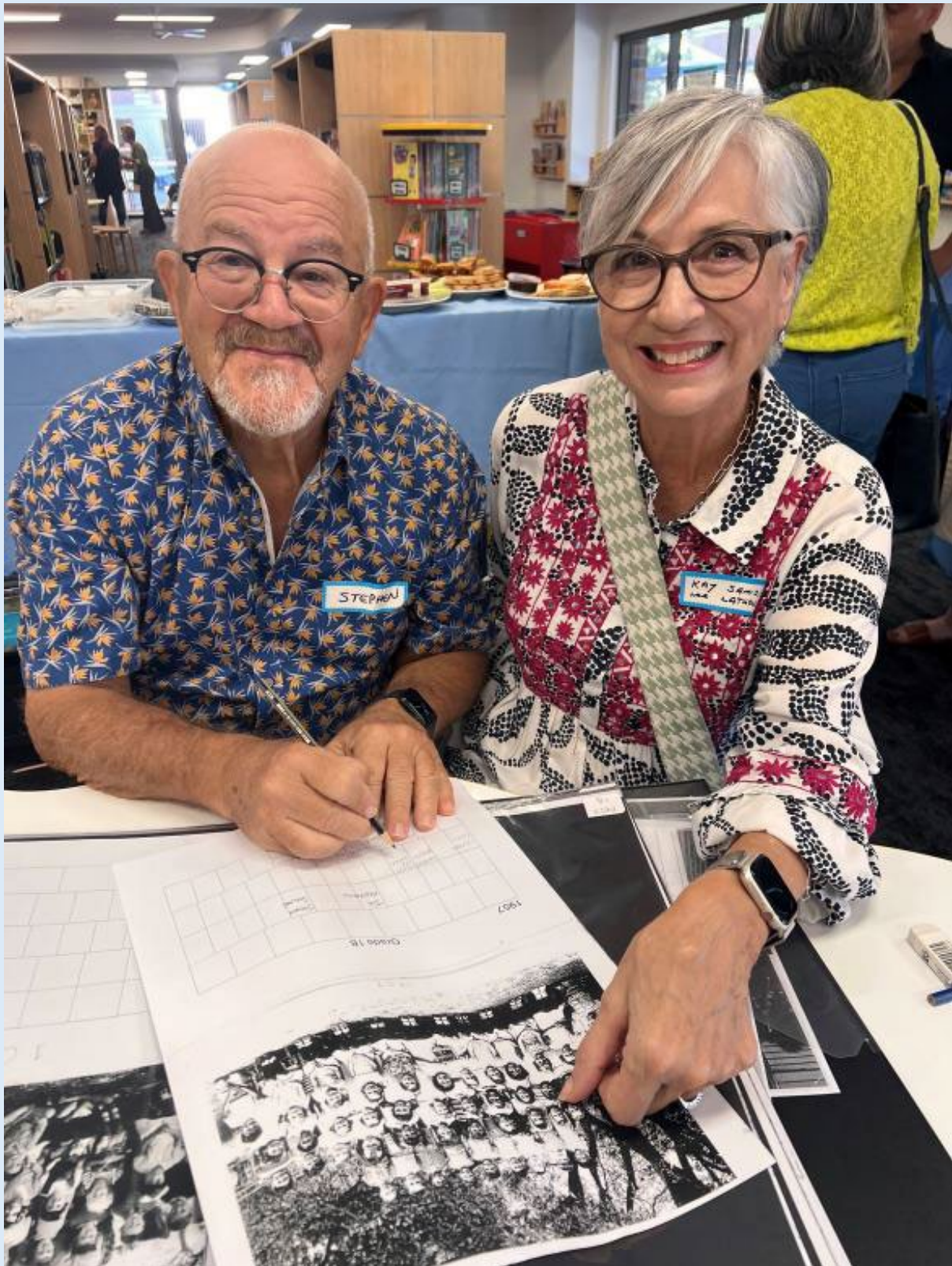
The Alumni of the 1950's-1960's have many regular attendees who are completing all the names of the A3 Folders in readiness for the 150th Fiesta Memorabilia Display in the Hall on Saturday 16th August from 10:00am - 4:00pm.



1960's Alumni



Sabrije Avdyl (1964-1971)



Stephen Kazoulis (1956-1963) Kay Samios (1955-1963)

Alumni travelled from all over Queensland and Northern NSW to attend the May Memory Morning Tea, with many siblings using it as a family reunion as well.



Pat Xynais (Alumni, WESS Teacher Aide and Greek Dancing Founder in 1974) and her sister Dora Tonakis (Callianiotts) (1951-1959)



Siblings Charlie Carnavas (1955-56) and Chrissie Papavas (Carnavas) (1955-1961)



Friends and neighbours since early 1940's, Deanne Sommerland (1949-1954) and Dina Dakin (Parnell) (1946-1953) shared family photos as well as school photos with Cheryl Brogan (Pound) (1963-1964) and Keith Hookway.



Then it's down to work completing names under the photos and chatting about "the old days".



There was also the opportunity to purchase 150th Anniversary Memorabilia from WESS 150th FIESTA Coordinator and P&C Uniform Convenor, Alex Pintilie.





School Tour Time has become a very important component for the Alumni , many of whom haven't been back to WESS for 70 years. They appreciate the ability to tour the Historical Buildings on the original site opened on August 16th 1875.



There was a long line up of our biggest group who specifically wanted to see the grounds and walk through both the 1936 Depression Brick Building and the Wooden Infants Block.



A tour group recalling stories about the 1945 -1949 Historical Chalk Nursery Rhyme Artwork that used to hang in the stairwells of the West End Infants School when they were there.



No fans nor air-conditioning in the Year 1 classrooms of the 1940's and 50's - they opened the windows for the breeze of the river.



Following the Tour the 1955 Graduating Class donated books to the School Library as well as a copy of their 1955 Reunion Book from a previous reunion , filled with memories recorded of their time at WESS.

We are also looking for any previous uniforms from any and every era that we could borrow for the 150th Anniversary FIESTA on August 16th .

You are all very welcome to join members of the WESS 150th Committee for our **FUN FOLDER FILLING FRIDAYS** happening **EVERY Friday from 9:30 - 1:30 in K Block Library** . We are trying to prepare A3 folders for every year filled with every class , sport and extra-curricular photo we have been able to track down. There is free food !!!!

TERM 3 WEEK 3 2025

The WESS 150th Committee, formed in March 2024, has coordinated a range of 18 events throughout 2024 and 2025 to gather and share information, photos and memories of West End Schools with WESS current and former Alumni, Staff, Parents and Community members.

Preparations are now focused on the WESS Memorabilia and WESS School Tours which will be held in and from the School Hall at WESS 150th Anniversary FIESTA on Saturday 16th August – exactly 150 years to the day that West End Schools (West End Infants, West End Girls School and West End Boys School) all opened at 12 noon on Monday 16th August 1875.

Several events in the 150th Anniversary Calendar have occurred recently with many West Enders from across the decades reconnecting and reminiscing.

June 21st WESS 150th Anniversary Staff Reunion at The Boundary.

Former staff from the 1970's to current staff travelled from overseas, interstate and from throughout Qld to attend the WESS 150th Staff Reunion held late last term.

WESS School Principal Kim McNamara (2016-2023) and Business Services Manager Kylie Jones (2014-2024), who drove the Stage 2 and 3 Expansion Site Building Program, led a tour prior to the Staff Reunion. They outlined the research-based decision-making processes which resulted in the collaborative planning and construction of the WESS State of the Art Educational facilities.



WESS is very lucky to have so many experienced and dedicated staff working throughout the school that have created a respectful and welcoming learning environment across academic, creative, sporting and cultural endeavors. A unique aspect of WESS staff is the high number of long-term staff who have provided mentorship, guidance and support for new staff, both to the school and to the profession over the years – showing by example the WESS traditions and high expectations of The West End Way – to constantly look to become lifelong learners and provide a range of opportunities to West Enders with a smile.

Throughout the Staff Reunion celebration, staff were grouped and photographed in decade groups from the 1970's. See if you can find someone you know ...







June 27th WESS 150th Memory Morning Tea

Our June Monthly Morning Tea was held on the last day of Term 2 and saw new faces attending for the first time. They brought along photos to share from the 1950's that the school did not have. All photos are scanned, photocopied, enlarged and have a grid added for the names to be recorded on the day so attendees can take their original photos home that day. The A3 Folders will all be available at every Memory Morning Tea and at the 150th Fiesta in the school hall.



Alumni, staff and parents from the 1930's to 2020's attended the June Memory Morning Tea.

First time attendees, 95 year old Mary Michael (Edna Cholakas) (Alumni 1934-1942) and daughter Diana Michael (Teacher 1988-2001) found lots of photos in the 125th Anniversary Book which was produced for the 125th Anniversary in 2000.



Many West Enders continue their association with the school as students, parents and volunteers, returning in a range of roles across the decades.



Dimitra Athanasos (nee Jill Manis) - Alumni 1948-1953, parent and also a Religious Instruction Accredited Volunteer Greek Orthodox – throughout 2000's



Alumni from the 1950's and 1960's have provided lots of original photos to the school archives.



1960's



WESS 150th Committee Members - Alumni Cherly Barham (Pearce) 1967-1973, Mary Skarparis (Georgiou) 1964-1970 and Anne Olsen (1970-1976) assist in all the Monthly Memory Morning Teas and also our weekly Fun Friday Folder Working Bees to develop the individual A3 Photo Folders for every year from 1950's to 2024. These will be available at every Memory Morning Tea and at Fiesta in the School Hall.

WESS Parents often form lifelong friendships as their children progress through preschool, primary and secondary schooling.



WESS Parents Cheryl Barham and Jenny Blakeley are helping complete the unnamed Extra Curricular sporting and cultural photos from the early 2000's when their children attended WESS.

July 25th Memory Morning Tea

The latest Monthly Memory Morning Tea saw many first time attendees as well as returning West Enders continue to help develop out school archives with their photos and stories.



July Memory Morning Tea

Every month we walk down memory lane with a school tour of the 1936 Depression Brick Heritage listed A Block and the wooden West End SS Infants Building.



First time attendees on the school tour beside the WW1 Memorial Fountain which was dedicated in 1930 and installed in the West End Infants School central courtyard. It was relocated to the front of the school under the flagpole in 2010 when J Block was constructed.

Special WESS 150th Photo Frames will be available for you to use to capture your WESS 150th Photo in the School Hall at Fiesta. We will also have a group photo tiered area available if you want to organize a family / alumni group photo during the 150th FIESTA. They will be set up in the hall along with Photo Working Areas so you can sit at tables and look through the A3 Folders.



Con Drakos (1960-1966) has worked out the 150th Photo Frame set up perfectly to capture the moment with his fellow alumni

We will also have a 'Take Your Best Shot' board that was made by WESS Student Leaders and incorporated by them in every Side Show Alley which the students ran each Fiesta until the last one in 2019.



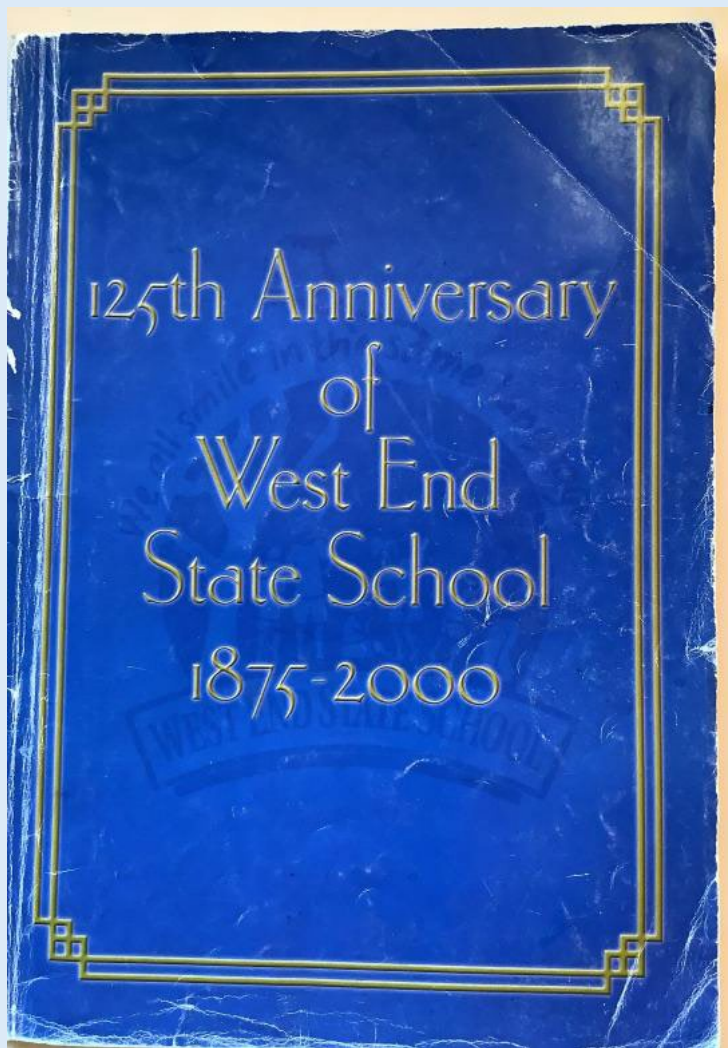
Deputy Principal Sia Hunter (Alumni, Parent, Staff 2003 - current) checking it out for size.

West End State School Anniversary Publications

125th Anniversary Book - There will be copies to look through available at the 150th Memorabilia Display in the School Hall at Fiesta as well as every Monthly Memory Morning Tea.

The book is able available to download via this link:

[125th Book](#)



WESS 150th Anniversary Book

100th West End Infants 1879-1979 Book

[100th Book](#)

West End State School 1955 Scholarship Class Reunion

This group recently held their 70th Anniversary Reunion at the May Memory Morning Tea and presented the school with this publication compiled after their 40th Anniversary Reunion. It contains examples of the 1955 Scholarship Test. Students had to pass this test in order to progress to High School. Check out the last 6 pages in the book and see how you would go...

[1955 Scholarship Class Reunion](#)

150th Anniversary FIESTA - SCHOOL TOURS

We will be holding school tours throughout the day at FIESTA. To enable us to organize volunteers to lead them, please register through the Try Booking site below to book a spot on a tour.

Issue 1 - Term 3, 7th August 2025

There will be two different tours - both leaving from the School Hall. The Registration Sheets will be located inside the School Hall, (at the doors leading to the walkway). Spaces for walk-ins will be available on the day – just add your name to any available spaces on the individual tour sheets.

150th Anniversary Fiesta – School Tours - TRYBOOKING LINKs for Free Tickets

Take a walk down Memory Lane! To celebrate 150 years of WESS, we're offering two special guided tours showcasing both our historic and modern school sites.

HISTORICAL SITE TOUR

Step back in time with a guided walk through the heritage-listed Red Brick building, including the Admin site and remaining old Infants area.

Tour Times: 10:30am, 12:30pm, 1:30pm, 2:30pm

Duration: Approximately 30 minutes

Meeting Point: Please meet in the Hall 5 minutes before your scheduled tour time.

Book via TryBooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/DEDJL>

EXPANSION SITE TOUR

WESS 150th Anniversary – Expansion Site Tour Celebrate the growth and transformation of WESS over the years. This guided tour of the **Expansion Site** will take you through our newest additions - the Year 5/6 classrooms, Performing Arts Centre, second Library, and Early Learning Centre.

Tour Times: 11:00am, 1:00pm, 2:00pm, 3:00pm

Duration: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Meeting Point: Please meet in the Hall 5 minutes before your scheduled tour time.

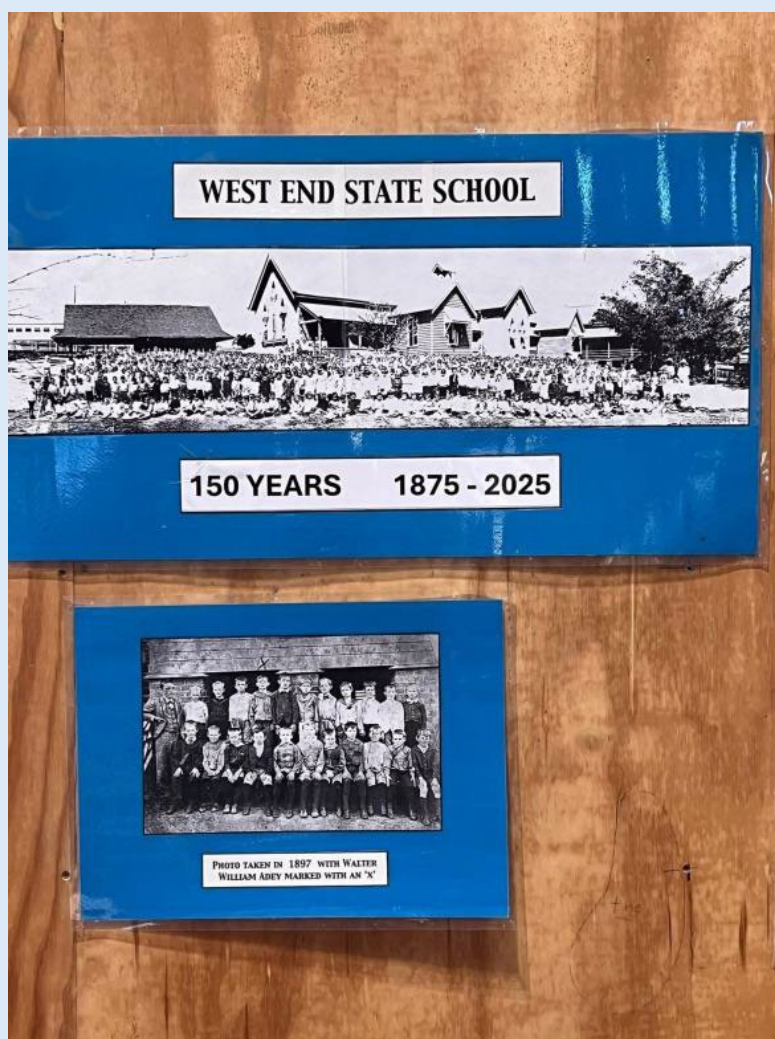
Book via TryBooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/DEDUZ>

To explore the full history of WESS, you're also encouraged to book a separate tour of the Original Site.

*Meet in the hall (Jane St Oval) for both tours at the School Hall

FIESTA 150th Commemoration - 11:45 - 12:15 pm - Main Stage - 16th August 2025

Join us for the COUNTDOWN to 12 o'clock - 150 years to the second of the Official Opening of West End State School at 12 noon on 16th August 1875.



What a wonderful way for WestEnders to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of West End State School on the 16th August 2025 –with the ringing of the old school bell at 12 noon - exactly 150 years to the minute and day that WESS was opened on 16th August in 1875.

Our thanks to Dr Barbara O'Shea, MP South Brisbane, for recreating the Official Opening of WESS at 12 noon and our amazing choir and Music Department staff of Gill Law, Liz Flynn, Nerida Trebilco and Georgie Taylor who led the singing of Happy Birthday followed by The WESS School Song.

This 150th Anniversary was also the Debut Performance of the Collaborative Commissioned complete rendition of the WESS School Song incorporating the now recently approved First Nations language component. This WESS School Song was the result of a Whole School Community Collaboration driven by the WESS Music Department of WESS Students, staff and community with Joff Bush (WESS Alumni and Bluey Composer) and Dr Shellie Norris AO (Yanuwa and Wardaman Singer /Songwriter) The extensive consultation process, held over several months of discovering what elements and values make 'The West End Way' marked the

completion of Stage 2 WESS Expansion and the Performing Arts Complex opening in November 2022. Aunty Sharon Mirri Bell and Lynda Maybanks of the Wirrinyah Gurrnung Aboriginal Corporation assisted with the Yagara Language translation of our student's ideas.

The First Nations language approval processes was completed just in time for our next significant WESS event – the 150th Anniversary FIESTA. Both the WESS School Song and the WESS Expansion Consultation Process was captured in two special artworks by parent Katrina Lee Anthony (School Council Chair 2023-2025). These were on display at the WESS Memorabilia Display in the school hall.

It was amazing to see the 150th Display, which was set up in the school hall, visited by thousands over the 6 hours of the 150th Anniversary FIESTA. Many stayed and helped the 150th Committee complete the name grids under their school photos in the A3 Folders for each year from the 1950's onwards, as well as use the space for their family, class and friend reunions.

Thank you to the 150th Committee members and WESS staff who led the 8 Historical and Expansion School Tours held throughout the day. The hundreds of attendees on the tours gave great feedback on the day of their journey back in time and of their glimpse of WESS as it is today.

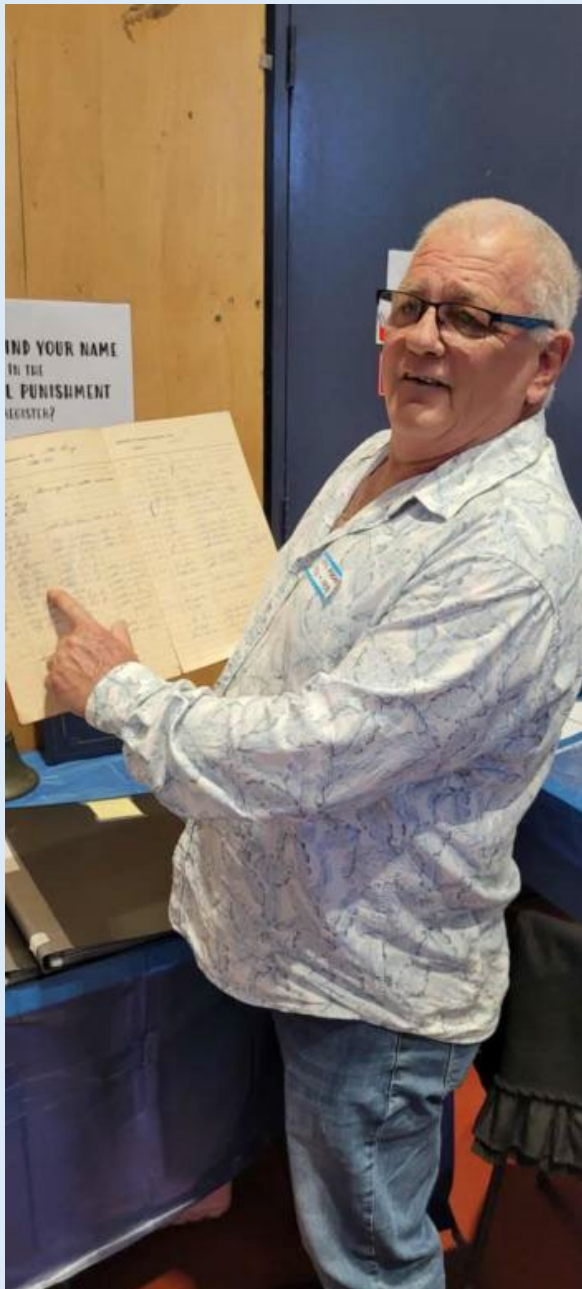
Everyone loved the opportunity to share their knowledge of their time at WESS and we gathered lots of names at the Photo Naming Working Stations and memories in our Memory Box task.



The 150th Memorabilia Display has thousands attend throughout the 6 hours of the 150th Anniversary Fiesta.



The Memory Box and Cards will be available at all Monthly Memory Morning Teas til November.



Speaking of MemoriesWESS Alumni Craig Fogarty (1972-1978) found his name in the West End Year 3-7 School Corporal Punishment Register ...a couple of times...for Minor Disobedience. He thought it was hilarious that he made the cut to get his name on our historical records....

Craig still loves his years at WESS , the lifelong friends he made and has come to our Monthly Memory Morning Teas as well.

Corporal Punishment through the use of the cane was stopped throughout Qld State Schools in 1995.



Special WESS FIESTA shirts were created for the Fiesta Organisers and Convenors each year. A lovely momento of Fiestas held annually from 1997 to 2019 and worn with pride at the 150th Anniversary FIESTA by Former WESS P&C President Karen Czornohalan 2013-2016 (who came from South Australia for the event), Judy Thompson (WESS Principal 2009-2016), Donna Stack (former WESS P&C Business Manager who was presented with the WESS 150th Community Service Award at the April Launch and FIESTA Convenor for 8 years) and Felicity Gutteridge (FIESTA Vietnamese Stall Convenor for many years under the guidance of Miss Dung, recently retired Teacher Aide of 40 years).



Former WESS Student, WESS Parent, WESS Teacher and now WESS Deputy Principal, Anastasia Hunter, together with her parents Jim and Frieda Patounas , ensured that Honeypuffs, one of FIESTA Favourites from the past of the parent run Greek Stall, was available on the day from the new canteen in the expansion site of the school. Jim's Honeypuffs are famous!!



The WESS Greek Dancers, founded in 1974, have performed at every Fiesta, also representing the school at every Paniyiri since it started in 1976. Looking forward to them performing Paniyiri's 50th Anniversary on May 23rd/24th 2026 - Save the Date!



Greek Dance Volunteer Teacher, Maria Kastrissios, catches up with WESS Greek Dance Founder and WESS Teacher Aide from 1974, when teacher aides were first introduced as official roles, Pat Xynias. Maria and Julia Tetteris, both WESS Alumni and WESS Greek Dance Alumni, volunteer weekly to continue this unique tradition and opportunity for all WESS students.



What a difference 28 years makes ...Former WESS Student Vasilios Katsigiannis (1991-1997) caught up with his former Principal , Bob Pascoe (WESS Year 3-7 1987-1994, WESS State School 1995-1997) . Bob oversaw the last big restructuring at WESS with the amalgamation of WESS 3-7 and West End Infants School in 1995. Who has changed the most??



The 150th Anniversary FIESTA also saw lots of former and current WESS staff check out the 150th Memorabilia Display to help out with completing lots of the empty grids of the Extra Curricular Sporting, Music and Cultural Photos up to 2017 that don't have names as many of them undertook volunteer coaching in their lunch hours and before school to give lots of extra opportunities for WESS students.

Tania Venuto, Zina Shirin (who flew back from Luxembourg for the 150th), Gaia Nobel (also a WESS Alumni), Elliot Knight and Sandie Mitchell.



Many Alumni travelled from overseas, interstate and from throughout Queensland to attend the 150th Anniversary Fiesta, reuniting with friends, family and classmates in reunion groups throughout the day in the Memorabilia Display areas in the School Hall.

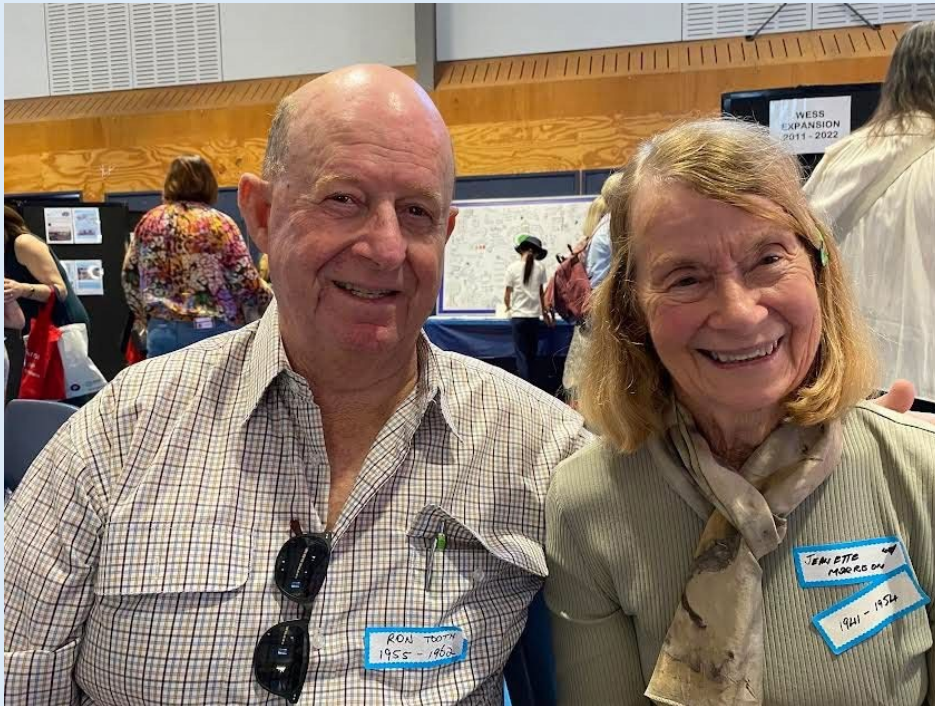




Family, Friends, Classmates Reunions









Alumni Katya Bains and her father Michael Bains (Mouse) was once again part of the Fiesta Band Entertainers with their band KatyaMouse volunteering to provide a great set of original music. Captain Mouse was the fantastic Fiesta Entertainment Coordinator and MC for many years in the mid 2010's at the annual Fiestas when Katya was a WESS student. They now regularly perform at events around Kurilpa and surrounds.



WESS has had their own Staff Band - The Catchment Kids - since late 2013, performing at Feistas, Art Shows, WeCreate and even the occasional Staff Christmas Party... There have been a number of WESS staff taking part in this group over the years.

A big thanks to teacher Vanessa Lonton (Lead Vocals) for travelling from Chinchilla for the 150th Feista performance to join Peter Stewart (Keyboard) Taakin Pastourel (Bass Guitar) and David Hinton (Drums) for the performance.

The 150th Memorabilia and Photo Albums will be available to look through at all the upcoming Monthly Memory Morning Teas on August 29th, September 19th, October 24th and November 28th.

We will also be displaying the WESS 150th Timeline Posters on the Mobile Black Concertina Display Boards to be accessed and utilised by the school HASS teachers in their curriculum for the remainder of 2025 as well as the Monthly Memory Morning Tea attendees.

Monthly Memory Morning Teas

Sadly, the school had NO photos prior to 1968, so using the Monthly Memory Morning Teas, which started in March 2024 and through the West End State School Alumni Facebook Page members, we have been able to obtain some old school photos from the 1930's to 1968 which are being compiled in the decade A3 Photos folders.

If you have any neighbours, relatives or work colleagues with links to WESS from years ago, we'd appreciate if you could pass on our email wess150th@gmail.com so they can email us any photos they may have or invite them to the upcoming Memory Morning Tea on November 28th from 10:00am -12:00 in K Block Library including a school tour.



August Monthly Memory Morning Tea

Following the Saturday August 16th 150th Anniversary FIESTA, many new faces attended the August Memory Morning Tea on Friday 29th August.



School Reunions

Past students are using these morning teas as occasions to catch up with past classmates and tour the school following a lovely morning tea organised by WESS 150th Committee member, Mary Skarparis, the longest serving teacher in the history of WESS – 46 years.



Mary Skarparis and Natasha Chui ensure morning tea is perfect by conducting taste testing on selected items



Classmates from the 1950's reminisce about the old days.



Lachlan King - 2010's student

It's also lovely to see students from the 2010's attend to help with the name grids of the Extra Curricular sport, performing arts photos, which are nearly all unnamed. Luckily the class photos had names, so they are a bit easier to complete.

WESS Memory Box



The WESS 150th Committee has also started the WESS Memory Box and Memory Cards to capture individual memories of WESS. They are available at every Memory Morning Tea and will also be completed by the 2025 Year 6 Graduating Class as part of their end of year activities.



Attendees take time to complete their WESS Memory Cards at the Memory Morning Teas.

Year 4 Historical Day

As part of the Year 4 curriculum, WESS students have been dressing up and learning about the WESS Story with plays, Night of the Museum performances from 2009 and with individual sepia photos of them as students from yesteryear displayed at the WECreat annual art shows.



This year we were lucky to have WESS parent Vanessa Bertagnole volunteer to capture the day by photographing the class groups throughout the day.



Year 4 staff and teachers in old time outfits in front of the 1936 Heritage Listed Depression Brick A Block



WESS is very lucky to have such amazing Year 4 staff who go the extra distance to provide engaging learning experiences for their students.



They couldn't keep that stern look and demeanour up for very long though, reverting to the embodiment of the much-loved WESS School Motto "We All Smile in The Same Language".

This year was particularly special with 150th Committee members Judy Thompson (Principal 2009-2016) Chair WESS 150th Committee) and Mary Skarparis (WESS Alumni 1964-1970, WESS Teacher 1979-2025) presenting a series of sessions throughout the day showcasing WESS artefacts and history to the nine Year 4 classes. They were held on the site of the WESS Fig Tree, planted in 1890 in the first Arbor Day held in Qld, now the centre of Dirram Yani. Sadly the 124-year-old tree was destroyed in the extreme storm of 2014.



WESS 150th History Lessons in Dirram Yani



The school introduced a Greek dancing program in 1974, which continues to feature prominently in Brisbane's Paniyiri Festival each year.

The inner-south school lost one of its oldest structures – a 120-year-old fig tree – in 2014, which former principal and current 150th anniversary committee chair Judy Thompson said had been a key part of the school's identity.



Former West End State School long-time teacher Mary Skarparis and former principal Judy Thompson hold an image of the fig tree that stood for more than a century on the site. CATHERINE STROHFELDT

"It became a symbol of the strong roots and traditions, and just that protection, that comfort, and that welcome," she said.

WESS also featured in the Brisbane Times article about all the schools in Brisbane celebrating their 150th Anniversaries in 2025.

September Memory Morning Tea



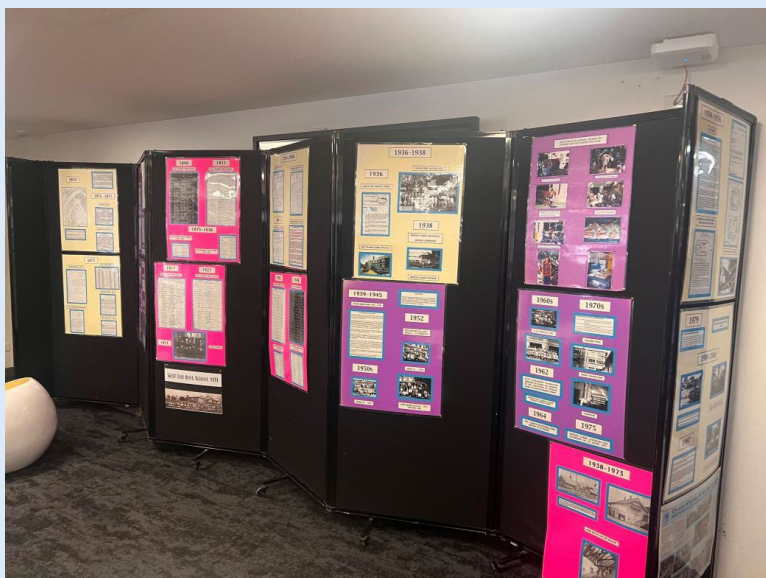


October WECreat Historical Artwork Display 5:00pm – 7:30pm Friday 24th October

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Georgia Barrosa , who recently retired after long career at WESS, came along to help curate and provide her insight into the wide range of WESS Artwork that has been saved. Covering a variety of modes and mediums, they will be displayed on Level 2 throughout the evening.



WESS History Timeline – This will also be set up at the Level 2 area and shows the changes in structures from 1875 to today. It will also be available to anyone to have a look in the K Block library, where it is on display until the end of this year.

November Monthly Memory Morning Tea – Friday 28th November – 10:00am – 12:00 noon K Block Library

We'd love you to come along to share in the last Memory Morning Tea of 2025. There will be food!!

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