

History of Maleny's Education

The first school to open on the Range was the Blackall Range Provisional School in 1886, which later became the Wootha State School. In 1892 the Witta State School opened, followed by the Bald Knob State School in 1902. A small school in a slab hut was constructed near the junction of Burgum's Rd & North Maleny Rd, but insufficient numbers delayed the progress of this school. After the Maleny butter factory was opened in 1904, it became obvious that a town would evolve in this area and that a more central school be established. In 1912, land was acquired in Cedar Street, where the Guide Hut stands today, and the school committee had to fund one fifth of the cost of £335. The Maleny Township School opened in Cedar Street on 22 April 1913 with 36 pupils

and 52 were enrolled by the end of the first week. The first head teacher was Mr Burnett Bruce.



First Maleny School in Cedar St

Over the years, the smaller schools struggled to keep their numbers and were closed down. The School Transport System started and the Maleny State School became the central school for the district. By the 1950's, domestic science and wood working classes became available and students from surrounding schools were transported to the Maleny School. In the early 1940's, parents started negotiating with the Education Department for a Secondary Department. It wasn't until 1954 that the Maleny High School opened

with 23 students on the site of the Primary School. The principal was Mr H. Hughes.

The site in Cedar Street became very overcrowded. Land was purchased in Bunya Street, a new building was built and the High School moved to this site in 1957. A year later the Primary School was moved. Some of the old schools from around the district and buildings from the Cedar St site were moved to the new site and they were joined to form the primary school. The new school was officially opened in 1959 by the Premier at the time, the Hon. G.F.R. Nicklin. In 1963, Secondary Education was extended to include the Senior Public Exam, fifty years after the first Maleny Township School had been opened.

As the years progressed, numbers continued to increase in both the primary and secondary schools with the age range of students from Prep to Yr 12. In 1986, construction began on the new high school at the top of Bunya Street and a year later, the Maleny High School was opened. Students from Beerwah swelled the numbers when this school opened. The High School celebrated 50 years of education in 2004.

The Ananda Marga School opened in 1995 with 22 children.

Desley Malone

It's interesting to note that when the school held their *Golden Jubilee* on 27th April 1963, 21 of the original students were marked present by Mr Bruce.