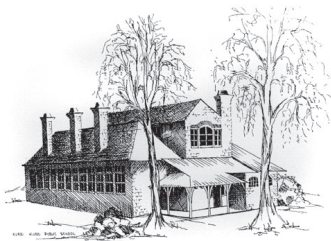


Primary entry #13: Kurri Kurri Public School



Kurri Chronicles



Heddon Greta Drive-in: the biggest screen in the Hunter.
Picture: Jordan Lambert

Head down to Heddon Greta Drive-in now

By JOSIE CAIN and HUDSON FITZPATRICK

HEDDON Greta Drive-in, one of only 13 drive-ins remaining in operation in Australia, has embraced the digital revolution and is looking forward to celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2017.

First opened December 20, 1967 the drive-in has endured two closures before being re-opened a third time by Scott Seddon in 1996.

Mr Seddon, who also owns Scotty's Cinema Centre in Raymond Terrace, has committed the drive-in to a new era with the conversion from 35mm film to digital.

"Digital conversion did cause the closure of some cinemas and drive-ins across America, but we felt that the great expense was worth it to be able to continue to provide this service," Mr Seddon said.

"We see the drive-in as a place where families can go, have a meal, sit down and watch great movies together." Mr Seddon said the completion of the Hunter Expressway has changed the profile of the audience with more young people taking advantage of the attraction.

On average the drive-in has 200 cars a week but a really busy night can take it to capacity at 747 cars.

With the decline of drive-ins due to the introduction of television and DVD players, and the selling of land for housing subdivisions, the Hunter is fortunate to have this unique attraction still operating.

Bright side of immigration

By ELIJAH FAALUA and JOSIE MADDEN

ON Australia Day this year Christine Ostermann reflected on her father's decision 57 years ago for himself and his family to migrate to Australia for a better future.

Only a child, Mrs Ostermann, her three sisters, two brothers, mother and father boarded the Skaubryn on March 13, 1958 for a six-week journey to Australia.

However the journey was not without trouble as the relatively new ship's engines caught fire in the middle of the Indian Ocean causing the ship to sink. The ship was never salvaged and it still sits in the Indian Ocean today.

"We were rescued from life boats in shark-infested waters by a general cargo ship, the City Of Sydney," said Mrs Ostermann. "We lost many of our possessions but saw the name of the ship as a good luck omen".

Mrs Ostermann's family first touched Australian soil in Melbourne, and from there they travelled to the Bonegilla Migrant Camp near Albury. They stayed there two weeks until her father, formerly a butcher, got a job as a driver at the Greta Migrant Camp.

A disused army base, the camp became home to migrants of 18 different nationalities including Polish, Russian and German.



Christine Ostermann shows her certificate of naturalisation to her grandson Ryan.
Picture: Mia Barrett

pregnant wife to raise their soon-to-be family of seven children alone.

Miners in the community swarmed the family with kindness and raised enough money for them to pay off their mortgage and to live on for the two years remaining until Mrs Ostermann's mother was eligible for naturalisation and the widow's pension.

Mrs Ostermann drew comparisons between being a child in a migrant camp in Australia in the 1950s and a child in present day detention centres.

"It is really sad for the children," she said. "They don't get to go out into the community and discover how friendly and kind Australians can be."

During their 18-month stay, Mrs Ostermann went to the camp school and like everyone else, had to learn to speak English.

"There was never any racism or fights in the camp because everyone was in the same boat of starting a new life and making the best of it.

We all appreciated being there."

With the closure of the camp the family bought a home in Bellbird where the children now attended the local school.

Soon after, tragedy struck when Mr Ostermann was in a fatal car accident, leaving his six-month



Sarah Smith in training at Kurri Kurri Tennis Club.
Picture: Lukas Straker

Friday night fires up in Kurri Kurri

By MIA BARRETT, MEILA CONNOLLY, ETHAN MYCHAS-LANG and AMELIA ROSE

FRIDAY Family Tennis Night has revived Kurri Kurri Tennis Club and proven immensely popular with the community.

The program encourages families to play tennis together in a fun and safe environment.

Everyone is catered for with a variety of programs

including ANZ Tennis Hot Shots for children, Cardio Tennis for fitness and Target Shooting for skills practice.

Since the club teamed up with Hot Shots in January, numbers at Family Tennis Night have grown to 60-80 per week.

Kurri Kurri Tennis Club now has more junior mem-

bers than any other club but none shine brighter than 11-year-old Kurri Kurri Public student Sarah Smith, currently ranked 30 in NSW. "She has more power than any other 11-year-old I know," coach Jason Quinn said.

"There are many benefits to playing tennis," Beth Campbell, club secretary, said. "You can improve your hand-eye co-ordination, relieve stress and make new friends."

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