

The Early Years – Qld State Council Formation in Charleville

2nd November, 1971

The Isolated Children's Parents Association Australia was formed in Bourke in April 1971.

Cunnamulla Branch may claim the fame of the very first Branch formed in Queensland on 28th August, 1971 but it was Melbourne Cup Day, 2nd November, 1971 that a meeting was held at Coronas Hotel in Charleville to form the first State Council of ICPA.

At this meeting were representatives of the first branches formed in Qld and the first executive were elected.

President – Mr Bunny Powne, Bollon Branch

Vice President – Mrs Gwen Vail, Blackall Branch

Secretary/Treasurer – Mr Tony Gall, Dirranbandi

Committee – Mr John Parkinson, Blackall, Mr Malcolm Patterson, Langlo Crossing and Mr Alan Murray, Charleville

A few weeks after this meeting, on the 25th November, once again at Coronas Hotel, the Charleville Branch was formed where Mr Alan Murray was elected President, Mr Tim Agar as Secretary/Treasurer and Mrs Leah Fisher as Assistant Secretary. Mr Murray and Mr Agar went on to become Qld State Councillors.

The story goes that there had been great rain and flooding creeks and parents were doing everything they could to get to this meeting, inspired and motivated to ensure high quality education of their children in Rural and Remote areas.

As with most branches, distance, dirt roads, creek crossings, not to mention correspondence lessons made meetings difficult to organise however these early pioneering Branches did so without any of the technology we rely on today – it was even long before copy machines and faxes. We are very fortunate to have the original handwritten minutes of both the Qld State Council and Charleville Branch Inaugural Meetings in our archives.

Charleville Branch hosted the 25th Silver Jubilee Conference in 1996 and hosted the Registration Dinner at Coronas Hotel in recognition of the Inaugural Meeting for form Qld State Council in 1971.