



**SIZZLE:** Bendigo Bank's Lauren Sayer, Tanya Pratt, "Piggy", and Deb Hally celebrate their fifth birthday.

# Merbein ready to party

**By Hannah Knight**

MERBEIN is in party mode. Equipped with balloons and a cake, the Bendigo Bank Piggy made a special appearance at the Merbein

and District Community Bank recently for its fifth birthday celebrations.

The branch was opened on July 21, 2004, and now boasts about 3000 accounts.

While the Bendigo Bank



**OLD-TIME:** Blair Russell, Ashleigh Knight, Amy Ryozel, Kelsey Matheson, Jazmin Cook and Nicole Turner practice for the settlers picnic.

Picture: Stacey Merlin

Piggy was enjoying the birthday sausage sizzle and posing for photos, across town, Merbein Secondary College students were gearing up for next month's centenary celebrations.

A group of students has practiced old-time races in preparation for the Merbein Lions Club and Whiting Family Settlers Picnic on August 16.

The family day out will be at Kenny Park from noon, featuring music by the Mildura City Band and a pipe band, Irish dancing, fire brigade races and demonstrations, sheaf tossing, Scottish dancing and childrens' races and games.

Max Whiting, centenary committee vice president, said the picnic would be a re-enactment of New Year's

Day celebrations held from 1911 to 1955.

"It will be a chance for people to sample some of the things they would do back then," he said.

"The biggest crowd back then was over 6500 so we're hoping for a big turn out.

"We're suggesting people bring their own picnic lunch but there will also be plenty of food stalls.

"It will be a good, family reunion day."

Merbein will celebrate its 100th birthday from August 14 to August 23.

An exciting range of events will include competitions, a street parade, bush dancing and exhibitions.

For more information about the celebrations visit [www.merbeincentenary.com.au](http://www.merbeincentenary.com.au).