



Protect a part of Catholic History

MUCH has been written about the Parramatta Female Factory (1821-1847) but, surprisingly, it has not been accorded national heritage recognition despite most of the surviving buildings predating nationally-listed convict heritage sites. A petition to protect the site from further deterioration and possible loss of these remnants of convict era structures is to be presented to the State Government by the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct Association. Because of the pastoral care provided by the early Catholic Clergy and Sisters to the many Catholic women and children who spent time in the Factory and the nearby Orphan School, we urge members to sign the petition.

The Female Factory, which was opened by Governor Macquarie in 1821 on this site, replaced the 1804 grossly over-crowded Female Factory above the old Parramatta Gaol. Macquarie requested the emancipist architect, Francis Greenway, to design a building to provide secure confinement for up to 300 female convicts, together with a hospital and work rooms. Despite some extensions during the ensuing years, the Factory quickly proved grossly inadequate for the increasing number of female convicts.

Between 1788 and 1840, 12,500 female convicts arrived in New South Wales and many of them spent time in the Parramatta Female Factory. Colonial administrations were responsible for providing them with shelter until they were assigned to service or were married. In return, they were required to contribute to their upkeep by undertaking various duties in the Factory and producing products required in the Colony. The women had all been sentenced under the English Penal Code to transportation for various crimes, but they were certainly not all hardened criminals.

Continual over-crowding and the mismanagement/corruption of the Superintendents led to deteriorating conditions. Even after the cessation of transportation to New South Wales in November 1840, increased free immigration and economic depression lead to a population peak in July 1842 of 1203 women and 263 children at the Factory. During those years, some of the women reacted to their treatment by resorting to violent riots, break-outs and even an unsuccessful attempt to burn the Factory down in 1843.

By the 1820s and, particularly, after the passage of the 1829 English Catholic Emancipation Act, Catholics in the colony were granted more religious freedoms and a small number of Catholic priests were allowed to provide spiritual guidance to the Catholic community here. Australia's first Catholic Bishop, Rev. Dr. Bede Polding, OSB, appointed in 1834, was appalled by the low moral state of the colony and the lack of religious observance by colonial Catholics. He soon realized that he would need assistance from more religious, if he was to succeed in his mission.

In 1836, Polding renewed an earlier request to Mary Aikenhead, Foundress of the Sisters of Charity in Ireland,



Sisters of Charity at the last remaining wall of the Factory, 2005. Photo by Bruce W. Stephens.

for some Sisters to assist with his work, particularly, with the female convicts at the Parramatta Female Factory. In 1836-38, Rev. Dr. William Ullathorne, OSB, Australia's first Vicar-General appointed in 1832, went to Europe to generate support for the mission in Australia. As a result, five volunteer Sisters of Charity and several volunteer priests arrived in Sydney in 1838 with Dr. Ullathorne to begin work.

The Sisters travelled to Parramatta in mid-January 1839, where they commenced their daily ministry at the Female Factory, which continued until the factory closed in 1847. Within a short time, the Sisters brought about a considerable improvement in the behaviour and morale of the Catholic female convicts, many of whom had been severely degraded since their sentencing.

In 1841, an orphanage was built on an adjoining site to which orphans from the Waverley Catholic Orphan School were transferred in 1844, when it was renamed the Roman Catholic Orphan School. The Sisters of Charity assisted the Government-appointed Matron of the School until 1847. From 1859 to 1886, the Good Shepherd (later renamed the Good Samaritan) Sisters were responsible for the management of the school. In 1887, the orphanage was converted to the Girls' Industrial School (a State Reform School) which closed in 1912 to be converted to the Parramatta Girls' Home (1912-1974) and later, the Norma Parker Detention Centre for Women.

A plaque near the last remaining outer wall of the Factory proclaims the site as "sacred" to the Sisters of Charity of Australia. There are other locations within the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct which deserve recognition as "sacred sites" for the descendants of those women and children who spent time there. The preservation of this precinct with its strong links to Australian Catholic history deserves the support of the Society. To sign the petition members should phone MP Tanya Gadiel's office on 02 9891 4722.

Patricia Jacobsen, ACHS Councillor

Report of 69th Annual General Meeting

Sunday 14 March, St Mary's Cathedral College Hall.

ACHS Vice-President Howard Murray presided over the AGM as former President, Dr Damian Gleeson, was unable to attend. 31 members were present. The minutes from the 2009 AGM were read, followed by the Treasurer's Report. The members were told that the Society is in a strong financial position, with current membership at 267.

The proposed increase of the annual membership subscription by \$5, to cover costs associated with printing and postage expenditure on the journal and newsletter, the major expenditure of the Society, attracted considerable debate amongst members, with the motion being passed.

There was also significant discussion about the newsletter format and content. The look of the newsletter was perceived to be expensive by members, while others signalled their preference for more in-depth content. It was pointed out by Councillors that there were no willing volunteers to do such a newsletter as had been produced in earlier years of the Society and, as well, all printing and design was now outsourced. It was agreed that the incoming Council would consider the format of the newsletter during the year.

Murray then spoke about the programme of speakers he had organised for the coming year, which are detailed in this edition. John Johnson, Chair of the Board of the Catholic Weekly, also indicated his willingness to promote the work of the Society by arranging for copy to be published in the Weekly.

A vote of thanks was given to Br Alan Bradstreet



Howard Murray, Vice-President, greeting members before the AGM.

for his work in the Archives, and to Br John Luttrell for his long years as President, Vice-President, and Journal Editor.

Office Bearers 2010

President: Howard Murray

Vice-President: Geoff Hogan

Treasurer: Helen Scanlon

Councillors: Denise Corrigan (since resigned from Council), Helen Barrie, Patricia Jacobsen, Peter Makinson, Sr Moira O'Sullivan, Helen Abbey, and Prof James Franklin.

Former Council member, Marg Zucker, volunteered to coordinate the Christmas lunch.

The Irish in Australia

Members might be interested to know that historian and barrister, Dr Jeff Kildea is running a course at the Centre for Continuing Education in Sydney examining how events in Ireland, from the 1798 Rising to the Irish Civil War of 1922-1923, impacted on the course of Australian history. The National Museum is also planning a major touring exhibition telling the story of the Irish in Australia from 1788, to open on St Patrick's Day 2011. Look out for Barbara Hall's latest book *The Irish Vanguard: the Convicts of the Queen 1791*, which traces the lives of the first 155 convicts exiled from Ireland to NSW.

Welcome to our new members

Kathleen Butler, Brigidine Sisters Archives; Edwina Huntley, Mary MacKillop Place Museum; and Dr Graham English.

New Editor for ACHS newsletter

I am pleased to let you know that Patricia Jacobsen will be taking over my position as Editor. Due to increased work responsibilities, I am no longer able to produce the newsletter.

Patricia has a MLitt. Public History (Syd Uni), and has worked for many years in Catholic religious archives.

The Church's Response to Historical Abuse

HOWARD Murray has a background in criminal investigation in the policing services. He first began hearing about civil and legal cases regarding sexual abuse in the Church through reports coming from Canada in the 1980s. He told members that nothing like this had touched his life and similarly for his male colleagues who had also attended Catholic schools. At the time it wasn't thought it would ever be a major issue in the Australian Catholic Church, but Murray volunteered himself to assist the Church if such cases ever arose.

Since the late 1980s Murray has been investigating predominantly sexual abuse cases involving Australian church personnel. In those early years when confronted with allegations of misconduct, Howard explained that individual church leaders at the time offered a pastoral response, some made referrals to the police, and some did nothing much at all.

In 1994 Church leaders realized they needed to address this issue nationally across the Australian churches, and in 1996, they published *Towards Healing* - a policy and protocol document for dealing with abuse in the Australian Catholic Church.

Towards Healing was prepared by Prof Patrick Parkinson, a Baptist, and law professor at Sydney University. It is a policy document that recognizes that abuse is anathema to Christ's teachings and has no place in the Church. It provides a framework for procedural fairness by setting out how the Catholic Church will deal with these issues, and it applies to all church personnel. Murray stipulated that at any time complainants still had a right to go to the police.

Two notable exceptions that did not embrace *Towards Healing* document were The Archdiocese of Melbourne under Pell, and the Jesuits. The Archdiocese developed its own policy in 1995, which is still in use today, and the Jesuits have since embraced the *Towards Healing* document.

Murray went on to say that complaints he had dealt with made against males generally involved sexual abuse located in a school or parish context, and complaints made against women generally involved physical abuse usually within orphanages. Murray also described how it usually takes the complainant 20 or 30 years to come forward, and this added a further complication of the accused often being deceased.

The majority of complainants revealed that they now had lost faith in the Church. The effects of the abuse has resulted in poor education outcomes, poor work outcomes, and failed relationships for the victims. He went on to say that male victims usually look for a financial outcome in terms of compensation, but women were much more inclined to look for the provision of ongoing benefits, especially for the care of their children.

Murray finally questioned the unfathomable "what makes a person an abuser?" His own opinion is that 'celibacy' has a lot to do with it, and there are also paedophiles born to it.

"A calm and measured overview, complex, difficult, and touching." That was how ACHS member Marg Zucker, encapsulated the spirit of this talk in her thanks. Question time from the members was just as complex and difficult.

Denise Corrigan, ACHS Councillor

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April Lecture

Bishop Thomas William Muldoon (1917 – 1986)

DR John Carmody, who prepared the entry for Bishop Muldoon in the Australian Dictionary of Biography, gave the members a most entertaining account of Muldoon's life. Thomas Muldoon was the sixth of ten children of a Catholic family in the Lismore district. He attended St John's Marist Fathers College at Lismore in his final school years where he did well academically and became Head Prefect. He had a brother who became a Marist priest. After leaving school, Thomas spent one year at St Columba's College, Springwood, and was then chosen to go to Propaganda Fide College in Rome to complete his studies for the priesthood. When World War II began, he chose to remain in Rome while many of the other Australian students at Propaganda returned home. He completed his doctoral studies after his ordination in 1941.

At the end of the war, Thomas Muldoon returned briefly to parish work in Lismore before becoming a teacher of Dogmatic Theology at St Patrick's College, Manly, where he rose to be Dean. Students have judged his lectures to be orthodox, thorough but not inspiring. They did not deal with the issues then being discussed in Europe. These lectures were published in Latin, as delivered to his students, just as Vatican II changed the teaching language at St Patrick's to

English and so the books became instantly redundant.

He was appointed a Bishop in March 1961 and chose to go to Rome for his consecration by Pope John XXIII in May that year. One of the co-consecrators was Bishop Fulton Sheen, a very famous American broadcaster of religious programmes. Bishop Muldoon was the Sydney spokesperson for Catholic Media and was at one time managing director of the Catholic radio station 2SM and had much interest in this aspect of his ministry.

Bishop Muldoon attended the sessions of Vatican II and expressed his very traditional values. His combative attitude to those whose views differed from his was demonstrated when the Sacre Coeur Mother Gorman visited Australia and was interviewed on ABC radio. The Bishop believed that only views he agreed with should be broadcast. He wrote critically of Mother Gorman which resulted in a spirited public meeting in the city which Dr Carmody stated changed Catholicism in Sydney.

Bishop Muldoon was in many ways a larger than life figure. He also had a serious problem with alcohol, particularly as he aged. He retired in 1982 and spent his last years privately, dying in 1986.

Helen Scanlon, ACHS Councillor

2010 LECTURE PROGRAM

Unless otherwise stated all meetings are held at St Mary's Cathedral College Hall and commence at 2.30pm.

16 May	<i>History of Police Chaplaincy</i> Fr Jim Boland	12 September	<i>Catholic Bushwalking Club</i> Fr Peter Blayney
20 June	<i>They Called Him The Old Smoothie: John Joseph Cahill</i> Peter Golding	9 or 10 October	Excursion - to be advised
11 July	<i>Chaplaincy in the Australian Defence Force</i> Mgr Greg Flynn Meeting in Cathedral Chapter Hall	14 November	<i>The Loreto Sisters</i> Sr Chris Burke, ibvm
15 August	<i>Catholic Schooling in the Great Depression</i> Denis Davis	11 December	Christmas Lunch – Dr John Carmody