

**ST MATTHEW'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH
WINDSOR**



1840 - 1990

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WINDSOR**

1840 – 1990

An account compiled
For the Sesquicentenary
of
The Opening of the Church
on
21st October, 1840

PARISH PRIESTS

ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, WINDSOR

1831 C.V. Dowling

1835 J.V. Corcoran

1838 J. Brady

1843 T. Slattery

1843 W.J. Dunne

1845 J. Kenny

1845 M. McGrath

1847 J.J. Therry

1848 J. Grant

1851 N.J. Coffey

1852 P. Hallinan

1874 J.A. Sheehy

1886 J. Hayes

1898 B. McDonnell

1924 P. Galvin

1940 W. O'Flynn

1947 M. Coffey

1954 L.S. Murphy

1976 J.E. Dooley

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP



Diocese of Parramatta

10th September 1990

Dear Parishioners of St Matthew's,

My hearty congratulations to Father Jim Dooley and to all the parishioners who have been involved in arranging this sesquicentennial thanksgiving and celebration. It is very important that we remember the past on which the future is being built.

St Matthew's parish, established in 1832, is the oldest in our Diocese and one of the oldest in Australia. St Matthew's opened in 1840, is a precious part of our Catholic heritage, in the Diocese and in the whole of Australia. We must value it dearly in respect for those who have gone before us and in reverence to God who has done so much here.

For the Catholic Church everywhere this is a critical time. The Second Vatican Council inaugurated a new era in the Church. Its hallmarks are a great love of the scriptures, commitment to worship, shared responsibility in the Church and service to the whole of humankind. We are still coming to terms with the call of the Council, and searching for ways to make the ideals live in every parish.

St Matthew's Windsor shares this challenge, made the greater by the accelerated growth of the parish, the needs of young Catholics and a society ever more materially motivated in its assumptions.

I am confident you will be equal to this challenge. I pray that God bless you in the great events being planned, and look forward to sharing them with you.

Yours sincerely,

BISHOP BEDE HEATHER
BISHOP OF PARRAMATTA

MESSAGE FROM THE PARISH PRIEST



My Dear Parishioners and Friends,

What a marvellous occasion as we celebrate with gratitude and joy the one hundred and fiftieth year of St Matthew's Catholic Church! It is a great landmark in the history of the Hawkesbury, the local point of our worship and the sign of God's presence in our midst.

We are intensely proud of this building, consecrated and opened by Archbishop Polding to serve God's people. As a centre of grace and comfort, a place of prayer and community, I am sure it will continue to fulfil its purpose for many, many years to come. Courageously you have begun the work of restoration. Congratulations to you all. I admire the keenness for the task, the enthusiasm with which you approach it, I am proud to share it with you.

The driving force is our faith which we are delighted to share with your children, a faith we will continue to encourage in the years to come. We celebrate those who have worshipped in this Church, dedicated priests, religious and laity, who laid the firm foundations of faith on which we continue to build. Our future is bright with hope.

With you, I pray that St Matthew's will radiate God's love to us in our worship, in our community and that His inspiration will help us be true messengers of His love to others.

In this year of celebration, may St Matthew inspire us to lives of service.

FATHER J.E. DOOLEY

THE CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA BEFORE 1840



*JOHN BEDE POLDING
an English Benedictine
appointed in 1834 as
Australia's first Catholic Bishop*

The initial establishment of the Catholic faith in Australia was the work of the laity. From the first fleet on, there were many (mainly Irish) men and women who clung to their Catholic identity, but, for the first thirty years, Catholicism in Australia was virtually priestless.

The first priests to arrive (Fathers. James Dixon 1800, James Harold 1800 and Peter O'Neill 1801) were themselves convicts, transported for suspected complicity in the 1798 rebellion.

In 1803, Fr Dixon was given conditional emancipation and permission to exercise his priestly duties, celebrating Mass publicly in Sydney, Parramatta and the Hawkesbury in rotation. However, this situation was short-lived and the permission was revoked as a result of the Castle Hill rebellion the following year. By 1810, the three had returned to Ireland.

In 1817, Father Jeremiah O'Flynn arrived, but he lacked government authorisation. This, plus his actions here, led to his deportation in 1818. He is believed to have left the Blessed Sacrament behind in the cottage of James Dempsey, which became a meeting place for prayer for some Sydney Catholics.

Local Catholic support for O'Flynn, coupled with frequent petitions for priests, finally convinced the British Government, and in 1819 two Catholic chaplains were appointed, each on a salary of one hundred pounds per annum. These were Philip Conolly and John Joseph Therry, who arrived in Sydney on 3rd May, 1820. At the time, there were already six or seven thousand Catholics in the colony.

In 1821, Fr Conolly took up his residence in Tasmania, while the entire mainland settlement was Therry's parish. Other priests were to follow these first two – notably Fr Daniel Power in 1826 (he died 1830), Fr Christopher Dowling (1831), Fr William Ullathorne (1832) and Fr John McEnroe (1832). By 1842, there were twenty-four Catholic chaplains in the colony.

As the number had begun to increase, the civil authorities felt the need for a single ecclesiastical authority with which it could deal, rather than the several, often conflicting, individuals. Therefore the Bishop of Mauritius, whose diocese included Australia, appointed Ullathorne as Vicar-General. However Oils for Baptism and Confirmation still had to be brought from Mauritius, Rio de Janeiro or London and this, plus other major and minor inconveniences, led to mounting pressure in London and Rome for an Australian Bishop. In 1834, John Bede Polding, an English Benedictine, was appointed Australia's first Catholic bishop. He arrived in Sydney in September, 1835, and was soon involved in care of the convicts and long missionary journeys.

The final step in the church structure was the establishment of a hierarchy. This took place in 1842, when Sydney was raised to an archbishopric and new dioceses of Hobart and Adelaide were established. To these were added Perth in 1845, while the first church council was held in 1844. This council placed the church in Australia under the patronage of Mary, Help of Christians.

The lives of these early priests and those who followed them were hard ones. They faced loneliness, isolation, the lack of spiritual support, as well as the physical hardships of heat and cold, poor accommodation, poor food, insects and other pests: all this on top of the constant travel over distances not experienced at home. Some Mass centres were 100 miles from their base. To quote Fr P. J. Hartigan in *The Men of '38*, "Having gone no further than 'up the old Boreen' at home the long roads of Australia were a sermon on Eternity."

Before the churches or chapels were built, these travelling priests said Mass where they could, often in the houses of individuals. At Windsor, the new Convict Barracks were used, until they became the hospital, and Mass was then said in Patrick Garrigan's house. When the congregation outgrew the house, a barn, made of slabs, was used. Despite the need for a church, finance was the obstacle. However, a bequest of five hundred pounds in the will of James Doyle (1836) enabled a start to be made. The foundation stone was laid at the end of that year and St Matthew's Catholic Church, which is still used for worship, was finally completed and opened in October 1840.

THE IRISH IN THE NEW COLONY

JAMES DOYLE (1765-1836)

The bequest of five hundred pounds by James Doyle at his death in 1836 made possible the building of the church in Windsor.

ANDREW DOYLE (1774-1841)

Brothers Andrew and James Doyle, both well-educated and of some means, were sentenced in Dublin, 1801 for their parts in the Irish rebellion, and sent to the colony on the ship “Rolla” in 1803. Andrew’s family accompanied him into exile, but James’s wife missed the ship. James, before being pardoned in 1813, was associated with a John Fox in a farm on the river above Richmond, where they were attacked by thieves carrying pitchforks, who stole their boat and store of wheat. By 1812, James and his new wife owned a farm at Seven Hills, and James apparently took to selling liquor. This resulted in an appearance at Windsor Court in 1816 and a ten-pound fine for unlicensed spirit selling. The following year, he was fined three times the amount. Undeterred, he opened the Lord Nelson in 1818, making his fortune as proprietor. He gained widespread interests in land and commerce, and was a well-known money-lender. He was also a philanthropist, a member of the Benevolent Society and a warm supporter of the Catholic Church, his bequests amounting to some one thousand two hundred pounds. It was his bequest of five hundred pounds that made possible the building of the church.

Although Andrew, living down the river, had changed his faith, a close relationship continued between the two families. Andrew’s investigations of Sergeant Evans’ murder in 1812 and a brutal robbery downriver in 1817 resulted in the conviction and execution of James Fitzpatrick, a neighbour and fellow transportee. The burial of James Fitzpatrick at Windsor was prevented by Governor Macquarie, probably because of high feelings in the district and a fear of violence against Doyle by fellow Irishmen. Many of them felt that Andrew had renounced his faith in his aspirations to become a magistrate. Certainly Andrew Doyle caused a stir when, after a heavy drinking session at his brother’s pub, he attacked Marsden’s exposition at Arndell’s funeral in 1821. When committed to Sydney gaol for three months on bread and water, he appealed for Fr Therry’s intercession, but Marsden was outraged. The scandal died away, and the Doyle family continued to grow and spread in and beyond the Hawkesbury.

JAMES AUGUSTINE CUNNEEN (1826-1889)

James Cunneen was educated at the Catholic School, taught by its first teacher James Cassidy. In 1860, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly on the platform of free selection, and was returned unopposed in 1864. The following year he became the first parliamentarian to occupy the position of Postmaster General. On 19th April, 1889, he fell while descending his Paddington home staircase and broke his neck. His will stated his wish to be buried in the Catholic cemetery at Windsor.

RICHARD FITZGERALD (1771-1840)

Richard Fitzgerald was fourteen when transported to N.S.W. where he was sent with many other boys to work on farms at Toongabbie. In 1794 he was granted 30 acres of ground at Cabramatta, where his diligence earned him the appointment of “Superintendent of Convicts from Parramatta to Toongabbie” and two further grants of 250 acres, on which were planted wheat and maize (1795). In 1802, Governor King appointed him “Inspector of Government Agricultural Concerns” for the Toongabbie, Hawkesbury and Castle Hill areas. However, in 1804, he was accused of neglecting his duties, was discharged and subsequently retired to the Hawkesbury.

The Bligh Rebellion in 1808 resulted in the unpopular decision to appoint Fitzgerald as Constable of the Hawkesbury, replacing the Bligh supporter, Andrew Thompson. Fitzgerald’s attempts to crush support in Windsor for Bligh failed; (and it is interesting to note that it was Thompson, not Fitzgerald, who was mentioned for community assistance in the bad floods of that time.) In 1812, Governor Macquarie re-instated Thompson and declared Fitzgerald “Superintendent of Stores”. The following year, Fitzgerald also became the Clerk in Commissariat Department in Windsor, while entering the hotel business with the opening of “The Macquarie Arms.”

By now, Fitzgerald was the greatest emancipist landholder in the Hawkesbury, controlling 27,200 acres at Rylestone, Cassilis and Mudgee. It was recorded that he donated ten pounds to the erection of St Mary’s Cathedral in 1830 and took an active role in the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society. A fifty pounds annuity was paid until 1875 and one thousand two hundred pounds invested until 1946, when the money was used to build the nurses’ quarters. Robert Fitzgerald died on 25th May 1840.

PATRICK HAND (c.1777-1827)

Transported from Ireland on the “Rolla” in 1803, Hand did not have the resources of his companions, the Doyles, and so leased a small farm at Cornwallis. He weathered the 1806 flood, but was washed out in the 1809 flood and so moved to higher ground at Richmond. There is no record of Hand’s marriage to Catherine Hatch, who came out from Dublin in 1809, but the two were both devout Irish Catholics. At that time, the Catholic Church regarded vows made by a couple binding in the absence of priests, whereas a marriage performed by a “heretic” clergyman was unrecognised.

Patrick was regarded as a hard-working family man, and so when a shooting occurred at Hand’s New Year’s Eve party, resulting in the death of Isaac Cornwell, he was acquitted on his plea of self-defence. However, it was difficult to manage on 15 acres, so Patrick worked extra jobs, carting rice from Parramatta and helping the Benevolent Society. In 1820, he was fined for having government stores in his possession and, unable to pay, was gaoled.

The following year, when Catherine died in childbirth, he was awarded a land grant, but, two years later, died and was buried with Catherine by “Roman Catholics” in the churchyard of St Peter’s. His two young boys were fostered by local farmers.



“The Macquarie Arms” – opened by Richard Fitzgerald



*Esther Elizabeth Cassidy
(1803-1874).
Esther and James Cassidy
conducted the first
Catholic School in Windsor
from 1835 to 1844.*

JAMES DUNNE (?-1837)

James and Catherine Berry were sent to the colony on the “Sugar Cane” in 1793, and although both devout Catholics, married in the Church of England to cement a lifelong union. It is thought that Dunne worked with compatriot McCarty farming on South Creek. However, in 1803, he was granted 60 acres on the right bank of Portland Reach, near shipmate Thomas Chaseling and Michael Lamb. The three had problems with the aborigines, and Dunne wounded one when defending his property. The aborigines retaliated by burning down the houses of Chaseling and Lamb, but Dunne’s house escaped. However, in 1806, floods devastated the property. The convict, Morgan, who had left owing 7 week’s work, was ordered back to the farm. Morgan rose early and felled a tree which crashed across the roof of the house just as the family was stirring. Dunne’s wife was injured and his two children were killed. Morgan was found to be careless and was sentenced to 500 lashes.

By 1809, the Dunnes had moved to Boston’s Reach to higher ground, and by 1820 they had 120 acres of land at Sackville. Dunne led the inquest jury that investigated the drowning of Matthew Everingham in 1817 – and twenty years later, he himself, drowned in the river. He and Catherine were buried in the Church of England cemetery at Sackville, but under a Catholic inscription.

MICHAEL LAMB (c. 1774-1860)

Michael was a young Irish tailor of Roman Catholic faith, transported on the “Queen” in 1791. He set up a tailoring business for the Hawkesbury farmers, and in 1802 bought a few acres to farm. Although the 1806 muster showed Lamb as married, his first recorded marriage was in 1811 to Mary Farrell, who ran away and left him. Lamb had spent some time in Windsor gaol with debtor-prisoner Mason on a charge of pig-stealing. He disposed of his farm and rented a small area at Portland Head, where he resumed his trade as tailor. In 1814, he identified the coat of a drowned murder-victim and so helped solve the crime.

With the death of his faithless wife, he was able to marry Susannah Thompson from Dublin. She had been sent out on the “Frances and Eliza” in 1815. Though both Catholic, they married at Windsor under Church of England rites. The children were baptised Catholics. By 1820, Michael had acquired a 150-acre farm below the Colo. Five years later, because of his record of sobriety and honest industry, he was granted a further 50 acres by Macquarie. Lamb was buried in a small cemetery on Half Moon reach, his eldest son taking over the farm.

DENNIS McCARTY (c.1768-?)

Dennis McCarty, a brawny Irish Catholic, arrived at the Hawkesbury in 1796, assigned as a servant on the Cornwallis estate set up by the captain of the ship “Marquis Cornwallis” in that year. In 1799, he was granted 30 acres on South Creek and the following year was able to purchase a further 40 acres. His partner at this stage was thought to have been James Dunne. In 1804, his neighbour, Dr Mason, began clearing his Penruddock farm. McCarty claimed that Mason was luring away the convicts in his employ before the allotted tasks were done. Magistrate Arndell ruled in McCarty’s favour and the irate surgeon demanded the men’s return to finish the work on wages. When McCarty refused, Surgeon Mason prosecuted and won a cash settlement.

In 1806, McCarty left South Creek and bought 15 acres at Wilberforce from Cusley. Surprisingly, the following year, he signed the address pledging support to Bligh in quelling the outbreak of Irish violence.

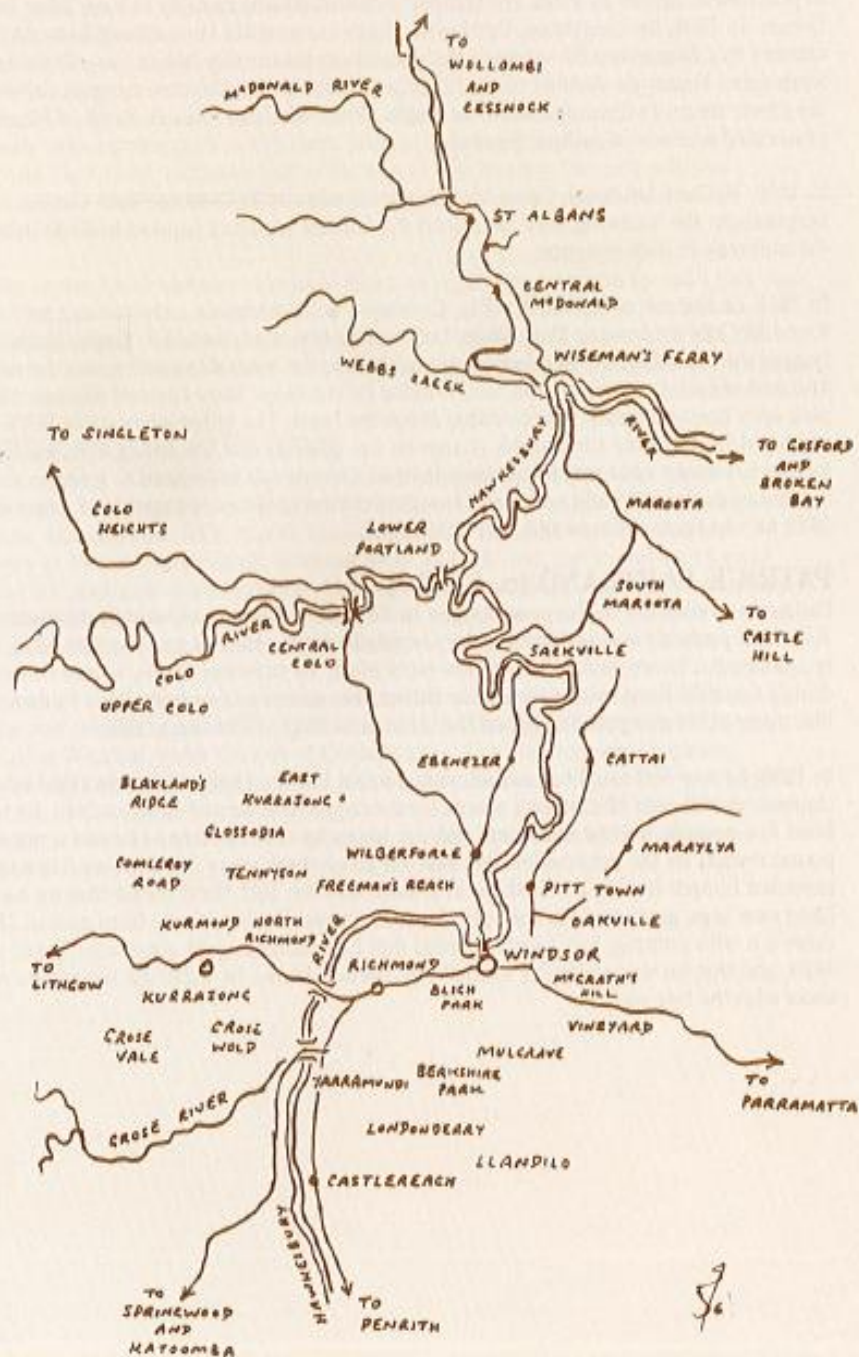
In 1814, on the eve of St Patrick’s Day, Constable Williams heard a cry of “Murder!” and found McCarty and young Mary Ward, both very intoxicated, locked in battle. McCarty begged the constable to “take her away”, but before the constable could re-act, he was knocked senseless to the ground, and blinded by the blow. Mary claimed she saw McCarty pick up a hoe and knock the constable about the head. The judge advocate of NSW reprieved McCarty from the murder charge on the grounds that the failing light was too bad for the girl to see what was happening. Instead, McCarty was sentenced to solitary confinement on bread and water and transferred later to Newcastle gaol for 7 years. By 1828 he was back at Cornwallis and unattached.

PATRICK PARTLAND (c. 1772-?)

Partland travelled out to the penal colony in 1796 with shipmates Connolly, McCarty and Tully, and probably was assigned to the Cornwallis estate. He was pardoned in 1806, and recommended for exemplary behaviour, particularly by surveyor Evans, whose distress call during the 1806 flood was answered by Patrick. He rented a farm from John Palmer, and like many of his compatriots, signed the address to Bligh of February, 1807.

In 1808, Partland was first caught manufacturing poteen, but the charges were dropped when he claimed he had paid Macarthur’s agents for the sugar. The second time, in 1810, he was fined five pounds, but the third time was not his lucky one. Someone claimed a twenty pound reward for the information that saw Pat given three years’ hard labour. He had overextended himself buying a half share in a farm, and in the 1811 flood meant that he had to hand over pigs, goats and his corn grinder to creditors. On his release from gaol in 1815, he came out with nothing, but it was recorded that he was renting 24 acres from Baker in 1820, and that he was caring for a small boy, named James: records do not show who the boy was.

MAP OF THE HAWKESBURY DISTRICT



THE IRISH DOWN THE RIVER

The Irish played an important role in the development and character of the new settlement in Australia. They were fun-loving and generous folk, often transported for their part in the Irish uprisings of 1798 and 1801. One such Irish man was Andrew Doyle, transported in the “Rolla” with Patrick Hand, James Fitzgerald and Patrick Byrne. The Doyles became connected with the Protestant faiths, in particular Wesleyan and the Church of England.

Although three Irish priests had come to the colony, there are no records of marriages or baptisms occurring “down the river”. Even when Father Therry arrived in 1820, ministering to Windsor from time to time, there is no mention of him travelling out of the town. The Catholics on the river must have felt neglected at times. Kitty Carman (Catherine Collins?) was an early Irish transportee, convicted in Dublin in 1796 and sent out on the “Britannia”, under the rule of Captain Thomas Dennott. The convicts under his charge were starved and denied adequate water. They were heavily ironed and brutally flogged – some receiving 400 lashes a day, and many dying on the voyage. Women were beaten, placed in neck-yokes and had their heads shaven. Kitty, her husband and the other Irish transportees who had suffered so cruelly, soon found their hatred of the British disappear once they reached the colony.

An Irish settler who lived along the Colo, near its mouth, ancestress of the Cavanough family, was Margaret Darnell (Dowling?), and it was her nephew, Father C.V. Dowling who arrived in Windsor in 1831. Another was Jeremiah Sullivan, who had once been in the seminary and worked hard to establish a church and school in the area. In 1835, Father Corcoran visited the Macdonald River and Sullivan formed a committee for the erection of a Catholic School. He later approached Father Brady in 1838. It is not known if this school was built – it may have been the schoolhouse-cum-church opened by Bishop Polding on St Rose’s day, August 30, 1840 (the chapel of St Rose, said to be near the Upper Branch or Colo River).

From October, 1840, Father Slattery ministered to the area from the Macdonald River to the Brisbane Water, and a Macdonald register commenced. Well-known Catholic families were the Morans from the Colo, Hugh Doughertys from Wiseman’s Ferry area, the Byrnes, Toomeys and the Jurds. St Joseph’s on the Macdonald River was commenced in 1839, but not finished until 1853. It is now in ruins. Ten miles north, at Upper Macdonald, was Our Lady of Loreto, in use from 1842. Great floods in the 1850s and 60s saw the decline of Catholic families in the area, and after the hardships of the 1891 flood, many Catholics adopted the Wesleyan faith, which was very strong in the area.

SOCIAL LIFE IN EARLY WINDSOR

When the early settlers came to the Hawkesbury, the greatest need was to survive.

Everyone faced the same difficulties, and the bonds of equality brought neighbours together to help each other as best they could. The earliest documented leisure activity (apart from sharing the odd drop) was a horse race held in 1806 along the Killarney Chain of Ponds.

The settlers brought with them many of the customs of their Homeland, but many new sports flourished in an area where sport often relied on whatever was available. Settlers competed in, and bet on, any activity of physical prowess – jumping from one upright bottle to another, rolling down hills in empty casks, running races balancing pumpkins or carrying sledge hammers by a nail in the handle. A cow race (with owners being jockeys) was held in 1812 down George Street.

Traditional sports such as horse racing and cricket became popular, as did bare-fisted fighting and coursing. Less well-to-do folk enjoyed dancing in the hotel bars – the Hornpipe and the Four-Handed reel were danced bare-footed on floorboards.

Grand balls highlighted the social seasons, the highlight being the “Bachelors’ Ball” at Coffey’s “Daniel O’Connell Inn” (now the museum). Mr Hale hosted balls at the old brick stables (demolished to make room for Westpac Bank) - the stables having white stone floors. Fairfield was also the scene of many balls and sporting events in the days of Henry McQuade.

Travelling companies often came to Windsor, including Fred Mills (‘world’s principal ventriloquist’), and Windsor boasted its own Chamber of Horrors in the Waxwork Museum above Miss Bushell’s establishment (Baker Street).



Coffey's "Daniel O'Connell Inn" (now the museum), where "Bachelors' Ball" and other grand balls were held in the early days of Windsor

DEVELOPMENT OF WINDSOR PARISH

Dr Polding opened St Matthew's on 21.10.1840, assisted by rev Ullathorne, and by 1842 he was able to report that St Matthew's was completed. Also in use at that time was St Gregory's at Kurrajong and the Chapel of Our Lady of Loreto ten miles up from St Joseph's, Macdonald River.

Fr Therry was stationed at Windsor for about 9 months in 1847. Before leaving the district in 1848, he requested that a church be built in Richmond to accommodate the spiritual needs of the people. Ten years later the foundation stone was laid and the first Mass at St Monica's, Richmond, was celebrated on 4th May, 1859.

The three Parish Priests in quick succession were J Grant, NJ Coffey and P Hallinan. During Fr Hallinan's 22 years as Parish Priest, the "great flood of 1867" caused hardship and loss to the parish, not only in the destruction of dwellings and crops, but in the loss of lives. This all-time flood wrought havoc. All suitable church buildings were made available for refugees. Many people were taken off the tops of houses or trees. The Eather families were not so fortunate, for when the floodwaters washed the families off the rooftop of their house, the two wives and ten children drowned. Monuments in the Catholic cemetery stand in memory of this sad time.

In 1874, Fr J Sheehy took charge of the parish and asked that a convent be established to accommodate an order of nuns. The sisters of the Good Samaritan opened a convent in an old house in George Street. Twelve months later a more suitable house was rented in Macquarie St on the corner of Suffolk Street. In 1878, the sisters moved into the renovated presbytery, renamed St Joseph's Convent and blessed by Archbishop Vaughan. A new brick presbytery was erected to adjoin the church.

In 1877, the western area of the Parish, which included Richmond and Kurrajong, separated, and the new parish priest, Fr P Cassidy, was sent to Richmond.

WINDSOR.

PLAN

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of Survey of a Siltator

89 2999

Roman Catholic Church and Presbytery

TOWN OF WINDSOR

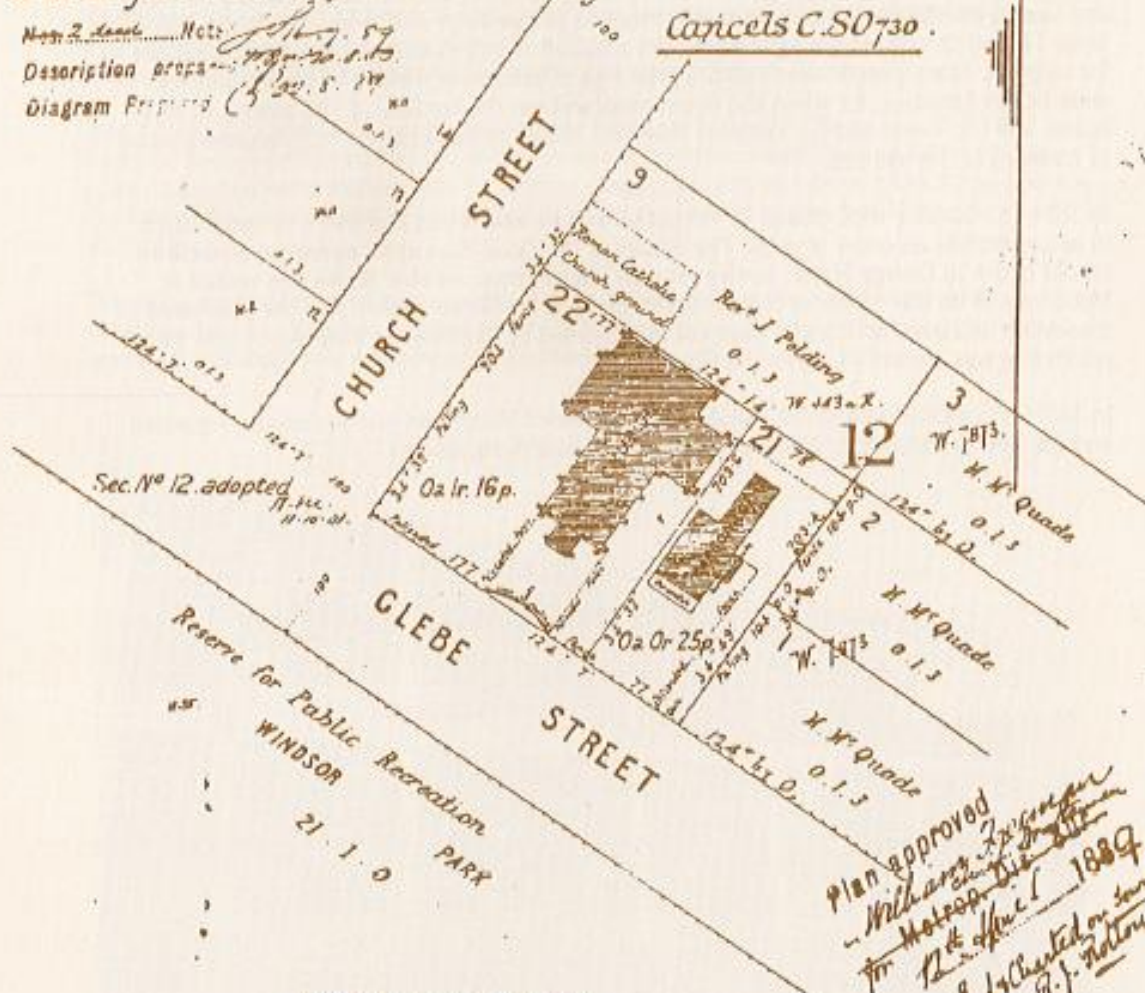
Parish of S^t Matthew County of Cumberland

for original Appropriation vide R.M.R. 37/30 Approved by C.S.L. 24/182 Nos. 254 for R.C. Church & Residence only
Measured for Issue of Deeds of Grant

Under M^o 67.14988 appointing the following gentlemen Trustees for Roman Catholic Church & Presbytery, School & Burial Ground Sites at Windsor, viz: The Most Rev^d Patrick Francis Moran D.D. The Very Rev^d John Joseph Carroll D.D. The Rev^d Denis Francis O'Haran D.D. The Rev^d John Hayes. Messrs Bernard Conlon J.P. Pat^r Butler jun^r. Christopher Warkins May.

Notes 2. Land. Note: 1. 1889
Description prop^d: 1889. 2. 1889.
Diagram Prepared (1889. 3. 1889)

Capitals C.S. 730.



Scale 1 chain to an Inch

Measured in accordance with regulations on the 23rd January 1889

Transmitted to the District Surveyor with my Letter dated 28th February 1889

PLAN MICROFILMED

FORMS OR AMENDMENTS TO BE MADE HEREON

Plan approved
by William J. Polding
for M^o 67.14988
12th June 1889
Signed & Certified on same
R. J. Polding.

THE BUILDING OF ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

St Matthew's Catholic Church, the oldest Catholic church in continual use since 1840 in mainland Australia, is an early example of a stripped-down Gothic revival Church. It was the inept plan of Fr Therry, completed under the supervision of the architect, Thomas Bird, and the Bishop, Dr Polding.

A grant of land was appropriated in 1833 for a Roman Catholic church and cemetery (although the cemetery was in use since 1822, if not before this). The cemetery contained three acres one rood. The oldest vault is that of Patrick Cullen, 1822, and many well-known public men, including the McQuades JA Cuneen, MLA, 1889; Rev J Butler, 1889; Rev J Hayes, 1897; the Eather Family, 1867; JJ Fitzpatrick, 1899 and Edward Raper, are buried there.

In 1834, the plan of Windsor showed the present Tebbut and Church Street as being part of the Church Green and the adjacent farm, "Catherine Farm".

On 1st May, 1836, Bishop Polding wrote, in his letter to Rev Thomas Heptonstall that he had visited Windsor the "Sunday before last and celebrated Mass in our temporary chapel there. It was a barn, and will be one again, made of slabs. A man by the name of Doyle died there a few weeks since, and he left five hundred pounds to build a church and two hundred pounds for a school. I hope to obtain as much from the government for the same purposes and to complete the two this year."

He went on to describe Windsor parish, where Fr Corcoran cared for a district 70 miles long and "very wide", and that of the 140 odd communicants, not more than "6 or 8 had been to Confession for many years."

Judge Burton's report of 1836 stated that a day school (run by James Cassidy, 1834-44) had an attendance of 67 boys and 37 girls, while a larger church was being built to house a present congregation of 250. The following year, deeds were issued for a school, church and presbytery at the corner of Tebbutt and Church Streets.

The foundation stone of the church was laid on 28th December, 1836, by Rev Dr Polding, assisted by Rev Dr Ullathorne (hence the centenary celebrations were held in December 1936 ("Gazette" records). In 1837, the Trustees of St Matthew's Catholic church, Windsor, were:
The Right Rev Bishop JB Polding,
Rev JV Corcoran,
Mr Thomas Lynch,
Mr Francis Prendergast,
Mr Daniel Harrisky
(Polding records 71,21).

SAINT

MATTHEW

St Matthew was a tax collector at Capernaum and so somewhat on the outskirts of Jewish society. The tax collectors were despised, not only for their extortionate methods, but also because they co-operated with the hated Romans and so were considered as traitors to their own people.

When Jesus called Matthew (also called Levi) to follow him, he answered immediately. He also gave a banquet in Jesus' honour and Christ's acceptance to attend this meal shocked the Pharisees (cf. Luke 5.29-32). He was chosen by Christ to be one of the Twelve Apostles.

The Gospel attributed to him appears first in the New Testament, but most scholars hold that Mark's Gospel is the first to have been written.

Tradition tells us that Matthew preached first in Judea, but then moved further east to Parthia where he was martyred. His Gospel reflects the problems of a Jewish community that was now receiving a number of Gentile (non-Jewish) converts.

THE OPENING OF ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – WINDSOR

Extract from *The Chronicle*, 27th October 1840

At 11.00am the procession moved from Mr Brady's house – first the band of the 80th regiment, then the children, dressed in white with banners; the committee of St Patrick's Society from Sydney, in white scarfs and carrying banners; Catholics of the district two by two; the ecclesiastics and assistants, according to their degree and office in the ceremonial – the procession being closed by the bishop. The band drew up by the side of the church door, the children proceeded to range round the sanctuary with their banners, the long line of people divided, and the clerical procession advanced between their ranks to the church door, entered and approached the altar; then again proceeded forth to circumambulate the new erection, reciting the psalms and forms of prayer prescribed by the ritual; when they again entered the sanctuary. The right Reverend, the bishop, officiated in rich vestments of drap d'or, the Rev. Mr Brady, the local pastor, in alb and stole, performed the functions of assistant priest to his lordship. The Rev. Messrs Murphy and Platt ministered as deacon and subdeacon, in dalmatiques of the same rich materials as the bishop's chasuble; the very Rev. Dr Ullathorne did the office of master of ceremonies; and eight priests assisted in surplice and stole. The choir of St Mary's Cathedral, conducted by Mr Bushelle, occupied the right transept, and the military band the left. The sacred music of the great Italian and German masters, to which the seraphine formed the accompaniment, was executed in a style of grace and power worthy of its high character. We never heard the choir to greater advantage.

The sermon was preached by Dr Ullathorne in his usual style; weaving the philosophy of religion with the most glowing imagery of the sacred Scriptures and shaping the masses of historic fact to someone present practical purpose.



At two o'clock the church poured out its spacious and closely packed congregation. An excellent lunch had been prepared under the direction of Mr Coffey, to which his Lordship with the clergy, the officers of the 80th, and other gentlemen of influence and respectability sat down, during which time the excellent band of the 80th played appropriate airs. At seven p.m. vespers were solemnly chanted by the choir and the clergy alternatively, and the Right Rev. the Bishop delivered an impressive discourse. We were gratified in hearing his Lordship speak so strongly on the great moral improvement which has been and is still going on in that district.

The Church was designed to the cruciform shape with a porch symmetrically at the front, and is possibly the first catholic Church designed with transepts. Although supposedly designed to seat 1200, it accommodated approx. 350 persons. The external walls are stuccoed brick with corner and intermediate buttresses, small transepts all originally with a shingled roof, but now with corrugated iron. A palisade iron picket fence emphasised with stone piers frames the street frontage.



Internally, the decoration is simple but grand in volume, with its high original cedar panelled ceiling segmented by matching scissor trusses. Apart from replacement windows, the building remains virtually in its original condition.

THE STATUE OF MARY

The statue was donated by William McQuade. Bishop Polding delivered his address on the occasion of its inauguration on 21st June, 1868.

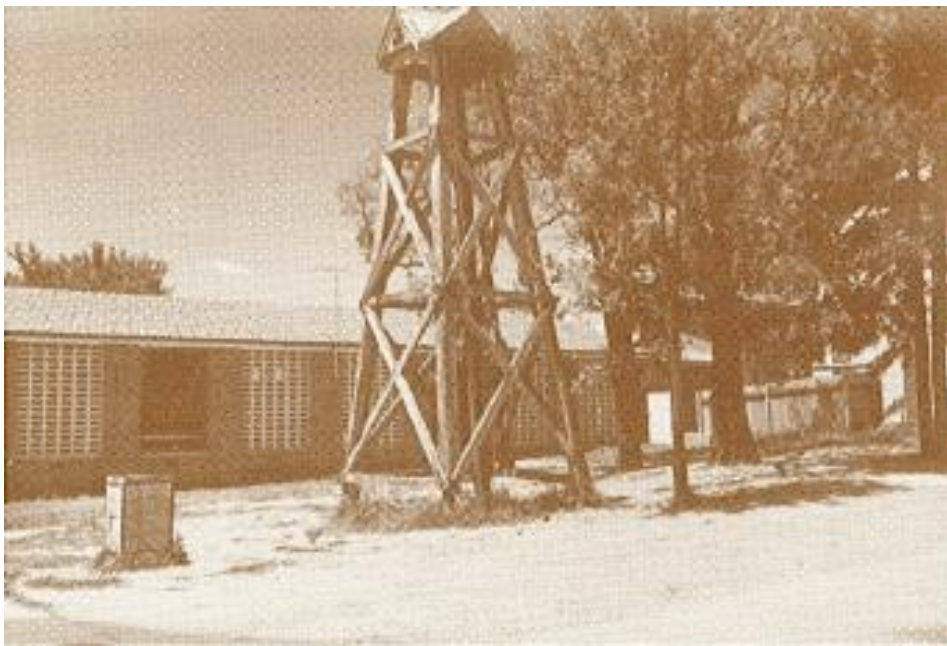
THE PIPE ORGAN **A GIFT FROM THE McQUADES**

The pipe organ, presented to the Church in January 1882, is still thought to be the first “Hunter Organ” in N.S.W. (Ref: G.D. Rushworth, “Historic Organs of N.S.W., 1988) and remains in the choir loft in full working order. The organ, donated by the McQuades, was described as a “bright jewel with its pale grey pipes decorated with bands of blue, red and gold.”

THE HIGH ALTAR AND THE TWO SIDE ALTARS

These were donated by Mr Roger Ryan (1825 – 1912) of Pitt Town.

THE CHURCH BELL



The Church bell was erected in 1907 by Father McDonnell in a large wooden tower, now demolished and replaced by a steel frame. The bell was donated by Miss O'Donovan, a saintly lady who lived for many years in the two-storeyed house in George Street (later taken over by Taylor's Produce store, then Simmond's Hardware, now used by the Arab Horse Society).

THE CHURCH AS IT WAS FROM 1940 TO 1955

Sister Maree Stanley's family owned a farm at Maraylya in the 1940s and 50s, so she was a boarder at the convent school (1947-1952) and worked in Windsor until she entered (1955), to return as a teacher in 1967-68. These are her memories of the church during these earlier years.

The windows in the body of the church were patterned coloured glass, making the church so dark that some of the nuns would bring a torch to read their prayer books. The confessional at the back under the stairs was closed off with red curtains. The baptismal font was at the back left-hand corner, as one entered the church, marked off with railings similar to the altar rails, and the area graced by a large statue of St Patrick in the corner.

There many more statues in the church then. In addition to Our Lady and St Patrick, there statues of the Sacred Heart, St Joseph, St Anthony, the Little Flower, possible another of Our Lady and a statue of the patron of priests (the Cure D'Ars).

The large crucifix, now at the front, was at the back, near the baptistery. Over the front of the sanctuary was the painting of a monstrance with an adoring angel and cherubs in clouds on each side. On each side of the altar was a statue of an adoring angel, holding large brass candelabra. The angels stood on pedestals. Also, on each side of the altar, were small altars (credence tables?) and farther to the sides were the side altars.

On special feast days (Forty Hours etc.), there was a satin drape behind the altar, suspended from a large brass crown. When not in use, this was stored in the choir loft.

The side door is comparatively recent. It used to be a window, but as a result of Sr Marie Celine Evans' urgings, was replaced with a door. Sr Marie Celine taught at St Matthew's from 1954-60, and objected to the children having to walk all the way round to the front to visit. Consequently, the door was often referred to as Sr Marie Celine's Door.

Sr Maree has a photo of a seat marked: "For Asylum Patients", that was in the choir loft. She thinks it refers to a Catholic orphanage in Windsor (Possible called St Patrick's), as in older times, these were called Orphan Asylums.

ALTERATIONS TO THE CHURCH BUILDING

The original windows were replaced with steel framed, leadlight memorial windows, which retained the formation but with simplistic lines.

The timber shingled roof was replaced with corrugated iron. The choir loft and a circular leadlight window high in the street facing façade were added. A concrete slab was inserted in the Sacristy. Porch doors were replaced. The timber picket fence flanking the entrance porch was replaced with a red textured brick wall.

(We would like to thank the conservation Architects, especially Mr Graham Edds, for permission to use some of the information compiled in the “Restoration of St Matthew’s Catholic Church” submission.)



*Northern elevation with leadlight windows
in Sanctuary and Sacristy.*

EARLY PARISH PRIESTS



Very Rev. Father Therry



Very Rev. Dean Coffey, O.S.F.



Very Rev. Dean Grant

EARLY PARISH PRIESTS

Although the early priests, Frs Dixon (1803-4), Therry and Power (1820s) visited Windsor, Fr Christopher Vincent Dowling, an Irish Dominican based at Parramatta, was the first to hold regular services at Windsor (1831). On his transfer to Newcastle in 1835, a resident priest was appointed. This was Father James Vincent Corcoran, another Dominican who had come to Australia with Bishop Polding. Writing to his confrere and cousin, Rev Thomas Heptonstall, OSB, Bishop Polding speaks of the religious revolution effected by Fr Corcoran in Windsor. One hundred and forty had attended their Easter duty, only half a dozen of whom had been in Confession for many years. There was still much to be done, as the 1836 census showed over 800 Catholics in the Windsor area. Fr Corcoran had seen the foundation stone of St Matthew's laid, but he did not see the church completed: while driving to Sydney on 4th August, 1837, he was thrown from his gig and killed.

The next priest was the Rev John Brady, later Bishop of Perth, who saw the completion of the church. In addition to Windsor, each month he visited six stations, each having a small chapel and situated at distances of 12 to 35 miles from Windsor. In 1840, Fr Thomas Slattery was assigned to assist Fr Brady and, when Brady was transferred to Western Australia in 1843, he took charge of Windsor until the arrival of the Rev WJ Dunne later that year.

In 1845, Fr Dunne was succeeded by the Rev John Kenny and, later the same year, Rev M McGrath. Although his stay was short, Fr Kenny must have had pleasant memories of Windsor, for when he died in 1886, his Will included a bequest of one hundred pounds to the Parish.

In 1847, Rev John Joseph Therry, the pioneer priest of Australia, took up residence in Windsor for about nine months. He was followed in 1848 by Rev John Grant, who remained until 1851. Fr Grant obviously had the gift of making friends, for, when in 1851, he planned to leave Windsor quietly to board the "Blackwell" for a health trip to Europe, friends at Windsor gathered a testimonial of one hundred pounds and sent a parishioner riding to Sydney to deliver it before the ship sailed. While in Rome, Pope Pius IX conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. On his return in 1853, he was stationed at Bathurst until his early death in 1864, and in his fund raising effort there, his Windsor friends joined the many who supported him.

Father Grant's place at Windsor was taken by Fr Nicholas J Coffey, a Franciscan. The following year saw Fr Patrick Hallinan become parish priest, and, unlike his predecessors, his stay was not a short one. Parish priest for twenty-two years, he was highly esteemed by all classes of the community. During his time, he worked hard to have the church of St Monica built at Richmond. He shared the tragedy of the 1867 flood, taking shelter with the many people who found refuge at the two St Matthew churches [Anglican and Catholic].

When Dean Hallinan departed over four hundred assembled to see the presentation of a purse of one hundred and fifteen pounds and listen to an address on behalf of many well-wishers.

In 1874 he was followed by the Rev Samuel John Austin Sheehy, a Benedictine. As Polding's Vicar-General, he had been nominated for a bishopric, but in the English-Irish friction of the 1860s, this did not eventuate. It was he who brought the sisters to Windsor, establishing a convent south of Fitzgerald St in George St.

In 1886, Fr Austin was succeeded by Rev John Hayes, from Wollongong. Fr Hayes was in charge of the now-smaller, but still large Windsor parish for the next twelve years. He suffered from ill-health until his death in 1898. He was buried in the local cemetery after a funeral service attended by fifty priests. Rev B McDonnell became parish priest and remained until 1924. He was well-liked by all denominations, and the silver jubilee of his ordination(1911) was marked by many celebrations at Windsor and Riverstone, where speakers included non-Catholic clergy as well as his brother priests.

WINDSOR ASSISTANT PRIESTS

(Priests other than those listed as Parish Priests)

Fr Thomas Slattery (c. 1840)

Fr Maurus OSB (mentioned by Sisters 1878)

Fr Sheridan (c. 1895 – M. Brown's notes)

Fr Lynch (C. 1898 – M. Brown's notes)

Fr Whelan (c. 1920)

Fr Eris O'Brien (later Bishop)

(Names below have been supplied by Rita Taylor – order uncertain)

Fr Stack

Fr Sheils

Fr McCulloch

Fr Leo Purcell

Fr Richard Cattell

Fr Brian Egan

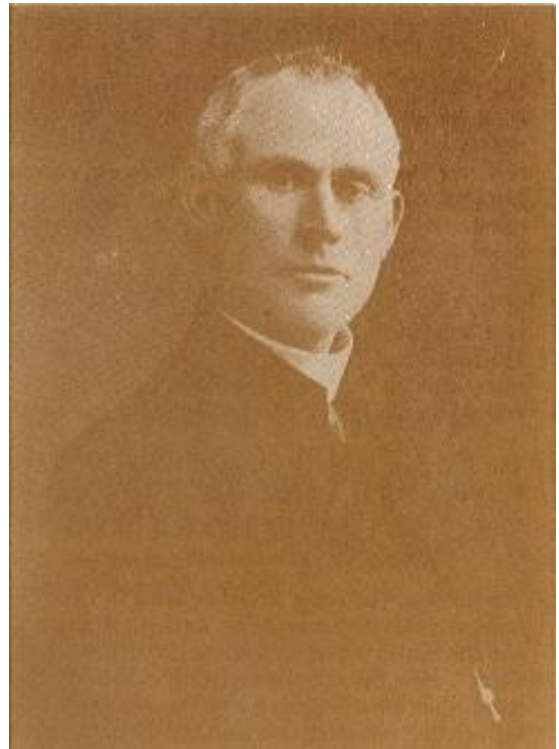
Fr Chris de Souza

Fr Peter Lamont

Notes: No curates in Father Coffey's or Father Murphy's time (Sr M Stanley), but M. Brown says Father Costello in Fr Murphy's time. A cutting from the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* May, 29, 1909, mentions a Fr Ryan and Fr Jerome Keating OSB. – Hartigan in *Men of '38* mentions Fr Jerome several times, but at Bathurst and the goldfields at Sofala and Turon. There were several Ryans listed in index.

Mrs Mahoney, in her recollections, mentions a Father Cusack as Parish Priest.

*Rev. B. McDonnell
Parish Priest
of Windsor
1898-1924*



First Communion 1954 with Rev. Leo Murphy

A COMMUNITY OF SISTERS AT WINDSOR

The Institute of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan was founded in Sydney by Archbishop Polding in 1857. The first convent was the old convict barracks in Pitt Street, where Central railway now stands. The original work was the care of penitent women and the sick. However the early sisters also accompanied Archbishop Polding on his missionary journeys, staying in private homes and preparing people for the sacraments. There are some references to their visiting Windsor in this capacity as early as 1859, a journey which in those days took fifteen hours.

In 1874 Fr JS Sheehy (Fr Austin), a Benedictine, who had become parish priest in that year, requested the services of the sisters in preparing adults and children for Confirmation. The two sisters, Mother M. de Sales Moloney and Sr M. Stanislaus McDonald, were so successful that Fr Sheehy requested a permanent community for Windsor. The request was granted and in 1875 the first community was established.

This first community consisted of Mother M. Cecilia Fitzpatrick, Srs M. Stanislaus, McDonald and M. Emilian Hassett. After a few weeks Sr M. Walburga Byrne joined the group. When ill health soon forced Sr Emilian to give up teaching her place was taken by Sr M. Casimir Callachor.

In Windsor, the first convent was a rented building in George Street, which had previously been an old hotel and was rumoured to be haunted. A larger place became available the following year and Sisters moved to a house in Macquarie Street (about the present [1990] site of "Macquarie Court"). Here the Sisters took in a few boarders. The large drawing room became the school room while what had been a pantry was the infants' room. As the number of boarders increased, the living quarters of the Sisters became more cramped.

When the new presbytery in Tebbutt Street was completed in June 1878, the old one in Macquarie St was renovated and enlarged. By October, the work was complete and the Sisters moved into their permanent convent, which Archbishop Vaughan blessed on the 23rd of that month. A new chapel was added to the school. The decorations to the chapel added in 1885, were the work of Mr Souter, father of Mother M. Alphonsus.

About the middle of 1881, there was a very successful bazaar that realised 750 pounds. This cleared all the debt on the convent buildings and left a balance which paid for the galvanised iron enclosure on the Macquarie St side of the grounds.

The Sisters accompanied Fr Sheehy when he visited out-stations and instructed the children while he heard confessions. Often adults would crowd around to listen to the instruction, interjecting words of approval. The Sisters had also taken charge of the primary school, St Matthew's, while the number of boarders increased rapidly. At the beginning of 1879 they had twenty-two boarders and by Easter thirty-four, the maximum number they could accommodate.

The passing of the Public Instruction Act 1880, which withdrew all state aid from Denominational Schools by 1882, made new schools necessary. Fr Sheehy arranged a teacher for the boys while the Sisters established a girls' high school, named, like the convent, St Joseph's, in 1882. The next year, Fr Sheehy arranged for a community at Richmond. Two schools there were under the care of the Sisters – the primary school and a boarding school for small boys. These latter schools were transferred to the Poor Clare Sisters in 1943 while the High School at Windsor closed twenty-two years later.

Over the years changes and renovations had been carried out on the convent buildings and grounds to meet new needs. The completion in 1967 of renovations to "the Castle", as the building had been nicknamed, was followed by a grand re-union of Sisters, past pupils and friends. However, all the efforts could not defeat the ravages of time and in 1979 the old convent, except for the chapel, was demolished and the present, smaller convent built. The chapel and the old gates, which in 1989 were transferred from that part of the property which had been sold to the Council, now remain as links with the past.



*The three convert Eather Sisters –
Sr M Joseph, Mother M de Sales
(Cecilia, 1847-1929), Mother M. de Chantal
(Jane, d. 1930).*

ST JOSEPH'S HIGH SCHOOL, WINDSOR

The Sisters had provided accommodation for both weekly and term boarders as early as 1876. However, with the closure of the denominational schools following the passing of the Public Institution Act, a Catholic secondary school for girls in Windsor was necessary. So St Joseph's High School was established in 1882.

The school was a small one. One ex-student who attended the school about 1900 remembers 25-30 boarders and 8-10 day scholars. The total enrolment was 30 as late as 1952, although there were junior boarders who attended classes at St Matthew's who were not counted. (Approximately 80 boys and girls attended the primary school.) Despite small numbers, there was a wide range of subjects offered, with attention given to cultural subjects.

Day pupils wore everyday clothes with a well-starched white linen or muslin pinafore. Black shoes or socks or stockings were worn and no girls or boys ever went bare-footed. The boarders wore black frocks, cashmere in winter and light-weight material in summer. During winter, the girls wore dark red cashmere hoods made with attractive frills and tied under the chin with bonnet strings of the same colour. In summer, they wore white boater hats with black ribbon bands and the school insignia worked on the band in blue letters.

The school drew high praise in the Freeman's Journal (30/11/1901) for its healthy situation, physical facilities and its academic excellence: "all the branches of a first-class education are taught in a graduated course which is believed to be the best means of securing solid results. Classes are also prepared for University examination."

In 1913, a business course was introduced to "teach shorthand, typing and book-keeping to any pupil from either school, who wished to attend class two afternoons each week at the convent school." No typewriters were available, which was a big disappointment to Sister Margaret Mary and money was not plentiful – the problem was solved when a relative made available the needed machines, and the class opened.



(MEMOIRS OF Catherine Mahony, nee redden)

I commenced school there in 1908. Mother Mary Angela was the reverend Mother, with Sr Mary Placid, Mary Norbert, Mary Assisi, Mary Stanislaus and Mary Lawrence teaching at the Primary School, and Mary Philomena, Mary Dominica (music), Mary Agnes and Margaret Mary at St Joseph's. The subjects taught were Arithmetic, Pen Painting, Wood Drawing, singing, Music and Dancing.

The ten pupils who went to school with me were:

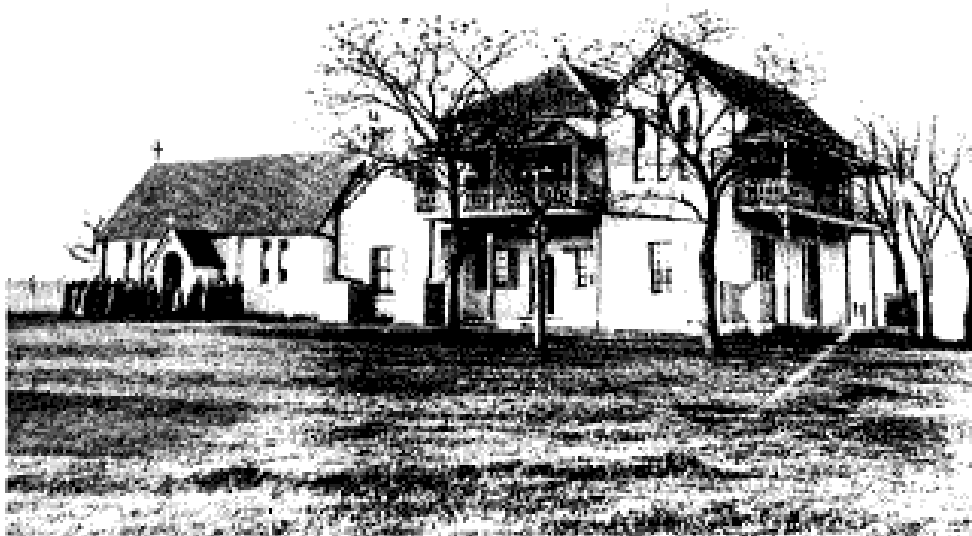
Elsie Dawson – boarder (Deceased, Non-Catholic)	Maggie McSwiggin
Lena Fitzgerald – weekly boarder (Deceased, Non-Catholic)	Evelyn Hession
Maudie Moss – weekly boarder	Margaret O'Kane (Deceased)
Magdaline Cummerford	Vera Hession
Gertie Toohey	Olive Vaughan (Deceased)

I was Sr Margaret Mary's first pupil in her business course. Then two resident boarders, one weekly boarder and two non-Catholic town girls joined the class. We obtained our I.P.S.A. Certificate for shorthand as well as passes for typewriting and book-keeping.

A Mr Hayman brought loads of feed for the cows and fowls and kept the garden and lawn in order. His wife did the laundry and assisted Mrs May Boyd, resident House Keeper and cook, with her chores. Mr & Mrs Hayman resided in a small, neat, red-brick cottage adjoining the convent grounds, facing Macquarie Street (now demolished).

Each year both schools held their annual picnic, generally at Cattai Creek. On one occasion, an invitation was extended by Mr Potts, Manager of the Hawkesbury College, for the annual picnic to be spent at the college. Mr Jesse Gosper's buses were engaged to take us there. Other annual picnics were later held at Bungool or Mitchell Park.

The end-of-year concerts were prepared carefully, and were always held at the School of Arts (Taylor's Boot Factory in 1968).



CHRISTMAS EXHIBITION, 1881.

St. Joseph's

Convent,

MINISOTA

PROGRAMME.

School Hymn	" Adagio Fideles.
PART I.		
Pianoforte Solo	" Romance by Ascher.
Duet, on two Pianos	" " Il Trovatore."
Song in Character	" Personification of Flowers."
Solo, on two Pianos	" " Gartenmelodie."
Song in Character..	" " Sea Fairies."

A CHRISTIAN DRAMA.

ADAPTED FROM FAHOLA

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Fabiola (A Pagan Lady)	Miss GRACE FITZGERALD.
Afm (A Black Slave)	Miss EMILY MANNING.
Gracia (A Pagan Slave)	Miss BOLAND.
Sym (A Christian Slave)	Miss HERBERT.
Lady Agnes (A Christian, and Cousin to Fabiola)	Miss ANNE SLATTERY.
(Pause)		
Pianoforte Solo	" "Wearing of the Green."
Song in Character	" "Merry Zingara."
Vocal Solo	" "Killarney."
Trio, on two Pianos	" "Gipsy Fortune Teller."
Recitation to suit the times	" "La Harpe Esienne."
Song in Character	" "The School Mistress."
Pianoforte Solo	" "Home Sweet Home."
Mirthful Sketch, entitled	" "En Route."
Pianoforte Solo	" "Im-pe-cu-ni-ca-t-y."
Duet, on two Pianos	
Song in Character	

INTERMISSION FOR TWENTY MINUTES.

PART II.

General Song	" "We have been friends together."
Pianoforte Solo	" "Variations on the Last Rose of Summer."
Duet	" "Barcarolle D'Obson."
Pianoforte Trio	" "Chimes at Sea."
Song	" "Dance Negro."
Pianoforte Solo	" "Trainaux."
Solo on two Pianos	" "L'Elleiro D'Amore."
Conversation with old "King Time."	" "I have always a welcome for thee."
Pianoforte Solo..	" "Irish Diamonds."
Trio (Normal) on two Pianos	" "Bonnie Dundee Quadrille."
School Song	
Pianoforte Solo	
Trio on two Pianos	
Solo on two Pianos	

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES.

NATIONAL ANTHEM.

Memoirs of Nora Cupitt (nee McMahon)

The community of Sisters at St Joseph's included Mother Mary Angela Lysaght, Sr Mary Joseph, Sr Mary John, Sr Mary Peter, Sr Mary Placid, Sr Mary Elizabeth, Sr Mary Norbert, Sr Mary Assisi, Sr Mary Appolonia, Sr Mary Cyprian, Sr Mary Dominica, Sr Mary Felix and Sr Mary Borromeo. The pupils were Eve Maddock, Dorothy Maddock, Ivy Brown, Gabrielle Sewell, Eileen Sewell, Adrienne Ainsworth, Rita Pearce, Dagnia Alpen (daughter of Herr Alpen, musician), Kathleen Bourke, Winnie, Carrol (later Sister Mary Bernadette, S.S.G.S.), Tot Hawood, Doris Burton, Julia Geddin, Mary McMahon and myself. The local boys always called the boarders the "red heads".

We were taught English, Maths, Geometry, Algebra, History, Geography, Latin, French, Advanced needlework, Point lace, Limerick lace, Oil and Water Painting, Music (piano, violin etc), Singing and Religion. Art and Needlework were strong features of the School. There was also a good orchestra, made up of piano, Cello 1st and 2nd violins.

Mother Mary Angela Lysaght kept a laundress (the laundry was later sold to the house in the corner of Macquarie Street), a yardsman, a gardener and a cook. The men worked in the garden, milked the two cows, cut the wood and cleaned the fireplace.

There were never any young sisters at St Joseph's until Sr Mary Peter Kelly came. Her white veil was quite a novelty in Windsor. Sister Mary Andrew McGuire was one of the earlier pupils, as were her sisters. Mrs Ouvrier was the mother of Sister Mary Raymond and another Sister.

Ivy Brown, daughter of a state school teacher and a cousin of Dorothy and Eve Maddock, had a lovely contralto voice. She appeared in many country concerts, particularly in the South Coast area where her father taught. Tot Hawood and myself both became State School Teachers.

Memoirs of Mrs Eileen Allen (nee Young)

Looking back on the days spent at St Joseph's the performance of the operetta "Princess Ju-Ju" stands out most vividly in my memory. Mother Jean Marie directed and produced the operetta, and some of the girls who performed in it were Pat Davis, Beverley Puckeridge, Lynette Boulous, Mary Lee, Pat O'Connor, Rosemary Charnock, Lesly Frame, Maria Wenc and Marion Smith.

Sister Mary Aelred will be remembered not only by the music pupils who loved her, but by the school as a whole... what fun we all had in the "Sound of Music" concert! Once an irate pupil – and we will never know who – dared to paint on the convent gate, "I hate everyone but Sister Mary Aelred" – I wonder if Sister felt elated? None of us in our year will forget dear Sr Mary Cajetan R.I.P., or dear Mother Mary Teresa R.I.P. I am sure there are many who still pray for them.

VOCATIONS

FROM ST MATTHEW'S PARISH

Many Catholics from the Hawkesbury entered Vocations. Unfortunately, this list is far from complete. Those we know of include:

PRIESTS

Fr William Cuneo (ordained 1938) – Sacred Heart
Fr Albert Cuneo – Sacred Heart

SISTERS

Sr Mary Agatha Cassidy (1840 – 1915) – first Australian born Sister of the Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Aloysius Cassidy (younger sister of Sr M. Agatha – died 1873) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Casimir Collachor (professed 1869) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary de Sales Eather (1847-1929) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary de Chantal Eather (died 1930) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Joseph Eather – R.S.J. “black” Josephite
*These three sisters from Kurrajong were converts to Catholicism.
Mother Mary Alphonsus-Souter (died 1941) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Killian Carrol (prof. 1904) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Philomena Daley (1877-1961) – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Agatha Daley (1882-1966) – Good Samaritan
(Note: also Daley's in the Sisters of Mercy)
Sr Mary Andrew McGuire – Good Samaritan
Sr Mary Bernadette Carroll – Good Samaritan

Those at school in the late 1940s and early 1950s:

Sr Maree Stanley – Good Samaritan
Sr Carmel Bambridge – Good Samaritan
Sr Monica Armstrong – Good Samaritan
Sr Janet Heath – Poor Clares
Sr Monica McNamara – St Joseph of California

LAY MISSIONARY

Margaret May – lay missionary to Kimberleys (recently)

VOCATIONS FROM THE PARISH



Alben Cuneo (left) with Maurice Carey in 1928.



Sr. Marie Stanley — Good Samaritan.



Rev. W.A. Cuneo



6th September 1990

The Sesqui-Centenary Year of St Matthew's Catholic church, Windsor, is indeed an historic occasion. The parish Primary School of St Matthew's jointly celebrates and reflects with the Parish during this time. We celebrate one hundred and fifty years of Catholic Parish Life – a partnership shared with the Parish and the School which is comprised of many families. We reflect on the vision of Christianity in the Catholic Tradition and how this vision has been communicated and celebrated in this community of Windsor.

The Parish Primary School is also a very old school and in fact is one of the oldest schools in Australia. The school was established years earlier than the church. This was as a result of a conscious decision of the Australian bishop that schools would be established in parishes before churches. St Matthew's School was started by Mr James Cassidy and Mrs Esther Cassidy in 1832. In 1882 the School was taken over by the Good Samaritan Order of Sisters. The Good Samaritans had a long and continuous association with the School from 1882 until the end of 1989. At the end of this year Sr Robyn Brady, the last of the Good Samaritan Order to work in the school, began a new ministry in the Parish.

Sr Patricia Coral Lawless (known as Sr Jude) was the last of the Good Samaritan Order to Principal the School. On 1st February, 1976, Mr Patrick McGee was appointed as Principal after the many years of leadership of the Good Samaritan Order. Mr Colin Pilkington took up his appointment as Principal in 1983. On 27th April, 1987, Miss Colleen Fuller was appointed as the first lay, female Principal of St Matthew's.

In the past years the School has grown dramatically and is presently at maximum enrolment of 431. St Matthew's School continues in its struggle to educate children to transform the world; where everyone is seen as a learner, operating as centres of evangelisation and human excellence within the framework of educational transitions. As an ideal, the graduate of St Matthews' will: search for truth; be responsible for his /her own learning and decision making; be able to think, research, reason, reflect and act in the light of Gospel values; strive for excellence in areas of human growth; gain knowledge, skills and competence necessary to participate in and contribute to society; learn from a curriculum which is academically rigorous and relevant to his/her life experiences; determine a set of personal values which will form a framework for life decisions; be convinced of the concept of learning as a lifelong process, and have a commitment to the Christian faith and practise it in the Catholic Tradition.

Indeed this Anniversary is a time to celebrate as a community and rejoice in the gift of each other.

Yours in peace and hope,

Signed: Colleen E Fuller, Principal.

HISTORY AT ST MATTHEW'S



At a gathering of past students from St Matthew's Catholic School in Windsor, a video was made of present students interviewing past students. Pictured standing above are Phil Lyne (O'Conner) with her brother Jim, who attended the school between 1924 and 1928. Seated are Lochlan Hayes, a pupil from 1914 to 1921, Nora Cupitt, a pupil from 1899 to 1906, and Maurice Carey, 1924 to 1929.



Mr Ralph Ellis, Mr Colin Pilkington and Father Jim Dooley, of St Matthew's Church, with the historic pew end, which is to be restored for the 150th anniversary celebrations.

BEDE POLDING COLLEGE

In 1970 the Parish Priests of Richmond, Windsor and Riverstone announced their intention to investigate the feasibility of beginning a co-educational Secondary School in the a Hawkesbury area – an intention which resulted from a predicted huge increase in population growth and the lack of a Catholic Secondary School to service the feeder parishes.

As the parishioners and priests took the positive view that a school would be built despite negative responses in some areas, every teaching order in Australia was approached to assist in staffing the school. Owing to the decreasing membership in the Orders, all the teaching Orders approached were unable to be of assistance.

From 1970 to June 1981, the Hawkesbury Catholic High School Committee overcame almost insurmountable problems such as possible location, funding and, indeed, convincing the Archdiocese that a Catholic high School was desperately needed. On 5th June, 1981, at a Sydney C.E.O. (Catholic Education Office) meeting of the Blacktown and Hawkesbury Planning Personnel, it was finally agreed that plans be initiated to establish after 1986 a “Catholic regional co-educational secondary school to serve the parishes of Richmond, Riverstone and Windsor.”

The original site was at McGrath’s Hill, but in 1984 the present site was chosen and generous government grants supplemented by parish contributions enabled Stage 1 to begin – completion date being January, 1986.

After much discussion, particularly by interested parents, a school name was decided upon – Bede Polding College, in honour of Australia’s first Catholic Bishop and the school motto, “Called to Bring Peace”, was adopted, as it was thought to represent the spirit of the school.

In November, 1985, the school uniform, using maroon and blue as primary colours, was selected. The school opened late January, 1986, although the first few weeks were spent at Dharuk (until recently a correction and detention centre for juvenile offenders) while builders completed the first buildings. In its first year, the school comprised 110 students, with 11 teaching and ancillary staff. Marist Brother Nestor Littler was, and still is, the school Principal, with Good Samaritan Sister Sue Barker being our first Assistant Principal. Sister Sue left at the end of 1988, and Sister Elizabeth Delaney was welcomed in 1989.

The school has now grown to 700 pupils, from Year 7 to Year 11, and 55 teaching and ancillary staff. As a parent of a child attending Bede Polding, I give thanks to God and all those hard-working people (from so many areas of life: priests, parents, C.E.O. members, school staff and others) who made, and continue to make this school possible.

(Mrs) Sandra Wilson,

Archivist B.P.C. 1990

“THE GOOD SAMs”

Over the years, people from many different walks of life in the Hawkesbury area have spoken affectionately of “the Good Sams”. The present small, hard-working and truly dedicated band of Sisters has heightened our awareness of how much is done by these “quiet achievers” and this is our tribute to them.

Sr Robyn Brady presently ministers to the Parish. Sr Patricia Satterthwaite works in adult literacy programs at Mt Druitt; Sr Elizabeth Delaney is Deputy Principal at Bede Polding college; Sr Imelda Callaghan is working with the ecumenical prayer service, begun in June this year, and which meets monthly; Sr Marie Kennedy “keeps the home fires burning” – a difficult task with so much activity happening in our Parish.

Good Samaritan Community, Windsor, 1985



L to R: Sr Marie Kennedy, Sr Dunstan Riordan, Sr Lucina Bourke, Sr Methomas Upston, Sr Robyn Brady.

PIONEERING FAMILIES

IN THE HAWKESBURY

Henry McQuade purchased William Cox's beautiful "Fairfield" property at Clarendon while managing His Majesty's Theatre in Sydney. He added a handsome two-storeyed structure to accommodate the lavish entertainment that he provided, and, in 1880, had Alfred Hunter build a pipe organ for installation in his new home. Tenders were called to erect the organ, but the organ was donated to St Matthew's Church in 1882.

Henry was an avid supporter of sports, particularly of horse racing and cricket. In 1881, the All England XI played Hawkesbury-Nepean on a concrete, carpeted wicket set up at Fairfield for the event. A special train brought spectators from Sydney to watch the one and only visit made to the area by an international side.

He was also a colourful politician, employing fiery campaigning and electioneering techniques to win a seat for Windsor. In 1882, when Windsor was absorbed into the Hawkesbury electorate, he succeeded in his ambition.

In 1868, William McQuade donated to St Matthew's the statue of Our Lady and Archbishop Polding delivered his address ("The Eye of Faith", p. 313ff.) on the occasion of its inauguration on 21st June.

William McQuade owned the building in George Street that was leased to the Bank of NSW and later sold to the bank for three thousand five hundred pounds.

Other family members also played important roles on the political scene: Michael McQuade was elected in the first and only election of the Windsor District Council in May, 1844 – a council that dissolved with a debt of three hundred and forty-five pounds; John Michael McQuade was elected to the Borough Council of Windsor and in 1873 caused a stir when he used his casting vote as mayor to have Windsor Park renamed McQuade Park.

MR ROGER RYAN (b. 1825 d.1912)

On 23rd June, 1912, Mr Roger Ryan of Pitt Town passed away after recurring bouts of bronchitis. Ryan came to Australia in 1840 on the "Glenswillie", sailed under Captain Birdwhistle, leaving his Tipperary Irish home with his mother, his brother, Edward, and three sisters. One sister, Mrs Richard Maher, was the licensee of the hotel which stood on the present site of the Carrington Hotel, Windsor. The other sisters were the late Mrs P. Butler of Pymble and Mrs Maugham.

Young Ryan was hired off the ship by Blaxland, the explorer, to plough up the Salt Pans near Parramatta. The plough was an old fashioned wooden one, pulled by 12 bullocks. Ryan suggested that an iron plough would do more work, only requiring two horses, and so Blaxland and Ryan purchased the first iron plough used in NSW from the Sydney firm of Iredales.

Ryan's mother had settled in Kurrajong on Bishop's Farm, part of the present Garryowen Estate, so Ryan eventually joined her, taking on the job of drawing sawn timber for a man named Roberts. Most of the timber used in the old buildings of Richmond, were drawn over the punt by Roger Ryan. He had one bullock in the shafts, and had many tales of adventures and accidents that happened while crossing the river in the punt.

He married the daughter of Hugh Geehan, from Freemans Reach, later renting Baldwins farm adjoining Conlans there. On one of his trips conveying produce to Sydney, he met up with Big Cooper, the notorious highwayman. Cooper sprang out, hitting Ryan with his gun, and in so doing broke the gun. Ryan grabbed the barrel, leaving the stock in Cooper's hands and they fought. Cooper's nose was broken and before long he called a truce.

When the gold diggings began in 1851, Ryan began carrying on the mountains, so he and his wife returned to Kurrajong. He frequently met up with Ben Hall, but after doing Hall a good turn, Ben never let his gang rob Ryan. The fee for carrying goods was two pounds per hundred-weight, so Ryan was able to save a considerable amount of his earnings. In 1865, he sold his property and bought a farm at Pitt Town flats from Patrick Mahony. He also acquired several other valuable properties, including Harts farm at Pitt Town, Smiths farm, Robinson's farm at Wilberforce, Geehans farm (where his wife had been born at Freemans Reach). Ryan was a keen judge of horseflesh and went in for breeding and dealing in horses.

He reared a large family, all held in great respect in the Hawkesbury. The eldest was Mrs TB Roberts, wife of the proprietor of the Gunnedah Advertiser. Next was Thomas Hugh John, JP, who died 1899; Edward Sydney, William and Theresa (both of whom died young), Frank James, Emily, and Mrs Elphisten of Waverley. Ryan's funeral, conducted at St Matthew's by Fr McDonnell, was the largest seen in Windsor for many years. The church bell tolled throughout his internment into the family vault, while Fr McDonnell spoke of the deceased's noble character and living example, not only to religious duties, but also to relations with his fellow men.

THE EATHER FAMILY

The three Eather brothers, George, Thomas and William, were farming at Cornwallis when the all-time record flood devastated the Hawkesbury area. The only areas in Windsor not submerged were along the Terrace between New and Fairfield Streets and George Street, from Johnston to Bridge Streets. The refugees sheltered at “Fairfield”, St Matthew’s Anglican and Catholic Churches, the School of Arts and the Court House.

It was in this flood of June, 1867, that the Eather family suffered appalling losses. Thomas and William both lost their wives, Emma and her five children and Catherine Eather and her five children, swept away before the rescue boat could reach them. They had been awaiting rescue on the rooftop of one of the houses, built on wooden piers on the flats of Cornwallis, when the swirling waters caused the house to collapse. A boat had been launched, with a crew of three – James Ross, Jack Jarvis and a Swede. Mr Dight, who lived across the river, lit fires at his house to guide the boat, as it was pitch dark at the time. (It was Mr Dight who offered fifty pounds for a crew to attempt the rescue.) The crew rowed across dangerously swirling water for three hours before finding the survivors. The three Eather brothers and one young son had managed to reach a nearby tree. William had been strapped to the willow, all but dead, and he was resuscitated with great difficulty.

The parish Burial Register shows the burial of four children on 26 June, 1867. Apparently, the other eight bodies were not recovered. Parish priest, Fr Hallinan, shared in the grief and hardships suffered by the people along the Hawkesbury.

THE SULLIVAN FAMILY

William and Sarah Stubbs’ second daughter Elizabeth, married Jerimiah Sullivan, son of Daniel and Ellen Sullivan (Daniel was a butcher at Pitt Town). Jerimiah was born in Ireland and had studied to become a Catholic priest. As there were no Catholic marriages prior to 1821, Jerimiah and Elizabeth married in St Matthew’s Church of England, Windsor.

Elizabeth obtained a grant of 50 acres below the C. of E. cemetery at Wiseman’s Ferry, but her husband rented farms progressively at Webbs Creek, Lower Macdonald River and St Albans. Here the couple finally settled down in a two-storeyed stone mansion built by Jerimiah prior to 1848. The Sullivans opened their dwelling as an inn, named “Settlers’ Inn”, and operated it for many years. Elizabeth embraced the Catholic faith after he married and was buried in the cemetery beside what are now the ruins of the Catholic church, built in 1853 on the mountainside overlooking what was the site of Whalans Ferry, which crossed the Macdonald River on the old road from Wisemans. (The “Settlers’ Inn” was managed in its heyday by the Jurd family.)

(Above information supplied by Roy Sullivan, from Arndells book, “Pioneers of Portland Head”).

CAROLINE CHISHOLM (1808-1977)

Caroline Chisholm is one of Australia's most famous pioneers. Did you know that her work in Australia started here in Windsor, in the parish of St Matthew?

Caroline Chisholm is remembered for assistance to the many young women migrants who came to the colony in the 1830s. Without her intervention and support, these young women faced a life of destitution or even worse prospects in a remote colonial sea-port that was dirty and crowded and comprised mostly of males. Employment opportunities for females were severely limited and many women were forced into prostitution. A significant change of direction occurred when Caroline and her husband arrive in the colony. Even as a young girl, Caroline Jones developed a vision of working to help others. In 1830, at the age of 22, she married Captain Archibald Chisholm and when stationed with him in India, commenced a program to assist single girls attached to the base. When her husband became ill and took sick leave to recover, they came to Australia and moved into a small cottage in Windsor. This was 1838, when St Matthew's parish was in its infancy. They lived here for the next three years (1838-1841), by which time the church had been built and was in regular use.

It was when they travelled into Sydney Town that Caroline agonised over the desperate plight of hundreds of girls dumped on the shores of Sydney Harbour and left to wander the town in aimless search of lodgings and employment. She prayed on this intention during the Season of Lent in 1841, offering her own talents to the Lord and seeking a way of serving the young girls. By Easter Sunday she had resolved a plan and with her husband's support their small home at Windsor became the first refuge for homeless migrant girls, sheltering as many as nine girls at a time.

Caroline made regular trips to Sydney to meet the incoming ships at the wharves. The number of young migrant girls increased and by 1841, when Captain Chisholm was recalled to India, Caroline left Windsor and moved the girls into a portion of the immigration barracks in Macquarie Street, Sydney. Over the next few years, she made many trips out into the country with her girls to find them homes and employment in rural communities. Expanding her program, she is believed to have settled more than 11,000 people as farmers, farm hands or domestics.

Caroline managed to undertake all this work even though she was a mother of six young children herself. Today, more than one hundred and fifty years later, Caroline Chisholm is remembered far and wide as "the Immigrants' Friend", who devoted herself to the welfare of young single girls.

References "1000 Famous Australians" (Rigby, 1978); "Builders and Crusaders" by T Luscombe (Landsdowne, 1967); "100 Great Australians" by R. Macklin (Currey O'Neill Ross, 1983) and "50 Famous Australians" by Prof. G. Portus (Colorgrave).

PHILIP TULLY (c.1768-?)

Philip and his brother John were sentenced in 1794 for their part in an earlier Irish rebellion and Philip was assigned to Captain Hogan to work on his Cornwallis estate. Pardoned in 1803, he and John Riley shared 40 acres rent free for life, while other tenants were paying thirty shillings per acre per year. The 1809 floods washed away much of Tully's house and the box of deeds to 90 acres and a large house at Brickfields – probably acquired from Johnson for his help in deposing Bligh. In 1811, a deceased brother, John, left Tully a legacy, with which he purchased an additional 100 acres. Floods saw him in strife with creditors. His household included a lively Catholic lady, Mary Dignum (c.1758-?), well-known by the Windsor magistrates. Mary had accused Pat Partland of stealing her clothes, and had been fined for contempt of court in 1813. Philip was charged for assault and for employing a prisoner without a pass. They were both then charged for not having a number board on their cart. (This same cart was robbed of its tea and calico when coming from Sydney, and Philip had been severely beaten up.)

Still in debt in 1818, Tully's assets gradually evaporated, so that only his small holding at Cornwallis remained. He and Mary adopted the orphaned son of Patrick Hand. In later years, when Tully and his partner Riley were dead, young John Hand succeeded to the rent-free 40 acres until the Privy Council finally dislodged the tenant in 1861.

JOHN YEOMANS (c. 1768- 1837)

Sent out on the "Britannia" in 1791, John Yeomans met and married Mary Cassady at St Philip's (although both were of the Catholic faith). They adopted three children that came out with Mary on the "Kitty".

John was granted 65 acres at Sackville in 1808, having proved himself a capable farmer at Concord. In 1805, John made news by taking only two days to deliver to Sydney twelve bushels of wheat in a little open boat. Although many of the farmers in his area were troubled by aborigines, John seemed to have been left in peace, and built up the reputation of a reliable and hard-working man. He was chosen by Marsden during the 1806 flood to act as constable for the area.

Three years later, he gained a spirits licence and ran a small inn which he later sold to Cyrus Doyle when he moved upriver. He and his family moved to Wilberforce, where he subscribed to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Benevolence. He continued to prosper and in 1818 took over the selling of meat and liquor in the Macdonald Valley. Although John and his wife did not leave the Hawkesbury area, some of the family moved into the Hunter region.

(Information on the above settlers came from several sources, but useful data, particularly on religion and religious practices came from Bobbie Hardy's book, *Early Hawkesbury Settlers*.)

LAURANCE MAY (c. 1772-1837)

Laurance May came from Dublin, and was sent out on the “Queen” in 1791. He was flogged as an Irish Papist who had suppressed evidence in Court on the robbery at Arndell’s Parramatta residence. By 1800 Laurance had earned himself a 30 acre grant on Robinson’s Lagoon and his farm flourished. In 1804, the coroner found that his wife, Anne, had died from excessive drinking and not by violence. May advertised for a wet-nurse for his baby daughter, Sarah. His Son, Laurence, was five.

In 1805, he married Elizabeth Dowling. The first child wandered off to perish in a rain-filled sawpit. The second son, Christopher, born April 1813, was later to cause a sensation by riding a velocipede down George Street, creating a public nuisance and being requested by Lieutenant Bell not to appear in public again.

Storms had demolished part of May’s Bardonnarrang farm, and so May put his Parramatta inn up for sale. He held farms at Prospect and Concord, as well as others “down the river”, which were offered on clearing leases.

May had a racing chestnut gelding, “Tickle Toby”, which won him a lot of money, and also caused him in 1813 to ask debtors to pay up. In 1815 he opened at Wilberforce the Windsor horse mill, a powerful mechanism for grinding flour, and provided complimentary cartage of grain from wharf to mill. A charge that he substituted inferior grain was found false.

Laurance’s third wife, Rosetta, had 2 sons: John (1817-1838) and James (1820-1891). In 1819, May had to have his leg amputated, but his toughness and fortitude surprised the doctors. He returned home and continued to build his reputation as a man of vision, becoming a pioneer irrigator along the Hawkesbury River. James, his son, carried on farming in the Hawkesbury. He and his wife, Caroline, had 8 children – James Alfred, Herbert, Christopher Watkin, Jack, Joshua and daughters Tess, Sophie and Caroline. James May died on 6th August, 1891, and was buried with step-brother, Christopher – who died childless in 1890 – in the Catholic cemetery at Windsor.

James’ sons, James Alfred, Christopher and Joshua carried on farming in the Hawkesbury district. James Alfred, Christopher, Joshua and Jack May are all buried in the Catholic cemetery and the Mays living in the district now are descendants of James Alfred, Christopher and Joshua May.

(Information on Laurence May was provided by E. Harding.)

MRS JULIE HOLLAND (c.1819 – 1903)

In September, 1902, the Obituary of Mrs Daniel Holland was reported in the “Gazette”. Mrs Holland, born in Country Kerry in Ireland in 1819, had arrived in Windsor at the age of 23. She and her husband (an Englishman) were married in St Matthew’s Catholic Church by Rev Fr Slattery in 1845. The couple lived in Windsor, setting up home in Catherine Street, and were admired and respected by the community. Pre-deceased by her husband, Julie Holland

passed away, aged 83. Many friends from far and near joined the cortege to pay their last tribute to this lady who was a link from the past to the present. The service was conducted at St Matthew's Catholic Church, with pall-bearers Pendergast, Barker, McNeeley and Campbell taking the casket for burial at the Catholic Cemetery. The Rev Fr McDonnell officiated.

LAURIE AND FRANCES WILLIAMS

(Memories of Sheila Eather, daughter)

Mr and Mrs Laurie and Frances Williams, together with their 6 children, came to Windsor in early 1941. On attending Mass on their first Sunday in the parish, they were greeted outside the church by the three Miss Ryans from Pitt Town and asked if they were visitors to the district. When the reply was "No, residents", Mum and Dad were told that after they had been here ten years, they would be classed as "locals".

Mum was the complete altar society. She cleaned the church, the brass, decorated the church, and even assisted in making the altar breads. At Easter time, the Altar of Repose was decorated with a large satin drape, attached to the roof of the church with a crown. Flowers and fern were pinned to this drape at each yard or so and when completed it was pulled up with a pulley until it was covered with flowers from roof to floor. This process took more than one day.

One Mission, Dad made a large map of Australia out of bird wire and covered it – wreath style – with flowers dividing the states and accentuating the capital cities. Most flowers for the church were grown especially by my father, so with his vegetable garden (6 children to feed), he spent many hours in his own garden.

In his spare time, Dad seemed to become the school, church and convent carpenter, attending to all repairs that became necessary in the old buildings. He also participated in all parish working bees (school yard, cemetery, etc.). During this time, Dad worked at Goodyear Tyre Factory at Clyde, so he had to travel into Clyde by train each day.

This was all in Father Coffey's time, because after Father Murphy came an altar society was formed, then the new school, presbytery and convent were built and many changes were made. When Dad worked at the presbytery on a weekend, the housekeeper would cook pigs' trotters for lunch, as Dad and Father Coffey were very partial to them.

One flood time there was a visiting priest saying Mass and as he was worried about being trapped in the town, he said Mass in a hurry – a real hurry. My three brothers, Neville, Herbie and Phillip (who were altar boys for many years – they were followed by the Allen boys) had to keep up with this priest, and after Mass he blessed them and gave them each a medal, saying most altar boys could not keep up with him in ordinary circumstances. The boys always said it was the fastest blessing they ever had. (The Mass was, of course, in Latin.)

All jobs at the church, presbytery and school in those days were definitely voluntary, as the few pennies put on the plate did not stretch any way far enough.

MRS NORA CUPITT (1890-1990)

Mrs Honora Cupitt died on June 17, 1990, 18 days before celebrating her centenary. Nora was well-known in the district, living at Freemans Reach for much of her younger days, and then in Windsor. She taught as many as three generations of several families, beginning her career at the age of 17 at Miss Robinson's school at Wilberforce. A sign of her commitment was the daily walk to school, a distance of 12 kilometres.

Nora joined a variety of community groups, including Red Cross (founding the Windsor branch), the Hawkesbury District Hospital Society and the Windsor Ladies Bowling Club. She also travelled around the world several times.

A staunch Catholic, she was married in 1929 to Frederick William Cupitt, but was widowed soon after. She did not remarry, but continued to live in her George Street home, caring for herself until well into her 90s.

In the 1970s she was awarded an MBE for service to the community and to education. Mrs Cupitt had taught a record 53 years, but after retiring from teaching in State schools in the 1960s, she could not stay away, and taught at St Matthew's school from 1966 for several years.

Nora had the ability to remember the faces of her former pupils long after they left her classroom, and her alert mind and wit resulted in the presentation of an encouragement sash in a local show girl quest (at the age of 95) and a nomination as citizen of the year in 1989.

Mrs Cupitt was the sole surviving member of one of the original Macquarie town families, the McMahons, who settled here 100 years ago.



Mrs Cupitt displaying her British Empire Medal

BROTHER FINBAR KELLY

Brother Finbar Kelly's vision for the San Miguel Family Centre for the poor has struck a chord with the Richmond Rotary Club who named him their Citizen of the Year at a recent dinner. Br Kelly, a descendant of Australia's infamous bushranger Ned Kelly, received his award at the club's annual changeover dinner at the Richmond Ex-Servicemen's Club. Vocational service director Ian Jordan described him as a man "challenged by the vision of a centre in the Hawkesbury that would cater for the poor and disadvantaged in our society."

"Br Finbar is to be commended for his dedication, commitment and his incredible zeal to share such a vision."

Mr Jordan said the centre had begun as a row of tents in a paddock. Fund raising and help from service clubs had made it grow. It now has workshops, an educational unit, a community centre and family accommodation units.

The San Miguel Family Centre has attracted the support of such public figures as former NSW Governor Sir Roden Cutler and Sir James Rowland, and Jack Gibson, Rugby League coach. Br Finbar is a De La Salle Brother – a member of a Catholic teaching order founded in France in 1684 by a French priest, St John the Baptist de la Salle. He has been a member of the order for 49 years and will celebrate his Golden Jubilee in 1991. He entered the novitiate in 1940 and trained to be a teaching brother. Following a number of teaching positions he was appointed Foundation Director and Principal of St Michael's College at Beverley in South Australia.

In 1976 he was appointed the Deputy Headmaster of Oakhill College at Castle Hill. It was after this appointment that Br Finbar decided there was a need for a centre for poor and disadvantaged people. Br Finbar said, "I found there was a need for families to be kept together when there was domestic violence or a family break-up." He said the San Miguel Centre tried to bring families back together, or, failing that, helped family members cope with separation. The Centre has been operating for 10 years.



ANECDOTES

Just around the corner from St Matthew's Anglican church, is the Catholic church – another St Matthew's. Confusing!?

History tells us that in the early days of settlement, the government decreed that each prisoner must worship on a Sunday. In the Hawkesbury area, it was ordered that prisoners worship “at St Matthew's”. In order to remain within the confines of the law, Catholics called their church “St Matthew's”.

At Wiseman's Ferry, a man had been taught by Mr Sydney Chisolm to answer Mass. It was Mr Chisolm's last day, so Father Austin told the man to be sure to watch Mr Chisolm and learn everything. The fellow went over to Mr Chisolm and said, “I can manage the Latin all right, but tell me, I know he has two goes at the wine; ...when is the second?”

Another time, a poor old woman, whose husband had not been too kind to her, was dying in the old women's ward of the hospital. She had not been to confession for years, because she could not, she said, forgive her husband. Mother Cecilia was sent for and did all she could, without avail. She asked the other women around the bed to say the rosary for the dying woman. By the time it was finished, the woman said to Mother Cecilia, “Alana, will you tell the priest I forgive my husband and ask him to come quickly? Of course, her request was complied with and she died about an hour after receiving the last Sacraments.

A man whose wife was a Catholic and who had allowed his children to be baptised Catholics, took a sudden dislike to everything Catholic and would not allow them near the Church. The children managed to hear early Mass on Sunday morning then run across to the Church of England to find out what the sermon was on, so they could tell their father. They even succeeded in getting prepared for, and making, their First Holy Communion. The elder boy was dying of diphtheria and the doctor said he would not live till morning, but the father held out that no priests was going to cross his door. In her trouble, the wife sent for Mother Cecilia, Mother Cecilia spoke to the father who stood sullenly near the fireplace and would not even speak. “Mr Howard, you know your boy is dying. Will you, can you refuse his dying wish?” After some minutes, he replied, “Do what you like. I won't stop you.” Father Austin was, at the time, dangerously ill with an attack of bronchitis. The doctor said it would be the death of him if he went out, so a wire was sent to Dean Hanly, then at Penrith. This was about seven o'clock in the evening. The Dean arrived about ten in Windsor and did everything for the poor boy who passed away at midnight. When Dean Hanly went to the presbytery, Father Austin thought they had sent for him to prepare himself for death, but once he heard the story, it went a great way to cheer Father Austin and restore him to health.

The following was written in one of the Sisters' diaries: “Dr Vaughan gave Confirmation today at Kurrajong: nearly twenty confirmed. It was his first visit and the people wished to do him great honour. Two of us were sent in a cab a couple of hours before to have the children ready on his Grace's arrival. The people came to meet His Grace. Meeting the cab, they turned back and escorted the Nuns, thinking the first vehicle to be the Archbishop's. We enjoyed the joke immensely.

ST MATTHEW'S PARISH, 1990

Today, St Matthew's Catholic parish services approximately 4,000 Catholics in the area of Windsor, South Windsor, Bligh Park, Berkshire park, Londonderry, Llandilo, Cattai, Maraylya, South Maroota, Wilberforce, Ebenezer, Glossodia, Freeman's Reach and East Kurrajong. Our parishioners are mostly family groups with only a small proportion of solo parents, widowed, divorced or single adults.

We are a rapidly growing parish and school students currently comprise one third of our total Catholic population. In the past, many of our young people have been educated in the local state schools. However, today, approximately 40% of our students are enrolled in our local Catholic schools – St Matthew's Primary School, Bede Polding College, or in other nearby Catholic schools.

About half of our families now have migrant backgrounds. A small percentage come from Britain and other English speaking countries, but many more families have come from Malta, Italy, Holland, Yugoslavia and a variety of other countries.

A number of Parish Groups now serve the need of our loyal people. For example we have St Vincent De Paul Society, Legion of Mary, Parents and Friends' Associations, Mothers' Club, Lenten Groups, Majellan Group, Liturgy Group, Youth Group, Catechists, Acolytes, Special Ministers of the Eucharist, Lectors, Servers, Musicians and Choir. Service is also provided by groups and programs undertaking visitation of the Sick and Elderly, Instruction for Baptism and marriage, Development of Adult Literacy and Support for the Handicapped. The Sisters of the Good Samaritan continue to take a leading role in many of these programs. Regular Sacramental Programs also operate in conjunction with preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

One of our most recent initiatives is a Parish Renew Program being conducted over a three year period 1989-1991, in co-operation with other parishes within our newly formed diocese of Parramatta. The program involves special Sunday Liturgies, "Outreach" activities, special organised Parish activities and Small Group Meetings in the homes. With our Renew Program we are striving to develop stronger links between our Faith and our Life through prayer, reflecting on the scriptures, discovering Jesus in our lives and continually "Turning Back to God."

It is our dream that our Parish family may be enriched by the Renew Program so that we really can be Christ's present among the community in the Hawkesbury area and that this year of sesqui-centenary celebrations may reach out to give a greater awareness of ourselves as community.



Congregation at St Matthew's 1990

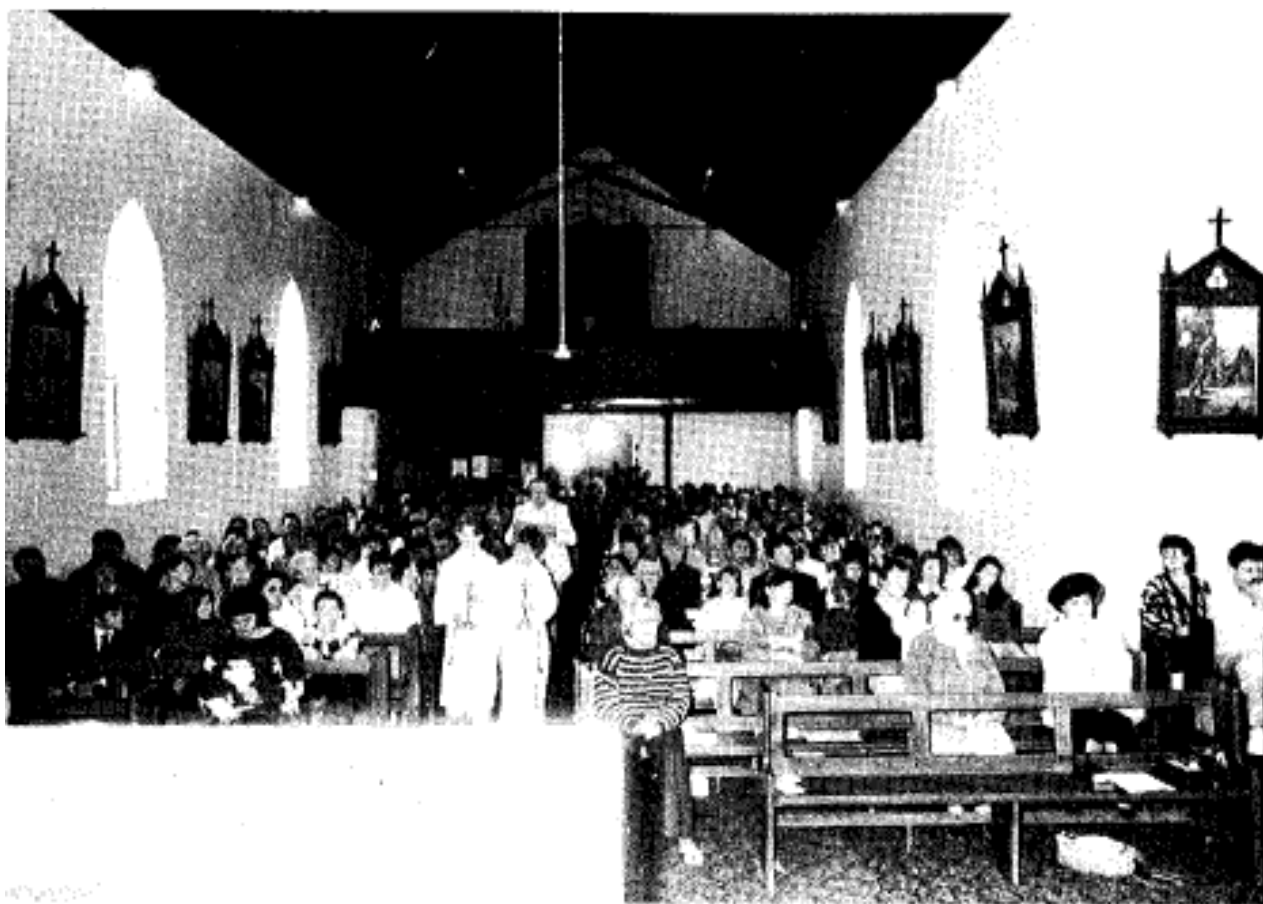
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Report: HAWKESBURY HISTORY

YEAR	DATE	EVENT
1791		Gov. Phillip names Windsor Green Hills.
1795		First baby born in Hawkesbury — John Huskisson.
1799	Mar	Flood — height 50 ft.
1800	Oct	Flood — height 38ft.
1801	Mar	Flood — 40 ft
1803	May 29	First Catholic Mass in Hawkesbury.
1804	Mar	Convict uprising at Castle Hill — Catholic worship withdrawn.
1806	Mar	Flood — height 45 ft
1808		Father Dixon returned to Ireland. No priest for 12 years.
1809	May	Flood — 41 ft.
1809	Aug	Flood — 48 ft.
1810	Nov 30	Macquarie names Green Hills Windsor.
1811	Jan 12	Macquarie orders burials in consecrated grounds.
1811	Feb	Flood — height 40ft
1812		Severe drought — food shortage.
1816	Jun	Flood — height 46 ft.
1817	Mar	Flood — height 47 ft.
1817		Continuous floods. Food extremely scarce.
1818	Dec 31	Hawkesbury Benevolent Society formed.
1819	Feb	Flood — height 44 ft.
1819		Arrival of two Catholic Priests — Therry and Conolly.
1820		Mass celebrated at Patrick Garrigan's; new Convict Barracks had chapel.
1821	Oct	Macquarie lays foundation stone for St Mary's Cathedral.
1822		Patrick Cullen — first Catholic buried in Catholic cemetery.
1823		Convict Barracks became hospital; Mass at Patrick Garrigan's.
1825		If no priest, teacher ordered to read service for 2/6 fee.
1827	Aug 4	Patrick Sullivan complained Catholics locked up during Sunday Service.
1828		Great drought. Howes bridge collapsed.
1830	Apr	Flood — height 36 ft.
1831		Father C.V. Dowling parish priest.
1831		Services held in private homes, temporary chapel Macquarie St.
1832		Father W. Ullathorne at Windsor.
1833		Land appropriated for Catholic cemetery.
1834		Re-built Howes Bridge collapsed again.
1834		James and Esther Cassidy opened first Catholic school in Windsor.
1835		Father J.V. Corcoran parish priest.
1835		Census reported 21,898 mainland and 7,000 Tasmanian Catholics.
1835	Jan	Separate register for Windsor commenced.
1836		James Doyle died, having bequeathed 700 pounds to Church.
1836		Church Acts passed, following failure of Bourke's educational schemes.
1836	May 1	Bishop Polding said Mass in old Barn in Macquarie St.
1836		Catholic population of area reached 800.
1836	Dec 28	Polding laid foundation stone at St Matthew's.
1837		Road to Windsor so bad that coach-drivers refuse to travel on it.
1837	Aug	Fr Corcoran killed when driving his gig near Toll Gate.
1837		Deeds issued for church and school cnr. Tebbutt and Church Sts.
1838		Father J. Brady parish priest.
1838		Churches opened at Penrith and Lithgow; reduced demands on Fr. Brady.
1838		One hundred and four scholars attending Catholic School, George St.

1838		Esther Cassidy given permission to teach 37 girls and 64 boys on own.
1839		150 pounds was raised through public subscription for building church.
1839		Severe drought. Measles and whooping cough cause many deaths.
1839	Dec 22	Dr Polding laid foundation stone of St Joseph's, Macdonald Valley.
1840	Aug 30	Bishop Polding opened the Chapel of St Rose at Colo River.
1840	Oct 21	St Matthew's Catholic Church opened by Bishop Polding.
1840		Timber slab church, St Gregory's, opened in Kurrajong.
1841		Transportation of convicts ceased.
1843		Father Slattery arrived in Windsor.
1843		Father W.J. Dunne parish priest.
1843		Our Lady of Loreto built at Upper Macdonald.
1844	Jul 11	Hawkesbury Courier first printed.
1845		Father M. McGrath parish priest.
1846		St Matthew's broken into and desecrated.
1847		Father J.J. Therry parish priest. Lived in sacristy of church.
1847		Mr C.A. McCann began teaching at Catholic school in Windsor.
1848		Sydney Railway Co. built line to Windsor.
1848		Public education began — bitter opposition by Anglicans and Catholics.
1848		Father J. Grant parish priest.
1851		Father N.J. Coffey parish priest.
1852		Father P. Hallinan parish priest.
1852		The Pope conferred the Degree of Doctor of Divinity on Rev. J. Grant.
1853		35 hotels in Windsor.
1853		Fitzroy Bridge replaces Howes Bridge.
1853		John Tebbutt built observatory.
1857	Aug	Flood — height 37 ft.
1857		Mr M. Hynes began teaching at Windsor's Catholic School.
1859	Jan 3	Archbishop Polding laid foundation stone for St Monica's, Richmond.
1859	May 4	St Monica's opened by Rev. Therry.
1860	Apr	Flood — height 37 ft.
1860	Jul	Flood — height 37 ft.
1860	Nov	Flood — height 36 ft.
1863		Railway line opened to Richmond.
1863		Mr William Langton began teaching at Catholic School, Windsor.
1864	Jun	Flood — height 48 ft.
1864	Jul	Flood — height 36 ft.
1865	Dec	Last Mass said at St Rose's chapel, Colo River.
1866		Henry McQuade left "Fairfield" estate in grandfather's Will.
1867	Jun	Record Flood — height 63 ft.
1867	Jun 26	Burial of 12 members of Eather family, who lost their lives in flood.
1868	Jun 21	William McQuade donated the Statue of Our Lady — address by Polding.
1869	May	Flood — height 36 ft.
1869	Sep 7	Sir Henry Parkes laid Foundation Stone — Windsor Public School.
1870	Apr	Flood — height 45 ft.
1870	May	Flood — height 35 ft.
1871	May	Flood — height 36 ft.
1871		Mr James Anderson, headmaster of Windsor P.S. for 21 years.
1873	Feb	Flood — 41 ft.
1874	Dec 23	Great fire of Windsor — 53 houses lost.
1874		Father J.S. Sheehy parish priest.
1875		Sisters of Good Samaritan opened convent.

1875	Jun	Flood — 39 ft.
1877		Richmond became separate parish.
1878	Jun	New presbytery became habitable, and old one became St Joseph's Convent.
1879	Sep	Flood — height 43 ft.
1879	Sep	Second Flood — 34 ft.
1882	Jan 1	Pipe organ used for first time at St Matthew's.
1882		Church renovated.
1882		Catholic school amalgamated with local public school.
1883	Jan 15	Mr Langton opened Riverstone P.S. — 60 scholars.
1884		Gaslight in Windsor streets.
1886		Father J. Hayes parish priest.
1886	Sep	Dean John Kenny bequeathed 100 pounds to Windsor parish.
1888		Richmond and Windsor Gazette first published.
1889	May	Flood — height 38 ft.
1889		Windsor's water supply system began.
1890	Mar	Flood — height 39 ft.
1890	Mar	Second flood — 34 ft.
1890		Proposed dams for Nepean and Warragamba Rivers.
1891	Jun	Flood — height 35 ft.
1893	Dec 2	Henry McOuade died, aged 41; Hon. W. Walker pall-bearer.
1895		Church reroofed and handsomely decorated internally.
1898		Father B. McDonnell parish priest.
1900	Jul	Flood — height 46 ft.
1901		Federation of Australian States.
1904	Jul	Flood — height 40 ft.
1904		Heat wave — temperature 120 degrees F in shade.
1914		Great War
1915		Gaslighting ceased.
1916	Oct	Flood — height 36 ft.
1919		Flu outbreak — people asked to wear masks.
1919		Earthquake rocks Sydney — felt as far as Kurrajong.
1924		Father P. Galvin parish priest.
1925	Jun	Flood — height 37 ft.
1929		First depression.
1936		Centenary of laying of foundation stone.
1939		World War II.
1940		Father W.O'Flynn parish priest.
1941		Warragamba Dam constructed.
1943	May	Flood — height 33 ft.
1947		Father M. Coffey parish priest.
1949	Jun	Flood — height 39 ft.
1952	Jul	Flood — height 38 ft.
1953		Father L.S. Murphy parish priest.
1956	Feb	Flood — height 45 ft.
1956	Feb	Second flood — 38 ft.
1961	Nov	Flood — height 49 ft.
1963		University of Sydney Newman Society worked to preserve St Joseph's.
1964	Jun	Flood — height 48 ft.
1969		Men land on the Moon.
1974	May	Flood — height 34 ft.
1975	Jun	Flood — height 37 ft.
1976		Bad bushfires.
1976		Father J.E. Dooley parish priest.
1978	Mar	Flood — height 47 ft.



Mass at St Matthew's Septemebr, 1990

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