

SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL FOR GOD



The first 50 years of
St Michael's Dorrington
1952 - 2002

Compiled by Marcia Logan

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A Church at last

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St Michael's Dorrington**

Reaching **1952 - 2002**

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The book has been written primarily to celebrate the first 50 years of the religious history of the parishioners of St Michael's, Dorrington. I have also included a chapter recalling snippets of history from local areas within the parish boundary. Where we live and how we live also have a profound effect in shaping who we are.

My hope is that when people read the book they will focus on the elements of the events or stories of which they were a part and cherish the wonderful memories which come to mind. It matters not who is mentioned or not mentioned in the history. Names are only used to create the structure. Your involvement has created the fabric. This is what is being celebrated in our Golden Jubilee.

Much of this book is based on oral history. Hence it is open to error. I acknowledge this and welcome any comments or corrections.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Origins of the land site

When Archbishop James Duhig commenced work as Archbishop in Brisbane his main objective had been to bring the Mass to the people. At that time there had been no church to the west beyond Red Hill, with the exception of the small churches at Enoggera and Samford, and none to the east beyond St Joseph's, Kangaroo Point. There were then in Brisbane about six or seven parishes.⁶ It was to this end that James Duhig began to secure sites where he believed suburban areas would develop.

The parish of Dorrington is relatively new in the history of the Brisbane Church. However the story of the Parish has its beginnings in John Christian Heussler's purchase of 20 acres 3 roods and 20 perches, Portion 460 of the Parish of Enoggera of the County of Stanley, on 19 April 1865, at a cost of £52/3/9.² (See Figure 1) It was Lot 38 of the Crown Lands proclaimed for sale on 22 October 1864 in the Brisbane Courier. The auction took place at Martin's Auction Rooms, Brisbane.⁹ Heussler also purchased Portions 461 and 463, some of the other "country" lots advertised in that Saturday morning edition of the Brisbane Courier.¹¹ The Deed of Grant for Portion 460, No. 11132, was signed under the Seal of the Colony of Queensland by Sir George Ferguson Bowen, Governor of Queensland, at Government House.² (This property is now within the Queensland University of Technology campus).¹⁰ Little did Heussler know that his then residence "Fernberg", in Fernberg Road, Paddington, would later become Government House in 1910.

John Christian Heussler is best known in the local area for having built "Fernberg", the present Government House, at Paddington in 1864. He was a wealthy merchant who contributed much to the development of the infant colony of Queensland. He encouraged the flow of German settlers to Queensland and was a member of the Legislative Council.¹

Heussler and his family lived at "Fernberg" until 1872 when the sugar industry collapsed and he lost his fortune invested at Pimpama. The high cost in upkeeping all his properties forced foreclosure on the Banks St land by the mortgagee, the Bank of New South Wales,¹ on 21 August 1872.²

It would seem that land sale activity in the Enoggera area was relatively slow. The Bank of New South Wales did not sell Heussler's repossessed land for 13 years, until 23 December 1885. This sale was to Robert Hazelwood Lawson who also held it for many years, undeveloped, before selling it to Thomas Pratt, a produce merchant, and William James Jackson on 2 August 1926.² Thomas Pratt was Chairman of the Enoggera Shire in the mid-1920s.¹⁴

With remarkable foresight, James Duhig purchased the whole of portion 460 from Pratt and Jackson on 4 March 1929 at 12:50pm. It was not mortgaged to a Bank but to Thomas Pratt and William Jackson. After having lain relatively undisturbed since it was first taken up from the Crown in 1865, "Portion 460" underwent some change in 1939, reflecting the beginnings of the population growth in the Enoggera area which would explode in the 1940s.²

Cyril George Holloway purchased subdivision 16, in April 1939 and Richard Howard Bryant bought subdivision 14 in June 1939. Both were free of mortgage. 33.4 perches were resumed for road purposes in May 1939 to be used for the beginnings of Havana Street. The road was constructed from Banks Street for a length covering the frontages of the two lots, 14 and 16.²

In April of 1939 James Duhig's Bill of Mortgage was transferred from Thomas Pratt to Edith Annie Jackson, widow, and Queensland Trustees Limited as Executors of the will of William Jackson. In November of 1939 the Mortgage once again changed hands, this time being transferred to the National Bank of Australasia.²

In the 1940s the land in the Banks Street locality began to take on a residential appearance. From September 1943 to March 1945 the blocks fronting Banks Street, between High Street and Havana

Streets, were sold to Victoria Brind, Evelyn Taylor, Ralph and Gladys Bell, Ronald and Henry Arnold, George Searle and William Guttorinsen.² Immediately after the end of World War II Archbishop James Duhig envisaged the establishment of a Catholic Hospital to service the northern side of Brisbane, probably as a counterpart of the Mater Hospital. It could have been ideally positioned on the western area of the land, fronting Wardell Street which was emerging as an important arterial road linking the City to the developing northern suburbs. However this plan did not eventuate as money was needed for the building of churches and schools, as these activities had inevitably slowed down during wartime.⁵

Now Portion 460 contributed to the Archbishop's building program by providing some of the much needed funds. From November 1945 to April 1947 house blocks, located along Banks Street between the corner of Wardell and High Streets, were sold off to Harold Sage Field, Senley Baxter, Edna Stacey, Frank Henry Hewitt, Hugh Somerville Cassidy and John and Dorothy Duffield. Mervyn Farrell and Frank Finlayson purchased 12 acres 3 roods and 37.1 perches on 28 May 1952.² This acreage was bounded by Wardell Street, the houses on the northern side of McCormack Avenue and the western boundary of the present Church site. Farrell and Finlayson, in subdividing the area, extended High Street from McCormack Avenue to Banks Street as well as extending Havana Street to its present length. This subdivision plan left an area of vacant land behind the houses in the block fronting Banks, High and Havana Streets. Because this land was spoiled by a gully the Council would not allow it to be subdivided. In 1957, Hugh Thompson suggested to Frank Finlayson that he donate this land to the Oakleigh Scouts Association.³ The den is accessed by an easement off High Street.

The Catholic Church was left with the remaining 4 acres 3 roods and 35.9 perches. During the process of incorporating the Archdiocesan affairs, the title for the land was transferred from the name of James Duhig to the Corporation of the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane on 20 March 1961. Even after all these years of ownership it was still subject to a Bill of Mortgage in favour of the National Australia Bank. This was subsequently reversed

in 1964.² In July 1973 this area was surveyed into two Lots and an easement. A valuation had been made of Lot 2 by Patrick Arthur Fitzpatrick on 18 July 1972. Fitzpatrick's valuation was for \$14,750. Lot 2, comprising 3 acres 0 roods and 25.5 perches, was sold to Desmond Francis Thomas on 8 July 1974. He subsequently subdivided it into a 17 block housing estate, accessed by a new road, Caneby Street. An easement was also included in these subdivision plans, to connect Caneby Street up with the easement on the Church land.²

The remaining parcel of land, of 1 acre 3 roods 9.5 perches, is the current Parish owned property. The title was issued on 14 November 1974.²

Evolution of a new Parish

At the turn of the century in Brisbane, the semi-rural areas to the north of the city centre were part of the very large parish of Red Hill. People from as far north as Samford had to go either to St Stephen's Cathedral in the city or to St Brigid's at Red Hill⁷ until the Enoggera Church was built in 1908.⁴ Ashgrove Parish was formed in 1921.⁸

After World War II the parish of Enoggera passed through a period of transition with the return of men from war. Brisbane began to expand and this was most noticeable in the north western suburbs. The land between Enoggera, Ashgrove, Everton Park and Stafford was cut up and subdivided. There was an explosion in the number of Catholics in the area.⁴

When Marty Rowan was considering buying property in McCormack Avenue in 1942 the agent advised him that the Catholic Church owned a large parcel of land on Banks Street. This was his and other people's incentive for buying property in the area. By the time he had built his house in June 1950 no action had yet been taken in relation to the Church property. Catholics south of Banks

Street travelled by private bus each Sunday to attend 7am Mass at St Finbarr's, Ashgrove. For parents with young families this was very inconvenient. It was equally inconvenient for Catholics, taking up residence in the housing areas being developed on the former dairy farms north of Banks Street, to attend either St John the Baptist at Enoggera or St Ambrose's at Newmarket.

This was the impetus which prompted Marty Rowan, Joe Costello, Gordon Eagleson and Clyde Ryan to approach Archbishop Duhig in 1952 to request the establishment of a Parish on the Church property on Banks Street. As there was no building on the site a Parish could not be established until a building was available. Later in 1952 an old house was offered for sale. It adjoined the Church property in Havana Street and faced McCormack Avenue. The crude sale notice offered the property for £1200. Again the Archbishop was approached and he arrived at the site on the next Saturday morning, accompanied by his agent, and bought the house.

Another reason has been put forward for the Archbishop agreeing to the establishment of the new Parish. A young mother of four children who had difficulties getting to Mass because of the distance and other family issues claims it was her confession at the Cathedral to Archbishop Duhig which decided him. Certainly both the direct and indirect approaches aligned well with the Archbishop's dream to have Churches within walking distance of every Catholic family.

The house was situated on Subdivisions 252 and 253 of portion 461. Portion 461 had also been purchased by John Christian Heussler in 1865 when he bought the land on which the Parish buildings stand. The Archdiocese purchased the land from George Bond on 27 October 1952. The block stretched from McCormack Avenue to Havana Street. In 1960 11perches were resumed by the Brisbane City Council for easement and water supply purposes.

The boundaries of the Parish were formed. Enoggera Creek, Samford Road and the bushland to the west seemed to be the natural boundaries to secede area from both St Finbarr's and St John the Baptist Parishes. Father Sam Hunter was appointed as Parish Priest.

Father Sam Hunter

The foundation Priest came to the Parish with a wealth of experience. Samuel Hunter was born in Belfast, Ireland, on 29 April 1901.¹² Originally he had been a Franciscan Brother in Ireland before deciding to become a Priest. He studied for the Priesthood at the Seminary in Newry, County Armagh, where he was ordained on 7 June 1931, celebrating his first Mass in Belfast. He then laboured as a Missionary in Liberia, West Africa. However under this strain ill health soon broke him. He came to Brisbane in 1934 through the mediation of his brother, Harry, a builder, who had emigrated some years previously.⁵ Father served as an Army Chaplain for six years and later on at Parishes in the Valley, Ipswich, Rosewood, Maryborough, Booval, Zillmere, Woody Point and Enoggera. Dorrington was indeed fortunate to have a man of his calibre to guide the parish through its early years.¹³

After the purchase of the house Father Hunter arranged for local tradesmen and some parishioners to alter the interior of the house to seat parishioners for the first Mass on 26 October 1952, the Feast of Christ the King. This entailed pulling down wall partitions and remodelling other rooms. The confessional for this period was the laundry of the old house. As there was no suitable place in the area for Father Hunter to live pending the erection of a proper church and presbytery, he lived at the Kalinga presbytery with Father Harry Ryan. Father Hunter would travel from Kalinga to say morning Mass in the old Church house and after Mass he would go across the road to Rowan's house for a cup of coffee before returning to Kalinga.

Not being interested in social functions, Father allowed the finance to be organised by several parishioners. They approached Catholics in the Parish to donate generously to the Building Fund on the basis that there would soon be a Church/School on the Banks Street property in which Father Hunter could also reside. Neal Connelly arranged with the Taxation Department for St Michael's to be a War Memorial Church as a monument to those who fought in World War II. St Michael the Archangel, being the patron saint of Good and

Evil, seemed an appropriate symbol of the struggle the Church building was commemorating. All donations, for which a receipt was held, could be claimed as a taxation deduction from Income – a great incentive in helping to pay off the debt on the new Church. Frank McKennariey and Jim Molloy contributed much of their time and skills in the early days of the new Parish. The first child baptised in the Parish was Margaret Lynch on 7 December 1952. Herb Adams was received as the first convert on 16 May 1953.

In May 1953 an official welcome by parishioners to Father Hunter was held in the home of Mr Bill Henry. Bill Henry's house was chosen as a venue to welcome Father Hunter because only the old Church house existed and was not suitable for a Parish welcome to the new Parish Priest.

After the wooden Church (now Hall) was opened for Mass in June 1953 the old house was restored for occupation by tenants. The Borovich's lived there for many years. Tenants vacated the site in 1974 when the house was demolished. The site was purchased by Bob and Margaret Bygott, parishioners, in June 1974. At this time the easement from McCormack Avenue to Havana Street was lost.

Footnotes

¹ R Chimes

² Certificates of Title.

³ Early History of the Oakleigh Scout group 1950-1962

⁴ Tony Hallam & Helen Radley

⁵ Souvenir of the Silver Jubilee of St Michael's Dorrington

⁶ Catholic Leader 25 June 1953

⁷ www.home.gil.com.au/~ola/parish.htm

⁸ Memories of the Parish of St Finbarr

⁹ The Brisbane Courier, 22 October 1864

¹⁰ Janet Hogan, Building Queensland's Heritage

¹¹ Maps held by the Enoggera & Districts Historical Society

¹² Catholic Archives Brisbane

¹³ Catholic Leader October 1977

¹⁴ Documents held by the Enoggera & Districts Historical Society

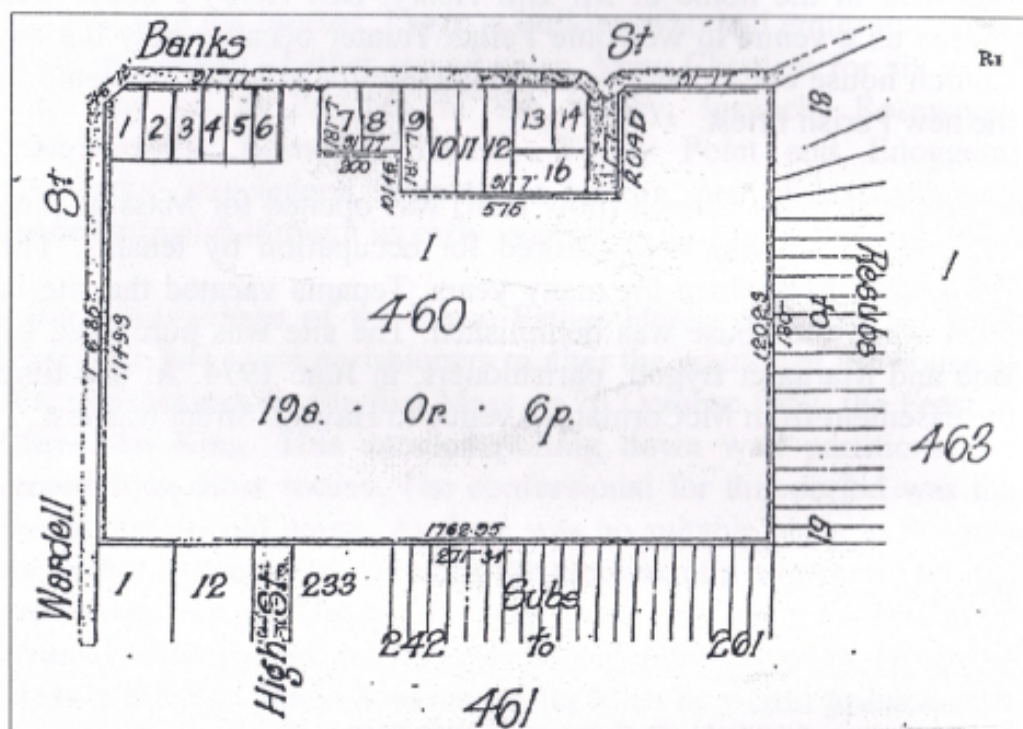


Figure 1. Portion 460, Parish of Enoggera, County of Stanley

A CHURCH AT LAST

The Wooden Church

Soon after the establishment of the parish in its temporary premises, moves were underway for the construction of a more suitable church building. Plans were drawn up by architect Frank Cullen, Archbishop Duhig's nephew, and the building contract was awarded to Mick O'Leary of St Brendan's Parish, Moorooka.¹

The new Church fronted Banks Street and, being perched on the edge of a ridge, commanded splendid views over Ashgrove, Bardon and towards the city. The Church had accommodation for 300 people. However it was not long before large attendances at Mass, especially families with young children, saw the congregation flow onto the Church verandah. Frank McKennarney would have all the young boys up along the altar rails to allow more adults into the pews.

On Sunday 21 June 1953 Archbishop Duhig blessed the new Church. Several hundred people attended the ceremony. The building had cost just over £5,000 and furnishings and lighting a further £1,000.³ The wooden altar and tabernacle came from the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Convent, Villa Maria, St Paul's Terrace, in the City. When the changes from the second Vatican Council were being implemented in the Archdiocese, John Menzies and Bill Power reconstructed this altar so that the priest could celebrate Mass facing the congregation.

At the opening ceremony Father Hunter said he was grateful to the people for the support that they had given him ever since his coming to the new parish. He appreciated not only their attendance at the opening but also the presence of his fellow priests. Rev Father Cremin, Parish Priest from the neighbouring parish of Ashgrove made the appeal for funds, which amounted to £300. Mr Dwyer proposed a vote of thanks to the Archbishop.³

Hopes for a School

The plans for the wooden Church catered for its eventual use as a primary school which was reiterated by Archbishop Duhig on the occasion of its opening. He said he was anxious that as soon as possible a school should be provided as there would be many children in this district.³ Expectations were still high at the time of the opening of the Presbytery in February 1962. Father Hunter stated that he hoped to commence the erection of a new parish church the following year so that the existing church could be converted to the school.⁴ Archbishop Duhig commented that they would soon have a school and convent as the parish was in the centre of a large population, so there would be no lack of people to fill the church or of children to fill the school.⁵

In spite of this optimism the Parish school never eventuated. Many of the Parish children attended the Oakleigh State School and boys from Year 5 could attend Marist Brother's College Ashgrove, both schools within the Parish boundary. The Sisters of Charity at St Finbarr's, Ashgrove, and the Good Samaritan Sisters at St Ambrose's, Newmarket, Our Lady of the Assumption, Enoggera and Our Lady of Dolours, Mitchelton, were reasonably accessible for young children. Some even travelled further afield to All Hallows' and Gregory Terrace.

The disadvantage in the Parish not having its own Primary School was especially evident in the days when the Sacramental Programme was administered through the School. The Parish children could have been baptised at St Michael's, received their First Holy Communion at St Finbarr's, Ashgrove and been confirmed at St John the Baptist Church Enoggera. Father Hunter would have understood that by not having a Parish school, his parishioners would miss out on sharing together many of the highlights of a child's religious upbringing.

Presbytery

Father Sam Hunter lived simply in the small sacristy of the wooden Church for nine years. He said he was happy living in this cramped room, being "so close to his Lord".¹⁰ It was a great change for him to be able to live in comfortable surroundings when his new presbytery was built in 1962. It is a single storied brick veneered building, sited on the corner of Banks and Havana Streets.

The presbytery was blessed and opened by Archbishop Duhig on 25 February 1962 at 3:30pm. The coadjutor-Archbishop, Archbishop Patrick Mary O'Donnell also attended. Father Francis Douglas, the Archbishop's secretary, and Father Hunter assisted the Archbishop. Archbishop Duhig made reference to the fact that Father Hunter had placed himself and his own comfort last in establishing the Parish. He went on further to say, "It is not easy for a priest to live in cramped and inadequate circumstances, but Father Hunter has done this for what he considered the good of the parish, since he was appointed first parish priest".⁵ Father John Slyney, PP Holland Park, made the occasional appeal. Visiting clergy included Monsignor John McCarthy, PP Rosalie, and Father T Brady, CSSR, rector, St Joseph's Monastery, Oxford Park. Mr Jim O'Rourke proposed a vote of thanks to Archbishops Duhig and O'Donnell on behalf of the parishioners.⁵ The high spirits of the day were not dampened by the wet weather. A huge tent had been set up. It rained continually so that the ground was mud – the parishioners were standing in water.

Caretaker Role

Early in 1970 Father Hunter's health began to fail due to a suspected brain tumour.² Father Isidore (Brian Beirne), Guardian of the Franciscan Friary at Kedron, often assisted Father Hunter when illness prevented his carrying out his ministry at Dorrington. It is most interesting to note that Father Isidore, who was of such great assistance to Father Hunter, was formerly his altar boy at St Patrick's Church in the Valley, all those long years ago.²

Father Isidore had been a local boy, growing up in Bardon with his sister, Carmel. In the 1930s there was no Catholic school in the area so arrangements were made for the children to attend Stuartholme Convent, a mile away up the hill through the bush. Stuartholme was at that time a girl's boarding school, so special permission had to be obtained to allow two day scholars to attend – one of whom was a boy! Brian used to tell people he was the first "Old Girl" from Stuartholme to be ordained.

Father Sam Hunter Stories

The Parishioners hold many fond memories of Father Hunter. He has been described as a "mad punter". Every Monday he went to the Lawnton Greyhounds and afterwards dined with the McShane's at Zillmere. Others recall going to 5pm Saturday Confession and being asked, after receiving their Penance, "You wouldn't know what won the last?" Father Sam liked chicken. Not then could you dip into the frozen food refrigerator of the Supermarket for a chicken. Mrs Anne Power kept chooks. He would like to go there for a meal of chicken. However he first had to kill it for her – by wringing its neck. Bob Keating remembers trying to get his children to Mass reverently dressed, only to be told by Father Hunter from the altar, "I don't care if you come in a sugar bag – just come!" One time at Sunday Mass he told Father Isidore that as it was so cold he could let the people off a sermon, "Make it very short or they'll freeze in the seats". His fear of fire came from being burnt out while working in the Rosewood Parish. Hence the regular bulldozing of all scrub in the vacant allotment below the new wooden Church.

Father Hunter is especially remembered by the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration on St Paul's Terrace, Brisbane. While they always had Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as part of their Rule, they did not have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Archbishop Duhig would not allow it unless a priest was resident. Father Hunter was able to explain that the Poor Clare Sisters in Belfast overcame a similar problem by constructing a special alcove above the

tabernacle. The Archbishop agreed saying, "Father, in the name of God, go on with it." The Sisters had the Altar changed. Having waited years for the privilege, His Grace exposed the Blessed Sacrament for the Sisters in 1936. Father Hunter wrote, "So began a flow of graces from that simple request of Mother Mary Philomena to a young priest just three years in Australia and a fitting reward to the Sisters for their great devotion to the Adoration under very difficult circumstances". After Vatican II, when Churches were having the altars turned around so that the priest faced the people, Father Hunter refused to change, remarking to Father Isidore, "For 50 years I haven't turned my back on Him (tabernacle) and I'm not doing it now!" However, he confided to Father Isidore that there was money in the Bank if the change had to be made after he died. Father Hunter claimed that his relic of Pope St Pius X held the tumour in check for a while.

When Father Hunter was very ill, Father Isidore took over more of the care of the Parish. He visited Father Hunter in hospital and on the last occasion realised Father was trying to tell him something and he kept looking at his pocket. Isidore found keys of the Church and the tabernacle and was able to assure Father he would look after them. Father Sam Hunter died on 25 September 1970, and was buried in Nudgee Cemetery following Requiem Mass at St Stephen's Cathedral, at which Bishop Henry Kennedy was principal celebrant.⁶

After the death of Father Hunter the Parish continued to be served by the Franciscan Friars from Kedron. Father Paul Fitzgerald OFM came to Dorrington Parish in early 1971 and worked here until the arrival of Father George Lahiffe on 9 September 1971. After his time here Father Paul went back to Aitape, PNG, where he welcomed the interest and support of the Dorrington parishioners. In 1981 he returned to Sydney to recuperate for six months. He continued his pastoral work in Eaglehawk, Victoria and Collie, Western Australia.

After completing a year's Pastoral Liturgy Course in Carlow Ireland he returned to Australia to work again in Kedron Parish from 1985-88. In

1988 he celebrated his Silver Jubilee. Members of the Dorrington Choir joined the Kedron Choir for the Mass.

When Father Paul was back in Eaglehawk he was diagnosed with leukaemia and returned to Brisbane to be treated by Dr John Mackintosh, who had been an altar boy while Father was in Dorrington.

The Holy Ghost Fathers in Australia

In 1841 Francis Libermann, together with two companions, began the Society of the Holy Heart of Mary. After only seven years of the Society's life, the Holy See asked Father Libermann to merge his new Society with the Holy Ghost Congregation, which had existed in France since 1703. It became the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary – now more familiarly known as the Holy Ghost Fathers or Spiritans.¹²

Australia's contact with the Holy Ghost Fathers dates back to the time of its founder Francis Libermann. In 1843 he was approached by the Bishop of Perth, Bishop John Brady, to send some priests to care for the Aborigines. After a short stay in the Vicariate of Albany in King George Sound, the priests moved to Mauritius. In 1888 the Holy Ghost Fathers founded St Patrick's College at Ballarat. It was later taken over by the Christian Brothers.¹²

With the ending of Civil War between Nigeria and Biafra in 1970, the Holy See requested the Holy Ghost Fathers to take a missionary territory in Papua New Guinea. Fathers W Butler and John Daly were sent to explore the situation. When nothing came of this Father Daly returned to Ireland and Father Butler remained in Port Moresby. Then a request came for priests for Port Moresby.¹³ At the same time Archbishop Patrick Mary O'Donnell invited the Holy Ghost Fathers from the Province of Ireland to Australia. Both requests met with a favourable response. Dorrington would provide a base to support the missionaries in the field, especially those in New Guinea.¹² Over the years the parish House has been a welcome stopover for many Holy Ghost priests enroute to their missions.¹³

Father George Lahiffe

Father George Lahiffe, the first resident Holy Ghost Father in Queensland, arrived at 6:00am on 9 September 1971 to take up duty in the Archdiocese of Brisbane under His Grace, Archbishop Partick Mary O'Donnell. An agreement between the Archbishop of Brisbane and the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and Immaculate Heart of Mary, concerning the Parish of Dorrington was formally signed. The arrangement was of a temporary nature, the first commitment for a period of three years at the end of which further terms would be negotiated.¹¹

Father Lahiffe was born on 6 September 1914 in Gort, County Galway. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1942. As a member of a strong Missionary Society, Father Lahiffe was posted to Nigeria where he remained for 27 years until being forced out in 1968 by the Biafran Civil War. There followed a short spell in Kentucky USA until his appointment to the Parish of Dorrington in 1971.

On hand to welcome him to Dorrington on 9 September 1971 were Father Paul Fitzgerald OFM, Dan Griffin, Joe Pyke and Joan Fitzsimon. Father Lahiffe celebrated his first Mass in Dorrington at 1 pm on his day of arrival. The official Parish welcome for Father was a BBQ held on 2 October 1971. Neal Connelly had lent Father the book about Mother Teresa of Calcutta, "Something Beautiful for God", by Malcolm Muggeridge. On his second Sunday in Dorrington Father asked the parishioners to adopt as the motto for the Parish, "To do something beautiful for God – in our souls, in our families and in our Parish." This theme was pursued in the many initiatives implemented during Father Lahiffe's period in Dorrington, and culminated in the erection of their beautiful Parish Church.

Father Lahiffe was a person of considerable energy and organising ability. Within three months of his arrival he had moved to establish the Parish Council, had formalised the Altar Society, purchased a new organ and organised a Parish Picnic in Dorrington Park. Also immediately on arrival he implemented a comprehensive home

visitation programme. He showed close interest in all sections of the Parish Community – young families, youth, the elderly and those suffering illness or bereavement. Father Lahiffe was enormously respected by all sections of the parish and was very well liked for his gentleness in confession. He enjoyed a game of cards, his playing partners including Ian and Dawn Jenkins, John Herron and Father Tom Byrne, also a Spiritan, who spent some time in the Parish and as Chaplain to the Mater Hospital.

The Brick Church

The planning and building of the brick Church spanned many years. On 28 July 1972, a public notice was erected and notice served to the surrounding landowners informing them of the intention to build a new Church.¹³ Site approval for the Church was granted by the Brisbane City Council on 17 August 1973.¹³ Ian Jenkins, a parishioner, was appointed as the architect and he set about preparing numerous plans to fully explore the proposals to develop the Parish Centre which were being considered by the Building Commission of the Parish Council. By Christmas 1973 the plan of the Church had been agreed on. A parishioner prepared a scale model of the new Church so that parishioners could visualise the whole scheme more clearly. It was also hoped that the model would stimulate more liberal giving.¹⁴ Bill Ryan and his wife Win were invited to canvass for extra funds for the new Church. They held a big function with open air Mass at the Marist Brother's College Oval at 11 am on 23 June 1974, at which the whole programme was put before the Parish.¹³

The contract for the construction of the Church was signed with Nema Construction on 23 June 1974. The builder marked out the site on 1 July 1974 and started digging the foundations on 9 July 1974. The bricks arrived and the crane put up the steel columns in two hours. At long last, after two years in planning, progress was being made. But not for long! The inevitable rain stalled progress and Father Lahiffe's diary entries reveal some of his frustrations:

"Two more fine days – little work done – don't know what is making them go so slow". The next day's entry states, "Overcast again. Hope it does not rain and fill the trench again". His third anniversary in Australia was a happy day. The bricklayers arrived and started on the bricks. But to his consternation he writes on the following day, "Never a dull moment. The bricklayers took off today – bag and baggage". To his relief, on the next day, "Bricklayers back on the job today".¹³

On Sunday, 1 December 1974, Archbishop Rush blessed the foundation stone. It is of 25mm thick Carrara marble, vee cut with gilded letters. A time capsule was placed in the foundation stone. Fathers Lahiffe, Moloney, Murray and Henry concelebrated with the Archbishop. Everyone stood under the open roof of the Church in the hot December sun.

Construction work on the Church was finally finished on 21 March 1975. This allowed the furnishing of the interior to progress. The Venetian glass mosaic came from Italy in pieces. Before fitting, it was laid out on the floor like a giant jigsaw puzzle. The tabernacle, against which the mosaic forms a background, was donated by Connie Bermingham. Special features of the Church include a sloping floor and a fan-shaped design so that no one in the Congregation is more than 36 feet from the altar.⁷ The design of the Church roof-line, with its fan sections spread protectively over the Church structure, is symbolic of the scripture passage, "How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings (Matthew 23:37)".⁹ The Church, perched on the edge of the high ridge, looks ready to take flight like the eagle ready to carry its young on its outstretched wings, "I have carried you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself (Exodus 19:4). Ian Jenkins' vision for the design of the Church was simplicity. He wanted to use natural tones and materials which would reflect the light. He also wanted it to be functional. It was to be his favourite Church design.

By 17 May 1975 sufficient work had been completed to allow the Blessed Sacrament to be removed from the old Church. It was

carried in procession to the new Church. A simple blessing was given to the building and the first Mass was said in the new Church on the Saturday evening Mass of Pentecost. After Mass all assembled for the turning on of the metal framed blue-light neon cross which caps the Church. After Connie Bermingham flicked the switch everyone applauded and sang "Faith of our Fathers".¹³

This allowed the old Church to be relocated to the lower terrace and set up as the Parish Hall. John Mackay Removals won the contract. The building, without being cut in two, was manoeuvred down an earthen ramp to position it fronting Havana Street. The total cost of \$13,000 included erection on new stumps and repair to damage. The event made TV news! The old pews were reworked as tables and trestles to be used for functions. The 150 seats in the Hall were donated by the parishioners at \$5 per seat. The area vacated by the wooden Church was sealed for a carpark. The white fence between the Church and Presbytery was used as the safety fence between the top and bottom terraces.

On 23 August 1975 the main altar was consecrated by Bishop Gerry, Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane. The new Church was officially blessed and opened on Sunday 28 September 1975 at 3:30pm by Archbishop Rush. Fathers Moloney, Isidore, Murray and Lahiffe concelebrated. A social gathering was held in the Hall afterwards.¹³ In the September 1975 Parish News, Father Lahiffe reflected on it being four years, almost to the day, since they had set out together to "Do something beautiful for God". He paid tribute to Father Hunter who would be looking down from above and saying, "Well done".¹⁵

The estimated cost for the Church, removal of the old Church to the new site and the erection of toilet blocks was \$200,873.⁸ A milestone was passed on 28 August 1986 when the last payment was made on the Parish debt. This was achieved through Father Hunter's reserve of finances, the proceeds from the sale of the gully block and the wonderful support of all parishioners. To celebrate this achievement a Dinner Dance was held at the Pasadena Function Room at Alderley on 17 October 1986.¹⁶

Grounds Improvement

After the new Church was built, a grounds improvement scheme took place. Jim Boyle was in charge of this project. In keeping with his motto – Do something beautiful for God – Father Lahiffe organised a tree planting ceremony. A group of original parishioners were called upon and invited to hand a tree to a younger member of the Parish. As they in turn planted their tree, Father said that it symbolised the handing on of the faith from one generation to the next.

In 1986 another major project for the improvement to the Church grounds was implemented. This landscaping was envisaged in the original plans for the new Church. Mr Geoff Street designed and proposed the drawings and specifications. A contract was let for \$9000. The landscaping was completed by September 1986 at the same time as the Church debt was cleared.¹⁷ Some of this landscaping was completed through working bees organised by Ray Strickland.

The July 1987 Parish Newsletter made mention of the work done by Brian Ozanne on the lower terrace. As a tribute to his efforts and in appreciation for his time and commitment the area was referred to as "Ozanne Park". Brian continues to contribute untold hours to maintain and develop the gardens of the Parish Centre. A rose garden was established in 1989 by Father Des Reid, initially through working bees and now attended by Brian Ozanne.

Father Lahiffe retired from Dorrington in 1978 and went to live in the Holy Spirit Parish at Pine Rivers where he worked tirelessly as Director of the Arch-Confraternity of the Holy Ghost Fathers. Members of the Confraternity undertake to pray daily to the Holy Spirit, read the Scriptures, pray for vocations and help the Holy Ghost Missionaries by prayer and donations.¹² Father George Lahiffe's health declined and he passed away in 1993 having returned to Ireland some time earlier.

Footnotes

- ¹ Souvenir of the Silver Jubilee of St Michael's Dorrington
- ² Catholic Leader October 1977
- ³ Catholic Leader 25 June 1953
- ⁴ Catholic Leader 22 February 1962
- ⁵ Catholic Leader 1 March 1962
- ⁶ Catholic Archives Brisbane
- ⁷ Catholic Leader 8 March 1974
- ⁸ Parish News May 1975
- ⁹ Souvenir of the Blessing and Opening of St Michael's Church Dorrington
- ¹⁰ Catholic Leader 9 October 1977
- ¹¹ Archdiocesan documents
- ¹² Francis Libermann – Liberator of the Oppressed
- ¹³ Father Lahiffe's Journal of the Holy Ghost Fathers in Australia
- ¹⁴ Parish News Christmas 1973
- ¹⁵ Parish News September 1975
- ¹⁶ Newsletter 14 September 1986
- ¹⁷ Newsletter 4 May 1986



Re-siting the wooden Church as the Church Hall—26 August 1975

GROWING IN FAITH

For the first 20 years of the Parish the rituals of the Church, the external expressions of faith, were well known, predictable and comfortable. For the ordinary parishioner it seemed they had been set in stone from time immemorial. Then, in the mid 1960s Pope John XXIII 'flung open the windows' and doors of the Church to new ideas and as a result, the Church seemed to embark on a whirlwind of change! The Second Vatican Council ushered in many new ideas.

Sodalities

The first ripple of change impacted on St Michael's in the early 1970s. Some time-honoured practices were discontinued. Parishioners saw many of their 'banked' indulgences, their 'passports to heaven', dissolved. Some saints were demoted to the ranks of the "faithful" departed. However the popular belief in St Christopher successfully resisted this move. Devotion to him only increased - in proportion to the speed of cars!

The Sodalities were discontinued. They had been introduced into Catholic practice many years earlier to encourage a Congregation to receive Holy Communion at least once a month. A belief had developed among many people that they were not worthy to receive the Eucharist every week. As far back as the time of Pope Pius X, there was a move within the Church to encourage more frequent reception of Communion. While this thinking had changed over the years, the Sodalities had remained. The Children of Mary catered for teenage and young adult women and the Holy Name Sodality united the men of the Parish. Both these Sodalities were present in St Michael's. A third Sodality, the Sacred Heart Sodality, was for the women of a parish. The members of each group would sit together, as a body, for morning Mass on their nominated Sunday. Afterwards they would gather for a short meeting to recite prayers and to organise rosters to perform good deeds, such as to clean the Church, or to serve in the piety stall. Each Sodality would march behind their banner at the annual Corpus Christi Procession held in the

Exhibition Grounds.

The most significant change ushered in by Vatican II was the introduction of greater participation by lay people in liturgical celebrations. The Choir and Altar Servers had been the only available roles for lay participation. While their role continued after Vatican II their function and emphasis changed.

St Michael's Choir

St Michael's Choir was formed in 1956 with Gareth Watson as conductor. Herb Adams took over from Gareth in 1958. The original members were Herb Adams, Bob Keating, Jim O'Rourke, Con Bermingham, Thora Page, Olive Ryan, Joan Keating, Pat Hettrick and Mercia Mackintosh. At later times they were joined by Denis Galligan, Jim Drake, Hugh Rodd, Dot Scanlan, Mavis O'Neill, Nance Richards, Val Power, Dolores Carter and Ann Irwin.

The original organist was Natalie Bermingham, followed by Gloria O'Rourke, (holding the position for many years), Maree Mackintosh, Paul Slattery and at different periods many others offered their talents – Cecily Roughan, Margaret Bygott, Nora Sugars, Celie Jenkins, Judy Connolly, Jane Keating, Maria Galligan, Margaret Grigg and Craig and Karen Hendry. Paul Slattery has been committed over many years to playing the organ and the Congregation have appreciated his generosity, particularly when he would play at two Masses each weekend. Today the parish is fortunate to have Dawn Jenkins and Lucy Pawlikowski to assist Paul.

On 8 December 1971 Father Lahiffe went to an organ concert at Marist College Ashgrove – and bought an organ which the choir members had to pay off. They worked hard, holding very successful 'Bring and Buy' Stalls after Mass and they even held their own Organ Concert which raised \$75.87.

The members were very committed for more than 30 years. Practice was held every Wednesday evening. Sometimes Father Hunter was

out on practice night and forgot to leave a key. Entry to the old Church via the hopper windows to the sacristy was an interesting sight. The Choir's repertoire included several Masses in Latin, in four parts, as well as motets and sacred songs for all occasions. As well as singing every Sunday, the Choir enhanced many functions. Most special among these was the Blessing and Opening of the new brick Church on 28 September 1975. Other occasions included the opening of Marycrest, in conjunction with Ashgrove choristers. A particular highlight was leading the Congregation in a Mass televised for the ABC programme, Divine Service, on 19 October 1975. Father Lahiffe was so impressed with one Christmas Eve performance he urged the Choir to repeat the performance on Christmas morning. The people appreciated the efforts of the choir and especially the inspiration and leadership of Herb Adams in being able to sustain the commitment and enthusiasm of the members over so many years.

Elements of change were evident by 1981. A new style of liturgical music was emerging. New hymn books were purchased. A popular group of composers were the St Louis Jesuits from America. Two of the group, Father Roc O'Connor and Father Bob Dufford visited Brisbane and gave a weekend workshop. Maree Mackintosh and Paul Slattery went along to the session for organists and some of the choir members participated in a workshop held at Festival Hall. This was a highlight of their choir training.

Membership of the choir was not all hard work. They also had fun together. Great friendships were forged among the members. For many years they had "ladies day" once a month in their homes. The women of the choir were joined by the wives of the male members. They brought their preschool children along, lunched, talked and laughed until it was time to be home for their other school-aged children. Parties in the form of a BBQ or meal, followed by singing around the piano well into the night, accompanied by Joan Keating or Dot Scanlan, fostered a strong bond within the group.

By 1993 with only a handful of choristers remaining,

congregational singing became the norm. The members supported this transition by their individual contributions.

Folk Masses

The world-wide popularity of folk music in the late 1960s and 1970s was reflected in liturgical music. Consequently, folk masses became popular and they were used in many parishes to complement the traditional organ accompaniment to hymns. St Michael's also had a folk group that performed at Masses once or twice a month. The group began in late 1971 and was organised by Maree Mackintosh, ably assisted on guitar (and vocally) by Rosemary Stirling and later by Mary O'Rourke. Many young people in the parish sang in the folk group. In the beginning, the group sat in the last two pews of the church, but as it improved, it was allowed to sing in the first two pews! When Maree left to begin teaching in 1976, Rosemary continued to organise folk Masses for a few more years. Performing in folk Masses was a worthwhile way for the young people at the time to be more involved in parish activities.

Altar Servers

The first altar boy at St Michael's was 14 year old Ray Jeffress. Ray was an altar server at Newmarket parish and Father Bolton allowed him to serve at the first Mass in Dorrington Parish in 1952. From then on families 'volunteered' their boys, and more lately their daughters, to serve at Mass. And so began a long history of participation and dedication, not only by the servers themselves, but also by their parents. One special feature of Dorrington Parish during the times of Fr George, Fr Val and Fr Des was the use of men servers at least once each Sunday. They were rare in the Archdiocese and widely known as the 'Geriatric' Altar Boys.

Like the Choir, altar servers have seen many changes. Those early volunteers had to cope with conditions that would bewilder servers of more recent times. The boys dressed in a black soutane and white

surplice which, in a Queensland summer, was most uncomfortable. This outfit was teamed with felt soled slippers and gloves for the cross bearer. It is at times difficult enough for the modern server to light two candles set conveniently on the altar. Bear a thought for the child who had to light two candelabra of candles, set high above the altar, with a taper stuck into the end of a long pole. This was done with the whole congregation watching with bated breath as each wick caught light.

The actual serving at Mass was more akin to a theatre performance, except that there were no auditions. After training for First Holy Communion the boys were unable to refuse the priest's gentle encouragement to continue on to become Altar Servers. Firstly the boys had to learn their lines and their movements. Mr Frank McKennariey took on this difficult task. While he taught them to recite their lines, by rote, in Latin, he also had the ability to convey to the boys an understanding and appreciation of the words and their meaning. As in any well orchestrated performance timing was of the essence. The dialogue between Father and server had to be without hesitation and missed lines would evoke a glare. The bell ringer had to be sensitive to the tone, timing and length of the ring. Tasks were accompanied by much ceremonial. Instead of the priest simply moving the Missal from one side of the altar to the other, the server had to carry it, heavy brass missal stand and book, down three steps, bow, and then up three steps to the other side. Benediction and High Masses also required the art of lighting and keeping alight the coals of the incensor. Serving was not just a Sunday Mass service. In addition to Sunday Masses, it required early starts for Daily Mass and evening rosters for Benediction, Missions and Retreats.

However servers from both eras have enjoyed a common experience, the Altar Servers Picnic. These 'thank you' celebrations have taken many forms. Some were combined with Pine Rivers Parish, other outings were as diverse as trips to Coochimudlo Island, the Sunshine Coast, Mt Glorious or Wivenhoe Dam. During Fr Des Reid's time, our flying Parish Priest literally took the boys to new heights and included a flight, either to or from Redcliffe, as part of their day. Fr Pat's more recent McDonald's excursions are far less

stressful on the parents.

Over time the rituals to be observed by the server became less arduous. This was brought on to a large extent by the changes introduced through Vatican II. These changes impacted, most noticeably by the ordinary member of the Congregation, on the Liturgy.

Liturgy

During the 1950s and 1960s the Liturgy at Dorrington revolved around the celebration of the Mass and the other uniquely Catholic forms of communal devotions such as Benediction and Stations of the Cross. The priest and altar servers were the key figures in these rites. Lay involvement was limited to participation in the Choir, the communal recitation of the Rosary in Church and Novenas and Marian Devotions. With the changes introduced after Vatican II and through the direct input of the Holy Ghost Fathers, the parishioners became aware of the many other ways lay people could be involved in enhancing their Parish celebrations.

The Mass began to be said in English and celebrated facing the people. While this change was a difficult adjustment for both Celebrant and people, it set up a very strong dynamic within the whole group. There was now a slowly emerging sense that all were celebrating the Eucharist together, rather than the Priest offering up the Mass on the people's behalf. The introduction of the laypeople as readers reinforced this understanding. Father O'Brien introduced four lay people to become Eucharistic Ministers in 1987. They were Denis Galligan, Clyde Ryan, Kath Macpherson and Kath Whelan. Today, after the 9.00am Mass a Eucharistic Minister visits the sick in their homes to give them Holy Communion. Other ministries are provided by bulletin distributors who welcome people to the Celebrations. New parishioners are welcomed by letter, written in recent years by Jill Apelt.

Associated activities flowed from the greater participation of the laity in the Eucharistic celebrations. The Church decoration and atmosphere was enhanced in 1985 by the introduction of the Banners

for the Liturgical seasons and special occasions. These were prepared by John and Claire Slattery, Paul Schuster and Clyde Ryan. These developments were complemented by the creation of new vestments by Mercia Mackintosh and more recently by Pam Foley. Planned Giving collectors have always had a "spot". Counters and roster organisers quietly support the more visible activities.

It takes special gifts and qualities to create a Parish and to establish the facilities in which the community can develop. It takes a different set of qualities to animate and cajole a group of people to step out of their comfort zone on their faith journey. The early 1970s had brought radical change to the Parishioners' expression of their faith. In a sense Vatican II was imposed from above. In the second half of the 1970s Father Val O'Brien challenged the parishioners to voluntarily take on change.

Father Val O'Brien

Father Val O'Brien was ordained in July 1955. He spent many years in Nigeria. At the end of the Biafran War he was imprisoned and then expelled with other Holy Ghost Fathers when the Igbo people were defeated. The Igbo people had been evangelised by Holy Ghost Fathers from 1885. He was several years in Brazil and Dublin before taking up his post in Dorrington in 1977.

Father Val spent fourteen years dedicated to the service of St Michael's, Dorrington. In that time, following on the foundations laid by Father Lahiffe, he created a friendly, caring community. Father was a capable administrator and earned the parishioners' gratitude for his efforts to have a Church free of debt in his time. It was with energy and enthusiasm that he led the Parish in spiritual growth through Missions, Renewal Programmes, Retreats and Lenten Programmes.

Parish Missions were reintroduced in 1974 by Father Lahiffe when he invited Marist Fathers, Pat Abbott and Martin Cabot, to conduct the programme *It's Time to Re-Enter*. With Father Val's

encouragement, the Parish also benefited from a Mission by the Passionists in 1977 and the Redemptorists in 1983 and 1990.

The Parish Community was forever changed after the *Movement for a Better World* Retreats. In 1978 the team comprised Fr Hugh Delaney, Fr Reg Callinan and Sr Jan Ryan and the sequel in 1979 comprised Fr Reg Callinan, Sr Jan Ryan and Miss Jill Gibbs. As a result of these Retreats, the parishioners became familiar with the concept of Basic Ecclesial Communities or BECs as they were often called. These BECs were introduced as a spiritual and community version of 'Neighbourhood Watch' and it was these community groups that were to become the support structures for the home meetings for the Lenten Programmes. The founding Group Leaders were Alf Roughan, Michael Westcott, Gabrielle Courtney, Denis Galligan, Jim Fitzsimon, Maurice Drake, John Slattery and Marty Rowan.

The Lenten programmes are now part of Dorrington history. Mixed memories will spring to mind when the titles such as Ministry (1978), Summit and Source (1979), Mission 80 - Evangelisation (1980), Ashes to Easter (1981, 1982 and 1983), Renewal of Faith (1984), Stories for the Journey (1985), Shaped by the Spirit (1986) and Called and Gifted (1987) are mentioned. Parishioners vividly recall these many gatherings around the parish as a community preparation for Easter. Father Val's fleeting visits to the groups are also remembered, as much for monitoring progress as for a quick headcount. He earnestly hoped that these programmes would help the parish gain spiritually and grow in a family spirit. They certainly contributed greatly to all who participated.

These were stimulating years as there was always something happening. The *Being the Body of Christ* Parish Renewal Weekends and a retreat by Fr Gerry Nicol occurred in 1982. The Parish embraced the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, with their first candidate in 1984. They prepared for the Papal visit in 1986 with a retreat by Passionist priest, Fr Tim Horlock, and in 1987 prepared for the Marian Year with Fr Greg Ferguson, a Marist Father.

Many other initiatives were offered. The parishioners were

encouraged to become involved with the Ecumenical movement in the area. In 1986 the *Coming Home for Pentecost* programme for non-practicing Catholics was conducted. *Journey*, a twelve month study of the Bible, encouraged a new insight into scripture in 1987. There were also group study sessions on the new Catholic Catechism. During the month of May, the Rosary was recited in different homes with nearby neighbours joining in. All these events helped promote spiritual friendship. Father Val was great on ritual, and with support from the Choir, the important feasts of Easter and Christmas were fittingly celebrated. Father Val truly left an indelible mark on the Parish.

Golf was Father Val's relaxation away from the Parish. He was also a keen follower of the Broncos and enjoyed the receipt of weekly bulletins on their progress when on relieving work in New South Wales and also after returning to Dublin.

Pious Goods Shop

The Pious Goods Shop has also served an important role in nurturing the faith of the Parishioners. When the brick Church was built the St Vincent de Paul Society was asked to set it up for the convenience of Parishioners. Items such as statues, rosary beads, holy pictures, missals, medals and Sympathy, Anniversary and Christmas cards were stocked and parishioners could request special orders. As the shop is for a service rather than for profit, prices are kept to a minimum.

In 1975 with the number of members in the St Vincent de Paul Society decreasing, the ladies of the Legion of Mary were asked to take over the responsibility of the running of the shop. Names of some of the early workers are Cecilia Walpole, Queenie Bowles, Agnes Connors, Mary Duffy, Monica Boyce, Nancy Richards, Erin Tierney and Phyl Thompson. By 1993 the Legion of Mary was forced to disband through lack of supporters and Phyl Thompson remained the mainstay of the Pious Goods shop with a few helpers. Kath Cronin took over the book work when Mary Duffy retired and left the Parish. When Phyl retired in August of 1998 she handed over

her responsibilities to Kath Cronin and a band of energetic volunteers who work to a roster, manning the shop at two Masses each week-end.

Over the years, through the generous support of the parishioners, the Shop has been able to make donations to worthy causes such as the St Vincent de Paul Blanket Drives each winter and their Christmas Fund, as well as a needy mission in Papua New Guinea.

Priests en route

The Parish has been privileged to have priests with missionary zeal looking after them. It has also benefited from the input of so many other priests who shared their experiences and faith. These were priests en route to New Guinea or other Mission assignments and priests who served in the Parish for short periods of time.

Father Tom Byrne CSSp arrived soon after Father Lahiffe in 1971. His special contribution was to begin the regular production of the Parish Bulletin. He gave retreats for the Sisters of Charity at Mt Olivet and St Vincent's Hospital in Toowoomba. As there was not enough work in the Parish for two priests, he left in February 1972 to do supply work at the Mater hospital and in the Parishes of Mt Gravatt and Ipswich. Father Con Peelo CSSp served in Nigeria and Malawi before spending time in California where he obtained a Diploma in Pastoral Counselling. This was to be of great value to him when he took up pastoral ministry in Australia for a period of 14 years. He served for some time in Dorrington and in Western Australia. Mostly his time was spent in Melbourne.

Father Des Reid

The seventies and the eighties had given way to the nineties and Fr Val was transferred, leaving Dorrington. Fr Des Reid arrived on the 12th January 1991 and, for the short time he was in the Parish, brought with him amazing zeal, a new style, a sensitivity and a wonderful approach with the youth. He had previously spent ten years

in Holy Spirit Parish, Strathpine, the last five of these as Parish Priest.

Father Des was born on 8 August 1934 in Moyne, County Longford, where his dad was the village School Master, the fifth of five boys and four girls. He taught in the Congregation's Colleges before coming to Australia. Since leaving Dorrington he worked in Melbourne and Northampton and is currently the Parish Priest of Port Hedland in Western Australia.

His stay in Dorrington was not to be a long one in comparison to some of our Parish Priests. Father Des was a passionate person who always felt and showed compassion for people. It did not take long for the Parish to respect him for his good work. During Father Des' stay the number of residents in the Presbytery increased by one as Father was joined by a friend, his boxer dog, Simba. From this time on the Parish community arrived at each Mass to be greeted by Des and Simba, who was also good at greeting. Many memories illustrate the diversity of Father Des. When he took all the altar boys on a flight for their yearly picnic, he was the pilot. When electrical work was required for the Church, Father Des did the work as he had an electrical ticket. When the outside of the Church needed painting, Father Des and Kevin Conway did the job. Finally, on one Australia Day, there was no organist at Mass. After the final prayer and before any one moved, Father took off his vestments, walked to the organ, sat down and played "Advance Australia Fair".

Father Frank Comerford

For a while, change seemed a constant, and then Fr Frank arrived in March 1992 and brought with him a wonderful wisdom and eloquence that he shared with the Parishioners for nine years. He was a man of great learning and he maintained a 'steady as she goes' attitude during a time of great concern over the "Shaping and Staffing" of parishes in the Archdiocese. During his time in the Parish, the 9am weekday Mass became widely supported by people from surrounding parishes. He wrote thought-provoking editorials in the weekly Parish Bulletin and often included his own poetry. Father

Frank started the St Monica's Guild and instigated the re-roofing and re-painting of the Parish Hall. For a time he was the Head of the Holy Ghost Fathers here in Australia. His fax had a speed dial to Rome. Dorrington certainly had come a long way...

Father Frank had spent 41 years in Kenya before being appointed to Dorrington. Major changes occurred over that time. The once British colony obtained independence and the apartheid system dissolved. Where there had been no African priests in 1950, in 1991 local clergy are in the majority in all Dioceses. Most of the 20 dioceses are served by local bishops, including a Cardinal and two Archbishops. Archbishop Raphael Ndingi of Nairobi, Kenya, visited his old friend, Father Frank, in 1998. He commented from the pulpit that the Parish had "a very beautiful compound!" During his time in Kenya Father Frank was a teacher and Headmaster in Secondary and Teacher Training Colleges, Founder-Editor of a bi-lingual Catholic Monthly, Parish Priest of Thika for 17 years and Secretary to two Apostolic Nuncios. The missionary presence has almost disappeared in Kenya. This proves true the saying that a missionary by definition is a person who works him/herself out of a job. Father Frank celebrated his Golden Jubilee in 1999 and indulged in a spot of nostalgia by revisiting Kenya.

Because of his many years in Kenya, Father Frank continually reminded the Parishioners of the need for a more simple and reflective pace to life and challenged them on a Social Justice level with amazing results in fund-raising for Somalia. With Father Frank's connections in Kenya, other parishes used Dorrington as a direct transfer point for funds desperately needed by the Somalian refugees. In his own quiet yet authoritative way he maintained the Parish community. He retired from Dorrington Parish in 2000 and is living in retirement at Kimmage Manor, Dublin.

Father Pat Doran

Fr Pat arrived in June 2000. In the short time he has been here he has added a personality and vitality that reflects the increasing

number of younger families now in the parish. His charismatic charm, friendliness and dynamic approach are bringing about a great re-awakening.

Father Pat was born on 22 September 1931 in Rathnew, County Wicklow, Ireland, the fifth son of seven boys born to Lill and John Doran. He entered the Holy Ghost Missionary College, Kimmage, Dublin, in 1949, and undertook overseas training in Trinidad where he taught at St Mary's High School, Port of Spain, for three years before his ordination in Dublin in 1959. In 1960 he was posted to Nigeria where he worked until his capture and imprisonment during the Biafran War and famine. He was deported back to Ireland in 1968. Four months later he was sent to the island of San Paulo, 300 miles off the Nigerian coast, where all the food and medical supplies for Nigeria were stockpiled. He was a member of a team of four Holy Ghost priests who co-ordinated famine relief flights into Biafra. The team conducted up to 24 flights nightly. One part of his job was to check on the distribution of all medical and food supplies to the clinics in Biafra (a three-day task every three weeks). Father Pat left just before the collapse of Biafra on 9 January 1970.

The next two years were spent teaching in Ireland before four years as Vocation's Director in Canada and four years in Malawi on the east coast of Africa. Father Pat was sick for most of the following year. He was then posted to Papua New Guinea for a total of fifteen years, eight at Aitape and seven at Wewak.

He has worked tirelessly on all aspects of church life in Dorrington since arriving in mid-2000, apart from two trips home to Ireland, due to the loss of two beloved brothers, Myles and Sean. The involvement of so many parishioners in parish life, especially the young people, attests to his abilities to draw our community together at a time when such events as the 2003 Synod is at hand.

We give thanks to God for all these wonderful men of God who have blessed the Parishioners with their faith, their spirit and their belief in them.

REACHING OUT

The first ten years of the Parish had seen much effort expended in establishing the physical structures. The first parishioners and those who continued to join their ranks over the ensuing decade could look back with pride on the achievements which their commitment had realised. From the simple beginnings in the house on McCormack Avenue in 1952, they had built the Church in 1953 and the Presbytery in early 1962. Now it was time for the people to look beyond their own needs and concerns. As a community they were ready to reach out to support others.

St Vincent de Paul

Under the leadership of Father Sam Hunter the St Michael's Dorrington Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society was formed on 14 November 1962. The office bearers appointed at that meeting were George Macpherson, President, Bill Hayes, Secretary, and Frank Blanchard as Treasurer. Other early members were Terry O'Shea, Jim Molloy, Ray Gamble, Frank McKennariey, Joe Pyke, Jim O'Rourke and Neal Connelly. Many other men were generous with their time and support over the years.

It was an active conference, faithfully carrying on the traditions of the Society founder, Frederick Ozanam, in providing assistance to those in need. The members also involved themselves in the cleaning of the old Church and mowing Presbytery lawns.

The Conference remained a male body until 1978, when membership was opened to ladies. Prior to this date several ladies had attended meetings as auxiliary members and actively assisted in the work of the Conference. The earliest lady members included Pat Hettrick, Nancy Brown, Carmel Scanlon, Aileen Quayle, Norrie Costello, Mona Wood, Joan Hill and Sheila Curtis. The admission to full membership of the ladies was very appropriate coming at a time when family breakdown and higher unemployment were changing

the profile of clients seeking assistance from the Society, in particular single mothers.

The Dorrington Conference for the past few years has also undertaken to attend to calls for assistance from Ronald McDonald House at Herston. The majority of these calls come from mothers from country areas whose babies are born with serious conditions requiring intensive nursing at the Women's Hospital. These calls usually require some special effort over and above that needed for local calls and the response from the ladies has been generous.

For a period in the early 1980s the Dorrington Conference rendered assistance in Inala. Young members who went to Inala included Stephen Gandini, Christine Carter, Peter Scanlon and Tim Apelt. Also in the 1980s the Society supported Granada House in Stewarts Road, Ashgrove. It was a hostel for handicapped adults, established by the St John of God Brothers. Norrie Costello described it as a beautiful place full of warmth and love.

As an international body, the St Vincent de Paul Society also seeks to provide assistance in alleviating the effects of poverty through a 'twinning' process. In recent times the Dorrington Conference has been twinned with two Conferences in Kerala, Southern India. The maximum annual contribution is \$400 and Dorrington has been able to meet this target for several years. It is a revelation how much the recipient Conference can achieve with the contribution. The sincerity expressed in the letters of thanks is encouraging.

The Legion of Mary

When Father George Lahiffe arrived to take over the Parish in 1971 his first priorities were to set up a Parish Council, get to know his people through house to house visitation and to initiate the building program to replace the overcrowded wooden Church building. When these activities were in place and progressing smoothly, he was then able to direct his focus outwards.

Together with the St Vincent de Paul Society, the Legion of Mary has traditionally been an effective Catholic organisation reaching out to those in need. The first meeting of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, Praesidium was held in the Presbytery on Friday 19 January 1973 at 7.30 pm. Carmel Byrne came from the Head Office to initiate the group. The first Parish members were Mary Duffy, Jean Wilson, Mrs Beahan and Mrs Mahony. Long term members were Mary Duffy, Queenie Bowles, Mona Boyce, Margaret Collier, Denise Venning, Nance Richards, Tess Cannon, Daphne Ozanne, Von Robinson, Mary Minton, Molly Griffin and Mrs Dowling.

As well as arranging for the specific activities for each member to perform during the week, the meeting was an opportunity to develop the spiritual life of the member through prayer, recitation of the Rosary and spiritual reading directed by Father Lahiffe. Devotion to Mary was most particularly fostered.

Works carried out by the Legion included visitation to the homes of lapsed Catholics, to let them know that instruction classes were being held at the Church for the Sacraments of Confession, Holy Communion and Confirmation. The members made sympathy visits to bereaved families, welcomed newcomers to the Parish and took their turn on the local Community Meals on Wheels Roster.

A Mass and Anointing for the sick and the elderly was held each March and September in the Parish. Transport was organised with the help of the St Vincent de Paul Society. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to socialise with other Parishioners over light refreshments after the Mass.

Our Lady's birthday, 8 September, was celebrated with Mass at 6.30 am, followed by a perpetual Rosary until 6 pm, finishing with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. During the month of October, being the month of the Rosary, the Fatima statue moved from house to house, wherever the Rosary was recited. Decorating our Lady's altar on her Feast Days was a special task for Legionaries, and was lovingly completed by Phyl Thompson for many years.

Annual Picnics to Slaughter Falls for Auxiliary members and friends were held. Up to 36 people would attend these enjoyable outings. A particularly happy memory was the occasion in October 1979 when Father O'Brien extended an invitation to visiting Holy Ghost Fathers from Bray Park.

The Mission Sewing Group

The Parish has always been guided by Missionary priests. This is very apparent when talking about the Parish Priests belonging to the Congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers. However Father Sam Hunter was also a missionary in Liberia, West Africa, before coming to Australia and their caretaker priest, Father Paul Fitzgerald, was a missionary in New Guinea. It would seem natural, then, that the parishioners would have become imbued with some of the same missionary spirit which inspired their pastors.

In 1976 Father George Lahiffe approached the ladies of the Parish suggesting they make children's clothing for the Missions in Papua New Guinea. Mrs Rene Gomm offered to organise the newly formed Ladies Sewing Group. They meet after Bingo on the first Wednesday of each month.

Over the years the Group, consisting of Pat Adams, Val Adams, Kath Boyle, Mary Fitzgerald, Mary Lynch, Mercia Mackintosh, Norah Towler and Alma McCormack have donated their time and money in buying fabrics, buttons and threads, sewing the garments and posting them off overseas. Over the past 25 years many a parcel has been sent to Papua New Guinea, firstly to Father Paul Fitzgerald OFM in Aitape, and later to the Mission Centre in Mingil, Aitape. In recent times a parcel was sent to East Timor.

Mention must be made of Betty Poncho, who regularly came to the Bingo game from Stafford. She was a retired tailoress and delighted in taking home a monthly supply of fabric, returning it the next month made up into lovely clothing. Betty did the majority of the basic cutting and machine sewing. The group finishes off the hand

sewing. As well as making dresses, skirts and shirts for children, the afternoon is spent enjoying one another's company.

Pregnancy Help and Right to Life

Because the members of Dorrington Parish hold as sacred the right to life, Pregnancy Help received wonderful support from Ida Tinniswood and her band of supporters. Ida organised fund raising Morning Teas at the Irish Club from 1976 to 1994, an amazing time frame. Olive Ryan and Thelma Bailey were diligent workers in Ida's team of ladies, never failing their monthly commitment. Ida also worked in the Pregnancy Help Office. Unofficially, Kaye Tinniswood contributed to Ida's work.

Dorrington parishioners were also strong in their support of Right to Life and responded readily to the signing of petitions to quash the legalisation of abortion. Sanctity of Life Sunday or White Flower Day was prayerfully remembered each year – with an appropriate homily.

Firstly in the role of Educator and then as Co-ordinator for Fund Raising, Brisbane Branch, Shirley Strickland was assisted by Leonie Galligan, Myrene Patterson and Claire Slattery as part of the Fund Raising Team. Office staff from the Parish were Muriel McRoberts, Carmel Steer, Pat Hettrick and Christine Strickland. Winifred Egan, as State Secretary and then State President of Queensland Right to Life, was originally from Dorrington Parish.

Sacramental Programme

It had always been the hope of the people and their early Parish Priests that a Convent school would be established. To this end the first wooden Church was designed so that it could be easily converted into classrooms. These hopes were never realised and the children attended the neighbouring convent schools, namely St Finbarr's, Ashgrove, St Ambrose's, Newmarket, Our Lady of the

Assumption, Enoggera, and even Our Lady of Dolours, because the bus route to Mitchelton was very convenient from some sections of the Parish.

When Father O'Brien became the Parish Priest he realised that many of our Parish children were attending Oakleigh State School, the one State School in our Parish. Instead of sending Catechists into the State School, Father preferred the religious instruction to be delivered at the Parish Centre. He gathered seven volunteers, one for each Grade, to teach the hour long Religious Instruction sessions each Monday evening. These brave volunteers were untrained. A correspondence course, prepared by Religious Sisters in Melbourne, rendered some helpful assistance.

In the course of time the numbers of children attending the State School dropped considerably so the 7.00 pm Monday night lessons were discontinued. However consideration had to be given to the few who required preparation for the reception of the Sacraments. Kath Macpherson was delegated to instruct those for Reconciliation and First Communion and Judy Connolly prepared the children for Confirmation. When Judy had to resign Claire Slattery took on the duties. The children came after school for their instructions which were carried on in the Parish Hall. If the numbers were small the candidates would go to the Catechist's home. The Parish children being prepared for the sacraments in the various Convent schools would join in and all receive the Sacraments in their Parish Church. John and Paul Slattery were a great help in preparing the Liturgy. Later on, in keeping with the rest of the Archdiocese, the Sacraments of the Blessed Eucharist and Confirmation were received on the same day.

After Mass all would gather in the Hall for the Communion Breakfast. The centre piece of the table was the First Communion cake baked and iced by Cecilia Walpole. The children sat at a special party table with Father. Over the years, the numbers of candidates for the reception of the Sacraments dwindled and Parish preparation of children for the Sacraments was discontinued for some time. This year children will once again be prepared for the

Sacraments within the parish. Chris and Fran Lewis have taken on the role of Catechist.

Response to Appeals

The Dorrington parishioners have always been generous in their response to Appeals. Their ability to reach deeply into their pockets to give generously was cultivated while they were repaying the Parish debt. This generosity of spirit has flowed over into supporting others in need of financial assistance. In the 1970s and 1980s the door knock appeals were a popular way of raising funds for charitable organisations. The Parish sponsored some of these, especially those for Mt Olivet Hospital, the Mater Mother's Hospital and Xavier Home for Crippled Children. On the Sunday morning on which the Appeal was being held, up to 30 youth, assisted by many parents, collected door to door from all the homes within the Parish boundary. The three hours of work would raise up to \$500.

The Appeal for the Somalian people in October 1992 represented the Parish's most generous effort. A Special Collection, together with Project Compassion and other donations brought the total to \$32,604, all of which was forwarded directly to Bishop Darmanin of Garissa Diocese, North East Kenya.

Over the years missionary visitors to the Parish would be invited to speak to the people during Mass. These guests would be overwhelmed by the generous response to the spontaneous collections.

Prison Visitation

Three parishioners have quietly worked in the Prison apostolate. Kath Macpherson and Pat Power were asked by Brother Dan Courtney, CFC, if they would team with Clare Devlin, Brother Tom O'Dempsey from Gregory Terrace and Sister Josephine Casey, a

Josephite nun from Banyo Convent to visit Woodford Prison to help the prisoners in furthering their education. Many of the prisoners had very limited education and the group's main task was to instruct them in literacy and basic Maths. They would travel up to Woodford each Tuesday, leaving Brisbane at 7 am and returning by 5 pm. This service was offered until the Woodford Prison was closed.

Norrie Costello thought of a plan to help prisoners, especially young male prisoners from interstate, have regular visits from relatives. It was believed that regular visitation from relatives led to prisoners not re-offending. She organised it with the support of a Stuartholme nun.

Families of prisoners from interstate were contacted, met at the Railway Station and taken to stay with Norrie while they were in town. Norrie would take them to Woodford Prison and arranged for them to have as much visitation as possible in the time they were in Brisbane. Norrie's work was a wonderful consolation for the prisoners' families. She never charged the families. Later in life she met some of the boys. They had a wonderful future – were married, had families and were building their homes.

Reaching out to the Parishioners

There are times when a community needs to set aside time to reflect on its own members' needs and how best they can be addressed. Members of a Parish share similar experiences to those of the wider community to whom they are reaching out to provide support. Parishioners need someone to pray for them. They, too, suffer sickness and bereavement. Children grow into youth, and parents grow old. They also need support at each stage of their journey and groups have developed within the Parish to respond to the members' needs.

Prayer Group

Norrie Costello initiated an apostolate of prayer. She gathered around her a group of parishioners who would provide immediate prayer support for any need which arose in the lives of parishioners, their families or friends. Norrie would ring the members of her group and Heaven would be “stormed”. This assurance of prayerful assistance was a source of great comfort to those who experienced distress or hardship in their lives.

Care and Concern Group

A meeting was held in October 1985, with Father O’Brien, Annette Donnelly, Phyl Thompson and Norrie Costello, to determine the needs which existed in the Parish that were not being met by the other Parish groups. This meeting also tried to determine whether there would be a sufficient membership to respond to the requests for assistance. Annette Donnelly worked tirelessly to research the issues and to build a very successful Care and Concern group.

Father O’Brien offered the 6pm Mass on Saturday 10 May 1986 for the success of the group. Everyone had the opportunity to register as a volunteer at each Mass during that weekend. Over the years the work performed by the members included providing meals in time of crisis—mainly illness and bereavement, visiting or contacting new parishioners and making contact with families of the newly baptised. Some volunteers keep regularly in touch with the elderly or sick in the parish by visiting them in their homes, driving them to hospital and doctor’s appointments, doing small jobs around the house or mowing the lawn.

In November 1985, with Phyl Thompson at the helm, the bereavement section of Care and Concern began. This has become the major effort of the group. Parishioners, at the time of bereavement, were offered the opportunity to have a home gathering after the funeral at which Care and Concern members provided and

served refreshments. This reflected the wonderful generosity of the Parish with the same people, over the years, providing food at each funeral and in many cases their help on the day. For several weeks after bereavement follow-up home calls are made to offer further support.

Under co-ordinators Annette Donnelly and Margaret Lindsay, strong links were forged with Centrecare, the Catholic Archdiocesan Centre for family and relationship counselling. Interested members attended many meetings, courses and Masses which were a wonderful source of guidance, encouragement and spiritual help to the group.

Playgroup

In the 1980s Judy Connolly formed a Playgroup which met in the Parish Hall on Friday mornings during school term. It provided an opportunity for mothers with young children to come together for morning tea and to get to know other members of the Parish. While mothers chatted the children were free to play or draw. Potential members were identified from the Baptismal Register and invited to join. After the original group of children commenced school Cathy Gabriel and Margaret Lutvey continued the group.

Youth Activities

The early 1960s saw the first group of teenagers reach the age where they moved into the workforce or tertiary studies. The YCW (Young Christian Workers) at St Ambrose's, Newmarket was one of the most successful groups in Brisbane. Quite a few of the Dorrington youngsters joined this group. Monthly dances and bus trips were popular entertainment. After several years the St Michael's youth decided to form their own YCW group. While they held several dances in the Enoggera Memorial Hall and ran bus trips, the group was never really successful and both Newmarket and Dorrington

disbanded in the mid 1960s.

By the late 1960s another attempt was made to bring the young people of the Parish together. Once again it seemed practical to join forces with St Ambrose's as they had a Hall. The roll call was often up to 90 members and non-Catholics were welcome to join. The Group held fortnightly dances, open to the public, in the Newmarket Memorial Hall. These dances were popular, drawing an attendance of 350 people, and 550 on the biggest night. The organising group worked hard to ensure they kept at bay the competition from other venues such as The Wizard's Cauldron, Windsor, Snoopy's Hollow, Edward Street, and the Red Baron at the Ashgrove Memorial Hall. They had their own resident band, "The In-Crowd", and spot bands each dance. The draw cards were free bus rides from and to the South Brisbane Railway Station, advertising and compering with Ross D Wiley, from the trendy Ipswich 4IP Radio Station and door prizes from Peter Shearer's Clothing store in Brisbane City.

The Committee took its responsibilities seriously. They spent many hours searching for new talent to exhibit at the 'spots' period throughout the night. They attended events like, *Hoadley's Battle of the Sounds* at Festival Hall, the *O'Connor Boathouse* on North Quay or Sunday nights at *The Irish Club* in Elizabeth Street. The Committee even had an agent, *Brian's Booking Agency*, who ran his business from his home in Ashgrove Avenue, Ashgrove. Dress standards were in force, and three police officers were hired for Special Duty to help stem bad behaviour. The last dance was organised and run solely by three people, John Stirling, Jeff Barber and Greg Hay.

The most rewarding and enjoyable aspect of all this activity was the sharing of the profits with local charities. The members had written into the Constitution which charities would benefit.

By 1975 the number of youth within the Parish was at its peak. Another attempt was made to form a Youth Group, this time as a Dorrington Group. The members were actually the whole body of

youth, over 70 members, ranging in age from Eighth Graders to School Leavers. The Parish Hall was now available and the Group met on Sunday evenings from 7pm to 9pm. A Constitution was written and Leo Rowan elected as the inaugural President. While Father Lahiffe supported the formation of the group and its ongoing activities in the Hall, the seminarian Michael Browne was usually in attendance.

As the members were from the Catholic High Schools and attended Church regularly, the group had more of a social focus, rather than a pastoral focus. Activities included watching movies during the meeting, organising various bus trips to places such as Kondalilla Falls, Caloundra and Bribie Island, skating at Stafford Skate Rink and organising Dance Parties with the Hall decorated and suitably darkened. Often members brought their school and other friends along to participate in the activities.

The Office Bearers worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the group. However in 1976, the Senior students left school and entered the workforce or university study. This had a significant effect on the group. As the needs and interests of some of these people changed, they no longer attended the group. Interest in the Group waned even amongst the younger members, because they had now developed a good network of friends in the Parish.

The Youth Group did disband in 1976. But it had achieved a significant role in providing opportunities for the large group of Dorrington youth to meet, socialise and form new friendships. There was even one marriage between members.

In the 1980s the Dorrington Youth movement experienced a renewed burst of enthusiasm. The youth group operated under the auspices of the Parish Council and was ably co-ordinated by Michelle Gomm, the Youth Group representative on the Parish Council, for several years. Its aim was to bring the youth together, to foster their growth as individuals and to provide opportunities for them to serve other young people and the Parish Community as a whole. In 1986 many participated in a youth version of the Lenten

Program *Shaped by the Spirit*. The Youth Mass at 5.30pm on Sundays was recommenced after many years. The Group were also involved in the Western Deanery Youth Council.

St Monica's Ladies Group

St Monica's Ladies Group was the brainchild of Father Frank Comerford. He felt that, as there were a number of widows in the Parish, they should come together periodically to socialise and support one another. As St Monica is the patroness of widows, it was appropriate to choose her name for the Group. As there were also quite a few single ladies in the Parish, they were welcomed into the group as well. The first morning tea was held on Thursday 6 May 1999 with 25 attending. Each meeting is equally well attended. The group meets on the first Thursday of the month at the home of a different hostess each month. Father Pat generally joins them for a cup of tea and a chat.

A People who are called to serve

Not everyone joins a Parish Group to express their service for others. Many parishioners are quietly and generously reaching out to others in a myriad of other ways. They are visiting their neighbours, taking the aged or disabled to Mass, to shop or on outings. They are in the hospitals visiting the sick, serving in hospital canteens or counselling patients or their families. They are active volunteers in their children's schools or teachers volunteering their time to run out-of-school, co-curricula activities for students. They may be in one of the many community service organisations. Our parishioners can be found out there, within a group or as individuals, sharing their lives so as to enrich the lives of others.

Hispanic American Catholic Community

The Parishioners of St Michaels's can look back with pride on their achievements in their Jubilee Year. Fifty years ago they stepped out in faith, taking the initiative to request of the Archbishop that a Parish be formed. They are mindful that the Parish they created was made possible through the generosity and sacrifice of all the members working together, sharing the dream.

In this the Jubilee Year, another group is stepping out in faith, taking the initiative to form themselves into a community. The Hispanic American Catholic Community, under the chaplaincy of Father Lauro Rufo, asked to share Dorrington Parish facilities. These buildings have been the tools used by the Dorrington Parishioners to build up a Christian Community where people care for and support each other. The buildings can now be the tools to nurture a second group, the Hispanic American group, in their growth towards community.

This first step in their journey was marked by a Mass of Thanksgiving, concelebrated by Bishop Gerry, Father Lauro, Father Seamus Giles and Father Pat, on Saturday evening, 20 July 2002. The Liturgy created a wonderful spirit of joyful celebration with the Parts of the Mass and the hymns being shared between the Spanish and English languages. Everyone joined hands to recite the Our Father in their own language. This festive atmosphere overflowed to the gathering in the Hall where people happily mingled, getting to know each other. The open-hearted welcome by the parish of St Michael's is a sign of the Holy Spirit working in both communities, making them one.

GROWING TOGETHER

Parish Council

Within a month of becoming Parish Priest, Father Lahiffe initiated the formation of the Parish Council on 13 October 1971. He had invited Sister Champion of the Sisters of Charity to speak of her experience in Parish organisations in the USA. As there was a quorum present as well as many representatives of the various groups in the Parish, elections were held. Joe Pyke became the pro-temp Chairman and Secretary of the Council. The functions of the Parish were grouped under various Commissions.

These were:-

- Worship and Liturgy – Herbert Adams
- Choir Master and Music – Herbert Adams
- Organ – Mrs Gloria O'Rourke
- Lectors – Denis Galligan
- Altar Boys – John Mackintosh Jnr
- Altar Society – Mercia Mackintosh
- Building, Grounds and Maintenance – Ian Jenkins
- Finance & Revenue – Brian Power
- Auditors – Jim and Maurice Drake
- Social & Recreation – Brian Power
- Outreach – Joe Pyke

The first series of Parish Newsletters arose out of this meeting with Father Tom Byrne nominated as Editor.

This group of dedicated and generous laypeople laid the foundation of an effective working relationship between pastor and people. They applied their collective knowledge, skills and expertise in their role of providing support and assistance to the Parish Priest in the ongoing administration of the Parish. It was an opportune time for the formation of the Parish Council. Society was becoming more complex, and the administration of a Parish was becoming more akin to "running a business". At the same time the teachings of

Vatican II were gradually changing Parishioners' understanding of their role as members of the People of God. The hierarchical structure of the Church was being replaced by a collegial view and the Parish Council reflected this changed perspective. Subsequent Parish Councils have continued the foundation members' tradition and have been ably led by Denis Galligan, Ray Strickland, Alf Roughan, Michael Westcott, Marty Rowan, David Connolly, Paul Le Clerq, John Slattery and Bill King.

The Parish Council has, over the years, effectively utilised its role to create community among the parishioners through the various Commissions. These have provided a focus to which individual parishioners could direct and contribute their talents. As well as the Commissions, other activities have also been instrumental in creating community.

Fetes

In the early days of the Parish, mini fetes were held. One venue was the McKennariey home in Weatherhead Avenue. Frank McKennariey was a train enthusiast. He made models of many familiar trains seen on Australian railway networks. These running models were the envy of children and a delight to see them running through the backyard labyrinth of miniature rail tracks, tunnels, switchboards and overhead walking bridges. The crowds took up the best vantage points to watch as the "Puffing Billy" steam engine, a Queensland Diesel locomotive or other trains and carriages made their way around the electrified system, expertly controlled by the Engineer in Charge, Mr McKennariey. Fetes were also held at the residence of Mr Bill Henry.

Garage Sale

On 28 November 1987, St Michael's held a Garage Sale to buy tables and linen for the Church Hall. Parishioners gathered at the Hall on the Thursday night before the sale to sort out the goods and

clothing. On the Friday night the articles were priced and itemised. Volunteers slept in the Hall at night to ensure nothing went missing. Everything was taken up to the carpark for the Saturday Garage Sale. Buyers started arriving at 5.30am. The day was a great success financially, raising approximately \$2,800.

Altar Society and Bingo

Bingo is held in the Hall on the first Wednesday of each month. The cost is \$2.00 and this includes morning tea and a lucky door prize. While Bingo is a social event to which the participants come along to enjoy lots of laughs, the funds raised at the Bingo are used to pay for the requirements for Mass celebrations – altar breads, wine and candles. Over the years Arts and Crafts displays, musical morning teas and flower demonstrations were other activities organised to provide enjoyment and to raise funds.

Kath Whelan runs the Bingo as part of her role in co-ordinating the Altar Society. The Altar Society is made up of eight groups of people, both men and ladies, who clean the Church and do the flowers every eight weeks. Over the last 25 years there have been many dedicated people who have generously given their time to this essential yet most unprestigious task. Kath also contributes many unseen hours in her role as Sacristan.

Concerts

Father O'Brien enjoyed social gatherings. One special day was the Feast of St Michael. Father Val and Parishioners gathered at Dorrington Park for the St Michael's Picnic Day. Games were played and picnic baskets shared. Father offered the adults a glass of wine. Everyone enjoyed the community spirit and made new friends. This was often followed by an enjoyable evening in the Hall.

In 1982 the Commonwealth Games were held in Brisbane and

everyone was caught up in celebrations. St Michael's also was caught up in the spirit of the event. All the "oldies" (in their sixties) dressed up as Marching Girls and did a very smart routine in red, white and blue gear, waving batons with great gusto. Nance Richards, Phyl Thompson, Pat Hettrick, Leonie Galligan, Joan Martin and others thrilled the audience.

Then in 1984 they did another routine about "growing-up". It included skits of a baby in a pram, a school child, and the various other stages of growing up. Joan Martin danced the "Charleston" dressed in a Marlene Dietrich outfit, provided by Claire Slattery and Camille Sexton. Another time the keen Parish actors performed a version of "Cinderella". People still talk about the concert put on for Bishop Gerry's visit to the Parish. It included the song, "I want to have a beer with..."

Melbourne Cup Parties

Joan Martin instigated the Melbourne Cup parties. After 9am Mass on Melbourne Cup Day a small group of ladies would go to the Hall to cut sandwiches and set up tables and TV sets which were kindly lent by Wal Armstrong. The "guests" would come for lunch, which would be finished in time to watch the Cup without interruption. So many people were generous at these functions, among whom were Leonie Galligan, Norah Sugars, Mary Duffy, Wal Armstrong and others. Val Adams was always there and Maureen Rowan, Kath Mitchell, Pat Power, Mary Power, Jan Rodd, Norrie Costello, Eleanor Rose and dear old Cecilia Walpole. Any funds raised went to the Missions.

Remember the "Yoga" anyone?

Dinner Dances

Dinner Dances were popular forms of entertainment in the 1970s and the Parish decided to hold some to foster community spirit. The

first one was on 11 February 1971 at "Denaro Trio". Another one was held at "Mantitia Lounge", Albion, in 1974. Over 200 people attended.

To celebrate the clearing of the church debt, a Dinner Dance was held at the Pasadena Function Room, Alderley, on 17 October 1986.

Bus Trips

Father Val O'Brien encouraged Norrie Costello to organise Bus Trips for the parishioners. After a slow start the trips became very popular and soon parishioners realised they needed to book early to secure a seat. A decade of the Rosary before the bus started was the order of each trip. Dunn's Bus Service supplied a very reliable service for \$4 per head per trip, plus a free trip at Christmas. Among some of the most memorable of those early trips was a day at Boystown (now closed), a Variety Show at Jupiters Casino and the Christmas Mystery Trips at night which ended up with a nice supper and gift to finish the year off.

When Norrie left the Parish, Jan Rodd took over the reins. She continued with the bus trips to places like Sanctuary Cove, Toowoomba Gardens, Day Lily Farm, a Winery and Historical Homes around Ipswich. When the day trip venues had been exhausted, Jan organised boat trips on the Tweed River, Moreton Bay and to St Helena Island.

Three day trips provided the opportunity to venture further afield. Trips to the Northern Rivers visiting Yamba and the Dorrigo Plateau were now possible. Another trip took in the Stanthorpe Apple Festival, Casino and back up the Tweed Valley. The nine day trip to Yeppoon and Rockhampton was memorable. Twenty one trippers were farewelled by Bishop John Gerry who was visiting the Parish that weekend.

With any trips that travelled down the Pacific Highway a stopover at the famous Yatala Pie Shop on the way home was always a 'must'.

These were happy times, but sadly they have ended as numbers declined. Parishioners now join in with the excursions regularly organised by the Ashgrove and Newmarket Parishes.

Cards

The Parish Hall is a hub in which Parishioners can come together to enjoy their common interests. Cards are enjoyed there on every third Wednesday of the month. Euchre and Bolivia are played, and if you cannot win at the cards you have another chance with the lucky door prize. Morning tea is also served. Excess funds from the \$2.00 entrance fee are donated to the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Indoor Bowls Club

At a Parish Council meeting in 1984, consideration was given to commencing Indoor Bowls in the Parish Hall. It was thought it would foster community within the Parish and be a focus for the members of other Parishes and those of neighbouring Christian Parishes. At this time the RCIA Programme was being fostered and it was thought the Bowls Club could be instrumental in implementing the Programme in the Parish. Father Val O'Brien asked Nance Richards to gauge the level of interest. Some forty Parishioners indicated enthusiasm.

Equipment had to be acquired or purchased. Jack Richards, from Ashgrove Services Club, donated four surplus bowls mats which his club had just replaced. Donations were forthcoming from Parishioners, some of whom were not potential players. A Melbourne Cup party held in 1984 by Joan Martin netted \$153 for the Club. With this money second hand bowls were purchased from defunct Indoor Bowls' Clubs. These were supplemented with new bowls until twelve sets were on hand. Twelve portable boxes were manufactured to hold and store them.

The Club was now ready to run a trial game on Thursday 16 August 1984. All was in order to commence play on 23 August 1984 and Indoor Bowls has been held every Thursday morning since. Night Bowls commenced on Friday 9 November 1984 and continued until 6 December 1986.

The second hand mats had given great service and the need for new mats became vital. The donations of \$420 from the late Don McCarthy and \$836 from the late Vera Ormodie (both players) in May 1985 were used to buy three new mats. The fourth mat was purchased in July 1985 at a cost of \$418.

Apart from the challenge of the game, the members enjoy lighter moments. On three occasions members were invited to play bowls at the Beenleigh and District Senior Citizens Club and to partake of lunch. These were enjoyable outings and the Dorrington Club was able to reciprocate by entertaining at the Parish Hall. On occasions, morning tea took on an added interest when the late Fred Hill, a keen fisherman, provided freshly cooked crab and Vienna bread. Memories are held of Kit Batty bringing a bag of lollies to hand around each Thursday when she arrived for Bowls. Kit is still playing but the lollies have been consumed. At year's end a break-up lunch, financed by members and partners, is held at the local Sports Club. In 2001 thirty-eight people attended.

Quite separate from the enjoyment and companionship provided by the Bowls Club, and mindful of the generous support it received in its beginnings, the Club shares its excess funds. Financial assistance has been given to painting the Hall, replacement of fans, purchase of a new refrigerator, donations to the St Vincent de Paul Society and the July 1998 Appeal for damage caused by the tsunami in New Guinea. The clock in the Church was donated in memory of Bob Keating.

MEMORIES FROM THE LOCALITY

Dorrington

The suburb, Dorrington, was formerly known as Oakleigh. The word Oakleigh was derived from "Oakden", the surname of a prominent resident of the area and "Leigh", the maiden name of his wife.¹ According to the Place Names Board of Mapping and Survey Department, the name "Oakleigh" was requested in 1941.¹¹

The area retained this name until 1947. The Post Master General's Department (PMG), now Australia Post, contacted the Oakleigh Progress Association, of which Fred Kelso was the Secretary, with a request that the Association choose another name for the area, as the Postal Authority was being confused with Oakleigh in Victoria.

Much thought and discussion was given to the request and as Dorrington Drive and Dorrington Park existed, Mr G Dowe, as President of the Progress Association submitted the name of Dorrington or Dorrington Park.¹ The name "Dorrington" was readily accepted by the PMG Department as the name of Dorrington did not exist anywhere in Australia. It was given the Postal address of "Dorrington W3".⁸ The new suburb was bounded on the south by Enoggera Creek, on the east by properties on the eastern side of Weatherhead Avenue, on the north by Banks Street, and to the west by the Rifle Range Reserve and Marist Brother's College.⁸ Dorrington is still recognised by Australia Post to this day. When the Post Office was removed from the shopping strip on the corner of Wardell and Stark Streets, Dorrington was declared a District within the Suburb of Ashgrove.

Origins of Street Names

Ashbourne and Matlock Bath are Derbyshire towns, the ancestral home of the Oakden family, after whom the suburb of Oakleigh was named.¹¹ In 1897 the "Ashbourne" house was situated on the corner

of Wardell and Lloyd Streets (where the Army townhouses now stand).¹⁴ Buxton is a famous mineral spa in Derbyshire and Dovedale is a reminder of the valley of the Dove River.¹¹

Helles Road, Chatams Post Road and Lone Pine Street were named after World War I incidents.¹¹ Lady Galway was a troop ship which transported soldiers to Gallipoli. Browns Dip Road refers to the dip in the road where cattle and horses watered.

Banks Street was named after James Matthew Banks who owned several large portions of land along Banks Street. High Street appears to be for purely topographical reasons.¹¹

Mr Merv Farrell, electrician, and Mr Frank Finlayson, builder, developed a "housing estate" in part of the land bordered by Yates Avenue and Wardell, Farrell and St Vincent's Streets. In 1955 when the land was cleared for development a huge bonfire was held on Guy Fawkes night for the whole district.⁶

Notable Landholdings in the Dorrington Parish

Robert Russell Smellie, a pioneer of the engineering and iron foundry trade, established Smellie and Co in the 1860s. With the discovery of gold, Smellie turned his attention to importing mining machinery, agricultural implements and general hardware. The heritage listed Smellie and Co warehouse is situated on the corner of Alice and Edward Streets in the City.⁵ The building housed the Industrial High School in the 1940s. It was an initiative of the Education Department to provide training in industrial arts for boys.¹⁵ The Department also ran a Commercial High School to train girls in typing, shorthand and general office skills. In the 1860s, Robert Smellie owned 23 acres of land at Enoggera between Lloyd and Banks Streets, Lots 457 and 444, situated opposite the Parish site.⁵

Mr Des McDonnell, one of the brothers who owned McDonnell and East Department Store lived in Banks Street.

Bird Sanctuary

The most significant land holding in the Parish is the Bird Sanctuary. The first owners of the portions comprising the sanctuary, 464 to 467, were James Matthew Banks (after whom Banks Street was named), Edward Barton Southernden and Thomas Scanlan. As well as the bird sanctuary land J.M. Banks owned the block next to the Newmarket State School and the block on the corner of Wardell and Lloyd Streets where the Army townhouses now stand.

Over the years the land comprising the Bird Sanctuary changed ownership until 1939, when the Brisbane City Council began to gradually acquire the sites. This resumption was completed by 1947. William Jackson, who sold the 20 acres of portion 460 to Archbishop James Duhig in 1929, was one of the owners of Portions 463 and 466. It was from his wife and the Trustees of his estate that these portions were finally acquired by the Council. In 1938 part of these portions had been subdivided as the Ridgeland Estate, backing onto the present Reserve and fronting Banks and View Streets. Twenty six acres of the balance of these portions were offered to the Council in 1938, free of compensation, because the Trustees believed the expense of carrying out a contour survey for any future subdivision "was not worth the expense".¹⁸ The Trustees of the Jackson Estate offered a further two parcels of land comprising six house blocks for a nominal sum of £2. The Council haggled over the outstanding rates on these blocks of £7/1/9 but eventually yielded. The Council realised these blocks provided suitable access from both the eastern and northern sides to the large parcel already gifted to the Council by the Jackson Estate, which the Council had plans to subdivide.¹⁸

In August 1939 the Council accepted an offer by Banks Bros. of Sydney, to hand over to the Council 30 acres of portion 464 on condition that the Council form a short roadway (Drummond Street) to access seven of the fifteen house lots subdivided on a flat northern section of the portion. This area was also accepted by the Council with the intention of subdividing it at some future date.¹⁸

In 1945 a Miss D F King presented a submission to the Council suggesting that instead of being developed, the land be set aside for park purposes. An outcome of the ensuing investigation was the proposal that the adjoining portion 467, comprising 24 acres and fronting Enoggera Creek, also be acquired or resumed by Council for the same purpose. The owners, W J Alick of Gailey Road Ashgrove and J Goong, were approached by Council with the offer to purchase the land for £1,560. Alick and Goong agreed on condition they could rent 12 acres for a period of five years at an annual rent of £26, with the option of renewal of the tenancy for a further two periods of five years. This land was to be used as a market garden. This is the origin of the Chinese Gardens that the Dorrington locals knew so well.¹⁸

The Sanctuary used to be known as "the gully" and there were air raid shelters in various places down there. After the war a woman used to live in the gully, probably in one of the shelters.¹¹

Corner Stores

In the 1920s a small wooden shop stood over a three foot gully right on the corner of Wardell and Stark Streets, with the doorway to the shop on an angle to the two streets. The shop was owned by a Mr Gunn. In later years the grocery business was conducted by a Mr Graham and Partner.¹ This Stark Street store sold everything from produce to the latest in soft drinks. When Dr Murdoch opened his surgery, George Logothetis became the chemist. Fred Kelso and his partner Mr Baird opened a butcher shop and later the Dorrington Post Office became operational. Mr Cameron started a Dental Surgery on the southern corner of Victoria and Wardell Streets, and opposite lived Mr McKimm who had been the local ice-man for many years.⁶

There had been a corner store in Wardell Street, corner of Brown Dip Road for quite a long time. It was owned by the Wells family in the 1940s.⁵ Among other owners were the Clewes', Groves' and Wright families. It is now the K&K Creative Toys shop. At some stage Melrose butchers opened next door, and a fruit shop opened

across the road in the shops next to the site of St John's Anglican Church.⁵

In the 1940s, mothers had to push strollers down the steep Weatherhead Avenue and cross the creek over large rocks to Hainesbrook Street to go to the Doctor in Waterworks Road (There is now a footbridge).⁴ To go to the butchers in the 1940s and 1950s some went to Alderley via Eagle Street down the "goat track" which came to the junction of Lloyd and Lorne Streets, Alderley, and then to the shopping centre. Life became easier when Baird & Kelso's Butcher shop was built on the corner of Banks and Moore Street.⁴ Eventually a small corner store also opened at this corner. It was owned by Mrs Marr who had the first refrigerator in the area.⁶ The Banks Street Store, which now houses "The Beauty and Relaxation Centre" at the junction of Banks Street and Braeside Terrace, was opened in the 1950s and the first owners were called Rasey.⁴ Rasey Park lies along the southern bank of Enoggera Creek near Butterfield Street at Herston.

Transport

When the general mode of transport was walking, horse, sulky and the very occasional motor car, the provision of any form of public transport was gratefully welcomed.

The Enoggera Railway Station opened on Sunday 5 February 1899.¹¹ While this offered some convenience for the people living close to the Samford Road boundary of the Parish, for those living in the vicinity of Banks Street and south of it train travel was still a difficult option.

In 1900 the Brisbane Tramways Company ran electric trams in Brisbane. The Enoggera line terminated at Bishop Street, Kelvin Grove, in 1901.¹³ In July 1912 a deputation, representing the local authorities and ratepayers of the Enoggera District, approached the Commissioner for Railways requesting that the Kelvin Grove tramline be extended to Alderley, or failing that, to the Newmarket

School. They argued that the line extension would “induce a great increase of settlement and several big estates would promptly be cut up for building purposes”.¹⁷

By 1938 consideration was being given by the Department of Transport to once again extend the tramline. The real estate handbill for the Ridglands Estate, dated 15 October 1938, reflected the expectations of the local residents. It stated that “Banks Road is the generally accepted (and only practicable) route for the Newmarket Tram Extension, as it continues on, past the estate, right to the heart of that big District located between Ashgrove and Alderley.”¹⁸ Ridglands Estate comprised 32 lots backing onto the Banks Street Reserve along Banks Street (formerly Road) and View Street. The members of the Greenhills Progress Association lobbied for the extension to turn left into Banks Street at the then present Newmarket terminus and proceed via Banks Street to some point short of Wardell Street. This would adequately service the Greenhills District. To avoid the steep grade of the Banks Street hill two plans were proposed. One suggested the top of the hill be cut and the lower levels raised. A small area of land at the top of the hill would be resumed to curve the road. The other plan suggested that at the western boundary of Newmarket State School the line should turn right along the short access road and then grade westerly and northerly coming back onto Banks Street between Mr Pratt’s house and Mr Jones’ house. The members of the Greenhills Progress Association also made it clear that while the tramline decision was being made they wanted the Everton Park – Valley Bus re-routed through Greenhills area and the timetable to include a night and Sunday service “comparable to that given in other suburbs”.⁵

The Banks Street tram line did not eventuate. In 1949 the line was finally extended along Samford Road to the Enoggera Terminus at the intersection of Wardell Street and Samford Road. The extension of the tram service along Waterworks Road also kept in step with population growth into the western suburbs. In 1924 the trams terminated at Oleander Drive. The service reached the Ashgrove State School, its final Terminus, in 1935.¹¹ The clusters of shops along the old tramline routes also reflect the commercial

opportunities provided by the public transport service.

These transport services still only skirted the Parish area. Access to tram and train stops was made easier by the locals carving out tracks through vacant land as they took shortcuts to their homes. Some enterprising businessmen also saw this need to provide more convenient links to the major transport routes. In the 1940s there was a local bus housed somewhere in Harding St which used to traverse Weatherhead Avenue. It was more commonly called 'Weatherbeaten Ave', as there were very deep ruts across the road.⁴ A Mr Burke ran a hire car route from Grovely to Ashgrove. He eventually converted it into a private bus service which ran from Newmarket to Ashgrove, where the local picture theatre, the Elite, stood on the corner of Stewarts and Waterworks Roads.⁶ This would have been a popular service for the children on a Saturday afternoon. A Mr Skinner also ran a bus service from Peters Street to Stewarts Road to connect with the Ashgrove tram. In September 1951 it was taken over by the Brisbane City Council who extended the service to the City, running from the corner of Stewart and Waterworks Roads via Dorrington and Newmarket. It was extended to Grevillea Road in 1973, and changed from Peters Street to Ethel Street in 1981.¹¹

The end of a defining feature for Brisbane came in 1969 when tram services were withdrawn and replaced by buses in a controversial programme initiated by Brisbane Lord Mayor, Clem Jones.

Children at play

The Dorrington area held an attraction for children's games as far back as the late 1920s. Jack Kelso can remember coming with his Mum from Red Hill, venturing down Lindsay Street to ford Enoggera Creek at the bottom. They would then climb up the slope on the grassy ridge between what is now called Brown Parade and McCormack Avenue. To their delight they could get within 20 metres of wallabies and hares.¹

Another popular playground, in the forties, was the area between Farrell and Wardell Streets and Yates Avenue. It was quite steep from the top of what is now the far side of Farrell Street to Wardell St. The younger children would slide down the track on sugar bags, and if lucky some of the "bigger kids" would give them a ride in their billy carts. There was an old farmhouse at the top of the hill which was popularly thought to be haunted, so the children gave it wide berth.⁶ A grassy slope below View Street, off Banks Street, provided another venue for "tobogganing". Home-made wooden sleds had their runners greased with butter to make them go faster.¹² Patrick Fitzpatrick, the valuer of the Church owned gully, described this gully as unsuitable for Church use "for apart from its unsightliness and owing to its being so low lying, it is infested with noxious weeds and groundsell and costly to keep free of growth". No wonder this gully was an exciting playground for the local children in the 1950s.¹²

In the 1950s cars did not pose a threat to the safety of children. Banks Street provided a superb racing track for the keen bikers, courtesy of the local representative. In the 1940s there was only a narrow strip of bitumen in Banks Street, but the residents were fortunate around an election time. Alderman Rudd lived in Banks Street and had the road totally sealed. The children would start from the curve near Goskar Avenue and race to the "cutting", where Banks and Wardell Streets meet.⁴ Tennis was another popular street sport. Cricket and football were backyard pursuits, probably because it offered the authority of definite boundaries which would avert scoring squabbles.¹² Who needed a swimming pool when the deep swimming hole just behind the Chinese Gardens offered the same amusement?¹²

In the late 1950s and early 1960s the electronic age was beginning to influence our lives. Les Dollar purchased the first television set in his local area and every Sunday night the local children were drawn to his lounge room to watch Disneyland. Up to 40 children could be seated around the room.¹² Crystal Sets were also a craze for the kids during these years. A fence was blown up in an electrical storm when the wire from one of these sets did not go to earth.¹²

As children grew up their recreational pursuits changed. A popular interest for many youngsters was Surf Life Saving. The Hay, Maher, McCulloch, Townsend and Neilsen boys from Bowral Street were all members of the Bilinga Club. To get to the Coast meant catching a tram to the Pacific Highway at Mt Gravatt and hitch-hiking a ride. It is hard to believe that in the 1960s the Coast road was a single lane highway for most of the way.¹²

Chinese Gardens

Every family had chooks and a vegetable garden, but most also made good use of the Chinese Market Gardens. These were situated along Enoggera Creek within the Bird Sanctuary. The gardens were constantly being tended in the traditional Chinese fashion of hard work and long hours. Greg Hay recalls one Chinese lad who would play with his group from time to time and allow them to ride some ponies the Chinese kept.¹² Access to the Chinese Gardens was by either a vehicular track off Weatherhead Avenue or by a walking track through the Bird Sanctuary on Banks Street.^{4 & 12}

The market gardens, irrigation plant and farming equipment were destroyed by the 1974 floods which also deposited a huge quantity of sand and gravel on the once rich alluvial soils of the cultivation. The market gardeners left the property and the area became overgrown.¹⁸

The area was cleared in 1975, during the Clem Jones era, for a Sports Area. However the locals protested and it never went ahead.⁴ The remnants can still be clearly seen from the overview given from View Street at the Newmarket end of Banks Street.

Dairies

From Harding Street right along Banks Street, on the Enoggera side, through to part of Lloyd Street were the dairies.⁶ The 1896 Enoggera

Street Directory lists Henry Kann and John Keating as dairymen along Banks Street.⁵ Eventually only the Kann's remained.

The John Kann dairy farm fronted Banks Street from after the shops at Moore Street for a distance of 100 meters towards Newmarket. The first three children were first day pupils of Our Lady of the Assumption School at Enoggera. Each day a different class was enrolled so Mrs Kann had to walk to the school, from Banks Street to the corner of Hurdcotte Street and South Pine Road, on three separate mornings to enrol a different child. John Kann delivered milk in the Raymont Terrace area and Billy and Joe Kann serviced different parts of Dorrington and Enoggera. Joe's former house still stands on the corner of Bowral and Banks Streets. Billy lived next door, his house being replaced by the current brick houses. After World War II the Housing Commission bought up the dairy farms in the area. The surveyor pegs were in the ground before the Kanns knew the resumption was to take place. It was purchased as rural land, costing the Housing Commission far less than if the land had been designated as vacant land. The family were compensated with three blocks running from Bowral Street towards the shops.⁷

The dairy houses had large wells out the back. When the Kann dairy closed down, everything was thrown down the well, including furniture and gas lights. The wells were then filled in.⁷

The block on the corner of Banks and Bowral Streets was the site of a 1960s Mater Prize Home, which was won by St Michael's Parishioner, Ray Gamble. A proof that prayer works – Ray Gamble said two decades of the rosary while walking home to Shirley Street after he purchased his tickets in the Mater Prize Home and won!!! Another Art Union Home is sited on the corner of Lloyd and Wardell Streets. It was originally a Wunderlich Display Home before being acquired by Marist Brothers College Ashgrove as the first ever Art Union raffle in Queensland.

Floods, fires and other events

In Oakleigh Park there was a creek over which a large tree had fallen. This provided a natural bridge for the local children attending the Oakleigh State School. This creek ran under Victoria Street and continued through the area between Wardell and Ashbourne Streets. It was very often flooded and the children would go home soaked after having waded through dirty water. When it was in flood there was no other way of getting home except over the creek because Victoria Street was also flooded.⁶

As well as floods, every year saw devastating bush fires in this area, mostly caused by lightning. Many times a tree, split right down the middle, would fall across what is now High Street.⁶

During the War and for a time after the area where the Army town houses now stand, on the corner of Lloyd and Wardell Streets, was a secure compound in which Army personnel assessed Allied and enemy tanks. The ground was built up very high around the edge, and topped with rolls and rolls of barbed wire. Later after this area was levelled the first of the army homes were built. It was fascinating for the locals to watch the development of these houses, for the chimney was put up first and the pre-fabricated housing was then erected. Across the road the original Housing Commission houses were being built.⁶

In the late forties, migrants from Europe – or displaced persons as they were sometimes called – were housed in Barracks on the western side of Oakleigh School, near Canberra Drive, and the children attended Oakleigh State School. It was always a special day when the Oakleigh children spent a day at the “camp” when the families dressed in their native costumes and served the food from their homeland.⁶

The Plowes family owned a foundry in Wardell Street on top of the hill just before Frasers Road. It was a popular excursion for the Oakleigh School children.⁶

During the 1940s house lots became numbered and suburbs also became classified. Enoggera became Enoggera NW2, and Ashgrove, Ashgrove W3. A further development was the introduction of postcodes, Enoggera being 4051 and Ashgrove, 4060. Phone numbers too have undergone change. Enoggera had the prefix LM and Ashgrove FW. Now Enoggera is prefixed by 3355, 3356 and 3855 and Ashgrove by 3366.⁶

Banks Street

In the 1940s, Banks Street was called Banks Road. From Weatherhead Avenue to Wardell Street all was bush.⁴

The 1940s also saw the fostering of a very special annual event on the "block" bounded by Banks Street, Lexington Street and Goskar Avenue. In the garden of number 179 Banks Street, the home of George and Mavis Cooper, grew a small Christmas tree. All the locals who lived in the "block" used to buy Christmas presents and bring them to the house and a Mr Leitner who lived on the corner of Goskar Ave and Affleck St dressed up as Santa Claus and handed out the presents to the children.⁴

During World War II the double storey house on the corner of Banks St and Lexington St was used by the Americans.⁴

Bond Street

In 1895, the Bond family moved to Enoggera and purchased "Oxnead" (18 Bond Street). The property extended from the entrance in Samford Road (approximately where Bond St is now) to Lloyd St across to Stirling St and towards Girton St in the east. The Bonds were prominent in St Matthew's Church, Grovely, and are buried there. In 1923 Mr Bond Snr died and the estate was subdivided with "Oxnead" being left on 77 perches. His daughter remained in residence there until 1948. On her death "Oxnead" was sold, the kitchen and bedroom wings demolished and the adjoining

land sub-divided. George, a son, took four adjoining blocks in 1926. He built "Plympton" (No.26) on these blocks at a cost of £1676. It was designed by well known architect Eric Trewern.³

It is believed that No 39 and No 40 Bond Street are identical and were built in the late 1880s for two sisters. In the 1920s, No 40 was moved at the time of the subdivision of the Bond land so that Dr Waters could build his house and surgery on the corner of Bond St and Samford Road. The house and surgery remain. The house at No 39 was owned by the Pilkingtons. The land on the corner (subsequently used as a petrol station) was the original front garden of No 39. It was renowned for its beautiful formal rose garden.³

Bowral Street

After World War II and the subsequent baby boom, the Government established Housing Commission Estates to help relieve the housing shortage. Houses were generally rented but today they are more commonly purchased.¹²

Bowral Street was developed by the Housing Commission on the land resumed from the Kann dairyfarm.

Many of the families awaiting housing lived in temporary accommodation in the form of huts erected near Gregory Terrace. Needless to say the completion date of their new home was eagerly awaited. Trips out to inspect the progress was no easy feat. It meant getting off the tram at Newmarket near Banks Street and trekking over the hill with children in tow.¹²

Frasers Road

The land, bounded by Frasers Road, Enoggera Creek and Moola Road, was taken up by Deed of Grant when the area was still part of the colony of New South Wales. Governor Sir William Thomas Denison proclaimed it for sale on 2 August 1858 and one month

later Thomas Cairns had purchased the 52 acres on 14 September 1858 for £112/12/-. Thomas Church purchased this lot on 13 March 1871. He also owned an 11 acre block at the Wardell Street end of Lloyd Street. Nine months later he had sold to Alexander Fraser on 22 January 1872.¹⁶ At that time Frasers Road was simply designated as a Government Road. Alexander Fraser's home, "Bannockburn", still stands on Frasers Road overlooking the Children's Playground in Dorrington Park. By 1897 the road was called Taylors Road.⁹

When Alexander Fraser died in 1905, seven acres surrounding the homestead were transferred to his unmarried daughter, Jane, and the remainder of the 52 acres was transferred to James Fraser of Sydney and John Mackay of Ballina. After purchasing the adjoining portion 363, the men subdivided all their land into 178 housing allotments, after setting aside 26 acres for parks and gardens. Selling began in 1925.¹⁶

On 19 December 1928 T M Burke Pty Ltd purchased just over 27 acres of this land. Burke had been responsible for developing the Glenlyon Gardens housing estate, the area of land bounded by Enoggera Creek, Waterworks Road and Stewarts Road. This was the estate of Alexander Stewart, the owner of Glenlyon House. The development of the 27 acres of Fraser land was to hang off the success of the Glenlyon Gardens sales, so Burke marketed the area as Glenlyon Gardens Extension (Fraser's Paddock).¹⁶ £1,000 had been spent on a concrete and wooden bridge across Enoggera Creek (Mirabooka Street) to connect the two estates and give easy access to the Ashgrove tram terminus which was at the corner of Oleander Drive and Waterworks Road.¹⁰ Taylors Road was by this time known by its present name of Frasers Road.

Harding Street

William and Edith Holloway bought the land at number 18 Harding Street and built "EDAL" in 1928 at a total cost of £628. The estate had been opened up in 1920. The Myer family had already built their home, which included a tennis court. At a later date Mr Frank

Finlayson built a home on the tennis court land. He was a builder and teamed with Mervyn Farrell to develop land in the local area. Another local developer was a Mr Smith.⁶

Mr Bill Henry lived in Harding Street. He was the local electrician and had a shop on the inbound side of Enoggera Road, opposite the Newmarket School. During the War the Henry family had a massive air raid shelter which was large enough for all who lived in Harding Street at the time, although every yard had a dug-out shelter, usually covered by half a galvanised iron water tank. Henry's neighbour, retired Army man John Stratford, was air raid warden for the area.⁶ Other early Harding Street families were the Lowe, Ellaway and McPhee families. Further along Harding Street towards Enoggera, lived families by the names of Barnett, Bronkhurst, Lake, Francis and McLean.⁶

Wardell Street

Wardell Street was originally named Bell Street. Cec Marshall recalls that Bell Street was a "No Through Road" prior to World War I. The Enoggera end accessed Bell's Paddock and the Ashgrove end was a bush track from Dorrington Park to the crest of the hill, the present Banks Street intersection. The hilltop was untrafficable except for pedestrians and horse riders, and any wheeled traffic had to go via Ashgrove Avenue and Newmarket. In 1915 WWI Diggers began cutting off the top of the hill during training for trench digging and thus did the initial work for the Banks St cutting.² In the 1930s and 1940s Wardell Street was still a dirt road and the steamroller and grader regularly levelled and rolled it.⁶

Hugh Campbell lived with his grandfather, William McCallum Park in Bell Street (now Wardell) near where the present cutting is at the corner of Banks Street. "Parkhill" was the name of their solid stone mansion. On his way to the Enoggera State School in 1889 he passed only three houses on the right between Banks Street and Samford Road.¹³

Mr McCallum Park's property was the venue for Sunday School

picnics. About 150 children and 25 adults from St Paul's Presbyterian Sunday School and the New Farm School converged on the property on 25 May 1907. They travelled to the Enoggera Station on the 8:20am train from Central Station.¹³

On 20 November 1920 at 3pm, Isles Love conducted an auction of the "Parkhill" mansion and property. The estate had been subdivided into 96 allotments. The area was bounded by Banks, Wardell, Shirley and Elfreda Streets.¹³

Dorrington Park

The original Dorrington Park was a 22 acre block bounded by Wardell Street, Enoggera Creek, and an approximate demarcation along what are now Steege Street and the southern part of Brown Parade. It had been owned by a T.V. Dudgeon before 1872. By 1891 it was designated as Dorrington Park. In May 1924 it was again in private ownership and subdivided into house allotments. Four acres were devoted to gardens and breathing spaces.¹⁰ Frank Waters Park now occupies this garden space.

Footnotes

¹ Jack Kelso

² Cec Marshall

³ David & Kathie Boddice

⁴ Mrs Margaret Cooper

⁵ Documents held by the Enoggera and Districts Historical Society

⁶ Denise Spratt (nee Holloway)

⁷ Len Kann

⁸ Telegraph 19 August 1947

⁹ Maps from Enoggera & Districts Historical Society

¹⁰ Typed notes from the Ashgrove Library

¹¹ The School Bell Retolled

¹² Greg Hay

¹³ Enoggera - the Early Years by R Chimes

¹⁴ Local Area Maps

¹⁵ Bill Power

¹⁶ Titles documents

¹⁷ Brisbane Courier 12 July 1912

¹⁸ Rei Muller "Banks Street Reserve"

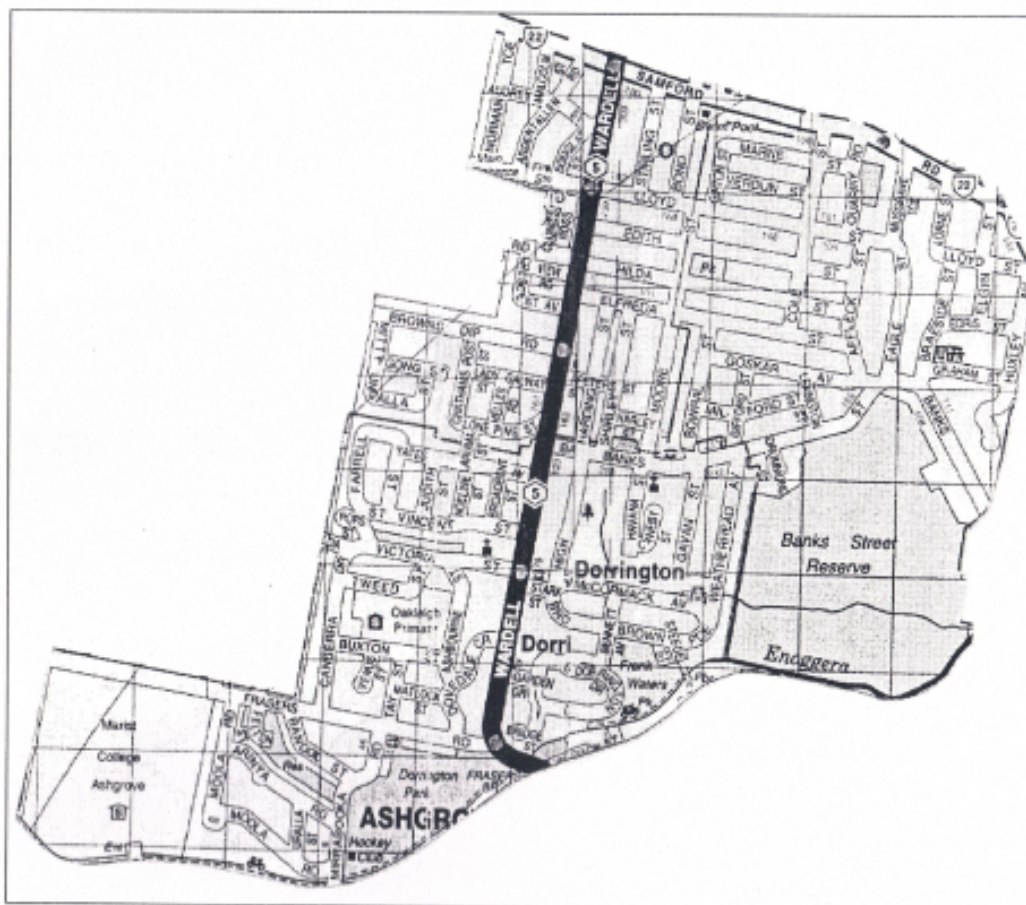


Figure 2. Boundary of St Michael's Parish, Dorrigton.



Father Sam Hunter - First Parish Priest of St Michael's Dorrington
1952-1970

St Michael's Catholic Parish
250 Banks Street, Dorrington, Qld, 4060
Phone: (07) 3356 4110

6.00