

**THE BUILT HERITAGE OF  
ALL HALLOWS' CONVENT AND SCHOOL ❖**

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Mr Peter Connell

**NOTE**

*The website of the Mercy Heritage Centre includes a virtual tour of All Hallows' Chapel, biographical articles, over 220 historical images, and around 35 audio files (sourced from archival documents, and voiced by Brisbane Sisters of Mercy). It is an excellent accompaniment to this article – to explore this significant resource visit [www.mercyheritage.com](http://www.mercyheritage.com).*

**Background**

In 1858 a new residence was built on Duncan's Hill, Brisbane:

Building: The large house which has [been] for some time past in the course of erection by Mr. Petrie for Dr. Fullerton is now nearly finished, and it is likely that the owner will take possession in a few days. The house and grounds have received the name of *Adderton*. The site has been well selected, commanding as it does an extensive view of the surrounding country. The view over Kangaroo Point with a reach of the River on each side, and the country beyond with its background of wooded hills is exceedingly fine.

The building has no architectural pretensions being an exceedingly plain but strong building in the London Street style. External appearance has been sacrificed for convenience and comfort within...The rooms are large well-lighted and lofty...The whole of the interior fittings are of polished cedar and the principal apartments have beautiful marble mantle pieces...

The Drawing and Dining-rooms are divided in two parts by folding doors. The Kitchens, Dairy etc. are below ground, and immediately behind on the same level there are Coach-houses, Stable, Cow, and Fowl-houses, and customary out-offices. A Bathroom is entered from the Hall. The building is of brick stuccoed. The workmanship in every part seems solid and well finished. We consider this

building a valuable addition to the district, although we regret the absence of architectural beauty on its exterior.<sup>1</sup>

*Adderton*, a residence built in the Georgian design, has been reported here as being built by 'Mr. Petrie' – so which one was it? Andrew Petrie was a building contractor responsible for the design of many local buildings until the influx of architects in the 1860s. His son John Petrie, Brisbane's first mayor, was Andrew's business partner from 1843. John is more likely to have been involved in the construction and design of *Adderton*, as Andrew contracted sandy blight and went blind after an exploratory excursion to the Darling Downs in 1848. Despite the loss of his sight, Andrew Petrie continued to supervise the construction of many of Brisbane's colonial buildings. In short, it is possible that both men played a part in the building of *Adderton*.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Fullerton, his wife (nee Julia Adderton Moffat), and their two children lived in *Adderton* for a few years before moving west to Tooloombilla Station, Maranoa.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Sisters of Mercy**

Soon after their arrival in Brisbane on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1861, the Sisters of Mercy were provided with temporary accommodation near St Stephen's Church.<sup>4</sup> Bishop Quinn's primary motivation for bringing the Sisters to Queensland was to establish a Catholic education system.

There were already two Catholic Schools in Brisbane, one at St Stephen's that had operated since 1845, and St Patrick's School, Fortitude Valley. The Sisters taught in both of these shortly after their arrival. Mother Vincent Whitty, foundress of the Brisbane Congregation, also established a select school in Charlotte Street, in December 1861, that was a precursor to All Hallows'.<sup>5</sup>

Bishop Quinn was convinced that centralisation of the facilities of the Sisters was necessary to best serve the colony, and began looking for suitable sites. At the time there were only three houses of a suitable size available in Brisbane.

The first was the home of Dr William Hobbs, originally known as Adelaide House<sup>6</sup> and later known as the Deanery, built in 1853. This was the temporary residence of Governor Bowen until Government House (George Street) was built in 1862, and it still stands adjacent to St John's Cathedral on Ann Street.

The second was *Dara*,<sup>7</sup> built for William Augustine Duncan (first Controller of Customs in Queensland), sold to Patrick Mayne who leased and later sold it to Bishop Quinn. This was later the site of the ill-fated Holy Name Cathedral, now the Cathedral Place apartment complex.

The third was *Adderton*, built for Dr George Fullerton (referred to previously). In July 1863 *Adderton* was offered for sale as Dr. Fullerton was returning to England.<sup>8</sup> *Dara* stood on land across Ann Street from *Adderton* and the two were considered by their contemporaries, to be the largest and best-appointed homes in Brisbane.<sup>9</sup>

Also in July 1863, Mother Vincent Whitty was writing to the Sisters in Dublin that '...as yet we have no Convent nor sign of one.' She went on to say that she was more concerned about the work that needed to be done, adding 'a House of Mercy is very much needed ... if we had the means of building one.'<sup>10</sup> Then in August she wrote: 'The Bishop has lately purchased the finest house and situation in Brisbane for a Convent. The purchase money is £6,000 – where it is to come from I know not – but I trust God will send it. As soon as we get into it, we are to commence a House of Mercy.'<sup>11</sup>

Quinn purchased *Adderton* for the sum of £6000, but the Sisters had to find the money to pay for it! The burden of this debt was with them for many years.

In September 1863 Mother Vincent wrote: 'I intend to ask the Bishop to call our new house either the "Mater Misericordiae", or the "Auxilium Christianorum". I might ask our Blessed Lady to make him give all the Convents to the BV under the name of some Title in the Litany – for instance a Magdalen Asylum to be called a

“Refugium Peccatorum”, an Orphanage “Janua Caeli” and so on – would it not be nice?’<sup>12</sup>. However it seems that Mother Vincent had a change of heart.

On 1 November 1863, *Adderton* was blessed and renamed *Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, All Hallows’*. It is thought that Mother Vincent named the newly formed school after All Hallows’ College, Dublin.<sup>13</sup>

On 21 November 1863, the Sisters and boarders settled into their new home, and with the transfer of the pupils of the select school to this site, All Hallows’ School found its permanent location. All Hallows’ School traces its origins back to 1861 and is therefore Queensland’s first secondary school for girls. All Hallows’ Convent was the first permanent home of the Sisters of Mercy in Queensland, and has remained the basis for the rapid expansion of their network of educational and social welfare activities until the present day.

*Adderton* remains as the core of the existing convent and is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Brisbane. Features that remain extant from this building include a rare Queensland example of a geometric spiral stair, early glazing, entrance door, windows and shutters, fireplaces, and timber joinery. Beside the fireplace in the parlour there is a bell that was undoubtedly used by Dr Fullerton to summon the servants.

The entrance hall and the two parlours are still very much the same as they were in 1858. The two front rooms were Dr Fullerton’s reception room and dining room, and the Sisters converted these into classrooms. One of these rooms was transformed into a reception room on occasion, and concerts held for the entertainment of visiting dignitaries. The left- hand room was originally separated from the study by a folding wall. The study was to become All Hallows’ first chapel. The basement held the kitchen, dining rooms, and the storerooms, and the boarders and some of the Sisters slept on the first floor. The remainder of the Sisters slept in the attic.<sup>14</sup>

There have been a great deal of changes here in Brisbane, and many of these are reflected in the development of the site at All Hallows'. An obvious change is described in a letter by Mother Vincent Whitty in February 1864:

I wish I could give you an idea of the beauty of the situation of this house. The view of the river from the Balcony is lovely and in the distance the thick bush, here and there cleared away, with the town on one side of the river, it certainly is very beautiful.<sup>15</sup>

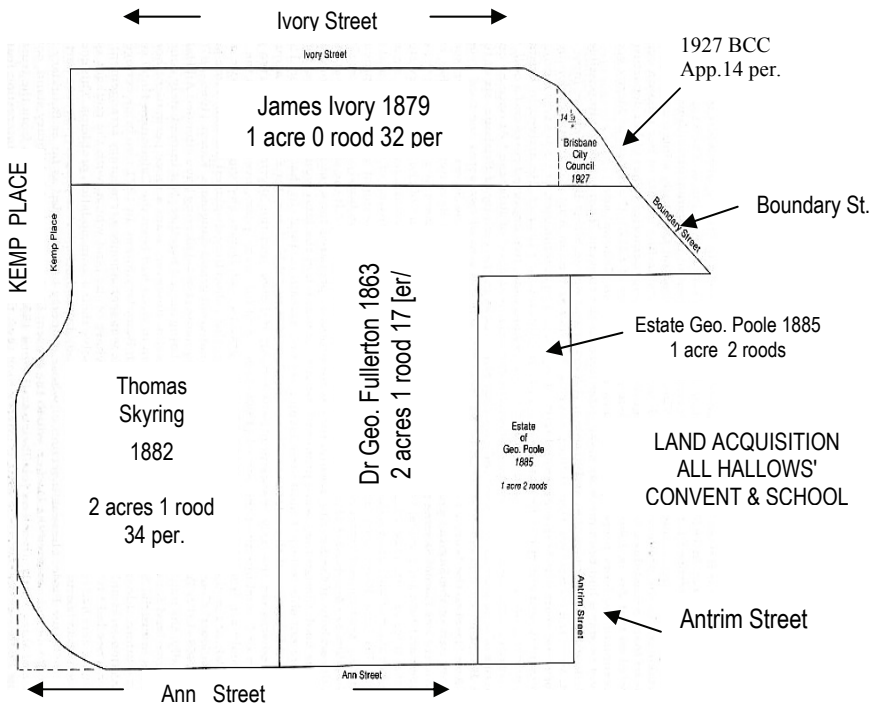
This view from the balcony was maintained due to the careful forethought of architect Andrea Stombuco in 1882, who positioned the Main Building so as to allow this pleasant vista to be maintained. Unfortunately modern architects have not been so kind.

The house originally stood on approximately two and a half acres<sup>16</sup> and overlooked farms and bushland owned by James Ivory, Daniel Skyring and George Poole. The Sisters later purchased these properties in a series of land acquisitions spanning the years 1879-1885.

### **Land Acquisition**

This map summarises the acquisition of land that forms the school and its grounds as they are today. It clearly shows that the grounds of All Hallows' as we know them were not acquired by the Sisters as one unit. The original *Adderton* property and associated lands (the estate of Dr George Fullerton – 2 acres, 1 rood, 17 perches) is the section presently occupied by the central portion of the convent, the driveway, the terraces, a section of Aquinas Hall, and the site of Loretto/ Mercy Hall.

## Map of Land Acquisition <sup>14</sup>



By the end of the 1870s the colony of Brisbane was moving towards the building boom of the next decade. At All Hallows' there were 24 boarders, 40 day pupils, another 30 Sisters (recruited directly from Ireland in 1873 by Mother Vincent Whitty), and an additional 60 professed Sisters and candidates arrived in 1880. The boarders were sleeping in the schoolroom during the late 1870s, and moving their beds onto the verandah each day in an effort to make the most of the available rooms.<sup>18</sup> On 11 July 1876 Governor Cairns commented that he was 'struck by the poverty of room in the place, and with the manner in which the sisters had given up nearly every comfort for the comfort and convenience of their pupils'.<sup>19</sup>

It was Florence O'Reilly<sup>20</sup> who cleared the debt on *Adderton* in 1872. Hailing from Brighton, England, at 23 she heard about the hardships

besetting missionaries in Queensland and was inspired by the Sisters' heroism. She felt no desire to join them as a Sister (and was quite clear about this in her letters) but was convinced she could make a difference in her own way.

Florence reached Brisbane on 24 May 1872, and leased a cottage in All Hallows' grounds – her home until All Hallows' boarding school was opened in 1881. She spent over two decades in Queensland, having chosen to use her inherited wealth to assist the Sisters of Mercy of All Hallows' with their institutions. Florence was a great friend and supporter of the Brisbane Mercies, and her experience in money management and investments proved invaluable to the fledgling community.

This generosity made new building possible. A Building Committee was formed in 1876, and additional land was clearly necessary for expansion. Negotiations with James Ivory began in 1873 for the purchase of his land adjoining Ivory Street. On 8 December 1879, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Sisters purchased the property for £2173. This date had particular significance for Mother Vincent who once commented that most of the outstanding events in her mission occurred on one of Mary's feast-days. In 1882 the Main School Building<sup>21</sup> was built on this land, freeing *Adderton* for the exclusive use of the Sisters.

The Sisters approached Daniel Budd Skyring, the owner of the 2 acre 1 rood 34 perches property between Adderton and Boyne Street-Bowen Terrace (now Kemp Place). He was unwilling to sell his property, but promised the Sisters the first option when the land would be offered for sale. Daniel died in 1882 and his son Thomas Skyring sold the land to the Sisters of Mercy for £5820 that same year.<sup>22</sup> The purchase of this land (the area that now incorporates McAuley Hall, the pool, parts of the convent and tennis courts, and a significant portion of the Main Building) allowed the Sisters to expand the convent building at last.

A series of fundraising bazaars enabled the Sisters to purchase the estate of George Poole for £3000 in 1885. The main idea behind this

was the desire to have a convenient site for the construction of St Ann's Technical School.<sup>23</sup>

In the 1920s the Brisbane City Council resumed land on the corner of Ann Street and Kemp Place for road widening, and in 1927 the Sisters acquired land on the corner of Ivory and Boundary Streets from the Council.<sup>24</sup> The property on the corner of Ann Street and Kemp Place may have been swapped for the land on the corner of Ivory Street and Boundary Road.

Thus the basic boundaries of the school were established, and recent years have seen the acquisition of most of the remaining land on the block. The All Hallows' property has expanded greatly from its humble beginnings in Charlotte Street in 1861, and now occupies almost the entire area bounded by Ann Street, Boundary Road, Ivory Street, and Kemp Place.

### **Extensions and Alterations**

*Adderton* itself remained unaltered until 1890, when major extensions were planned. Below are extracts from articles written in 1890 (*Brisbane Courier*) and 1892 (*The Building and Engineering Journal*) respectively, both outlining plans for the extensions to the Convent building – both articles have been left largely intact, to allow for comparison by the reader. Of particular note are the differences between the 1890 plans for the Chapel, and the report of completed works in 1892.

The convent of the Sisters of Mercy, 'All Hallows', [sic] in Ann street, is about to undergo considerable alterations, and additional buildings in connection with it are about to be erected. The old house, which was one of the earliest structures of Brisbane, being found fairly good and substantial, it has been decided by the architects not to remove it, but to take off the roof, raise the walls to a third story, and extend the building about 50ft in length.<sup>25</sup> This in the completed design will form one of the three sides of a quadrangle. At present this and the northern wing are the portions to be erected. The existing building and extension will contain on the ground floor reception rooms, two offices, workroom, study, and three practice rooms for music. In the basement will be storerooms, lay sisters' workrooms, and a row of six bathrooms. On the first and second floors will be a



novices' room, 20ft. by 19ft. various offices, and thirty-three separate bedrooms, or...cells...Verandas and balconies 8ft. wide will be erected both front and back, all of iron except the floors, which will be of hardwood.

The northern wing will contain on the ground floor a refectory, 52ft. by 27ft. 6in.; storeroom and pantry, each 16ft. by 10ft.; kitchen, 20ft. by 17ft. 6in.; scullery, 17ft. 6in. by 13ft.; bakehouse and large baker's oven. On the first floor will be a community-room, 52ft. by 27ft. 6in.; library and study, 27ft. 6in. by 22ft. 6in.; all these rooms will be 13ft. 6in. in height. The top story will be devoted to more cells, eleven in number, besides linen rooms, housemaids' rooms, &c. The veranda and balconies to this wing will be 10ft. wide. Corridors will run along the centre of the upper stories...The south wing, which is embraced in the plans, but not in the present contract, will comprise a chapel or nun's choir, 75ft. by 27ft. 6in., and 26ft. in height, and an antechapel for accommodation of the school boarders, 44ft. by 27ft. 6in. On the first floor will be an infirmary, 27ft. 6in. by 22ft.; and a tribune for infirm nuns opening off same where they can, through an arch filled with ornamental iron screen work, witness and hear the celebration of divine service in the chapel. The top floor will be divided into cells and linen-room. In the plans an organ gallery runs across one end of the chapel, but the sanctuary has an apsidal termination, and a sacristy is conveniently placed. A handsome belfry surmounts the apex of chapel roof. The elevations show a very plain and unpretending exterior, almost the only embellishment being the derived from the ornamental ironwork in verandas, &c...The architects are Messrs. Hunter and Corrie, of Queen street, and the contract for the portions now to be built has been let to Messrs. Woollam and Norman. The foundation work was commenced last week. The contract price is £7350.<sup>26</sup>

This article outlined plans for an ornamental iron screen, and belfry – neither of which appears to have made it to the construction stage. At this point it is clear the Chapel was planned, but not included, in the contract. This would explain some of the changes evident in the following report, written closer to completion of the works, and the variation in cost (completed alterations cost over £13000, significantly higher than the original contract price quoted above):

## All Hallows' Convent, Brisbane

The above building, which is just approaching completion, is one of the most imposing of the many striking buildings in Brisbane, and we hope to have the opportunity of illustrating it at an early date. Messrs. Hunter and Corrie, the architects, have kindly furnished us with the following description: –

The entire frontage of the building is 179ft. and it is practically four stories in height. The basement contains... [a] hand elevator ... for the purpose of conveying clothes, etc., from the level (where all washing and laundry work is done in outbuildings) to each of the upper floors.

The ground floor in the centre of the building, which is raised about 5 feet above the surface, contains, besides the main entrance hall 20ft. x 9ft., two reception rooms 20ft. x 18ft. each, work-room 20ft. x 18ft., study 18ft. x 16ft., three practice rooms, offices, and a nun's sacristy, and three main staircases.

The entrance is approached by broad flights of stone steps with tiled landing, having pedestals for vases, etc., at angles of same. In the eastern wing is placed the nun's refectory 52ft. x 27ft. 6in., and 16ft. high, with in close proximity store rooms and pantries fitted with hot and cold water, sinks, etc., a large kitchen, scullery, bake-house, brick oven, etc., etc. The refectory is served from the kitchen by a turn-table, whereby all opening and closing of doors is avoided.

The chapel and antechapel occupy the whole of the ground floor in the western wing. The total length is 95ft. x 28ft., the chapel having an apsidal termination at the sanctuary end, and the priest's sacristy opening off same. The sanctuary, 21ft. x 28ft., is floored with encaustic tiles, and has six white marble steps leading up to the altar. Down the whole centre of chapel is a space 9ft. 6in. wide, laid also with tiles, and on either side there are two rows of polished cedar stalls, on cedar flooring in two heights, which are occupied by the sisters, 82 in all. At the back of the stalls there is a polished very handsomely panelled and moulded cedar dado, running to a height of 8ft. above the floor. The chapel roof is supported on curved rib principals, richly moulded, springing from corbels and open to the ridge. All the spandrels are filled with specially designed massive fretwork panels, and along the centre, under ridge, is ornamented iron panelling 12in. wide, communicating with the ventilators in roof.

The spaces between principals are divided into panels by purlins, and filled with diagonal pine boarding. The ante-chapel has a flat ceiling, elaborately panelled, and moulded in Queensland pine casing in the iron girders which span the chapel and support the gallery. All the framing and moulds are stained light cedar colour, and together with panels varnished throughout.

The gallery occupies the centre of the chapel, and is arranged and fitted with seats for accommodation of about 100 boarders attending the convent school. Separate entrances to the chapel are provided for the sisters and children. The gallery front is of open cedar balustrading, on iron girders, spanning across an opening of 21ft. wide in a wall of the main building, which separates the chapel proper from the ante-chapel. This opening has a semi-circular arch with enriched mouldings and ribs springing from corbels.

All the string courses, mouldings and enrichments are in Keen's cement. The centre bay of the apse at back of the altar has no window, but is filled by a magnificent oil painting representing the Sacred Heart in the person of Our Divine Saviour, the figure being life-size. The picture is placed in a recess formed by fluted pilasters, cornice and entablature all worked on the solid wall in Keen's cement.

A memorial stained glass window commemorating the jubilee (50 years) of one of the good nuns, has been placed in the sanctuary, a gift from Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Gray. The glass was obtained from a celebrated manufactory in Munich.

The first floor in the eastern wing is devoted to a community room 52ft. x 27ft. 6in., and library 28ft. x 27ft. 6in. A verandah and balcony, 10ft. wide, partially enclosed with sliding lattice shutters, afford a shady and secluded promenade on the sunny side of this wing. The centre building has on this floor besides 15 cells (bed-rooms) for the sisters, an infirmary with adjacent requisites, housemaids' closet, sinks, etc. A verandah and balcony 8 feet wide and 108 feet in length, run along the ground and first floors of the centre building both back and front, thus affording sheltered communication between the eastern and western wings. The western wing contains on this floor, besides the children's gallery overlooking the chapel, a large room for a novitiate, 21ft. 6in. x 21ft. The second or top floor throughout the building is devoted to

cells...A corridor is wide, well lighted and ventilated, runs down the entire centre of the building, and each cell has a window [?].<sup>27</sup>

The north-eastern wing of the Convent was extended toward Ann Street in 1913 to house further dining, library, and bedroom facilities, replacing the earlier outbuildings (kitchen and bakehouse). An oven that the Sisters used to make altar breads has been retained in the eastern wall.

Despite extensions to the structure in 1891, 1913, and 1919, Adderton remains as one of the oldest surviving buildings in Queensland.

### **The Chapel**

The 1890 and 1892 articles above describe in detail many features of the All Hallows' Chapel, but what has happened to this structure over the years? What of its history?

The original Chapel, built as part of the 1892 extensions, now forms the back section of the present Chapel. It was intended to coincide with the Golden Jubilee of the foundress of All Hallows'. The early Chapel was blessed on 1 March 1892, Mother Vincent Whitty's 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday, as she lay dying. Fittingly, the first Mass in the Chapel was a Requiem Mass for Mother Vincent celebrated on the 9 March 1892 by Archbishop Dunne.<sup>28</sup>

In 1919 the Chapel was almost tripled in size to mark the Golden Jubilee of Mother Patrick. A memorial stone was set into place on the outside of the Chapel during this phase of construction. It reads:

*AMDG*

*This memorial stone to commemorate the Golden Jubilee  
of the Religious Profession of Sister Mary Patrick Potter,  
Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy,  
was blessed and laid by most Rev J. Duhig D. D.  
in the presence of Sisters from all parts of the Archdiocese  
on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1919.*

These renovations saw the removal of the apsidal hancel, the extension of the whole wing towards Ann Street, and the addition of a transept toward the south-west. This extension, designed by Hall and Prentice and costing £14910, was not designed to emulate the earlier Victorian building and employed a stripped classical or early-Renaissance architectural language. The distinction between the two phases of construction is clearly visible and is marked by an arcade supported on marbleised columns. The timber wall panelling and coffered ceiling under the organ gallery remain as they were in the original Chapel.

There are two sets of stained glass windows in the sanctuary. On the left side of the altar are the depictions of the Assumption of Mary and of the Coronation of Mary, referred to in the 1892 article above (See endnote 27). An inscription at the base of the two windows (part of the glass itself) reads:

*In memory of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
Mother Mary Vincent Whitty's profession  
from Mr and Mrs Gray and Mrs Quinlan  
and her old Brisbane friends. Brisbane, August 10, 1891.*

To the right side of the altar are two more stained glass windows, one illustrating the Annunciation and the other the Adoration of the Magi. These were a gift to Mother Mary Patrick Potter and the inscription in these windows reads:

*Presented to Mother Mary Patrick Potter  
by her sincere friends Andrew and Ellen Behan,  
Quebec, 1899.<sup>29</sup>*

Both pairs of windows were moved during the 1919 extension to their present location – the Whitty windows to their place at the left side of the altar in the sanctuary; the Potter windows on the right side of the altar in the sanctuary. However, the order of the latter pair of windows was reversed – previously the Potter windows were (left to right) the Annunciation and the Adoration of the Magi, now they appeared (left to right) as the Adoration of the Magi and the Annunciation. It is unknown why this change was made. Many of

the original stained glass windows from the early period remain in place in the back section of the present Chapel.

The southern transept of the 1919 Chapel is known as the Boarders' Chapel because it was here that the boarders came for Mass and other devotions. Although the boarding school ceased in 1971, the name lingers on.

The 1892 Building and Engineering Journal article (See endnote 27), describes features of the chapel that appear in what is now the Boarder's Chapel – suggesting that materials from the original sanctuary were reused when the Chapel was extended; notably cedar rib principals used in the roof of the sanctuary (now painted over), cedar panelling to the walls, and the wrought iron panel for ventilation. It's a shame the 'ribs' have been painted, however this may have been a result of reconfiguration and the need for additional material i.e. changing the supporting 'ribs' from a semi-circular or apsidal termination into a rectangular extension could mean some alterations to the supporting 'rib' themselves.

It is believed that artist Luigi Favretto painted the murals above the altar in 1952.<sup>30</sup> He copied elements of the classical moulding, and produced detailed feature panels on the walls and ceiling of the sanctuary. Favretto also painted many of the pillars, to disguise the fact that the only marble columns in the Chapel are the two in the sanctuary (closest to the altar).

The Chapel was refurbished in 1968 in accordance with changes to Roman Catholic service guidelines determined by the Vatican II Council. The centrally facing dark stained timber pews were replaced with light pine seating facing the new, more centrally located altar. The old altar and other sanctuary furniture were removed and replaced by the present marble altar and matching furnishings.

## **Some Memories and Recollections of All Hallows' Convent<sup>31</sup>**

### ***World War II***

*We had weekly air raid drill, taking shelter under the Convent. We also had several alarms which were the "real thing", and I*

*remember being drenched with holy water by Sr. M. Ronan at the foot of the narrow wooden stairs which lead down from our classroom. We sang hymns there behind sandbags under the Convent, while some of the nuns walked around outside, scanning the skies for Jap planes.*

*Our mothers had to make us each a small bag to hold ear plugs and a rubber or wooden peg to put between our teeth. Our name was embroidered on the flap of the bag. (Helen Langdon [nee Nice])*

*We had regular air raid practice and sirens would sound a certain way when it was just a practice but one day when we were in the Study the real thing happened. Sister Mary Celine always told us to keep singing even if the school was on fire. We were singing "Tales from Vienna Woods" and we tried to make her understand it was the real thing but that was in vain. She kept conducting the choir. We all started rushing out of the Study to the air raid shelters. We had to go to the basement of St Annes [sic] and there were lots of old nuns there. Probably not as old as I am now but at 14 years of age most people look old. We said the rosary over and over until the all clear sounded. Even now whenever I hear that music I remember that day so clearly.*

*Sister Mary Phillipa was an Air Raid Warden and I do wish there was a photo of her in her habit of the day with the tin helmet on top of her head. She was always so efficient and her efficiency didn't desert her when she was doing her war effort. (Win Mendoza [nee Collingwood] )*

### ***The Novitiate and World War II***

*There was no special Novitiate building before the 1940's. This group of young Sisters studied in the area above the back of the Chapel and in the building known as St. Brigid's. The Novices took their turn in caring for the Sick and many stories are told of their experiences during "night duty". In 1942, during the war years the Novices were transferred to the Training College on the grounds on St. Vincent's because a new Novitiate was built at Bardon in 1949...Convent at Nudgee. They did not return to All Hallows' (Sister Marie Carmelita Duggan rsm)*

### ***Teacher Training***

*After McAuley College was built in the grounds (1958) Sisters who had just left Bardon lived in All Hallows' while they did their Teacher Training. There were also Sisters from other Mercy Congregations – Townsville and Cairns – living here at the time. (Sister Germaine Greathead rsm)*

### ***Community Life***

*All Hallows' was a hub of activity. On the ground floor the Administration Offices of the Congregation were housed. This corridor was out of bounds for most of us. We would process from the Chapel to the Dining Room along the back verandah. (Sister Marie Carmelita Duggan rsm)*

*All Hallows' Convent was also the place of residence for the Mother Superiors of the Brisbane Congregation until 1975 when the Generalate was moved to Bardon...*

*The Sisters lived a semi-monastic life style even though they were engaged in various apostolic works e.g. teaching in schools, visiting the sick and poor, and domestic activities. (Sister Germaine Greathead rsm)*

### **Conclusion**

As the oldest surviving secondary school for girls in Brisbane, All Hallows' is able to demonstrate the pattern of development of education (particularly in privately managed schools) in Queensland. There has been considerable change on the site, though very little demolition of buildings, and therefore the site retains an intact record of the growth of the school, and is a very good example of a nineteenth century convent and school site. The introspective nature of the site planning provides an intact physical manifestation of the catholic ethos of female education during the nineteenth and twentieth century, and reflects traditional collegiate planning.<sup>32</sup> The open areas of the school allow the buildings to maintain a relationship with the river and surrounding areas.

Individually the buildings are well-composed, and have significant aesthetic and architectural value: the 1882 Main Building is a good



example of educational building design of the Victorian period, with sensitive additions; St Ann's Industrial School demonstrates Gothic revival detailing; several of the 1920s and 1930s buildings, including the chapel extension, manifest an influence of inter-war classicism; Aquinas Hall is a well-articulated building of the post-war period; and the Georgian proportion and restraint of *Adderton* influenced the additions of the Convent (1891, 1913, and 1919). A citation from the National Trust of Queensland 1986, having quoted the earlier description of *Adderton* (See endnote 1), concluded:

...the extensions have done little to alter the austere appearance. The convent, though large, still presents itself as a plain, handsome stuccoed building dressed up with verandahs and iron railings on all levels.

Several individual buildings have architectural merit, and together feature the work of many of Brisbane's premier architectural practitioners and firms, including Andrew and John Petrie, Hunter and Corrie, Andrea Giovanni Stombuco, Hall and Dods, Hall and Prentice, FDG Stanley, GHM Addison and Frank Cullen. Many of these buildings feature high quality craftsmanship, including the timber joinery and stained glass panels in the Main Building, Convent and St Ann's.

The School and Convent also have associations with many people of importance to both Queensland and Catholic history. These include Archbishops Quinn, Dunne and Duhig, who were all actively involved in the planning and development of the institution; Mother Mary Vincent Whitty who established the Sisters of Mercy in Queensland; and Mother Mary Patrick Potter who was a long time superior of the Order.

Over the years, All Hallows' Convent has seen a multitude of changes – conversion from a private residence to a Convent, structural alterations, foundations of Mercy ministries, organisational reforms, ecclesiastical renewal as a result of Vatican II, religious ceremonies, the development of Brisbane around it, the failure of the Holy Name Cathedral, and the construction of the Story Bridge to name but a few – and will always be a significant heritage site,

reflecting the history of the Sisters of Mercy, the Catholic Church, and Brisbane itself.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Associated Structures – in brief**

Several of the buildings on the site provide evidence of early social and cultural customs that are no longer practiced. Some examples are: St Ann's, one of few Industrial Schools in Brisbane, providing evidence of earlier forms of technical education; and the Lodge, which acted as an almonry for many years, always an important element of the Sisters' social programmes.

### **The Wall**

In 1865 the environment on Duncan's Hill began to change as High Road was renamed Ann Street. During that same year Ann Street was cut down by 15ft, so from that time on All Hallows' was perceived as being on the top of a cliff, rather than on the apex of a gentle hill. Ann Street was subject to three more cuts in 1876, 1886, and finally in 1927, when it took its present form.<sup>33</sup>

Little would a stranger passing down Ann Street know what great work for the needy was being done behind that great stone wall! Travelling in a tram one day I overheard a group of American sailors discussing the Wall. Between them they had decided that All Hallows' was Boggo Road jail! I could have given them some facts on the spot. (Sister Marie Carmelita Duggan rsm) (See endnote 31)

### **The Gatekeeper's Lodge**

In 1879 a stone gatekeeper's lodge and entrance gateway were constructed. For many years the lodge served as an almonry, and the poor were given food and clothing here on the steps, until other arrangements were made.

Rev. Joseph Augustine Canali,<sup>34</sup> an architect and engineer from Italy who arrived in 1872, designed both the lodge and the gate. He intended to join the priesthood in Queensland, and he was the first priest ordained in St Stephen's Cathedral on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1879. He



## ENDNOTES:

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- 1 Moreton Bay Courier, 8 May 1858.
- 2 John Petrie is credited with the building (Adderton) in:  
Sr Jean-Marie Mahoney, *Dieu et Devoir: The Story of All Hallows' School, Brisbane, 1861-1981* (Brisbane: Boolarong Publications, 1985), 8.  
A blue oval historical plaque from 1963 concurs; however the source of this information is unknown:

THIS IS THE OLDEST PART OF ALL HALLOWS' CONVENT, ONCE THE RESIDENCE OF DOCTOR GEORGE FULLERTON, A MEMBER OF THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF QUEENSLAND IN 1860, AND OWNER OF TOOLOOMBILLA STATION, MARANOA DISTRICT, IN 1862. ON 15TH APRIL 1857, HE HAD PURCHASED THE LAND UPON WHICH JOHN PETRIE BUILT FOR HIM THIS HOUSE, CALLED *ADDERTON*. IT BECAME QUEENSLAND'S FIRST SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS WHEN IT WAS OPENED BY ITS FOUNDER, THE RIGHT REVEREND JAMES QUINN, D.D., ON ALL HALLOWS DAY, 1863. THIS PLAQUE WAS AFFIXED HERE BY THE QUEENSLAND WOMEN'S HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, 100 YEARS AFTERWARDS, ON ALL HALLOWS DAY, 1963

See also (for biographical information):

- Dimity Dornan & Denis Cryle, *The Petrie Family: Building Colonial Brisbane*, (Brisbane: UQ Press).
  - D. Watson, & J. McKay, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century: A Biographical Dictionary* (Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994).
- 3 See 1963 plaque information above (endnote 2). Also: Mahoney 1985, 8.
  - 4 Denis Martin, *The Foundation of the Catholic Church in Queensland* (Toowoomba: Church Archivists' Press, 1998), 152.
  - 5 More detail on the beginnings of All Hallows' School may be found in: Mahoney, 1985, 2-9.  
Further information on select schools is in: Sr Mary Xavierius O'Donoghue, *Mother Vincent Whitty: Woman and Educator in a Masculine Society* (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1972), 34ff.
  - 6 Queensland Heritage Register, place ID 600078.  
<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/projects/heritage/index.cgi?place=600078&back=1>  
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  - 7 Reference to the early history of *Dara* can be found in Martin, 86, 146, 151, 153, and 156.
  - 8 *Queensland Daily Guardian*, 14 July 1863, reported '...the Hon. Dr. Fullerton wished to return to England.'

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- 9 Queensland Heritage Register, place ID 600200. Hon. Dr. Fullerton wished to return to England.  
<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/projects/heritage/index.cgi?place=600200&back=1>
- 10 Letter 18 July 1863: M. M. Vincent Whitty to Rev Mother, Baggot Street, from: Sisters of Mercy Brisbane Congregation - *Mercy Women Making History: From the pen of Mother Vincent Whitty* (Brisbane: Crusader Print, 2001), 59.
- 11 Letter 18 August 1863: M. M. Vincent Whitty to Rev Mother, Baggot Street, from: *Mercy Women Making History: From the pen of Mother Vincent Whitty*, 6-62.
- 12 Letter 18 September 1863: Mother Mary Vincent Whitty to Reverend Mother, Baggot Street, from: *Mercy Women Making History: From the pen of Mother Vincent Whitty*, 66.
- 13 *All Hallows' College*, Dublin, was established in 1842 for training priests to serve the overseas Irish diaspora, at a time of ongoing emigration from Ireland (to the USA, Canada, Australia, etc.), and a time of missionary expansion of the Irish Church. The college itself was named after a Priory of Augustinian Canons founded on the site by Diarmuid McMurrugh about 1166 and dissolved in 1538, with confiscation of the land, during the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. When land from this site was acquired for the new college, Archbishop Murray of Dublin suggested that it be called *All Hallows'*, since the original Priory was titled *All Saints'*. See Condon, Kevin *The Missionary College of All Hallows 1842-1891*. (Dublin: *All Hallows' College*, 1986), 59-60; comments supplied courtesy Dr Rosa MacGinley.
- According to Mahoney (1985, 9-11) *All Hallows' College*, Dublin, was so named to recall the seventh century parish church, *All-Hallows'-by-the-Tower* in London. Mahoney also discusses the long tradition of associating *All Hallows'* Brisbane with *All-Hallows'-by-the-Tower* in London – but admits that the reason/s for the selection of the title is unknown.
- The connection with '*All-Hallows'-by-the-Tower*' is also acknowledged in O'Donoghue, but no reference is noted. See: O'Donoghue, Xaverius, *Beyond Our Dreams: A Century of the Works of Mercy in Queensland*. (Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1961), 33.
- 14 Mother Bridget Conlan, *Reminiscences 1860-1921*, handwritten document held at the Sisters of Mercy Congregation Archives, Bardonia, 15.
- 15 Letter 17 February 1864: Mother Mary Vincent Whitty, Brisbane to Reverend Mother, Baggot Street, from: *Mercy Women Making History: From the pen of Mother Vincent Whitty*, 73.

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- 16 2.5 acres is equivalent to 1.012 hectares, or 10117.14 square metres.
- 17 Mahoney 1985, 55.
- 18 Mother Bridget Conlan, *Reminiscences 1860 – 1921*, 51.
- 19 *Brisbane Courier*, 11 July 1876.
- 20 Information on Florence O'Reilly was obtained from Sr Ursula Markham rsm for the *Brisbane Beginnings: History and Her Story* exhibition at the Mercy Heritage Centre in 2003. Sr Ursula is currently researching Florence O'Reilly for a future biographical publication.
- 21 Information about the architect for the Main Building (Andrea Giovanni Stombuco) can be found in:
- Piero P. Giorgi, , *Stombuco: The Building of Brisbane in the 19th Century* (Brisbane: Minerva E & S, 1998)
  - D. Watson & J. McKay, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century: A Biographical Dictionary* (Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994).
- 22 Mahoney, 1985, 56. This account is footnoted and refers to Title Deeds and a Cash Book at the Sisters of Mercy Congregation Archives, Bardon.
- 23 Information about the early history of St Ann's Industrial School can be found in Mahoney, 99-101.
- 24 Mahoney, 151. This account is footnoted and refers to correspondence from the Town Clerk to Hon. E. H. Macartney, Messrs. Thynne and Macartney, Solicitors, 18 June 1925, held at the Sisters of Mercy Congregation Archives, Bardon.
- 25 1 inch = 2.54 centimetres; 12 inches = one foot = 0.305 metres.
- 26 *Brisbane Courier*, 2 July 1890.
- 27 *The Building and Engineering Journal*, 27 February 1892.
- 28 Mahoney, 98.
- 29 Sister Mary Asicus Murphy was a niece of the Behan's. Further explanation of this linkage can be found in Mahoney, 97.
- 30 In 2000 a relative of Favretto came to All Hallows' Convent and reported to a member of the resident Community that the mural and columns were done by Luigi Favretto in 1953.

We know from the 1952 All Hallows' School Magazine that painting took place in the Chapel (August to at least November) that year, making it unavailable for Mass for schoolchildren – incidentally the Main Building

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Concert Hall was used as an alternative venue. However, the Magazines do not report who did the painting, or even that the mural appeared at this time i.e. may have been maintenance painting. From reliably dated photographs we can see the mural and columns were painted some time between 1951 and 1958 (photographs in collections of both All Hallows' School Archives and Sisters of Mercy Congregation Archives, Bardon).

Based on this evidence, 1952 seems the most likely date.

- 31 The personal memories and recollections used in this section (and in Appendices) were compiled as a didactic resource for visitors to the Mercy Heritage Centre in the *By the Bend of the River: Scenes from All Hallows' 1858-2005* exhibition 2005. As the comments are written by a number of different people, their names have been included at the end of each quote.
- 32 Adapted from the Queensland Heritage Register, place ID 600200.
- 33 Adapted from the Queensland Heritage Register, place ID 600200.
- 34 For more information on Joseph Canali see: Patrick J. Tynan, *The Apostle of Brisbane: Joseph Canali*, (Toowoomba: Church Archivists' Press, 1992).
- 35 Letter 11 February 1875: Bishop Quinn to Reverend Mother, held at the Sisters of Mercy Congregation Archives, Bardon.

## **OTHER WORKS CONSULTED**

### **Huxley, Sr Rita.**

*Ann Street Gate and All Hallows' Chapel* (unpublished article, 2000).

### **Kennedy, M. Cook, M. & Macken, N.**

*All Hallows' Conservation Plan for All Hallows' School and the Mercy Congregation* (unpublished report, 2000).

### **Mercy Heritage Centre**

*Heritage Tour of All Hallows' Convent and School*. (Brisbane: Sisters of Mercy Brisbane Congregation, 2003).

### **O'Donoghue, Sr Mary Xaverius.**

*Beyond Our Dreams: A Century of the Works of Mercy in Queensland* (Brisbane: The Jacaranda Press, 1961).