

ANZ Musings

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Photograph by Caren Mitsios – Tulip time in Ottawa 2017

Our visit to Mary Immaculate Primary School

For some months a few of us at Stuartholme had been wondering about what gift we could give to Mary Immaculate Primary School on behalf of the Society and Stuartholme to mark their centenary which we shared. The first RSCJ to arrive in Brisbane in 1917 had been asked by Archbishop Duhig to open a primary school while they searched for a suitable site for a boarding school. After some thought and discussion we decided that the best gift we could give them was the story of their first three years as recorded in our archives.

Among the stories of the work of the Sisters in the parish and school are some of the favours obtained by praying to Sophie. Here is one of them.

Madeleine McGrath born shortly after our arrival in Brisbane, was named after our saint. When less than a year old she was severely scalded and the poor mother sent word that the baby was not expected to live for the day. We sent a relic and a prayer but, as Madeleine was from time to time seized with convulsions, the relic was not put on her, she having to be constantly put in hot baths. When a telephone message brought us this news, we urged the mother to put on the relic at once. She did it and the whole family, kneeling around the little cot began to recite the prayer to Madeleine Sophie. The baby immediately went to sleep, slept all night and next morning was sitting up laughing and crowing as gaily as ever showing to everybody the relic which, with a scapular of the Sacred Heart, was sewn on her nightgown. In the afternoon there was a slight return of fever, but the prayer was again recited with the same result as on the previous day. Madeleine was completely cured to the great astonishment of the doctor. Mrs McGrath has since either lent her relic or obtained others for her suffering friends with most happy results.

We thought that Sophie would not have lost her interest in Annerley and it would be good to reintroduce her to the children there as we were sure she would happily coexist with Mary MacKillop. So just before the school holidays began Genny and I paid a visit to Mary Immaculate with our gift to the school: a framed picture of Saint Madeleine Sophie, two versions of her life, one for the children and Mary Shanahan's one for the adults, as well as their early history from our archives and a photobook of the story that the children could enjoy. We spent a pleasant time with the Principal, Mike Armstrong and Leanne Delaney, the Chair of the Centenary Committee. The next day we received this beautiful email from the Principal, Mike, who Leanne told us is very interested in history.

Thank you so much for visiting yesterday and presenting our school community with your very generous gifts. The books and canvas were the perfect representations of the historical and spiritual connection that exists between our two communities. The charism and narratives that you generously shared, are such a momentous part of our journey and the role your community played in our school's beginning, 100 years ago is so significant in our story.

Together may we continue to 'incline our hearts', to 'discover and make known the love of God' in our school communities and in our world, for many centuries to come.

We are very grateful for your overwhelming support for our centenary year, and for your continuing and welcomed involvement in our school community.

N.B. "Incline our hearts" is the motto of Mary Immaculate Primary School.



Leanne Delaney with the picture of Saint Madeleine Sophie



With Mike Armstrong and Leanne Delaney.

Rita Carroll RSJC

Julia Nanette Kelly

7 December 1924 - 20 August 2017



To do justice to Nanette Kelly in the time and space of a eulogy is both a privilege and a challenge.

At the outset, I want to acknowledge Nan's much loved sister, Gretchen, whose health does not allow her to be here to-day. The bond of affection between the two sisters was tangible. Every week without fail, wherever Gretchen was living, Nan would arrive in her little car to take her out for the day or afternoon. This continued at first when Gretchen moved to St Joseph's Nursing Home at Kensington. When it became impossible for Nan to visit, both sisters knew the pain of isolation from each other.

Nan was born on 7 December 1924 at Wangaratta in Victoria. Her father was the doctor and I imagine her mother, whom we all knew as Pixie, was given fully to rearing her three children, Nanette, Gretchen and John. She was educated by the Brigidine Sisters in her primary years and had a lifelong love of and regard for them. She had only just turned 10 when she arrived at Sacré Coeur Melbourne in February 1935 as a boarder.

That was the beginning of a love of the Society of the Sacred Heart, of RSCJ and of all things associated with us.

School records show that she achieved academically from the outset and that she was a leader. It was a time of the movement for Catholic Action, inspired by the Belgian Cardinal Cardijn who promoted action through seeing, judging, acting. I wonder if this sowed the seed in Nan for a life of service and responding to any need she saw. Someone said to me:

She had an eye for need. This echoes words Mary MacKillop often said to her Sisters: *“Never see a need without doing something about it.”*

Her academic achievements and her leadership were recognized in her final year. The Annual Prizegiving was presided over by the Archbishop and attended by a number of priests. Nan was awarded the Prize for Excellence which meant that she received the First Medallion and Ribbon of Merit, as well as prizes for Distinction in Studies, Christian Doctrine and general good conduct, all requirements for the Prize for Excellence.

Nan was awarded a Bursary for Newman College, University of Melbourne where she excelled in Science subjects. The 1945 school annual reported that, as well as continuing her university studies, she was also teaching Science and German part-time at Sacré Coeur and was still doing that in 1947.

1946 was a very difficult year for the Kelly family. Gretchen entered the Society of the Sacred Heart in February, aged 18, a major separation for her and the whole family. Both her father, Dr John Kelly and her grandfather, William Kelly died within a very short time of each other. Subsequently Pixie, Nan and John moved to Melbourne.

Probably in the late 1940s - early 1950s, she travelled to England and taught at a prestigious school, the Alice Ottley School for Girls. With her spirit of adventure, she would sometimes go to the Headmistress saying: *I'm off to Paris for the weekend and I'd like to leave a little early on Friday.* Nothing daunted Nan, even the renowned Headmistress, Miss Roden.

Though it's not clear when she returned to Melbourne, it seems that she would have been back, living with her mother and brother, Johnnie, when he died in an accident in 1957. Undoubtedly, resilience was a character trait of these two remarkable women.

Nan and Pixie moved to Sydney in the early to mid-1960s, closer proximity to Gretchen being part of the motivation for the change. They lived for a time in the eastern suburbs and became parishioners of St Joseph's Edgecliff.

One day Pixie noticed a new unit building being constructed right behind St Joseph's Church. They decided to move to Karoola on its completion in 1968. Nan lived there until 2014 when she moved to Albert Court. She was the Honorary Secretary of Karoola for most of those 46 years and a great friend of many of the residents, never too busy to help anyone at any hour of the day or night.

Nan was involved with St Joseph's and dedicated to the Parish since she first moved to Sydney. One of the Franciscan Friars who remembers her from her early days said she was

committed to looking after every wedding, every funeral and to setting up everything to make it easier for those involved. Nothing was a trouble to her.

In later years, Nan took over more duties. Her day always began with the opening of the Church and attending the 7 a.m. Mass. Undoubtedly, her faith was the bedrock of her life, a faith that was lived in action and service.

The building of the Albert Court Retirement Hostel was perhaps one of Nan's greatest challenges. She saw the need for a Catholic retirement facility for parishioners. In the early 1980's, she, with Fathers Peter McGrath and Mel Cotter, formed a committee to raise funds, design and build the beautiful Hostel/Nursing Home that is there to-day.

After many challenges, Albert Court was built and opened in 1993. It was finally her home for the last three years of her life.

Nan was a woman of friendship. She had many friends across the world, of all ages and in all walks of life. She was much loved by them all. Evidence for this may be deduced from the fact that she had 14 godchildren – many of her friends calling on her in this capacity.

Speaking with some of them this week, I heard recurring themes: she always found time for them, she treated each as though they were the only one, she was great company and fun, gave wise and timely counsel and was interested in every aspect of their lives. One godson said to me: *We were her children.*

Nan taught for a time at Ascham School in Edgecliff. With the introduction of the Wyndham Scheme in the 1960s, many Science teachers especially in Catholic schools were faced with new approaches for which they were not prepared. Many a Brother or Sister was coached by Nan in new methods. She was prominent in the Catholic Science Teachers Association and co-authored a Biology text book for Higher School Certificate.

She was a Senior Lecturer at Sydney Teachers' College. We can only try to imagine her influence on students, the ways in which she enabled them to become good teachers, insisting firmly but kindly on high standards and also the impact she would have had on her colleagues. The words of Janet Erskine Stuart, a great Sacred Heart educator, could surely be applied to Nan: *It is not so much what we say or do that educates; what really educates is who we are.*

Nan's education at Sacré Coeur Melbourne was the source of her love of and support for the Society of the Sacred Heart and its schools in Australia and New Zealand. She served on a Provincial education advisory committee in the 1970s.

Being an alumna from Melbourne, she was able to take a somewhat impartial role in bringing about the fusion of two Alumnae Associations of Kincoppal and Rose Bay at the

time of amalgamation of the two schools, leading to the foundation of the Sacré Coeur Association New South Wales in 1975.

One alumna from this time recalled Nan writing something she called “The Musings of a Tribal Elder”. She was passionate for the alumnae association to “reflect the source, history and traditions of the School’s foundress, St Madeleine Sophie Barat and the origins of the Society’s educational philosophy.”

Nan was appointed to the School Council of Kincoppal-Rose Bay in 1977. She chaired the Council’s Committee which planned all the events associated with the Centenary in 1982. She carried out this multi-faceted role with great efficiency and charm.

In 1983, she was appointed Chair of the School Council, a position she held until the end of 1989. She ran very well organised and efficient Council meetings. Council members and the Principal were asked to present monthly reports on ONE page only. *‘We do not need to cut down any more trees’*. As Principal, I could count on her wise counsel and loyal support. She would often remind me *that the cemeteries are full of indispensables*.

As Chair of the Council, she oversaw the process of recruitment for the first lay Principal, chaired the interview panel and negotiated the incoming Principal’s contract. This was new territory. She carried this out with due diligence, appropriate consultation, a sense of collegiality with the Council and accountability to the Society. As the retiring Principal, I experienced her unwavering support and sensitivity.

Another great love of Nan’s was Sancta Sophia College. She was appointed a Member of the College Council in 1977, a position she held until 2000. An active contributor to Council, Nan took a particular interest in the College Treasures, the Library and the College Archives. One Chair of the Council said that she was the no-nonsense person to turn to for clear thinking and wise counsel.

I have spoken to a number of people this week or received written testimonies from them. I have been touched by words and phrases used to describe Nan and now, in conclusion, name but a few: she was kindness personified, indefatigable, a connector of people, great fun, always interested in the other person, always available, a woman of great resilience, empathy, humour and common sense.

Nan was involved in a day of reflection for Alumnae in 2014. The theme was “The Vocation of Ageing”. Words of St Madeleine Sophie shared that day speak to me of Nan: *“As time goes on, the aged often come to a freedom which brings in its wake a quiet love and a kinship with all.”*

As we celebrate Nan's life to-day, let us give thanks that she knew and lived *the freedom which brings in its wake a quiet love and a kinship with all.*

Rest in peace, dear Nan, until we meet again.

*Anne McGrath RSCJ
25 August 2017*

Marie Kennedy shares the following:

Nanette Kelly was an Associate of the Sacred Heart from its inception in Sydney and remained part of my group until she went to Albert Court when she became a correspondence member. She was also an alumna of KRB. Personally, I appreciate her great support in writing the history of Sancta Sophie which she asked me to write.

MARYMOUNT

Communication 2



Our second week at Marymount included a celebration at Mass of the Korean martyrs. Kim Sook Hee presented some information which was both interesting and inspiring particularly in that the Church in Korea had its beginnings and was sustained for a long time by laity; at that liturgy we also acknowledged International Peace Day as we were not having Mass the next day, the actual day for International Peace Day. We generally have Mass four times a week as we have four priests doing the programme; on Sundays, or Saturdays, we go to the various local parishes.

Last Saturday evening, we attended Mass at St Madeleine Sophie's Parish, Kenthurst. It was the first time I had been there and it seems quite a vibrant and sizeable parish and school. They are raising money to build a new church; I am wondering where the original little stone church might be ... Next time we go there it will be one question I plan to ask. We have also celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Mercy as Marymount is run by the Sisters of Mercy. While Mary was acknowledged in the liturgy there was a very strong emphasis on the mercy coming from God/Jesus. We also did celebrate the Marists' feast on 12 September, the Holy Name of Mary.

On the Sunday, we were taken on a ferry ride up the Hawkesbury River from Palm Beach to Patonga, Cottage Point then Bobbin Head where we had lunch followed by bush walks through two areas of Ku-Ring-Gai National Park, many more wild flowers being in the second area, so many so tiny and insignificant that one needs to look carefully and closely to see them and they are truly beautiful. At one point there was a lot of noise coming from some birds. As we looked we saw two plovers on the ground where their nest was; momentarily the mother got up and I saw four eggs in the nest! The father was being

protective from a distance; there were so many people around that one would wonder at the wisdom of nesting on the ground but that is what plovers do!

We have been given a list of birds that can be seen at Marymount and I am gradually placing ticks beside those I have actually sighted - currawongs, eastern rosellas, lorikeets, butcher birds among others; I heard a koel the other day!



Images: Plover also called Masked Lapwing, Rainbow Lorikeet and Gynea Lily

The presentations from the speakers are excellent and very varied - contemplation and compassion, focussing, living scripture, prayer, journaling and art therapy, discernment ... And much more to come. Already I can see that while the presentations are very different there is quite an amount of inter-connection between them. Spiritual companionship is offered and on Thursdays there is extra time for reflection, much needed to enable us to absorb what we have received in the previous days.

I had a chance to have time with Reiko Tanaka, one of my sisters of probation, and Sook Hee, Buk Sil and I had some time together with her during which she shared something of her experience of doing translation work with the Good Samaritans at their General Chapter at Baulkham Hills.

Monday 2nd October, was a public holiday in N.S.W., so some of the group went away. We end this week with a day trip to Canberra for the whole group.

Once again, I want to say how grateful I am to have this time of renewal and reflection - it is proving to be very enriching.

Esmey Herscovitch RSCJ

Acorn Award at Duchesne College



Formal Dinners are a feature of all University Colleges and they are an important aspect of the students' life at Duchesne. There is always an invited guest speaker to give the students an insight into a topic of current interest. Each year the students really look forward to the "Alumnae Dinner" when an alumna speaks of her days at Duchesne and the pathway of her professional career. This year was a little different as two alumnae, best friends Rachel Stewart and Melissa Walter, were interviewed by Thérèse Eddy, the Principal, instead of the usual formal talk. It made for a very friendly atmosphere and emphasised the way that "sisterhood" is valued by the students, to use one of their favourite terms.

A highlight of the Alumnae Dinner is their recently introduced Outstanding Alumna Award. It is called "The Acorn" and it is a prestigious award for former residents who have achieved outstanding success in their fields and who have made exemplary contributions to their communities. This year it was awarded to our own Kathleen Muirhead. The award was presented by Alumna Gina Brosnan with the following beautiful citation.

If we look at some of the writings associated with The Religious of the Sacred Heart, we soon see words that sum up many of tonight's recipient's attributes and the ways in which she lives out the Goals of Sacred Heart Education.

Saint Madeline Sophie Barat, the founder of the order, said, "For the sake of one child, I would have founded the Society."

She wrote that "What is needed for winning parents and children is to be busy about them, at their service from morning to night; to forget oneself and enter into what concerns the children, body and soul; to listen to them with interest; to console and

to encourage them; finally to sacrifice for them everything except one's soul; and become for their sakes gentle, patient, indulgent; in one word, a mother."

She continued: "Give only good example to the children; never correct them when you are out of humour or impatient. We must win them by an appeal to their ... hearts. Soften your reprimands with kind words; encourage and reward them. That, in short, is our way of educating.

"With the students, keep an even tone, both gentle and firm. Show them by the care with which you help them to advance along every line for which you are responsible, that you care for their interests alone, and that you want to help them to acquire a solid and faith-filled education, enhanced by learning, and thus make them happy.

This quote is particularly illuminating:

"Your example, even more than your words, will be an eloquent lesson to the world.

What Sophie said was echoed by Janet Erskine Stuart, Head of the Order a century ago:

"Those render them the best service who train them early to decide for themselves to say yes or no definitely; to make up their mind promptly, not because they 'feel like it' but for a reason which they know ..."

The awardee tonight has had an association of more than 30 years with Duchesne College. Her name first appears on the Honour Board in this Dining Room in 1987.

The awardee tonight is a superb example of a person who has lived her life in alignment with what these great educators have said. She did what many country girls had to do and at the age of eight she left home to attend Stuartholme School as a boarder.

After receiving her call to the religious life, she spent her time as a novice at Woldingham School in Surrey, the first Sacred Heart School to be founded in England, in 1842.

She returned to Stuartholme as a boarder mistress and then as Director of Boarding.

She came to Duchesne in 1987 as Vice Principal, a role she filled for nearly 30 years.

Although the students at Duchesne were a bit older than most of the "children" Sophie speaks of, Sister Kathleen Muirhead has lived and breathed the teachings of Madeleine Sophie. She has set the example by her own behaviour, her own standards and faith and she has done so without being judgmental. Students have always known that Sister Kath would be a kind, compassionate and caring listener and supporter. She has enriched the lives of many hundreds of Duchesne students, and

she is a most worthy recipient of the Acorn Award as an Outstanding Alumna of this College.

Kathleen was presented with an engraved plaque and a beautiful bouquet of flowers.

The evening was rounded out with a some farewell words to Principal, Thérèse Eddy, from the Vice-Principal, Clare Goodwin and the Student President, Grace Shuttleworth, expressing gratitude for her leadership of the College and a presentation and blessing from the Council.

Rita Carroll RSCJ

Golden Jubilee of St Therese School Sadleir

1967 – 2017

This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the parish school of St Therese at Sadleir-Miller. Fr. Frank Muldoon, the Parish Priest at the time, had asked Mother McGuinness if she could supply him with some of our religious to conduct this school.

In honour of the Golden Jubilee, the current P.P., Fr. Paulino and the principal, Mrs Michelle McKinnon, invited all the former principals of St. Therese for their day of celebration, commencing with a 9.30am Mass in the church. Srs. Betty McMahon, Diana Hayes and myself, being the first three principals, were all able to attend and were duly feted, especially Betty, who being the “Founding Mother”, was invited to address the gathering during the time for ‘speeches’ after the Mass.

This she did, informing the gathered children of ‘fifty minus forty seven’ important things to remember: 1. Faith – or a strong belief in the fact that God loves, and always will love each one of them, no matter what. 2. That they should be passionate about learning. 3. To always look after each other and be kind, so as to really form a “simply loving” community, in keeping with the motto on the school crest, “Simplex Caritas”. The other forty seven important things she was going to keep to herself.

The principal, Mrs McKinnon, newly arrived this year, spoke so beautifully to the children, saying how much God loved them, how much she loved them and how honoured she felt to be the Principal of this school, that I found myself wiping away a tear from my eye. She exhorted them to ‘reach for the stars’ and become anything that they wanted to be. Fr. Paulino’s homily was so fatherly that, between the three of them, that ‘simple love’ was tangibly felt in the church.

Before the end, the past principals and teachers were invited to come up and face the congregation, in order to be applauded, while Betty, Diana and myself each received a beautiful bouquet of flowers. At either side of us were four banners, bearing the titles: Muldoon – for Father Muldoon the first Parish Priest, McMahon – because Betty was the first principal; Baartz (Shirley Baartz) – the first, and superb, secretary of many years; and Lowen (Ted) – the first male teacher (and wonderful ‘father figure’). These banners, which had been processed up the aisle in front of their patrons, will be used for the names of sporting teams, etc., replacing the school colours of red and white.

The behaviour of the meticulously uniformed children throughout this one-and-half hour ceremony was exemplary. They also sang numerous hymns in full voice. After the time in the church, we all crossed the road to continue the festivities – last day of term, to boot, for the students.

We visitors were welcomed to a delicious luncheon in the school hall, as well as lots of hugs and greeting from old friends. Betty, whose association with the school went back the furthest was, of course, the 'star'. Three of the teachers who were there in my day – twenty years ago – were still in the school. Of particular joy to me was being greeted by four fine young men, three of whom I had taught in Grade Four. It was quite a challenge trying to recognize faces and remember names after so long but, amazingly for me, I seemed to manage. One lady helped by saying, "You'll remember me because I'm the mother of ----", saying his name. With that prompt, I certainly did! They are all such beautiful, open and welcoming people that it is no wonder little St. Therese School, Sadleir, will always have a special place in the hearts of those of us who have had the privilege of living and working there.

Nancy Fitzgerald RSCJ