

## HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES SCHOOL

On Sunday, November 2, 1890, a meeting was held in the Star of the Sea Church, East Devonport. At this meeting it was resolved that the Sisters of St Joseph be asked to start a Catholic school in the area.

Our Lady of Lourdes School officially opened in January, 1891, when three Sisters took up residence in the sandstone cottage which still stands at 81 Steele Street. One room of the cottage became a schoolroom under the direction of the first principal, Sr Francis McCarthy.



On January 2, 1893, Archbishop Murphy laid the foundation stone of a new school to be built on the present site. The East Devonport Catholic church was brought across the Mersey River on a punt and was used as a church on the western side of the river until a brick church was built in 1914. It then became a classroom for the school.

The school continued in this limited accommodation until Fr Donald Shaw was appointed Parish Priest in 1932. He immediately began planning a new building and, on February 5, 1933, a new red brick building with a red tile roof was officially opened, having been built by Wilson Bros Pty Ltd, under the direction of Mr C Clancey, architect. This new building added four classrooms and an enclosed verandah to the school facilities and gave the school a striking appearance with its facade of arches and gabled porticos.

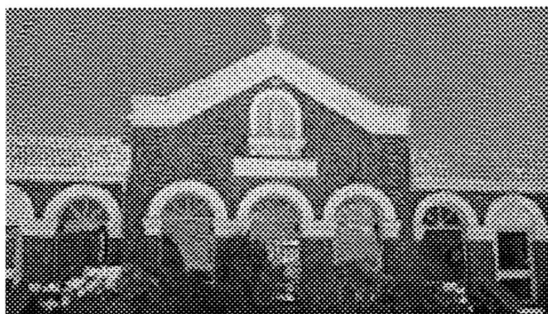
When the then Prime Minister, the Rt Hon JA Lyons, died on April 7, 1939, he was laid to rest in a sunken grave in the school grounds. This monument was a focal point in the school grounds for the next two decades.

During the 1940s, Our Lady of Lourdes School moved into secondary education and work continued on the grounds with the avenue of trees down the drive being added.

In 1953, the two storey brick classroom block was built by the builders Wilkins, Gray and Dowling.

When St Brendan's College opened in 1960, Our Lady of Lourdes became a girls-only school from Grade 5 upwards. When Shaw College was opened in 1969, a new era began for the school. It now catered for primary grades only and, with increasing enrolments, more accommodation was needed.

A new complex began to emerge - in 1975, a library - in 1976, a Prep and Grade 1 classroom block, toilet block and office space - in 1982, a further 4 classrooms and staffroom. Several houses along Steele Street were purchased at this time in order to enlarge the playground area.



In 1994, the school Board of Management began planning to upgrade the 1932 section of the school. From an original idea to paint and carpet the verandah area, the idea of refurbishing the whole section grew. Ideally, this meant relocating classrooms. A master plan for future development was drawn up.

In January, 1996, two new classrooms were built and the four original rooms were changed to provide a more efficient administration area. In the process, a new entrance was created.

In 1998-1999, a further two classrooms were built and the Grade 5, 6 area will be refurbished to provide upgraded Grade 6 facilities and multipurpose areas.

The refurbishment of the existing school building at the east end of the school made it possible for a Kindergarten to be established in 2000. It underwent further extension in January 2001. The establishment of the Kindergarten allowed, for the first time in Devonport, a pathway for education within the Catholic School system from Kinder to Year 12.

The Sisters of St Joseph relinquished their active role in the school when Sr Carmel Jones was appointed Congregational Leader of the Order. A new era of lay principal appointments has begun.

In 2000 the school was headed by an acting Principal, Mrs Susan McGann, whilst the process of appointment of a school principal was undertaken. In July, Mr Mark Workman was formally appointed as Principal, the first lay Principal in the school's 110 year history. His position was taken up from the 1st January, 2001.

The refurbishment of the Library, including computer facilities, took place in Term 3, 2002

In January 2003, further refurbishment to the Administration improved service facilities including First Aid/Sick Bay Room, Clothing Shop, Resource Room, Specialist Staff Work Stations, and extra storage.

