

THE NETWORK

ISSUE 3: JUNE 2007

- *Bindoon*
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- *Clontarf*
- *Tardun*
- *Nazareth House*
- *St Joseph's*
- *CBERS*

Remembering Rosie Finucane

Rosie Finucane was the cook at Castledare Boys Home from 1949 until 1960. She was devoted to her work and to the boys who lived there, and they in turn adored her.

Rosie, an Aboriginal woman, was almost certainly a member of the Stolen Generation, and was a special friend to the boys who found 'the going' hardest. Rosie's patience and kindness were said to be that of a saint, but beware the boy who crossed the threshold of her kitchen unbidden - although he rarely left without a lump of cake in return for the rousing!

Rosie passed away on 8th March 1962, and was buried at Karrakatta Cemetery. Her headstone was removed during the cemetery's renewal work in 2000, and was rescued by Tony Dalton, one of the boys who loved Rosie and had known her kindness.

On 8th March this year, a ceremony to celebrate Rosie's life was held at Castledare, where her headstone will be reinstated near to the room

that used to be 'Rosie's kitchen' in the Niana homestead.

The ceremony was attended by a large crowd who came to honour Rosie and joined in celebrating her memory. Christian Brothers Province Leader Br Kevin Ryan welcomed the gathering and led the opening reflection. He introduced speakers Anthony Spiteri, Tony Dalton and Gabe Morrow, who all spoke of their personal remembrances of Rosie Finucane, and told stories about what she had meant to them.

Following prayers of Thanks and Intercession, Anthony Brennan led the gathering in a stirring rendition of Amazing Grace; and a plaque and headstone were then unveiled by Tony Dalton and Br Pat Kelly of the Christian Brothers Leadership Team.

After the formalities, a sumptuous morning tea was served, and people had a chance to mingle and share their own stories. Ex-residents gathered around Rosie's original headstone for an official photo, which is shown below.

Continued on page 2

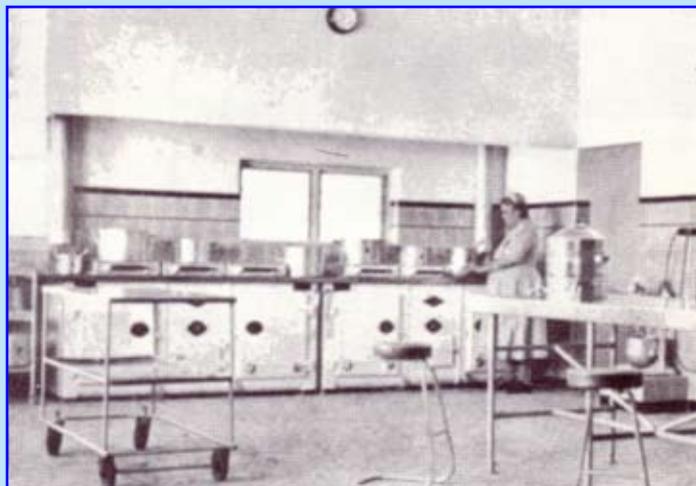


Thanks to Peter Bent for this photo

Remembering Rosie (continued)

Continued from page 1

However, despite an extensive search prior to the ceremony in March, no photo of Rosie herself could be found. Since the ceremony the search has continued. Well done to Dennis McNerney, who recently unearthed what appears to be the only known photograph of Rosie Finucane. This photo, taken in the 1950s, appeared in Br Richard Healy's history of Castledare. It shows Rosie in 'her kitchen' at the Niana homestead.



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CBERS Consultancy

Welcome to Issue #3 of *The Network* newsletter. This edition reports on the first six months of 2007 and provides news about several forthcoming events. Following the success of last year's get-together at Trinity playing fields in November, social group representatives have arranged to use the same venue for this year's gathering (see page 3). Another event well into the planning stages is the 1947 child migrant's 60th Anniversary, organised by Laurie Humphreys (details on the back page). '1947ers' need to register with Laurie in order to receive an invitation.

Two notices are enclosed with this newsletter - one is from Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN) - and seeks feedback from ex-residents regarding their interest in care leaver memorials. The other notice was submitted by the Edmund Rice Celebration planning committee, and is an invitation to purchase tickets to the function they are holding for the Christian Brothers in August.

Many thanks to all those who contributed to this edition of *The Network*. The next issue will be published in mid-December 2007, with a deadline for submissions of 23rd November. If you would like to submit a notice or story to the newsletter, contact your rep or CBERS.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Pip

Philippa White, CBERS Consultancy

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**Opening hours
Wednesdays by appointment**





End of year BBQ



Plenty of sunshine, good friends, and roaring barbecues were a recipe for success at the end-of-year event in November 2006. As a venue, the Trinity playing fields in Waterford proved to be a real winner. Around 70 people came along to enjoy the occasion, and set up picnic lunches under shady trees, with modern conveniences close by in the clubrooms.



It was a great atmosphere on the day, and Social Club representatives are planning a similar event for Sunday 18th November 2007.

Invitations will be posted to ex-residents on the CBERS mailing list in the first week of November.

If you would like to help out with the event, please contact your rep.



CMC News

by Sr Flo O'Sullivan



Carol, Sr Flo and Delia

When reflecting on the Catholic Migrant Centre, it is very easy for the general public to think that it is a place for our Current Migrants i.e., our recent Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Yes, it is true that our 30 odd staff are mostly engaged in service for these people. However, for the past 23 years the Catholic Migrant Centre (that we affectionately call CMC) has been the home of the Former Child Migrants' Service, which holds many original files and information on the Migrant Scheme for Child migration of the early 20th Century from the UK and Malta.

I am in my sixth year at CMC. My predecessor you will recall was Sr Tania de Jong, who untiringly served for nine years. Other staff members who render invaluable assistance are my administrative assistant (at present, Carol Smith) Delia the Receptionist, registered lawyers at CMC and our very pleasant EDN staff (Rohan in the past and Paola).

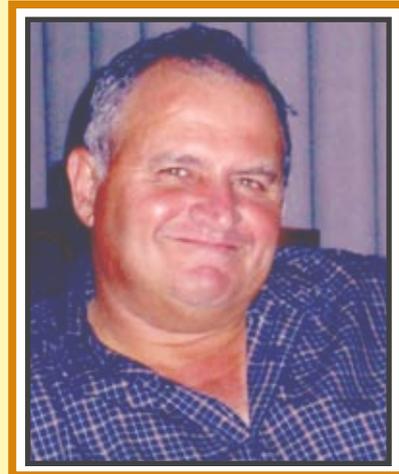
During a period of 15 years countless numbers of Former Child Migrants have received diverse services such as family tracing (in conjunction with the services of Joan Kerry in UK); application for travel funding to places of origin; access by clients to their personal files; services of advocacy, outreach assistance and areas of educational assistance.

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TONY ABELA



Anthony Nicholas Abela 1956 – 2006

Tony Abela, a former resident of Castledare and Clontarf, passed away suddenly on 4th December 2006, after suffering a major heart attack. Tony leaves his beloved wife Julie, their six-year-old daughter Britney, and his stepsons Jamie and Ben. Tony is also sadly missed by his former school mate Mario Mamo, a fellow ex-resident of Castledare and Clontarf, who shared with us some memories of his old friend.

Tony and Mario were both eight years old when they sailed from Malta to Australia aboard the *Sydney* in 1964. They were both sent to Castledare and later Clontarf at the same time, and remained lifelong friends. Mario remembers Tony as a very giving person who helped a lot of people, and was 'always on the go'. After some harsh times in his early years, Tony joined the Salvation Army and devoted his time to working with homeless and disadvantaged youth. Tony's role as bus driver for the Salvos earned him the nickname of 'Skipper' and he was affectionately known as 'Skip' throughout his adult life.

In more recent years, Tony drove buses for Transperth, and is fondly remembered for his caring and respectful treatment of the elderly passengers on his regular bus route, for whom he would often make 'minor detours' to deliver safely to their doorsteps.

Tony's funeral in December last year was attended by around 300 mourners, including a group of Tony's former passengers, who arrived at the service aboard the Transperth bus he used to drive. Tony will be sadly missed by many.

Our sincere condolences to Julie and family.

THE CLONTARF NETWORK



An aerial shot of Clontarf taken in the 1960s

Clontarf Social Group meeting

All ex-Clontarf lads are welcome to attend a meeting at Peter Bent's house in Cannington on 16th June at 11.00am.

Tea/coffee and cake will be provided, and it will be an opportunity to catch up with former schoolmates.

For inquires ring: 9458-4495.

Clontarf History Project

The ongoing Clontarf History Project is seeking input from Old Boys of different eras to help in planning a visible history of past students and staff of Clontarf.

If you would like further information or to join in the Project, please contact Dennis McNerney at the Clontarf Management Office on 9458-1774.

Clontarf Old Boy reconnects with family in the UK

The last time Dennis McNerney travelled to the UK was in August 2005, when he attended his mother's 80th birthday party, and met six sisters and five brothers who hadn't known about him. This time, Dennis took his youngest son Daniel over to meet the extended family in England, and then celebrated Christmas and New Year with his family in Longford, Ireland. Dennis' brother Oliver is a popular radio personality in Longford, and the local press took a keen interest in Dennis and Daniel's visit –featuring several stories in the *Longford Leader*.

Dennis returned home to his wife Nicky and eldest son Clint earlier this year, while Daniel remains in

Ireland on a working holiday. Dennis says the trip was a great chance to reconsolidate contact with his UK family, and while there have been some ups and downs, he feels the family circle is now more complete.

Like many people who connect with family overseas, for Dennis the 'tyranny of distance' is a real challenge to maintaining contact. Dennis keeps in touch with the family with phone calls and emails, and is looking forward to visit from his brother Oliver in August this year. Oliver will be here in time to help Dennis celebrate his 60th birthday in September.

All the best for a wonderful celebration Dennis.

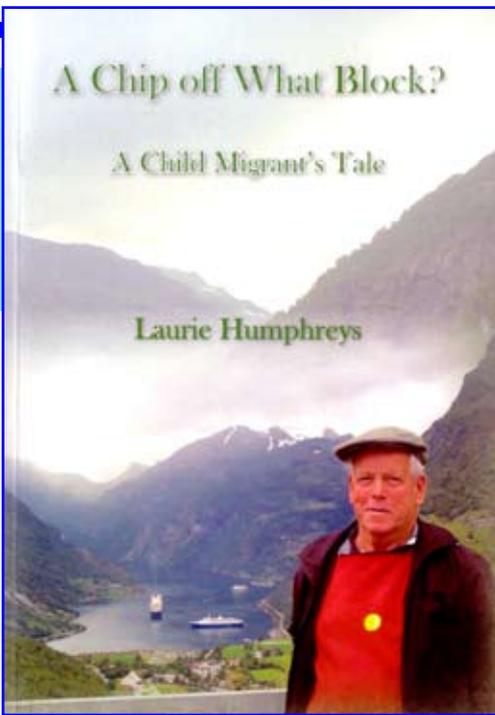


Local DJ celebrates reunion with brother after almost sixty years apart



Local DJ spends Christmas with his long-lost brother

Longford Leader



Book launch



Laurie Humphreys' newly-released autobiography - *A Chip off what Block? A Child Migrant's Tale* - begins with his earliest memories of England during the war years. Laurie describes his journey to Australia in 1947 as a child migrant, and then his time at Bindoon. The book tells of Laurie's finding family and emotional reunions, marriages and family life, union activism, and many years as a City of Cockburn Councilor. Laurie's story is dedicated to his family – his nine children, 36 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren. His daughter Susan acted as MC at the book launch, held at the University Club in March this year, and was joined by Laurie's long time partner Frankie and many other family members.

There was also no shortage of dignitaries at the event, which was launched by Dr Maria Harries, with speakers Ms Jennie Carter, Manager of State Libraries; Senator Andrew Murray, a former child migrant; and Mr Logan Howlett, a former City of Cockburn Councilor and Laurie's long time friend.

A Chip off what Block is an exciting and

emotional read, and includes many pictures of Laurie's life and relationships. The story it tells is aptly described in the words of Dr Carmen Lawrence on the back cover:

Too often history is written from a distance and all too often through the eyes of the privileged and powerful. Laurie's story, on the other hand is a first-hand account ... Laurie's is a story of endurance, resilience, occasional controversy and simple, old fashioned 'pluck' told in a matter-of-fact tone with an unsentimental eye.

Copies of Laurie's book can be purchased for \$25 by phoning 9337-4850.



BINDOON CORNER

LIONEL GEORDIE WELSH 1936-2006

Lionel *Geordie* Welsh passed away in December 2006 after a long battle with cancer. Lionel is sadly missed by his wide circle of friends and family, and is remembered by many more people through his authorship of two books. A number of fellow *ex-Bindoon Boys* attended Lionel's funeral last year, at which his old friend Gordon Grant delivered the eulogy.



Gordon spoke of Lionel's early life at Nazareth House in Carlisle, England, where Lionel was placed at two years of age, and remained for nine years, before being sent to Australia with the first group of post-war child migrants in 1947. Gordon described the harshness of Lionel's years at Bindoon, and the challenges Lionel faced as he made his way forward in life. Gordon spoke of Lionel's many positive achievements - the marriage that produced six beloved children; his indomitable spirit, great intellect, and kind heart.

In concluding his eulogy, Gordon said:

Lionel Welsh was a good and decent man, who turned his life around through courage and perseverance, and with the help of trusted and reliable friends. I want to thank Br Kevin Ryan for the support he has given to Lionel in recent years, and also thank solicitor Leonard Cohen for providing counsel to Lionel in his ongoing quest for justice.

On behalf of the former Bindoon Boys and Lionel's other good friends, I offer our very sincere condolences to the family members and five surviving children of Lionel's marriage, who are present here today at his funeral service. We urge you to embrace and support each other in this period of mourning the sad loss of your father.

May the Spirit, the Soul of Geordie now rest in peace.

Heart of Gold

Dear Geordie ...

You gave me the best gift one could give to a child ...

You helped me further to understand the life I led as a child growing up ...

Off spring of Bindoon is I ...

Hearts of Gold

Is the truth behind the masks of all that lived through it

Is what you showed I can be proud of ...

I am proud more than ever now

All because you showed me

How to understand and not fall into hate

Of which many have

My father you knew

I made friends with before he passed on

I was proud to be there for him and glad

you had kind hearts there for you

But you showed me how I am not alone

You gave me identity within myself

Your strength and humor

Was (and to me still is) contagious

Your courage to stand up is now stronger than ever

Is within me

Is now with me forever

Your universal love you came to

see in yourself

Is what I now see in me

I will stay in that special place you showed me

And share it the way you shared it with me

You set a good path for every child within

If you sink

Therefore you can swim ...

You my friend, Golden child

Golden heart, right from the start

Understandably so, friend to all

Your cause will live on

We will all live on and stay tall

I take my hat off to you ...

Because you stayed true ...

I too will stay true

Many thanks to you

A pleasure to have had the privilege

To have known you ...

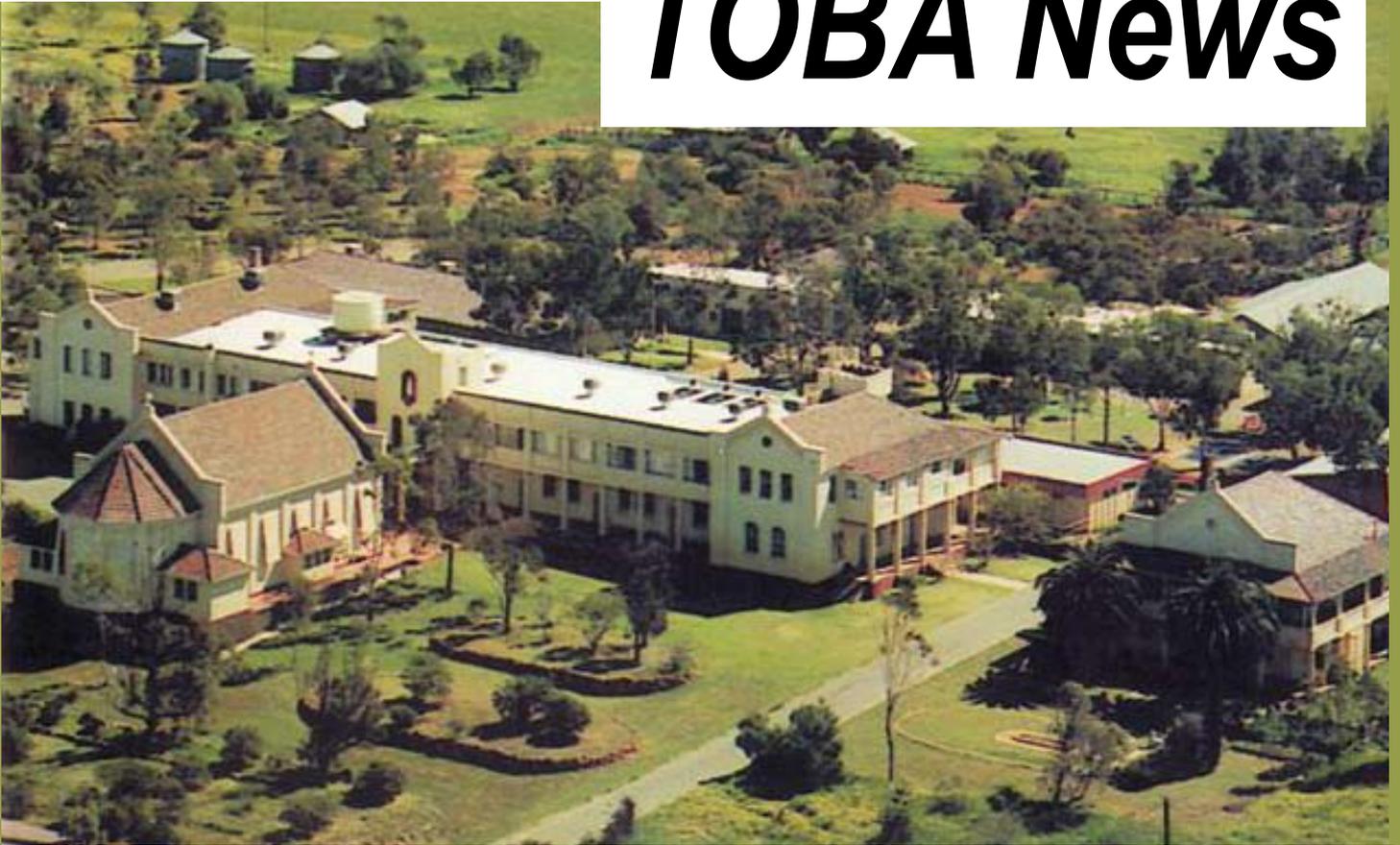
God bless

Shine on Geordie ...

Shine on

Dedicated to Geordie from Robbie Keating

Robbie is the daughter of the late Peter Keating, and lives in Queensland. She and Lionel formed a strong friendship in the last year of Lionel's life. Although they never met in person, Lionel holds a very special place in Robbie's heart. She wrote this song in his honour.



25 Years of TOBA

In February 2007 TOBA celebrated 25 years of its formation with a reunion at Moore River. The weekend was a great success as usual and was enjoyed by all. TOBA was pleased to welcome several new members into the Association.

History

In January 1982 a small group of ex residents of St. Mary's Tardun formed a committee to arrange a meeting of Tardun old boys'.

The first Tardun old boys' reunion was held on Saturday 27 February 1982 with a dinner/dance at the Morley Windmills Sportsclub. Seventy old boys' and wives attended.

On Sunday 28 February 1982 a barbecue was held at Kings Park and the Tardun Old Boys' Association was formed. TOBA became incorporated in December 1996.

St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Agricultural School Tardun began in 1928. Over the years there have been reunions held at Tardun to help celebrate special occasions, the last in 2003 for the 75th Anniversary. Back to Tardun reunions are always great events.

TOBA has been holding bi-annual family reunions since 1993. We gather at 'Tuppin House' Moore River, Guilderton to renew friendships and provide support and assistance to each other.

AGM

The 2007 Annual General Meeting and Election of Office Bearers was held on Saturday afternoon. Elected: Frank Marshall (Pres), John Vella (Vice), David Plowman (Tres), Judith Marshall (Sec). Committee: Jim Gilroy, Debi Gilroy, Gabe Morrow, Joe Saliba, Jan Vella, Harry Aubrey and Jil Morrow.

Activities

The Annual Bocce Competition was held during the weekend. The contest was fierce, with plenty of rivalry amongst the English, Irish and Maltese. The winner of the Tri-Nation Shield was Malta.

A monster raffle was drawn following lunch on Saturday, resulting in many people going home very happy with great prizes.

Vale

Tardun old boy Angelo Saliba passed away in Melbourne on 9 April 2007. Sincere sympathy to Joe, Sebastian and extended families on their sad loss.

Next Reunion

TOBA's second reunion for the year will be held on the weekend of the 28 and 29 July 2007. Invitations will be sent out in June. Tardun old boys' who are not on TOBA's mailing list, or wish to become financial members, please contact Secretary Judith Marshall on 08 9457 7936. (TOBA's mailing list is not the same as CBERS Network mailing list).

Solving a seventy-year mystery

For almost seventy years, the former residents of St. Joseph's Home in Enfield had wondered what became of their five schoolmates who had been sent to Australia as child migrants. Four boys - Michael Hannigan, Dennis Poulter, Peter Grigson and Peter Kronidorf - had departed for Australia in 1938, while a fifth boy - Derek Harper - followed in March 1939. These five were to become the only lads sent from Enfield before the outbreak of war in September 1939.

Late last year, a chance meeting in England between Norman Taylor and Carol Roper of the Catholic Children's Society in Westminster began a chain of events that led to contact between the former schoolmates in UK and Australia, and which solved part of a 70-year-old mystery. Norman, an ex-resident of Enfield, writes:

On December 2nd 2006 I was among the St. Joseph's boys who attended the Catholic Children's Society's Benefactors Mass. After Mass while speaking to Carol Roper and I mentioned to Carol that since 1938 we had not had any news of the five boys sent from St. Joseph's to Australia in 1938. Carol kindly suggested that I should send her the names of the boys and she would see what she could find out. I left taking any action on this matter until the New Year.

Imagine my surprise and delight after little more than a week I received an email from Carol telling me that contact had been made with Michael Hannigan. I have since had a number of emails and photos from Michael and his wife Thelma. Michael is now in the process of sending me details of his journey and life at the Agricultural School run by the Christian Brothers at Tardun in Western Australia.

Email communication has been ongoing since Norman and Mike made contact via Carol Roper, who had then contacted CBERS. Mike's story now appears on the Blaisdon Hall website.

Mike explains:
You will find my story and that of some of the boys from the orphanage at Enfield on this website:

www.blaisdonbrotherhood.info

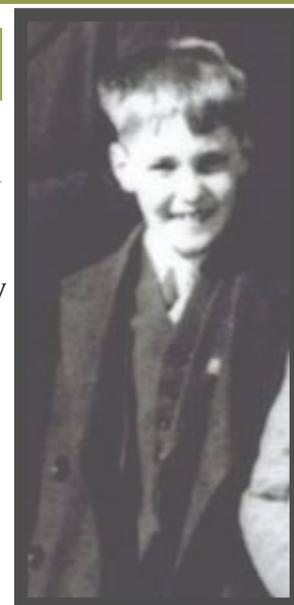
Click on the Library item on the home page and click on Item No 4 - and all will be revealed.

I hope you find it of interest, particularly the story of Blaisdon Hall, as that is where I and other boys would certainly have gone if we had not been lucky enough to be chosen to come to Australia.

As a result of the exchange of stories, those boys who, but for the war, also would have come to Australia, have been able to speculate on the 'what ifs'.

Mike's story is a fascinating read, and is accompanied by several photos, including this one of the first group of 37 boys, who arrived in Fremantle on 9th August 1938 aboard the P&O liner RMS Strathaird. They are shown at the welcoming reception held at the Fremantle Town Hall.

Many thanks for sharing this great story with us Mike.



Ten years since the sentimental journey

It's been ten years since the *Sentimental Journey* – a remarkable journey undertaken by 40 women who arrived in Australia as child migrants – many of them amongst the first group of children sent out post-war, in 1947. Jointly funded by the Srs Mercy and Srs Nazareth, the *Sentimental Journey* came together through the determined efforts of people like Sheilagh Pearce, herself a child migrant, and Maureen Colgan, who worked tirelessly to bring a dream into reality. Many thanks to Maureen for providing this story, which gives us a glimpse into this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

May 27, 1997 saw one man's dream become a reality!

The dream belonged to Jim Pearce, who had long harboured a desire to organise a trip back to the United Kingdom for his wife Sheilagh and her friends, who had been sent to Australia as Child Migrants.

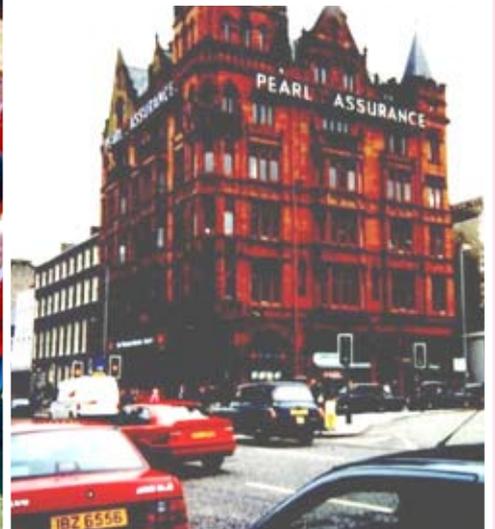
Jim's mission was to see the women travel back to their country of birth and then, as adults, voluntarily decide whether or not to come back to Australia. What an empowering mission! Sadly, Jim did not live to see his dream materialise; however his vision ultimately brought joy to 40 Former Child migrants, and some partners, as they came together for a *Sentimental Journey*.

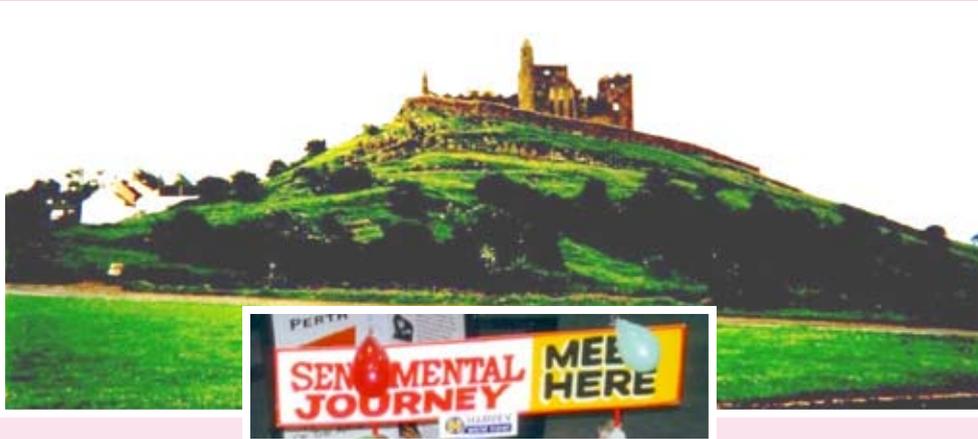
Chaos ruled at the Perth International Airport on the day of our departure. Laughter, tears and never ending squeals of delight were heard as the 'orphans' were reunited

once again. Some had not seen each other in 40 years, but the bond was as strong as ever.

The Premier of Western Australia, Archbishop Hickey, the Chairman of the Child Migrant Foundation, Sisters, and families were all there to farewell the group as they set off on their journey. The airport was abuzz!!

The excitement continued aboard the flight to London, as the girls from Nazareth house got to know the girls from St. Joseph's Orphanage. Little did I know this excitement would ultimately captivate the entire plane, not just our group. I think the staff and other passengers realised something very special was happening when the entire group broke into the haunting strains of *Whispering Hope*. Perfect harmony was greeted with stunned silence, followed by uninhibited applause. They were simply wonderful.





The media swarm that descended on the group as they entered Heathrow airport recorded their emotional arrival, including a meeting between two sisters who had not seen each other for 50 years. Their first hug was screened around the world, highlighting the 'miracle' of their journey.

While in London, the Sisters of Nazareth hosted a reception for at the Westminster Cathedral Hall, and it was here that Canon Fisher offered a very sincere apology to the women for the part the Catholic Church had played in what turned out to be a flawed scheme of child migration. It was a most moving moment, and one which none present will ever forget. Such is the power of the apology!!

As the group visited orphanages at which they once lived, they were frequently greeted by Nuns who remembered them and who welcomed them with open

arms. While this was not an easy process, the women handled it with great dignity. The Sisters also helped, knowing how difficult this process would be for the women.

There were some very powerful moments ... families were met; siblings discovered; gravesites found. These moments cannot be described in this article. Only the women themselves can speak of these. Much healing took place during the journey, and I believe each of the women gleaned something special from the experience.

Suffice to say, my involvement in organising the *Sentimental Journey* was a pleasure and a privilege. I have enormous respect for all Former Child Migrants - men and women. They have contributed so constructively to a story that has quietly and steadily had a huge impact on Australia's history.

NOTICE BOARD

Historic photos project

Following the success of the Historic Photos DVD project, there is interest in producing a second DVD. 'Phase Two' of the project would include new photos that have emerged since phase one, and historic photos of Nazareth House and St Joseph's. Thanks to Sheilagh Pearce, Rita Sturniolo, and Lucy (Ann) McVeigh for contributing photos. If you are interested in helping, or have photos you would like to have copied for the project, please contact your rep.

Choir of Hard Knocks

A note from Robbie Keating of Queensland: *For everyone interested, there is a choir being documented on ABC television called 'Choir of Hard Knocks'. These unique people are all truly doing their best to have a great purpose in life. Any support will help.* The website address for the Choir of Hard Knocks is www.choirofhardknocks.com.au

Forgotten Australians

Since the *Forgotten Australians* report in the previous *Network* newsletter, we have had two teleconferences and one face-to-face meeting with the Alliance in Sydney. One of their priorities is to develop an information resource for people who work with care leavers. Here in the West, Maria Harries, Barbara-Jean Costello and I have visited the Hon. Minister Sue Ellery to introduce the recently formed WA Alliance, now known as FACT – *Forgotten Australians Coming Together*. Our main submission was for a drop-in centre where people could access information and services. We will keep you posted on the progress of these initiatives. ***Laurie Humphreys***

Queensland news

A *Courier Mail* news clipping sent in by Clontarf ex-resident Ted Haenow reports a landmark plan by the Queensland government, which will grant free access to key State government services for former Wards of the State in Queensland. The scheme, which is the first of its kind in Australia, is tipped to include free medical and dental services, training and education, plus help obtaining public housing for people who were placed with foster carers, in detention centres or institutions from 1930 to 2000. The full article is available at:

<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,21040667-952,00.html>

NOTICE BOARD

Seeking Dennis Clements

Peter Clements and his wife Denise are seeking information on Peter's uncle Dennis, who arrived at Castledare in 1939, and was at Clontarf and Tardun up until 1945. Peter, of NSW, travelled to Perth earlier this year seeking family history, following the death of his dearly loved father Roy in 2006. Dennis may be the only surviving sibling of the three Clements brothers, who were at Clontarf, Bindoon and Tardun in the early 1940s. If you have any news about Dennis, please contact CBERS.

In loving memory of Sue McKenzie

Sincere condolences to Terry and Laurie Humphreys on the loss of their sister Sue McKenzie. Sue resided with her partner Taff in North Wales, and passed away in April this year after a battle with cancer. Our thoughts are with you Laurie, Terry and families at this sad time.

Seeking information on Brian Taws

Donna Chilcott of Southampton England would like to know if her great uncle has any relatives living in Australia. Frederick Brian Taws, known as Brian Taws, or Brian Smith, was at Bindoon in the late 1940s. Donna's search for her uncle earlier this year uncovered the sad news that Brian had died in 1990, although it is not known whether he ever married or had children. If you have any information please contact CBERS, or email Donna directly at donna.jerams@virgin.net

Computer classes at Mirrabooka

Computer classes for seniors will be offered at the Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka from 23 July 2007. For further details, contact the Centre on 9440 0625.

OAM for Leonie and Joanna of CLAN

Congratulations to Leonie Sheedy and Joanna Penglase, who have both received the Order of Australia Medal for services to the community and work with the Care Leavers Australia Network. Leonie and Joanna received their medals together at a ceremony at Government House in Sydney in May this year. Joanna said they were both amazed and thrilled about the award, and saw it as acknowledgement not only of their work, but also that care leavers' issues are significant and worthy of recognition. Well done on your achievements Joanna and Leonie.

60th Anniversary Function -- Final Reminder

ARE YOU REGISTERED?

On September 22nd this year, those of us who arrived in 1947 will be celebrating our 60th Anniversary in Australia. If you arrived aboard the *Asturias* or the *Ormonde* in 1947 under the Child Migrant scheme, and you want to attend the function, you must register in order to receive an invitation. Former child migrants who have registered will receive an invitation in August for themselves and one guest. The Fremantle Maritime Museum has advised that this event is considered a private function, and only those with an invitation will be admitted.

Laurie Humphreys 9337-4850

Ten years ago...

At the 50th Anniversary celebration in 1997, held at the Fremantle Council Reception Centre.

