

## *60th Anniversary celebration*

# *A day to remember*

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

Laughter, music and celebration filled a day to remember when over 300 people gathered on 22<sup>nd</sup> September this year to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of post-war child migrants' arrival in Australia. The choice of venue could not have been more apt, and with ideal weather conditions on the day, the Fremantle Maritime Museum presented a perfect setting for this memorable reunion of '1947ers'.

The event organiser, Laurie Humphreys, had begun planning 12 months before the function, securing funding from sponsors such as P&O, the WA Government, the Archbishop of Perth, the Christian Brothers, Sisters of Mercy and Nazareth, and the Maritime Museum venue itself.

Each of the 150 former child migrants attending the ceremony was awarded a certificate of recognition by Attorney General Jim McGinty, who



along with Fremantle Mayor Peter Tagliaferri, Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews, Archbishop Barry Hickey and Christian Brothers Province Leader Br Kevin Ryan, applauded the significant contribution of child migrants to their adopted country of residence.

Bindoon ex-resident Bob Hall gave a moving speech in which he talked

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# Celebrating 60 years

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about the challenges and successes of child migrants, and spoke of life 60 years on. MC Patrick Colgan then introduced Barbara Jean Costello, who surprised Laurie by presenting him with a bottle of French champagne – especially chosen for the occasion by Dr Maria Harries. Laurie thanked the sponsors and all those who helped make the day a success, with special thanks to Frankie for her help with the invitations and so much more. He then invited guests to relax and mingle during the afternoon tea.

Historic footage of child migrants arriving in Fremantle and coverage of the 1998 ‘Sentimental Journey’ was shown during the gathering, and was provided on a DVD to those receiving certificates. The DVDs were compiled by former St Joseph’s resident Sheilagh Pearce, who presented them in loving memory of her sister Doreen.

Former Clontarf resident Hughie McConnell won the door prize, a three-day Australia Day cruise for two aboard the *MV Funchal*, donated by Bicton Travel. Unfortunately, a heart condition prevents Hughie from undertaking the cruise, and he generously returned his prize to be re-drawn. The lucky winner Mary Mason couldn’t decide between her two great friends, fellow Nazareth House ex-residents Maureen Holland and Eileen Evert, so she arranged for the three of them to chip in for a third ticket. Congratulations ladies and *bon voyage* on your cruise in January next year.

As the day drew to a close, the Silver Threads Band entertained guests with music and light-hearted commentary, prompting sing-a-longs and dancing. As the band played their final number, everybody joined hands and sang *Auld Lang Syne*. It was an emotional end to a very special day – one that will be fondly remembered for a long time.



**W**elcome to Issue #4 of *CBERS Network*, as we approach the end of another eventful year. Many thanks to all those who sent in stories, to Yvonne for taking minutes, and the Combined Social Committee for their ongoing work. Among the Committee's more recent decisions was a vote to retain the name *CBERS Network* for this newsletter.

There were several big events on the social calendar this year — the 1947 Child Migrants' celebration in Fremantle; the Nazareth House reunion in Geraldton; and the Edmund Rice Celebration at Burswood, which was attended by many ex-residents and former students. We bring you news of these events in this edition.

The November get-together at Trinity Playing fields was very successful again this year, with around 100 people gathering in milder weather conditions for the 2007 event.

Two political issues also featured on this year's agenda. Firstly, as you may know, some state governments have responded to calls for redress for people who were harmed in out-of-home care, and a system for WA is now being considered.

Secondly, the matter of the Australian 'citizenship test' surfaced recently when I found that former child migrants applying for citizenship are not exempt from the newly-introduced test if they are under 60 years of age. Senator Andrew Murray, a former child migrant himself, says he will raise this issue at the next sitting of Parliament.

On a more light-hearted note, the Combined Social Committee wishes all readers a happy and peaceful festive season and a wonderful year ahead. We hope you enjoy this edition of *CBERS Network*.

*Pip*

Philippa White,  
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## **2007 Get-together**



Thanks to Dennis McNerney for these photos

# TOBA News



**TOBA Committee** extends Christmas greetings and best wishes for the New Year to all its members and readers of 'CBERS Network'.

**TOBA Reunion** at Tuppin House, Moore River, Guilderton to be held over the weekend of 8-10 February 2008. Invitations and membership forms will be posted in January 2008.

AGM and Election of Officer Bearers will be held on Saturday 9 February 2008 at 2 pm.

### Vale

TOBA extends sincere sympathy to Jim Plowman on the sad loss of his partner Janet Drewett. Janet was secretary of TOBA during 2005.

Condolences are also extended to the family of Kenneth Ball. Ken was a 47er and transferred to Tardun in 1948.

**Congratulations** to Tardun member and past President of TOBA Jim Plowman on being elected

President of the Maltese Association of Western Australia.

### 47ers 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Congratulations to all 47ers and TOBA members Peter Broderick, Ray Carter, Edward Cogan, John Gaughan and Patrick Monaghan who attended the function at the Maritime Museum on 22 September 2007 to commemorate their 60 years in Australia.

### Seeking

'Holiday' family - Elizabeth Egan seeking contact with Tardun old boy Joe McDonald (Joseph Michael McDonnell). Please phone Beth on 0412 207 222.

UK family would like contact with Tardun old boy Barry Earle. Please phone Sister Flo O'Sullivan, Catholic Migrant Centre on 9221 1727.

### Contact

Please phone TOBA Secretary Judith Marshall on 9457 7936 to update contact details and record names of deceased.

## *A family together for the first time*

Tardun Old Boy Peter Scott was united with his family in Canada for the first time in March this year, when he travelled to meet his mother and two sisters.

Peter met his cousins in England last year, and when he returned home decided to search for his mother. He contacted John Boers, a Canadian-based researcher who specialises in reuniting families separated by war. John found Pete's 81-year-old mother and two sisters within weeks.

Many phone calls and letters paved the way for the family's emotional meeting in Ottawa, which was filmed by Canadian TV. An added bonus of this is that Pete now has a permanent record of the joyful moment when he first hugged his mum and sisters, and was so warmly welcomed to their homeland.

Pete is looking forward to his next trip to Canada in August next year, when he will join the family again and celebrate the birthdays of Kathy, and Sandy's husband Wayne.



Kathy, Peter, Mum and Sandy

# BINDOON CORNER

Thanks to Eddie Butler for this photo



The Musk Estate issue has once again been before the courts and Leonard Cohen has promised he will keep us informed of the outcome.

Fred Crocker and Bill O'Connor are on the sick list, our thoughts are with them and their families and we hope and pray for a speedy recovery.

It would be good if we can make a trip up to Bindoon around Easter time next year and would like as many old boys as possible to join Gordon, Eddie and I. Any ideas are welcome, so give either of us a ring.

*Laurie Humphreys*

## CMS NEWS

The Catholic Migrant Centre continues to be a source of support, assistance and often just a drop in centre for many Former Child Migrants.

Did you know?

- That CMC is still located in Victoria Square, but has now merged with *Centrecare*, 456 Hay Street, Perth
- The Centre is no longer CMC but is now CMS (Catholic Migrant Services) under the auspices of Centrecare
- Centrecare Staff is now 200 employees stretching across the State
- Our staff here at CMC have now doubled to 26
- Carol Smith, my assistant and I, make up the Former Child Migrant Services staff
- Nigel Calver is our newly appointed Manager and a very popular one at that
- This office has worked with Former Child Migrants for over 20 years

We are a very friendly staff at CMS and many clients enjoy a close association with some staff

members, who recognise them as original clients of the Catholic Migrant Centre.

Through our weekly computer classes we regularly mark birthdays with cake and cuppa; visit clients who are patients in RPH, and generally find Thursday morning after class a time and a place for camaraderie.

*Flo O'Sullivan rsm*

*Co-ordinator Former Child Migrant Programme*



# THE CLONTARF NETWORK

## 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion 1947 – 2007

by Peter Bent



Pictured here is Hugh McConnell (a young lad from Ireland) receiving a certificate to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the arrival in Fremantle of the Child Migrants in 1947.

At the tender age of five years he was one of the youngest Child Migrants.

The reunion took place at the Maritime Museum in Fremantle and was attended by members of the government and representatives of the

Catholic Church, the Christian Brothers and other dignitaries. With the compliments of P&O Liners the certificates were presented to each Former Child Migrant by the Mayor of Fremantle.



## Remembering a Tragedy

by Yvonne Radzevicius

'Lest We Forget' could have been the motif for the day spent at Serpentine as past residents of Clontarf gathered on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2007 to remember the tragic death of a young Welshman - Michael Bowman .

With sausages sizzling on the barbie and Welsh music playing, it turned out to be a celebration of his short life in a peaceful bush setting.

As a member of the Welsh Society and a fervent supporter of the event, Bob Kucera (Acting WA Premier) cleared a space in his heavy schedule to attend. In his short speech, he once again assured everyone of his continued support. Another member of the Society - Doug Higginson – was also present.

A great deal of thought and hard work by Old Boys went into the organization of this event, and it is to be hoped that this tradition will continue with success each year.

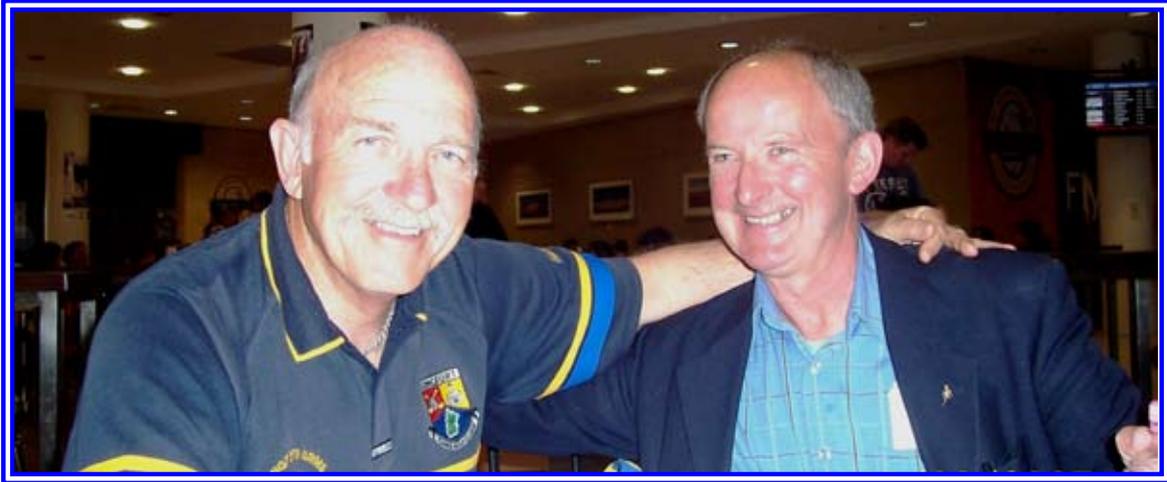
Thanks for an enjoyable day,

Yvonne



*\*Next year's commemoration for Michael Bowman will be held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October, and will be advertised in the June 2008 CBERS Network.*

# The trip of a lifetime



What began as a New Year's pledge between two brothers became a reality in September this year, when Oliver McNerney travelled to Perth from Longford Ireland in time to celebrate his brother Dennis' 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. The brothers also celebrated Ollie's 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday during his visit to Perth, thereby honouring the second part of their pledge.

Dennis had stayed with Ollie when he travelled to meet with family members in the UK last year, and was keen to return the hospitality. During Ollie's visit, the brothers travelled around the South West of WA, and also visited Castledare and Clontarf – two of Dennis' early homes.

Ollie, who described his journey to Australia as 'the trip of a lifetime', returned to Longford in early October. Dennis said it was very sad parting with his brother again, and that he and his family had really enjoyed Ollie's company while he was here.

In the meantime they will stay in contact by SMS and phone, and hope to reunite again in Ireland in May 2008, in time to celebrate Dennis's son Daniel's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. Daniel has been living there for a year on a 'European working holiday'. Lots of celebrations and more wonderful memories to cherish...

## A family reunited

Maurice Whitfield credits the 'softly softly' approach with the success he has enjoyed in connecting with family in the UK. Maurice first met his Mum in 1980 but didn't meet his brothers and sisters until 1995. Since then lots of letters, e-mails and phone calls have been exchanged, Maurice's mum has travelled here twice, one sister and her husband also visited, as did one niece and one nephew.

After retiring earlier this year, Maurice and Shirley, his wife of 37 years, took a trip to Europe, during which they stayed with Maurice's mother again. Shirley said things could not have gone any better, as family members had been so welcoming and they had all settled so comfortably together. Maurice thinks that being patient and adopting a non-blaming approach really paid off during the trip, and is reflected in the happy times he and Shirley spent with his mother, three brothers, two sisters, and their families.



Maurice and Shirley celebrating amongst family in the UK

Now they are back home, Maurice and Shirley maintain the long-distance family connections, and are looking forward to a visit from one of Maurice's sisters in April next year.

# NAZARETH NEWS

It was a year of celebration for the many Nazareth House ex-residents who attended two events marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1947 child migrants' arrival in Australia, and the marriage of Bernadette Bowey and Les Hills.

The first of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary functions was an emotional reunion held in September at Nazareth House Geraldton, where 50 ladies gathered to renew friendships and remember old times.

At the second function (featured on page one), Nazareth House ex-residents joined in the 47ers' celebration of 60 years in Australia, held at Fremantle Maritime Museum.

Over 100 guests attended Bernadette Bowey and Les Hills' Wedding Mass at St Lawrence's Catholic Church in Bluff Point on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2007, which was also Bernadette's 71<sup>st</sup> birthday. Bernadette's son John arrived from Townsville, along with Chris, Deb and family from Perth, and many friends from the West Coast.



After the Wedding Mass, around 200 people joined in the celebrations at a memorable party.

Les and Bernadette's love story began when they met aboard an ocean liner, and culminated in a romantic marriage proposal, in which Les presented Bernadette with a ring hidden inside a bouquet of roses. The happy couple will take to the seas again in December, when they take a 10-day honeymoon cruise aboard the *MV Funchal*.

Congratulations Bernadette and Les, and best wishes for the future.



## St Joseph's



November 2007 get-together at Trinity Playing Fields

Those of us who celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Australia this year were treated to a very special function in September, organised by Laurie Humphreys. Thank you Laurie for your hard work in arranging this fabulous event. As a result of your efforts, we have welcomed back into the fold three St Joseph's ladies who we had not seen for 50 years.

We would also like to thank Sheilagh Pearce for her tireless and dedicated work on behalf of the St Joseph's Girls over the years. Sheilagh resigns as Group Representative at the end of 2007, and we wish her all the best for the coming year.

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# What do memorials mean to you?

Memorials of all kinds - plaques, headstones, statues, and heritage trails - are all physical reminders of someone or something that is important to somebody.

Memorials can celebrate, or mourn, or both, and we all interpret them differently.

A memorial that marks a tragedy ensures that it is not forgotten, and can unburden the survivors of this task. Memorials can also provide a rallying point for commemoration and celebration, and help us to connect the past with the present.

For some readers, Child Migrant memorials have a particular significance. Former child migrant Yvonne Radzevicius sent in the image on the right, which shows the WA memorial surrounded by the flags of children's countries of origin. Yvonne writes:

"I don't think that the person responsible for the sculpture was a child migrant, but has the uncanny knack of capturing the forlorn look we must have all experienced on our arrival in Australia. The day we arrived in Fremantle it was a rather gloomy place, and



not knowing what was happening made me feel lost and alone.

"So although I am glad to be acknowledged as a child migrant, my visits to the memorial dredge up some feelings of pain and regret".

Patrick O'Flaherty, a former child migrant who now lives in Canberra, has researched memorials throughout Australia. Last year Patrick attended the unveiling in Melbourne of the sixth and final Australian child migrant memorial, which takes the form of a Welsh love bench, and symbolises the story of child migrants caught between two countries. Patrick says that Immigration Minister Sen Amanda Vanstone, who unveiled the memorial, spoke highly of child migrants' important part in Australian history, and showed great understanding of the challenges they faced.

The Melbourne memorial stands within a beautiful garden setting at the Migration Museum, and is shown in the photo at left, with Patrick alongside three fellow former child migrants.

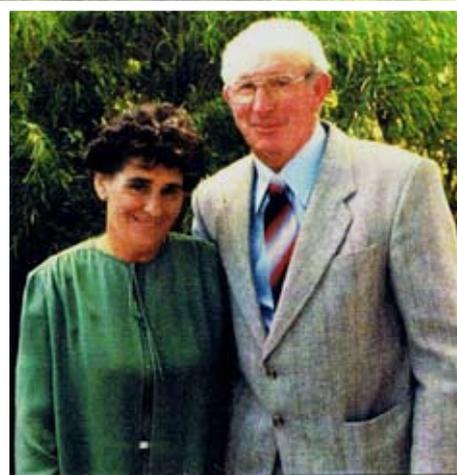


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Sadly, we lost one of our own, Patsy Hunter, in August 2007. A beautiful eulogy was delivered by Patrick Armstrong at a Mass of Celebration and Thanksgiving for Patsy, which was held in Albany. Patrick spoke of the times of great joy, and some of sorrow, in Patsy's life; her fifty years of marriage to John, their six children, and the grandchildren.

We extend our sincere and deepest sympathies to John and family.

**Barbara Jean Costello**



# EDMUND RICE CELEBRATION



There were many familiar faces amongst the large crowd at Burswood Theatre in August this year, as Bindoon, Clontarf and Tardun ex-residents joined in a celebration held on behalf of the Christian Brothers.

The celebration was a gift from Old Boys, friends and associates of the Brothers, to wish them well in the future. The Congregation is restructuring from six Provinces in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, into one overall Province for the Cook Islands, New Zealand, Australia, Papua New

Guinea, East Timor and the Philippines. Another new organisation, called Edmund Rice Education Australia, will take responsibility for the 38 schools formerly operated by the Christian Brothers in Australia.

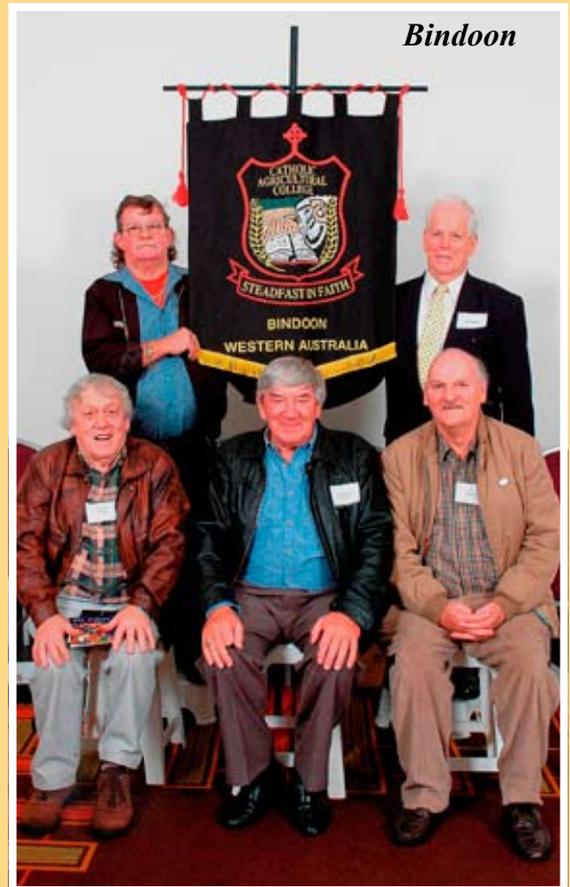
The celebration commenced with a procession of banners representing schools and organisations associated with the Christian Brothers, including Castledare, Bindoon, Clontarf and Tardun. Banners were marched onto the stage by current students and Old Boys together, and the CBERS symbol was

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carried by Laurie Humphreys, Frank Marshall, and Maria Harries (Chairperson of the former CBERS Services).

Current and former students and co-workers also participated in storytelling, speeches, mime and prayer about the past, present and the future. Speaking on behalf of the Christian Brothers, the Leader of WA & SA Holy Spirit Province Br Kevin Ryan thanked the organisers for their generosity and hard work in arranging the event. During his speech, Kevin noted that over the last 20 years the Christian Brothers had learnt “humility in the face of our failure to live up to our ideals. We apologise again today for the hurts we have caused any individual and group. We thank you who have been hurt for it is you who have taught us about forgiveness, healing and reconciliation”.



## The Alliance for Forgotten Australians

The Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA) was formed in 2006 as part of the response to the Federal Government Inquiry into Forgotten Australians in 2004. It was officially launched by Senator Andrew Murray on 16th October this year.

Dr Maria Harries represents Western Australia in an advisory role and I am on the Steering Committee. Since May 2006 we have attended three meetings and three teleconferences.

AFA is a national group of organizations and individuals from across Australia that promotes the interests of the estimated 500,000 people who experienced institutional or other out-of-home care as children in the last century and who suffered physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse.

A group of us are working to set up and incorporate a state-based support organisation which we have called FACT (Forgotten Australians Coming Together) so that we can develop services at a local level for people who were in the care of the state as children and so that we can have a stronger representative base in working with AFA.

AFA works to advance its objectives at all levels of government in Australia. It works with the knowledge and cooperation of its members to advance issues at the federal, state and territory levels.

### AFA is committed to:

- Obtaining adequate acknowledgement, accountability and redress for past wrongs
- Achieving the full implementation of the recommendations of the Senate Report, overseen by a national watch committee
- Supporting current efforts to highlight child protection issues, including those relating to Indigenous people and Child Migrants.

### Our key priorities for the next period are to obtain:

- Resources to set up and run a national body to support and promote the interests of Forgotten Australians.
- A national, meaningful, written apology from the Federal Government
- Fully funded and resourced drop-in centres in every State and Territory
- Free, open and supported access to all personal records, including the preservation of records
- A Forgotten Australians Gold Card which provides Forgotten Australians with priority access to mainstream services such as housing, social security, counselling and health care.

# NOTICE BOARD

## *Vale*

### **Ron Taylor**

Passed away March 2007.  
Ron arrived from the UK in 1938 aboard the Strathaird, and was sent to Tardun and then Bindoon. Despite his harsh early years, Ron always had a very cheerful attitude to life.  
RIP from Peter Bent.

### **Sheila Winter**

Passed away in Wales, September 2007.  
Sheila is fondly remembered by many ex-St Joseph's girls, who send sincere condolences to her sister Dilys Budd (nee Winter) and the family.

## **Castledare Chapel Golden Jubilee 2007**

A 9.30am Mass held at Castledare Chapel on 9th December 2007, followed by a Morning Tea at the Castledare Retirement Village Community Centre. The organisers express much gratitude to Tony Dalton, Peter Bent, and to Christina at Westcourt for their help with historic photos for this event. Watch out for a writeup in the next edition of *CBERS Network*.

*Birthday Boy - 70 yrs. Old!*



Many happy returns to Terry Humphreys, who celebrated his 70th birthday this year.

From your friends at CMC.



## **Can you help?**

An ex-resident down on his luck is wondering if anyone has a VCR (video tape) player they no longer need, and might be willing to donate.

## **Historic photograph project**

Some ex-residents are still seeking to find a childhood photo of themselves. Please contact your Rep if you have any photos not already copied for the historic photo project. Thanks to Maureen Holland for sharing her photos, including this one from Nazareth House in Cheltenham. Maureen is standing fourth from the left in the front row.



## **Found**

A pair of black 'Polaroid' brand sunglasses, found at the Maritime Museum after the 60th Anniversary function in September. Left behind by a lady in a pink cardigan with large pearl earrings. Contact CBERS.