



FRIENDS OF THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS

St John's Park Precinct New Town Tasmania

Issue 30

NEWSLETTER

December 2017

1828-2018

2018 marks the 190th anniversary of the founding of the Orphan Schools. The Friends of the Orphan Schools are planning a number of events to mark the 190th anniversary, beginning with Fox's Feast on Sunday 25 February 2018.

In March 1828, the *Colonial Advocate* newspaper noted,

That fine building belonging to Mr. Loane, and late the residence of Mr. E. Curr, has been rented by Government for a Female Orphan School. It is singular that this building is erected nearly on the same spot where the late Lieutenant Governor Collins erected an Orphan School nearly 20 years ago. It is to be conducted, we understand, by Mr. and Mrs. Chorley. The Male Orphan School, to be managed by R. W. Giblin, Esq., is to be established at Roseway Lodge, near New-town, so that the boys may be near the Government Farms, on which some of them are to be practised in the habits of agriculture. [Ref: *Colonial Advocate* 1 March 1828 p.43]

From 1828, the Admission Register for the King's Orphan School meticulously listed the names of the children, their age, the date they were admitted, their parents' names, the ship to the colony,

their date of removal and any relevant remarks. [Ref: TAHO, SWD28/1/1] The first names in the Boys Admission Register were Thomas Davies or Robinson, aged 4, Joseph Hack aged 5, and William Platt, aged 4½. They were all admitted on 19 May 1828. All three boys spent considerable time in the Orphan School. Thomas was in the institution for seven years before he was discharged to his mother in March 1835 at the age of 11. Joseph, who was in the Orphan School for 11 years, was discharged to Richard Lewis on 3 October 1839 when he was about 16. After 12 years, William was discharged to William Carter; he was also 16. The first names in the Girls Admission Register, were Catherine Williams, aged 4½, and Caroline Parsons, aged 3. Both were admitted on 21 May 1828. Catherine spent 18 years in the Orphan School and was discharged at her own request. After 8 years in the Orphan School, Caroline was discharged to her mother in February 1836.

Tours Taking Off

The new program for tours of the St John's Park historic precinct has seen good results during 2017. After undergoing training with Robyn Everist, tour guides Jane Hodgman and Richard Watson have been leading regular tours on the last Sunday of the month and we have been able to accept four

bookings from organised groups. The participants have also been treated to tea and scones from Bernadette Bell, assisted by June Joiner.

The highlight of the year was the special Church Tour in July. Nearly 40 people enjoyed a series of presentations on the history, architecture and people of the Church's 180 years. They also enjoyed a video presentation on features of the Church not accessible to the public, including the clock and bell tower and the convict gallery. This was followed by time in the building itself. The tour will be repeated next July. If you would like to join a tour, please book through our website at www.orphanschool.org.au

Tour Organiser Simon Cocker

Member's Story: Mary Ann Hilliard

My great-grandmother was Annie Hilliard. She married my great-grandfather, George William Adams, at Roxburgh, Otago, New Zealand, on 12 May 1890. Her age is recorded on the marriage register as 27, which if correct would mean she was born about 1863. Her name is recorded as 'Annie' and we have no record of her as 'Mary Ann'. The marriage certificate records Bride's parents as 'Unknown to Bride who is an orphan'. Her birth place is given as:

Hobart, Tasmania.

The Queen's Orphan School records for Mary Ann Hilliard state her age on admission in 1862 to be 3 years, which would mean she was born about 1859. It seems highly probable that Annie and Mary Ann are the same person but we need to know what became of Mary Ann after she left the orphan school to be sure of this. Can anyone help with information on this?

It looks like Mary Ann was discharged from the Orphan School twice – on 11 March 1873 and again on 28 August 1874 – once to Miss S M Hogan. Did she stay with her or then go to someone else? I understand that she completed her apprenticeship in 1877.

Mary Ann Hilliard's parents were both convicts. Her mother was Margaret Thomson (or Thompson) *Emma Eugenia* (4) 1851 and her father, Patrick Hilliard *Equestrian* (3) 1852. They were married at St Joseph's Church, Hobart Town, on 9 January 1854. Their two eldest children died early: Thomas born 23 January 1854, died 25 May 1854; and Margaret born 24 March 1855, died 29 April 1857. Patrick had been a police constable until he was dismissed in 1855 for being drunk on duty. According to a note on Mary Ann's orphanage admission file, he died at O'Brien's Bridge about December 1859. Margaret died in hospital on 3 June 1861. Mary Ann was with her mother in hospital and remained in the Hospital Nursery after Margaret's death. At the age of 3, she was admitted to the Queen's Orphan School on 17 July 1862.

We know that our Annie Hilliard was a Catholic. She had a child, Donald Archibald Hilliard (Archie) in Lawrence, Otago, to an unknown partner in 1885. Her age on the birth certificate was given as 23 which means she would have been born about 1862. That child went into care by Court Order at the age of 4 months. Annie seems to have worked as a do-

mestic servant prior to marrying my great-grandfather, George, in 1890. We know that both Annie and George had been working at *The Robert Burns Hotel*, Ettrick, Central Otago, when the hotel burnt down on 12 June 1888. [Ref: *Tuapeka Times* 25 July 1888 p.3.]

George and Annie lived most of their married life at Rongahere, a small settlement on the Clutha River, where George, an ex-seaman, was employed for a number of years as puntman. His occupation was also given as labourer and miner. Together they had a family of five boys and two girls but also appear to have adopted Annie's first child, Archie, who became known as 'Archie Adams'.

Annie died of stomach cancer at Rongahere on 11 April 1910 and was buried at Lawrence cemetery. Her age was given on the death certificate and her headstone as 46 which means she would have been born about 1864. However, a newspaper death notice gives her age as 50 which if correct would mean she was born about 1860 which is closer to the date of 1859, which the Orphan School admission records seem to indicate. I have been unable to find any registration of Mary Ann Hilliard's birth in Hobart.

Given the confusion over Annie's age, the lack of a birth record for Mary Ann, and a lack of information as to what happened to Mary Ann after she completed her apprenticeship, it is not possible to conclude without any doubt that they are the one and the same person. However, after considerable searching, I have found no evidence of Mary Ann living anywhere else (eg on the Australian mainland) and until evidence to the contrary is found I am tentatively claiming Mary Ann Hilliard (Orphan 2562) as my great-grandmother.

I would be most happy to correspond with anyone who has any further information or suggestions

for further research.

Graeme Martyn gs@martyn.net.nz

FOX'S FEAST SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2018

We are planning a special Fox's Feast to mark the 190th anniversary of the Orphan Schools and hope that as many orphan descendants as possible will attend. It will be held on Sunday February 25 February. Part of the original orphan school will be available for our use and we hope to launch 'Voices from the Orphan Schools', a series of articles about the children. If you would like to help with the organisation, please contact:

Dianne Snowden
dsnowden@tassie.net.au

CHRISTMAS 1865

In 1865, more than 400 children from the Queen's Orphan Asylums were treated to a Christmas pantomime performance of Jack the Giant Killer at the Theatre Royal with the Governor, His Excellency Col. Gore Browne and Mrs. Browne attending. The children were invited by Mr Greville whose company performed the pantomime.

'At the close of the mid-day entertainment the Orphan School children as they left the Theatre, were, by the liberality of the management, supplemented to some small extent by voluntary contributions from the public regaled with profuse supplies of cakes "lollies," fruit, and "ginger" cordial. These refreshments were dispensed by Mr. B. N. Nathan assisted by some few subordinate auxiliaries, and were accepted by their recipients with manifestly surprised gratification'. [Ref: *The Mercury* 2 January 1865 p.2.]

NEW YEAR'S DAY 1861

'On New Year's Day the children of the Queen's Orphan Schools were conveyed in the Hon. R.

Cleburne's punt, The Queen, to that gentleman's residence at Restdown where they were regaled with cake and tea; having amused themselves in the grounds the delighted juveniles returned to the schools in the cool of the evening'. [Ref: *The Mercury* 23 January 1861 p.3]

2018 Deadlines for newsletter articles

1 February 2018
1 May 2018
1 August 2018
1 November 2018

Editor: Dianne Snowden

Contact us

Friends of the Orphan Schools,
PO Box 461,
North Hobart, TAS 7002

Email:

secretary@orphanschool.org.au

Telephone messages:

03 6285 2654



Cleburne House, East Derwent Highway, Risdon

FEMALE CONVICTS RE-SEARCH CENTRE Autumn seminar, Sunday 22 April 2018.

Topic: 'The Hobart Town Female Factory and the move to the Cascades, 1828'

In 1828 women convicts were transferred from the old Hobart Town Female Factory to the new Factory at the Cascades. To mark the 190th anniversary, the next FCRC seminar explores the old Factory and the move to the new one.

Registrations for the seminar will open in Jan 2018:
www.femaleconvicts.org.au



Season's Greetings from the Friends of the Orphan Schools Committee