

6 1875 First convent purchased

In 1875 a cottage on Flinders Terrace / Brown's Lane (Lot 97) in front of Northern Dairies (now the Coles carpark) was purchased, with funds raised by the Sisters. Sr Angelica Greene wrote to Mary MacKillop in March 1875 saying, "...we have paid at least £88 off the purchase price and spent £130 on improvements."

The school was crowded to begin with and by 1882 there were 170 students on the roll. The building later became the McAuliffe family home and was demolished in 1962.

1897 Mary MacKillop's final visit

When Mary MacKillop made her final visit to Port Augusta in May 1897 there were four Sisters in the community, living in the 'new' convent off Brown's Lane acquired in March, 1888. There were 100 children on the roll, seven music students and one boarder. During this time classes were also held in the newly built All Saints Church and the adjacent Catholic Hall.

7 1927 St Joseph's Convent School

St Joseph's Convent School opened in 1927, 56 years after the arrival of the Sisters to Port Augusta. With ever increasing student numbers, buildings were added in 1957 and again in 1963, yet still some classes had to be held in the Convent and in a classroom at the Central Primary School.

8 1915 St Joseph's Convent

Mary MacKillop never saw the jewel in crown, the new permanent stone convent opened in Sept 12, 1915 by the third Bishop of Port Augusta Dr John Henry Norton. The convent was built on land described as "a raging sandhill that once housed the brewery horses."

During the 1970's there were often as many as 12 Sisters in the community with some 400 students. With constant overcrowding in the school a decision was made in 1981 to relocate the school to the Westside. The vacated site was to become Wadlata. The Sisters resided in Jervis Street until 1999 when with only two now in community they also moved to the Westside. The Westside campus with R-12 became Caritas College.

9 1883 All Saints Cathedral

All Saints Church, a transept of Gothic design, was partially completed in 1883. The front entrance presented two spires, with a bell tower intended for the left wing. In October 1883, the bell weighing nearly 660kg and costing £100, arrived from Dublin. Manufactured by foundryman, J Murphy, the bell was decorated with Irish emblems of a shamrock and harp, as well a Latin inscription. The bell tower was however, never completed with the bell housed in a wooden structure until the present church opened in 1976.

A new presbytery was built next to the church on the site of the old Hall, described as "a very handsome and commodious Presbytery, erected by the same contractor. It contains eight rooms and has all the conveniences of a well-built house."

The Sisters taught in the church and adjacent Catholic Hall until 1927.

Other sites

CONTINUE BY CAR TO
OTHER SITES OF INTEREST

1878 Disaster strikes

**Sr Laurencia's grave
Stirling North Cemetery
16 Bowman Road
Stirling North**

On Sunday March 3, 1878 disaster struck the Commercial Road Chapel building. After Benediction that evening, Sisters Laurencia Honner and Immaculata Punyer were preparing for school. While extinguishing the sanctuary lamp, the lit oil accidentally spilt, engulfing them in fire. Years later Sr Immaculata, who survived the accident, recalled "we were both severely burnt but dear Sr Laurencia more seriously than I. Mother Mary (MacKillop) was in Adelaide when she received news that we were dying and calling for her. She hired a coach from one town to another undertaking the 300 mile journey as quickly as possible through rough bush country."

A consoling picture we have is Mary MacKillop attending Sr Laurencia's funeral and staying on to comfort the Sisters. The stained-glass window, which adorns Caritas College Reception, came from the old Convent on Flinders Terrace and was donated by Sarah and Richard Honner in memory of their young daughter.

1971-1987 Dartmouth Street to the Westside

**40-46 Dartmouth Street,
Port Augusta**

Initially established as a primary school, secondary classes were eventually added and by 1971 the school had expanded to Year 12. St Joseph's High School moved to a new site on Dartmouth Street, with a name change to Caritas College. Numbers continued to grow and in 1987 the site was sold and all students from Reception to Year 12 were relocated to the current Caritas College site on the Westside.

1990's Boarding facility

**Caritas College
Woodforde Street
Port Augusta West**

In the 1990's a Boarding facility was built opposite the College on the Westside, providing students from isolated stations in areas such as Leigh Creek, Woomera, Roxby Downs and Hawker, the opportunity to pursue a Catholic Education. This remained viable until 2012.

WALK THE JOURNEY OF MARY
MACKILLOP AND THE FIRST SISTERS

WALKING

1 8 7 1  2 0 2 1

OUR STORY



CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN PORT AUGUSTA

*Sisters of St Joseph, St Joseph's Convent School
Caritas College and All Saints Parish Church*



A place where we can grow

History walk sites

DURATION 45 MINUTES (approx)

1 1871 Arriving in Port Augusta

Mary MacKillop accompanied the first two Sisters, 21 year old Angelica Greene and the younger Angela Crugan, to Port Augusta, arriving by the steamer Lubra on May 15, 1871. It is likely that they disembarked on the large jetty built for Elders Wool Exports at the end of Commercial Road. Mary wrote about a woman and her children coming on board to help them ashore and take them to Mrs Ryan's to meet the women of Port Augusta.

The Sisters found the town built on a sand bank without any trace of vegetation or shade. The land in close proximity to the Port, was completely ravished by the many goats that roamed and downtrodden by the sheep, camels, horses and bullock teams that passed through. Most people lived in tents and the few buildings standing had white walls with glittering roofs of corrugated iron.

For most of the next 19 years Angelica would steadfastly serve the people and children of Port Augusta.

2 1871 First School

Having arrived on Saturday and settling in, Mary and the Sisters gathered the people for Mass Prayers that Sunday morning and again in the evening. School opened the next day in a shed near the Police Station with 56 students. Evening classes were held for young men to learn the basics of reading and writing.

3 1871 First lodgings

Mary and the Sisters soon found a place to rent on Tassie Street. Father Reynolds described the premises as an "overcrowded, windswept cottage" and Mary MacKillop wrote "Father Pallhuber did not come, but sent a telegram to say he could not. We then got the Committee to take the house we are now in, which suits very well, and will unless heavy rain comes, for then it is liable to be flooded... we have goats milk and butter..."

4 1871-1874 School sites

Between 1871-1874 with as many as 200 students, the Sisters and school moved along Commercial Road, with classes being held near the police station, in both the original post office and the old institute known as the Music and Arts Hall.

5 1874 A Place to call their Own

In 1874 there was a grand Bazaar over three days in April and May. Father Nevin purchased the two-storey building on the corner of Commercial Road and Flinders Terrace and the private School House opposite on Commercial Road. These buildings and the weatherboard residence next door were used as the school, chapel, and presbytery. It was here in 1878 that disaster struck. See back cover.

A CATHOLIC SCHOOL R-12  In the Josephite tradition

Begin at the Wharf, continue along Tassie Street, down Commerical Road and Flinders Terrace, finishing at All Saints Cathedral.

DURATION 45 MINUTES (approx)
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TERRAIN

Port Augusta is one of the few places where the Josephites have been serving the community continuously since Mary MacKillop's arrival with the first Sisters, Angelica Greene and Angela Crugan, in 1871. Mary MacKillop's dream of providing a quality education for the children in rural areas had its humble beginnings in that flood prone shed on the Port Augusta Wharf in May 1871. For decades the Sisters, teachers, staff, students and families all endured overcrowding and poor facilities. Today, Caritas College is a vibrant, engaging, learning facility, dedicated to continuing the Catholic Education of students in the Josephite tradition. In the same spirit that has sustained it over the previous 150 years, our school stands as a testament to the commitment and dedication of all who made Port Augusta their home. We acknowledge the courage, faith and hard work of the Josephite Sisters and we rejoice that Mary MacKillop, a woman of vision and Australia's first Saint, lived among us for a short while.



1 PORT AUGUSTA WHARF 1871



2 FIRST SCHOOL NEAR POLICE STATION 1871



3 FIRST LODGINGS TASSIE STREET



First Nations people

The first inhabitants of the area were the Barngarla, Nukunu and Ngadjuri people. Barngarla country extends from Port Lincoln to the head of Spencer Gulf, including the township of Whyalla, and beyond Port Augusta up to Lake Gairdner and Lake Torrens. Ngadjuri country covers the eastern slopes of the Mount Lofty Ranges and the Southern Flinders Ranges, near Gawler, up to Hawker and beyond. Nukunu country covers west of the mountains, including but not limited to the townships of Port Augusta, Port Germein, Port Pirie and Melrose. The Barngarla people called Port Augusta, Curdnatta, meaning *plenty of sand*.

Image credits: State Library of South Australia B-4514, B-8446, B-9346, B-26363, B-27350, B-48325



4 POST OFFICE 1871



4 OLD INSTITUTE 1932



4 COMMERCIAL ROAD 1890



9 ALL SAINT'S CATHEDRAL



8 ST JOSEPH'S CONVENT



7 ST JOSEPH'S CONVENT SCHOOL



6 FIRST CONVENT 1875



5 CHAPEL, PRESBYTERY & SCHOOL