



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 2.4 Migrating
- 6.2 Establishing schools

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 402 Education and science

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon has considerable aesthetic value due to the idiosyncratic forms of the buildings located there. The significant buildings exhibit a well resolved combination of architectural, symbolic and artistic motifs. (Criterion 1.1)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon has aesthetic significance for its architecture. The combination and use of both the 'Inter-War Free Classical' and 'Inter-War Romanesque' style characteristics throughout the place, culminating in the impressive main building and tower, exhibit design and artistic excellence. (Criterion 1.2)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon contributes to the aesthetic qualities of significant vistas to and from the place and the natural landscape within which it is located, particularly from the north side of its valley setting, and upon approach from the south. (Criterion 1.3)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon, with its substantial and idiosyncratic buildings, collectively forms an imposing cultural environment in a rural landscape. (Criteria 1.3 & 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is associated with the child migration and child welfare policies implemented by the State and Federal Governments and the British Government in the first half of the twentieth century. (Criterion 2.2)

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For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon was one of four institutions established by the Christian Brothers which later became part of an integrated scheme for the purpose of educating and training orphaned and migrant boys and other socially disadvantaged children in farm and trade. (Criterion 2.2)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is closely associated with the orphaned and migrant boys and other socially disadvantaged children who lived and worked at the farm and trade school. It was these children who constructed the main buildings under the supervision of architects, builders and Christian Brothers. The place is a tangible reminder of the experiences of boys who suffered abuse and exploitation at the hands of those charged with their care. (Criteria 2.2 & 2.3)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon has a close association with the work of Dom Urbano Gimenez as designer of the Central Block and the Technical Block, and architect-priest John Cyril Hawes as designer of the Dormitory Block and the Refectory Block. (Criterion 2.3)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is closely associated with the Christian Brothers, in particular Brother Paul Keaney who was directly responsible for the construction of the major buildings as part of his approach towards farm and trade education. The place was named Keaney Agricultural College for nearly 28 years from 1966 to 1994. It provided education in agriculture for boys aged 8 to 10 years. This was not available anywhere else in the State at that time. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon demonstrates technical sophistication in the construction of roof form over the tower in the main building. (Criterion 3.3)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is significant to the orphaned and migrant boys who worked and lived at the school. The place represents memories and associations for those whom it played an important role in their lives. (Criterion 4.1)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is highly valued by the general community for social, religious and educational associations since it opened as a farm and trade school in 1937. (Criterion 4.1)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is an impressive complex of buildings in a rural setting which attracts visitors. It contributes significantly to the wider community's sense of place. While the complex is not visible from a public roadway, the stone entrance posts mark its presence to passing traffic. (Criterion 4.2)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon contributes to the local and wider community's sense of place through its association with both the child migration scheme and the Catholic Church. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon was one of four institutions established by the Christian Brothers as part of its Scheme for the purpose of educating

and training orphaned and migrant boys in farm and trade. It provided education in agriculture for boys aged 8 to 10 years. This was not available anywhere else in the State at that time. (Criterion 5.1)

The combination and use of both the 'Inter-War Free Classical' and 'Inter-War Romanesque' styles throughout the place and the scale of it in its environment are rare characteristics. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon is representative of style characteristics associated with both the 'Inter-War Free Classical' and 'Inter-War Romanesque' (c1915-c1940) styles of architecture. (Criterion 6.1)

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon was one of a number of institutions which were either directly involved or had associations with child migration in the first half of the twentieth century. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon, generally, is in sound condition. Maintenance of the significant buildings has been undertaken on an ad-hoc basis. The ongoing maintenance requirements of the place are considerable, and it is apparent that a significant 'catch-up' maintenance program is required in the near future.

In some cases the significant buildings of the place require major conservation works to prevent further deterioration of the existing fabric.

The Convent building in particular is in a poor condition. The building is currently unoccupied, and it would appear that minimal maintenance work has been undertaken.

The roof-light over the gallery space in the main building is unsafe and requires repair/stabilisation to prevent possible collapse.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon has a moderate degree of integrity. Although attitudes towards child migration and the care and education of orphans and socially disadvantaged children has changed, the site and buildings that comprise Catholic Education College, Bindoon, have been adapted in order to continue to provide an educational facility.

The current use of the place is compatible to its earlier use as an Agricultural School for migrant children. *Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon* continues to function as an agricultural school, students are currently drawn from the surrounding agricultural areas and throughout the State.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Catholic Agricultural College is intact and retains a high degree of authenticity. It would appear that some additions have been made to the original fabric of the significant buildings. These changes have not greatly diminished the authenticity of the place.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by John Taylor, Architect.

Additional research has been undertaken by Kristy Bizzaca and HCWA staff. Further data and comment has been supplied by former child migrants and other ex-Bindoon children, as well as the Christian Brothers organisation.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon comprises seven major buildings: Catherine House (1937, 1949, 1951), the Dormitory Block (1940-1943), the Classroom Block (1942, 1948, 1955, 1970s), the Refectory Block (1944), the Central Block (1944-1953), the Technical Block (1948-1951), and the Convent (1948-1950).¹ The Dormitory and Refectory blocks were designed by Monsignor Hawes. Benedictine Monk, Dom Urbano Gimenez, designed the Central and Technical blocks, and probably the Convent. Other elements of the place include: the Laundry & Bakery and the Old Power House (1949); the entrance gate and stone pillars; fourteen statues forming the Stations of the Cross which line the road from the entrance gates, and the statues of Christ the King, and the Holy Family, designed by Father Eugene Perez (1949-1950); the Cemetery containing seven graves (1950-1960); the grave of Brother Paul Keaney at the Grotto (1954) and his life-size statue (c.1962); the Garages (1965); the Brother Dawe Memorial Swimming Pool (1972); and Lake Scott and Lake Musk. There are an assortment of farm buildings which are not part of this assessment.

The buildings were constructed by the Christian Brothers, largely using the labour of the boys in their care, for use as an orphanage and migrant boys home known as St Joseph's Farm and Trade School, which was established in 1936. Founded in Ireland in 1802 by Edmund Ignatius Rice for the education of poor boys, the Order first arrived in Australia in 1868. In 1894, the Christian Brothers came to Western Australia, and took on the management of the boys' college in St George's Terrace. In 1897, the Brothers took charge of the Catholic boys' orphanage in Subiaco.²

In 1901, the orphanage was transferred to new buildings on the Canning River, in Manning, and renamed Clontarf Boy's Orphanage and Industrial School. The Orphanage provided residential care for orphans, children from 'broken families' and younger juvenile delinquents.³ In Perth at that time, there were Catholic, Protestant and State orphanages for boys and girls, each combining the function of an industrial school. There was also an orphanage farm. The children in these institutions were expected to work to help support themselves from the age of six or seven.⁴

In 1912/1913, a new institution, Fairbridge Farm School, was established by Kingsley Fairbridge. The school played a major part in child migration to Western Australia, reflecting the child welfare policies of both Australia and Britain at the time. It took in British child migrants and trained them for work on the land. Fairbridge's death in 1924 and the release of his autobiography in 1927, raised widespread publicity and support for his farm school scheme.

¹ A summary of the development of each of the main buildings can be found at the end of the documentary evidence.

² Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme: The Christian Brothers and Childcare in Western Australia*, Argyle Pacific Publishing, Perth, 1993, Introduction.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ 'Report by Superintendent of Public Charities & Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, etc', 1900, Paper 7 in *Votes & Proceedings of the West Australian Parliament, 1901*.

The land settlement schemes of the 1920s also increased the support for such child welfare policies.⁵

The Catholic Church and the Christian Brothers developed their own child migration plan, a 'Scheme' to educate and train orphaned and migrant boys in farm and trade. The 'Scheme' comprised of four institutions: Clontarf Boys' Orphanage and Industrial School, Manning (1901), St Mary's Farm School, Tardun (1927), St Vincent's Boys' Home, Castledare (1929) and St Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon (1936)..⁶

However, by the mid 1920s, both State and Federal governments refused to subsidise a similar Catholic migration scheme to the Fairbridge Farm School which they considered to be unsuccessful. The British Government, which had sent tens of thousands of 'foundlings' abroad in the previous sixty years, mainly to Canada, was also phasing out child emigration at this time, considering it better for British children to stay and help build Britain.⁷ It took ten years of negotiations by the Catholic Church and the Christian Brothers in Western Australia, and the advent of a Catholic Prime Minister, Joseph Lyons, before the Federal and State Governments agreed to subsidise the 'schemes'. In 1938-39, an agreed quota of 110 British boys arrived at St Mary's, Tardun.⁸

In 1936, the Christian Brothers had accepted a donation of 17,000 acres (6,885 ha) of land in the Chittering district.⁹ The donation of the land, known as Mt Pleasant Station, came from Catherine Musk.¹⁰

Catherine Musk was the widow of John Musk who had purchased the property in 1912.¹¹ Following a tour of Africa, where she saw Catholic nuns caring for the sick, she became a benefactor of Church activities. She donated most of the £250 construction cost of St Catherine's Church at Gingin, and became involved in the work of the Christian Brothers. She was particularly impressed with the Scheme and with the work of Brother Paul Keaney¹² at Clontarf.¹³ She offered the property to Brother Keaney for use as a farm centre similar to St Mary's, Tardun. On 11 August 1936, the Christian Brothers took possession of the place.¹⁴

⁵ Heritage and Conservation Professionals, 'Conservation Plan for Former Fairbridge Farm School' prepared for Fairbridge, Western Australia (Inc.), October 1998, pp. 9 - 15.

⁶ Coldrey, Barry M. 'Child Migration, the Australian Government and the Catholic Church 1926-1966', pp. 4- 7.

⁷ Coldrey, Barry M. 'Child Migration', op cit, p. 8-9.

⁸ *ibid*, pp. 8-29.

⁹ Certificate of Title, Vol. 1049 Fol. 996, 1 September 1936.

¹⁰ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, pp. 263-265.

¹¹ *ibid*.

¹² Paul Francis Keaney was born in Ireland in 1888. In 1911 he had migrated to Queensland and joined the police force. He entered the Christian Brothers in 1916 and joined the staff of Clontarf in 1919. He was appointed director of Clontarf in 1926. The 'house system' of *Fairbridge*, where the children lived in small family units, was considered too costly by the Christian Brothers, so St Mary's, Tardun, and later St Joseph's, Bindoon, were designed along more institutional lines, large-scale institutions housing numerous children in dormitory accommodation being the prevalent model in residential child care in Australia through to the 1970s.

¹³ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, pp. 263-265.

¹⁴ Certificate of Title Vol. 1049 Fol. 996, 1 September 1936; Bindoon Annals, 1936-1991, p. 174, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt'. **Note:** Although the Brothers took over the property on the 11 August, Bindoon celebrates its anniversary on Assumption Day, 15 August.

As the Mt Pleasant property had not been a planned acquisition, it was not until 1938 that it was decided that the property would take those boys from Clontarf who did not qualify for training in the trades, or as farmers at St Mary's, Tardun, and train them as farm labourers. The place was named St Joseph's Farm and Trade School. By catering only for the older boys, 14-16 years, St Joseph's would not require a school, a decision which pleased Abbot Catalan, of the nearby Benedictine Monastery at New Norcia, within whose small Abbey diocese the Bindoon property was situated. He had been happy to welcome the Brothers to the district, but did not want them to establish a school at Mt Pleasant which would compete with New Norcia's St Ildephonsus College.¹⁵

Initially, two Brothers and seven farm trainees set about establishing a productive dairy farm on the Bindoon property, despite the only large market, Perth, being sixty miles away.¹⁶ The group occupied the Old Homestead, the second house Edmund Byrne had constructed (not extant).¹⁷

A description of the property, by the Manager of the Bank of Australasia at Moora for his 1936-1937 financial year report, stated that the property had:

2 permanent running springs, 5 wells, permanent creek and many soaks. 9 roomed stone house, fair order, verandahs on 3 sides, other outbuildings. Recently constructed shearing shed, 12 stall stable, chaffhouse under roof - sawn timber & galvanized iron. Shearers quarters.¹⁸

A dairy was constructed in 1937, three miles from the Homestead, the site chosen because it was near permanent water and close to the site selected for future buildings.¹⁹ It was built on the present site of Catherine House, in which it is incorporated.²⁰

By 1939, St Joseph's had a £4,000 overdraft, and the property and Homestead were run down.²¹ Pressure to develop the place was mounting. Mrs Musk expressed disappointment at progress on the property, and the Christian Brothers Provincial Council in Sydney was concerned about the overdraft and the conditions under which the Brothers were living. A change in management was made, with Brother Sebastian Bresnehan, an experienced farmer, taking charge of St Joseph's Bindoon from 1940.²²

Construction of the first major building, the Dormitory Block, was begun in January that year, by boys from Clontarf.²³ The building had been designed by Monsignor John Hawes.²⁴ The following description of the building process was reported by former Clontarf boy, Brother Douglas Boulter.

¹⁵ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, p. 266; Letter from Abbot Catalan, 1936, in 'First Annals of Bindoon - written at the Homestead by L. P. O'Sullivan & others over the years', handwritten journal, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt'.

¹⁶ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit p. 266.

¹⁷ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, Christian Brothers, Perth, 1986, p. 10; photograph p. 2.

¹⁸ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 12].

¹⁹ *ibid*, [p. 6].

²⁰ Telephone conversation with Brother Norbert Tuppin by Irene Sauman, 26 June 1999, Memo HCWA File 3101.

²¹ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, pp. 268 & 272.

²² *ibid*, pp. 267-268; 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 7].

²³ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 7]; *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 9.

²⁴ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 12, Brother Bresnehan's speech at the opening of the first section of the building, 21 September 1941. Monsignor Hawes has been

This site was selected because, although in the valley, it is reasonably well elevated, well cleared and the only comparative flat spot in the area. Br Conlon had put in two pegs about 100m apart to mark the front of the building with a third to indicate the corner of the wing. I then set to work to peg out the foundations following the plans prepared for us by Mons. Hawes of Mullewa... When this pegging out of the complete building was finished, Br. Paul Keaney returned from Clontarf with a group of boys to cut [because the ground was extremely hard], rather than dig, the foundations... After eight days of this hard work the foundations were complete to ground level for the complete building even though it was only intended to build one wing.²⁵

A group of Clontarf boys worked on the building under the direction of Mr O'Reilly, a retired builder who had been Clerk of Works on St Mary's Cathedral. Sand for the building site at St Joseph's was carted from a neighbouring property, about nine miles (14.5kms) west, and cement dust was collected free from Rivervale. Water was provided by a spring, about 100 metres in front of the building (later the site of Lake Scott), and the stone was quarried on the property. Gelignite was used to blast the stone into moveable pieces, which were carted on a sled pulled by horses. Hand tools were used for all the work.²⁶

The first section of the Dormitory Block contained a chapel, and could comfortably house twenty boys.²⁷ It was officially opened on 21 September 1941, by E. H. Gray, Assistant Minister for Employment and Child Welfare. At the same time, the foundation stone for the next section of the building was laid by Catherine Musk and blessed by Abbot Catalan. The Lotteries Commission provided £2,500 toward the ongoing work.²⁸

Two days after the opening, on 23 September, the State Government granted permission for St Joseph's, Bindoon to take in boys, Catholic and Protestant, who had been through the courts and were wards of the State.²⁹ It was proposed that twenty boys, 14-16 years, would arrive at St Joseph's, Bindoon. The State Government would pay £1 per week each for the first 10, and 15/- each for the rest, the same subsidy that Seaforth received.³⁰

The Government's acquiescence in the matter would have had a lot to do with Brother Paul Keaney, whose image was heightened by the 1938 release of the movie *Boys' Town*; 'the fictionalised and romantic story of Father Charles Flanagan, the dedicated Catholic priest who established a model community for delinquent youth near Omaha, Nebraska'.³¹

Brother Keaney was appointed Principal of St Joseph's, Bindoon in 1942. On 1 March that year, the Air Force took over Clontarf, and the boys were sent to

credited with the design of at least sixteen buildings for the Catholic Church during his twenty four years (1915-1939) in Western Australia. These include a number of churches in the Geraldton diocese, at Morawa, Mullewa, Perenjori and Northampton, and six buildings in Geraldton, including St Francis Xavier Cathedral and Nazareth House. He also designed some of the buildings at St Mary's, Tardun. The design for the Dormitory Block was completed prior to his departure from Western Australia.

²⁵ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 9.

²⁶ ibid, p. 9-10, photograph of quarrying, p. 17.

²⁷ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 6].

²⁸ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 11; 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 54]; inscriptions on foundation stone; invitation to the opening ceremony.

²⁹ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 50], 23 September 1941.

³⁰ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, pp. 271-272; 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 50], 22 September 1941.

³¹ ibid, pp. 276-277.

St Mary's, Tardun and St Joseph's, Bindoon for the duration of World War Two. About forty of the older boys were transferred to Bindoon, camping in tents supplied by the Army.³² When the boys arrived, Brother Keaney had 'a recreation hall with tiled roof and spacious fireplace' constructed to provide a homely touch (now part of the Classroom Block) as well as another building for extra dormitory accommodation (not extant).³³

In August 1942, architect Harold Krantz provided a plan for the central buildings in the complex. His design was less ornate and, as it was not followed, obviously did not meet with approval.³⁴ In October 1942, (1943?) a plan for the layout of the grounds was approved by David Davidson, Perth Town Planning Commissioner. This plan was only partially followed, but the drawing prepared at the time shows the recreation hall and extra dormitory accommodation behind the Dormitory Block.³⁵

The second (front) section of the Dormitory Block was officially opened on 1 November 1942, by J. J. Kenneally, chairman of the Lotteries Commission. The Commission had previously provided some of the funds for the work.³⁶ At the end of 1942 there were 70 boys at Bindoon.³⁷

St Joseph's now had the services of Joe Pascoli, 'an expert in stonework' who had previously worked at Tardun (1939-1942), and who took charge of work on the Dormitory Block.³⁸ The completed building was opened on 17 October 1943, by Abbot Catalan in the presence of an estimated 600 people. A. R. G. Hawke, then Minister for Industrial Development, Labour and Child Welfare, laid the foundation stone for the second building, the Refectory Block, which was already under construction.³⁹ A photograph taken at the opening ceremony shows that the tower on the Dormitory Block was originally constructed with a tiled roof.⁴⁰

In his speech at the opening A. R. G. Hawke stated that:

Bindoon would play a valuable part in training lads in useful trades and callings, and an even more valuable part in training them for citizenship.

The work of Brother Keaney and those associated with him was achieving splendid results in the building of human character and the strengthening of the best qualities of human nature. It was work which all would admire and all should encourage and assist.⁴¹

Other work carried out at St Joseph's during this period, largely by the boys, included two miles (3.2 kms) of road from the top of Bindoon Hill to the home site, and an underground storage tank behind the Dormitory Block.⁴² The dam created on the spring in front of the buildings was later named Lake

³² Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 9.

³³ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 52]; Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, p. 275; photographs, 1940s, *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit. p. 23 & 54.

³⁴ Plan (007 923), August 1942, Harold Krantz, from the New Norcia Collection, Battye Library.

³⁵ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 53]; site plan (007 914) prepared by David Davidson, 20 October 1942, New Norcia Collection, Battye Library. Note: The date of the drawing is unclear and may possibly be 1943.

³⁶ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 12; inscription on foundation stone.

³⁷ *ibid*, p. 44.

³⁸ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 53]; *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 26.

³⁹ *The Record*, 1 December 1943, p. 1; 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 54].

⁴⁰ Photograph, *The Record*, 1 December 1943, p. 1.

⁴¹ *The Record*, 1 December 1943, p. 1.

⁴² 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, p. [56-57].

Scott, for benefactor A. D. Scott. The Federal Government constructed a relief runway (1943-1944) on the property. The earth-moving equipment used for its construction was loaned to St Joseph's at evenings and weekends and was used to construct the dams.⁴³ Guests were housed in two buildings which Brother Keaney had acquired and moved from Canning Dam, and which were situated apart from the main building site.⁴⁴

The second building constructed, the Refectory Block, was a replica of the external form of the Dormitory Block, and comprised 'a kitchen, dining rooms of large proportions, and three classrooms'.⁴⁵ The tower of the Refectory Block, however, was taller and finished with a flat roof and turrets, and the tower of the Dormitory Block was immediately extended and altered to match. The Refectory Block was opened on 15 October 1944, by the Governor of Western Australia, Sir James Mitchell, in the presence of 3,000 people. He also laid the foundation stone for a third building, the Central Block, at the same time.⁴⁶

Progress made in two and a half years at St Joseph's Trade and Farm School at Bindoon, known as Boys' Town, was strikingly revealed yesterday. The occasion was the opening by the Lieutenant Governor (Sir James Mitchell) of a refectory built by the boys, [and] the laying of a foundation stone to a large building which will serve as the administration block...

The refectory, built of stone, cement and bricks, is tiled and contains the kitchen block, workshops, classrooms and dining rooms, while the first building, which was completed about 12 months ago, contains the dormitory, bedrooms, chapel and stores...

Thousands of tons of soil had been shifted for the purpose of water conservation, large vegetable and fruit gardens had been laid down and fenced against rabbits, trade shops had been set up and equipped. The farming side had not been neglected in that improved breeds of sheep had been introduced, the dairy herd increased and poultry farming commenced. Many of the boys had gained practical training in the many-sided activities of the Bindoon scheme.⁴⁷

In mid 1944, the Government decided that it would no longer send non-Catholic wards of the State to St Joseph's. The subsequent renewal of British child migration in 1947 was part of the Federal Government's immigration policies in response to 'Populate or Perish'. It was believed that the child migrants would grow up loyal to their new home and would defend it.

Brother Keaney and his supporters saw child migration as a way to salvage the investment already made in St Joseph's. They established the Boys' Town Committee and launched an appeal to raise £100,000 for completion of St Joseph's Farm and Trade School, and to settle 500 orphan boys on their own farms.⁴⁸ Over £8,000 was raised within the first six weeks.⁴⁹ However, the Christian Brothers Provincial Council in Sydney was becoming increasingly alarmed at what it saw as overly grand plans in Western Australia, with too

⁴³ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, p. 278.

⁴⁴ 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 54].

⁴⁵ ibid, [p. 54]; inscriptions on foundation stone; plan of Refectory Block (007 929) n.d. New Norcia Collection, Battye Library.

⁴⁶ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 44; 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 63]; inscriptions on foundation stones; invitation to the opening ceremony.

⁴⁷ *West Australian*, 18 October 1944, n.p. 'First Annals of Bindoon', op cit, [p. 63].

⁴⁸ 'Boys' Town Bindoon', leaflet printed by A. D. Scott advertising the appeal and detailing the scheme, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt', Manning.

⁴⁹ Note: This figure and time varies depending on the source.

much emphasis on construction and not enough on religious life. It had also not been consulted on the new plans for Bindoon. The Council responded by sending Brother Keaney to Tasmania, and appointing Brother J. F. Doyle principal at St Joseph's.⁵⁰

This was not a popular decision as Brother Keaney's work at Bindoon had the support of people from all denominations and walks of life, from the Governor down. The buildings at Bindoon were evidence of 'the quality and dignity' of the Brothers' work, and reflected public opinion. They were also a source of pride for the Catholic congregation, who often felt themselves a deprived minority.⁵¹

In 1947, St Joseph's, Bindoon ceased to take State wards in preparation for the British child migrants. Eighty-four British boys arrived that year. The State Government paid 3/6 per week each and the Federal Government paid 7/6. St Joseph's also took in 'private needy cases'. Renovations and structural changes were made to the Dormitory Block. There were 'plans for a model dairy on higher ground with milking machines'.⁵² This would be the third dairy building, the second dairy, the present ruins, being on lower ground and the first (1937) being on the site of Catherine House.

In September 1947, the first British child migrants arrived and were divided between the four Catholic institutions. Although St Joseph's had been designed for teenagers, the migrants that arrived were aged ten to fourteen. St Joseph's now had to provide a primary education for its charges and it was not equipped to do so. It also received the most troubled and least academically inclined. The Child Welfare Department considered conditions at Bindoon substandard and the Provincial Council was concerned because the overdraft had blown out to £14,000. Brother Keaney was recalled to take over from the beginning of 1948.⁵³

Construction once again became a prime concern, as Brother Keaney felt that 'book learning', apart from the basics, was of little use to the type of boys he had to work with. What they really needed, he considered, was a capacity for sustained hard physical work and practical trade and farming skills.⁵⁴ During 1948-1949, the Convent, the Technical Block, the Central Block, the Laundry & Bakery, and the Power House were all under construction utilising child labour, and a foundation stone had been laid for the Classroom Block.⁵⁵

In April 1948, two Benedictine nuns, Sisters Benita and Frances, from St Joseph's Orphanage at New Norcia, and three 'well-trained native girls', arrived at St Joseph's to provide welfare services for the boys.⁵⁶ Lack of female care for the boys had been of concern to the Child Welfare Department since the arrival of the first migrants.

The nuns occupied the 'temporary' convent building, constructed by Joe Pascoli and 'his trainees'. A smaller building, situated between the Laundry &

⁵⁰ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, p. 288-291.

⁵¹ *ibid*, pp. 281-285.

⁵² Annals of Bindoon, 1936-1991, Christian Brothers Archives, 'Westcourt', p. 33.

⁵³ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, pp. 296-312.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, p. 317.

⁵⁵ Annals of Bindoon, 1954, p. 168; plans of Laundry & Bakery (007 931), Central Block, (007 915 & 007 916), Technical Block (007 917 & 007 927), Convent (007 925), n.d. New Norcia Collection, Battye Library.

⁵⁶ *The Record*, 14 April, 1948, p. 1; itinerary for opening of buildings 14 November 1948.

Bakery and the main Convent, was the 'temporary' convent.⁵⁷ Much of the internal work on the Convent, as well as other renovation work carried out at St Joseph's, Bindoon, in 1948-49, was done by members of the Perth Fire Brigade, during their holidays. The Convent included a sick bay and a dental surgery. The Convent Chapel was blessed on 19 March 1950.⁵⁸

A foundation stone for the 'new school block' was laid on 21 May 1948, by Archbishop Walsh of Tuan and Bishop Browne of Galway, who were visiting from Ireland.⁵⁹ The lower floor of the Classroom Block was constructed, around the recreation hall (1942). Photographs of 1948-1953 show a triple-roofed structure. The dormitory accommodation (1942) was demolished to make way for the larger building.⁶⁰

On 14 November 1948, two foundation stones were laid. One was the foundation stone for the Technical Block, laid by the Director of Education, T. S. Edmondson.⁶¹ The other foundation stone was laid by Lindsay Thorn, Minister for Lands & Immigration, for the house for Robert Murray.

In the late 1940s, the Hostel, or Men's Quarters, later to be known as Catherine House, was begun. The dairy (1937) which already occupied part of the site, was enlarged to provide accommodation for Italian internees, Pio Sinicco and Vittorio Muchino, and their families. This construction became part of the lower floor of Catherine House. The two Italians were stonemasons and terrazzo workers.⁶² They were responsible for the fine terrazzo work, including the crest and symbols worked into the floors, and the faux marble columns and wall panelling in the Technical Block and the Central Block.

In 1949, utilising child labour, Father Eugene Perez completed the Stations of the Cross along the main drive. Father Perez was also responsible for the Christ the King statue, on its 40 foot (12 m) high pedestal, which was completed the following year, and for the statue of the Holy Family, erected in remembrance of Catherine Musk, who died on 25 November 1949.⁶³ Catherine Musk's will left over £40,000 to Boys' Town, to be used for the boys but not for buildings.⁶⁴ On 14 August 1949, the original Power House was

⁵⁷ Telephone conversation with Brother Frank Donohoe by Irene Sauman, 29 June 1999, Memo HCWA File 3101; Telephone conversation with Brother Norbert Tuppin, op cit. **Note:** Coldrey states that the Convent was a converted laundry, but a laundry wasn't established at Bindoon until 1949.

⁵⁸ Annals of Bindoon, 1948-1950, pp. 55 & 67.

⁵⁹ ibid, p. 45.

⁶⁰ Telephone conversation with Brother Norbert Tuppin, op cit; photograph, c. 1949, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt', Manning; photographs, *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, annotated photograph of dormitory accommodation (1942 not extant) p. 23, photographs of recreation hall, including original fireplace, p. 54, photograph, c. 1953, p. 55. Note: Brother Tuppin was in New South Wales 1947-1950, and could supply no specific details regarding the construction of the Classroom Block during that period.

⁶¹ Annals of Bindoon, 1948, p. 45; inscription on foundation stone of Technical Block; itinerary of event.

⁶² Information supplied by Sinicco family; Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 53. The brothers-in-law had come from Italy in 1949, at the request of Dom Urbano Gimenez. Pio Sinicco had been employed by Mussolini on the restoration of old buildings in Rome. Once in Western Australia, he and Vittorio worked on the buildings at Tardun and Bindoon.

⁶³ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 64.

⁶⁴ Annals of Bindoon, p. 71.

opened, and the lighting for the complex switched on, by Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration.⁶⁵

At the end of 1946, the Commonwealth and State Immigration authorities agreed to contribute a one-third cost toward the buildings which were needed to accommodate the British child migrants. Brother Keaney had always relied on the unpaid labour of the boys, people with skilled labour and materials, and fund-raising, to get his building programmes carried out. Thus when Father Stinson made an application for Government funds on behalf of St Joseph's in 1949, the lack of plans and building approvals meant delays and much negotiation before any money was forthcoming. The exact amount received is unclear, and there were conditions, but at least £18,000 was granted in 1953.⁶⁶

In a similar vein to the Federal Government's policy change in focus to non-British immigration, Maltese child migrants (British subjects) were also encouraged to emigrate. The first Maltese migrants, thirteen boys in number, arrived at St Joseph's on 22 April 1950.⁶⁷

Some Maltese families also migrated. In 1951, the upper floor of Catherine House was constructed under Brother Tuppin's direction to provide accommodation for three Maltese families, who stayed with the Brothers until they were able to establish themselves in Perth.⁶⁸ In 1951, there were twenty working boys (boys over school age), eighteen Maltese, forty-one English, five Welsh, five Irish and twenty-one Scots boys at St Joseph's aged between nine and eighteen.⁶⁹

A small cemetery was established on the property in 1950. Four boys, aged 13-17, and three men, including Brother Keaney's brother, Michael, were buried there between 1950 and 1960.

In 1952, the foundation stone of a new chapel was laid on Easter Sunday by Abbot Gregory, newly appointed Abbot of New Norcia.⁷⁰ The site was behind the Central Block, but the building was not constructed.

On 4th October 1953, the Technical Block was opened by the Premier, A. R. G. Hawke, and the Central Block was opened by Senator N. O'Sullivan, Minister for Customs, supported by P. Hasluck, Minister for Territories and H. E. Holt, acting for the Minister for Immigration. The ceremonies attracted a crowd of 8,000. Afternoon teas were provided, bands played and buses provided transport to and from Perth.⁷¹

Construction on the Central Block appears to have begun in 1946, almost two years after the laying of the foundation stone.⁷² The building was originally designed with a 'cat-walk' around the roof, but this had to be tiled because it could not be made weathertight.⁷³ The Technical Block was completed in

⁶⁵ ibid, p. 60.

⁶⁶ Coldrey, Barry M. *The Scheme*, op cit, pp. 328-330.

⁶⁷ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 48.

⁶⁸ Telephone conversation with Brother Norbert Tuppin, op cit; Calleja, Paul, *Maltese of the Western Third*, Kallaya Publications, Perth, 1993, pp. 78-81.

⁶⁹ Annals of Bindoon, p. 95.

⁷⁰ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 48.

⁷¹ *West Australian*, 6 October 1953; foundation stones; itinerary for the event.

⁷² Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 48.

⁷³ ibid, p. 46.

1951, when Brother Tuppin came back to St Joseph's after a few years in the eastern states, and made the windows and doors for the building.⁷⁴

On 26 February 1954, on the eve of leaving for a holiday in Ireland, Brother Keaney died. He was aged sixty-five. He had been awarded the Imperial Service Order in 1953, and an MBE for his services to the State in the area of child care. He was buried in the grounds of St Joseph's, at the Grotto, in front of the central courtyard.⁷⁵

Brother Keaney's successor, Brother Quilligan, was responsible for the upgrade of the facilities in the Classroom Block. A large flat roofed room was added at each end of the Classroom Block, in what appears to have been an attempt to emulate the design of the Technical Block. Internal alterations resulted in 'three modern schoolrooms, a large assembly hall, & picture theatre.' The old fireplace in the hall was altered by 'raising the hearth to waist height.'⁷⁶

In about 1958, the Benedictine Sisters left St Joseph's, after a stay of about ten years.⁷⁷ The Old Convent was occupied by one of the farm managers.⁷⁸

A life size statue of Brother Keaney was erected by his supporters c. 1962. It was situated on a tall pedestal in the central courtyard. On Parents Day in 1972, an inscribed tablet, provided by A. D. Scott, was unveiled by Lady Brand.⁷⁹

In the case of Catholic Institutions like Bindoon, the last child migrant from the UK came in 1957, and from Malta in 1965. By the 1960s, attitudes in Britain towards child migration had changed with release of a number of reports dealing with child welfare and practices of overseas institutions and recognition of Britain's own population problems. As a result of these changes in attitudes, child migration was phased out. The declining number of British migrants was also influenced by the 1973 Federal Government's restrictions on immigration.⁸⁰

St Joseph's, Bindoon, together with the other three Catholic institutions, faced a change in course. In February 1964, there were fifty-nine boys at the place. The Abbot of New Norcia gave permission for St Joseph's to take on 100 student boarders. In 1966, St Joseph's became Keaney Agricultural College, a residential college for boys 12-15 years of age. Education department approval for the combined agricultural and academic content was granted from 1 January 1968.⁸¹

The Refectory Block underwent two major refurbishments during this period. In 1964, it was extensively renovated to make the area easier to clean, and

⁷⁴ Telephone conversation with Brother Norbert Tuppin, op cit.

⁷⁵ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 59.

⁷⁶ Annals of Bindoon, 1954-1961, p. 168; Telephone conversation with Brother Frank Donohue and Brother Norbert. Tuppin, op cit; photograph Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 23.

⁷⁷ Telephone conversation with Brother Norbert Tuppin, op cit.

⁷⁸ Bindoon visit 30 April 1999 personal notes.

⁷⁹ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 77; photograph p. 14. The statue was sculpted by Edward F. Kohler, whose other works include the bust of Sir Talbot Hobbs (Memorial), King George V. Madonna and Child rondo, Highgate, and the Fremantle Blessing of the Fleet statue of the Madonna. (From Robyn Taylor and Martin Turner, National Trust of Australia (WA), Talbot Hobbs Memorial Assessment.)

⁸⁰ Heritage and Conservation Professionals, op. cit., pp. 29 - 34.

⁸¹ Annals of Bindoon, pp. 232-4; *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, pp. 68-69.

extra windows and a cold room were added.⁸² In 1967, the kitchen was remodelled, and matron's quarters were added, as well as toilet facilities for staff.⁸³ Lotteries Commission funds allowed for the construction of a large workshop and truck and bus garages.⁸⁴ A new power house, to house new generating machinery, was constructed in 1966-67, and an olive press was installed in the Old Power House.

There had been no government funding for private schools in Western Australia since 1895, but in 1963 Federal funding was introduced.⁸⁵ In 1970, the upper floor of the Classroom Block was constructed, with a fully equipped science room, a tiered Lecture Theatre, and a photographic and optics darkroom. George Thompson of Henderson & Thompson Architects, was responsible for the design of the Classroom Block. It cost \$45,000 to build, the cost being kept down by contributions of various materials and labour, and \$39,000 was provided by the Federal funding. The Year 10 class built the tiered seating in the Lecture Theatre.⁸⁶ The large flat-roofed room on the lower floor (northern end) was unusable because the roof leaked, so a workroom was constructed above it. The room below was later fitted out as the library.

On 23 September 1972, the Brother Charles Dawe Memorial Swimming Pool was opened. It was built with funds raised by the Parents and Friends Association. The foundations and columns of the chapel, which stood on the site between the Central Block and the Swimming Pool, were removed. On Parents Day that year, the Classroom Block was officially opened by the Premier, Sir David Brand.⁸⁷

Minor renovations in the 1970s comprised: aluminium windows to replace the timber windows in the room which was to become the library; a classroom in the Classroom Block partitioned off for use as offices; alterations to Catherine House to incorporate a flat for married staff and shearers quarters; a new drying room in the Laundry; and a special vinyl covering applied to the pillars and the walls along the staircase of the Technical Block, covering the faux marble finish on those surfaces.⁸⁸ Keaney College, Bindoon was connected to the State power supply in the late 1970s. Renovations to the Dormitory Block, including new bathroom and bedroom cubicles, were carried out at a cost of \$80,000 in 1979, and the library was ready for use in the third term of 1982.⁸⁹

On 17 August 1976, the Australian Army purchased 2,233 ha of the Bindoon property for \$248,300.⁹⁰

Following the non-construction of Dom Urbano's 1952 chapel, architects Henderson & Thompson had prepared preliminary sketches for chapel

⁸² Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 65.

⁸³ *ibid*, p. 68.

⁸⁴ *Annals of Bindoon*, 1965.

⁸⁵ Tannock, P. D. 'Catholic Education in Western Australia, 1829-1979,' in Neal, W. D. (ed) *Education in Western Australia*, UWA Press, 1979.

⁸⁶ *Annals of Bindoon*, p. 303; *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, pp. 74-75.

⁸⁷ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, pp. 76-77.

⁸⁸ *ibid*, pp. 74-82.

⁸⁹ *ibid*, pp. 82-85; plans for Dormitory Block renovations, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt', Manning.

⁹⁰ *Annals of Bindoon*, p. 342.

buildings in 1966 and 1974, but neither of these projects eventuated.⁹¹ Instead, renovation of the Chapel of St Joseph, in the Central Block, was begun at Easter 1992.

Much of the work on the renovation was undertaken by students and teachers, or parishioners. The two paintings at the foyer end of the Chapel were the work of the Year 8 Class; most of the woodwork was done by Mr. Neil Leckie, the College Woodwork teacher, or by students under his direction; the leadlight screen, depicting the sun rising over the hills of the property was the work of parishioners, Carolyn and Andy Gomersall; the wooden carving of the Sacrificial 'Lamb of God' on the wall behind the Altar, was part of the first permanent Altar in the Homestead in 1936; the carved statue of St. Joseph, holding the instruments of his trade, inside the main doors, is dedicated to the memory of Mr. Con Cullity, who worked with the Christian Brothers for much of his life; and the copy of 'Our Lady of Perpetual Succour' image was brought from Lourdes in 1958, by Michael Gleeson, retired farmer from Victoria, who had been working at Bindoon.⁹² During renovations to the Chapel of St Joseph, another chapel was established in the centre of the Refectory Block.

In the late 1980s, allegations of abuse, sexual and physical, were made against the Christian Brothers by a number of former students, including people who had been sent to Bindoon as child migrants. In 1991, a group of some 270 men formed an organisation to represent and provide support for those who had experienced abuse and exploitation in orphanages and institutions conducted by the Christian Brothers in Western Australia. Called 'Voices', this organisation earned national and international recognition as the voice of those who had suffered as children at the hands of the Christian Brothers.⁹³

The Christian Brothers accepted that there was strong evidence that many of these allegations were true and, on that basis, made a public apology. They also funded an agency that offers a variety of services to former students from Bindoon and other childcare institutions whether they claim to be victims of abuse or not. These services include counseling, assistance in tracing family for those men who were child migrants, and financial assistance to travel to Britain or Malta to meet family or to reconnect with their country of origin.⁹⁴

At the time, these revelations appeared to have little impact on enrolments at any of the Christian Brothers' schools, including Keaney Agricultural College. However, the college was already struggling for financial viability and, in 1995, the place became a co-educational residential agricultural college catering to both senior and junior high school students in an attempt to address a 'niche market' in the education scene.⁹⁵ The institution was renamed *Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon*.

⁹¹ Sketches of proposed new chapel building, October 1966 and September 1974, Bindoon archives.

⁹² Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 63.

⁹³ Blyth, Bruce *Counting the Cost: Christian Brothers & Child Care in Australian Orphanages* P & B Press, Como WA, 1999, p.1.

⁹⁴ There was also a legal action brought by over 200 former students, some of them former child migrants and some of them former students of Bindoon, which ran from 1993 to 1996 in the New South Wales Supreme Court. This action was settled out of court in 1996. Information supplied by Brother Tony Shanahan, Province Leader, 'Westcourt', Manning.

⁹⁵ Information supplied by Brother Tony Shanahan, Province Leader, 'Westcourt', Manning.

A garden area was established in the courtyard behind the Refectory Block and named Keaney Court. Brother Keaney's statue was relocated there, without its pedestal, and a time capsule, to be opened in 2020, was placed beneath it.⁹⁶ Proposed extensions to the Technical Block in 1997 have yet to be carried out.⁹⁷ The architects, L. I. Robinson & Associates, also produced a site plan showing future development for the complex, including staff housing and a chapel in the grotto.⁹⁸

Parishioners have attended the Sunday service at the chapel since the Bindoon Catholic Church was destroyed in a storm on 15 March 1943.⁹⁹ Guided tours of the Bindoon complex, which can include a Devonshire tea, meal or BBQ, are also conducted. Some of the funds raised from this activity have recently been used to paint and decorate the students' dining room.¹⁰⁰

In 1999, the farm runs 200-300 pigs, 600 head of cattle, 7,000 sheep, and about 30 horses. It crops approximately 400 hectares each year. The students from Years 8, 9 and 10 spend a half day per week involved in hands-on farm activities and the Year 11 and 12 students each spend two and a half days on the farm per week.¹⁰¹ All buildings in the complex are in use except for the Old Convent which was condemned in 1992, and is unoccupied. Catherine House is occupied by female boarders and staff flats.

Summary of Development of Main Buildings

(A) Central Block (Dom Urbano Giminez)

15 October 1944	Foundation stone laid by Sir James Mitchell, Governor of WA.
1946	Construction begun.
1953	Original flat roof design replaced with a tiled roof because of leaks.
4 October 1953	Building officially opened by Senator N. O'Sullivan, P. Hasluck, and H. E. Holt.
1950s	Completed internally.
1992	Chapel renovated.

(B) Dormitory Block (John Hawes)

21 September 1941	First section (northern wing) completed and opened by E. H. Gray. Foundation stone laid for the next section of the building by Catherine Musk.
1 November 1942	Second (front) section of the building opened by J. J. Kenneally.
17 October 1943	Completed building opened by Abbot Catalan. Tower had a tiled roof.
1944	Tower altered to match Refectory Block.
1947	Renovations to accommodate migrant boys.

⁹⁶ The relocation of the statue was a decision of the College Board taken in conjunction with the restructuring and renaming of the school.

⁹⁷ Plans, 17-18 May 1997, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt', Manning.

⁹⁸ 'Master plan', August 1995, L. I. Robinson & Associates, Christian Brothers' Archives, 'Westcourt', Manning.

⁹⁹ Grant, P. *Boys' Town to Keaney College*, op cit, p. 44.

¹⁰⁰ Bindoon visit 30 April 1999, personal notes.

¹⁰¹ Information provided by guided tour notes, 1999.

1979 Renovated.

(C) Refectory Block (John Hawes)

17 October 1943 Foundation stone laid by A. R. G. Hawke. Already under construction.
15 October 1944 Officially opened by Sir James Mitchell, Governor of WA.
1964 Renovations included extra windows and cold room.
1967 Kitchen remodelled, matron's quarters added.

(D) Technical Block (Dom Urbano Giminez)

14 November 1948 Foundation stone laid by T. S. Edmondson.
4 October 1953 Officially opened by A. R. G. Hawke, Premier of WA.
1970s Vinyl covering to pillars and walls along staircase.
1997 Extensions to upper floor.

(E) Classroom Block (? and Henderson & Thompson)

1942 Recreation hall with 'tiled roof and large fireplace'.
21 May 1948 Foundation stone laid for 'new school block' by Archbishop Walsh of Tuan and Bishop Browne of Galway.
Probably 1948 Building constructed by enlarging recreation hall with the addition of new section(s), forming a triple-roofed structure.
1955 New tiled roof over whole building, flat-roofed rooms added at each end, internal alterations to make 'three modern classrooms, hall and picture theatre'.
1970 Upper floor added.
Parent's Day 1972 Officially opened.
1970s New rooms added above flat-roofed sections.
1982 Library opened in lower floor flat-roofed section at northern end.

(F) Old Convent (probably Dom Urbano Giminez)

April 1948 Temporary Convent ready for occupancy. This building was constructed from a converted hay shed.
Main Convent building completed externally.
1950 Convent completed internally, including chapel.
1992 Condemned.

(G) Catherine House (?)

1937 Original dairy constructed on site.
1949 Dairy converted and extended for occupation by Italian terrazzo workers and families.
1951 Upper floor added.
1974 Renovations to incorporate a flat for married staff and shearers' quarters.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Bindoon is a small rural town located approximately 90km (by road) to the north-east of Perth. *Catholic Agricultural College* is situated north of the town centre along the Great Northern Highway. The property is accessed from the south, the main entrance is located on the corner of Great Northern Highway and Dewars Pool Road. From here the entrance road descends down into a

valley where the impressive setting of the College is revealed some 2-3 kilometres north of the main entrance.

Elements and features of the overall site include: Catherine House (1937, 1949, 1951), the Dormitory Block (1940-1943), the Classroom Block (1942, 1948, 1955, 1970s), the Refectory Block (1944), the Central Block (1944-1953), the Technical Block (1948-1951), the Old Convent (1948-1950) the Laundry & Bakery (1949), the Old Power House (1949), fourteen statues forming the Stations of the Cross (1949), the statue of Christ the King, and the statue of the Holy Family (1949-50), the Cemetery (1950-1960), the grave of Brother Paul Keaney at the Grotto (1954) and his life-size statue (c. 1962), and the Garages (1965), the Main Entrance Gate, plus additional outbuildings and structures.

(A) Central Block (1944-1953)

The Central Block and its impressive tower are a focal point of the main group of buildings at the College. The two storey main building is of masonry (primarily stone) wall construction. The timber-framed roof structure is clad with terracotta clay roof tiles. The building is situated to the south of the Classroom Block, south-east of the Dormitory Block, and north-east of the Refectory Block. A landscaped forecourt is situated in front of the building on the west side, and the swimming pool and tennis courts are located on the eastern side.

Built in the early part of the Post War Period (c.1940-c.1960) the Central Block exhibits style characteristics associated with the earlier Inter-War Period (c.1915-c.1940). The Central Block could be considered characteristic of both the earlier Inter-War Free Classical, and Inter-War Romanesque styles.¹⁰²

The external walls are of masonry construction, with cement rendered quoins, balustrades, window surrounds and columns. The mortar joints of the random rubble walls are carefully pointed, the external walls of the tower are cement rendered.

The main roof form is a steeply pitched mansard roof, which reflects the building's rectilinear plan form, and the north & south wings. The roof terminates behind parapets of the external walls and double height verandahs. The domical vault roof form over the tower terminates at a ridge balustrade around the base of the open sided fleche (belltower). The fleche is covered by a smaller domical vault roof, and is crowned by a crucifix. The roof over the staircase at the rear of the building is a hipped roof form which reflects the elongated circular plan form of the space below.

The ground floor verandah on the west side of the building has a metal screen balustrade, while the first floor verandah has a concrete balustrade similar to the north and south elevations.

The ground floor level of the building is elevated above the west forecourt, built up on a rendered masonry plinth. Concrete steps from the forecourt lead up to the base of the tower and entrance. A round arched opening in the base of the tower on the west side provides access to the front entrance and verandah.

The foundation stone located at the base of a lighting pier outside the front entrance reads:

¹⁰²

Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter A *Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, op cit, pp. 158-161 & 194-197.

THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THIS BUILDING
WAS LAID BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
SIR. JAMES MITCHELL, K.C.M.G.,
GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
ON THE 15TH OCTOBER 1944

A plaque located at the base of the lighting pier opposite reads:

THIS BUILDING WAS BLESSED BY
RIGHT REV. DR GREGORY, O.S.B.,
ABBOT OF NEW NORCIA,
ON THE 4TH OCTOBER 1953.

AND
DECLARED OPEN BY HON. SENATOR O'SULLIVAN
SUPPORTED BY HON. P.HASLUCK, M.P.

The west elevations of the north and south wings have a concrete balustrade balcony at first floor level, with a segmental pediment incorporated above the balcony openings.

An external staircase is incorporated into the north elevation of the main building overlooking the basketball courts. The roof over the concrete staircase terminates behind a stepped parapet. The ground and first floor verandahs have concrete columns and balustrades. A basement has been incorporated under the north portion of the building.

A double height verandah on the south side of the building provides access to the chapel at ground floor level. The main roof form terminates behind a stepped parapet located at first floor level. The double height verandah has concrete columns and balustrades.

The central staircase which provides access to the gallery level of the building, from the foyer, is located on the eastern side of the building. Rectilinear and circular leadlight windows are incorporated into the wall at high level.

A double-height volume incorporating a foyer space at ground floor level and gallery at first floor level is located centrally within the building. Columns, panelling, balustrades, cornices and the staircase walls are finished with a painted marbling effect. The entry foyer and passage are tiled, while the staircase and landings are terrazzo. A large leadlight roof-light covers the foyer and gallery space. The roof-light is in a poor condition, and plastic sheeting has been placed over externally.

The gallery floor at first floor level is lined with timber parquetry – some of the parquetry in the south-east corner of the space has lifted. The gallery level serves as a small museum for the display of historic memorabilia and photographs associated with the place.

The chapel is located in the south portion of the building at ground floor level. The altar is situated on the east side of the space and a side chapel is located in the south wing.

The former boarding house is located in the north wing at first floor level. The dormitory space is divided into cubicles by half-height partitioning. Bathroom facilities are situated at the east end of the north wing. The dormitory is currently not in use.

(B) Dormitory Block (1940-1943)

The Dormitory Block is situated to the north-west of the main building. With the Refectory Block the building forms the west forecourt entrance to the main building.

The Dormitory Block is a single storey building of masonry (primarily stone with brick quoin work) wall construction. A hip roof covers the U-shape plan form of the building. The timber-framed roof structure is clad with terracotta clay roof tiles. The plan form provides a courtyard space on the east side of the building which opens up onto the basketball courts, the Classroom Block is located opposite (further to the east).

Built in the early part of the Post War Period (c1940-c1960) the Dormitory Block exhibits style characteristics associated with the earlier Inter-War Period (c1915-c1940). The Dormitory Block could be considered characteristic of the earlier Inter-War Romanesque style.¹⁰³

The floor level of the building is elevated above ground surface level. A masonry verandah and concrete balustrade runs the length of the south elevation. A concrete stair at the west end provides access to the verandah.

The masonry arcade and concrete balustrade along the west verandah of the building is punctuated by a three storey tower over the west entrance. The arch forms of the arcade are three-centred arches. The upper portion of the tower is rendered and painted, incorporating a balustrade battlement. A concrete stair provides access to the west entrance via a round head arch in the base of the tower.

The verandah on the north side of the building has a rendered and painted balustrade height wall between columns. Concrete stairs at the east and west ends provide access to the north verandah, and dormer windows are incorporated into the north face of the main roof form. The roof lights were incorporated into the north wing of the building as a portion of the 1979 designed works by Henderson & Thompson Architects.

Verandahs continue around the perimeter of the courtyard and the east elevation. Located within the courtyard is a raised concrete plinth covering a water reservoir.

The north wing and central portion of the building are boys dormitories, and a recreation room is incorporated into the north end of the central portion. The south wing incorporated the former administration area. Administration facilities have since been moved into the school building.

(C) Refectory Block (1944)

The Refectory Block is situated to the south-west of the Central Block. The overall form and style of the building is similar to the Dormitory Block, and the building forms the south edge of the west forecourt outside the Central Block.

The Refectory Block is a single storey building of masonry (primarily stone with brick quoin work) wall construction. A pitched roof covers the U-shape plan form of the building. The timber-framed roof structure is clad with terracotta clay tiles, and the plan form provides a courtyard space on the east side of the building.

Built in the early part of the Post War Period (c1940-c1960) the kitchen, dining & hall wing exhibits style characteristics associated with the earlier Inter-War Period (c1915-c1940). The building could be considered characteristic of the earlier Inter-War Romanesque style.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ *ibid*, pp. 194-197.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*, pp. 194-197.

The floor level of the building is elevated above ground surface level. The west entrance is marked by the three storey central tower, which is similar to the tower of the dormitory/administration block. The upper portion of the tower is rendered and painted, incorporating a balustrade battlement.

The verandah on the west side has a masonry arcade and concrete balustrade. The arches are three-centred arch forms, and single bullnose bricks are used in the arches providing a rounded edge. The same bricks are used to construct the window reveals, and the round head arch opening at the base of the central tower – similar bricks are used for detailing in the Dormitory Block.

The foundation stone is located at the base of the central tower and reads:

THIS FOUNDATION STONE
WAS LAID ON OCTOBER 17TH 1943
BY THE HON. A.R.G. HAWKE. M.L.A.
MINISTER FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

The north verandah arcade consists of round head arch forms different to those of the west verandah. Small arch head openings are incorporated into the elevation of the basement space under the north verandah. The verandah columns of the courtyard space are square columns similar to those of the Dormitory Block.

The kitchen facilities are located in the south wing, the dining room is located centrally, and the hall is located in the north wing of the building.

The internal wall surfaces in the upper levels of the central tower are in very poor condition. The rendered surfaces have spalled badly, during periods of heavy rainfall, moisture penetration is prolific causing severe damage to these surfaces.

(D) Technical Block (1948-1951)

The Technical Block is located to the north-west of the Dormitory Block. Garage and workshop buildings are situated to the north-east of the Technical Block. The Technical Block is a two storey building of masonry wall construction. The timber-framed roof structure of the main roof form is clad with terracotta clay roof tiles.

Built in the early part of the Post War Period (c.1940-c.1960) the Technical Block exhibits style characteristics associated with the earlier Inter-War Period (c.1915-c.1940). The Technical Block could be considered characteristic of the earlier Inter-War Free Classical style.¹⁰⁵

The external masonry walls of the building are mostly cement rendered. Discolouration, staining, and cracking of the rendered wall surfaces is evident, particularly on the south side of the building.

The main roof form over the building is a hip & valley roof. The single storey east and west wings of the building have roof-decks above, accessed from stairs on the north side of the building and from second floor classrooms internally.

A stepped parapet wall crowned by a crucifix marks the front/south entrance to the building. The two storey front facade of the building is broken up into

¹⁰⁵ ibid, pp. 158-161.

bays by square piers. A balcony is located at first floor level above the front entrance.

The foundation stone located to the right of and at the base of the front entrance reads:

THIS FOUNDATION STONE
WAS LAID BY
T.S. EDMONDSON ESQ.
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
14TH NOV. 1948.

A plaque located on the opposite side of the front entrance reads:

THIS TECHNICAL SCHOOL WAS
BLESSED BY
RIGHT REV, DR GREGORY, O.S.B.,
ABBOT OF NEW NORCIA.
ON THE 4TH OCT. 1953.
AND
DECLARED OPEN BY A.R.G. HAWKE.
PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Undercroft storage/workshop space is incorporated under the north and west portions of the building. A deck (at ground floor level) enclosed by a concrete balustrade and located on the north side of the building is accessed via a central concrete stair.

The floor plan of the building consists of a central foyer, an east wing and west wing. At ground floor level a metal work class room, metal lathes room, welding room, store and fabrication room are located in the east wing. The woodwork class room, wood lathes room, store, timber store and woodwork room are located in the west wing.

At first floor level class rooms are located either side of the central staircase and landing. A staff room is located above the foyer and is accessed from the first floor landing.

The foyer space floor, staircase and first floor landing are made of terrazzo. Generally internal wall surfaces are rendered and painted. The first floor spaces have timber-framed floors and timber floorboards lined with a carpet floor covering.

(E) Classroom Block (1942, 1948, 1955, 1970s)

The Classroom Block is located adjacent to and north of the Central Block. The school oval is situated to the east of the Classroom Block.

Due to the multiple construction times and the lack of cohesive design, the Classroom Block could not be considered characteristic of any particular style.

The external walls of the two storey Classroom Block are of masonry construction. Above window sill level the external walls are rendered and painted, below sill level the walls are stone walls constructed in a random rubble pattern and mortar joints are tuck pointed.

The main roof form over the building is a hip roof clad in terracotta clay tiles. A verandah at first floor level provides access to the first floor class rooms. Two 'flat' roof forms cover the north and south portions of the building

The school administration office is located in the south wing of the building, classrooms, staff facilities, and timeout room are incorporated into the main portion of the building.

(F) Old Convent (1948-1950)

The single storey (with undercroft) Old Convent is situated to the south-east of the main group of buildings, and Catherine House is located south of the Old Convent.

Built during the Post War Period (c1940-c1960) the convent exhibits style characteristics associated with the earlier Inter-War Period (c1915-c1940). The building could be considered characteristic of the earlier Inter-War Romanesque style.¹⁰⁶

The external walls are of masonry (primarily stone) construction with either rendered or brick quoin-work and window reveals. The stonework is constructed in a random rubble pattern and the mortar joints are tuck pointed.

A timber-framed dutch gable roof clad in terracotta clay roof tiles covers the main portion of the convent. The gablets are louvred, providing ventilation to the roof space. The east wing of the convent is covered by a timber-framed hip roof also clad in terracotta clay roof tiles.

A two storey tower is located centrally in the west elevation, and a timber-framed pyramidal roof covers the tower. A small room is located at first floor level and access to the roof space is possible from this level.

A basement space is incorporated into the undercroft below the verandah on the north side of the building. It is possible that this space may have served as a chapel at some stage. The verandah has square concrete columns and balustrading.

The single storey bakery is an extension of the east wing. The external masonry walls of the bakery are mostly rendered and painted. Remnants of the old baker's ovens are visible on the south side of the building.

(G) Catherine House (1937, 1949, 1951)

The girls boarding house is located south-east of the main group of buildings and to the south of the Old Convent. The two storey building is of masonry construction. The main roof form over the building is a timber-framed hip roof, and most of the external walls are rendered and painted.

(H) Cemetery (1950-1960)

The cemetery is located on a hilltop/ridge to the south-east of the college buildings. The small cemetery overlooks the main group of buildings. A masonry (stone) wall and wire mesh gate form the entrance to the cemetery.

(I) Main Entrance Gate

The main entrance gate is located at the south-west corner of the *Catholic Agricultural College, Bindoon* property, at the intersection of the Great

¹⁰⁶ ibid, pp. 194-197.

Northern Highway and Dewars Pool Road. Metal screen gates are fixed to masonry (stone) piers. The stone piers are crowned with crucifixes. It appears that signage of some type has been removed from the cement rendered cappings. Access to the main entrance road has been shifted (probably for vehicular safety reasons) further along Dewars Pool Road, and therefore the gate is no longer used – it still remains as a significant signpost to the property's entrance.

(J) Grave of Brother Paul Keaney at the Grotto (1954) and his life-size statue (c.1962)

The grave of Br Keaney is located opposite the forecourt on the western side of the main building, in alignment with the entrance. A shrine to the Immaculate Conception is situated to the west of the tomb.

The inscription on the tomb reads:

REVEREND BROTHER
FRANCIS PAUL KEANEY
M.B.E.
FOUNDER OF BOYS TOWN
ENTERED HIS ETERNAL REWARD
28TH FEBRUARY 1954
AGED 66 YEARS.
REQUIESCAT IN PACE

(K) Stations of the Cross (1949)

The stations of the cross are located alongside the main entrance road into the College. A re-enactment of the crucifixion of Christ is carried out as a procession along the stations of the cross at Easter time each year.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

13.4 REFERENCES

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13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
