

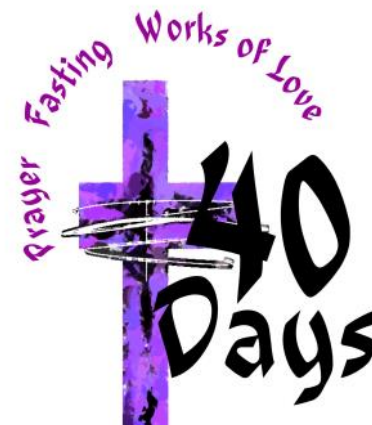
The Symbols of Lent

The Catholic Church is rich in history and tradition - every season in the Church calendar has its own symbols which are full of meaning. This is especially so in the season of Lent which starts on Ash Wednesday which this year is on 1 March.



Ashes - On Ash Wednesday the Ashes are blessed and put on our forehead as a sign of penance (saying sorry for our sins). The ashes are made from the palm branches from last year's Palm Sunday celebrations. When we receive the Ashes on Ash

Wednesday the priest tells us to "turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel. This marks the start of our Lenten journey to Easter.



Forty days - this reminds us of the 40 days which Jesus spent in the wilderness when the devil tried to tempt him. Our Lent should be a time of prayer, sacrifice and acts of mercy.

Purple - We use the colour purple in the Church in Lent. It is a sign of our willingness to prepare, change and be sorry for our sins. It is traditionally the colour of mourning and sadness.

The Cross - In the Christian church our main symbol throughout the year is the Cross. It is for us a symbol of being saved from sin and as a sign of winning over death. During Lent we have the sign of the cross in ashes on our forehead, the Cross leads the processions of palms on Palm Sunday, we have the Stations of the Cross through Lent and we also have the worship of the Cross on Good Friday when we kiss the Cross. The Cross is the most powerful symbol in the Catholic Church.



A Message from Liz & Dave...

Liz's report

Hello and welcome to our first newsletter for 2017.

I thought I would update you in relation to a few exciting things which have been happening at Ephpheta. Firstly I would like to welcome our 2 new pastoral staff Patricia Knight and Jarrod Brown. Pat and Jarrod both come to Ephpheta with very different life experiences. Many of you may know Pat who has worked in the deaf community for many years. Pat brings with her a wealth of experience – she is a wise, kind person who loves working with people especially our older deaf people. Jarrod is a young man with tremendous drive and enthusiasm – his youth and energy are wonderful to see and he has also worked with the deaf community in a variety of capacities before. We hope that you will all enjoy meeting Pat and Jarrod and make them feel welcome to our Ephpheta community.

This year we will also be welcoming 2 new trainee priests from the seminary at Parramatta. They will be starting with us shortly – neither of them have worked with the deaf before so this is very exciting for them! Many of you will remember when Fr John Paul started with us when he was in the seminary back in 2009 and of course Shinto Francis was with us last year. We welcome these young men as they come to learn of our deaf community and culture and of course Auslan. Please make sure that you say hello to them and make sure they practice their signing! Having these young men work with our community – together with having Fr Michael with us – shows a strong commitment by the Church in supporting our deaf community for which we are all so grateful.

We have hit the ground running this year – but over the break I had an opportunity to reflect on the many blessings which we have at Ephpheta. I feel so privileged to be a part of a loving faithful community of people who look out for each other and support each other in good times and in bad. Here's to a great year.

Until next time,

Liz



Dave's report

A happy New Year for 2017 to you all! Hope you all had a lovely Christmas with your loved ones, friends and neighbours.

Ephpheta had its first ever Christmas mass on 25th December 2016 and nearly 25 people came. Fr Michael, Bettina the Auslan interpreter and I came. Jitka, my wife, also came. We thought it was a very successful and spiritually filled day. We will have 25th December morning Mass from now on.

December last year to January 2017 has been a very hot season. Today on the way to work, when I dropped off one of my daughters to her school bus stop this morning, she told me, she heard from the radio, that for the last few days in February, NSW has been the hottest place on Earth! It is important we stay cool and drink lots of water. Do not forget to **Slip** on a shirt, **Slop** on the 30+ or better sunscreen, **Slap** on a hat and sit under the shade.

I am very excited to have two more staff members, Pat and Jarrod join our Ephpheta team for 2017. Our pastoral team is now bigger and fresh for 2017. We will be able to continue our work as always for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Once again thank you for the support and see you around. We also look forward to working closely with the Deaf Society and other organisations for deaf and hard of hearing youth activities and other activities.

We will continue to have Deaf cafe events here at Ephpheta, at Gosford, Craft on Wednesdays, and different Deaf Men and Women outings throughout the year. Your ideas for future deaf men and women outings would be great. Please let me know.

I plan to setup a computer club on Thursdays most probably once a month in the afternoon where we can talk about mobile phone plans, how to use Skype/Facebook and antivirus packages. Please check Ephpheta newsletters and the website for latest information. Stay cool and be safe. Peace be with you all.

Over and out until next time,

David



Fr Michael's Reflection...

Happy new year everyone!

I hope this is a big year for Ephpheta, filled with lots of faith and love for God and one another.

As I write this I'm reflecting on the conversion and life of St Paul, who Jesus miraculously brought to a very deep faith. St Paul took that faith to the world, and gave the world the Truth which leads to eternal life. Love obliges us to hold onto what is real and true. So I am happy to hear about a number of projects starting up here at Ephpheta to help us deepen our faith. There are rumours of Bible study, pilgrimage, formation in the faith, more visits at home, and beautifying our Chapel. I hope all these things happen and more!

May this year be one which deepens our love and faith. Mother Mary, pray that your Son will open our eyes to the truths of our faith and help us to proclaim it. Help us to teach our children, support one another in living the faith, and be well prepared for the life to come.



The Conversion of St Paul



Our 2017 Ephpheta team - Welcome Pat and Jarrod!

Meet Our New Staff! Jarrod and Pat

Jarrod Brown

1. Where were you born and how long have you lived in Sydney?

I was born in Nambour, Queensland. I was 4 years old when my parents moved here. I have lived here for 17 years now.

2. Tell us about your family...

My mum and step dad are both sign language interpreters.

I am the only Deaf person in the whole family! I have two sisters and a brother.

3. Do you have a hobby? What do you do in your spare time?

I love spending my spare time in the garden under the sun. I love cooking. I am also passionate about AFL.

4. How do you feel about coming to work at the Ephpheta Centre?

I am very excited to be able to work at the Ephpheta Centre especially when the Ephpheta Centre has given me so many great opportunities. I am looking forward to meeting the community and being a part of it!

5. What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?

It was when I was travelling overseas. I loved walking around in new places especially in the bush/forest.

6. What sporting teams do you follow – NRL, AFL, NBL or A league?

I love AFL. I follow the Brisbane Lions! I was selected into the Special Development Team in the G.W.S team! Unfortunately I didn't get into the top 5 because of my injury!

7. Do you have a favourite Saint and why?

I will be honest I am not very knowledgeable about Saints, but I did do some research. I found St Francis, Patron Saint of animals and the environment. I like him because I have a big passion for animals, and the environment. I love to see and breathe nature. I believe patient people are very important, and he was very patient.

Pat Knight

1. Where were you born and how long have you lived in Sydney?

I was born in Sydney and lived in Randwick all my life before I got married.

2. Tell us about your family...

I have an older Deaf sister, Toni-Rose, and other two older hearing siblings.

I have three hearing adult children (Belinda, who is married to Richard, Brett, Amanda, and a step granddaughter). My husband Garry is deaf.

3. Do you have a hobby? What do you do in your spare time?

Photography, travel and adventures with sightseeing, bushwalking and activities. I also love making anything with arts and crafts. I love having relaxing time and reading magazines or go out for cuppas with family and friends.

4. How do you feel about coming to work at the Ephpheta Centre?

I am looking forward to this new chapter and love to meet deaf people involving the 'strong' Deaf Community.

5. What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?

Garry and I went to travel overseas for two months around Europe. Italy is one of my favourite countries!

6. What sporting teams do you follow – NRL, AFL, NBL or A league?

My family are the strong fans of Manly - Sea Eagles. South Sydney Rabbitohs were my favourite NRL team before I meet Garry! I was so happy that Souths won the Premiers a couple of years ago!

7. Do you have a favourite Saint and why?

I feel this Saint matches my personality - Saint Valentine, Patron Saint of Love. "You are always happy to help people and have a deep appreciation for inner beauty. You are a good listener. You know how to help people with their problems. You give guidance and support whenever someone needs it."

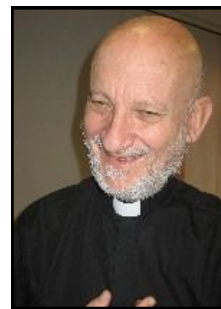


Meet the Deaf Religious - Fr Cyril Axelrod

(Johannesburg, South Africa)

Fr Cyril Axelrod

Fr Cyril Axelrod was born profoundly deaf, into a Jewish hearing family in South Africa in 1942. There was little support for the deaf in those days in South Africa. Luckily he was sent to St Vincent's School for the Deaf which gave him a very good education. After a difficult spiritual journey, he became a Catholic in 1965.



One day at Mass he noticed that some deaf people were completely missing out what the priest was saying. "That was when I decided to become a priest," he said. He became a priest in 1970. Fr Cyril began his ministry in South Africa with deaf and deafblind people using over eight indigenous sign languages. Despite many challenges, he established a multi-racial school for deaf children in Soweto, a hostel for deaf homeless people in Pretoria, and an employment centre in Cape Town. This was ground-breaking at this time.

In 1979, Fr Cyril was diagnosed with Usher's syndrome and that he would go blind. He continued his work and in 1988 travelled to Macau, where he set up many projects including a centre for deaf children, the Macau Deaf Association, and a deaf social service centre.



Fr Cyril in Sydney in 2012

Fr Cyril moved to the UK in 2000. As his sight faded he learnt new skills to help him prepare for his new situation. By about 2001 he had lost all his vision. Describing himself as a "modern hermit" Fr Cyril has his own flat and lives independently doing his own cooking and housework. Braille on his phone, computer and doorbell enable him to communicate with the world. Fr Cyril enjoys studying and reading.



Fr Cyril saying Mass at Ephpheta

Fr Cyril remains passionate about inclusion of all people including deafblind. He wrote recently: "The fear of being unknown can easily lead to losing faith or clinging to shyness. Jesus used the same phrase thirty-two times in the Gospel: 'Don't be afraid.' It is the matter of faith which



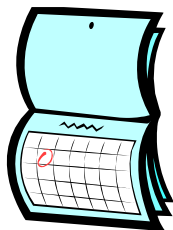
With Pope Francis

strengthens one's confidence and trust to know what is unknown ... it is quite natural to feel overwhelmed when not being able to understand what deafblindness means or not knowing how to communicate with the deafblind person. To approach him or her and ask him or her to teach you the way of communication, will melt the fear of the unknown or the shyness of meeting and talking to him or her ... My mission to parishes is to open hope and faith that the deafblind persons receive God's message through the kindness of sighted people and that they learn to enjoy the gift of communication with them."

Source: Independent Catholic News - Profile: Father Cyril Axelrod
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=10328>

Save the Dates

Some very important things to book in to your diary now so you don't miss out!



See below for more information...

1st March - Ash Wednesday Masses

5th March - Mass said by Bishop Randazzo

16th March - Deaf Men's Day Out

27th April - Deaf Women's Day Out

7th May - Integrated CWF Mass

Easter Mass Times and Information:

9th April - Palm Sunday

13th April - Holy Thursday

14th April - Good Friday

15th April - Easter Vigil

Ash Wednesday - 1st March

There will be two Ash Wednesday Masses this year.

Punchbowl - Ash Wednesday morning

When: Wednesday 1st March, 11.00am

Where: Ephpheta Centre,
4 Turner St, Punchbowl.

Penrith - Ash Wednesday night

When: Wednesday 1st March, 7.00pm

Where: St Nicholas' Catholic Church,
326 High St, Penrith



Mass said by Bishop Anthony (Tony) Randazzo - 5th March



On Sunday, 5th of March, Bishop Tony Randazzo will be saying Mass for us at the Ephpheta Centre. He was appointed Bishop in the Sydney Archdiocese in 2016 and is excited to celebrate with the deaf community. Bishop Tony hopes to be able to stay for morning tea with the community but all are welcome to stay for lunch.

When and Where: Sunday 5 March - Ephpheta Centre, 4 Turner St Punchbowl for our regular 10am Mass

After Mass: Light lunch for \$3 with the community

RSVP: David 0408 669 672 (SMS) or email david@ephpheta.org.au before Thursday 2 March

Deaf Men's Day Out - 16th March

Join us for a tour of Gosford Classic Car Museum. After the tour we will browse and have lunch together.

When and Where: Thursday 16 March - meet at 10.30am for a 11am start
3 - 13 Stockyard Place, West Gosford

The museum is located just off the M1, one hour north of Sydney and south of Newcastle

Cost: Adult - \$20, Concession - \$12. Pay at the door

RSVP: David 0408 669 672 (SMS) or email david@ephpheta.org.au before Thursday 9 March



Deaf Women's Day Out - 27th April

Join us for a short tour of the Chinese Garden of Friendship. After the tour we will take a walk around the garden and have lunch at the Teahouse together.

When and Where: Thursday 27 April - meet at 10am for a 10.30am start
Meet at the front entrance. Pier Street, Darling Harbour

Cost: Adult - \$18.50, Senior - \$17. Includes entry and lunch. Pay at the door

RSVP: Chrisso 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email christiane@ephpheta.org.au before Thursday 20 April



Integrated CWF Mass - 7th May



The Ephpheta Centre receives some funding support from the CWF (Charitable Works Fund). There are 3 CWF weekends a year. This year on 7 May we will be joining a hearing parish for Mass. We do not yet know where this will be.

We would love the community to join us for this integrated CWF Mass.

We will let the community know closer to the date the location and time for this Mass. This will be by group email, our Bulletin and Facebook.

Because of this Mass, **PUNCHBOWL Mass at Ephpheta Centre is CANCELLED for 7th May.**

Any queries, please contact David 0408 669 672 (SMS) or email david@ephpheta.org.au

Lenten Groups 2017

This year we will be having Lenten groups which will be held in the weeks from Ash Wednesday to Easter. A Lent group is a great opportunity to read and reflect on the Gospels through Lent. They will be at the Ephpheta Centre and also at 2 different people's homes in Sydney. If you would like to join a Lent Group please contact David (SMS) 0408 669 672 or email to david@ephpheta.org.au

Holy Week Program - 9th - 15th April



This year, we have our usual Easter timetable and everyone is welcome, even if you only like to come to church at Easter time!

Sunday 9th April (Palm Sunday) - Mass

Time: 10.30am

Where: St Mary's
6 Raglan St Manly
(Integrated Mass)



Thursday 13th April (Holy Thursday) - Mass

Time: 7.00pm

Where: St Nicholas' Catholic Church
326 High St, Penrith (Integrated Mass)

Friday 14th April (Good Friday) - Passion Service

Time: 3.00pm

Where: Good Friday Service at Ephpheta Centre, 4 Turner St, Punchbowl

Please join us for hot cross buns and tea/coffee after our Service.



Saturday 15th April (Easter Saturday Vigil)

Time: 6.00pm

Where: Ephpheta Centre
4 Turner St, Punchbowl

Please bring a plate of food to share for supper after Mass and spare change for the wonderful Easter Raffle.

A Pilgrimage to Penrose Park

We are having a special pilgrimage day to Penrose Park (near Sutton Forrest just past Moss Vale on Sunday **26 March**). We will organise a coach to and from Penrose Park which is about a 1.5 hour drive from Strathfield. Penrose Park is a beautiful centre run by the Pauline Fathers - there are over 40 different international chapels to explore on the grounds. The centre attracts over 70,000 pilgrims a year and it will be a lovely day.



One of the small chapels

lunch and there will be tea and coffee available. We will have lunch together after Mass and explore the grounds. We should return to Crossroads by about 4pm and return to Strathfield by about 5pm.

When: Sunday 26 March

Where: Penrose Park Sutton Forrest

How to get there: We have booked a coach which will leave Strathfield train station at 8am. We will have a second pick up from Crossroads along the way on the way to Penrose Park.

Price: \$10 per person which includes lunch and the coach.

What to bring: Money for morning tea, water for the trip, comfortable clothes and walking shoes so you can explore the grounds.

RSVP: To David by email to david@ephpheta.org.au or SMS to 0408 669 672. We will give you more information about exact meeting times and locations to meet etc closer to the date when we know the numbers.

Please RSVP as soon as possible as numbers are limited.



The Main Chapel at Penrose Park

On the day we will have Stations of the Cross with Fr Michael and then Deaf Mass. **This will replace our usual Punchbowl (4th Sunday) Mass.**

Stations of the Cross through Lent is a very important part of our Catholic tradition.

We will stop for morning tea (at your own cost) on the way down. Ephpheta will provide sandwiches and cake for

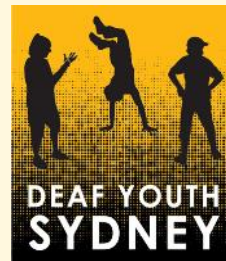


Shrine Church of our Lady of Mercy Penrose Park

ALL ARE WELCOME ON THIS SPECIAL DAY!

Deaf Youth Sydney

Deaf Youth Sydney is a project run jointly by the Ephpheta Centre and the Deaf Society. It is open for any young deaf or hard of hearing person aged between 12-17 years.



Ephpheta is very lucky to have funding for DYS from Dooleys Catholic Club in Licombe to assist in making activities affordable for all and we are very grateful for their support.

The idea of a jointly run youth group started a few years ago and has grown from strength to strength. We aim to have one activity a month and this can be anything from a games and pizza night at Ephpheta, to bubble soccer, to Wet'nWild to indoor skydiving.

It is a great opportunity for young deaf and hard of hearing people to develop new friendships and networks, to see deaf adults in leadership and to have the opportunity to build new skills and develop confidence.

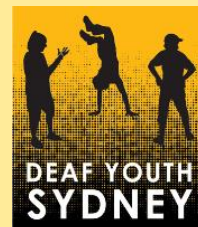
We know that the impact of Deaf Youth Sydney has been profound! Many of our young deaf people say that the group is one of their favourite things.



You will see on this page that there is information about the activities which are planned for this year. If you are a parent or carer of a young deaf person or you know someone who you think might be interested, please ask them to contact us as new members are very welcome!

DYS Program for 2017

4 March
21 April
5 May
2 June
7 July
18 August
29 September
6 October
3 November



For more information please contact:
Christiane Kassab (Deaf Society)
SMS only: 0405 749 488
Email: ckassab@deafsociety.com

Donovan Mulligan (Ephpheta Centre)
SMS only: 0408 697 773
Email: donovan@ephpheta.org.au





Noticeboard



Deaf Cafe

for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people!

Deaf Café is for anybody, no need to book, just turn up. We will have the coffee hot and the cake and biscuits waiting!

You can meet & chat with new people or catch up with old friends over a cuppa.

Tea & coffee available all day! Gold coin donation. Bring your own lunch or you can buy your lunch for \$3. The next dates are:

10th March 2017

14th April 2017

NO DEAF CAFÉ ON GOOD FRIDAY

12th May 2017

(always on the 2nd Friday of the month)

Time: **10am to 2pm**

At: The Ephpheta Centre,
4 Turner St, Punchbowl.

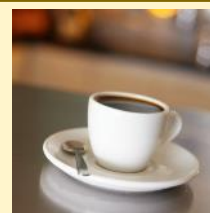


See you there! 😊



Central Coast Deaf Cuppa

for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people! For everybody, just turn up! There are a few coffee shops around the food court at Erina Fair shopping mall. Bring your money if you want to buy morning tea. CC Deaf Cuppa is a great place to meet & chat with new people or catch up with old friends over a cuppa. Meet at middle of food court. Always on the LAST Friday of every SECOND month. The next dates are:



24th February and 28th April 2017

Meet at middle of food court of Erina Fair shopping mall.

Time: starts **10.30am to 2pm**

Contact: **Donovan** SMS: **0408 697 773**

Email: **donovan@ephpheta.org.au**

See you there! 😊

Thursday Data Group

We will be starting a new group. We will talk about data plans, NRS/VRS updates, computer protection and internet suite packages. **No repairs or computer upgrades please!**

Our focus will be on general information which will help you use your technology better.



When: Starting **25 May** and then on the 4th Thursday of the month

Where: Ephpheta Centre, 4 Turner St Punchbowl

Time: 1pm – 4pm

Questions: please contact David Parker on david@ephpheta.org.au or SMS to 0408 669 672.

Would you like a visit?

We are happy to visit any deaf person for chats and company for 1 hour, at your home or at a café with coffee.



Pastoral Visits are not only for sick people or people in Nursing homes. We are happy to meet with anyone who is deaf.

You might have a problem you want to talk about or maybe you just need some support. Maybe you would just like someone to talk with. You don't have to be Catholic - It is for anyone who is deaf.

If you would like a Pastoral visit, please contact David Parker on david@ephpheta.org.au or SMS to David on 0408 669 672

Out and About in the Deaf Community

Christmas 2016

Christmas Vigil Mass

We had around 100 people come and help us celebrate this Mass. It was a wet night! All of us crammed inside the building and we still managed to enjoy ourselves. There were kids around so the dynamic Chrisso ran a little liturgy group for these active young children! We brought a lot of lovely food to share.

Christmas Day Mass

We had the first ever Christmas Day Mass at Ephpheta on a Sunny morning. 25 people came and it was a very special day. These parishioners commented how much they enjoyed their Signed Mass on a Christmas day. So we will deliver Christmas Mass services from now on.

Photos of Christmas at Ephpheta below



Christmas morning at Ephpheta



Christmas Eve Mass



Chrisso and the children's liturgy group

Nativity Scene

A big thank you to everyone who helped out with the nativity scene for Christmas. I hope none of you got hooked on spray paint!

Special thanks to Gary Greinke, a parishioner of the Lewisham who let me use his shed and did most of the work of making the wooden silhouettes. Thanks also to Stephen Lawler who finished off the job of painting the silhouettes.

God bless,
Father Michael.



Gary Greinke in his bicycle repair shed



Our beautiful Nativity scene



Our wonderful choir on Christmas Eve in the chapel



Deaf Youth Sydney at Wet'n'Wild!

On Saturday the 10th of December, we gathered at **Wet'n'Wild** for our last youth event of 2016 for Deaf Youth Sydney. The theme park is filled with all the exciting **WILD** rides and of course, the youth got **WET!!** About 40 deaf and hard of hearing **WILD** youth came together to catch up with their friends before Christmas and school holidays! They all had a fantastic time and didn't want to go home.

It was the last event for some of our youth, who are leaving Deaf Youth Sydney, as they finished their HSC and will begin their new journey in 2017.

We wish them all the very best of luck! We look forward to all the exciting and new youth events throughout 2017. Our program of all the event dates for 2017 can be found on page 9.



Our happy (and wet!) group

Deaf Men and Women's Day Out at Town Hall

On Thursday the 8th of December 2016, we had a wonderful Men's Day Outing visiting Town Hall. This year, on Tuesday the 7th of February - it was the women's turn!

Despite the pouring rain that day, it was a lovely day. We were given a tour of Town Hall that was guided by Rebecca Anderson, who works at City of Sydney. We learned of the incredible history that surrounds this iconic Sydney monument. It seems that every time we have a tour of a building or place of Sydney, we learn more and more about our wonderful city.



Men's Day Out

During the tour we also learned of the fascinating, yet sad history of Elizabeth Steel, who was an English convict sent to Australia aboard a ship of the Second Fleet. She was convicted in 1787 and was the first record of a deaf Australian.

We are excited to organise more Deaf Men's and Women's Days Out this year. Our groups do love these days out and the time spent together. Our next Deaf Men's Day Out will be on the 16th of March. Our next Deaf Women's Day Out will be on the 27th of April. Please see page 6 for more details.



Women's Day Out

Deaf Mother's Club of the West

During 2016 Deaf Mother's Club of the West (DMCW) met at many venues for their Tuesday luncheon gatherings and Sunday outings.

To start off 2016 eight of us braved the very hot weather on Tuesday, 23rd February 2016 at Nurragingy Reserve, Doonside to visit the Chang Lai Yuan Chinese Gardens.



Our first Sunday outing for 2016 on 20th March was when we all caught the train to Hawkesbury River (Brooklyn) on a beautiful cool day where we enjoyed the many sights finishing with a delicious lunch at the Marina.



Throughout the year we visited The Grounds of Alexandria (a former industrial precinct from the 1920s) for our annual Mother's Day outing, Penrith Regional Art Gallery to see some touring

exhibitions, Balmain for the markets with lunch at the London Hotel and the Cherry Blossom Festival at Auburn Botanic Gardens.



For our final 2016 outing on Sunday, 27th November 2016 ten of us packed a picnic lunch, wine and gathered at Cronulla to catch the ferry to Bundeena where a shady spot was found at the beach and we enjoyed catching up with news and drinking wine.



Deaf Mother's Club of the West has its own Facebook Page. You will need to like the page to be kept up to date with any new information/changes. If you do not have Facebook, please contact Carolyn Hanley on 0411 775 360 (sms only) for any information.



By Margaret Johnston

My Pilgrimage to Poland and Italy



Me!

Last year, 32 pilgrims, 3 sisters and a priest all went on a pilgrimage to Poland and Italy. We started our time in Poland, in the city of Warsaw where we visited the shrines of St Maximilian Kolbe and Blessed Jersy Popieluszko. The next day we went to Auschwitz to visit the concentration camps.



Our group

This was a very emotional and moving experience for all of us. We then headed to Czestochowa to the shrines of Our Lady of Czestochowa.

Then we headed to Krakow for World Youth Day Week, which consisted of different talks from various Bishops, visiting the Divine Mercy Shrine and getting up front and close to Pope Francis as he drove past during the final mass. We stayed in the city of Wadowice, the home town of St John Paul II.



After Krakow we went to Assisi in Italy and visited the tombs of St Francis and Claire of Assisi, we also did a bit of shopping and had more time for rest. Then we headed to Rome where we visited many churches including St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican as well as visiting the Colosseum.

After my pilgrimage I headed down to Hobart to do some missionary work for five months. Read about my missionary work in the next newsletter!



In Auschwitz

By Brett Beath

Deaf Mother's Club of the West

Below is Deaf Mother's Club of the West 2017 luncheon and outing dates:-

Tuesday, 28th February 2017 – Luncheon at Easy Lane, Windsor RSL Club, 36 Argyle Street, South Windsor at 11.00am

Sunday, 19th March 2017 – Outing to Audley Boatshed, Royal National Park, 150 Audley Road, Audley

Tuesday, 25th April 2017 – No gathering due to Anzac Day

Sunday, 28th May 2017 – Mother's Day Coastal walk from Clovelly to Maroubra

Tuesday, 27th June 2017 – Luncheon at Australian Hotel and Brewery, 350 Annangrove Road, Rouse Hill at 11.00am

Sunday, 23rd July 2017 – Weekend Away (to be confirmed)

Tuesday, 22nd August 2017 – Visit to Chinese Garden of Friendship, Pier Street, Sydney and luncheon at one of the many cafes along Darling Harbour

Sunday, 24th September 2017 – Outing to Tramsheds Harold Park (Annandale) and walk to City

Tuesday, 24th October 2017 – Morning tea at a café at Galston to be followed by a picnic at Fagan Park, 38-48 Arcadia Road, Galston

Sunday, 26th November 2017 – Woy Woy Outing



Please check Deaf Mother's Club of the West Facebook page for any events and updates.



Remarkable Deaf Women...

At the end of 2016 we said goodbye to the wonderful Nola Colfax. Most of us knew her well, but if you did not know her you would surely recognise her face or her name.

Nola, we know was a strong woman, but she had some company.... Dot Shaw, Pearl Beath are some other names who many of us know to have been strong Deaf women.

These are 3 women who had very different lives, but made changes to our community that will be seen for years to come.

Dot, we know fought for the rights of Deaf people in a very public

way, many of the rights that the Deaf community enjoy today are from Dot's hard work during her life. Pearl we know was a quiet woman, whom many looked up to and relied on as a mentor and guide particularly in the Catholic Deaf Community. She was loved and respected by many and she was very active in the community sitting on many committees.



Nola showed so many that Deafness does not have to be a barrier. This was all at a time when women in the general community were often at home looking after families and households, rarely at work or in the public eye, so it is even more amazing that these Deaf women seemed to be able to do it all!



Pearl Beath

Nola often described herself as an ordinary women, she would say "I will just do what I can for the Deaf Community!" We know that she was an skilled actor and had written and published a book and had received an Order of Australia, but what many did not know was that right up until she died she was visiting isolated Deaf people in their homes and nursing homes, and working on committees. She was volunteering at the Deaf School at RIDBC and many other things. For a famous person she was a very quiet achiever.



Nola at the Deaf Festival in 2016



Dot Shaw

Nola's life, like Dot and Pearl's show us that anyone can make a difference. That often it's not the big things but the very small things that change lives and make a community grow. When we think of Nola we might still feel a little sad, that is normal, we feel sad because we loved her so much. We should also feel proud, we have been given a wonderful example of how to make a difference.

So now, we can just imagine these 3 remarkable women organising heaven, making sure everything is just as it should be, and no doubt putting on a terrific show while they are at it!!

Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Vale Dame Nola, and thankyou

Wedding Time!

Siobhan Kelly's twin sister Christine married Matthew Grace on the 12 February at Sefton Catholic Church, and then continued the celebrations at Belgenny Farm.

All present had a wonderful time.

Siobhan was Christine's bridesmaid, wearing pale pink and diamantes.

Thank you to Nicole for interpreting!



A message from Liz and David:

You may have seen in the news about some of the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Many have been shocked by the things we have seen on TV or read in the newspapers about people telling their stories at the Royal Commission and the terrible pain and suffering experienced by so many people as children and their families. Some of this goes back over many years. Our hearts and prayers go out to those people who have suffered so much.

At the end of last year, Robert Hickman (former Chaplain to the Ephpheta Centre back in the late 1970's and 1980's) was convicted of a number of offences relating to sexual and indecent abuse of children. He was sentenced to 10 years in gaol with a non-parole period of 5 years. Many in our community feel shocked and betrayed that the person who was our spiritual leader committed such terrible crimes against children.

Sometimes it is hard as Catholics when we hear about the awful things which have happened. We know that some of that abuse happened within the Ephpheta community years ago and this has hit our community hard – worst of course with the people who were directly impacted by the abuse (and their families). We pray for all those who have suffered and who continue to suffer. This has also had an impact on all in our community. It is hard not to feel angry, sad and disappointed when people we thought we knew well and who we trusted committed such terrible crimes.

The abuse of children is a serious issue and has no place in our community.

The Church teaches us that the emotional and physical safety of all people is a fundamental part of its values. Everyone has the right to feel safe, and the Catholic Church (including Ephpheta) is working hard to ensure that these terrible crimes never happen in our Church again. The Church has made a firm commitment to aim for seven things in particular: truth, humility (being humble), healing for survivors of abuse, assistance to other persons affected, a fair and just response to those who are accused, an effective response to those who are guilty of abuse and prevention of abuse.

If you have suffered from abuse or are aware of a crime having been committed, the first people you should talk to are the police. We can support you if you would like help in talking to the police. The Catholic Church wants to support anyone who feels they were hurt by anyone in the Church. You can talk to us and we can help you talk to someone in the Church. Ephpheta will offer support to any person who would like help – please feel free to contact David or Liz if you would like to talk or would like more information.

Murreall O'Connor's recollection of the Waratah Fire

I read with interest the account of the Waratah Fire by Brian Johnston in the last edition of the Ephpheta newsletter I remember it very well as I was at school at the time - I will never forget that night.



Murreall aged 13 years old

I was 13 1/2 at the time - my name before I was married was Murreall Walker. My memory is that the fire actually started on Sunday 11 July 1948. We had just finished a special anniversary concert for one of the Sisters who had spent 50 years with the Dominicans.



One girl - who I think may have been Christine - saw the lights of the fire in the ironing room and told Sister Mary Mannes (Sr Anne). I remember that someone tried to wake me - I remember that I wanted them to go away because I thought that it was



After the fire

too early to be getting up that day! When I was awake I could see the fire in the Sacred Heart Dormitory - it was very bright. I asked what was happening and was told "there's a fire". My first thought was "my sister Sue" as she slept in the area where the fire was.

We then started to move the furniture to keep it safe - I remember the older girls and I pushed the beds to the end of the room and moved the chest of drawers. The fire chief then arrived and told us to get out but we kept moving furniture with one of the teachers! Then we were told to leave and we were pushed out of the building and down the stairs. I saw Sr Anne and she wanted us all to move away where we would be safe.

There was a house across the road owned by a man called Alan and his family. They offered to have all of the girls stay in his home as we had nowhere to go. All 64 of us slept on the floor on his house - but none of us really got any sleep that night! I remember we all had to queue up to use 1 toilet! Bishop Toohey came to visit us early the next day.



After the fire

Some of the girls from Sydney and Newcastle went back home and took some of the other girls with them. My sister Sue and I went back home to our parents at Narromine - I remember our parents met us at the train and they were so happy that we were both ok! We went back to school after about 3 weeks and they had changed some of the classrooms into bedrooms. So that is my memory of the Waratah fire!

By Murreall O'Connor

CRAFT CORNER



What have the craft ladies been up to?

The Deaf Craft Group is always open to any interested ladies, meets **every Wednesday** (except when there's something on) from **10am until 2pm** at the Ephpheta Centre. Bring your craft to work on. Lunch is provided for \$3. More information? Contact the Ephpheta Centre!

The craft ladies gathered together for a lovely morning tea and lunch on Wednesday the 14th of December. They have begun meeting again for 2017. We look forward to seeing what amazing things they create this year!



History Corner

Sign language banned in schools

By Brian Johnston

In the early 1950s there was a lot of disappointment and anger in the Deaf community when Sign language was banned in Catholic Deaf schools at Waratah, Newcastle NSW and at St Gabriel's, Castle Hill, Sydney and Deaf children were taught a pure *Oral Method* (lip reading and speech) instead. Also, Deaf teachers and Deaf staff lost their jobs in schools.

Both the Dominican Sisters (Newcastle/Waratah since 1875) and Christian Brothers (St Gabriel's since 1922) had used the Australian-Irish Sign Language, the *One-handed* Sign Language. Sign language was the most efficient and the easiest way to communicate with children. They also taught the *Combined Method* (Sign language and lip reading and speech training) for children who had some hearing. The Sign language community flourished until Waratah and St Gabriel's decided to ban Sign language by the early 1950s.

In 1880 the International Conference on Deaf Education in Milan, Italy decided to remove the use of Sign language from Deaf schools around the world. Teachers in some countries began to teach children to lip read and not to sign (*Oralism*). By the 1940s hearing professionals overseas and in Australia believed that *Oralism* was the best way to educate Deaf children.

So by 1953 both Waratah and St Gabriel's stopped to teach Sign language and became an Oral school. Although forbidden, the children signed to one another behind the sheds or one of the older teachers (who objected to new methods) secretly signed to them in classroom.

Sadly, discipline (punishment) was used to stop children to use their hands to communicate or have their hands restrained behind their backs. Children were very confused about not to sign any more. For profoundly Deaf children speech lessons were very hard and time wasting. Religious lessons were reduced. The *Oral method* was a failure as many children took up signing after they left school. Lip reading was never completely satisfactory and was a lot of guess work, a mental strain and concentration. Without Sign language, children couldn't learn to read and write properly. They became afraid and bewildered. Likewise, teachers became anxious and tense. Even a Deaf child of Deaf signing parents was refused to be admitted to Waratah or St Gabriel's.

While all this change was going on, Deaf people strongly believed that signing was part of a Deaf person's language, culture and identity, particularly their right to their own Deaf language. Sign language should not be abandoned in schools and mental development would suffer from *pure Oralism*. By finger spelling, methodical signs and writing, the Deaf can be educated better and faster than by the *Oral method*.

Interestingly, in 2010, the 21st International Conference on Deaf Education in Vancouver, Canada made an important decision to formally reject the resolution passed at the Milan Conference in 1880 (130 years previously) to ban Sign language in Deaf schools. The Vancouver Conference expressed regret and sadness for children who suffered under the *Oral method*.

Unfortunately, Sign language still has not been used in the Catholic education system for Deaf children in Australia from the early 1950s to the present day.

For further readings see following books: 'Open Minds Open Hearts' (1999), 'Memories of St Gabriel's' (2000) and 'The Silent Book' by Bernadette Wallis (2016).

Mass Times

MARCH

5th	Sunday PUNCHBOWL <i>with Bishop Tony</i> see page 6 for more information	10.00am
12th	Sunday NORTH GOSFORD	9.30am
19th	Sunday SEVEN HILLS	11am
26th	PILGRIMAGE see page 8 for more information	

APRIL

2nd	Sunday PUNCHBOWL	10.00am
9th	Sunday MANLY	10.30am
14th	Good Friday PUNCHBOWL see page 7 for more information	3.00 pm
15th	Saturday Easter Vigil PUNCHBOWL see page 7 for more information	6.00pm
23rd	Sunday PUNCHBOWL	10.00am

MAY

7th	Integrated CWF Mass see page 7 for more information	
14th	Sunday (Mother's Day) NORTH GOSFORD	9.30am
21st	Sunday SEVEN HILLS	11.00am
28th	Sunday PUNCHBOWL	10.00am



Church Addresses



Chapel of St Francis de Sales
4 Turner St Punchbowl



Our Lady of the Rosary
92 Glennie St North Gosford
Integrated Mass



Our Lady of Lourdes
7 Grantham Rd Seven Hills



St Mary's
6 Raglan St Manly
Integrated Mass

Friday morning Mass

Where: Ephpheta Centre,
4 Turner St, Punchbowl
When: Every Friday
Time: 10.30am

We pray...

For those who have died

15 December 2016 - Nola Colefax
28 December 2016 - Ben Christie (Eve's husband)
1 January 2017 - Graham Smith
2 January 2017 - Michael Andrew
22 January 2017 - Ann Darwin (Melbourne)
3 February 2017 - Alan Mann (Melbourne)

For those who are sick

Helen Farmer
(Please pray for those who are sick)



DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG –

If you would like an Auslan Interpreter for Mass, anointing of the sick or a Parish event - please contact Rebecca Miller, Chaplain to the Deaf Community.

Mobile: 0419 152 310

Email: rebecca.miller@dow.org.au



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The Ephpheta Centre is supported
by the Charitable Works Fund.



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EPHPHETA WEBSITE NEWS

Have you seen our website recently?

Our website is now being updated regularly
so it is always full of current information.

Please keep checking it!

If you have any ideas or feedback for our
website please contact David at

david@ephpheta.org.au

www.ephpheta.org.au

Please send your news, stories,
information and requests to Liz or David to
be considered for the next newsletter!



What does “Ephpheta” mean?

The name Ephpheta of our Centre came from the
bible - a story about Jesus meeting a deaf man,
he says “Ephpheta” which means “Be open”.

We are always open to you all!