

# From the Archives

*"Every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old."*

*Matt. 13.52*

*Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2010*

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Editorial: On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2010 the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, our property at 70 McArthur Avenue, Kealba was successfully sold at auction. We purchased the property in September 1986 and shortly afterwards three MSC Sisters, Elisabeth, Anita and Theonatis moved into the house which very quickly was transformed into St. Paul's Convent. Elisabeth was the Religious Education Co-ordinator of the Parish School. Anita established a thriving craft "school" in a section of the large garage where ladies of the parish and neighbourhood gathered to learn tatting and other handicrafts and she was a special minister of the Eucharist, visiting sick and elderly parishioners in their homes. Theonatis was the homemaker and became well known in the district for her concern for the needy in their homes and wherever she met them on the streets. When Theonatis took on receptionist duties at Sacred Heart Hospital in 1988, Brigid arrived at St. Paul's. While a member of the St. Paul's community Brigid continued her work as Province Archivist and her involvement in teaching English to migrants as part of the Home Tutor Scheme. Elisabeth moved from St. Paul's in 1989 to take on the pastoral care of the German Speaking Community at St. Christopher's in Camberwell. After MSC moved out of Sacred Heart Hospital in 1991, Theonatis returned with Benedict, and the following year Brigid transferred to St. Joseph's Tower. Benedict became involved in parish ministries as a special minister of the Eucharist, a Reader and as a Catechist. The five Sisters who lived at St. Paul's over the 23 years made it a place of warm hospitality for families, friends, neighbours, parishioners, sisters and strangers. St. Paul's was the hearth from which love radiated to all who came by. Its little chapel was the repository of heartfelt prayers for many in need. I have no doubt that the young family who have purchased the home at 70 McArthur Avenue will feel its special atmosphere and be warmed by it. Pat

Anita

&

Benedict

closing

the door

at St. Paul's

March 2010





## Extract from the Chronicles of St. Paul's Convent, Kealba

### From the beginning a pattern of gracious hospitality was established at St. Paul's

St. Paul's Convent, 70 McArthur Ave. was formerly owned by Mr. and Mrs. Attard and their three sons. Mainly on account of their animals (two dogs and a horse) they decided to move to Taylor's Lake.

Negotiations were entered into in September; and on 22/9/1986 the property was bought. However, the previous owners were not ready to move out until 30th October after which extensive rejuvenation work was begun: the existing carpets were removed, window frames and water pipes changed, a second toilet installed, the whole house fumigated, then painted and finally re-carpeted.

Much work needed to be done outside, such as clearing the backyard, erecting a trellis fence (for added privacy), security doors (for safety) and steps outside the laundry (for practical purposes). Part of the front fence needed replacing. The back fence and part of the side were in tatters, and a garden was non-existing. All these were attended to in due time as was the renovation of the garage. The latter was far too big for the personal use of the community. Thus it was decided to divide it into a furniture storeroom and garage, and a work room for Sr. Anita's future apostolate.

By the 8th December the house was ready to be occupied. Thus the new community consisting of Srs. Anita, Theonatis and Elizabeth (Superior) moved in, the most necessary pieces of furniture arriving on the same day from different convents that had previously been closed.

On the following day Fr. Tom Furey, P.P. blessed the house and offered the Eucharist for the first time in the new convent.

Already two days later one member of the community had to leave on account of a previously arranged home visit to Germany (Sr. Elizabeth). Srs. Anita and Theonatis completed the task of unpacking and organising the house.

On the Sunday following they were officially and warmly welcomed into the parish and soon were called on to assist as special ministers, readers and ministers of the Eucharist.

On 3rd January, Sr. Anita's three sisters (Franziska, Gisela and Brigitte) arrived from Germany to spend four weeks with their sister, saying "Farewell" on the 31st January, the day after Sr. Elizabeth returned.

With the beginning of the school year work was taken up: Sr. Elizabeth continued acting as Religious Education Co-ordinator for parish and school (an apostolate that had been assigned to her in 1984), while Sr. Anita commenced craft lessons for the elderly, mothers of the children at the school, the children of the catechists, and Gr. 5s. Sr. Theonatis started valuable and indispensable work as support person in the house, the parish and the catechetical field.

We welcomed her niece and friend (Mechtild and Herbert) from Germany on 24th February and introduced them to the Australian way of life and the beauties of Victoria, for one week.