

PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS
NEWSLETTER NO:01
JANUARY – MARCH 2015



PFFF COMMITTEE 2014 - 2015

President: Gay Hendriksen **Vice President :** Judith Dunn **Treasurer:** Kerima-Gae Topp
General Secretary: John Gaffey **History/Research:** Anne Mathews **History/Research:** Beth Matthews
Publicity: Ronda Gaffey **Membership Secretary:** Noela Vranich
Committee Members: Kerry Martin , Pauline Garmonsway, Alice Kershaw

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PFFF website: <https://www.parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au/>
For PFF history information: <https://parramattafemalefactories.wordpress.com/>

MEETING DATES 2015

March 20th

May 15th

July 17th

September 18th

November 20th

WHEN: 3rd Friday of every second month

WHERE : The Coach House
 Hambledon Cottage,
 Hassall Street, Parramatta

TIME : **Guest speaker** at 1:30pm
General Meeting 2pm – 3:30pm
 followed by afternoon tea

PFFF SPECIAL EVENT:

'IT'S A RIOT' DAY

Friday 23rd October 2015



Augustus Earle – Parramatta Penitentiary - Factory 1826
 Courtesy: National Library of Australia -nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an2818460

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PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Welcome to new and old members of the Factory Friends. We have well and truly launched into another year of activity for the Parramatta Female Factory Friends. Thank you to Ronda Gaffey, our publicity officer who suggested the idea of this newsletter and has gathered threads of information and chased up contributors. Sharing our activities and information in this way is a great record for the Friends and provides a regular update. The plan is to send this out every 2 months so that one month is our meeting and the next month, our newsletter.

In relation to our advocacy, our vision and response to the Parramatta North Urban Renewal Strategy was submitted. We are currently waiting for the first responses to our concerns which include multi-storey building in the Gipps Yard and 6000 units in the vicinity.

We have new additions to our committee. The committee is busy refining our vision document which will be sent to members for comment. Preparation for our next 'It's a Riot' Day is in hand so don't forget to put Friday October 23rd in your calendar for what promises to be a great day already.

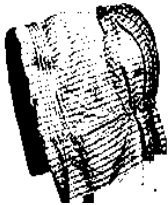
Please note, the Factory talks prior to our meeting will continue this year. Don't miss this special history sharing.

Yours in community

Gay Hendriksen

NOTICEBOARD

A very warm welcome to our newest members Sue Rowe, Robert Hickman, Leslie Neuhaus, Kim Farraway, Marilyn Wise, Pamela Henderson, Janice Dooley, Peter Hine and the Wyong Family History Group. A warm welcome also to our newest Committee members - Kerry, Pauline, Noela and Alice - more willing hands are always welcome so please don't hesitate to contact Gay!



PFFF Membership: If you have any friends or know of any societies who may like to support us by coming to our talks, booking a tour or taking out a membership then please encourage them to do so!

PFFF Petitions have reached 7,768 as at 16/1/15 –there are still a few more to go to reach our target of 10,000. Petition forms can be downloaded from the PFFF website OR contact Anne.

Talks - the next *Female Factory Insights* talk is 20th March at 1:30 prior to the general meeting. Pauline Garmonsway's daughter Heidi Brown will be talking about her ancestor Ann Gordon, a matron of the PFFF.

Site Watch: Judith Dunn reports that small repairs have been done at the Factory - but much more are needed!

History/Research: The intrepid Anne Mathews and Beth Matthews spend each Wednesday at the State Archives researching "*our girls*" – so far they have trawled through 90 reels with many thousands to go and have written profiles for 4000 Parramatta Female Factory women! Currently Anne and Beth are researching women sent to Newcastle and are researching the *Newcastle Gaol Entrance* books for links to the Parramatta Female Factory. Often women were sent onto Newcastle and we know that the Rioters of 1827 were sent there and elsewhere. If you have any information or inquiries, please contact our researchers (contact details on page 1.).



It's A Riot! Day - October 2014.

Julie Owens, local Federal member and staunch supporter of the Parramatta Female Factory Friends featured here with Beth Matthews and Anne Mathews – photo sent in by Anne.

“OUR GIRLS“

Beth Matthews

The following extract is from a fact sheet written by Beth Matthews based on research with Anne Mathews. The women Beth talks about here are featured on the Parramatta Female Factory Friends logo which is on the first page of this Newsletter and on the Parramatta Female Factory Friends website.

The stories of the girls make interesting reading. When we began this quest we discovered not many pictures/photos existed of these women. Photography did not begin until well after the Female Factory was closed (1848). Those few pictures we have show ‘old’ women.

Susanna Watson arrived per *the Princess Royal* in 1829, with a sentence of 14 years. Her offence was ‘shop robbery’. She was committed to the Female Factory at least six times. She died in 1877 age about 86 (*far left of the PFFF logo*).

Anne Dunne was transported with her infant son John in 1831. This photo (*3rd from the left*) was identified from the ship’s muster, as the descendant had only known her as ‘Annie, which Annie? She married James Tomkins and her son took his name. There were no other children born. Anne died sometime after 1863.

Constance and **Elizabeth** were slaves born in Mauritius. They were both convicted of murder and sentenced to Death; this was commuted to transportation for life. They were assigned together and became maids to two young ladies in the colony. Elizabeth married and had 5 children. She died aged about 62 in Sydney. Constance moved to Bathurst with her mistress, married Robert Trudgett and had a family of 11, also she was a local midwife and died in 1892 aged 70 (*Constance is 2nd from left*).

A VISIT TO THE CASCADES - A TALK BY JUDITH DUNN

Judith recently visited **The Cascades World Heritage site** in Hobart and in her talk at the PFFF’s January meeting, compared ‘*what they have and what we have*’, i.e. the Cascades (c1828) and the Parramatta Female Factory (c1818). Judith’s talk re-affirmed the absolute imperative that the Parramatta site achieves its UNESCO World Heritage listing. Currently the PFFF have an application for consideration in the National listing – a prerequisite for World Heritage.

The Cascades Female Factory is situated with one boundary on the Cascades River just as the Parramatta Factory is bounded by the Parramatta River. It was an extensive site however much of the original footprint has been built on or has been demolished. Today the site features include a fragment of poor quality sandstone wall, the Matron’s House and 3 definable yards, primarily represented by the remains of their sandstone walls. Footings of the solitary cells are evident and the cells have been partly reconstructed.

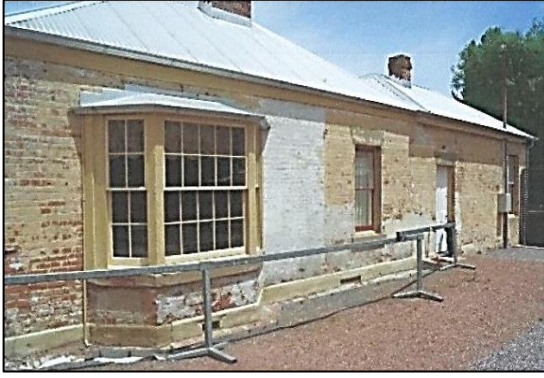
Right: The Cascades today



Far right: The PFF- a segment of the quality sandstone wall



Judith commented that the site is well organised with lots of good *passive* and *active* interpretation for the visitor. The factory footprint is clearly defined with lots of information. Judith also noted the ‘*great signage*’ at the site.



The Matron's House at the Cascades - today



The Matron's Quarters at the Parramatta site today

The Cascades Factory footprint is clearly outlined and archaeological remains are visible. Judith described the site as peaceful and commented on the landscaped areas where there was appropriate seating and accommodation for the many visitors the Cascades site attracts. Judith further commented that the women and their stories are very well represented with various displays. One particular display worth mentioning is a metal interpretation of the **Rajah Quilt** (*right*) made by the convict women on the *Rajah* c1841.

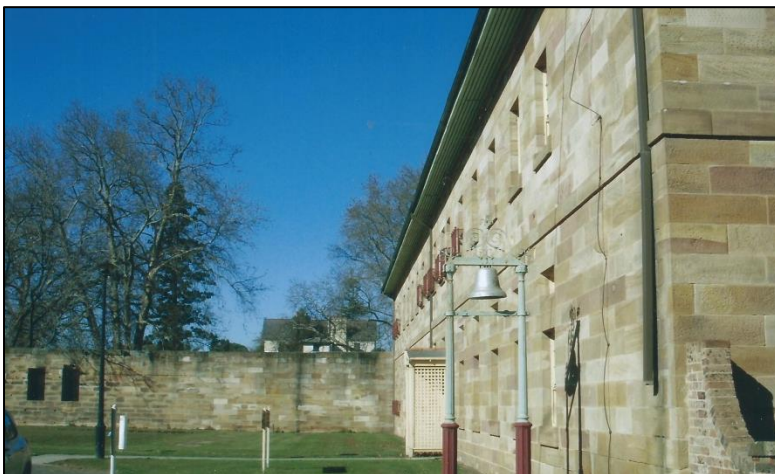


Comparing the 2 sites; they were designed for the same purpose and to a large extent mirrored each other, however, there is little of the original fabric remaining at the Cascades site whereas the Parramatta site is far richer in surviving fabric (though not in archaeology as at the Cascades - as yet!). At Parramatta there is a substantial and continuous wall, which is quality sandstone and skilfully tooled by convict labour (*much superior*, Judith commented!). There are many buildings and courtyards (c1821-1830) as well as the Matron's House, Hospital and 1st and 3rd class buildings.

In her talk, Judith briefly alluded to 'our clock' at the Parramatta Female Factory site (*far right*). Five clocks had been sent to Sydney from **Thwaites** and **Reed**, the clockmakers of Clerkenwell, London (est. in 1740). Clocks went to **St Mathew's** Windsor, one to the **Parramatta Female Factory**, others to **St John's** in Parramatta, **St Luke's** in Liverpool and to **St David's** in Hobart (c1823). Judith followed her intuition and climbed the tower in St John's church near the Cascades to investigate the clock there and confirmed its maker! It was a Thwaites and Reed which is an interesting link between these 2 early historic, colonial sites.



Thank you to Judith for such a fascinating talk. It is certainly 'hats off' to those who advocated for the Cascades site recognition and underscores our appreciation of the 'treasure' we have just waiting for 'her' turn to be appropriately recognised and cared for into the future and the layers of site narratives yet to be told.



Photos taken at the Parramatta Female Factory in 2011. Above left: the sandstone wall. Above right: The Clock Tower with the clock 'in situ' Far right : the 3rd class quarters –

HISTORY CORNER

Tenders for the Parramatta Female Factory were first gazetted in the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* on Saturday February 21st 1818, (right), in March and in April 1818.

'As soon as is practicable' suggests a degree of urgency. Furthermore, the comment that the proposed Factory was to be 'on a large scale' suggests not only a large undertaking and lucrative project but underscores the fact that the Factory would be the first Factory of such proportion to house Female Convicts in the Colony!

An interesting and related article appeared in the *Hobart Town Gazette and Southern Reporter* (Saturday March 28th 1818) which suggests that the new Female factory planned for Sydney may have been welcome news to the authorities.

It is interesting that notice of this Govt Order was 'gazetted' one week after the call for tenders in the Sydney Gazette.

It would appear that the 'girls' in Hobart Town were 'misbehaving' and since there was no Factory for 'placing such women under regular Restraint and Labour', the solution was to despatch the 'bad' women to Port Jackson and perhaps onto the 'new', larger Factory at Parramatta.

GOVERNMENT PUBLIC NOTICE.

ENGINEER'S OFFICE, SYDNEY,
Saturday, 21st March, 1818.

IT being intended to erect a NEW FACTORY and BARRACK at PARRAMATTA on a large Scale, for the Employment and Residence of the Female Convicts, as soon as practicable :—Such Persons as are willing and desirous to contract with Government for building the same, are requested to send in Sealed Tenders to the Acting Engineer's Office, in the Lumber-Yard, on or before Monday, the 6th of the ensuing Month of April ; after which Day no Tenders will be received ; and those given in will be opened by His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR, at Government House, on the same Day, at Three o'Clock in the Afternoon, in Presence of the Parties concerned.

Plans and Specifications of the proposed New Factory and Barrack may be seen at the Engineer's Office, between the Hours of Ten o'Clock in the Morning, and Three o'Clock in the Afternoon, every Week after Monday next.

(signed) GEORGE DRUITT, Acting Engineer.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, HOBART TOWN,
Saturday, 28th March, 1818.

THE Female Prisoners in Assigned Service having misbehaved in many Instances, and there being at present no Factory or Public Establishment in this Settlement for placing such Women under regular Restraint and Labour ; His Honor the LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR makes known his Intention of sending up to Port Jackson, to be placed in the Factory there, such Female Prisoners as from their bad Conduct cannot be continued in Assigned Service, or allowed the Indulgence of a Ticket of Leave.

By Command of His Honor, the Lieutenant Governor,
Samuel Hood, Secretary.

FROM THE PUBLICITY OFFICER : Welcome to the inaugural PFFF Newsletter which I hope will provide interest and stimulate contributions from members who are passionate about the Factory women and would like to write an article from their reading and research. Please contribute to 'History Corner' which will be a feature in each edition. There will be more of 'our girls' profiles, our talks and much more. The next Newsletter will be in early April. I can be contacted at the PFFF gmail address or catch me at the meeting in March. Finally, a huge thank you to the PFFF Committee for their support, suggestions and information!

Ronda Gaffey

image: 2011 - my first visit to the PFF site which once housed my great, great grandmothers - Sarah Scott (Elizabeth 1828) and Mary Ahern (per Palambam1831) Mary was sent onto the Newcastle Factory "to be paraded in the usual way" - a potential bride!



Postscript: There are many interesting historical as well as contemporary images of both the Cascades site and the Parramatta site on the internet which are well worth exploring. The narrative of the making of the Rajah Quilt is also worth reading - the quilt is on public view at the National Gallery Canberra once a year so if anyone finds out when, please let me know.



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