

PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS NEWSLETTER – ISSUE NO: 09 JUNE-JULY 2016

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 Online petition and brochure/PFFF website: parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au
 History: parramattafemalefactories.wordpress.com



The Parramatta Female Factory - Augustus Earle 1826 – courtesy NLA

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NEXT MEETING – AGM FRIDAY 15TH JULY AT 1:30PM - FOLLOWED BY A SPECIAL MEMBERS' EVENT – BOOK LAUNCH OF 'HERSTORY-LIVES OF THE PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY WOMEN' 2:30-3:30PM AT THE COACH HOUSE, HAMBLEDON COTTAGE, HASSALL STREET PARRAMATTA.



PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Well the cooler season is finally with us. As our part of the globe is passing the winter solstice and we are beginning to move towards the light filled part of the year the friends are moving towards our AGM. We are back at the wonderful Hambleton Cottage which is where our AGM will be held. Please feel free to nominate yourself or someone else. The nomination forms have been sent out. Be aware that nominations close two weeks prior to the AGM so get cracking if you would like to participate. You can send your hardcopy nomination to our PO Box. You can also send scanned signed copies to the gmail and then send originals. If you don't want to be an office bearer but would like to help there are always subcommittees for various activities.

There are three great reasons to join us for our AGM. One is participating in our AGM. The second is the official launch of the publication *Herstory* which has grown out of our exhibition at Hambleton. Don't worry if you think you have missed it as this is the third reason - Parramatta and District Historical Society has kindly extended it so you can also enjoy that.

Our advocacy continues. The last few months have seen promotion of our Museum of Australian Identity idea. This has been shared across political parties and we are beginning to share it through the community. There will be more on that in the coming months. Our petition continues to gain momentum but I urge each of you to get a copy and get the petition out there. Remember this is our new Federal petition. You can do this easily by going online to our website (the advocacy page) <http://www.parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au/advocacy-2/petitions-brochure/> . If you don't have the internet then ask one of our committee members. There is also our online petition that augments the hard copy and gives even more credence as well as capturing those people who don't necessarily have direct contact with us. <https://www.change.org/p/declare-the-parramatta-female-factory-a-national-and-world-heritage-site>.

If you would like to share more of our history or do an 'online museum tour' then go to our history website <https://parramattafemalefactories.wordpress.com/>

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our committee and all our members for supporting the Parramatta Female Factory Friends and its goals for the future of the Parramatta Female Factory.

Yours in community

Gay Hendriksen

NOTICEBOARD

NEW MEMBERSHIP – a very warm welcome to *June Bullivant, Barry Bullivant, Halina McQueen, Robert McQueen, Suzette Meade, Jon Hillman, Alison Ward, Patricia Tulloch, Lance Barry, Frank Dolphin, Gina Dolphin, Cheryl Ryan, Dorothy Warwick, Gwenda Lister, Karen Brown, and Lee Courtwood.*

“OUR GIRLS” - in the preamble to her talk at the last general meeting, Beth reported that she and Anne Mathews had identified 10,000 women who had passed through the factory system! They have now developed 4,500 women’s profiles, and *“made them flesh”*. Beth and Anne began their Parramatta Factory Women research in 2007 and have spent many hours at the State Archives at Kingswood and at the Mitchell Library, trawling through thousands of rolls of microfiche. Their research/PFFF archive of women’s stories has been a marathon effort – congratulations! If you would like to contribute to Beth and Anne’s research please let them know - contact them at parramattafemalefactory@gmail.com

THANK YOU! First, to June and Barry (Granville Historical Society) for their generous support in providing our temporary home and, for always looking for opportunities to promote the “factory”- congratulations on their new education initiative which includes school tours of the factory site - the Society is also adding to its *Talking Pictures* Library <http://www.granvillehistorical.org.au/talking-pictures---contact-us---.php>; secondly, thank you to NPRAG for including the PFFF petition and a bookmark in the ‘heritage’ sample bag given to patrons at their recent Riverside event.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - 2016

Meetings – guest speaker at 1:30pm and **General Meeting** at 2:00pm.

When: the 3rd Friday of every **second** month. **Venue:** Coach House, Hambledon Cottage.

MEETINGS for 2016 are Friday: 15th July, 16th September, 18th November, and 16th December 2016

FRIDAY 15TH JULY please note there is **no** guest speaker. The **AGM** will commence at 1:30 and will be followed by **the book launch** of a new PFFF publication comprising material from the exhibition at Hambledon Cottage, *‘Herstory-Lives of the Female Factory Women’* – all PFFF members are invited to join us for afternoon tea after the AGM at approximately 2:30pm - 3:30pm, in the garden of Hambledon Cottage. You may like to arrive earlier and tour the Cottage as well as view the *Herstory* Exhibition! (\$5 conc. \$6 adult). Books will be on sale on the day !

SPECIAL EVENT: ‘IT’S A RIOT!’ - **Friday October 28th 2016** - please contact Gay if you would like to help on the day - we would welcome help for the sales table and general ‘hosting/directing visitors to the registry desk etc. parramattafemalefactory@gmail.com

EXHIBITION NEWS –

Trevor Patrick (Lucas Gallery Co-ordinator) has emailed this interesting snippet from his weekend guiding at Hambledon Cottage:-

Visitors have included one young woman visiting from England, who was very excited in finding her ancestor, the famous prison reformer Elizabeth Fry, featured in the *Herstory* Exhibition.

Another visitor was a descendant of a police officer who had been shot during an encounter with Ben Hall junior, whose mother, factory girl Eliza is featured in one of the exhibition panels.



Isabel with her 4 x grt grandmother Elizabeth Fry –photo Trevor Patrick

Judith Dunn has also reported she met a descendant of the Bells who also visited the factory and exhibition recently. Mrs Bell was Matron and her husband was Keeper at the factory between 1836 and 1843.

PARRAMATTA HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP – KEN SMITH P.H.P. CHAIR

To advertise activities in Parramatta during the National Trust Festival (16th April- 29th May 2016), Parramatta Heritage Partners manned a stall in Centenary Square Parramatta on Friday 15th April 2016. Organisations represented on the day were Sydney Living Museums (Elizabeth Farm), the National Trust (Old Government House & Experiment Farm), Parramatta & District Historical Society (Hambledon Cottage), Whitlam Institute (Female Orphan School) and Rowan Tree Heritage (local history tours), Heritage Bike Tours and Brislington House Medical & Nursing Museum.

Parramatta Heritage Partners is a group of Parramatta museum site managers and local tourism operators, and includes relevant Parramatta City Council staff. The group's aim is to promote Parramatta's unique and significant heritage sites.

The stall gave each participating member organisation the opportunity to spread the message about the various events, walks and talks being held during the Festival, as well as to promote their heritage site.

All agreed it was a very successful day with 500 NT Festival booklets being distributed and with site representatives having lots of conversations with the passing throng.

Photo: Ken Smith – Robyn (Brislington), Gay (Rowan Tree Heritage Tours), Margaret (Friends of OGH & EF) and Ronda (PFFF).



PFFF NATIONAL TRUST FESTIVAL TALK AT HAMBLEDON COTTAGE–

The Parramatta & District Historical Society kindly offered PFFF a 'spot' in their National Trust Heritage Festival programme at Hambledon Cottage in May.

PFFF Vice President Judith Dunn was guest speaker and gave a spirited and entertaining account of the factory women drawing on her volume of research. She began with comparing the Cascades and Parramatta Female Factory spoke with passion in her advocacy for the Parramatta female factory site National Listing > World Heritage listing which the Cascades site has already achieved.

Due to restoration work happening in the Coach House, there was a "full house" nevertheless with at least 35 people crammed into the Lucas Gallery and spilling into the Stranger's Room at Hambledon Cottage. We were also fortunate in having a "sales" table set up on the front verandah of the Cottage and manned by Anne, Beth and Ronda. PFFF (and PD&HS) member Kaye Weaver ably assisted with refreshments.

Judith's talk was a great success and the sales on the day were a bonus for the PFFF coffers with book and bookmark sales being very popular.

A sincere thank you to Ken Smith for his support for including us in the programme and Judith for 'spreading the word' and presenting a PFFF perspective! A special thank you goes to Brian Powyer (PD&HS President) for his genial hosting of the event.

HISTORY CORNER

TRANSPORT from Sydney to Parramatta was a developing industry in the early days of the Colony and was newsworthy as this following newspaper extract demonstrates:

Stagecoach Service Extended (The Morning Chronicle 21 June 1821).

'A stage coach with four horses has recently commenced running daily between Sydney and Parramatta, leaving Sydney in the morning and returning in the evening; while a handsome two horse spring caravan, fitted up for passengers, leaves Parramatta in the morning and returns in the evening.'

'These conveyances were paying so well that a second caravan was preparing to run between Sydney and Parramatta daily; a third between Parramatta and Liverpool, and a stage coach between Parramatta and Windsor; so that now travellers may proceed by daily stages to all the well settled parts of the Colony.'



Source: Australian Coach Transport: [www:http//engineer.org.au](http://engineer.org.au)

TRANSPORT AND THE LADIES

The mode of transporting the convict women from Sydney to Parramatta is also fascinating and well recorded in contemporary Police Intelligence Reports and newspapers. The conveyances which transported the women varied and leads to much speculation as Judith Dunn's research has revealed. Judith notes that while there are no drawings, there are many references to, and descriptions of the vehicles used to transport the women to the factory at Parramatta.

One consistent reference is to a *'black box'* which suggests a carriage painted black with covered windows blocking out the light or a carriage without windows. In 1831 there is a reference to *'eighteen ladies'* being *'tightly packed'* into a tandem, elongated ordinance vehicle which gives some indication of the size. There are also references to tenders for *'a caravan'* to convey the women and references to the second mode of transport to the factory *'by water'*.

'A batch consisting of thirty five damsels, was forwarded by water to Mrs Gordon's Villa, on Tuesday, the van having gone on a trip to Bathurst; they appeared highly delighted with the new mode of conveyance, as it afforded them a full use of their eyesight.'

'...forty-five naughty dickie birds were forwarded from the gaol to the aviary, per boat, on Wednesday,'

Judith comments that the reference to *'full use of their eyesight'* adds credence to the idea that the black van was either windowless or had covered windows.

Source: *Colonial Ladies -Lovely, Lively and Lamentably Loose* by Judith Dunn

(My great great Grandmother Sarah Scott per *Elizabeth* 1828 is recorded as being in Darlinghurst Gaol 'awaiting water transport' to the factory after being returned from a failed assignment of 4 days to a Mrs Campbell- she was recorded as 'useless in service': SRNSW) – Ronda Gaffey

"OUR GIRLS" – PROFILES BY BETH MATTHEWS AND ANNE MATHEWS RACHEL AARONS (NEE SCHLEISSMYER)

Rachel aged 33 was tried at the Lancaster Quarter Sessions on 12th September 1821 along with her husband Joseph Aarons for stealing eighteen yards of woollen cloth from James Blakesley's warehouse. Her native place was listed as Hamburg, Germany; her occupation is noted as 'shopkeeper'.

Joseph was found guilty and transported for life while Rachel was transported for seven years. On the convict indent it is noted that they have four children, Rachel aged seven years, Rosina aged five, Hannah aged four years and Aaron Joseph aged two years.

Rachel was transported per the ship 'Mary' (3) leaving London on 16th June, 1823. It appears that Rachel was pregnant at the time of her trial – in the Medical journal, the ship's surgeon lists a female child as follows "Elizabeth Aarons, aged eight months, convict's child, taken ill at sea, sick or hurt, bowels irregular, very much emaciated, she got three months suck and has been badly taken care of; put on sick list 12 July, 1823, died 19 July 1823 at 10 o'clock."

Rachel and her children would have gone to the female factory to be assigned and on the 10th December, 1824 Rachel was assigned to Simon Lear, in Pitt Street, Sydney. In the 1828 Census (1), Rachel and Joseph are listed as 'Dealers' and living in George Street, Sydney. Rachel was 36, Joseph was 38 and their children – Rachel, aged thirteen, Rosanna (Rosina), aged ten, Joseph aged seven, Sarah aged four and Rebecca (born in the Colony) was aged one year.

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Rank	Profession	Place of Birth	Year	Remarks
5	J. Aarons Joseph	38	TL	Penit	Regent	1802	life	Pro. Registrar Pitt Street, Sydney
6	do Rachael	36	TL	Penit	1822	7	"	"
7	do Rachael	13	CF				"	"
8	do Rosanna	10	CF				"	"
9	do Ann	7	CF				"	dealers George Street, Sydney
10	do Joseph	7	CF				"	"
11	do Sarah	4	BC				"	"
12	do Rebecca	1	BC				"	"
13	do Hannah							"

Joseph was assigned to Joseph Raphael, of Pitt Street on 29th November 1823 and then to Simon Lear of Pitt Street where his wife Rachel had been assigned a year later.

On 27th October 1830, Rachel petitioned the Government to have her husband assigned to her. On 27th October 1830, Rachel received her Certificate of Freedom - Joseph received a Conditional Pardon on 27th May 1828 and then an Absolute Pardon on 11th March 1834.

In 1838, Rachel and Joseph applied to have a girl, Mary Ann Downs, from the Female Orphan School assigned to them. This was approved in July 1838 on the provision that they "provide for the present maintenance and education as well as for the future support of the child". How long Mary Ann stayed with the family is not known.

Rachel died on 24th July, 1866 in Sydney, aged 75 years and was originally interred in the Devonshire Street Cemetery; the remains were then removed and relocated to the Rookwood General Cemetery, Lidcombe.

Source: SRNSW; for further reading: <http://www.eoe.convictwomenspress.com.au/index.php/biographical-dictionary/10-a/1> Rachel Aarons (1790?-1866) by Lucy Frost

Postscript

In her journal Mrs Elizabeth Fry recorded a visit she made to the ship 'Mary' in London Port as follows

"The last time I was in the ship Mary there was such a scene around me – parting from them, probably forever. So many tears were shed – so much feeling displayed, and almost all present, the low and poor."

It is likely that Elizabeth Fry may have been acquainted with Rachel, who had been in Newgate Prison awaiting transportation. (Source: Old Bailey Session Papers– London Gaol Delivery).

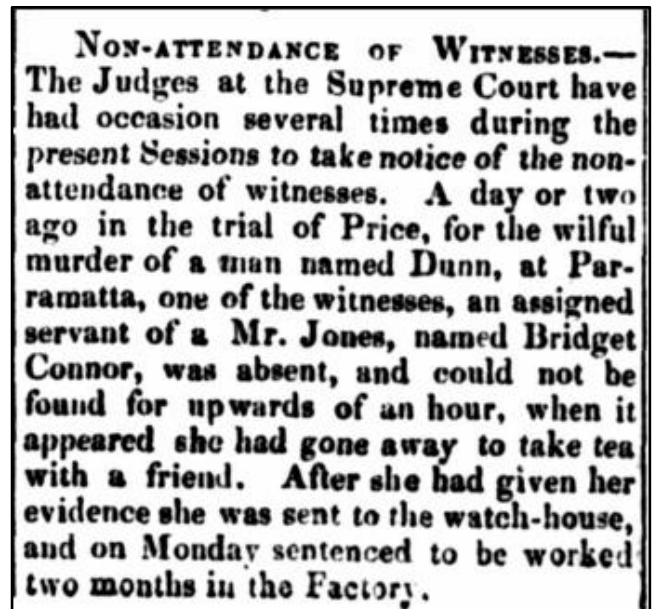
TWO FEISTY IRISH COLLEENS

BY MICHAELA ANN CAMERON

Just when I thought a biography I was writing about a three foot tall, "very deformed" ex-con turned brothel owner of Old Parramatta called "My Lord Dunn", could not get any crazier, the female factory-bound **Bridget Connor** entered the scene. Suffice it to say, My Lord Dunn came to a very bad end as the victim of a seemingly unjustified axe murder in August 1838 and Bridget was a key witness to the murder – not that Bridget felt weighed down by this great responsibility!

On the day of the murder trial, Connor, "the assigned servant of Mr Jones....was absent and could not be found for upwards of an hour, when it appeared she had gone away to take tea with a friend." Not surprisingly, after she finally turned up and had given her evidence, she was sent to the watch-house then to the factory for two months. (1)

(1) Sydney Gazette & NSW Advertiser –Tuesday 13 Nov 1838



NON-ATTENDANCE OF WITNESSES.—
The Judges at the Supreme Court have had occasion several times during the present Sessions to take notice of the non-attendance of witnesses. A day or two ago in the trial of Price, for the wilful murder of a man named Dunn, at Parramatta, one of the witnesses, an assigned servant of a Mr. Jones, named Bridget Connor, was absent, and could not be found for upwards of an hour, when it appeared she had gone away to take tea with a friend. After she had given her evidence she was sent to the watch-house, and on Monday sentenced to be worked two months in the Factory.

Bridget Connor was not the only feisty Irish colleen I have encountered of late. Miss Judith 'Julia' Allen, my all-time favourite female factory inmate, was another. But where Bridget had thumbed her nose at authority with her actions, Miss Julia most definitely did so with her words. The silver-tongued wordsmith from Cork delivered the most splenetic tirade at her master, Mr Owen and, in so doing, captured both my attention and my heart!

"You're a dirty, disagreeable, detrimental little devil – a foul-mouthed evil – speaking, sanctified, contonkerous coxcomb, and I'll be damned before I work for you!"

Just imagine how flabbergasted Mr Owen must have been at this display of insolence and exceptional wordsmithery from his house servant, who ought to have been scrubbing his floors rather than gallivanting about the Sydney streets!

For a long time I shared Julia's hilarious "Police Incident" with family, friends and all over social media. She became a real comedic heroine, so when I decided to delve a little deeper into her life story recently, it was a shock to learn that this five-foot-nothing "pert little dame" who was so full of spunk appears to have been one of the women irreparably broken by the factory system.

In early January 1832, Julia was before the bench once more after being "found in a public house" where a "swell" was assuring her she had a "charming method of making punch". She was sentenced to one month in prison class at the factory. One can only imagine how hideous the third class sleeping quarters must have been at the height of summer; revealingly, four young children died at the factory during her

incarceration alone. It seems likely, therefore that the factory environment was responsible for her death in Sydney's General Hospital, a little over eight weeks after her release from the factory. She was all of 32, at most.

It is very poignant to read the final words recorded in her last "Police Incident" in the Sydney Herald. Upon receiving the sentence that soon claimed her life, Miss Julia reportedly "dropped a curtsey", and said,

"Sweet gentle Sirs, adieu".

Michaela is a Ph.D. candidate, tutor, guest lecturer and research assistant, Dept. of History -Sydney University. She is PFFF social media manager and Project Manager of the St John's Cemetery Project.

A more detailed version of Miss Julia's story, with full references and links to resources, at Michaela's blog "The Old Parramattan" <https://theoldparramattan.wordpress.com/2016/06/01/judith-julia-allen-a-female-factory-inmate/>

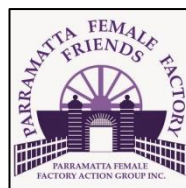
My Lord Dunn's story is on the newly launched biographical database, "The St John's Cemetery Project" <https://stjohncemetryproject.com/bio/john-dunn/>

*When thee builds a prison, thee
had better build with the thought
ever in thy mind that thee and thy
children may occupy the cells.*

Elizabeth Fry



Image: Mrs Fry visiting Newgate Prison



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