



**PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS INC.
NEWSLETTER – ISSUE NO: 38 MARCH-APRIL 2021
1821-2021 BICENTENARY EDITION**



Contact: parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com or PO Box 1358 Parramatta 2124
 PFFF website: parramattafemalefactoryfriends.com.au
 History: parramattafemalefactories.wordpress.com
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pfffriends/>
 Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/parramattafemalefactoryfriends/>



Female Penitentiary or factory, Parramatta [i.e. Parramatta], N.S.Wales c1826 by Augustus Earle – nla.pic-an 2818460 National Library of Australia (NLA)

Patrons: Meg Keneally & Thomas Michael Keneally AO
President: Gay Hendriksen **Vice President:** Frank Williams
Treasurer/Public Officer: Kerima-Gae Topp **General Secretary/Editor:** Ronda Gaffey
Committee: Minutes Secretary: Lynette Watkins **Membership Secretary:** Cate Whittaker,
Tour Coordinator: Steve Bryant, Anne Mathews, Judith Dunn OAM, Janice Ruse Huntington

Next Meeting: Friday 16th April 2021. **Guest Speaker 1:00pm**
General Meeting at 2:00pm followed by afternoon tea.
VENUE: Parramatta Female Factory Friends’ Rooms, Gipps Yard, 5 Fleet Street, North Parramatta.

Content	Page
President.....	2
Noticeboard/History Corner.....	3
1821-2021 Bicentenary.....	4
‘Our Girls’.....	7
Research Centre Muster.....	8
Serendipity.....	10



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Factory Friends

Welcome to your autumn newsletter.



Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who made the Bicentennial reflection event such a great one. It was a truly meaningful reflection and commemoration. The walk, the character re-enactments, the music, the tearooms, research centre, sales and models, all contributed to making it such a great day. We also have great photographic records of the day, so thank you to all the photographers as well. Special congratulations to Ronda for coordinating this one. Well done.

Thank you to our Patrons Tom and Meg Keneally for their stirring addresses. Tom spoke about the women and the importance of the Parramatta Female Factory and Meg shared the story of her ancestor Mary and highlighted the humanitarian crisis of the factory such as Mary Ann Hamilton's story and, spoke about the need for advocacy.



The Hon. Don Harwin MLC and the Consul General for Ireland (NSW), Mr. Owen Feeney led the laying of floral tributes. Also in attendance were many descendants, State Government representatives and a number of local politicians, the Deputy Lord Mayor and Councillors of the City of Parramatta.

With regard to the factory site, there has been a number of archaeology test pits in the Third Class Penitentiary Yard. A gateway has been reinstated in a south east section of Gipps Yard.

Work has progressed in relation to the Western Sydney Startup Hub identified buildings, as have our protests. I participated in a panel offering further objections to the report that responded to submissions against the Hub.

There has been movement on the Registrations of Interest submitted some time ago. Property and Development NSW is inviting the high performing ROIs to walk around the site and discuss their needs and vision. We will certainly make our views known and share at the next meeting. They will also be speaking at our next general meeting to give us the current status on the site. The Committee is also following up on what the master plan for North Parramatta/Cumberland Precinct means for the factory.

The Jack Munday State Memorial was held on Wednesday 10 March. The Friends would like to acknowledge what a great man and great supporter Jack has been for the Parramatta Female Factory Friends. His vision and advocacy will be sorely missed. We still apply his advice in our advocacy. He was a truly great Australian and recognised how important the Parramatta Female Factory is to the Australian narrative.

Don't forget our next meeting is on 16th April when guest speaker will be Babette Smith OAM at 1pm, before the General meeting - Babette will be sharing some fabulous research. Also, there will be a workshop at 9am April 16th, *An Introduction to Family History* (8 people limit), so book in by emailing your interest and a place will be according to first 8 respondents. Looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

All the best,
Gay Hendriksen



Photographs: Sylvia Uebelhoer

NOTICEBOARD

* The next General Meeting is Friday 16th April, 2021. Guest speaker, Babette Smith OAM at 1:00pm. The General Meeting is at 2:00pm and followed by afternoon tea. Please note PFFF are a registered COVID-19 safe business.

* The 1821-2021 Bicentenary was supported by the team at the [Parramatta Heritage & Visitor Information Centre](#) with a small exhibition, online material and a video. Go to *Parramatta Heritage and History* and follow the links. The video is available on YouTube - search for: *YouTube Ann Gordon - Parramatta Female Factory Matron*

* The PFFF Bicentenary Book *History-Herstory-Ourstory* is on sale at the Friends Rooms, 3rd Friday of the month or by email order to: parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com

The book costs \$40 - postage & packaging is an extra \$12.20. A wafer is also available for \$25 - this contains a pdf version of the book, Female Factory women lists, videos and photographs of the 2018 Bicentenary Event. Postage & packaging for the wafer is \$3.30.



The CD of songs especially commissioned for the Bicentenary, is also available. The CD comprises four songs: *Mothers of the Nation*, *Banish My Misfortune*, *Little Parramatta Mary* and *Shower of Stones*. Cost is \$15 plus p&p \$3.75

Please email your order to parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com - subject line - "CD Order".



HISTORY CORNER- FRANCIS OAKES SUPERINTENDENT of the PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORIES

Francis Oakes (1770 -1844) was born in Warwickshire, England. He was a shoemaker by trade and a member of the Congregational Church. In 1796 he volunteered as an artisan missionary to Tahiti where he stayed for four years before arriving in Sydney in 1790. He received a grant of 100 acres, at Dundas.



During his lifetime he was a farmer, a chief constable, a baker, a shopkeeper and contractor. His civic posts in Parramatta included, clerk of the public market (1812) and Superintendent of the Parramatta Female Factory (1814-1822), serving at both factories. His daughter Mary married the Rev. John Hutchinson who was appointed Superintendent of the Female House of Correction in Hobart (1832). In March 1851, Mary was appointed Matron of the Female Factory in Hobart, now known as the Cascades Female Factory.

Francis Oakes died in Parramatta in February 1844. He is buried in St. John's Cemetery Parramatta. His wife, Rebecca (daughter of First Fleeters, John and Mary Small), died in 1883.

Ronda Gaffey

References:
Biography, Francis Oakes - Australian Dictionary of Biography adb.anu.edu.au by Neil Gunson



Model of the Parramatta Gaol and the first Female Factory, 'the Room above the Gaol', by Wayne Mathews. This is an interpretation with model structures superimposed on James Sempler Kerr's redrawn ground plan c1819 showing amendments to the original drawing of 1802. C0201.1333f193 and map of Parramatta c1813 PROMR C07000 NSW 32.

Research: Anne Mathews and Wayne Mathews

Photographs: by Anne Mathews

Portrait of Francis Oakes: Australasian Pioneers' Society Collection

1821-2021 BICENTENARY

What a fantastic Bicentenary Day!

The day started with the rumbunctious, rowdy, riotous rebels being marched from the site of the first factory at Prince Alfred Square to the grandeur of the Greenway - designed second factory, in Fleet Street.



At the gates they were met by Governor Macquarie and Mrs. Macquarie, the Rev. Marsden and Mrs. Betsy Marsden. A posy of roadside flowers (dandelions) was presented to Mrs. Macquarie by a 'convict child' before the women were marched inside by the military escort led by Superintendent Oakes...

The formal proceedings commenced with an Acknowledgement of Country and speeches from Gay Hendriksen, PFFF President and PFFF Patrons, Tom Keneally and Meg Keneally with Ronda Gaffey introducing the music performance of the Bicentenary commission song suite EP, *Mothers of the Nation* which was performed by Cliona Molins, Rosie McDonald and the band. The songs were emotionally powerful and brought a sense of living history to the occasion.

The ceremony closed with a wreath laying led by the Hon. Don Harwin MLC and the Consul General for Ireland (NSW) Mr. Owen Feeney with special guests, descendants and guests following.

Many thanks to the PFFF volunteers who worked so hard in making this event so special .

Kevin Dodds



On 1st February 1821, another chapter in the lives of the Parramatta female convicts unfolded with the occupation of the newly completed Macquarie/Greenway Barracks and Factory and 200 years later, that historical event was re-enacted with great emotion for all involved.

The Re-enactment Walk participants gathered at Prince Alfred Square, the site of the first factory in 'the Room above the gaol'. Before setting off, Steve Bryant spoke briefly about the historic occasion and then led a minute's silence in remembrance of the 109 convict women and their 71 children who were moved that day.

The route taken by the walkers mirrored that taken by the women, in part, following the Parramatta River to emerge at O'Connell Street. Then, past the new stadium and onto Fleet Street where there was a moment to pause and gaze up at the imagined edifice that would have greeted the women 200 years ago...

The day was memorable and there were many highlights including the wonderful array of colonial costumes, the speeches, the reflection with a harp accompaniment by Cliona Molins, the array of floral tributes and the performance of the song suite by Cliona (vocals and harp), Rosie McDonald (vocals and guitar), Nigel Lever (mandolin) and Ann Palumbo (bass). The inaugural exhibit of a model of the first factory and gaol by Wayne Mathews, the result of much research and skill, was also rather special.

Thank you to Gay and to all the Committee, members and volunteers - the event was a great collaborative effort. Thank you to Steve for all his support and to all the wonderful Walk participants. Thank you to Jeff Allen for playing Governor Macquarie, to Kerima-Gae Topp - Mrs Macquarie, to Ken Smith and Margaret Smith who played the Rev. Samuel Marsden and Mrs Betsy Marsden and for embracing the occasion with much enthusiasm.

Thank you to everyone for all the hard work 'behind the scenes' - to Frank for sourcing the extra shelters and to Frank, Steve, Kevin, Iain and Barry for setting up, to Judith and Greg Dunn for sprucing up the Bicentenary Wall, to Kerima-Gae and Anne for the sign making and laminating, to John Brock for traffic control, to Lyn and the reception team and to Steve, Judith and Lyn for their extra energy in taking afternoon tours. Thank you to Pauline and the catering team, Anne, Beth and Kerima-Gae for sales and Janice and the hygiene marshals.

Above all, many, many thanks to Jeff Stein and Frankie Lee (the City of Parramatta Events team) for the infrastructure support and sound engineer, Bowen Shakallis - the performance would not have been possible without them. Lastly, a huge thank you to Parramatta Leagues Club - we could not have succeeded without their generous support.

Ronda Gaffey





Photographs: Bob Cook, Ray Allen and Wal Phelps.

In 1821, 21 convict ships set sail for Port Jackson. The ship, *Providence*, with 103 women embarked, left Plymouth on 6th June 1821 and arrived in Sydney Cove in January 1822. It was a long voyage of 208 days. A number of the women on board were from Newgate prison and sentenced for the common crime of “counterfeiting”. This is the story of one woman who was in this ‘cargo of women’ - **Elizabeth Ann Denham**.

...they appeared in general young and decently dressed women, and most of them went off in good spirits. Considering the great disproportion that exists between the two sexes in New South Wales which is said to be ten males to one female, perhaps a more desirable consignment could not be made to the colony than a cargo of women; government seems to be aware of this fact, as scarcely any female convicts are now sent to the penitentiary at Millbank..

The Spirit of the Times¹

Elizabeth was baptised at the Church of St. Andrew, Holborn, London, on 25th March 1802. Her parents were John and Elizabeth Denham. She was tried and convicted at the Old Bailey in 1821 having been found in a room with 12 others with counterfeit money. She was sentenced to transportation for 14 years.

At the time, Elizabeth had two children: Stephen, who was born in 1818 and Elizabeth, born in 1820. Their father is noted as Stephen Johnson - no marriage has been found for Stephen and Elizabeth. Stephen Johnson was convicted in 1820 and sentenced to seven years for stealing silver spoons. He embarked the ship *Grenada* in May 1821 and arrived in NSW, on 16th September 1821.

The convict ship *Providence* landed 53 women in Hobart on 18th December 1821 and sailed on to Sydney where the remaining 50 were landed on 7th January 1822. The Muster Roll describes Elizabeth as: *20 years, 5 feet 1 inch, fair skin, freckles, brown hair and hazel eyes, house servant*.

On arrival Elizabeth and her two young children were sent to the Female Factory at Parramatta. Stephen re-offended sometime in 1822 and was sent to Newcastle from where he absconded - he was caught and sent to Port Macquarie.

In February 1822, Elizabeth was given permission to join her husband in Port Macquarie. Another child, Maria was born there in 1823. The 1825 Muster has the family living at Port Macquarie - Stephen’s occupation is given as *baker*.



In 1826 the family returned to Sydney - Stephen was assigned to Jacob Wyer in Market Street, Sydney. Their children were admitted to orphan schools in November 1826.

In 1828, Stephen was in gaol for non-payment of debts. He claimed that Elizabeth had eloped from his house, that she had left him and the children, taking everything with her she thought useful and leaving him with debts of upwards of 40 pounds. Elizabeth was apprehended and returned to the Female Factory. On 7th February, she was sentenced to 1st class at the Factory for being ‘illegally at large’. Stephen petitioned for his and Elizabeth’s three children to be granted asylum in the Orphan Schools. The children were admitted on 26th February 1828. In the 1828 Census (November), Elizabeth is listed as being in the Factory and the children, Stephen aged 9, Elizabeth aged 7 and Maria aged 4, are on the list of orphans in the colony.

For 26th November 1828, there is a record that states that young Stephen and Maria had absconded from the orphanages saying their father Stephen was dead. Later research shows that Stephen deserted his family and returned to England in 1829. He was then ‘free by servitude’. Elizabeth was still in Parramatta and had given birth to a fourth child, James, son of James Williams who had been employed at the hospital. James died aged 3 months and was buried at St. John’s Cemetery on 2nd March 1834 - he was described as ‘convict’s child, in Factory’. On 26th December 1834, Elizabeth received her Certificate of Freedom.

A second son David William was baptised on 15th May 1836. Elizabeth was described as a spinster living in Parramatta. In early 1837 Elizabeth and James Williams left Parramatta and moved to the Sutton Forest area. Her son Stephen and Maria were with them. Elizabeth stayed behind and was later ‘disposed of as a servant apprentice’ from the Female Orphan School. She was 17 years old. James Williams and Elizabeth were married on 7th June 1837 at All Saints, Sutton Forest. Elizabeth’s sixth child, Richard was born 24th May 1840. Elizabeth Denham is thought to have died in 1840.

References:

‘Our Girls’ - unpublished work sourced from original papers, State Archives and Records NSW by Anne Mathews and Beth Matthews

Family History notes, by Denise Thompson and Sharon Ferge.

¹Free Settler or Felon? Voyage of the convict ship Providence 1821 by Jenny Willetts

Image: Port Macquarie c1820 - artist unknown.

RESEARCH CENTRE MUSTER

The Research Team - Gay Hendriksen, Kevin Dodds, Janice Ruse Huntington, Barry Lance and Lyn Watkins.

The Research Room is moving steadily along. We are adding more books to our catalogue and setting up vertical file content. These files are planned to focus on the women, the site and life in the factories. Our female factory lists are being installed, so soon, you will be able to research your own particular factory women and interests. If you have information in hardcopy or soft copy form, please contact me and we will add to our resources.

We will be starting our workshops from April. Our researchers will be sharing their family history and female factory knowledge. The first workshop will be on building your family tree, presented by Kevin Dodds. It will be 9am to 11am, April 16th. Cost is \$5 per person. There is a limit of eight people as these workshops are practical in nature. If you would like to participate, email parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com. The first eight who reply will be given a place and will be notified by email.

A Plea Heard

One of our recent inquiries included **Elizabeth Browning Owen**. Elizabeth was born in Surrey in 1789. She was tried at the Surrey Assizes on the 25th March 1820 and sentenced to 14 years. After sentencing she was sent to the Horsemonger Lane Gaol. A letter of petition was submitted to authorities describing her 'unfortunate situation'.¹ She was sent on board the *Morley* and then advised that her eldest child was unable to accompany her as they were too old (nine years old).

The ship's surgeon describes the scene:

*About 7 p.m. a person arrived, saying he had brought four children belonging to Browning Owen, a convict, but had left them at Woolwich, being uncertain whether they would be received on board. One of them unfortunately happened to be three years above the age permitted by the Secretary of State. The case of this poor woman seems one of aggravated distress: About nine months since, her husband incited her to commit crime; and, after involving her in guilt and misery, left her with a helpless family without a friend in the world. Her conduct having been exceedingly good since she came on board, induced me to lay a statement of her case before Mr Capper, for the consideration of the Secretary of State, whose benevolence granted permission for all the children to be embarked and accompany their mother.*²

Thomas Reid, the ship's surgeon and Elizabeth Fry disciple, supported her request to have all the children on board. Imagine her relief on having all four children with her. They all arrived safely - John, Eliza, Robert and Elizabeth.³ This was followed by transportation and arrival at the factory where all her children were removed. Within 12 months she was married to Emmanuel Marvin and her children reunited with her.

Check out our research rooms for more details of her story.

Gay Hendriksen - Centre Convener

Image: Horsemonger Lane Gaol (1799-1881)
Southwark, London.



¹ <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol42/pp92-12187>. [F25/6/32a] Elizabeth Browning Owen, Horsemonger Lane Gaol, 27 February 1820.

² Two Voyages to New South Wales, and Van Diemen's Land, 1822, Thomas Reid, London, Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown.

³ Colonial Secretary's Papers Index 1788-1825.

A Family Connection by Lyn Watkins – Research Centre Team Member

I have been researching my family for years as well as other members of my family to discover so many interesting facts. I have at least six Convicts, three of them being women, two of whom spent some time at the Parramatta Female Factory. At this stage, I have not found out if my third female spent any time at Parramatta factory, but, they all ended up in the Maitland Area.

Last month when I visited Maitland, I called in to *Maitland & Beyond Family History Inc.* which is based in the Barracks near Maitland Gaol. It was a very interesting visit - they are compiling a data base of female convicts who ended up in the Maitland area. They are also making a bonnet, celebrating each female convict - these will be on display at different venues, they have already had displays at Newcastle, Singleton, and in other districts. They had records of two of my ancestors so I was able to give them information on another, my 2 x great grandmother, **Margaret Brandon**, who arrived in Sydney on the convict ship *Burrell 2* in May 1832. Margaret was featured in "Who Do You Think You Are?". Peter Rowsthorn, the actor, is her 4 x great grandson.

Margaret only spent a short time at the Parramatta Female Factory - she arrived with a baby girl (my great grandmother, Mary) who was born on the ship and an 11 year old son. She was then put on another ship to Newcastle where she was assigned, on 18 June 1832, to Mr Dodd's' Farm, Darlington, Hunter River .

After receiving permission from the Governor, Margaret married Joseph Wood, a convict who had earned his freedom. They were married at Christ Church, Newcastle, in December 1832. In December 1833 they had a daughter, Ann, who was the 4 x great grandmother of Peter Rowsthorn.

Unfortunately Margaret Brandon died in March 1835 from excessive drunkenness - she is buried in the Glebe Cemetery, George St, East Maitland. This Cemetery also hold the remains of Francis Greenway, architect. The cemetery is attached to St. Peter's Anglican Church, East Maitland where my parents were married.

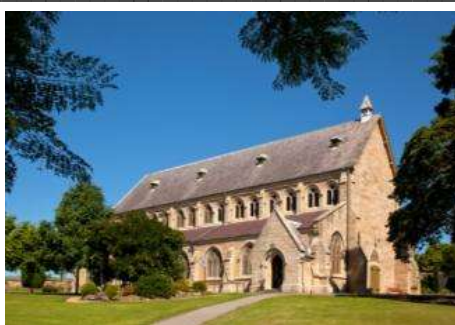


A Posy for Margaret - Lyn lays a floral tribute..

Photographs: Bob Cook



Above: Greenway sign at Glebe Cemetery



St. Peter's Anglican Church, East Maitland
Photograph: Kerima-Gae Topp

Left: Mary Bromage (Lyn's great grandmother) - daughter of Margaret Brandon. Photograph: courtesy Lyn Watkins



Postscript and a serendipity! Matron Ann Gordon is also buried at the Glebe Cemetery, East Maitland. See the article by Heidi Garmonsway in PFFF Newsletter No: 35 September - October 2020 edition, page 6. Margaret Brandon would have been at the Parramatta Female Factory at the time of Matron Gordon's tenure, 1827 -1836. Ed.

If you have any ancestors who lived in the Maitland District, or if any have any enquiries, the Maitland and Beyond Family History Inc. would like to hear from you. E: mdgs01@tpg.com.au

Those unexpected discoveries and serendipitous moments, just keep coming!

Ronda Gaffey writes: *Recently I had some brick work restoration done on my cottage and while chatting with Eamonn about his various jobs as a tuckpointer, I discovered that he had been working at St John's Cemetery on a rather different and special project! Further chats revealed that he had restored the top section of the Tunks family vault for the Tunks family.*



Photographs: Eamonn Spain

Ronda writes: *I often think about those, whose footsteps we walk in and how lives and circumstance collide through time - in April 2019, I was in London and made a beeline for the Church of St. Andrew in Holborn where my 2 x grt grandfather Joseph Jones (per Hadlow 1818) had been baptised in 1801. When Beth and Anne sent me their 'copy' for this edition, I was rather tickled to read that Elizabeth Denham (per Providence - see page 7) had been baptised in 1802, at the Sir Christopher Wren Church of St. Andrew, Holborn too! PS: Gay has just told me that her ancestor Zacharia George Hopkins was also baptised there on 25th June 1787!*



Image: The Church of St. Andrew, Holborn



Photographs: Anne Mathews

Recent archaeology by Dr Mary Casey and team at the Female Factory site yielded finds which included bricks, a collection of ten metal objects - possibly six are nails, three 'kaolin' or clay pipe stems, a bakelite pipe stem, two buttons and four pieces of crockery. These artefacts are not thought to be associated with the Female Factory other than the broad arrow bricks.

The convict bricks are part of a demolished wall for workrooms located along the eastern side of the yard. The bricks were made in Parramatta and are stamped with the Parramatta broad arrow. The two test pits in the 3rd class yard are shown here. Above right is the northern workshop and lower right, the southern workshop. I can imagine the women picking oakum or breaking rocks here, or maybe chopping wood...and, imagine their chatter!

Anne Mathews



Thank you Mary and Rhian for the PFFF Committee's "sneek peek" at the test pits and thank you to Mary for additional information. Ed.