

Our dear Old Boys

Men and boys have made a significant contribution to the history and life of St Catherine's in the capacity of young students, council members, visiting chaplains, fathers and teachers.

Mrs Evangeline Galettis OAM ARCHIVIST

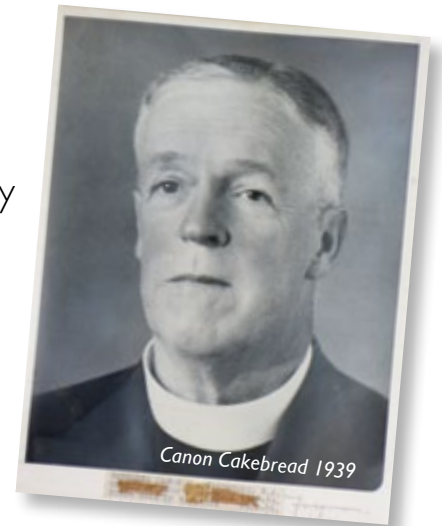
In the first half of the 20th century it was not uncommon for an independent girls' school to have boys enrolled in the early years because boys' preparatory schools would not enrol children under the age of seven. The alternatives were for a boy to attend school with his elder sisters, attend a public school or to be educated at home. Gradually, demand led to the opening of infants sections at the major independent boys' schools and the practice lapsed.

We have no idea when boys were first enrolled at St Catherine's, although we have anecdotal evidence from Peggy Goswell (OG 1942) that Ken Dobb, John Donovan, Stanley Lever, Jimmy Greville and David Greville were all enrolled during the early 1930s.

The first mention of boys as students occurs in *The Catherineian* 1935 where Kindergarten Notes record that "we all turned into Red Indians" and "the boys made beautiful suits for themselves out of bags". Playing Red Indians seems to have been a regular occurrence in Kindergarten as were visits to Waverley Fire Station, where in 1939 the boys were allowed to try on helmets and gas masks.

The usual number of boys enrolled in the 1930s and 1940s seems to be around five or six, but *The Catherineian* records Kindergarten numbers as variable. We have no record of the names of these early boys except for: P. Dillon, who is recorded as having won the Boys' egg and spoon race, as well as the Boys' flat race in the Kindergarten sports for 1940, and Stanley Leaver, who attended from 1934 to 1936 and sits in splendour in the middle of the front row of the whole school photo for 1936.

Our last boy was Stephen Man, who left in 1988 as a result of a change in policy by Headmistress Mrs Jo Karaolis, but throughout the 1970s and 80s we regularly had boys enrolled in infants, leaving no later than Year 2. The only exception was Peter Elmaloglou who remained until 1980, leaving from Year 4.



Canon Cakebread 1939

As well as boys, a significant number of men have contributed to the life of the School. Two exceptional men are Canon Cakebread and Dean Shilton. Both served on the St Catherine's School Council as Secretary and Chairman at very different times in the School's history.

The Canon Cakebread Memorial Prize is known to all St Catherine's girls as the coveted prize for Dux of the School. It commemorates The Very Reverend William Cakebread, Rector of St Jude's 1912-1939, Honorary Chaplain to the School, Secretary to School Council 1914-1939, and loving friend and supporter of St Catherine's for many years. His name is commemorated by the bell on the corner of the Stone House and the clock on the cloister wall.

Canon Cakebread died in 1939, and throughout the 1920s and 30s *The Catherineian* reports his interaction with the School community: taking Sunday evening services for boarders, conducting annual confirmation, moderating debates and presenting awards. A poem in *The Catherineian* 1939 reads in part: "The influence of a life of love, of service, perfect faith, abiding grace, upon this school for evermore will rest". An account of the memorial service ends with an exhortation not to mourn a life lived in perfect love, but to celebrate the abundant goodness of it.

The Very Reverend Lance Shilton, Dean of Sydney, member of School Council 1974-1988, was Miss Patterson's Chairman, and many will remember her response to any controversial suggestions: "The dear Dean will not hear of it!" Nevertheless it was during his tenure that we danced in the Cathedral in 1978 as part of the evening service, causing a stir.

On his retirement, Dean Shilton made a donation to fund the Dean Shilton Prize for Christian Activity within the School. He died in 1998.



Dean Shilton and Miss Faith Patterson in 1987.



Class of 1988 with a boy in the centre of the front row.