



**St. Agnes Girls' College, former,
22-6 Myers Street**

History

Months after her election as Mother Superior (1899), M.M. Bernard Lyons established the St. Agnes College as a day school extension to the Newtown Sacred Heart College for boarders. At first, a two-storey house with a 'galvanized-iron front neatly and effectively shaped and painted' was used as the Myers Street day school. Late in 1902, Archbishop Carr opened a new college on the site, costing some £2360: this was described as a brick two-storey school with outbuildings.¹ Further works followed in 1911, designed by G.W. Vanheems and constructed by W. Murphy. It cost £3447.²

The Newtown Sisters of Mercy started in 1859, at the invitation of the Most Rev. Dr. Goold and under M.M. Xavier Maguire.³ At first an orphanage (1864, 1886), then a 'young Ladies' boarding school,' the convent building (1872) and chapel (1874) were the main elements of the complex. A primary school (St. Catherine's) and a

teacher-training school (1891) were additional parts (St. Agnes Girls' College Art).

From Newtown, the Sisters ran primary schools at St. Patrick's in Kildare, S.S. Peter and Paul's in Ashby and at St. Mary's Hall (q.v.).⁴

Description

The major building on this site, the first school, follows a typical Catholic architectural form for the period, using two-coloured brickwork and an Italian Gothic revival stylistic inspiration. Comprised of three gabled bays, two major and one minor. Bartizans, applied across the gables, introduce a picturesque element to an otherwise typical elevation. Centred on the roof is what presumably was intended as a bell-tower. Comparable Catholic structures of a similar form and style included the earlier Notre Dame de Sion Sale convent, Ararat school, Kilmore, Marist Brothers monastery and school, the former Kilmore Convent of Mercy (now Assumption College), Geelong

Christian Brothers monastery (part) and St. Brigid's school, North Fitzroy.⁵ Government schools include

1 RB1903,376; RB 1906, 380

2 MUA1 cites *Building* 12.9.11/26, 12.12.11/102; RB1920, 385- brick 2 storey buildings and land

3 SOFFY p.55f

4 ibid.

5 SOFFY

City of Geelong Urban Conservation Study
Significant Sites

Glenferrie primary school (1877-87), Armadale primary (1886-) and Port Melbourne Primary (1888-).¹ The Myers Street school is much later than most of these, although similar stylistically.

External Integrity

Generally complete (front elevations) except for the front fence replacement. Old plans show a probable timber picket fence with an entry indent on axis with the building.²

Streetscape

Related in scale, materials and form to later buildings on the site at the Fenwick Street corner, and the former Presbyterian residence at 32 Myers Street. It contributes to a late 19th and early 20th century civic precinct (6.01), where schools, churches and related residences are a reoccurring theme.

Significance

Historically, a community building over a long period. Architecturally, stylistically late but otherwise a typical and successfully designed school for the period.

1 Burchell, p.154f
2 GW&ST, plan 25