

## St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Waimate



ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, WAIMATE (C.T. TEMPLETON 2015)

The second church of St. Patrick in Waimate was designed by Francis William Petre and the contractors were Mills, Ford & Murtagh of Oamaru.<sup>1</sup> According to his daughter Margaret, her father was the most proud of Waimate.<sup>2</sup> The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Grimes on the 26 January 1908. The design of the building is described as Lombard - Romanesque, and the construction is of reinforced concrete with brick and Oamaru stone facings. The cost of the building was only £6,000, which reflects the substantial donation in both labour and materials from the congregation. The church was designed to seat 600 and was opened on 24 October 1909.

The bell tower was part of the original Petre design and added to the building in 1912, at a cost of £1,000 to house a peal of bells donated by the late Nicholas Quinn (he also donated the bells in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament Christchurch and Sacred Heart Timaru). One part of the design that was not completed was a nun's chapel on the west side of the sanctuary (the exposed brickwork for which can be seen on the outside of the building).<sup>3</sup>

In 1972 the parish priest of the time planned alterations on a wide scale to the interior of the church, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, and the 1971 circular by Bishop Ashby (Diocesan Bishop) requiring that all churches make the required alterations by 1974.<sup>4</sup> Between April and June 1972 the congregation used the parish hall while alterations were being done to the church. Most of the congregation only discovered the design of the new look at the "unveiling" Mass on 18 June. The interior had been painted a monochromatic grey, some statues were removed, and those that remained had been spray painted white. The pulpit had been removed, and the high altar of Queensland marble and Greenstone pillars, and altar rails of

Italian Carrara marble had been cut up and while a few panels were reused, much was consigned to the Waimate dump. There were also a significant number of architectural and liturgical artefacts that were removed and have disappeared without trace.

The Parish Annual Meeting on 1 July 1973 revealed that the cost of the alterations to the Parish were \$48 shy of \$20,000 (\$330,00 – 2016) and that the Parish Council had no knowledge that that would be the total cost of the project, having had the whole matter taken out of their hands. The parish priest had also been transferred to Christchurch within months of the project's completion.

The results of the removal of so many interior features at St. Patrick's Waimate added to the opposition to any such moves for the interior at Sacred Heart Basilica in Timaru (which was going through an open and consultative discussion of altar arrangements) the result being that the high altar and other internal features in Timaru were retained.<sup>5</sup>

Between 2000 and 2009 the building went through a three stage restoration, the roof and tower, the exterior and finally the interior. The first stage of earthquake strengthening the tower and roof, and retiling was in 2005 at a cost of \$228, 000. The second stage in 2007 was cleaning and repairing the exterior for \$126,000. The interior was restored in 2009 in time for the centennial of the opening. A local colour consultant researched and proposed the renovated colour scheme, and remnants of the original altar rails and altar were found under the floor and reconstructed into the side altar rails. The present altar is from the former Lewisham Hospital (later Calvary Hospital) of Christchurch.<sup>6</sup>

The pipe organ in the church was the gift of Mr and Mrs Patrick Hanley of Morven. It was built by Arthur A. Hobday of Wellington, and was commissioned in 1914, although not opened until 5 September 1920. As the *Timaru Herald* of 6 September quoted:

“The business arrangements for the organ had been made about the start of the war, and the great struggle had delayed its completion, while adding greatly to the builders costs. Mr Hobday had made no claim upon them, but had kept his bargain, and whilst the speaker had made some adjustment voluntarily, Mr Hobday was losing on the transaction. He consequently suggested the voting of the collections taken up at that day's services as a gratuity to the builder, who had certainly earned their gratitude.”<sup>7</sup>

The opening of the instrument was aided with a special choir that came down from Timaru and was under the direction of the Sacred Heart organist, Mrs N.D. Mangos née McGuinness.



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The instrument is tubular-pneumatic, and was originally powered by a hydraulic pump, located in one of the gallery side rooms. The hydraulic system was replaced with an electric blower in 1921.<sup>8</sup>

GREAT			SWELL	
Open Diapason I	8		Double Diapason	16
Open Diapason II	8	TC	Open Diapason	8
Clarabella	8		Rohr Flute	8
Dulciana	8		Viol d'Orchestra	8
Gemshorn	4		Celeste	8
Harmonic Flute	4	prepared for *	Gambette	4
Fifteenths	2	prepared for *	Flute	4
		†	Cornopean	8 prepared for *
			Oboe	8
			Tremulant	
COUPLERS			PEDAL	
Swell to Great			Open Diapason	16
Swell to Great Super			Bourdon	16
Swell to Pedal			Bass Flute	8
Great to Pedal				

Compass: 58/30

Action: Pneumatic

Balanced Swell Pedal

\* added 1996 by SIOC † ex Fincham & Hobday Curzon Street Presbyterian, North Melbourne

Apart for an overhaul by Matla & Son in 1966, the organ was untouched until it underwent a restoration by the South Island Organ Company in 1996. With the restoration went the addition of the prepared for stops using recycled pipework.

1 Hanrahan, M. J., Built in *Faith. Catholic Churches of the Christchurch Diocese Past and Present 1840 - 2010*, (Christchurch, 2012), pp. 216 – 220

2 Foley, John. *Grace and Majesty; the History of St. Patrick's Basilica Waimate 1909 – 2009* (Waimate, 2009), p.43. See also Brosnahan, Seán, *Thinking about Heaven, a history of the Sacred Heart parish, Timaru* (Timaru: Sacred Heart Basilica Centennial Book Committee, 2011), p. 121 for a discussion on the recollections of Margaret Petre.

3 Ibid., p.64.

4 Brosnahan, Seán, op.cit., p. 271

5 Foley, op.cit., chapters 21 -22

6 Ibid., chapters 27 - 29.

7 *Timaru Herald*, 6 September 1920, p.5.

8 Foley, op.cit., p.81.