

# **History of our School**

**Our School has a rich history that began back in 1942. At that time Port Hedland was made up of people from vastly different backgrounds, cultures and customs. There was a common dream by the people for the town to obtain a resident Priest and Catholic School for the education of their children.**

**This dream became a reality thanks to the determination of the local Aboriginal families of Clarke, Dann, Pianta, Murphy and Kelly with the assistance of Father Edward Bryan. They petitioned the Bishop of Geraldton and with his blessing in 1942 the Presentation Sisters arrived to begin our school.**

**Since then and to this very day Aboriginal people have had a long and happy association with St Cecilia's Catholic School. The foot prints are clearly visible.**



**On Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> July 1942, the three Sisters of the Presentation order in Northampton, arrived in Port Hedland. They were Mother Kevin Costello, Sister Carmel Mathews and Sister Concepta Canty. Life was very difficult and challenging for the Sisters in the early days.**

**The sisters worked tirelessly setting up their first school and only five days later on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 1942 teaching began. Their first convent was the C.W.A cottage on Richardson and Edgar Streets, which had been procured for them on a rental basis. The school was known as The Convent School of the Presentation Sisters.**

**By 1944 the school had moved to larger premises on the corner of Richardson and Wedge Street in Port Hedland. There was no air conditioning, gas or electricity and no running water, these were just some of the difficulties the Sisters faced in the early days.**

**By 1966, the school population had expanded so that both the Convent and School were moved to the present site on Sutherland Street in Port Hedland. In 1983, 4 Teacher Housing Units were constructed on the school grounds to accommodate single teachers.**



**In 1991, following requests by parents that St Cecilia's be expanded to include a secondary campus, BHP Iron Ore offered the Bishop their single men's quarters on Cooke Point, as a secondary school. The offer was accepted and renovations went ahead in November of that year.**

**In 2003, construction of a new primary school on the Sutherland Street site commenced. Existing school buildings built back in the 1960's by parishioners and families of the time, were progressively demolished and the new buildings you see today began to take shape.**

**The Secondary campus closed in December 2004 after thirteen years operation and St Cecilia's College became St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School. Today St Cecilia's caters for students from Kindergarten to Year Seven and can accommodate up to 278 students.**

**The School draws from the Parishes of Port and South Hedland with both Priests actively involved in the pastoral and spiritual dimension of the School. The Principal enjoys the support of a dedicated and committed School Board as well as a creative and energetic Parents and Friends Association.**

**The School is very proud of the many successes and initiatives that have been started. This is particularly true in the Performing Arts, the teaching of Aboriginal Studies, Physical Education and our Art Program.**

**St Cecilia's is an exciting learning environment with dedicated and enthusiastic staff and students. There is a distinctive and proactive Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy within the School. St Cecilia's values excellence and strives to be a school which encourages every child to reach their potential.**