

Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop

where the story of the Josephites continued

School House

Mary MacKillop and Father Julian Tenison Woods were deeply committed to the education of all children, regardless of wealth and social standing.

When their classes outgrew a small cottage, St Joseph's Church and a stable, this purpose-built school building was constructed. Work began in October 1866 and was completed in May 1867, with the building's simplicity reflecting the commitment of the Josephite Order to a life of humility and poverty.

Within weeks of the schoolhouse opening, Mary MacKillop boarded the steamship *SS Penola* for the journey to Adelaide, where she went on to establish the Cathedral Hall School and took her formal vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The Sisters of St Joseph continued her work in Penola, teaching and living in this schoolhouse off and on up until 1889.

When the new St Joseph's School (now the Mary MacKillop Memorial School) opened in 1936, the schoolhouse became a parish hall. In 1989, following a lengthy restoration process, it was re-dedicated as the Woods-MacKillop Schoolhouse by Archbishop Faulkner. The heritage-listed building now operates as a museum.



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Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop

nurturing a dream

Slab Homestead

Mary MacKillop celebrated her nineteenth birthday on 15 January 1861 in this slab homestead owned by Alexander Cameron, who was one of the first settlers in the district.

Her aunt Margaret (nee MacKillop) was Alexander's wife, and Mary had moved from Melbourne to work for the family as a governess. It was the Cameron family who introduced Mary to Father Julian Tenison Woods, the man who nurtured her dream to devote herself 'to poor children...in some very poor Order'.

The slab homestead originally overlooked a lagoon on Old Penola Estate, but was removed in 1970 by the Rymill family who had purchased the property in 1900.

Conscious of its significance to the local area, the family took detailed plans of the original building and numbered every section before storing it in pieces inside a woolshed for the next 40 years.

When Old Penola Estate was sold in late 2008, the Rymill family donated the slab homestead to the Catholic Church and the people of Penola. The building was reconstructed on this site to enable pilgrims and the wider community to gain a greater insight into Mary MacKillop's life, and celebrate an important link to the region's forebears.

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where the story of the Josephites began

Mary MacKillop Park

“Little did either of us dream of what was to spring from so small a beginning...” —Mary MacKillop, Sydney 1891

In 1866, when Mary MacKillop’s classes grew too big for the tiny St Joseph’s Church, some lessons were shifted to a six-stall stable formerly located on this site. The stable was owned by John McDonald, who was also the landlord of the cottage Mary rented with her younger sisters Annie and Lexie.

Mary’s brother, John MacKillop, converted the stable into a schoolroom, and it was here that the Cradle of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart began. The following year, the classes shifted to a purpose-built schoolhouse on the corner of Portland Street and Petticoat Lane.

The property remained in the McDonald family up until 23 December 1925, when ownership was transferred to The Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart South Australia Inc. It is understood that the stable had been demolished prior to the transfer of the land.

Since the early 1970s, this tranquil site has been enjoyed as a public memorial garden.



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building on a dream

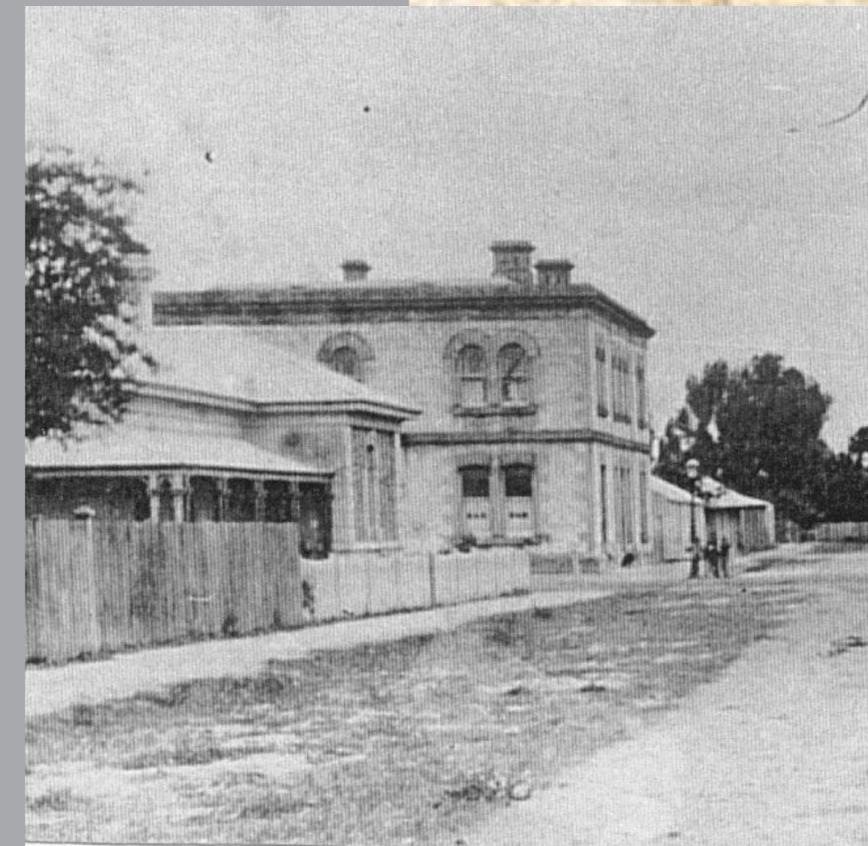
Royal Oak Hotel

Penola's founder, Alexander Cameron, opened the Royal Oak Hotel in 1848 with one of the earliest hotel licences in South Australia.

The word Penola was the local Pinchunga Aboriginal name for 'wooden house', which was the term used for the original building located at the rear of the current two-storey hotel built in 1872.

Alexander Cameron and his wife Margaret (nee MacKillop) had moved to the district 16 years earlier to establish grazing land. The couple hired their niece, Mary MacKillop, to work as a governess for their children, and Mary arrived in Penola in 1860 at the age of 18.

After briefly returning to her family in Melbourne, Mary MacKillop then travelled to Portland in April 1862 where she worked as a governess and teacher. She returned to Penola in 1866 with her sister Lexie, and met up with another sister, Annie, at the Royal Oak Hotel, which at the time was being managed by their uncle Donald MacDonald. The three MacKillop girls then rented Winella Cottage, which was formerly located in a paddock on the western fringe of the town.



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Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop

a land rich with inspiration

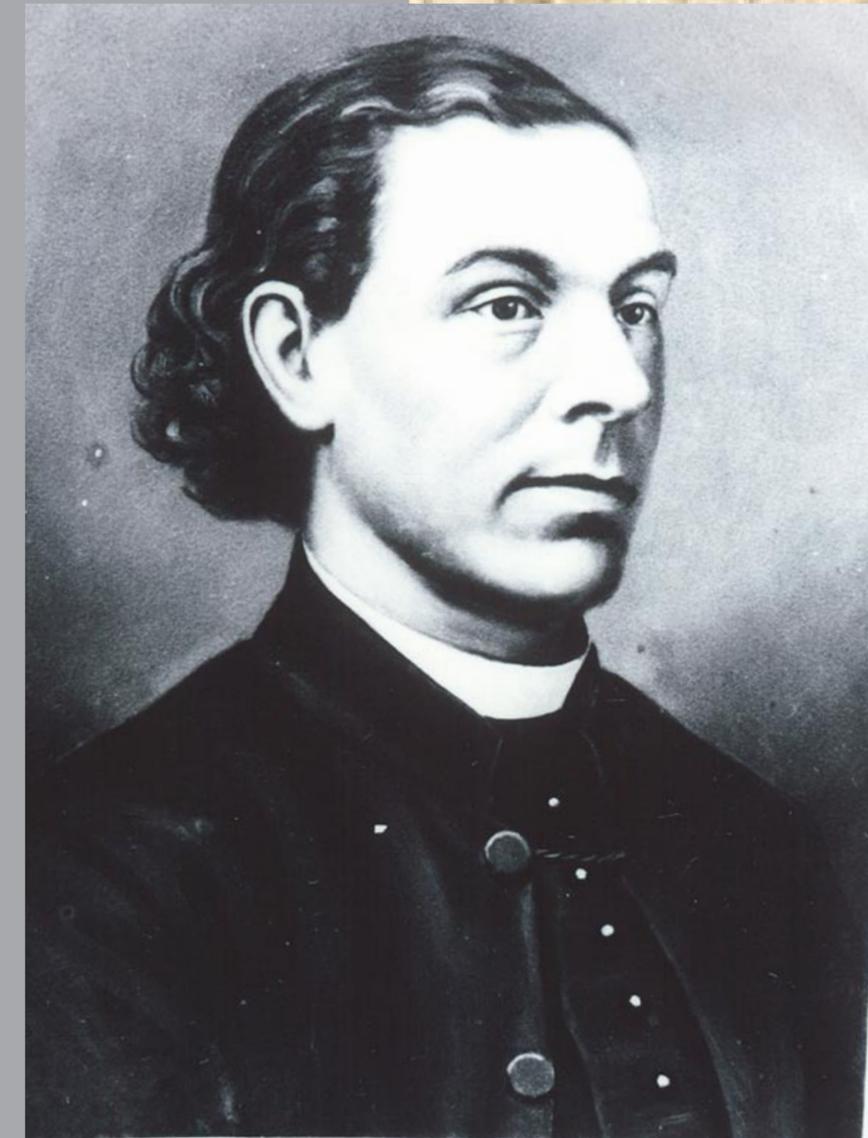
Father Woods Tree / Father Woods Park

Mary MacKillop first met Father Julian Tenison Woods while working in Penola as a governess for her Uncle Alexander Cameron and Aunt Margaret (nee MacKillop).

It was Father Woods who inspired Mary's devotion to the education of all children regardless of wealth and social standing, and in 1866, they co-founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

In his role as parish priest of the south-eastern district of South Australia, Father Woods was able to combine his devotion to God's work with his interest in science and nature.

This area of land on the original Limestone Ridge Station was a favourite stop-over during his travels across his parish, and he could often be found preparing sermons, celebrating Mass and rejoicing in the splendour of his natural surrounds beneath the shelter of the towering River Red Gums.



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the journey continues

Port MacDonnell Jetty

On 21 June 1867, Mary MacKillop began the next chapter in her journey to sainthood at Port MacDonnell jetty.

The 25 year old was Adelaide-bound after accepting an invitation from Father Julian Tenison Woods to move to the city to help expand their revolutionary Catholic teaching principles beyond the south-east of South Australia.

Arriving from Penola in a buggy driven by her Uncle Donald MacDonald, she boarded a small lighter which took her to the steamship SS *Penola* anchored around 100 metres offshore. At the time, Port MacDonnell was the state's second busiest port, shipping wheat and wool from the local area to destinations around the world.

The bustling crowds on the jetty would have been oblivious to the life-long journey which lay ahead for one particular passenger dressed in a simple black dress, yet the significance of that journey is now steeped in history.

After arriving at Port Adelaide, Mary MacKillop went on to establish the Cathedral Hall School. On 15 August 1867, she became Sister Mary of the Cross after taking her formal vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

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a commitment to education

Our Lady Star of the Sea Church

In March 1857, Father Julian Tenison Woods arrived in Robe on board the steamer SS Boomerang to take up his new position as parish priest of the south-eastern district of South Australia.

The parish covered 56,000 square kilometres of bushland, and Our Lady Star of the Sea Church was built in 1858 to host Mass and provide sparse lodgings for the travelling minister.

Father Woods had a vision of founding a religious order of women devoted to the education of disadvantaged children in this region, and his vision was realised when he co-founded the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Penola with his close friend Mary MacKillop. The

Josephite Sisters set up a school inside this church in 1868 and continued until 1882, living in the sacristy and teaching lessons in the body of the Church. Mary MacKillop was a source of strength and inspiration to her religious Sisters during her regular visits, and the Josephites quickly established themselves in the hearts of the local people.



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