

YOU WERE ASKING ABOUT MULLUMBIMBY PARISH

St John's Mullumbimby Catholic Parish is situated in the beautiful Brunswick Valley, NSW, just 15 minutes north of the neighbouring Parish of Byron Bay and 25 minutes south/east of Murwillumbah Parish.

The Brunswick River runs past the St John's School and Church in Mullumbimby and enters the sea at Brunswick Heads.

Parishioners reside in the townships of Mullumbimby and Ocean Shores and the surrounding villages of Brunswick Heads, Bayside, Billinudgel, New Brighton, South Golden Beach, Fem Beach, The Pocket, Yelgun and Main Arm.

St John's Catholic Heritage

In the early days of Mullumbimby, settlers dotted the green countryside with their dairy farms and banana plantations beneath the shadow of Mt Chincogan.

There were no resident priests and the Eucharist had to be celebrated by a visiting priest in a room at the Railway Hotel.

The Sisters of St Joseph were the first Religious Order to reside in the area, arriving in the district during in the early

1900's. Provisions were made to build a convent (circa 1911) in Mullumbimby and later in Brunswick Heads (circa 1935). This allowed the Sisters to establish education facilities and provide pastoral care to the local community.

The foundation stone of the Roman Catholic Church, Mullumbimby was laid on May 12, 1906, by the late Bishop Doyle. At this particular point in time, Dean Welsh was in charge of the district. It is interesting to note that there was no bridge across the Brunswick River during the early days and Mass times had to coincide with the tide. Parishioners crossed the river by foot or in their horse-drawn buggies at low tide.

The Parish acknowledges the work of the Priests and Religious throughout its 100 year Catholic heritage. Their pastoral work and spiritual guidance paved the way in establishing and nurturing a faith-filled local community.

A record of the history of St John's Catholic Parish was presented to the Diocesan Office in Lismore on September 20th, 1987 during the Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated at St Carthages' Cathedral. This Mass formed part of the centenary celebrations for the Diocese of Lismore and was attended by parishioners from throughout the diocese. The historical timeline contained within the "*History of St John's Parish*"



Interior of St. John's Church, Mullumbimby

document outlined the work undertaken by the Parish to maintain a presence within the wider community.

St John's Catholic Parish looks forward to celebrating its own centenary in 2017.

The first Parish Priest at St John's was Fr Richard 'Dick' Williams who arrived in the Parish in 1917 and was responsible for building the School, Convent and Presbytery.

At present, a presentation folder is being compiled covering the history of the parish and will include the following photographic images of past buildings; The Original Catholic Church (1906), The Original Convent (1911), The Original School Building (1912), Bell Tower (circa 1912), Parish Presbytery (1920), The 2nd Convent (1920), The Convent Grotto, The new Church (1974), Brunswick Heads Church & Convent (Our Lady of Lourdes 1936) and Billinudgel Church 1935 (now closed).

Other photos being collected from parishioners will showcase various aspects of parish life throughout its 100 year history. A similar task was undertaken in 2010 with the publication of the St John's School Centenary Booklet compiled when the school celebrated 100 years of Catholic Education in the Brunswick Valley. Centenary celebrations for St John's Primary School, Mullumbimby, took place on June 12th & 13th, 2010.

Over the weekend, ex-pupils and parishioners were treated to a display of memorabilia with photos dating back to 1907. Other items on display included class programs written by teachers, student work samples, uniforms, school bags, posters and school photos from each decade dating back to 1911.

A Centenary Booklet entitled "A Walk Back Through Time" was produced for the special event. It contains over two hundred photographs along with a comprehensive history of the school and personal stories from ex-students, Sisters of St Joseph, ex-principals, parents and priests.

Parish Pastoral Council caring for the pastoral needs of the Parish. The establishment of the St John's Parish Pastoral Council has given great assistance in dealing with the workload of the Parish Priest and the Religious Pastoral Associate. Pastoral Councils were strongly recommended by the Bishops of the Second Vatican Council to further the work of the Church by fostering the spiritual growth of parishioners, leading them to respond actively to their universal call to mission.

The Pastoral Council and the Finance Council will work to create a unified vision for the Parish of St John's Mullumbimby. The vision will move the Church to become proactive in providing for the families of the Parish Community entrusted to their care.

One of the recent events initiated by the Parish Pastoral Council was to facilitate a parish dinner at the Mullumbimby Ex-Servicemen's Club with guest speaker, Deacon Gary Stone from the Veteran's Care Ministry. Gary shared with the parishioners his life story which has been captured in his book 'Duntroon to Dill'. His Ministry now involves caring for the well-being of Veterans who struggle with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Parishioners were encouraged to pray for Gary's Ministry and gained greater awareness of the personal trauma experienced by so many individuals affected by war.

Support for families in Vanuatu affected by Cyclone Pam in 2015 St John's Parish raised much-needed funds and became involved in the Re-build Vanuatu Project. The project involved collecting funds for the villages in the North of Efate, Vanuatu to deal with the lack of food and medical supplies caused by the Cyclone Pam. A container of supplies was also sent to Vanuatu



A village in Vanuatu saying thanks for the support. St John's Parish & School, Mullumbimby, sent items and funds over after Cyclone Pam destroyed their village in 2015



Parish Priest Fr Lyall Cowell saying Mass at St John's Church, Mullumbimby



Principal Mr Tim Bleakley with students from St John's Primary School, Mullumbimby



*Our Lady of Lourdes Church
Brunswick Heads*

to assist in the rebuilding process. Many thanks to Viv Pike & Mary Ashton and the St John's Parish Community for making this possible. Previously, teachers from St John's Primary School have personally delivered clothing and school supplies to the families in the villages. The project will be long term and the need to help our neighbours in the South Pacific will become a great outreach from the Parish Community of the Brunswick Valley.

Sr Maureen Celebrates 40 years as a Sister of St Joseph. Sr Maureen McDermott rsj, the Pastoral Associate in the Parish, celebrates 40 years of Religious Life this year. The Parish community joined Sr Maureen at a special Mass and morning tea held on Feb 7, 2016. At this Mass, Sr Maureen renewed her Religious Vows and shared some of her thoughts on the 'Year of Consecrated Life'. It was noted that the Sisters of St Joseph have an unbroken record of service to the Parish since 1908, which has been very much appreciated by the parishioners and the extended local community.

Visitation by the Sisters of the Immaculata in May 2016 will bring a blessing to the Parish. Three Sisters will visit the Brunswick Valley in May this year to share their experiences and spiritual guidance with the local community; with special emphasis on interacting with the youth.

Parish Finance Council to formulate a budget to make the vision a reality. The Parish will introduce a Planned Giving Program in July/August to provide a platform to finance a new Parish Vision.

Parish Website and Event Planning

Please visit the website for more information about the Catholic Community of the Brunswick Valley www.mullumbimbycatholic.com.au

Parish Infrastructure Profile:

Mullumbimby Presbytery (1920) & Administration Office, St John's Catholic Church (1974), St John's Primary School (1912), St John's School Hall, Pastoral Associate House, Former St Joseph's Convent (1920), Brunswick Heads, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church (1936)

Current Mass & Prayer times:

Week end Mass:

Brunswick Heads – Saturday Vigil – 6.00pm;

Mullumbimby – Sunday 8.00am

Week day Mass:

Mullumbimby Wednesday 9.30am

Brunswick Heads Thursday 5.30pm

Eucharistic Adoration:

Mullumbimby – Wednesday 10.15am – 11.15am

Reconciliation: Sunday 7.30am before Mass

Contact Information: Parish Office:

15 Murwillumbah Rd, Mullumbimby, NSW 2482

Postal: PO Box 27, Mullumbimby, NSW 2482 Australia

Email: mullumbimby@lismore.catholic.org.au

Web: www.mullumbimbycatholic.com.au

Phone: 02 6684 2106 **Priest:** Fr Lyall Cowell **Pastoral**

Associate: Sr Maureen McDermott rsj

Parish Secretary: Michelle Davies

Office hours: Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 2pm



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