

**ADDRESS TO THE ANGLICANS TOGETHER DINNER,
Sydney - 20 November 2009**

**“Sydney and Melbourne Anglicans from 1836 to 2009:
Historical and personal reflections “ Bishop Barbara Darling,
Diocese of Melbourne**

Thank you for your invitation to be here this evening. It is always a joy to come back to the city where I was born and grew up, and to see the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House out of the window of the plane when we are landing. It is not so much of a joy to know that my clerical orders of priest and bishop have to be left over the border and picked up again when I return to Melbourne – or go to Canberra /Goulburn or Newcastle! But that is all part of the reflection I would like to give this evening – looking at developments in Sydney Diocese and Melbourne Diocese both historically and personally.

I would like you to come with me on a journey – as a lover of history and a lecturer in that subject I am fascinated by how the past has moulded us and shaped us, and helped to make us the people and the institutions we are today. I have decided to look at our past every twenty years or so, and see what was significant at that time, and how that links in with us today as members of the two largest Anglican Dioceses in Australia – Dioceses that developed very differently.

So let's start with **1836** – and you will see why in a moment.

William Grant Broughton, Archdeacon of NSW and responsible to the Bishop of Calcutta, had travelled to England to seek help in the establishing of the Church of England in the colony of NSW. This led to an unexpected outcome as he was made the first and only Bishop of Australia and was consecrated in London before returning to Sydney in 1836. By that time Sydney had been settled for just under 50 years and was now a sizeable community with free settlers, emancipists and convicts. During Governor Macquarie's time from 1810 -20 the first of the more permanent public buildings, including churches, had been built there and in surrounding townships and the colony was developing and expanding. The early chaplains had been provided and supported by those in England, mostly of Evangelical persuasion.

In 1836 the tiny township of Melbourne had just been settled by John Batman, John Pascoe Fawkner and others on the banks of the Yarra River just below the falls, near present day Queens St. The first church service had been taken by Fawkner reading prayers for the Book of Common Prayer to his household. The numbers of settlers increased quickly and began to move to other parts of the Port Philip Colony.

By 1856 there was a very different situation in both Sydney and Melbourne. Gold was discovered in 1851, first in Bathurst in NSW and then in Ballarat, Bendigo and surrounding areas in what was now known as the colony of Victoria. Suddenly people from the UK and America were prepared and willing to make the long and arduous sea voyage out to try and make their fortune on the goldfields. Melbourne was transformed with its population trebling in 10 years.

By this time the church structure had also grown and developed. In 1842 Tasmania had become a separate diocese; then in 1847, thanks to the British Colonial Bishopric Endowment Fund, three new dioceses were carved out of the enormous Diocese of Australia. Charles Perry was consecrated first Bishop of Melbourne, Augustus Short for Adelaide, and William Tyrell for Newcastle. Broughton became Bishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of Australasia. Charles and Frances Perry arrived in Melbourne in January 1848 and began using St James as their cathedral – this was later moved to its present position near the Flagstaff Gardens and is now known as St James' Old Cathedral.

In 1850 the Australian bishops plus Selwyn, the sole New Zealand bishop, met in a bishops' conference in Sydney. This led to deep theological discussions with Broughton, Short and Tyrell all Broad church or High church sympathies and Perry the sole Evangelical, trained at Cambridge University. This meeting also led to the formation of the Australian Board of Missions or ABM – leading on to missionary work, especially in New Guinea.

By 1856 Perry had begun to meet with his leading lay men in his church Synod, which was a novelty in those days. The Church of England Act was passed by the new Victorian Legislative Council in 1854 and Melbourne was now a fully fledged city, thanks to having its own bishop. Clergy were trained in the UK – still known as Home – and committees there sought to support the church in the colonies and to find suitable clergy. This was very significant as the friends and previous school and university contacts of the bishop usually shared his theological and other views re the church and his role. This affected how each diocese developed.

By 1876 times had changed yet again. The impact of the Oxford Movement on theology and liturgy and of Darwin's book and theory on the *Origin of the Species* was felt even in Sydney and Melbourne. Thomas Moore's gift to Sydney diocese of his country house near Liverpool led to the establishment of Moore College as a theological college - later moved to its present position in Newtown in the inner city. This college and particularly its Principals have had a crucial bearing on the development of Sydney diocese and its theological emphasis.

By this time, Bishop Perry had left Melbourne and returned home to England, where in retirement he helped found the evangelical theological college of Ridley Hall in Cambridge. Perry had been influential in the development of Melbourne University in the 1850s (a couple of years after Sydney University). Both of these universities had far more secular bases than the English universities, but they did both allow for the building of residential colleges by the four main denominations – Church of England (the largest), Presbyterian, Methodist and Roman Catholic. This had led to the foundation of Trinity College in Melbourne in 1872. By this stage it was a university college but as yet it had no theological students. Perry sent his students back to England or to Moore College after 1860.

Meanwhile Frederic Barker had succeeded Broughton as Bishop of Sydney in 1854 and served as such for 27 years until his death in 1882. His firm Evangelical persuasion led him to finding clergy with the same outlook and to beginning the preference in the Sydney diocese for strongly evangelical leadership. In 1872 the Church of England had held its first General Synod in Australia and was working out whether the Provincial Synod in each state was more important than the individual diocese – again it was significant that the primacy of the individual diocese was resolved in both Sydney and Melbourne.

By 1896 Sydney and Melbourne were both greatly affected by the Depression that caused land prices to fall rapidly, banks to fail and unemployment to soar. The Church of England sought to reach out to those in need, particularly because there was no government social welfare scheme yet developed. Sister Esther in 1888 had begun the Mission to Streets and Lanes in Melbourne and this was to develop later to the forming of the Community of the Holy Name, despite initial resistance to such religious organisations within the Church of England (as a conservative reaction to the more catholic stream of the church). Bishop Moorhouse in Melbourne from 1876 to 1886 had engaged energetically and with powerful preaching and speaking on issues of the day, including science and religion e.g. He had drawn several thousand people to the Town Hall for a two hour lecture on science and religion. By 1896 Moorhouse had become the Bishop of Manchester and had been replaced as Bishop of Melbourne by Field Flowers Goe. The tyranny of distance was a factor in both

cities – when bishops returned to England for the newly instituted Lambeth Conferences or for a visit, it could be a year before they returned. If they decided to retire while over there, it could be three years from the time of their departure till the election, preparation and arrival of a new bishop.

The Dioceses continued to divide as population grew. In NSW, the diocese of Newcastle had already been formed; Goulburn was created in 1863 and Bathurst in 1869, with the Riverina in 1884 and a combined Armidale and Grafton diocese in 1867 – this was divided further later on. In Victoria, Ballarat was formed in 1875.

Let's move on to 1916. By this time the states had agreed after several referenda to come together as a Federation in 1901, with Melbourne the centre of the tiny Federal government until the new city of Canberra in the separate Australian Capital Territory was developed 26 years later. Then came the outbreak of the Great War in Europe and the corresponding involvement of Australia and New Zealand. 1915 had seen the ANZAC troops land at Gallipoli and remain there in the trenches, despite great opposition. What was a defeat which led months later to a retreat, enabled the Anzacs to come together and show their distinctive traits of courage, egalitarianism and mateship. Church of England bishops in both Sydney and Melbourne supported the call for conscription – and were opposed strongly by the Catholic bishop Daniel Mannix in Melbourne. (Partly England vs. Ireland at work here).

By 1916 two theological colleges existed in Melbourne - Trinity College for graduates and the new Ridley College for non graduates and those of more evangelical churchmanship. Like many other organisations they were affected by the war efforts and men enlisting in the Army. Lowther Clarke was the Archbishop in Melbourne – his title had changed after the Diocese was divided further in 1902 with the formation of the dioceses of Bendigo, Gippsland and Wangaratta. Likewise Sydney, too, had become an Archdiocese and the Archbishop of Sydney became Primate of Australia in 1882 following the decision of General Synod.

By 1936 the whole world was in the throes of the Great Depression. The churches in both Sydney and Melbourne sought to help those in need, with soup kitchens and handouts. By this stage various church organisations had developed – in Melbourne this included the Mission of St James and St John and the Mission to Streets and Lanes, with Brother Bill at Fitzroy and Father Tucker also at Fitzroy with the small beginnings of the Brotherhood of St Laurence. The Church of England was still the dominant church in both states and part of the establishment with several key influential Anglican private schools for boys and girls in each city.

In Sydney this marked the beginning of a very important partnership – with Howard Mowll as Archbishop for 25 years from 1934, and T C Hammond the dynamic Irish born Principal of Moore College for nearly 20 years. Their strong leadership ensured the dominance of the conservative evangelical viewpoint in the diocese of Sydney.

The highlight of 1956 was the staging of the Olympic Games in Melbourne. All Sydney could do was read about them, watch the newsreels or read the Women's Weekly (I remember as a young schoolgirl making a scrapbook from the Women's Weekly highlighting our wonderful swimmers and athletes). Some people in Sydney were fortunate to watch some of the Games on a brand new television set, or travelled the long journey down and became spectators in Melbourne. Australia grew of age and on the world stage through the Olympics.

This was linked with the growth in population after World War 2 and the generation of baby boomers – of which I am one and I suspect many of you may be too. In both Sydney and Melbourne churches were growing and new churches were being built as population spread. This was near the end of the long period of strong evangelical

leadership by Howard Mowl as Archbishop of Sydney for 25 years from 1934 to 1958. I grew up at St Alban's Epping in Sydney in the 1950s and we had over 600 children in our Sunday School, with various departments squeezed in all around the church property until the War memorial Hall was finished in 1959. This was the era when even if parents didn't come to church very often, it was expected that the children would go and learn both Christian teaching and ethical behaviour. We had 96 girls and boys aged 13 and 14 confirmed together in 1961, but undoubtedly in many cases including ours, this became a passing out parade and an excuse to stop attending church – a year later less than 10 of us were still actively involved from my group. Some of us went on to Sunday school training and teaching. I was a product of my local church but also went to Camp Howard, run by the Anglican Youth Department, and attended Inter School Christian Fellowship at high school. Then I became a leader at a Scripture Union Pioneer Camp for some eight years and also joined the Evangelical Union or EU at Sydney University. Other students joined the more liberal SCM or Students' Christian Movement.

This time also marked the beginnings of European immigration to both capital cities from non British countries, especially Italy and Greece. Melbourne became and still is the third largest Greek speaking city in the world. The Roman Catholic Church gradually became the largest denomination in Australia. This was partly because of immigration and larger families; but also it was due to declining numbers of people who claimed to be Church of England – some before were only very nominal – often truly C and E from the notion of being only Christmas and Easter attendees.

The other very significant event that was to impact on the church in both Sydney and Melbourne was to come a couple of years later in 1959 with the first and incredibly successful Billy Graham crusade – packing the major sporting grounds in both cities and speaking many times in each place to enthusiastic audiences, some of whom like your present Archbishop Peter Jensen came night after night. The careful organisation and follow up by local churches of all denominations meant that the impact continued and was seen in growing local churches. It was also felt years later when people converted at the Crusades offered to be ordained and went on to become leaders in the church – again like Archbishop Peter. It is interesting that this had significant impact on both cities – I suspect in Melbourne that it was restricted to the more evangelical Anglican churches and those from other denominations.

And now to 1976

The Church of England in Australia was still struggling to work out its own constitution and to think more nationally. There have always been distinctive backgrounds and approaches by individual dioceses. It was not until 1981 that the constitution was finally approved and we became the Anglican Church of Australia. It is interesting that today when visiting people in hospitals or nursing homes, many still say they are C of E, not Anglican, and that change was nearly 30 years ago!

This era marked the beginnings of liturgical change – both in Australia and in other parts of the Anglican Church. The General Synod liturgical committee produced experimental liturgies such as *Australia 1969* and this led in 1978 to the first distinctive Australian Anglican prayer book - AAPB or *An Australian Prayer Book*. This was always meant to be used alongside the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. Linked with the new liturgies was the increased participation by laity – both men and women – with intercessions, Bible readings and distribution of Communion as well as welcomers and side's duty and membership of vestry for both men and later for women. During this period in Melbourne in particular there was a decline in the deaconess order linked with the beginnings of debates about women and ordination. There was an increase in the number of people involved in sector ministry – including school, hospital and welfare chaplains, and university and ITIM chaplains.

There was a continuing influence of the teachings of the three different theological colleges - Moore College in Sydney and Trinity and Ridley in Melbourne. Moore

College trained people and their staff moved into positions of influence as bishops and archbishops in Sydney – particularly Marcus Loane, Donald Robinson and Peter Jensen. At this time it became more common in both dioceses for Australian archbishops to be appointed rather than British – e.g. Robert Dann after Sir Frank Woods.

There was also increasing ecumenical involvement including a strengthening in relationship with the Roman Catholic Church following the Vatican 2 discussions and the renewal in various ways of the Catholic Church. The charismatic movement also crossed denominational boundaries and was fairly strong at this time. In 1977 the Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist churches came together as the Uniting Church.

To recent times - 1996

During this period the church was engaged in discussions on the issue of women's ordination. After many years of General Synod debates and final approval, deaconing for women began in Melbourne and other dioceses, and later in Sydney in 1989. Priesting for women was passed by General Synod eventually in 1992, for those Dioceses who voted in favour, and by the end of that year 33 of us "ladies in waiting" in Melbourne had been ordained priests, with a total of 92 women priests in the whole of Australia by the end of 1992. Some, like me, had been in charge of parishes for several years, and we had had male priests coming to celebrate communion while we continued to preach and teach, and to take weddings, baptisms and funerals.

Episcopal leadership was significant in this debate both here and overseas. The dynamic New Zealand priest David Penman, a liberal evangelical, became Archbishop of Melbourne in 1984 and was significant in this debate and in the whole area of mission, cross cultural ministry and church growth, until his heart attack and untimely death in 1989 – just on 20 years ago.

This led in 1990 to the election of Keith Rayner as Archbishop of Melbourne, coming from a more catholic tradition. He was a wise statesman and historian, cautious but not afraid to speak out when his mind was made up – e.g. his synod charge in early 1990s re women's ordination when he methodically put up all the arguments against women's ordination and carefully answered them and explained why he could support such a move. This led to some people who had been unsure voting for the proposed legislation. Meanwhile in Sydney the leadership was united in opposition to the priesting of women and the exercising of headship by them, although their deaconing and teaching of women and children was seen as permissible.

During this time there was more liturgical change – and the new book *A Prayer Book for Australia* or APBA was published in 1995. This appears to have been more widely accepted in Melbourne than in Sydney, where people were using BCP, AAPB or cards with an abbreviated service, or the beginnings of overhead projector or Power Point in a more visual way.

That brings us up to the present, to **2009** – while acknowledging that it is always dangerous to comment on the present situation!

Leadership in both dioceses has been significant. Like Donald Robinson, Peter Jensen became Archbishop after serving as Principal at Moore College. Archbishop Jensen has a strong emphasis on conservative and evangelical theology and an interest in the wider church; including the GAFCON conference and the Jerusalem declaration last year, plus his ongoing involvement with the Global South through his link with some African bishops.

There have been tensions world wide re some recent Episcopal Church actions. There were also tensions at Lambeth Conference in 2008 – when a significant minority of Bishops stayed away or went to GAFCON at Jerusalem instead. Two main areas of tension have emerged – the consecration of women bishops and the attitude to the leadership and involvement in the church of people of homosexual orientation and practice.

Last year women were consecrated as bishops in Australia in two dioceses with Kay Goldsworthy in Perth and me in Melbourne. This highlights the difference in attitude to women's ministry in Sydney and Melbourne, where women are not recognised as priests or bishops. Melbourne's Archbishops including the current Archbishop Philip Freier have been consistently supportive of women's ministry, both lay and ordained. At the same time, Archbishop Philip has endeavoured to care pastorally for the very few clergy and lay people who find the appointment of a woman bishop difficult.

In the other area of recent controversy, Archbishop Philip and a majority of clergy and laity in the Melbourne Diocese support the position upheld by the Anglican Communion at the 1998 Lambeth Conference of ratifying their Resolution 1.10 and the Windsor Report. This includes accepting and welcoming people of various sexual orientations, but agreeing not to ordain as Anglican priests or bishops those people who are living in an active homosexual relationship. Others in Melbourne hold different views – some more conservative and others far more liberal - reflecting the various traditions and churchmanship that coexist in Melbourne diocese and have done so for many years.

Liturgically, there have been more informal services in both cities with PowerPoint and bands and no liturgical garments, rather than traditional Anglican liturgy and vesture. There is a mixture of this in Melbourne that I am discovering as I go around the Eastern Region. I believe it is more the case in Sydney, but have no statistics to prove this.

The last twenty years have seen the influence of people like Dawkins with his “God is dead” theory and the liberal ideas of John Shelby Spong from USA and Francis McNab at the Independent church in Melbourne just up the road from the cathedral. We have also seen young people now dubbed Gen X and Gen Y sit far more lightly with denominational loyalty, preferring to go to a place of worship which meets their criteria, whether that is the theology expressed, the style and content of preaching, use of music, visual versus book, or often significantly the presence of a critical number of other young people. There has been a decline in numbers in the Anglican Church in most places in Australia, including Melbourne, but not as much in Sydney – where there has been a far greater emphasis, interest and investment in evangelism and church planting.

As we come to the end of our overview of Sydney and Melbourne Dioceses, various trends have emerged. We have seen:

Their different background and history – both when they were founded and how this developed;

Their different training institutions – with Moore, Trinity and Ridley Colleges all vital to the development of the dioceses;

The impact of different leaders, including Bishops and Archbishops William Grant Broughton, Frederic Barker, Howard Mowll, Marcus Loane, Don Robinson, Harry Goodhew and Peter Jensen in Sydney and Perry, Moorhouse, Lowther Clarke, Frank Woods, Robert Dann, David Penman, Keith Rayner, Peter Watson and Philip Freier in Melbourne;

The vital importance of the leaders' churchmanship and those they accepted and trained as clergy;

The different traditions and culture in the composition of each city as well as each Diocese;

The different attitudes to women in ministry – reflecting different hermeneutics or interpretation of Scripture;

The greater diversity of people and parishes in Melbourne - more open to variation – and yet not always comfortable with those of varying views;

Different endowments and strengths of each Diocese (until recently, when Sydney lost a considerably greater portion of its endowments in the recent economic crisis);

You as Sydneysiders are a part of a strong Diocese with firm beliefs and a desire to reach out to others – but also with an expectation and approach to theological truths from a Reformed perspective. I understand that many of you here this evening may not necessarily see eye to eye with Diocesan leaders on various aspects of church polity, and yet we are all members of the body of Christ and need to be able where possible to understand and accept each other, and hopefully to respect each other. I urge you to remain within the Church here, not to become despondent or cynical, but to look beyond the Sydney scene to those in other dioceses, and to go back to your roots to the willingness and enthusiasm of some of the early pilgrims here.

Those in Melbourne can learn from the energy and vision, church planting & multicultural ministry of many Sydney friends. Queen Elizabeth I in the sixteenth century sought to make the Church both Catholic and Reformed as part of what is called the Elizabethan Settlement. May we take what is positive from our history and benefit from that, and what has been difficult in our history and learn from that. And so may we continue to be faithful to our Lord and to his church as we continue as pilgrims together, encouraging each other.