

Lochinvar Founding Sisters

Sister Ambrose Joseph, born Annie Dirkin in Ireland but raised in Australia, was the Sister Guardian (leader) of the community. Annie had met Father Woods on his missionary travels around Forbes in 1880, entered the Sisters of St Joseph at Perthville, was professed in 1882 and at the age of twenty-four left Bathurst to make the foundation at Lochinvar. She was Sister Guardian till 1890. In 1893 she transferred to the Tasmanian congregation where she was widely recognised as a gifted musician and in 1898 she was elected Sister Guardian till 1904. She visited Lochinvar in 1914 and 1933. She died in 1948 and is buried in Cornelia Bay, Hobart.



Sister Imelda Flood was born Catherine Flood, the eldest child of Thomas Flood and Julia Cullen in Blayney, central New South Wales in 1862. She entered the Sisters of St Joseph at Perthville in 1881, was professed in January 1883 and later that year she left Perthville to make the foundation at Lochinvar. There she taught the junior classes in the school till she was appointed sister in charge firstly of the new foundations at Quirindi in 1885 and Burwood in Newcastle in 1888. In June 1890 Sr Imelda was appointed Sister Guardian till June 1893. During her term as leader she courageously initiated a building program to provide an adequate and substantial Mother House for the congregation. After resigning as Sister Guardian she went to Burwood and later to Largs. She was appointed congregational bursar in 1899. Her health began to fail and she was confined to the infirmary. She died in February 1900 at the age of thirty-seven.



Sister Aloysius Cahill was born in County Roscoe, Ireland in 1861, the daughter of John Cahill and Anne Emerson. She came to Australia to visit her brother who had settled in Brisbane and while there she met Father Woods. Through his influence entered the Sisters of St Joseph at Perthville in January 1882. In August 1883 she left with the Sisters for Lochinvar. In 1885 at the age of twenty-three she went as Sister in charge to Merriwa, the first branch house made from Lochinvar, accompanied by two novices. As well as being a thorough and dedicated teacher, she was very active among the people in the many parishes where she lived. Despite illness and many infirmities she lived a long life, and died at Lochinvar in June 1947.



Sister Baptist Dugan was born Mary Anne Dugan in 1846, the daughter of John Dugan and Mary Bowen. She entered the newly established Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph at Perthville in 1877 and was professed in December 1878. Aged thirty-seven she was the oldest of the four Sisters who came to make the foundation at Lochinvar in 1883. Her first years were spent at Lochinvar where she was active amongst the people of the district as well as in the convent and school. In 1889 she was appointed Sister Assistant by Sister Ambrose Joseph and was reappointed in 1890 when Sister Imelda became Sister Guardian. She was appointed to Glendonbrook and Wybong where she junior classes travelling by buggy each day to school for ten years to Upper Wybong. She returned to Glendonbrook to continue her work till her retirement in 1917. She visited the branch houses frequently till her death after a short illness in June 1921.

