

Adelaide Diocese celebrates 175 years

The Anglican Diocese of Adelaide celebrates its 175th birthday today. It was formed by Letters Patent on 25 June 1847 which also created the Dioceses of Sydney, Melbourne, and Newcastle.

Initially, the Adelaide diocese included Western Australia and South Australia. It divided into other diocese as time went on: Perth (1857), Bunbury (1904), North West Australia (1904), Kalgoorlie (1914-1973), Willochra (1915), and The Murray (1970). Northern Territory passed from Adelaide into Carpentaria in 1900.

Adealideâ??s first bishop was Augustus Short (1847 to 1882) who was consecrated in Westminster Abbey on 29 June â?? St Peterâ??s Day.

â??Two months later he set sail for Adelaide on board the Derwent with his wife Millicent, their five children, and an entourage of at least two governesses, four servants, and three clergymen who had volunteered to come to the colony with him,â?• the South Australian State Library records.

Short was installed as Bishop of Adelaide in a service in the colonyâ??s oldest church, Holy Trinity, on 28 December 1847 â?? the 11th anniversary of the proclamation of the colony.

Trinity Church, 1849 Courtesy of/Photographer: Penman & Co. (after ST Gill)
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Augustus Shortâ??s entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* describes him as a High Churchman who clashed frequently with his predominantly Evangelical flock, as well as the colonyâ??s predominant Nonconformist population.

But Short took a strong interest in the Aboriginal population, the Library says. Archdeacon Matthew Hale and he established Poonindie Mission near Port Lincoln.

â??He was passionate about education, becoming the first Vice-Chancellor of the Adelaide University, and purchasing land to establish St Peterâ??s College.

In 1855, Short created a system of diocesan self-government through a synod.

â??The Diocese of Adelaide, together with the Diocese of Willochra, to the north and west, and the Diocese of the Murray to the south and east forms the Province of South Australia, of which the Archbishop of Adelaide is the head,â?• the SLSA notes.

â??A number of childrenâ??s Homes in South Australia were run by independent committees that reported annually to the Diocese of Adelaide. The Diocesan Archives Centre holds records relating to many of these Homes.â?•

On his retirement in 1881, Bishop Short, his wife and daughter Isabella, returned to England where he died at Eastbourne in 1883.

The Diocese of Adelaide will be celebrating the anniversary over the coming months, including during a visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury from 7-9 October.

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