

History of St Stanislaus College, Georgetown, Guyana

St. Stanislaus College began as a Roman Catholic school run by the Jesuits. In fact, it was a Catholic school for one hundred and ten years, until it was taken over by the Government.

May 1st, 1866

The Catholic Grammar School was opened. It was situated in the Presbytery next to the Church of the Resurrection, which was on the site of the present Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Brickdam. The school was opened in May 1st, 1866, with Fr. Theobald Langton in charge. Fr. Langton died of Yellow Fever during the August Holidays, but the school was re-opened under Fr. S. Bond, with seven boys.



The Old Grammer School – St Stanislaus College 1943 Magazine Photo

October, 1866,

Fr. C.K. Wilson took over the school.

November 3rd, 1866

The school moved to new premises on Main Street.

In January, 1868,

Mr. C. B. King went to the school as an assistant, and in September 1869, he took over the school when Fr. Wilson was transferred to Victoria Parish. The school then moved to Waterloo Street.

In 1871,

The school returned to the Cathedral Presbytery.

In 1872,

The Vicar-General Fr. E. Whyte was in charge. Also in 1872, the school received a Government grant, which was subsequently lost.

In 1873,

Fr. Foxwell was Headmaster.

In September 1874,

Fr. Hartnell took over, and he introduced boarders to the school. This was to cater for Venezuelan boys who came to Demerara to be educated.

By 1878

The frequent change of Headmasters and the location of the school show that it was undergoing problems, hence the school was closed temporarily.

In early in 1880

The Jesuit General selected Fr. Charles Wilson to re-open the school, which was done.

In October 1880,

Fr. Barraud became Headmaster. At that time there were fifteen boys at the school, as well as an assistant master. Fr. Barraud remained as Headmaster for twenty years. The numbers of boys increased to 27, and reached 72.

Fr. Barraud writes: *"In those early years Mrs. Deguara wife of the assistant master, was employed to teach the small boys, while Fr. Rigby and after him Fr. Barber took the Mathematics. Somewhere about 1890 Fr. O'Donnell joined myself as second master, taking charge also of the mathematical work. Meantime the Deguaras had gone to the States, and first Miss Waddell and Miss Maria de Silva, and then Miss Waddell and Mrs. Child had charge of the small fry, Mrs. Child remaining on along with Brother Reynolds, who had come from British Honduras. The school never paid its way, the income being insufficient, and so had a claim on the Government grant.*

For seventeen or eighteen years our premises were on the ground floor of the Presbytery. Although so dark on a rainy day that the boys could not use their slates, they were not on the whole bad quarters. There were three classrooms, and later the Guild-room was utilized. Some two or three years later before the end of my time a new school was built beyond the Cathedral chiefly with money begged for that purpose".

In 1894

The Catholics of British Guiana sent a petition to the Governor, Sir Charles Cameron Lees, asking for financial help to erect a suitable building in Brickdam. The appeal failed.

At about 1897,

The school moved from the Presbytery to a new premises (located at the site of the present St. Mary's School), although the preparatory classes remained in the building near the Presbytery, and the school used the old playground until 1901. The temporary chapel alongside the Cathedral was used as the elementary school until the destruction of the Cathedral by fire in 1913.

In 1901,

A silver medal was awarded to S.I. Cyrus who was to become the first 'Guiana' Scholar. The uniform at that time included a straw hat with a yellow hatband, and the initials S.S.C. were monogrammed in gold on a shield on the blazer pocket.

November 13, 1907

The College moved to the present Brickdam site and the Catholic Grammar School was renamed St. Stanislaus College, in honor of St. Stanislaus Kostka, a patron saint of youth. In this year the buildings that stood on the eastern end of the present Brickdam site were utilized.

Fr. Pollen was in charge of the school until 1911, and Fr. Beauclerk, the Mission Superior, was in charge of the Junior School.

The number of boys at the college was now about 100, and this figure remained until 1924.



The **Statue of St. Stanislaus** (which had been presented to the school by the boys as a testimonial to Fr. Barraud) was moved from the Camp Street building and placed before the entrance to the new building.

In 1911,

Fr. Besant took over from Fr. Pollen, and remained until 1917. The College Scout troop was started during the time of Fr. Besant by Fr. Robinson, and the boys were very prominent in trying to control the disastrous fire which, in 1913, destroyed the Cathedral.

Between 1918 to 1925,

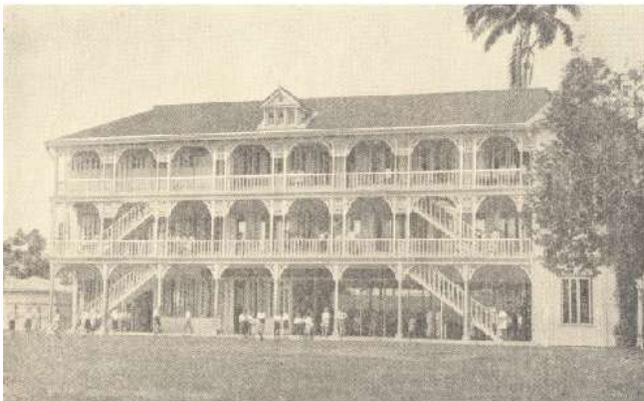
There were three changes of Headmaster, Fr. Miller, Fr. Whiteside and Fr. McCowan.

From 1925 to 1932

Fr. Weld was Headmaster it was in his time that the main wing of the present building was built. He was eager for the teaching of Science to begin at the college, and was instrumental in obtaining Fr. Adamson, a science graduate to do so.

In 1928

The opening of the main wing (now called the **Weld Wing** in honour of Fr. Weld) took place.



St Stanislaus College, as built in 1929



1968 Photo of Weld Wing

It was a very handsome building with open galleries. However, it was discovered that driving rain flooded the corridors, so blinkers were added to protect them.

The College made great strides and the academic standards improved steadily.

1932

Fr. John Marrion, the next Head, developed the work started by Fr. Weld who was



consecrated Bishop. The **Marrion Forum** is named in his honour.

Marrion Forum – Reunion 2009 Photo

The science laboratories were improved, and a new playing field was obtained. A house system was started to promote rivalry in sports. The houses were called **Etheridge, Butler & Galton** after Bishops Etheridge, Anthony Butler, and Theodore Galton respectively. Later, in the 1980's, a fourth house was added, called **Weld** after Bishop George Weld.

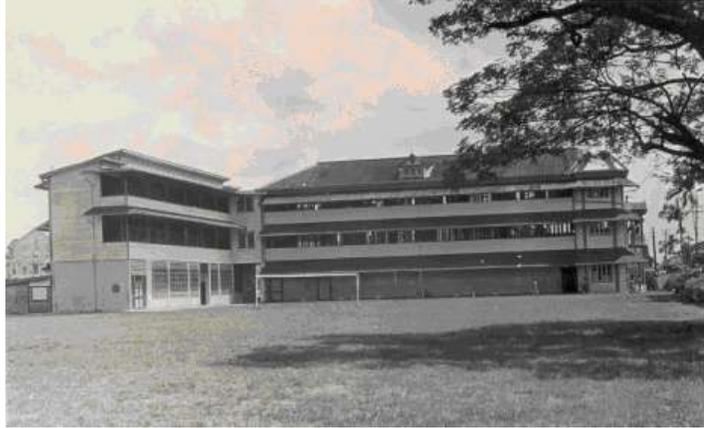
The house colours are: Etheridge – red, Butler- blue, Galton -green, and Weld - yellow.

In 1941

Fr. Francis Smith succeeded Fr. John Marrion.

In 1949

Fr. Brian Scannell became Headmaster. It was during his term of office that a new wing was built with six classrooms on the upper two floors and two laboratories on the ground floor.



This wing (now called the **Scannell Wing**) is an extension to the Weld Wing, and runs parallel to Hadfield Street. It was opened in the Christmas term of 1952.

Fr. Brian Scannell retired because of ill health in 1958.

In 1958

Fr. John Hopkinson became Headmaster. He introduced the grey uniform, and, among many other things formed the plans for another wing. This wing, called the **Hopkinson Wing** in his honour, was completed in 1972.



Hopkinson Wing – Reunion 2009 Photo

In May 1966

The College celebrated its 100th anniversary with a week of celebrations.

In 1972,

Fr. Kenneth Khan became Headmaster.

In December 1974

The Workshop was built.



Saints Workshop – Reunion 2009 Photo

In September 1975

The college became co-educational in 1975, with an enrollment of 36 girls, 12 in each first form.

The 16-acre College Farm was started at Sophia. The Farm is an economically viable unit, and is administered by the SSCA with the primary goal that of teaching Agricultural Science by hands-on training (see Reference 3).



THE ST. STANISLAUS COLLEGE FARM A WELL DIVERSIFIED FARM



In 1976,

After being a Catholic institution for 110 years, the college became a government school.

In 1980,

With the removal of Fr. Kenneth Khan as Headmaster by the Ministry of Education, the Jesuit connection ended, and the Jesuits on the staff were assigned elsewhere. The last Jesuit on the Staff was Fr. Fred Rigby.

From 1980 to the present time,

All Headmasters have been appointed by the Ministry of Education.

From 1980 to 1982

Mr. Clarence Trotz became the first non-Jesuit Headmaster of the College since 1872.

From 1982 to 1984

Mr. Dinband Khusial served as Headmaster.

From 1984 to 1988

Mrs. Hazel Sargeant, became the first Headmistress.

From 1988 to 1990

Mr. S. K. Singh served as Headmistress.

From 1990 to 1992

Mr. B. Tihal served as Headmaster.

In 1991,

The 125th anniversary was observed. The commemorations included a mass held at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, at which the chief celebrant was former Headmaster Fr. J. Hopkinson.

From 1992 to 1996

Mrs. Zohora Singh served as Headmistress,

From 1996 to 1999

Mr. Murdwaj Singh served as Headmaster.

From 1999 to 2004

Mr. James E. Fanfair served as Headmaster.

From 2004 to 2008

Ms Esther McGarrell served as Headmistress.

In 2005 a Board of Governors was set up to manage Saints with considerable authority delegated by the Ministry of Education and the Teaching Service Commission.

On October 5, 2005, the new Headmistress received an Award on behalf of the College as being the most improved secondary school for the year.

In 2008, the Headmistress received an Award on behalf of the College as being the most improved secondary school for the year.

From August 16th to 23rd, 2009

The college hosted Reunion 102.

References:

- 1) [History of St Stanislaus College, Naomi Collins, October 2002.](#)
- 2) [St. Stanislaus College, Catholic Standard, 1st Quarter March 1957](#)
- 3) [Center of Sustainable Agriculture, St. Stanislaus College Farm, Hector Munoz.](#)