



Sister Mary Bede checks the rain gauge at Monte Pio Orphanage, Maitland, yesterday. Good falls were reported from many Hunter Valley centres.



Grand final honours at first attempt!

ABOVE: Monte Pio Girls Home basketball team—the Valentines—has won the C-grade division two grand final at their first attempt. The team, which comprises girls from the home, started playing this year. They beat a Beresfield team, Lyrebirds, 23-22 to win the 14 years and under competition. Sister Mary Francine coached the girls, many of whom are playing for the first time this year.

They are students of St. Mary's Dominican Convent, Maitland, and St. Paul's, Rutherford.

PICTURE: Team captain Sharon Ball, Joyce Ba Colleen Murphy, Christine Woodey, Cheryl O'Rourke, Christine Alken and Helen Utley.

Siblings together again at orphanage reunion

EMMA SWAIN

As children Anne, Davina and David Jones were sent from their family home in Mayfield to start new lives at the Monte Pio and Murray Dwyer orphanages. At the time their mother had suffered a stroke and their father could not care for them. "But the year after Mum had her stroke Dad died so we stayed on and that's where we spent our childhood," Anne, now Mrs Ince, said. Yesterday the trio gathered with more than 70 other Monte Pio and Murray Dwyer orphans to talk about their lives at the Maitland and Mayfield homes and to talk about living a childhood without the love of their parents. The siblings attendance also heralded the first time the three had been together in 37 years. Mrs Ince was 11-and-a-half years old when she went to live at Monte Pio while her sister Davina, of Townsville, was 12 years and brother David was 10. "These reunions are always fairly emotional but this year it's even more so because we haven't been in the same place together for



REUNITED: (From left) Davina, David and Anne Jones were together for the first time in 37 years at the Monte Pio and Murray Dwyer orphanages yesterday.

so many years," Mr Jones, 49, now of Wollongong, said. Reflecting on her life at Monte Pio Mrs Ince, now 55, of Warners Bay, said the girls always believed they lived in the biggest house in Maitland. "We had clean clothes, food and a place to sleep but the discipline was given out freely whether

we needed it or not," she said. "But we survived and we were cared for in a way. In fact I'd hate to think where we would have ended up without the orphanages." The Monte Pio Orphanage opened in 1901 to care for girls from broken families while the Murray Dwyer Orphanage for

boys was opened in 1933. "We do remember about life at the orphanage but we especially remember rising early each day to go to church at 6am," Mrs Ince said. "And while at the time we probably thought life was a bit tough, it was certainly better than living on the streets."



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State aid for orphans

A recent amendment in the Child Welfare Act would cost the Government another £80,000 a year for NSW orphanages, the Minister for Child Welfare, Mr. A. D. Bridges, said.

Mr. Bridges was speaking at the official opening of the annual continental at Monte Pio Orphanage, Campbell's Hill. He said from the beginning of this month the home had received the amount which would have been paid if the children were wards of the State. Although the amendment would cost a further £80,000 a year, the expenditure was well justified. Mr. Bridges said, in the absence of a real home, he could not imagine anything better than being at Monte Pio, where children were given love and affection and spiritual care.

Mr. Bridges said he had met the Rev. Mother Regis three months ago at a Sydney conference to discuss problems in bringing together children who were neglected, destitute or lacked sufficient care. Mr. Bridges is the first Minister to have visited the home. He said he hoped to make his visit an annual pilgrimage. He said he had not known until yesterday that a men's committee had been working for 2½ years to raise funds to make the facilities second to none in the State.

Committee praised Much had yet to be done, but he knew the work of the committee would continue with the success it had had in the past. Mrs. Bridges accompanied her husband to Maitland.

Minister for Transport, Mr. Milton Morris, praised the Sisters for work being done for children from far beyond the city area.

He said he could not speak too highly of the tremendous job undertaken at the home. Bernadette Connolly and Terry Drane made presentations to Mrs. Bridges and Mrs. Morris.

Rev. Father M. O'Donovan, of Campbell's Hill Parish, thanked the Ministers for their visit on behalf of the Mother Superior, Sisters and children.

Picture shows two Monte Pio girls, Carol Lobley, left and Terry Drane, sharing a joke with the Minister for Child Welfare, Mr. A. D. Bridges, and Mother Mary Regis after the official opening of the annual continental.