SAINT MARY MACKILLOP MEMORIAL WALL OPENED

NSW Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, today officially opened the Saint Mary MacKillop Memorial Wall at Gore Hill Memorial Cemetery.

“Today’s event follows the completion of improvement works at Australia’s first Saint’s original resting place,” the Minister said.

“A total of $250,000 was allocated towards the work by the Land and Property Management Authority through the Public Reserves Management Fund and NSW Treasury.”

To celebrate the occasion, a blessing ceremony of the Memorial Wall was carried out by the Most Reverend David L Walker, Bishop of Broken Bay. Sister Eileen Lenihan, Assistant Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St Joseph, was also in attendance.

Mr Kelly said the Memorial Wall depicts the life and work of Saint Mary MacKillop and has been created as part of improvement works carried out to the cemetery by the Catholic Cemeteries Board.

“The work has been designed to improve the appearance of the site, public access, and understanding of the site’s significance,” the Minister said.

Catholic Cemeteries Board Chairman, Peter Ward, said the work has included the installation of fencing and signage around the Sisters of St Joseph burial sites, and enhancement of the memorial in that area.

“An increased paved area for visitors has also been completed,” Mr Ward said.

While the remains of Saint Mary MacKillop are now situated within the Mary MacKillop Chapel at North Sydney, she was originally buried at Gore Hill in 1909, before her remains were relocated to their present site.

As such, Mr Kelly said, the burial site at Gore Hill, surrounded by her fellow Sisters of Saint Joseph, represents a significant historical site, not just to the Australian Catholic community but the entire nation, and it’s important it’s preserved and protected for future generations.