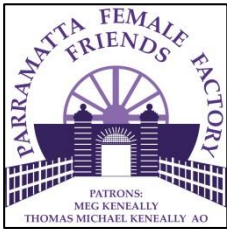


# Media Release

22/2/17



Meg and Tom Keneally

Photo: courtesy Random House

## A PLACE OF CONNECTION FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS!

Author Meg Keneally and her father, author Tom Keneally AO have recently taken on an exciting new job amid their busy writing and publishing schedule, accepting the inaugural post as PATRONS of the Parramatta Female Factory Friends Inc.

Meg was guest speaker at the recent annual Riot Day event held at the female factory site – an event close to Meg’s heart through a very personal connection. Her great - great grandmother Mary Shields from Limerick, Ireland, was a factory woman. Meg is passionate about this place – a place she and one in five to one in seven other Australians are connected to. *“To stand in a place where she stood”* gives this site significance and is a place of connection for Meg and so many more other Australians.

Meg and Tom are passionate in their advocacy for the factory site – a site which is at risk, and hasn’t received the attention it deserves. It is as significant as Hyde Park Barracks and is worthy of World Heritage status!

Meg and Tom have a further fascination for the Female Factory having just researched and completed the second novel in their Monsarrat colonial whodunnit series, *The Unmourned*, which is set in Parramatta and which is due out in March 2017.

“Tom and I are honoured to be named patrons of the Parramatta Female Factory Friends,” Meg said.

“I was lucky enough while researching *The Unmourned* to get to stand in the old meeting room where my great - great grandmother would certainly have stood. It is a shame that other Australians who are descendants of factory women can't stand in their ancestors' shoes as I was fortunate enough to do.”

“We applaud the Parramatta Female Factory Friends and their proposal to restore this site and make it part of a museum of Australian identity. It is an inspired idea, and one which is crucial to preserving the stories of brutality, hope and survival which have soaked into these walls.”

*“Don't swamp this treasure!”*

Tom Keneally 27/10/06



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