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NEWSLETTER

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NOTICE OF THE 2013 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ACHS

2.30 PM ON SUNDAY, 17 MARCH, 2013.

Crypt Hall of St Patrick's at Church Hill [Grosvenor Street], The Rocks.

***Note: this venue is a change from the venue used in previous years.**

The Agenda:

- Minutes of 2012 Annual General Meeting
- President's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Election of Office Bearers for 2013

NOMINATIONS REQUESTED FOR COUNCILLORS FOR 2013

All positions on the Council are declared vacant at the AGM and you are encouraged to nominate for a position to help the Society to continue to achieve its goals.

If you are interested in assisting in this or any other way, please contact ACHS President Dr John Carmody by writing to: SECRETARY ACHS, P.O. Box A621, Sydney South, NSW, 1235, NSW or email secretaryachs@gmail.com requesting that your correspondence be passed onto Dr Carmody.

The AGM will be followed by a presentation by Professor Bridget Griffen-Foley.

Australian Catholic Historical Society: Program for the first half of 2013.

A full program for 2013 was published in the November 2012 Newsletter.

(These details are correct as at 1 February 2013, but may change due to unforeseen circumstances).

Date	Topic	Speaker
March 17 <i>(Also the AGM)</i>	Monsignor Meany, the <i>Catholic Weekly</i> and 2SM.	Professor Bridget Griffen-Foley. Department of Modern History, Politics and International Relations, Macquarie University.
April 21	Mannix, Irish Catholics and Britishness: the problem of British 'loyalty' and 'identity' from the Conscriptio Crisis to the end of the Anglo-Irish war.	Assoc. Professor Neville Meaney. Department of History, Sydney University.
May 19	"Left-footer" linguists: the contribution of Catholic clergy to the documentation of Australian languages.	Dr Michael Walsh. Department of Linguistics, Sydney University.
June 16	Emotion in the letters of the twelfth-century lovers, Heloise and Abelard.	Dr Jennifer Carpenter. Faculty of Arts & Sciences, Australian Catholic University, Sydney.
July 21	Catholic pioneers of the Maitland region between 1800 and 1830: a pre-Institutional Church community.	Dr Michael Belcher [ACHS Councillor]. Previously: University of Newcastle; Diocesan Pastoral Support Unit, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle; Executive Producer ABC Radio, Newcastle.

The colloquia are held on Sunday afternoons, at 2.30pm, in the Crypt Hall of St Patrick's at Church Hill [Grosvenor Street], The Rocks. There is abundant bus transport along George and York Streets; the nearest railway stations are Circular Quay and Wynyard; and the Circular Quay ferry terminal is nearby. Enquiries may be directed to: Dr John Carmody, President ACHS: john.carmody@sydney.edu.au

Presidential message

I am writing this on 30 January. It is the 80th anniversary of the foolish and fateful decision by Hindenburg, the German President, to appoint Adolf Hitler to the position of Chancellor. That act had enormous consequences – the appalling burning of the books by university students on 6 May in Berlin and, nationally, on 10 May; the destruction of democratic institutions; the cowering and corruption of the universities and the professions; the imprisonment of many Catholic priests and religious (as well as those from other denominations) who did not conform to the tyrannical demands of that regime; and, of course, the nauseating slaughter of vast numbers of Jews, lay dissidents and other “outsiders” (such as the disabled) – all of which represented a ruthless and concerted assault on civil society and everything that it should be.

It is also an anniversary of a number of similarly potent political events: of the execution of the conspirators of the “Gunpowder Plot” in 1606, for example, and of Charles I -- and of the establishment of Oliver Cromwell’s “Commonwealth”; of the assassination of Mahatma Ghandi in 1948 and of the deaths of 13 people when British troops fired on a civil rights march in Londonderry in 1972.

Coming so soon after our celebration of Australia Day -- with its range from the serious to the trivial and vacuous – and especially in an election year, this date and its recollections should encourage all Australians to ponder seriously and resolve to avoid any complacency about the inevitability of our democracy. Many Germans were complacent in 1933 – “assimilated” Jews and Christians alike – and we should earnestly use such anniversaries to dispel any

of our own complacency: whether that touches on a disregard of our and our allies’ involvement in torture; unethical medical experiments; violations of civil-rights (all excused as being for our “defence” of course). Freedom requires endless honesty and vigilance on the part of those who wish to continually enjoy it.

Some of us – drawing gratefully upon that freedom – might celebrate this year as the tercentenary of the birth of the great writers Denys Diderot and Laurence Sterne; or the bicentenary of the renowned composers Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner; or – closer to our own time -- the composers Benjamin Britten and Witold Lutosławski.

Specifically, for us all as Australians, it is the centenary of the official naming of Canberra as the national capital of the new Federation (12 March). As section 125 of the Constitution specified, this was to be “distant not less than one hundred miles from Sydney” as part of the fraught agreement to form the Commonwealth of Australia. It seems that this “seat of Government” was intended to have a population of 25,000; currently it exceeds 367,000. For all that state politicians so often deride it (and encourage their citizens in that same hostility), Canberra has not only grown into one of our finest cities, but it has become a symbol of our *national* civil society, a development which we should all celebrate as we work to sustain our democracy.

Everything in life – our health, the structures and institutions which we create, our culture – is fragile. Every aspect requires vigilance, respect and constant nurture. Let us all take that truth with us into 2013.

John Carmody ACHS President

2012 James MacGinley Award

Entries for the 2012 James MacGinley Award closed in October 2012. The judges decided to make a joint award in 2012 as they thought that the extent of the research evident in two papers warranted such action.

The 2012 MacGinley Award was thus made to Odhran O'Brien from Yokine, WA, for his paper on "*The curious case of Bishop Brady: a new perspective*" and Stephen Utick of Stirling, ACT for his paper "*The faith-based charitable mission of Charles O'Neill in New South Wales (1881-91)*".

2013 Membership subscriptions are now due.

Most members have renewed their subscriptions for 2013. This is a gentle reminder to those who may have overlooked this. If you are in doubt or need a form, send an email to: secretaryachs@gmail.com. Alternatively write to:

The Secretary ACHS,
PO Box A621.
Sydney South, NSW, 1235.

Membership subscription rates for 2013.

- Individual \$40
- Family \$45: this covers all persons at the one address in Australia.
- Institutional \$50: one congregation, school, library etc. at the one address in Australia.
- Overseas \$55.

CHURCHES AT WAR: THEN AND NOW. Sunday 11 November.

On Sunday 11 November we met in the Chapter Hall at St Mary's Cathedral to listen to a Dr. Michael McKernan speak, not only about the experience of war, but also its impact on soldiers, families and friends; and their grief. Dr McKernan was a senior lecturer in History at the University of New South Wales and then Deputy Director at the Australian War Memorial. He is also a writer and broadcaster. He has written about this topic in his book *This War Never Ends* (2001).

Some of us recalled Mgr Greg Flynn's presentation *Chaplaincy in Australian Defence Forces*, given on 11 July 2010 in the same venue.

Dr McKernan began by telling us of the insights he gained as a doctoral student from Prof. John la Nauze whose father had been killed at Gallipoli in June 1915. Dr McKernan made the point: "that you cannot separate the homefront and the battlefield. Every man and woman who enlisted in Australia for the Second World War had family, probably, and friends certainly. For every enlistment there might have been six persons intimately associated with the life of the enlistee."

In discussing the role of the Australian churches in the Great War, he referred to his published works and of accessing the "significant holding of chaplains' materials in the Australian War Memorial" and mentioned the actions of a number of chaplains.

He spoke of the insights that he obtained from Bill Gammage in alerting him to the dilemma the chaplains

often faced and the passion associated with war. These emotions continued to be present even when peace came to "a ravaged, grieving world and nation".

He also touched upon Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne and some of the things in pre-Vatican II Australian Churches. Specifically he referred to some post World War I sermons including one by the Presbyterian theologian Larry Rentoul and another by the Catholic bishop of Sale, Patrick Phelan, which did not display restraint or sensitivity. By way of contrast Dr McKernan reflected on what the men in the trenches felt. He related the story of a recently arrived chaplain asking "what was the religion of the other chaplain in the battalion". The soldier replied: "there ain't no religion here, Sir, we're all brothers." Yet on returning home they "saw the awful divisions in Australian society" and "the hatreds between Christians".

Dr McKernan concluded his address by reflecting on his 1990 visit to the Anzac battlefield and war graves where he came upon the grave of Captain Charles Andrew La Nauze, the father of his university teacher, Professor John La Nauze, whose fourth birthday was two weeks before his father was killed at Gallipoli.

(A fuller report by Dr Carmody on Dr McKernan's talk was published in the Catholic Weekly - 20 January, 2013, page 22. Michael McKernan's paper is published in the Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society, Volume 33 2012). (*Geoff Hogan Editor*)

Christmas Lunch address: Evaluating Myths. 8 December 2012.

We gathered for a delightful Christmas Lunch at the Mary MacKillop Centre North Sydney. The after dinner speaker was Ken Healey, a former Franciscan, pre-concert speaker for the Australian Chamber Orchestra, writer and broadcaster on opera and concert music and formerly a lecturer in the History of Theatre at NIDA. He has also been a senior member of the administrative staff at the Australian National University and a soccer writer for the Canberra Times.

Ken mentioned that his presentation was the beginning of something he wanted to examine further.

On the surface Ken presented his talk in a light-hearted manner which began with an account of an English squire whose shotgun had backfired resulting in him arriving, somewhat confused, before St Peter. But that light-hearted story and subsequent delivery actually carried a deeper examination of aspects of belief which gave us an insight as to why Christmas has always been so popular with Christians, notwithstanding our theological understanding of the primacy of Easter.

Ken compared and contrasted four accounts of the relationship between the godhead and humankind: initially looking at Ancient Greek mythology, and then moving onto, Judaism, Islam and "the dizzying proliferation of Christian confessions".

He suggested that in the four accounts, each sought to elucidate aspects of divine/human interaction, but suggested that Christianity is the "comprehensive victor". The Greeks had told stories of Hero Gods. The Hebrews had God and various angels, on His behalf, instructing, questioning and berating the leaders of the chosen people. Islam had Allah personally dictating his words to the prophet.

Leaving aside redemption, atonement, the Trinity, etc.; in the Christian account, Jesus became human and lived among us without ceasing to be divine. It is something only the deity can do. This, Ken suggested, is the power associated with Christmas and why Christmas has always been so popular among Christians. "We want to celebrate the clincher that belongs to Christians: the Nazarene is Both; and He is Ours".

(*Geoff Hogan Editor*)

ACHS WEBSITE

The ACHS website (<http://australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/about/index.html>) is worth having a look at. It contains current and past programs, Newsletters and also the last two Journals. Prof Franklin has also recently added a number of items to the Timeline, in which he has linked a number of items to other sites which give added detail. It is almost like a library. If you have any suggestions for items to be added to the Timeline, please contact Prof. James Franklin: j.franklin@unsw.edu.au

ACHS Journal

The latest issue of the Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society (vol 33 for 2012) was posted to members on Jan 24, 2013. The Society thanks James Franklin for his work as editor and Gerry Nolan as subeditor. The Society also thanks those who submitted papers for publication in the Journal. Submissions for the next issue are welcome, as per the Journal page on the ACHS website.

Group emails

Last year the Society started sending emails to members about functions that we were advised of and other matters of interest. This filled the three month communication gap between Newsletters. This has been welcomed by many. If you have not received an ACHS group email this is because you have indicated that you do not want to receive these, we do not have your email address or the email address we have is incorrect. If you wish to receive these emails, but have not received any, please send your name and email address to: achsmembers@gmail.com

Anniversaries

The Australian Catholic University's Canberra Campus will celebrate 50 years in higher education in March 2013. Established as Signadou Teachers College, it was officially opened in March 1963 and in January 1991 amalgamated with the Catholic College of Education Sydney, the Institute of Catholic Education in Victoria and McAuley College of Queensland to form the ACU. However the origins of Signadou date back to 1867 when the Dominican Sisters came to Australia from Ireland and England and established a teacher training school in Maitland, New South Wales.

Death and burial of Fr Receveur. On 17 February 1788 two French ships led by Comte de Laperouse called into Botany Bay shortly after the arrival of the First Fleet. Fr Receveur, a Conventual Franciscan Friar who was a chaplain and scientist on one of the ships, died and was buried on the northern shore of Botany Bay. This year marks the 225 anniversary of his death. The parish of St Andrew's, Malabar will conduct a pilgrimage and Mass at the tomb of Fr Receveur at 11am on 17 February. The Mass will be celebrated in a marquee erected adjacent to the Museum and near the tomb. The tomb and museum are in the park at the end of Anzac Parade in Laperouse and opposite Endeavour Ave. An entry on Fr Receveur is located in the Dictionary of Sydney's website: http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/receveur_laurent

Obituaries.

Fr Paschal Chang OFM died on 8 January 2013. He was the initial Chaplain to the Chinese Catholic community in Sydney, serving them for almost 60 years and leaving a lasting legacy. Fr Chang attended the ACHS presentation on Chinese Catholics in Australia on 11 November 2007. RIP.

Fr John McSweeney died on 16 January 2013. After retirement he continued to serve Kingsgrove Parish where he had been parish priest and also wrote several books including a biography of Bishop David Cremin and *A Meddling Priest: John Joseph Therry* which examined Fr Therry's influence on the founding of the Catholic Church in Australia. RIP.

Postal address The Secretary ACHS PO Box A621 Sydney South, NSW, 1235	Enquiries may also be directed to: secretaryachs@gmail.com Website: http://australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/
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