

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
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NEWSLETTER

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Annual General Meeting: Sunday 20 March 2022

President's Report: Dr Carmody spoke briefly to his written report. He thanked all for the support he had received.

Treasurer's report. Dr Hughes had supplied printed copies of the audited accounts. She spoke briefly about some of the expenses and that income had exceeded expenditure, due largely to an increase in donations.

Election of Council: The following members were nominated, seconded and were elected unopposed.

President: John Carmody. **Vice President:** James Franklin.

Secretary: Helen Scanlon **Treasurer:** Lesley Hughes

Councillors: Janice Garaty, Geoff Hogan, Odhran O'Brien, Anne Power, Christine Riley

ACHS Chaplain: Sr Helen Simpson continues as Chaplain and is ex officio on Council.

Unfilled positions: One Vice President, three Councillors.

REMINDER: MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

ACHS membership fees for 2022 were due on 1st April 2022 and must be paid by 1 July 2022. Application/Renewal forms were included in the envelopes with the February 2022 ACHS Newsletter. A Membership Form for those whose fees are outstanding is included in the envelope with this newsletter. A form is also available on the ACHS website. NB Fees remain the same as last year.

James MacGinley Award

The 2022 ACHS James MacGinley Award for Australian Catholic History has been awarded to Jodie Vandeeper for her essay entitled "The Atelier of St Dominic's Priory". In her introduction she wrote: "Whilst South Australia was still a relatively young colony, the women of the fledgling religious communities harnessed their energies and existing needlework skills to adorn the colony's growing number of churches." This narrative of the English Dominican Sisters describes how they came to North Adelaide only to find they could not staff a hospital as planned and turned to embroidery skills

developed in England to support themselves until they could open their school, still in existence today. The story as told is lucid, logical, well sourced and engaging and most original. In the opinion of the judges, it is well deserving of the award. It is a story of faith and resilience. Jodie is continuing her PhD research at the University of Adelaide and lives in the Clare Valley in South Australia. As she said herself, "as just an ordinary person from regional Australia ...being awarded a national award like the James MacGinley Award is something very special".

(Janice Garaty Councillor)

Australian Catholic Historical Society Inc. Program for May to August 2022

This information is correct as at 17 April 2022, but changes may occur.

Sydney Meetings

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
15 May	Writing Australian Catholic history: A case study – "Riverview"	Mr Gerard Windsor Novelist, literary critic, and essayist. Author of <i>The Tempest-tossed Church</i>
19 June	'A place for faith in the public square	Professor Francis Campbell Vice-Chancellor, University of Notre Dame Australia
17 July	Aboriginal religious art	Sr Dr Rosemary Crumlin rsm OAM Artist, art curator, art educator, art historian Author of <i>Images of religion in Australian Art</i> (1988) and <i>The Blake Book</i> (2011)
14 August *A week earlier than usual.	Walking the synodal path of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia - a reflection	Dr Helen Belcher Co-chair the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Diocesan Pastoral Council

Location, time and contact: Sunday afternoons at 2.00pm (unless otherwise stated) in the Crypt of St Patrick's at Church Hill [Grosvenor Street], The Rocks. Admission is free and does not require membership of ACHS, but a donation is welcome. **Enquiries to:** **Dr John Carmody**, President ACHS via ACHS email: secretaryachs@gmail.com
Further information: ACHS website. [<http://www.australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au>].

Melbourne Meeting Monday 6 June 2022

Speaker and Topic: To be advised

Location: Catholic Theological College at 278 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne. **Time:** 5:00 to 6:30 pm.

Contact: Matthew Beckmann, OFM. **Email address:** mbeckmann@franciscans.org.au

Sydney Meeting, Sunday 20 February 2022

Presenter: Sr Dr Susan Connelley rsj.

Topic: Remembering Timor 80 Years On: The Australian and Japanese Invasions of Portuguese Timor

Sr Susan Connelly explained that she had entered the convent at age 16 and it was for her the best of decisions. She has taught in schools but for the past 25 years has had a close involvement with East Timor and its people.

Historically, Timor had been colonised by Portugal for some 500 years. During this time they had only educated about 2% of the Timorese, just sufficient to aid in administration. Catholic missionaries had come with the merchants but most of the people still practised animism.

During the Second World War Portugal was neutral. Japan agreed not to invade the Portuguese-held Macau and Timor as it pushed southward occupying Singapore and northern New Guinea. Australia feared Japanese invasion but Sr Susan stated that this would have been possible only with 10 to 15 Divisions of Japanese soldiers, according to Japanese sources. They lacked such forces. Japan aimed to cripple Australia, not to invade. Prime Minister Curtin knew that the intention was to cripple Australia not invade because there were spies in Lisbon passing on information.

In December 1941, Australia landed 300 troops in Portuguese Timor, breaching the neutrality. Probably as a consequence Japan prepared to invade Timor. On 19 February 1942 Darwin was bombed with much loss of life and damage. This was an important move by the Japanese to prevent air attacks from the air base there. The next day Timor was invaded from the west and the troops moved eastward. The 300 Australian soldiers who were in Timor had no contact with Australia until April when they made radio contact. It was assumed they had perished.

Some additional Australian troops then went to Timor but Susan said there were never more than 700 at any time. The Timorese people were very friendly toward the Australians. These were well trained men, acting as guerrillas. Some Timorese who were young boys then are still alive now and Sr Susan showed us photos of one now elderly man.

The death toll during the war in East Timor was high. Between 40 000 and 60 000 died, all civilians, estimated to be between 8 and 14% of the population, compared to 0.8% of British people, both civilian and military. By war's end there were 18 000 to 20 000 Japanese in East Timor. Allied bombing was mostly responsible for the large death toll. It was the villages that suffered.

Sr Susan had attended a memorial service held at the Hyde Park War Memorial on the 19 February with a

group of Timorese. A wreath was placed in the Lake of Remembrance by two young girls, an aboriginal and a Timorese.

Susan then went on to speak about later history. On 7 December 1975 Indonesia invaded East Timor. She reminded us of the Balibo Five, a group of Australian journalists based in Balibo in what was still Portuguese Timor. They were gunned down on 16 October 1975 by the Indonesians. There was widespread starvation following the invasion. There were 30 000 Indonesian soldiers, and there was huge loss of life as the Timorese fled to the mountains. Widespread starvation followed for the next 20 years. There was a growing movement for independence and finally in September 1999, following a vote of the people where a huge majority wanted independence, a peacekeeping unit was set up by UN headed by an Australian group, called INTERFET, the International Force for East Timor. Independence was declared on 20 May 2002.

Australia was keen to get access to the oil sea between East Timor and Australia. During the discussions Australia bugged the Timorese and in 2006 a treaty was signed which split the oil 50/50 provided East Timor did not argue about the border which was drawn to favour Australia. This story was leaked and still Bernard Collaery and witness K are waiting for an outcome.

Retired judge Stephen Charles AO QC has stated of the Australian government performance "mendacity, duplicity, fraud," In connection with the bugging. Susan asked: "Did Jesus teach realpolitick or something else" ?

Questions followed. One topic was about the religion of the people. Only about 13 % are Catholic, all are animist. When the Indonesians took over, many became Catholic, the choice was allegiance to Indonesia of the Catholic church, The Jesuits had established schools and a seminary and allowed the use of local languages.

Tetum is the main language but not the main language of the people. The Constitution allows both Tetum and Portuguese (spoken by many older Timorese) but Bahasa Indonesian and English tend to be working languages.

It was mentioned that schools used Portuguese textbooks and taught in Portuguese for the HSC equivalent. In answer to a question Sr Susan said that there was no official Australian presence in East Timor.

(Helen Scanlon Secretary)

Melbourne Chapter Meeting: Monday 7 March 2022.

Matthew Beckmann advised that ACHS Melbourne Chapter reviewed aspects of their operation. Essentially they reaffirmed their commitment to continue meetings, to scholarship and the promotion of Church history. They would continue to meet quarterly (Remaining dates for

this year: 6 June, 5 September, 7 November). However meetings will now be from 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm. There will also be a change in the venue to the Catholic Theological College at 278 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne. A number of other topics were also discussed.

Sydney Meeting, Sunday 20 March 2022.

Presenter: Dr John Challis. Formerly Head, ABC Science Unit and International Relations Executive, ABC

Topic: Cathedral Folly. The origin of the 1960 plan to build a Brutalist Style cathedral at New Norcia, Western Australia

John began by explaining his family connections in WA and displayed slides of how New Norcia looked in Dom Salvado's day and explained the purpose of the buildings and their styles. He also explained the terms 'Folly' (extravagant features of a building) and 'Brutalist' (raw concrete). The site was on the banks of the Moore River. John posed the question, why were various Abbots so preoccupied with building a cathedral? Salvado was born in Galicia in Spain and attended the Benedictine monastery of St Martin in Compostella. Following closure of the monasteries by the anti-clerical government in Spain in 1835, Salvado sailed to Fremantle as a missionary priest to the Aboriginal peoples. His respect and curiosity led him to begin a dictionary of Aboriginal Noongar language.

Salvado (1814-1900) secured complete independence of New Norcia from Perth in 1870. He spent 54 years making New Norcia a progressive and successful mission. Salvado's vision was to create, among the indigenous peoples a Christian, largely self-sufficient village based on agriculture. At one stage, he was appointed to Port Essington (in the Northern Territory) as bishop but when Port Essington was abandoned, he was allowed to return to New Norcia with an episcopal throne. Salvado's brother accompanied him to New Norcia in 1869 with objets d'art for the Monastery. Bishop Salvado determined to establish a library and New Norcia still houses rare editions of the bible.

Salvado chose Dom Fulgentius Torres to be his successor. Torres returned to New Norcia to implement Salvado's plans in 1901. He died there in 1914. The gold discoveries of the 1890s changed the face of Western Australia and

the Catholic Church by bringing an influx of lay Catholics from the eastern states of Australia. In 1951, the pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima made an impact among the people. However, Archbishop Prendiville was concerned that an anti-communist message could be seen as similar to what PM Menzies advocated.

When Gregory Gomez became abbot, he thought New Norcia could become a pilgrimage centre. On April 1, 1955, he called for all monks to cast a vote on building a new church which would exemplify the new liturgy. All the monks agreed that a cathedral was necessary. In May 1957 there was a sketch and model of the new cathedral, with the altar in the centre. The four parabolic arches of the design were to be built in Italy and shipped to Perth.

The building was to be funded by the sale of land in Perth owned by the monastery. An ambitious plan to build a modern abbey church and monastery from designs by the international architects Carlo Vannone and Pier Luigi Nervi did not proceed because of a lack of funds. However, John Challis noted the enthusiasm in journals like *Architecture Today* in 1960. The detailed plans and models were archived and a virtual reality video of the model was made and part of it was shown to end Challis' presentation.

During the Q&A session John referred to items in Salvado's diaries. One was Florence Nightingale being impressed by Salvado's care of Aboriginal people. John also mentioned a site in Canberra where a cathedral could be built and speculated on the possibility of Nervi's design being used. (*Anne Power Councillor*)

Sydney Meeting, Sunday 10 April.

Presenter: Mr Hugh Myers Special Collections Advisor Australian Catholic University (Sydney)

Topic: Historical perspectives from the newly formed collection of rare books and manuscripts at the ACU

The talk given by Hugh Myers (the Special Collections Advisor) at ACU was fascinating. His interest in books about Australian Catholic History is that of a rare book collector and hence he has looked more broadly than Catholic publications. He stated that the sources in print were Catholic books written by priests, books by the hierarchy of the Church of England (associated with the colonial government), and books and pamphlets by Protestants which were anti-Catholic. In the colony, sectarianism was a major social divide and religious affiliation mattered. The Catholic Church was intimately

tied to Irish identity, but many Catholics were neither Irish nor transported convicts. They fled the steady deterioration of the land, culminating in the great famine. Transportation ceased in 1853 but the last decade demonstrated the worst conditions.

Of the two books that Myers brought to give focus to his talk, one was *The Catholic Mission in Australasia* (1837) by William Bernard Ullathorne. He trained as a Benedictine under Polding and took on a mission offering salvation to the convicts in a time when the experience of

Mass was uncommon. He brought with him over 500 volumes to Australia. In the convict colony, prostitution and perjury were rife. During this early period, Fr O’Flynn arrived in the colony without permission of the government and consequently was expelled by Governor Macquarie. Nevertheless Macquarie granted small stipends to two priests – John Joseph Therry in NSW and Phillip Conolly in Van Diemens Land. Ullathorne visited Norfolk Island, with its penal colony and what he saw affected him profoundly. His book confronted the moral conscience of colonial society. He depicted the plight of the Irish convicts sympathetically. He did this at a time when the Protestant position struggled to propagate a moral community. It was also a time when the charisma of Ministers of religion mattered. Early Catholic priests were not inflammatory preachers. However, Protestant Ministers were typically charismatic and fearless, in the mould of John Dunmore Lang. Barzillai Quaife arrived in Sydney in 1844 and wrote a pamphlet explaining that every government was at odds with the Christian message

(effectively encouraging civil disobedience) but also denouncing the Catholic Church as the ultimate temporal kingdom with the pope as the anti-Christ. Myers brought his talk to a close, stating that the social environment changed dramatically with the end of transportation and the Gold Rush period.

Some questions followed.

Q. Could some of the rare books be digitised?

A. Twenty per cent are already digitised. Myers’ emphasis is on having real books for people to access.

Q. Does the collection at ACU have items after the 19th century?

A. The date range is broad but the focus is on the 19th century.

Q. Is the collection likely to include maps?

A. Myers wants to work out which cartographers were emancipated Irish convicts.

(Anne Power Councillor)

Sesquicentenary of the Marist Brothers arriving in Australia and opening a school: St Patrick’s Church Hill

After the 12:00pm Mass on Friday 8 April 2022, A bronze bust of Br Ludovic Laboureyras was unveiled in the courtyard adjacent to crypt of St Patricks Church Church Hill. The unveiling was performed by Br Peter Carroll the current Provincial of the Marist Brothers in Australia. There were a number of Marist brothers, Marist priests, current and former Marist students and teachers in Marist schools present. This event marked the sesquicentenary of a group of Marist Brothers, led by Br Ludovic, opening St Patrick’s School, the first Marist school in Australia. The Marist brothers who were with Br Ludovic were: Br Jarlath Finand, Br Augustinus MacDonald, and Br Peter Tennyson. After the unveiling there were a number of speakers including the sculptor and social interaction over a buffet lunch.

On the evening of 8 April 2022 the Archbishop of Sydney, Archbishop Fisher OP celebrated Mass at Saint Mary’s Cathedral together with the Archbishop of Melbourne, Bishops of Parramatta and Wagga Wagga some Auxiliary Bishops, and Priests from around the country, many of whom were educated in Marist schools. Present in the Cathedral and connected via the internet were many people with Marist connections from 19 Dioceses throughout Australia.

St Ignatius anniversaries

May 20th 2022 marks the 500th anniversary of the start of the conversion of St Ignatius Loyola after he was struck by a cannonball as a soldier. The 400th anniversary of the canonization of St Ignatius occurred on 12th March 2022.

Subiaco Boys Orphanage

In 1872 the Bishop of Perth opened the Subiaco Orphanage for Catholic boys and was initially run by the Benedictines until 1876.

100 years ago: The Irish Civil War

The Irish Civil War began in June 1922. The conflict followed the war of independence, which established the Irish Free State and a territory in the north linked to and governed by Great Britain as per the Anglo-Irish Treaty This Civil War was a reaction to the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Pro-Treaty nationalists accepted that Northern Ireland remained linked to the United Kingdom, but the anti-treaty republicans (the Irish Republican Army) opposed the treaty and the separation of Ireland. The civil war continued for 11 months and was won by the pro-treaty Free State forces, but it left Irish society divided and embittered for generations. The issues connected with these matters had some influence with groups and individuals in Australia, particularly Archbishop Mannix.in Melbourne.

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