



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
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NEWSLETTER

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Australian Catholic Historical Society Inc. Sydney meetings and program for 2022

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
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
18 September.	Champagnat Marists in Australia: 1872-2022	Br Dr John Luttrell <i>fms</i> Author of: <i>Norman Thomas Gilroy: An obedient life</i> ; Formerly: President ACHS and Editor <i>ACHS Journal</i>
16 October	Heavens Below: Religion on ABC Radio from the 1940s to the Present	Professor John Potts Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language and Literature, Macquarie University
20 November	The story of St Mary's Spires – the completion of Polding's dream	Mgr Tony Doherty. Former Parish Priest of Rose Bay and former Dean of St Mary's Cathedral (Sydney) Co-author of <i>The Attachment</i>
10 December 11:45 am	Christmas Mass and Lunch.. MacKillop Place North Sydney. Cost: TBA	Dr Anne Thoeming Topic: An invitation from the grave: writing a biography of Herbert Moran.

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: jjcarmody@gmail.com

Sydney meeting: Sunday 15 May 2022

Topic: Writing Australian Catholic History—Riverview: A Case Study

Presenter: Gerard Windsor

History is by its nature contested. People use their own experience to create meaning, and connection to the past. Community and culture provide familiar frameworks as people engage with their own history, and archival material informs direction and context. Identity and sometimes solidarity are important when contested moments arise, such as those outlined by Gerard Windsor in his case-study of St Ignatius' College at Riverview in Sydney. For the 53-member audience, Windsor's presentation illustrated the importance of Catholic public history, and the skill required to tell stories meaningfully to those with a deep knowledge of the topic.

Human beings are history makers, according to Australian historian Greg Denning, and Windsor's case study powerfully reflected this. His talk was archivally rich as he described the people, their decisions, and the events that took place after he volunteered to write a college history for its 1980 centenary. The school accepted his offer, saying: 'he intends to write a history

that is neither dull nor lacking a few anecdotal elements...He is also interested in characters'. However, the history Windsor wrote for the school challenged notions of itself and included stories about the school's clerical community which conflicted with its public and reputational ideals.

The dismissal of Windsor's work was partly based on Riverview's expectation that its history was one to be joyously treasured rather than uncomfortably truthful, and that characters, while interesting, were expected to meet school standards. In justifying its decision to abandon Windsor's work, the school accused Windsor of being selective in his comments, unduly cynical, and that he damned with faint praise. The stakes were high, yet the school in the early days of the work had little idea of the scope and direction it wanted for its history. On the other side, Windsor admitted to a degree of tactlessness in releasing entertaining yet unflattering snippets he had found in the archives. His approach soon alarmed the school which realised it wanted a

story where ‘personal mannerisms or defects...should not be mentioned. Letters and diaries, works never intended for publication, should not be used. Pious and affectionate memories should not be tampered with’. Windsor was later told that ‘however true what you say may be and almost certainly is, except here and there ... it should not be presented to the general public in its present form’. Although he defended his work, arguing that he had not revealed any serious defects that were not public at the time, the school’s decision not to publish stood, even after a further review by three Riverview staff members.

Windsor’s aim was to chronicle Riverview’s real life: its human history not just its institutional one. This approach conflicted with that of the school which, like other institutions, companies, etc, wanted a different outcome: a book that told a celebratory story about achievements rather than one that engaged with human history. Windsor’s background in literature no doubt informed the challenges he experienced about his book’s content, and he later realised his approach was unsuitable for Riverview’s centenary history. However, he still believes the school was not at its best in the

way it dealt with him personally when conflict emerged.

Errol Lee-Scarlett wrote the final version which conformed to the centenary genre. Windsor commented that his own unpublished book was certainly the one to read, despite it not satisfying the institutional need. Windsor’s personal reflections of his experience of over forty years ago made a fascinating insight into the way time and talent can enrich stories and we hope he will publish this talk in our journal.

Many questions followed the talk. Windsor was asked to talk more about the Jesuit and other reviewers of his unpublished book, the accessibility of his archival documents and drafts, the on-line availability of the Jesuit archives, and the legacy of the events he outlined on current boarding/school life. A lively and amusing discussion also took place in question time as members and guests recalled their own experiences as boarders in both Catholic and non-Catholic schools, and there was a great sense of relief that much had changed over the decades. *Reflection by Anne Thoeming with notes supplied by Gerard Windsor*

Sydney meeting: Sunday 19 June 2022

Topic: A place for faith in the public square.

Presenter: Professor Francis Campbell Vice-Chancellor University of Notre Dame Australia

On Sunday, 19 June, Professor Francis Campbell (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Notre Dame Australia) addressed the fifth ACHS meeting of 2022 on “A place for faith in the public square”. Given his own background – born in a minority Catholic family in Northern Ireland, close to the border of the Irish Republic, educated at Queen’s University in Belfast, and British Ambassador to the Vatican for 5 years – and the fact that the first results from the Australian Census of 2021 would be released only a week later, this address (as philosophically nuanced as it was engaging) could hardly have been more timely, as two specific pieces of national data show.

The first Commonwealth census revealed that, in 1911, there were only about 1070 Australians who declared that they had “No religion” (0.21% of a population of about 4.455 million, of whom 98.46% were “Christian”), whereas in 2021, when our population had grown to 25.5 million, just 43.9% declared themselves “Christian”, whereas 38.9% (nearly 10 million) declared themselves of “No religion”. Yet, as Professor Campbell asserted, “You can take faith out of the public square, but you can’t take the public square out of faith” because “one’s theological principles and commitments are the source of all other principles”. Yet, he suggested, it might seem easier for governments (or even various confessions and denominations) to deny the diversity which our census reveals and opt for “a one size fits all” approach as “fairer”. Religions could “just blend in”, or even “stop

engaging intellectually”, for example in education, but, in aptly quoting Pope Francis – “The mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth, of what is good and beautiful” – he persuasively reminded us of how much that sense is contingent on religious values.

He pointed to the distinctiveness of the Francophone and the Anglophone “Enlightenment” traditions and approvingly quoted the German philosopher and sociologist, Jürgen Habermas, who said, “Liberal societal structures are dependent on the solidarity of their citizens. And, if the secularization of society goes off the rails, the sources of this solidarity may dry up altogether. That could well slacken the democratic bond and exhaust the kind of solidarity that democratic government needs but cannot impose by law.”

Put another way, this implies that, between secularism and religion – as with people and governments – there will always be tension, which requires constant examination and reassessment, which is in the interest of everyone, whatever their philosophical or religious standpoint.

Naturally, Professor Campbell’s presentation evoked a plethora of questions. Ever the diplomat, he prefaced many of his responses – which were as much variations on the interlocutors’ themes as “answers”—with, “That observation would be almost a separate presentation on its own”, thereby guaranteeing a further invitation to speak to the Society. *John Carmody (ACHS President)*

Sydney meeting: Sunday 17 July 2022

Topic: Anzac Day Sydney 1916: An origin story. How the Anglican Church laid the foundation for Australia's National Day of Commemoration

Presenter: Dr Darren Mitchell

Dr Darren Mitchell, when director of the Anzac War Memorial, Hyde Park Sydney, was struck by the similarity of the Anzac Day dawn service (introduced in 1928) and Anglican liturgy. In his talk he explored the origin of the first Anzac Day commemoration in Sydney held on 25 April 1916 and its chief instigator Dean Albert Talbot of St Andrew's Anglican Cathedral. This was just two days after Easter Sunday and the themes of resurrection and hope which are the crux of Easter are the same ones developed by the Anglican Church and incorporated into Anzac Day itself. Because of the huge losses and suffering, visible and to the fore as veterans returned and were appearing with wounds so evident, the people turned to the Church for the solace universally sought.

Dean Talbot, the Anglican Dean of Sydney had served as senior chaplain on the Gallipoli Peninsula where he was wounded at Lone Pine; his experiences there gave the ring of authenticity to his advocacy for nationwide solemn commemoration. He realised new rituals were required for Anzac Day. Darren emphasized the core theological truth which Talbot had reinforced in the rituals of Anzac Day and also in the design of war memorials to be built throughout the nation—resurrection and hope as well as sacrifice and death. These were epitomised in the mourning of Good Friday and the resurrection of Easter Sunday. This first Anzac Day commemoration in Sydney was held at 12 noon at the Outer Domain with 60,000 hearing an address by John Wright, the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney. It was established later in questioning by the audience that the Catholic Church organised an alternative service at St Mary's Cathedral at 12.15 pm as Catholics then would not have been able to actively participate in an Anglican form of worship. The government had decreed all work was to stop and a full minute's silence observed at noon (it wasn't until 1924 that Anzac Day became a public holiday in NSW). The afternoon would be occupied by various forms of entertainment and Talbot saw this balance of the day's proceedings as

a suitable compromise. It was interesting to hear that on the Gallipoli battlefields Dean Talbot and his Catholic counterpart agreed to both hold burial rites over the fallen; a pragmatic solution given the circumstances. It was also a fact that Australia was a deeply Christian society at this time and the Anglican Church was the numerically dominant religion with almost 50% of Australians Anglican. Consequently, the proscribed rituals for Anzac Day were to be Anglican.

The floral wreath which is so significant today in our ceremonies was seen in 1916 as a symbol of hope for a new life amongst the living. Keeping with his theme of resurrection and hope Darren turned to the Winged Victory War Memorial (1919) standing outside Marrickville Town Hall in Sydney's inner west and explored the symbolism of its figure of Nike with raised sword and lowered wreath. The fact the sword was in the left (inactive) hand was all important— the sword was no longer needed. The wreath was in the active hand. There was a promise of finality in the resignation of the face rather than one of triumph. The original Winged Victory had to be replaced partially and then in 2015 by a new stature and Darren skilfully outlined the differences between old and new. The sword was now in the right hand and lowered and the wreath, the symbol of mourning in the left inactive hand. Does that transposition of the hands symbolise further fighting? The body is no longer facing but is twisting away from the viewer. This new Nike is not about completion and victory and is saying to the onlooker peace is only temporary, its message at odds with the message of resurrection and hope of that first national Anzac Day at Sydney's domain. We thank Darren for his expert and thought-provoking talk. The numerous questions and comments which followed were indicative of the keen interest of his audience. The torso of the original Winged Victory may be seen in the WW1 gallery at the AWM.

Dr Janice Garaty, Historian and ACHS Councillor

Biographical Dictionary of Australian Catholic Educators Launch

On 20 July at ACU North Sydney, two members of the ACHS Council, Professor James Franklin and Dr Janice Garaty, attended the launch of the Biographical Dictionary of Australian Catholic Educators as an online repository of biographies, video interviews, obituaries, historical photographs and essays, books, media articles and relevant resources. This is an on-going project building on the initial publication "Not Forgotten: Australian Catholic Educators 1820-2020", eds Anne Benjamin and Seamus O'Grady, Melbourne, Coventry Press, 2020. The BDACE 'aims to keep the stories of these predecessors alive to inspire current and future teachers and leaders in Catholic schools and to provide a distinctive research tool'. It is primarily a resource for lay teachers in catholic schools to know and be inspired by the individual voices of individual Catholics who lived before and through the great transformation when Religious women and men were replaced by non-Religious teachers and administrators. The website can be accessed at <https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/faculties-directorates-and-staff/faculty-of-theology-and-philosophy/biographical-dictionary-of-australian-catholic-educators/>

Dr Janice Garaty, Historian and ACHS Councillor

Obituaries of recently deceased ACHS members

Richard Connolly (1927-2022)

When Richard Connolly – composer, broadcaster, singer, Latinist and literary expert – died on 4 May, Australia lost one of its most creative people and the ACHS a distinguished member. To the wider community, his theme for “Playschool” on ABC-TV would have been his best-known composition, for all that “There’s a Bear in there” was, literally, written overnight: there must be remarkably few Australians under 50, who don’t know that song by heart. However, to the Catholic community (both here and overseas) he is renowned as the creator of the sublime “Hymns for the Year of Grace” which he wrote with the poet, James McAuley.

Connolly was also an imaginative and influential ABC radio broadcaster and producer, especially as Head of its Department of Drama and Features, where -- never fearful of intellectual competition -- he assembled a galaxy of brilliant writers and broadcasters. His was a Golden Age for the ABC though he was aided by possessing richer and deeper gifts than any individual had a right to expect. (*John Carmody*)

Alan Hogan (4-1-1929-31-5-2022)

Alan was a retired NSW Judge. He had studied as a young man for the priesthood but left Propaganda in Rome before ordination. In his retirement from the law he gained an MA (Biblical Studies) at the Catholic Institute of Sydney. His knowledge of the New Testament was incredible and he shared this by publishing “Enjoy the Good News, a New Testament Guide” in 2016.

Alan was a wise and thoughtful person, a man with a strong spiritual life. He had had a very happy marriage and missed Jill very much. Up till last year he was restudying Greek and Hebrew and tutoring a young relative in Latin. His work as a Judge and as a visiting teacher of New Guinea lawyers gave him many stories to share with his friends. He will be missed. (*Helen Scanlon*)

Michael Kelly (1936-2022)

After a Bondi boyhood and Marist education there, Michael Kelly (1936-2022) graduated from Sydney University in Science and then briefly enrolled at St Columba’s Seminary (Springwood) and St Patrick’s (Manly). In 1969 he graduated from UNSW with a PhD in History and Philosophy. In the 1970s he held a tenured position at Swinburne College of Technology in Victoria. He left that appointment to return to Sydney to care for his mother and found work teaching secondary-school Mathematics (a career which he did not really enjoy).

Around the time of completing his PhD he was diagnosed with bone cancer in one arm. Typically, he first chose to go to Lourdes to pray for a miracle. Eventually, after surgery, he was cancer-free but not before losing the whole arm gradually to amputations. Close friends have praised Michael’s courage, toughness and selflessness through this illness. Those qualities, combined with a selfless concern and kindness for others (together with honesty, a propensity for deep thought and a profound spirituality) were hallmarks of his whole life. Shortly before his death he published *Philosophico-Religious Cameos* (*John Carmody with help from Margaret Hetheron*)

Order of Australia Medal

Dr Louis McGuigan has been awarded a Member of the Order of Australia honour for his significant service to rheumatology and community health. He has been part of the Australian Rheumatology Association for decades and was previously on medical boards and committees.

Book Release

Sub Tuum Praesidium Marist Brothers in Australia 1872-2022 by Julian Casey, John Luttrell, Peter Rodney and Neville Soloman. Available at Marist Resources The Hermitage, Mittagong or go to www.thehermitage.org.au search under ‘Shop’ for ‘Marist Resources’. RRP \$45 + postage.

Newsletter

We thank Geoff Hogan for generously and fastidiously compiling the newsletter. He has retired from this role and passed it on to Odhran O’Brien, please send any requests to the email below.

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