

# The Chimes



Newsletter of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia

Vol. 25 No. 3 - May 2025

## A New Chapter for Art in New Norcia Our first Artist in Residence — Simon Sieradzki.

*We're celebrating a milestone for New Norcia: the Old Trading Post's transformation into a vibrant gallery space, and the arrival of its first Artist in Residence, Simon Sieradzki. His presence brought fresh creative energy to this historic setting, now home to an inspiring new art experience.*

*Continues on page 2...*







## Our first Artist in Residence – Simon Sieradzki. (Continued)

Simon was born in Bunbury, and describes his heritage back to his grandparents as a combination of Polish and a ten pound Pom. His great grandparents settled and farmed in the Denmark and Northampton area, his side of the family coming off the farm during his parents' time.

Simon's mum married a second time to a United States sailor and as a consequence he spent a number of his primary school years in the States at schools that very much promoted art.

After school he played and gigged in a number of Indie rock bands before turning his attention back to art, his first love.

He has had an extensive and wide education in the arts. He graduated from Curtin University in Graphic Design, then went to Melbourne University to do a planning and design post-graduate certificate.

Both his Masters degree in Art and his PhD in Art were completed at Curtin University.

Simon works in oils, mostly brush, but also employs a pallet knife in his work.

Simon heard about the artist in residence programme by word of mouth, and a friend sent examples of his work to Abbot John prior to him applying to come to the Old Trading Post.

Simon is a working artist. He met a German artist undertaking his PhD work while at Curtin and visited him in Leipzig. He says his first thought was to go and establish himself in Berlin, but fell in love with Leipzig where there is a thriving art and artist's community. There he undertook two residencies in Leipzig but was unable to leave the country during the initial COVID wave. As a result, he has a studio and flat in Leipzig, and divides his time between Germany and Australia.

## Our backpackers in the Roadhouse

*Over the last two years, we have had a great experience with backpackers coming to work at New Norcia.*

They are usually highly qualified people who work in the roadhouse kitchen or for Grounds and Maintenance as a town cleaner.

Our newest "crop" of backpackers is no exception, all currently working at the roadhouse.

As you can see, they are lovely, smiley people who spend months with us, and inevitably enhance our life at New Norcia.

At left are Karen and Guillaume who come to us as a couple. Karen is Argentinian from Buenos Aires. Karen is an HR graduate who worked in recruitment, compensation and benefits. She has also worked as a barista, so has become a great asset at the coffee machine in the roadhouse.

Guillaume is more a man of action. He hails from Carcassonne, a mediaeval fortified city in the south of France and is excited by all things relating to water. He has worked as a lifeguard, a diver and on jet skis.

Karen and Guillaume have been travelling Australia for a couple of years and plan to be in the country until February 2026.

Izzy, on the right, is from Devon in the UK. She is here with her husband, Jos, who is working for Brad and Lisa Sinclair on their farm. Izzy worked with homeless people in the UK, for the YMCA, assisting them to get housing and general help and support.

They present wonderful smiling faces when you go the roadhouse. We are so happy to be able to host you for the time you are here.

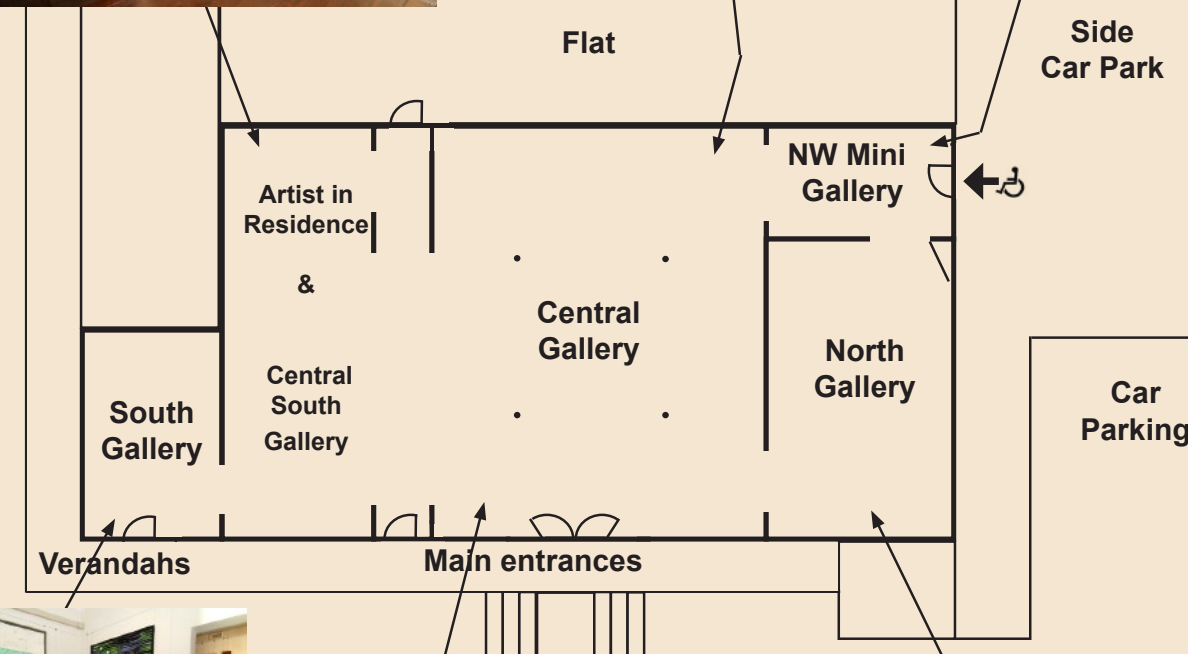


*We are very proud of the new gallery spaces of the Old Trading Post, now home to the Mandorla Art Award Exhibition.*



*...The galleries are expansive and light...*

*The central gallery is a triumph of space, and has a real "wow" factor*



*Even the smaller galleries have a great sense of space, and Abbot John and Carmel Murray were very careful not to "over-stock" them, as they curated the exhibition.*



*The exhibition is open to the public when the artist is in residence, and will soon become part of our two daily town tours.*



## Book your next sundowner at New Norcia in St Ildephonsus' Courtyard Bookings available from February 2025



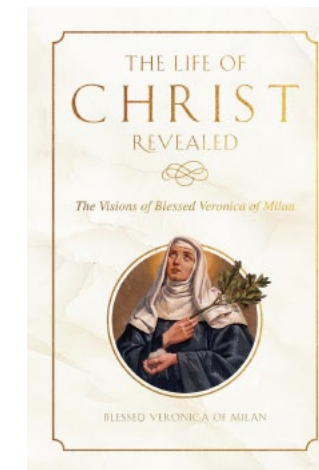
For more information, please contact Joyce:  
[groups@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.com.au)



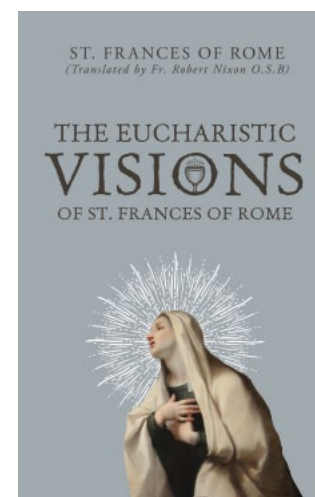
## More visions of the Saints translated into English by New Norcia's Fr. Robert Nixon

*Many of the saints throughout history have experienced remarkable visions, sometimes offering insights into the life of Christ and sometimes into the mysteries of the Church's sacraments.*

New Norcia's Fr. Robert Nixon has recently had published some new translations of visions of saints. One is *The Life of Christ Revealed: The Visions of Blessed Veronica of Milan*, published by TAN Books. Blessed Veronica was an Augustinian nun of the 15th century, who experienced a series of beautiful visions of the life of Christ. These often add many small but touching and colourful details to the incidents described in the Gospel, as well as other events in the life of Christ—such as when the Holy Family were attacked by bandits while travelling to Egypt, or the final supper which was shared between Jesus and Mary alone (on the night before the Last Supper).



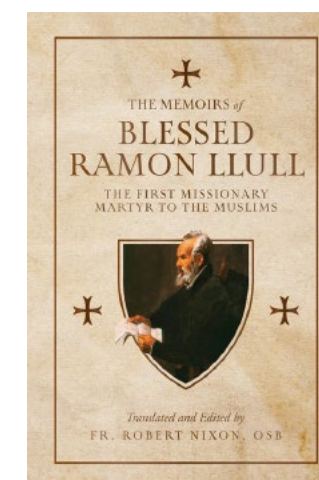
The second collection is *The Eucharistic Visions of St. Frances of Rome*, published by Sophia Institute. St. Frances of Rome, who also lived in the 15th century, is the patron saint of Benedictine oblates. Very often, after receiving the Eucharist, she would enter a state of trance and experience visions which offer illuminating insights into the mystery of Christ's presence in the sacrament.



Finally, Fr. Robert has also translated *The Memoirs of Blessed Ramon Lull—the First Missionary Martyr to the Muslims*, published by TAN Books. This remarkable and fast-paced memoir reads almost like a Quixotic adventure tale, and includes travels through exotic lands, shipwrecks, narrow escapes from

death, treacherous betrayals, and both remarkable successes and heartbreaking failures. Ramon Lull, a Majorcan knight and third order Franciscan of the 13th century, was also a novelist, poet, mystic, experimental scientist and alchemist. He embarked on an ambitious campaign to convert both the Muslims and the Mongols which finally resulted in his martyrdom in Tunisia.

All three books (as well as many others of Fr. Robert's translations) are available through the New Norcia giftshop and webshop, and through online retailers.



## The Easter Triduum at New Norcia, 2025

*The celebration of Holy Week and the Easter Triduum was a wonderful time of entering deeply into the mystery of Christ's suffering, death and Resurrection. All of those who attended these days were led to reflection and prayer on the meaning of both the supreme sacrifice and glorious triumph of our Saviour, which continues to touch the lives of us all and to reflect the hidden realities of our own hearts and souls.*

As usual, the monastic community at New Norcia were privileged to be joined by a diverse and appreciative group of guests, many of whom stayed at the various accommodation venues which are on offer. The liturgies were of great solemnity and beauty, presided over by Abbot John Herbert, and with music led by the celestial voices of New Norcia's special Easter choir. These liturgies commemorated the triumphant entrance of Christ into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday; the intimate actions of humble charity and service in the washing of the feet and sharing of bread and wine at the Last Supper on Holy Thursday; the ultimate expression of love and self-giving in the sacrifice of the Cross on Good Friday; and, finally, the glorious Resurrection of Our Lord from the dead on Easter Sunday. The Easter vigil liturgy commenced in darkness at 4:30am, with participants devoutly gathering around a blazing bonfire in front on the abbey church.

Apart from the liturgical events, the experience of the Easter Triduum at New Norcia is an opportunity for focused personal prayer and reflection, leaving behind for a few days the distractions and concerns of the external world to enter into the prayerful and contemplative silence of Benedictine monastic life. Our guests and visitors expressed their deep appreciation for the opportunity to share in this enriching experience of renewal and insight.



# Yerecoin P&C Ladies' Night

*On a warm March evening, the Yerecoin P&C hosted its annual Ladies' Night, bringing together 46 local women in the beautiful courtyard of St Ildephonsus. This cherished event has become a highlight of the year, encouraging connection and camaraderie among women from across the Victoria Plains Shire.*

Attendees ranged from current parents of Yerecoin and Calingiri primary schools to past parents, principals, teachers, and new residents encouraged by employers to get involved in the community. Long-time locals mingled with newcomers, creating a vibrant and supportive atmosphere where shared experiences and community spirit were celebrated.

Marlon's Kitchen provided a delicious selection of finger food, thoughtfully served by his staff, while drinks were available for purchase. A raffle organised by the P&C added a fun fundraising element to the evening, raising over \$400 to support our small school.

Although there were initial concerns about the lack of background music, it quickly became clear that none was needed – the sound of laughter, stories, and lively conversation filled the air, making it a truly memorable night.



## We Value Your Feedback

At New Norcia, your feedback helps shape a better experience for every visitor. We actively listen through a variety of channels:

- Our in-house visitor survey
- Reviews on TripAdvisor and WikiCamps
- Conversations and comments on Facebook and Instagram

Whether it's a suggestion, a story, or a snapshot—every bit of feedback helps us grow and improve.



We are on  
TRIP ADVISOR



Follow us on  
INSTAGRAM



Follow us on  
FACEBOOK



**Neil Finley**  
Local Guide · 399 reviews · 128 photos

★★★★★ 2 months ago

Stopped in for a look while on a Motorbike trip up from Mandurah. The Monastery, Schools and Churches, Cemetery and other buildings are very interesting which fantastic architecture. The visitors centre gives you an idea of early life back in the day. You get a sense of peace here but also a realisation of some dark sides of New Norcia. It was so interesting to walk around and see all these buildings and the grounds. There is a tour which we were not in time for but we decided to have our own paced walk around for a hour or so. I'm so glad to have visited to see this place.



## The Mazurkas of Frederick Chopin

A MUSICAL SOIRÉE  
Performed by Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB  
7TH JUNE 2025  
At the New Norcia Hostel



Scan for tickets

Frederick Chopin (1810-1849) is perhaps the most popular and widely performed of all composers for the piano. His music is profound, beautiful, and infused with a variety of emotions and a rich tapestry of textures, rhythms and unforgettable melodies. The musical form he favoured most was the Mazurka- a type of dance from his native Poland, combining lively rhythms, distinctive melodies and rich and ever-changing emotions. This recital will present a programme consisting entirely of the Mazurkas of Chopin, and offer to listeners a unique and memorable immersion into these beautiful and capricious works.



# Roadhouse electrical upgrade

*The current roadhouse was originally a traditional garage, selling fuel and oils, tyres and work on vehicles.*



After the Old Trading Post ceased operation selling provisions and food some thirty years ago, the roadhouse was expanded a few times to accommodate a fully equipped kitchen, together with serving counters and a café seating area.

As a consequence, the roadhouse had three separate distribution boards in three different locations. The boards have increasingly been incapable of supply the power needs for the roadhouse, and were not up to modern day standards, requiring a complete rewire of the building. Rewiring a building of this age and complexity is difficult enough, without having to keep the operation running at the same time.

Doug Pauly and his team Pauly and Co from Bindoon, are undertaking the rewiring and upgrade work.

The upgrade required relocation of the old distribution boards to one central point. They are having to remove all the old cabling and install new power circuits to even out the power demands required to meet the modern demands within the roadhouse. They have installed three new sub boards, cable trays to carry electrical cables in the roof spaces, upgraded the lighting to all LED both in the shop and over the service counter.

To meet the brief to keep the roadhouse operational throughout the work, they have to work nine night shifts starting at 5:00pm working through till 3:00am in the morning.

Once all the work chasing cables and placing the new distribution boards is completed, they will change over the cabling to the new supply.

The project is expected to take 3 to 4 weeks to complete.

## Coming Events

*From May 2025*

**24<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

One Day Retreat: Meditation and Union with God

**7<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

The Mazurkas of Frederick Chopin:  
A Musical Soirée

**11–13<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

Weekend Retreat: Monastic Wisdom  
for Everyday Life

**21<sup>st</sup> June 2025**

One Day Retreat: Christian Stoicism

Visit our website for a complete list of  
Coming Events - [newnoria.com.au/whats-on/  
events-calendar/current-events](https://newnoria.com.au/whats-on/events-calendar/current-events)

## Liturgical Calendar

*May – June 2025*

**Sunday 18 May**

Fifth Sunday of Easter

**Monday 19 May**

St Celestine  
(Optional Memorial)

**Saturday 24 May**

Our Lady Help Of Christians  
(Solemnity)

**Sunday 25 May**

Sixth Sunday Of Easter

**Monday 26 May**

St Gregory VII (Optional  
Memorial)

**Tuesday 27 May**

St Augustine of Canterbury  
(Optional Memorial)

**Saturday 31 May**

Visitation of Our Lady (Feast)

**Sunday 1 June**

Ascension Sunday (Solemnity)  
(Seventh of Easter)

**Tuesday 3 June**

St Charles Lwanga &  
Companions (Memorial)

**Thursday 5 June**

St Boniface (Memorial)

**Sunday 9 June**

Pentecost Sunday (Solemnity)

**Wednesday 11 June**

St Barnabas (Memorial)

**Friday 13 June**

St Anthony Of Padua  
(Memorial)

**Sunday 15 June**

Trinity Sunday (Solemnity)



**NEW NORCIA**  
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

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New Norcia Road, New Norcia WA 6509, Australia  
T: (08) 9654 8018  
[www.newnoria.com.au](http://www.newnoria.com.au)