

The Chimes



Newsletter of the Benedictine Community of New Norcia

Vol. 26 No. 6 Sep 2026



Around the grounds

***T**here has been no shortage of activity around the town this season.*

The northern precinct of town, including St Ildephonsus', the workers' cottage, St Mary's Square (Education Centre) and staff housing in Piggery Lane, received a much-needed power upgrade recently.

Our friendly 'Sparky' Doug Pauly is pictured here finishing off his work on the installation of the shiny new power distribution board.

The grounds and maintenance team have completed the installation of a very smart picket fence at Kelly's Cottage.

We are grateful to our long-time friends and benefactors Sue and Kim Gardner, whose generous donation towards the cost of the materials made this possible.

The old wobbly wooden ramp at the northern rear door of the Abbey Church has been replaced with a very sturdy steel ramp built by Arnold of Beurs Engineering, Bindoon.

We continue to work on extending disabled access across the site. If there is someone out there who is willing and able to help us with funding for a small lift to the monastery oratory ... we'd love to hear from you!



Following in Salvado's footsteps

Each year, schools, parishes and individuals retrace the Camino Salvado — the route walked by Bishop Rosendo Salvado from Subiaco to New Norcia in 1846. They walk it in stages, arriving at the Abbey Church to ringing bells and a welcome from the community. This season brought several groups to our door.

St Joseph's Church, Subiaco — Group One

After six days of walking — with the mishaps and adventures that any good pilgrimage provides — the first group of Camino Walkers from St Joseph's Church in Subiaco arrived at New Norcia to the ringing of the bells.

Dom Daniel presented a warm welcome in the Abbey Church, after which the group enjoyed afternoon tea, dinner and an overnight stay. The following morning brought a cooked breakfast and a town tour before they headed home.

St Joseph's Church, Subiaco — Group Two

A second group of Camino Walkers from St Joseph's Church in Subiaco arrived not long after — and this time the pilgrimage had drawn people from well beyond Western Australia.



Of the group, only three walkers were from WA. The remainder had travelled from interstate, and one guest had made the journey from Singapore, following in Salvado's footsteps from the other side of the world.

It is something to pause on: that the walk Salvado made through the WA bush in 1846 continues to call people to it — not just from Perth's suburbs but from Sydney, Melbourne, and further afield still.

The group enjoyed a welcome from Dom Daniel in the Abbey Church, followed by afternoon tea, dinner and an overnight stay. The following morning brought a cooked breakfast, a town tour, and a packed lunch for the road.

Holy Cross College — Year 12

On a cold and windy winter's day, 120 students and ten teachers from Holy Cross College completed the final leg of the Camino Salvado Walk.

Holy Cross College complete the walk in stages, walking a stage each year in high school, finishing in the Abbey Church after the final stage when they are in Year 12.

It was wonderful to see so many parents, grandparents and siblings make the effort to come up to New Norcia to see their students

complete the walk and show their support — the Abbey Church was filled to overflowing!

It was also an exciting day for Dom Daniel and the staff — for the first time in three years, the bells in the bell tower were ringing as the students approached the Abbey Church — it has been a long wait and we are happy that we no longer have to use the hand bells!

The parents provided an afternoon tea in the Arcades for the students before they all returned home.

Corpus Christi College — Camino Blessing

On Tuesday 25th of August forty students and four teachers from Corpus Christi arrived for a Camino Blessing before their walk down to Subiaco, following Salvado's pilgrimage trail.

Corpus Christi are deviating from the usual pilgrimage trail in that after they departed from New Norcia, they went to Wyening Mission to see the wells that the monks built. To Corpus Christi this is a more authentic replica of the walk, following the water.

Dom Daniel spoke about how Wyening Mission came to be and the meaning of Wyening in Noongar language — the place of





the dreaded snake. He also spoke about how Salvado and the monks as well as indigenous workers built a trail to the mission and sank the wells so that they could farm sheep to provide for New Norcia. Dom Daniel also explained how Torres, the second Abbot of New Norcia created vineyards at Wyening Mission and, until 1972, all sacramental wine used in Catholic churches in WA was the Benedictine Wine from Wyening.

Dom Daniel concluded the blessing with holy water and wished the students and teachers God's blessing on their walk.



Soirées 2026

Fr Robert Nixon

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A BAROQUE EVENING

3rd October 2026

Scan below to book tickets



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FRENCH IMPRESSIONISTS

5th December 2026

SOLD OUT



La Table de L'Abbé

The Abbot's Table 2026

.....

In case of
cancellations/availability
please email
museum@newnorcia.com.au
.....

SPRING
21st November 2026



A visit from: **Swan Valley Anglican Community School**

On a sunny winter's day, the Year 12 students from Swan Valley Anglican Community School came for a day trip to New Norcia.

The students' focus for the day was stillness and to learn about how the Benedictine monks practise this in everyday life, before they have a busy and stressful few weeks sitting their final exams.

Sr. Hilda gave two talks in St Gertrude's Chapel while Tracy took the students on a town tour.

A small group of Art students started the day with a town tour and then browsed the Mandorla Art Gallery where they admired the art and sketched drawings of various pieces as well as the architecture around the town. They concluded the day with a visit to the Museum/Art Gallery.

It was wonderful to have such a lovely group of well-mannered students in New Norcia who were eager to be here and who appreciated their surroundings.





A visit from:

Salvado Catholic College

On Friday, 28th of August, 120 Year 8 students arrived in New Norcia for a day visit.

The students completed a town tour (thank you to Tracy for being an amazing tour guide), a look through the Museum/Art Gallery, the Prindiville Room and the Six Seasons Panels.

The students and teachers also attended midday prayers with the Monks, held in the Abbey Church due to the large group.

We thank the students for being respectful and interested in the history and story of New Norcia.

On Tuesday 8th of September we welcomed seventy-nine year five students from Salvado Catholic College for a day visit. The students enjoyed a town tour, Prindiville Room activity and the Museum/Art Gallery as well as joining the monks for midday prayers. They were a lovely cohort of students who asked many interesting questions and who enjoyed the day.



A wonderful cat charity

A wonderful registered cat charity, Awesome Funky Felines, has been assisting New Norcia in reducing feral cat numbers around the town.

Husband and wife team Natalya and Colin founded the Wheatbelt based cat charity near Northam about seven years ago, have assisted numerous communities with their strays, semi-social strays and feral cat problems and have been immensely helpful with this project in New Norcia.

Cats are, of course, an introduced predator and cause devastation to the native fauna. It's estimated that they kill over 1.5 billion native animals annually such as birds, frogs and reptiles plus over a billion invertebrates. So in a small way we are pleased to say that with Awesome Funky Felines' support and advice, plus the loan of

several traps, we caught four feral and semi-feral cats this month from around the town and also another couple earlier in the year.

They were taken by Natalya and Colin who made the four hour round trip to collect them from us!

These most recent four cats are already getting work done such as being vet checked, neutered and are being socialised. Volunteer foster carers take the stray and semi-feral cats and work with them, and Natalya and Colin work intensely with the wild ferals. The aim is the same and that is to socialise and tame the cats so that they can be adopted out - usually directly through them, occasionally through Cat Haven or other such rehoming organisations and always as indoor cats only. If you're interested to see some of their work and successful adoptions you can find them on Facebook.

New Norcia's 2027
Retreat Programme:

Ancient traditions & new insights

Our programme of retreats and seminars for 2027 has just been released, and we are delighted to be able to welcome bookings for these wonderful events. There are some very interesting and remarkable offerings indeed, covering a wide range of spiritual perspectives, including those of Thomas Merton, Jordan Petersen, Friedrich Nietzsche and Carl Jung. Retreats exploring the spiritual insights offered by contemporary cinema (The Matrix, In the Name of the Rose, etc.) will be a feature, as well a study of the mysterious Gospel of Thomas, and an intensive study weekend on ecclesiastical Latin.

Central to the programme of retreats are, of course, those focusing on the monastic approach to prayer, God and practical living, highlighted in the ever-popular weekends on Benedictine Secrets for Balance and Serenity. Other retreats explore approaches to uncluttering one's heart and mind, cultivating inner strength and peace through meditation, and praying the Rosary.

As always, we welcome participants from all backgrounds. As well as the retreat content, participants enjoy the atmosphere of quiet, prayerful contemplation, the natural and artistic beauty of New Norcia, and the warm and generous hospitality of the Benedictine tradition.

Details may be found at New Norcia's webshop, at shop.newnorcia.com.au.

Those interested are encouraged to book early to avoid disappointment.

Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB



Reminder: Studies Day Friday, 2nd October 2026

The Studies Day this year represents an exciting milestone as it will be the thirtieth Studies Day since its inauguration in 1991.

To mark this historic occasion, it has been decided to hold the event on a Friday instead of the previously customary Saturday event. This is so that librarians and archivists, as well our usual attendees, can attend a professional development day, especially now that the traditional professional development Library Day is held on alternate years following the merger of the archives and library departments.

The programme this year will include translator Judy McGuinness' review of the second published volume of the Santos Salvado letters (although the first, chronologically), Spain and Italy 1849-1868, together with an update on the last phase of the Santos letters; and an audio-visual presentation from Mexico-based Sarah Connor on her work on the joint New Norcia – Perth Catholic Archdiocese project, the Bishop Griver correspondence. There will also be three musically-themed papers, one from New Norcia's new Music Collections curator and former Abbot Placid scholar and soprano, Allegra Giagu, who will be talking about her research into Bishop Salvado's music; the second paper will be from our current Abbot Placid scholar, Paul Watt, on Gregorian Chant. The last paper will be from New Norcia's Liturgist, Fr Robert Nixon, and is titled Rosendo Salvado and the mid-19th Century Piano Circus. This replaces Abbot John's update on the restoration works at New Norcia which will be delivered at a later date.

The papers will be presented in the stunning chapel of St Gertrude's College with lunch in St Ildephonsus' dining room. Morning and afternoon teas will be served in St Gertrude's and entry to the museum and art gallery will be free to those wearing their name tags. Geoff Moor has very kindly agreed to be available again to give people a demonstration of printing techniques in the Abbey Press and print your "hot off the press" Studies Day bookmark.

Admission costs are \$100 or \$85 for seniors and students and they can be purchased from New Norcia's web shop site (<https://shop.newnorcia.com.au/collections/special-items>). Registration will be in St Gertrude's College foyer starting at 9.00 and the first paper will be at 10.15 following Abbot John's welcome.

Looking forward to seeing you on 2nd October!

New Norcia revisited

Written by Jim Longbottom

Every now and then we tour guides have ex students on our tours, and they add to the tour every time. I recently had Mary Warner on my tour, who boarded at St Gertrude's for a few years in the 70's, then Mary Murray.

Mary was so excited about being back in St Gertrude's and was even carrying her old yearbook and photos. She generously allowed me to photograph them and to write a short piece for the Chimes.

Mary was Captain of the school 1970-1971, and was the recipient of the Lord Abbot's cup, awarded for "best all-round sportsmanship".

The actual cup is on display in St Gertrude's side room, but the inscription is on the rear of the cup and not accessible to turn around.

I love the photo of the girls marching out on the field in front of St Gert's on sports day, with Mary, the flagbearer leading from the front. Thanks for a lovely reminiscence, Mary, we are delighted that you enjoyed reconnecting with New Norcia and St Gertrude's College.



Top: Abbot Gregory Gomez presenting Mary with the cup 1971.
Middle: Mary Murray 2026. Bottom: Sports Parade 1970.



Vale: Christopher Sean Kelsey

1966–2026

On Wednesday 12th August Abbot John presided at the Memorial Service for Chris Kelsey, who died suddenly at home on 3rd July. The crowded Mogumber Hall was the perfect venue for the celebration of the life of this much-loved local.

Along with a wonderful slide show of images from Chris' very colourful life, his larrikin spirit was captured in the eulogies shared by his two daughters Sarah and Jessie, his sister Julie, and one of his good mates Gavin Halligan.

One of Chris' grand-daughter's moving testimony captured the hearts of this close-knit community.

At the conclusion of the service the congregation departed in silence after placing sprigs of rosemary around the urn containing Chris' ashes as a gesture of respect and remembrance.

The silence didn't last long as everyone gathered at the Mogumber Hub to share lively stories, drinks and finger food.

[Abbot John's welcome address — excerpt]:

"The invitation to this gathering describes Chris as a man, a myth, and a legend. We'll be hearing all about what made him so in a moment, but for now I think we can all agree that he was a pretty decent bloke, a man who believed in community, a man who participated in and made a significant contribution to the various small communities that make up the Shire of Victoria Plains.

Although Chris has worked for us at New Norcia on and off over the years, my experience of him was quite simple. We'd often cross paths at the New Norcia roadhouse – me picking up the post, and Chris getting stuck into his big breakfast!

He wouldn't just lift his head out of all that sausage and bacon, and say 'hi', but rather he'd always engage, always invite me to take a seat for a chat, usually so he could tell me all about his latest exotic idea of how we could get rid of those wretched corellas. I mention this, because that's what life is all about in a small rural community.

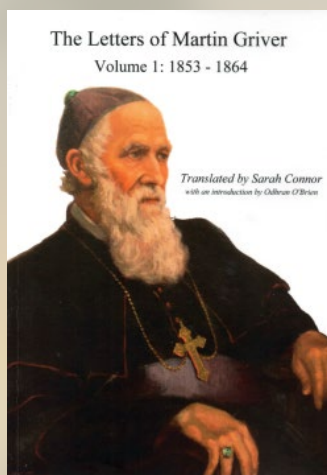
*May you, our dear friend,
rest in peace.*

Studies Day 2026: book launch

'The Letters of Martin Griver'

New Norcia Archives and the Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth are delighted to announce the launch of their first joint venture, *The Letters of Martin Griver* covering the years 1853–1864. As a bit of background, Martin Griver y Cuni (1814–1886), was the second Roman Catholic Bishop of Perth, serving from 1873 until his death in 1886. The establishment of a mission in New Norcia by Rosendo Salvado was not supported by Salvado's co-bishop Serra and this led to tensions in the new colony. Griver was subsequently appointed Administrator of the Diocese and given the responsibility for separating the activities of the mission from the diocese. This unique collection of letters from New Norcia's archives sheds a fascinating light on the machinations of colonial Perth.

The letters have been translated by Dr Sarah Connor who is a NAATI-certified Spanish–English translator with over



thirty-five years of experience, working between Europe, Australia, and Mexico. Her aim has been to translate the handwritten Griver documents accurately, whilst preserving the original tone and context for readers to enjoy. Sarah is currently in Mexico but has agreed to appear at Studies Day via an

audio-visual presentation during which she will discuss her reactions to the letters and the difficulties they presented. She has been very ably assisted in this by Eugenia Schettino who, readers will remember, has translated the letters of Santos Salvado with fellow translator Judith McGuinness.

The book will be on sale at the Museum and Art Gallery bookshop following the launch on October 2nd. Alternatively, it can be ordered online at <https://shop.newnoria.com.au/>.

Coming Events

From October 2026

2nd October 2026

Studies Day & book launch

3rd October 2026

Soirée: A Baroque Evening

23rd–24th October 2026

Weekend Retreat: Being Contemplative in the 21st Century

21st November 2026

Abbot's Table

Visit our website for a complete list of coming events:
newnoria.com.au/whats-on/events-calendar/current-events

Liturgical Calendar

From October 2026

Thursday 1 October

St Teresa Of The Child Jesus (Memorial)

Saturday 3 October

Bl Columba Marmion (Optional Memorial)

Sunday 4 October

Twenty-Seventh In Ordinary Time

Tuesday 6 October

St Bruno (Memorial)

Wednesday 7 October

Our Lady Of The Rosary (Memorial)

Sunday 11 October

Twenty-Eighth In Ordinary Time

Thursday 15 October

St Teresa Of Jesus (Memorial)

Saturday 17 October

St Ignatius Of Antioch (Memorial)

Sunday 18 October

Twenty-Ninth In Ordinary Time

Sunday 25 October

Thirtieth In Ordinary Time

Wednesday 28 October

Sts Simon & Jude (Feast)



NEW NORCIA
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

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