



*Pax, a Latin word meaning peace, is the motto of the Benedictine monks of New Norcia*

# The Chimes Newsletter



May 2018

## Easter at New Norcia

We have been coming to New Norcia for Easter for more than 25 years. We journey from Perth through the rural landscape, stopping at the Bindoon bakery, passing familiar landmarks and in no time crossing the Moore River and parking the car for three days in anticipation of something special.

Part of the appeal is the peaceful, undistracted setting where we can enter into and reflect upon the significance of the Easter Mysteries. It is very much an annual pilgrimage for us.

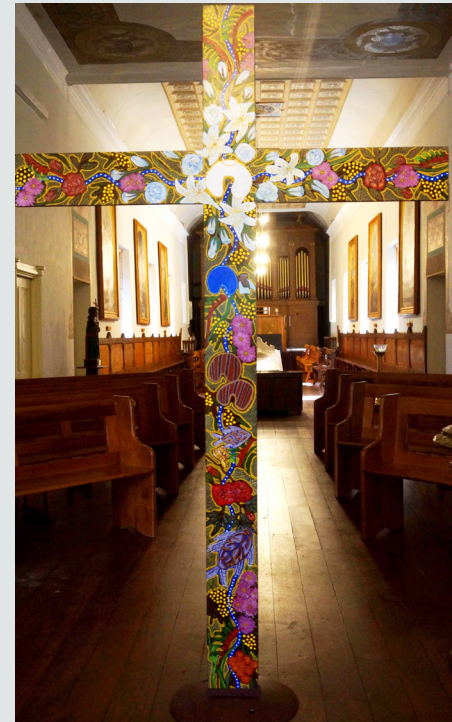
No two Easters are the same at New Norcia. The attention to detail in the rituals, the music, the homilies and the participating community make New Norcia Easters something rare and challenging.

From the washing of the feet and Mass of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday to the Service of Light and the Resurrection Mass early Sunday morning, Easter at New Norcia is a time like no other in the year.

It is also a time where we renew our friendship with the monks and join them in their community prayer, take quiet walks, make our annual record of the birds we see, meet other guests and locals, and share delicious home cooked meals. We take time to rest, read and reflect and leave very grateful for the experience.

We always look forward to next year!

By Chris and Dianne Reidy



*An Aboriginal Easter Cross by Sheila Humphries*

## Fr Anscar Celebrates his 60<sup>th</sup> Year of Profession

Fr Anscar McPhee's anniversary of his profession turned out to be a lovely celebration. Many friends, guests and locals joined the community for the Mass. Touched by the amount of people who joined with him to mark the day, Fr Anscar felt the unity of spirit and solidarity deeply. Among the guests were the Dillons, the very first couple he ever married, Joanne Panizza, the daughter of local parish members, Pat and Michael Whitley who Fr Anscar married in Fremantle on another anniversary of his profession. His brother Fr Pat McPhee travelled over from the Eastern States for the day and Mirella Freestone, a frequent visitor to New Norcia presented him with a painting depicting that laugh that we all know and love! Thanks to everyone who joined in the celebrations and making it such a special day.



*Fr Anscar with Mirella Freestone and Keith Hunt*

# Blessing of the Roads

Blessing of the Roads is a state-wide community campaign run in the lead up to Easter; a time of year that many travel long distances to be with friends and family or visit holiday destinations. The campaign is aligned with Towards Zero, a globally recognised approach towards achieving zero fatalities and injuries on our roads.

The Shire of Victoria Plains has over 800km of roads. Roads that connect our towns and people and provide access to services and community facilities. Roads that allow transport of our agricultural goods. Roads are a necessity to us all and the Shire of Victoria Plains is constantly working on our roads and working towards sourcing funding for our roads, to improve the safety and experience of all users.



*Fr Robert Nixon, Abbot John, Cr Pauline Bantock and Dom Paul Forster*

As we stand here at this lookout we can be grateful for improvements such as the New Norcia Bypass. As road which has helped preserve the heritage of the New Norcia town site and historic buildings. We are thankful for all those involved in achieving this.

I would also like to reflect on the previous loss of life and injury on the roads. In just recent days we have had such a tragedy occur only a few kilometres down the road from here. We thank the first responders from our community who attend such accidents, in an effort to save life.

By Cr Pauline Bantock  
Deputy President, Shire of Victoria Plains

# Regional Heritage Conference 2018

I set off for the Sacred Heritage Conference in Geraldton with a fairly limited notion of what a sacred space was, but over the course of the next two days my opinions were challenged and broadened. The speakers were passionate about their subjects, knowledgeable and interesting, including our own Abbot John whose talk “Of Monks and Museums” really set the tone of the day. People seemed to be awed and amazed at the extent of our collections, the history, the breadth of what we do and the complexity of running the town. They say when they visit New Norcia their experience is peaceful, cultural and reflective. Which is of course what we want visitors to experience, but it does make me smile wryly as I know only too well how fast that little duck is paddling!

It was an incredibly enjoyable couple of days. We met old friends, made new ones, got the opportunity to talk with a fascinating array of people and learnt how different organisations in similar situations are coping and running. The sharing of knowledge and contacts is always invaluable and the generosity with which it was given was refreshing. My own Eurocentric view of sacred heritage was turned upside down by Patrick Churnside and Godfrey Simpson whose presentations on Songlines and Sacred Aboriginal Sites were a revelation. I have always found the notion of being so in tune with the land problematic but listening to their passion and quiet knowledge, the bulb began to glow!

The whole group was also pleasantly surprised by Geraldton itself, the Monsignor Hawes exhibition is very fine and

definitely worth a visit as is the newly refurbished cathedral complex, and we found a couple of great restaurants too – always a bonus!

By Lucy Nicholson, Communications Manager



*Left to Right: Carmel Murray, Abbot John, Lucy Nicholson and Marina Baker*



## From 'a town like no other' to 'a town like Alice'

After Easter I had the great pleasure of presenting a paper entitled "*In the hands of Him whose name we had come to proclaim – the Aboriginal Mission at New Norcia*" at the Friends of Strehlow Research Centre Symposium in Alice Springs 5-8 April. The theme of the symposium was "*Reflecting on the past; making tracks for the future.*" Upon arrival I was immediately struck by the immense beauty of the Central Australian landscape, the warm hospitality, and the local Arrernte (pronounced Arunda) people speaking their native language.

The local parish priest kindly took me to visit the Santa Teresa Mission. After a tour and chat with the locals, I met some delightful Aboriginal women working away at their dot paintings in the spirituality centre. They presented me with a very special gift: one of their stunning painted crosses and a painted candle.

Back in Alice, the symposium commenced with two powerful presentations in the newly opened Supreme Court building addressing the complex issues of indigenous language and law in our current judicial system. The following two days included sixteen presentations at the Araluen Cultural Centre addressing a wide variety of topics including photographic collections, art, language, music, early film, landscape, Aboriginal education, mission, heritage architecture and pilgrimage...all giving profound testimony to the rich culture

of the red centre. My own paper was well received, and many expressed their desire to visit us!

As well as learning from and being inspired by these excellent and sometimes moving presentations, the symposium provided a welcome opportunity to make new connections with like-minded people. I was particularly pleased to meet delegates associated with the Albert Namatjira Trust, whom we will commission to work on the exciting New Norcia project of exhibiting the Namatjira paintings gifted to us by the late Michael Jones, an old boy of St Ild's.

On the Sunday after the symposium we enjoyed an excursion to Jay Creek including a Lutheran service in the simple tin church which was attended by many former Aboriginal residents and co-presided by Aboriginal and white Australian pastors. I was invited to address the congregation, so I was able to send greetings from Noongar and Benedictine country. We then went on to the renowned Finke River Mission at Hermannsberg for a tour and lunch. The visit concluded with the singing of hymns by members of the famous Hermannsberg Choir...and we all sang Kumbaya in Arunda!

To be welcomed by these spirit-filled folk in this exquisite landscape was truly an Easter blessing.

By Abbot John



Top: Santa Teresa Mission; Above: Hermannsberg Choir; Right: Namatjira Memorial

# Refurbishment of the Museum Ground Floor Exhibition

The ground floor of the Museum and Art Gallery of New Norcia has undergone a major refurbishment thanks to receiving a Tourism WA Visitor Centre Grant to update the entry areas of the Visitor Centre and Museum, including outdoor furniture, a revamp of the exterior fencing, installation of way-finding signage, a brochure and the refurbishment of the ground floor, as an entry to subsequent display areas. Beginning in mid-January, the project was accessible to the public by the end of February and was formally opened on 23<sup>rd</sup> April by the Australian Ambassador to the Holy See, Melissa Hitchman, providing a wonderful celebration of the new exhibition. The display is based on the 2014 New Norcia exhibition celebrating the Bicentennial of Rosendo Salvado's birth.

Our initial planning meeting brought together Abbot John Herbert with all involved and a timeline was established. Behind the scenes of the completed display is an enormous amount of work undertaken by the Curator Joy Legge and a team of six volunteers, with New Norcia Grounds and Maintenance staff guided by Ian Smith and contractors also in consultation with the Museum Manager, Carmel Murray. Responsibility for the Museum Collections Manager and five volunteers included the packing, removal, tracking, cleaning and storing of hundreds of objects, books, documents, furniture and paintings.

The volunteers ably assisted in these tasks over a few days, placing the entire contents of the museum ground floor on a dozen tables in a classroom where they were conserved, accessioned and photographed, with much of that work still continuing. Almost 200 items have been accessioned so far. As the display had not been substantially updated since 1977, the museum had previously fulfilled two roles – display and storage: at New Norcia as at many other regional museums “Display has been the best form of storage.” However the new display is much sleeker, bright and clean with interpretative panels and fewer items displayed, giving the visitor a deeper understanding of the motivation, establishment and progression of the New Norcia mission.

Thank you to all involved in this timely revitalisation of the ground floor of the New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery. We look forward to visitors enjoying the beautiful display and hopefully we will not have to do this again for a very long time!

By Marina Baker, NN Museum Collections Manager



## Mandorla Art Award Finalists Announcement



The Mandorla Art Award committee is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2018 award. The selection panel of Claire Bushby, Janis Nedela and Prof Bill Loader deliberated for some time to make a selection of 40 works from the 186 entries received. The artworks respond to the 2018 theme “And then I saw a new heaven and a new earth...” (Rev 21 : 1-2).

The prize winners will be announced at the official opening on Friday 1 June and the works will be exhibited from June 2 – 30 at Turner Galleries, Northbridge. A selection of works will then tour to the New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery, where they will be on show from the 7 – 29 July. For the list of the finalists please go to the Mandorla Art webpage, [www.mandorlaart.com](http://www.mandorlaart.com).



# Two Successful Events Begin the Year for NNIBS

The New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies (NNIBS) has commenced its yearly programme with two highly successful events. The first was a study weekend on poetic paraphrases of the psalms, led by Fr. Robert. The weekend presented a survey and exploration of the work of various poets, from 1500-1900, in transforming the psalms into poetry in the English language. The participants even produced their own original poetic versions of some of the psalms, with great success.

The second event was a Lenten retreat, led by Fr. David, drawing from the Lenten and Easter homilies of St. Augustine of Hippo. It revealed how the traditions of Christian initiation, as practised in Augustine's time, convey rich spiritual and theological insights into the journey towards God for the contemporary Christian.

A number of further NNIBS are due to take place over the coming weeks and months. For details, please refer to the New Norcia website.

By Fr Robert Nixon



Fr Robert Nixon

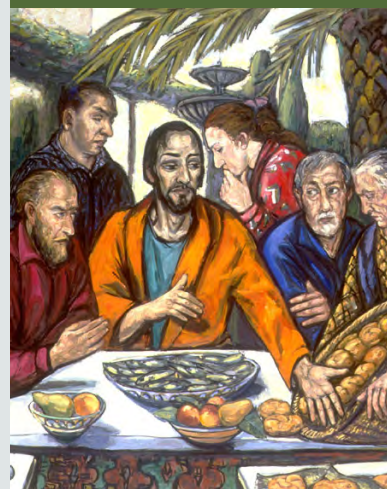


NEW NORCIA

**Institute for  
Benedictine Studies**

Study Weekends and Retreats

PROGRAMME 2018



## Library re-carpeted

The outdated brown carpet that had worn itself down has been discarded. In its place is a chameleon of foliage greys and blue-green speckled with hints of autumn. It all depends upon how the light and shadows tests the imagination.

The Grounds and Maintenance guys did a terrific job of redeploying all the furniture to the verandas and the rain that swept through the Bindoon area on Thursday afternoon bypassed New Norcia. The monks, ever willing to lend assistance, moved boxes of books that are yet to be catalogued, and then the carpet layers set to work. It did take them a bit more time than they expected but the end result is a job well done. After that, it was the inevitable shuffling of furniture back to its former locations.

I expect to be long past my used-by-date before some other librarian faces a similar necessity.

By Carolyn Talbot, Librarian



## Australia Day Award Winners

Although this was a while ago now, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the award winners at this year's shire run Australia Day Breakfast in Bolgart. Jane Graham was awarded volunteer of the year, Demi Payne junior volunteer of the year, and Nicole McInnes community citizen of the year. We greatly appreciate your contribution.



From left: Jane Graham, Shire Councillor Jacqui Corless-Crowther, Demi Payne and Nicole McInnes

NEW NORCIA  
**WRITERS'  
FESTIVAL**  
2018

**Save the Date!**

The date for the 2018 New Norcia Writers' Festival is Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> August.

More information will be available in the coming weeks.



# Repairing the Walls

Late one night after the villagers were safe in their beds sleeping, an unknown shadowy vehicle tried to squeeze through the narrow pass in the heritage wall, built from handmade bricks in Abbot Torres' era between 1901 and 1914. It did not succeed and disappeared into the night, probably with significant scratches and dents. In the morning the poor wall was in a sorry state, a pillar had been badly damaged and cracks sustained further into the base. Andy, a brick craftsman with many years experience (pictured right), is fixing the problem and will also make repairs to the top of the adjacent pillar.



Andy, busy at work

# A Busy Buildings and Grounds Team

As always a lot is going on behind the scenes. The Buildings and Grounds team has taken advantage of the school holidays and have brought plasterers into St Gertrude's College who specialise in lathe and plaster. Some of the internal walls were fairly badly damaged and we found that little fingers were helping the process along! The mix is the made from sand, lime and cement. Once mixed, chopped horse hair is added to strengthen and bind the plaster. After the render has set, a white top coat is applied. I loved the way they got the buckets of render up to the first level...talk about old school!

Rob has been putting the finishing touches to the library floor by adding storm-proof seals to the outside doors and Mark Kelly is revarnishing the flywire doors.

A number of the residential houses are being painted internally and externally by Steve Mosman of Colourwest Painting, the results are fabulous.

By Lucy Nicholson, Communications Manager



Getting the render up to the 1<sup>st</sup> level of the College



St Gertrude's College - during plastering



And, after.





26 May 2018

## The Bigger Picture

### 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary New Norcia Studies Day

This year is an important Studies Day as it's the 25<sup>th</sup> such event so we have decided to celebrate with something a little special.

Firstly, our presenters for *The Bigger Picture* (the title of this year's event) are Professor Ted Snell from UWA who will start the proceedings with a talk about the Contemporary Religious Art Collection. Then we have a fascinating paper from Dr John Reynolds of the Southern Irish police force – The Garda – who will be telling us about the curious link between New Norcia and Southern Ireland's battle for independence in the 1920s.

After lunch, Andrew Walton will tell us all about the "Maps Project" – the subject of his research as one of this year's Abbot Placid Spearritt Memorial scholars. Finally, Professor Bob Reece will share the results of his research into Bishop Salvado's brother, Santos, and his contribution to photography, as well as some insights into his life while he was at New Norcia.

*(Note: John Reynolds advises that he is unable to attend the day, but Odhran OBrien, Archivist for the Perth Catholic Diocesan Archives has very kindly offered to read Dr Reynolds' paper on his behalf)*

However, this year, after lunch and before the afternoon sessions begin – a little later than usual at 2pm – Fr Robert Nixon has arranged for a special musical extravaganza in the Abbey Church. Grace Feltoe (soprano), Andrew Brown (organ) and Fr Robert Nixon (piano), will present a post-prandial recital. Amongst other items, the programme will include compositions by Salvado, Moreno and other monks of the community. The recital will be an opportunity to enjoy the wonderful ambience of the Abbey Church, as well as to hear the unique sounds of the historic Moser organ.

The cost for the day includes morning and afternoon teas, a buffet lunch and beverages. Booking can be done via the webshop.

This special 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Studies Day is sure to be very popular and, as those of you who have attended before will know, seating is limited in St Joseph's Hall, so book early to avoid disappointment (as they say)!

By Peter Hocking, Archivist



## Pastries and CAKE now at the Roadhouse!

Why not treat yourself to a morning or afternoon treat and explore the exciting new range of pastries and cakes now made available by Dave and Marilyn at the New Norcia Roadhouse.

Come in and give them a go. Try them all. We'd love your feedback.



## Sunday Shank and Shiraz at the New Norcia Hotel

Slow cooked braised shank, served with seasonal vegetables, creamy mash and home-made gravy for \$20.95.

Add a middy of beer, or glass of house wine for \$3.00.

Add a pint for \$5.00 (excludes Abbey Ale).

