



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

# The Chimes Newsletter



*September 2022*

## Benedict in the Boardroom

Alongside the variety of study weekends and retreats offered by the New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies, under the direction of Fr Robert, New Norcia regularly hosts groups from a wide range of sectors: agriculture, mining, health, education, sport, recreation and the arts...to name just a few.

Our monks and staff make every effort to meet the particular needs of these groups, whether it be to offer appropriate venues and facilities or to actively facilitate meetings and sessions specific to their charism, values and purpose.

One such group was *Catholic Homes Incorporated* who stayed in the monastery guesthouse 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> August for their board meeting, retreat day, and formation session.

After checking in on the Wednesday afternoon they got straight to work with a three-and-half-hour board meeting in the historic monastery hall. This early 20<sup>th</sup> C venue, with its wooden floors, highly decorated pressed-metal ceiling, and marvellous frescoed walls painted by Lesmes Loepez OSB, provided a welcome change to the usual corporate boardroom setting. After the meeting, the group gathered for fellowship, complemented with New Norcia wine and abbey ale, joined the monastic

community for Vespers (evening prayer) in the oratory followed by dinner in the monastery dining room. After dinner, Abbot John welcomed the group with an introduction to Benedictine Spirituality, which concluded with Compline (night prayer) and an invitation to follow the monastic tradition of 'the great silence' until after Mass the following day, perfect preparation for the retreat day to follow.

The retreat day on the Thursday took the form of following the monastic horarium – the monks' daily rhythmic timetable of prayer, work, *lectio divina* (prayerful reading), hospitality and community. Abbot John took the group for morning and afternoon sessions exploring aspects of the 6<sup>th</sup> C *Rule of St Benedict* such as prayer, discernment, humility, mutual obedience etc. and how these might be integrated into the corporate world. Although the mornings were rather chilly, we were blessed with sunny spring-like days, which allowed plenty of opportunity to soak up the beautiful rural landscape and allow the topics explored in the sessions to sink in. The group enjoyed the opportunity to join the monks for lunch in the monastery refectory, which is taken in silence with reading, and were given a special treat with a 'laudate' in the magnificent Hostel built in

→ PTO



1927.

On the Friday morning, it was back to business. The group met for a formation session led by Fr Joe Parkinson and, after lunch, was taken on a guided tour of the monastery library and archive, with a quick visit to the bakery and olive shed.

The following feedback from one of the participants illustrates the benefits of such a balanced and unique experience:

*“Thank you sincerely for having us stay and participate in the monastic rhythm of prayer and reflection. It was an absolute privilege and I have left with an opportunity for particular consideration of our governance processes and a heightened sense of awareness of our fundamental values, for which I am very thankful.”*

*The opportunity to share lunch with the community was a truly humbling experience, to observe and experience absolute hospitality. I was deeply moved. I also thoroughly enjoyed the wonderful experience of the laudate at the hostel.*

*The simple act of replacing the sheets on my bed before leaving, in preparation for the next guest, reminded me of the joy it brings to care for a stranger.”*

If you would like to explore the possibilities of how New Norcia could host your organisation, please contact our Groups & Accommodation Manager on (08) 9654 8018 or [groups@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.com.au)

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## Moore River Flooding

In mid-August the Moore River swelled to levels not seen in many years resulting from heavy rains in the area, particularly in areas upstream of New Norcia. The photos below show the water levels inundating the monastery orchard and olive shed, however we are pleased to report there was no major damage.



# Mandorla Art Award – Brisbane critical care nurse wins People’s Choice

Queensland artist and critical care nurse Kirilee West has been announced as the winner of the \$2,000 Mandorla Art Award People’s Choice Award by Abbot John Herbert at the New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery. The People’s Choice Award is sponsored by The Benedictine Community of Holy Trinity Abbey, New Norcia.

The work, *3.42am*, depicts a poignant and touching moment between caregiver and patient in the small hours of the morning. It is a moment very familiar to West who has been a Registered Nurse for the past 13 years. In her Artist Statement about the work, West says there is an almost palpable sense of fatigue and burnout within hospitals right now that feels arid and unending. “I feel it when I walk within the hospital walls. We move together in spaces of care and bear witness to the life and death of those whose care we are entrusted with. We journey together amidst our efforts to find compassion and a sense of healing. And yet it’s in these small moments that I can see that all along, we were standing together, immersed; covered by rivers in the desert.”

Speaking from Brisbane, West says it is such an honour to receive the People’s Choice Award. “This artwork was deeply personal for me to create, and I’m grateful and deeply touched that the work has resonated with others. As a critical care nurse, this kind of image is a daily reality that is often quite difficult to put into words. I’m yet to find any prose that can adequately describe just what this is that we share with each other in such precarious spaces within hospitals. My gratitude to art for conveying the depth and breadth of unspoken words is immense.”

West says the opportunity to meditate on the ‘gentle whisper’ within her nursing and art practice through entering the Mandorla Art Award was a blessing. “Thank you everyone for welcoming me into the beautiful Mandorla community and for making me – and many healthcare workers – feel seen and valued. It is so appreciated.”

The Mandorla Art Award is Australia’s most significant thematic Christian art prize, with a major prize of \$25,000 sponsored by St John of God Health Care. The Award this year comprises 41 works, selected from 275 entries from across Australia. All artist’s addressed the 2022 theme: *Metamorphosis* – a profound or radical change, referenced in Isaiah 43:19: “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”



*3.42am*, by Kirilee West, winner of the People’s Choice Award.



The announcement of The People’s Choice Award at New Norcia, with a selection of works from the 2022 Mandorla Art Award on display.

# Upgrades to St Ildephonsus' College

New Norcia's Grounds team has been busy making major upgrades to the small dining room (otherwise known as the Green Room) in St Ildephonsus' College. Work has included removing the green carpet on the floor and walls, re-painting, installing new lights and fittings, restoring the original timber floorboards, installing a fireplace that was found in New Norcia's collections and hanging artworks. There is still more work to do, including finishing off the floor and hanging curtains.

This newly renovated area will now be used to provide lunches, or morning and afternoon teas, to tour groups. It is located close to the commercial kitchen in St Ildephonsus' College, which will make catering for these groups more convenient.

If you are interested in booking a tour and lunch experience for your group, contact Joyce on (08) 9654 8018 or [groups@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.com.au).

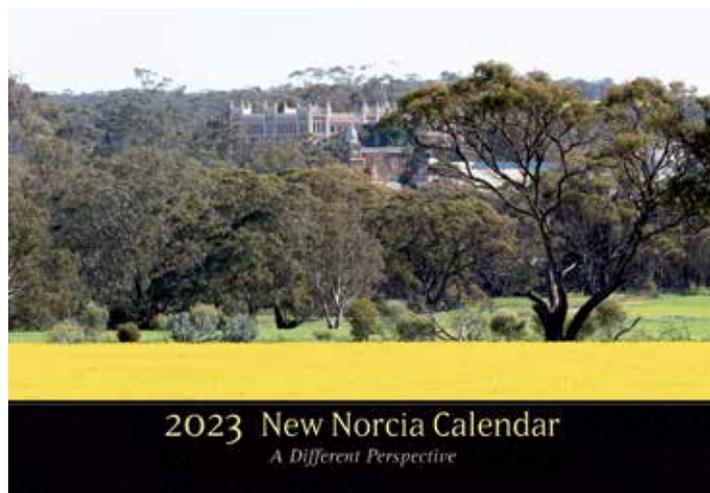


## 2023 New Norcia Calendar

Our 2023 calendar has been prepared, printed and is now ready to purchase from our online giftshop, Museum & Art Gallery, Guesthouse or Roadhouse.

This year the calendar looks at photos taken 'From a Different Perspective', most of which were taken by photographer and volunteer Jim Longbottom. We thank him for his ongoing support and creative photography of the town.

Calendars include liturgical dates, public holidays and school term dates.



# Cemetery Signage Installed

The monks and New Norcia's archivist, Peter Hocking, have been carrying out extensive research on the cemetery during the past decade. This has allowed for the installation of new signage at the entrance, which provides descendants of the deceased with a map of the cemetery, a list of names of those buried and their gravesites marked. This is an ongoing project, with more research to be carried out and additional signage to be installed in the future.



# Tourism WA Annual Conference

More than 300 industry representatives attended the 2022 Perth Airport WA Tourism Conference across the two-day event in July. The event was jointly hosted by Tourism Council WA, Visitor Centres WA, Caravan Industry Association WA, FACET, WAITOC, and Destination Perth, and was supported by Tourism WA.

Among the attendees were Carmel Murray, Joyce McGee and Tracy Sievwright who were flying the flag for New Norcia. The event provided them with the opportunity to discuss what the town has to offer to people within the tourism industry, learn valuable tips and gather information about the industry from the variety of guest speakers.



*From left: Carmel Murray, Joyce McGee & Tracy Sievwright*

# News from The Abbey Press

It has been over two years since we have been able to travel to Western Australia, and to New Norcia from England. In our absence the wonderful Grafix proof press has been connected up to the electricity supply, which allows the inking rollers to be driven - we no longer have to ink by hand. The press, built in 1972, came to New Norcia from the technical College in Perth. It was used at New Norcia for many things, including printing pages for one of Dom Moreno's Masses - a proof sheet from this publication was found on the impression roller.

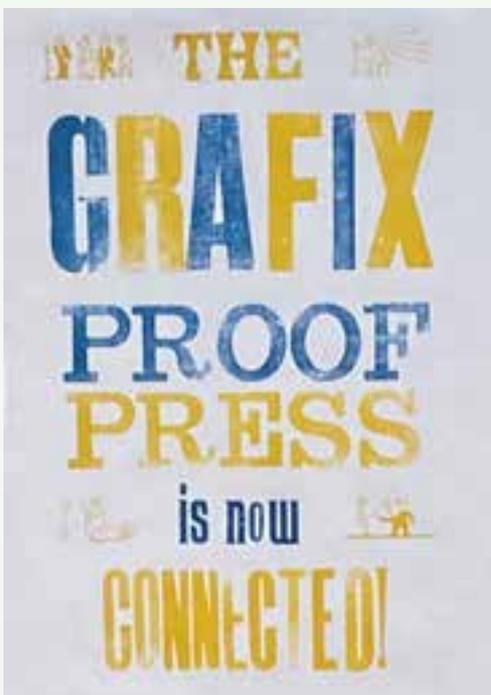
We switched the press on in slight trepidation, but need not to have worried - the motor purred quietly and the rollers rotated, spreading a fine coat of ink. To celebrate we decided to print a two-colour poster in blue and yellow. Wood-type letters were assembled on the bed of the press and the poster printed, with an ink wash up and change from yellow to blue to achieve the two colours. The ink rollers are in splendid condition and provided an even coating of ink.

Thank you to all involved in contributing to this press being operationa again.

During our visit we discovered two further founts of type letters, 8 and 10 point fonts of Christchurch Old Style Italic, both cast by Australian typesetting firm Wimble & Co.

There are still a few more founts of type to be cleaned and sorted but The Abbey Press is now operational. Discussions will take place in the coming months to plan its future use.

Claire & David Bolton





## Safeguarding News: National Child Protection Week Morning Tea

Last week New Norcia Safeguarding Officer, Tracy Sievwright, attended the National Child Protection Week Morning Tea at St Mary's Cathedral in Perth. It was a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness of child safety and to acknowledge all Safeguarding Officers.

For more information about Safeguarding, including news and relevant documents, please visit the Safeguarding platform on our website: [www.newnorcia.com.au](http://www.newnorcia.com.au).

### Tickets are still available for the following New Norcia events:

October 28-30, 2022  
Benedictine Experience Weekend IV

Benedictine spirituality is more readily experienced than defined. These weekends in the monastery guesthouse (beginning with Vespers at 6.30pm on Friday, concluding after lunch on Sunday) provide the opportunity to enter fully into the monastic rhythm and balance of prayer, work, lectio divina, hospitality and community life. There will be opportunities to ponder the riches of the scriptures and monastic literature, both in group discussions and personal silence and solitude, bringing from the 'storeroom, things both new and old.' Participants are also invited to join the community for silent meals in the refectory, one of many invitations to listen with the 'ear of the heart.'

Cost: \$250 (includes accommodation, meals and entry into the Museum and Art Gallery).

February 18, 2023  
Abbot's Table, Summer

'La Table de l'Abbé'  
The Abbot's Table  
SUMMER: Saturday 18th February

This series celebrates a set four-course menu of fresh seasonal produce and showcases New Norcia wood-fired bakery products, olive oil, Abbey Ale and Abbey wines, to be shared with family and friends – or strangers – in this special place, a town like no other.

In the spirit of community, guests will sit together at long tables throughout the venue.

- Pre-dinner drinks begin at 6.00 p.m.
- All-inclusive dinner: \$180 per person

Accommodation is available, please contact Joyce on (08) 9654 8018 or [groups@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.com.au).

***For more information regarding either event, or to book a ticket,  
please visit [www.newnorcia.com.au](http://www.newnorcia.com.au)***



# NEW NORCIA

## Institute for Benedictine Studies

### Study Weekends and Retreats

## PROGRAMME 2023

### A Message from the Director

At the centre of our monastic spirituality is the recognition that our closest encounters with God most often occur in times of silence and solitude, when we are able to get away from the busyness of the world and flee from the distractions and anxieties which can so easily plague the human heart and mind. It was thus that the ancient prophet Elijah (a prototype of monastic life) found God, not in the fire, nor in the earthquake, nor in the rushing wind, but in the “still, small voice” speaking gently to his soul. At New Norcia, we aim to be a place of encounter with the Divine, where the ear of the heart can be sensitively attuned to the voice of God communicating within.

In 2023, we are excited to offer a varied and stimulating range of retreats and study weekends. In keeping with the Benedictine charism of hospitality, the monastic community is delighted to welcome as our guests persons from all backgrounds of life and all traditions. Our scenic and serene environment and the quiet prayerfulness of the monastic routine form the perfect backdrop for seeking and finding peace, enlightenment, renewal and clarity.

*In pace Christi,*

Fr. Robert Nixon, osb



### February 24 - 26

*Lenten Retreat—The Seven Last Words of Christ, with  
St. Bonaventure*

The “Seven Last Words of Christ” refer to the seven utterances of Jesus during His final hours upon the cross. These utterances express a summation of His entire message, and have provided fruitful and profound meditation for Christians for many centuries. As a preparation for the season of Lent, this retreat will reflect upon the spiritual meanings of these words, guided by the writings of the early Franciscan mystic, St. Bonaventure.

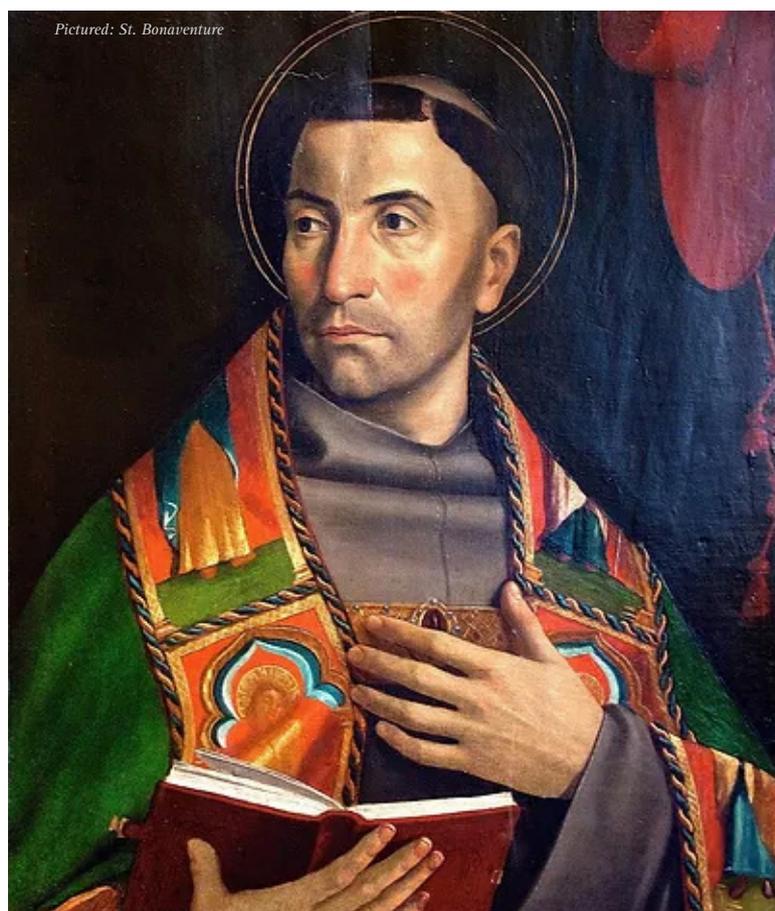
### March 10 - 12

*BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND I*

### March 31 - April 2

*Letting Go (Sr. Lilian Bong, SJA)*

As we journey through life, we are in a continual process of ‘letting go’, in many different ways. This letting go can be the result of the loss of loved ones, of the process of ageing, of relationship changes, and families growing up, etc. On the other hand, there can be things in our hearts – anger, regret, grief, attachment – of which we would like to let go, but find it difficult to do so. Yet, in learning to ‘let go’, we can embrace God’s plan for us more deeply, and thus come to live with greater fullness and freedom. This retreat will provide companionship and guidance in this process.



## April 28 - 30

*Female Benedictine Mystics of the Middle Ages: St. Hildegard of Bingen, St. Gertrude the Great, and others*

While monasteries and convents of Benedictine nuns flourished throughout Europe during the entire Middle Ages, the amount of writings left to us, in comparison with male Benedictines of the same period, is relatively small. Yet among these writings are many treasures, expressing the life of mystical prayer, remarkable visions and revelations, and an ardent love for God. This weekend will examine the remarkable lives and writings of several medieval Benedictine mystics; Hildegard, Elizabeth of Schönau, Gertrude the Great, and others.

## May 26 - 28

*BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND II*

## June 30 - July 2

*The Apocryphal Gospels—Meeting the Jesus of Myth and Imagination*

In addition to the four Gospels contained within the New Testament, a considerable number of other Gospels exist. Although these works embody myth and creative imagination rather than historical truth, they offer intriguing, surprising, and sometimes challenging perspectives, embodying a range of alternative understandings of the person of Jesus. This weekend will present an overview of the history and context of the non-canonical Gospels, and an illuminating survey of some of the more significant and interesting of these apocryphal writings.

## July 28 - 30

*BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND III*

## August 25 - 27

*The Desert Fathers – The Earliest Christian Monks*

The term 'Desert Fathers' (and 'Desert Mothers') refers to Christians who, from the late 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, adopted eremitic and/or coenobitic modes of life in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East. The thoughts, sayings and anecdotes of these remarkable and curious figures are well documented in various ancient writings, which in the course of time came to serve as models and inspirations for both Western and Eastern monasticism. The Desert Fathers continue to offer rich insights and challenges to modern Christians. This weekend will offer an introduction to the amazing world of the Desert Fathers.

*Pictured: St. Francis of Assisi*



## September 22 - 24

*BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND IV*

## October 6 - 8

*St. Francis of Assisi—Prophet of Freedom and Peace*

St. Francis of Assisi is amongst the most deeply loved and admired of all the saints in the Christian tradition. He is identified with the embrace of radical Evangelical poverty, simplicity and freedom, and the encounter with the Divinity through the created world. Emerging from the chaos and turbulence of plague and war-ravaged 13<sup>th</sup>-century Italy, he remains a source of deep inspiration for many people in the contemporary world. This weekend will draw upon the earliest primary sources, including the writings of Francis himself and the primitive hagiographical accounts, to present an authentic picture of this beloved figure.

## November 24 - 26

*BENEDICTINE EXPERIENCE WEEKEND V*

## Institute for Benedictine Studies

The New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies seeks to broaden and deepen awareness of the monastic tradition within Christianity. It offers an environment conducive to prayer, study and reflection with excellence in teaching and research. It aims to encourage participants at all stages of life to reflect on their journey of faith with the pastoral support of rich traditions in prayer, discernment and discipleship, whether as lay people, professed religious, academics, or in ordained ministry.

Participants are asked to contribute \$300 which covers the course expenses and full board for two nights (Friday and Saturday) at the Monastery Guesthouse. It also includes entry into the Museum and Art Gallery.

Bookings are to be made via New Norcia's webshop at: [www.newnorcia.com.au](http://www.newnorcia.com.au)

For all other queries please contact: Fr Robert Nixon, osb

E: [institute@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:institute@newnorcia.com.au)



New Norcia Institute for Benedictine Studies  
Great Northern Highway, New Norcia WA 6509

## Custom & Individual Retreats

The NNIBS is delighted to be able to offer 'custom' retreats, for groups of four or more participants, subject to availability. These retreats, presented by monks of the monastery, can be adapted to the particular needs and interests of the group, and scheduled on any mutually convenient dates. If you are interested please contact Fr. Robert Nixon, osb, at [institute@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:institute@newnorcia.com.au).

Persons are welcome to stay in the monastery guesthouse to make individual retreats. These may be done without direction, simply allowing the experience of prayer, silence and solitude to enrich and renew one's spirit. Alternatively, it is often possible to arrange for a monk qualified in spiritual direction to meet daily with retreatants. Enquiries may be directed to the Monastery Guesthouse, at [guesthouse@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:guesthouse@newnorcia.com.au).

[www.newnorcia.com.au](http://www.newnorcia.com.au)

# Abbot Placid Spearritt Memorial Scholarship for 2023

After a hiatus brought about by the recent pandemic and falling interest rates which adversely affected the scholarship fund, the Abbot and Community together with the Archives and Library Committee are delighted to announce that applications are now being invited for the 2023 Abbot Placid Spearritt Memorial Scholarship.

In 2009, in memory of New Norcia's late Abbot, Fr Placid Spearritt, the Community founded a scholarship that would bring a scholar on a stipend to New Norcia each year to work in the Archives on a specific project. The results of that research would then be made available to everyone interested in Australian history.

Research to date has seen the transcription, translation and publication of the letters of Théophile Bérengier, a monk of Solesmes in France and friend of Bishop Salvado, and the publication of his previously untranslated history of New Norcia. Other research has resulted in the translation and publication of the letters of Léandre Fonteinne, a French novice who came to New Norcia with Bishop Salvado.

In 2012, the Scholarship was awarded jointly to Dr Stefano Girola, lecturer at the Australian Catholic University and to Dr Joshua Brown, Assistant Professor in Italian Studies at the University of Western Australia. Dr Girola translated Salvado's 1883 *Report to Propaganda Fide*, whilst Dr Brown transcribed and translated the letters of Canon Raffaele Martelli. The letters of Canon Martelli were published in 2015 in association with Emeritus Professor John Kinder, also of the University's Italian Department.

In 2014, the Scholarship was again jointly awarded to Judith McGuinness and Dr Liz Conor who at the time was a lecturer in print history at Monash University; her project examined how the engravings found in Salvado's *Memoirs* brought Indigenous Australians into the print workshops of Europe as well as investigating the engravings' significance in the printing developments and technologies of the time,

with particular reference to colonial print culture.

Judith McGuinness is a linguist with expertise in French and Spanish; her project saw the completion of the archives' collections of letters from Théophile Bérengier, mentioned above. The completion of these letters marked a significant milestone in New Norcia's archival research programme (in conjunction with Joshua Brown's completion of the Martelli correspondence). Judith has since been awarded the Scholarship twice more in conjunction with Eugenia Schettino to transcribe and translate the correspondence of Bishop Salvado's brother, Santos. In 2018, a half scholarship was awarded to Emeritus Professor Bob Reece to finish his research on Santos' photographs, whilst a full scholarship was awarded to Andrew Walton to research New Norcia's extensive map collection.

Most recently, Spanish linguist Marta Pérez-Rey has translated the diary of Francisco Marsá, a monk who was at New Norcia during 1849-1853, a critical period when Bishop Salvado was overseas.

For 2023, the Scholarship Committee is primarily seeking scholars with expertise in Spanish, French or Italian but will consider applications from graduates who have an interest or qualification in other disciplines that will help further research in these unique and important Archives. As can be seen from the above, the range of projects that has been undertaken is both broad and eclectic.

For further information concerning available scholarship material, the current value of the scholarship and an application form, please contact Peter Hocking, the Archivist, at [archives@newnorcia.com.au](mailto:archives@newnorcia.com.au). Applications for the 2023 Scholarship will close on August 31<sup>st</sup> and it is expected that the successful applicant will commence his or her research early in 2023.

## New Norcia Studies Journal 28 Launch

The 28th edition of the Studies Journal will be launched at the Palms Community Centre, corner of Rokeby and Nicholson Roads, Subiaco at 5.30 pm on Wednesday October 5<sup>th</sup>.

The Hon. Tom Stephens OAM has very kindly accepted our invitation to launch the Journal. Tom has a deep interest in Western Australian history as well as a close connection with New Norcia as his wife, Anne, is descended from one of New Norcia's early monks, Jerome Rodoreda. Tom was, for many years, the MLA for the Pilbara and was awarded an OAM in 2014 for his service to Indigenous affairs, and to the Parliament of Western Australia.

In addition to the Journal, the second volume of the Monastery Chronicles, covering the years 1907-1910, will be published.

Everyone is cordially invited to what is always a very pleasant evening of light refreshments, wine and

presentations, hosted by the City of Subiaco and the Benedictine Community, and all to musical accompaniment from our old friends, Très Classique. As usual, there is no charge, but if you would like to come, we would ask you to please contact Diane Scott at the City of Subiaco to let her know that you are coming, by Monday October 3rd. Diane's contact details are [dianes@subiaco.wa.gov.au](mailto:dianes@subiaco.wa.gov.au) or 9237 9219.

See you there!

