



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

# The Chimes Newsletter

May 2016



## The New Norcia Bypass - Ground breaking ceremony



*L to R; Mr Gus Ryder, Cr David Lovelock, Jim Chown MLC, Abbot John Herbert, Warren Truss LNP*

An overcast, cloudy day set the scene for the momentous occasion of the ground breaking ceremony for the New Norcia Bypass. Stakeholders, dignitaries and locals gathered together, spades in hand. Mr Gus Ryder began proceedings with a Welcome to Country, followed by speeches from Margaret Drayton NNAC, Jim Chown MLC, Warren Truss LNP, and Abbot John Herbert OSB.

Below is the address Abbot John Herbert gave; On behalf of the monastic community, the staff, the New Norcia Aboriginal Corporation and the local community, I welcome you here today for this very special event. Having started discussions about a possible bypass for

New Norcia some ten or fifteen years ago, you would appreciate, I'm sure, how happy we are that construction is now imminent.

Although there are many reasons why the building of this bypass is so important and necessary, we rejoice for three outstanding reasons:

Firstly, New Norcia is primarily a place of spiritual pilgrimage, a place where people come to seek God; they come because the tranquil nature of this place facilitates their spiritual quest. Obviously, the heavy duty traffic roaring right through the middle of the site has been detrimental to sustaining the very nature of this special place. The bypass will, of course, contribute to restoring this village to a place of peace, where people can once again visit that quiet place within, to hear the voice of God.

Secondly, New Norcia is a place of historical and cultural significance. It is not simply a massive museum, but a living heritage with a living community at its very centre. With a multitude of commercial and monastic activity, it is a complex site, with endless conservation and maintenance challenges. With much of its fabric dating as far back as the mid-nineteenth century it is an extremely fragile site. I can't describe the relief we feel, knowing that the damage to this special place, caused by the massive volume of heavy traffic through its very spine, is about to come to an end.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the bypass will improve the safety of the thousands of guests, tourists and school children who visit us every year. The



current highway, with its volume of heavy traffic, is listed as the most extreme risk on our risk register. The bypass will ensure a dramatic reduction in the possibility of a catastrophic or fatal event in our midst.

So, it is with heartfelt sincerity on this very happy occasion, that we thank the Federal and State Governments for funding this project. With equal sincerity, we thank the multitude of organisations such as Main Roads, Jacobs, Arup, the Shire of Victoria Plains and Decmil (to name just a few) and the countless individuals within these organisations who have spent so much time and effort in the designing, planning and organising of the project to this point. We are truly grateful.

We at New Norcia look forward to offering our support and our hospitality to all the stakeholders as the project develops.

May I finish by calling upon the grace of God to bless the construction of the New Norcia Bypass:

We pray that all aspects of the project may be carried out efficiently and safely; and that we may all work together in harmony and peace. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

*Decmil has been awarded the project by Main Roads WA to undertake the Bypass project. It is expected that work will start in May 2016 and continue through to July 2017. Working hours will be Monday to Saturday 7.00am to 7.00pm. Work consists of the construction of a new four span concrete bridge over the Moore River East, the construction of a new section of the Gt Northern Highway to bypass New Norcia, a lookout over New Norcia and construction of new overtaking lanes north of New Norcia.*



*Abbot John, Xavier David Saville, and Jed and Courtney*

The Hunt family first came to the area in 1870 and bought their first 50 acres in 1878 and have had close ties with New Norcia ever since. Keith Hunt has been a member of the parish for 45 years and the parish chairperson and New Norcia farm manager for many of those.

What a delight that seven generations later, the latest member of the clan, Xavier David Saville's baptism took place at The Abbey Church on Saturday, 5th March.

It was a beautiful service and a wonderful occasion amongst family and close friends. Godparents Cory Payne, Mark Chan, Belinda Hunt & Demi Payne are very excited and honoured to be involved in the life of Xavier.

## Voices from the Archives

THE 2016 NEW NORCIA STUDIES DAY  
SATURDAY, 28th MAY 2016

There are a few spaces left for the New Norcia Studies Day on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2016.**

If you would like to book a space contact Peter Hocking on [archives@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:archives@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)

Guest Speakers and topics include;

Odhran O'Brien MA, "**Cash, convicts and Clergy**"

Peter Price M. Min, PhD, "**The Australian Bishops at the First Council**"

Stefano Girola, PhD, "**Salvado's 1900 Report to Propaganda Fide**"

Ross Bertinshaw, BEng, MSc, MBA, Grad Dip (Arts) "**The well diggers of New Norcia**"

## Local Photographer exhibits in the old Yerecoin Church.

A wonderful community event occurred in April, when local events business *Rustic Events* hosted Ron Ralston's first photography exhibition at the Yerecoin church. Yerecoin church, built in 1958, is part of the New Norcia parish.

Since mass has been in abeyance, it has been largely unused, so when locals Nicky Brennan and Jacqui Pearson approached the Abbot of New Norcia for



permission to revitalise the building and use it for community events,

he could not have been more pleased. Ron Ralston is a local self taught photographer. He was first introduced to his craft four years ago when he bought a second-hand camera. He was shown the basics; how to change the lens and keep the gear clean, but was left to work out ISO, shutter speed and Apertures himself. He admits his first attempts in capturing images were a bit of a disaster. A little disheartened, he read books and magazines on landscape photography, finding the ones that had the photo with the camera settings the most helpful. He started to recognize the connections and effects of capturing light and the way they changed with each camera setting, hours of practice in the front yard and on holidays saw him hone his craft, but it took another year to get to the stage of shooting RAW files in full manual and only



having to think of the composition and exposure to capture the best light. He shoots mostly at sunrise and sunset and under exposes his images to fully capture the amazing colours of bush landscapes and skies. Much of his work sold on the night and orders and commissions were taken. Over a hundred people visited the exhibition from surrounding towns, Perth and as far away as Mandurah. Perth Weather Live attended and posted a photo of the event on their FB page. *Rustic Events* decorated the church with local wildflowers and rustic material complementing the landscape images. Their delicious grazing table, glass of wine and toasty bonfire kept the winter chill at bay.



Ron Ralston's work will be displayed and for sale at the New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery from late May to June 2016.

*The next event at the Church is Australia's Biggest Morning Tea – A charity event. 25<sup>th</sup> May 10 am onwards Tickets \$10 pp – includes morning tea. For tickets visit their Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/Rustic-Events](http://www.facebook.com/Rustic-Events) or ring Nicky on 0429548055*

### **New Norcia Abbey Press news**



The continued popularity of the Abbey press workshops have led to another two workshops being scheduled for November.

Thursday 3rd November – **Introduction to Letter Press Printing - Basic Level**

Friday 4th November – **Introduction to Letter press printing - Advanced Level**

Go to the website for more information [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au) or contact Toni Tejada [groups@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)

**HELP.....** The Abbey Press is up and running. However it is in need of some type and some volunteers. We would like a fount of 12 or 14 point type, in good condition, and enough to set half a page of text. We would also love some volunteers, preferably

with some printing background, who could have the Press open for a day or two, and perhaps print something

while they are here. This should not be an onerous commitment, and accommodation would be provided. If 6 people could do this twice a year then the Press could be open for a few days every month. For more details contact Toni Tejada on [groups@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)

## **IN THE SPIRIT OF HANDS - July 7 - 18, 2016** **Reflections of the Monks and Staff from New Norcia** **Photography by Linda Espie**

**This exhibition** includes 32 of Linda's most powerful black and white photographs from her time at New Norcia Western Australia earlier this year. Linda spent time with the Monks and staff and gained a deeper insight into their work, life in the community and their individual resonance's about their roles and mission.

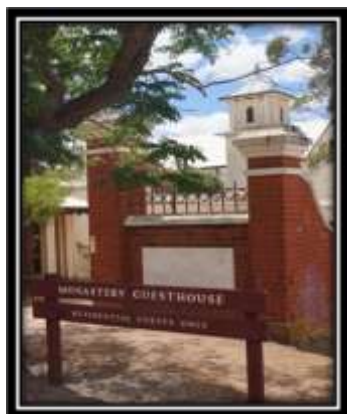
Linda's first exhibition, *The Voice of Hands: St Vincent's Staff in Action, 2012* was awarded a finalist position in the St Vincent's Health Australia Quality Awards. Her second exhibition, *The Gift of Japan: Through my eyes was held in March, 2013*. In July 2013 Linda raised funds and curated, *A Hidden Wholeness: The Zen Photography of Thomas Merton*, which came from the Collections of the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky, USA.



*Linda has a passionate interest for photographing the ordinary aspects of everyday life. With a strong spiritual focus, she believes that photography is a powerful avenue of expression, one that offers contemplative opportunities and potential for expanded personal awareness and community engagement*

**Australian Catholic University Gallery**, 26 Brunswick Street Fitzroy, Melbourne  
**Gallery hours:** Mon - Fri, 11am to 4pm, Sat - Sun, 10am to 4pm

## **Benedictine Experience retreats at the Guesthouse**



Benedictine spirituality is more readily experienced than defined. These weekends in the Monastery Guesthouse (beginning with Vespers at 6.30p.m. on Friday and 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."

Benedictine Experience weekends will run on the following weekends in 2016:

**June 24th-26th**

**October 28th-30th**

**August 12th-14th**

**December 16th-18th**

There is a maximum of 12 guests for these weekends so booking is recommended. Booking may be made by contacting the Guesthouse manager on 96548002 or by email: [guesthouse@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:guesthouse@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)  
Suggested Donation: \$250. This includes accommodation, meals, retreat sessions and entry to the Museum and Art Gallery.

*Contributed by Bernadette Taylor*

## St Gertrude's Reunion



Over the weekend of 15-17 April, a reunion of 36 former St Gertrude's College students were held in New Norcia. A very successful gathering, covering the years between 1946 and 1980, gave us all a wonderful coverage of what life in the College was like during each decade of those years.

We realised that there was not a great change for those between the 40s and 60s, and then much improvement in facilities, co-education and a general relaxing of boarding life, for those who followed on. It was so interesting to hear stories from the younger girls, who often had horrified looks on their faces when hearing of the privations and lifestyle of the earlier

students. Hand washing of our uniforms in buckets, one bath a week in water from the dams, nightly ablutions using a bowl of tepid water, class times of 6 days a week all year, and 7 days in Term 3, if one was in Yrs 10 or 12, facing public examinations!! How it altered, with a tuck shop, weekends spent in leisure, full laundry facilities, daily showers....

We had one lady fly from Queensland for the weekend, and an 86-year-old lady drive herself from Busselton. Others came from many country bases and from the city, all representing the usual mix that made up the College each year. During the weekend, we welcomed three ex-students from the Leaving Class of 1966, along with their guide, John, who completed the seven day Camino Salvado, having left Subiaco the previous Sunday. Abbot John conducted the moving washing of their (very sore, blistered) feet in the Abbey Church, which was attended by all the girls who had formed a Guard of Honour as the walkers crossed the bridge into the Monastery grounds. Well done Anne, Monica and Zoe. Following our attendance at Mass on Sunday, we bade farewell to both new and old friends with much affection, looking forward to the next time we gather as one...regardless of where our lives have taken us, we are St Gertrude's Girls, and this reunion certainly lived up to our Group's name ... SGC - Girls of the Century.

*Contributed by Sue Hackett [nee Halpin]. 1963-1966.*

### St Gertrude's Memorabilia Room

In April this year, a reunion of ex-students who had boarded at St Gertrude's College created an opportunity to reinstate a display room of photos, books, prizes, trophies and religious items associated with SGC. Students from 1946 to 1980 attended. The memorabilia room is housed in a high-ceilinged room off the main foyer of St Gertrude's, with 4 display cases presenting an array of objects in the themes of sport, academia, domestic life and religion. Later in the year the Reunion of the Class of '66 will celebrate 50 years since they left SGC. We hope to further develop and refine the display but we need your help. If you have a uniform, books, prizes and trophies, religious objects, photographs and other items from your time at the College, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Marina Baker, Collections Manager, New Norcia by email [museumcollections@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:museumcollections@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)



*Contributed By Marina Baker, Collections Manager*

## From Rosendo to Rosendo



*Dom Robert Nixon, Rosendo Mercado, Andrea Gonzalez and band members.*

In Spain, the name 'Rosendo' is immediately associated for most people with Rosendo Mercado, a legendary 'rockero', with a career spanning four decades. Following the bicentennial celebration of Salvado's birth, a connection emerged between Rosendo Mercado, and New Norcia's own Rosendo (our founder, Rosendo Salvado). After learning about Salvado's adventurous vision for New Norcia, and discovering that they both had in common a passion for music, Mercado became very interested in Salvado and New Norcia, and agreed to perform in Australia.

Rosendo Mercado's visit to New Norcia coincided with that of the Spanish Ambassador, H.E. Manuel Cacho, as well as the Honorary Consul of Spain in Perth, Enric Tarraso, both of whom were delighted to become better acquainted with New Norcia and to meet the monks.

The Perth visit culminated in a stunning concert from Rosendo at UWA's Octagon Theatre in Perth which was attended by over 400 enthusiastic fans. One of the remarkable moments was when Rosendo Mercado 'jammed' on his guitar with the music of our Rosendo Salvado, musically symbolising a cultural and spiritual connection between Spain and Australia, the past and the present, a 21<sup>st</sup> Century rock star and a 19<sup>th</sup> Century monk.

A documentary is being produced covering Mercado's Australian tour with a special emphasis on his New Norcia connection, which should be available by the end of the year.

Visit New Norcia's website for a link to a YouTube video of Rosendo Mercado playing his guitar in the Abbey Church.

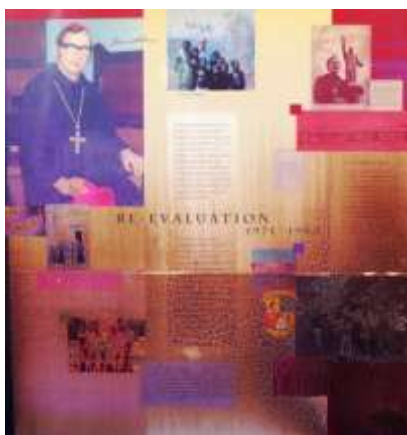
*Contributed by Dom Robert Nixon*

### *Town Tour Guide - Rave Review*

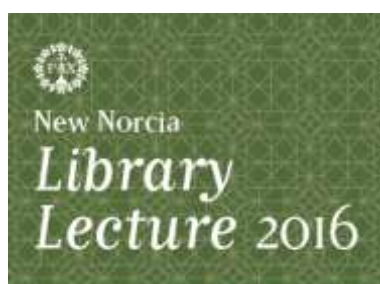
“ Please convey our sincere thanks to **Sue Johnson** for her fantastic tour. Several of us on the Town tour agreed that she was the best guide we had encountered anywhere, in Australia or overseas. We were impressed with Sue's straightforward yet comprehensive presentation of New Norcia. The two-hour tour was very engaging, largely because of Sue's long personal association with the place. Her love for New Norcia was clear, as was her admiration for Salvado. However, she was never sentimental, and did not allow her personal stories to overshadow the overall 170-year history she was sharing. Her ability to comprehensively cover the wide history of the place while also answering questions *and* keeping the tour to schedule was impressive. We particularly appreciated her sensitive presentation of Benedictine Spirituality. Sue clearly had a deep understanding of how Benedictine spirituality underpins the history and ongoing life of the place. She was able to explain it to a secular audience, honouring its significance to the monks without either valorising them or trivialising their faith. “

**Well done to Sue Johnson!** *New Norcia is following up the suggestion of the above reviewer that Sue be put forward for the FACET Golden Guide Award 2016.*

## Education Centre Interpretation boards get a facelift.



In the last couple of years the searing heat and sunlight in New Norcia have left their mark on the Education Interpretation boards, causing them to crackle and become unreadable. Fr Bernard Rooney has updated the information and included the present Abbot in the historical timeline. Delivery and installation of the new boards will occur in the next couple of weeks, so make sure you have a look at them when you are next in town. A new shade sail has been installed too.



**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October**  
**9am – 3.00pm**

### **Guest speakers include;**

**Dr Toby Burrows**, Manager of the eResearch Support Unit in Information Services, University of Western Australia

**Topic:** *Migrations of Manuscripts: How the vast collection of Sir Thomas Phillips was dispersed around the world.*

**Soraya Majidi**, Library Special Projects Coordinator, Albany Public Library and

**Laura Parker**, Years of experience as a Mum and Director of a private horticultural company

**Topic:** *Little Free Library Movement: Now happening in WA*

**Clare Menck**, Historian

**Topic:** *Not another dust collector!* Balancing client requirements with a useful public product when writing commissioned histories.

Contact **Carolyn Talbot** the librarian on [library@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:library@newnorcia.wa.edu.au) or visit the website for more details.

## THANKYOU!

For letting me stay in this lovely building. Being here has really opened my mind and eyes and it's truly beautiful. I am so grateful for the food you have served to my class and the dormitory you have allowed me to stay in. I loved the sound of the church bell at 7.00am every morning and opening my window to the sight of the engulfing fog. I loved walking to St Ildephonsus every morning with the feel of the chilling breeze against my cheeks. I truly love New Norcia, it is an amazing experience to stay here.

*A note found on a dormitory bed in St Gertrude's College, its lovely to know that the student s appreciate New Norcia and its uniqueness!*



# NEW NORCIA

## WRITERS FESTIVAL 2016

*books poetry music history food conversation*

Saturday 13 August

**Guests include Natasha Lester, John Kinsella, Tracy Ryan,  
Rashida Murphy & Ron Elliott**

\$80 all-day ticket includes 4 sessions, museum & art gallery entry & morning & afternoon teas. Buffet lunch available at an extra cost.

Bookings: Lucy Nicholson on (08) 9654 8018 or  
email [communications@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:communications@newnorcia.wa.edu.au).

Places strictly limited. For details visit [newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://newnorcia.wa.edu.au).



**NEW NORCIA**  
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY

