



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

# The Chimes Newsletter



*December 2021*

## New Norcia Awarded Silver at the Perth Airport WA Tourism Awards

We are pleased to announce that New Norcia was awarded a silver place at the 2021 Perth Airport WA Tourism Awards Gala Dinner, presented by Tourism Council WA at Crown Perth, in the category of Cultural Tourism.

In its 49<sup>th</sup> year, the awards attracted a record number of first-time entrants, representing a diverse range of businesses from across Western Australia.

“The Perth Airport WA Tourism Awards is the most prestigious awards programme in the tourism industry, with a long history of celebrating and recognising business excellence, innovation and outstanding customer service by tourism operators,” Tourism Council WA CEO Evan Hall said.

Abbot John and nine New Norcia staff members attended the evening held at the Crown Grand Ballroom filled with over 800 guests and were thrilled with the result.

“We are just so proud to receive this award. We hope this will encourage even more visitors to New Norcia, to join us on a tour, and see what our town is all about,” said Carmel Murray, New Norcia’s Director of Visitor Services.

The framed certificate will soon be on display at the Museum and Art Gallery.



*From left: Joshua Murray, Melissa Victoriano, Robyn Allison, Tracy Sievwright, Carmel Murray, Joyce McKee, Jillian Passmore, Abbot John Herbert, Natalie Nixon & Ian Smith.*





## ACL: A Closer Look, 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October

During that last glorious weekend in October, Archives Collections and Libraries (ACL) put on their most ambitious project to date – a combined Library Lecture (on Friday) with Studies Day (on Saturday). As if deciding this was to be a new beginning, the ceiling in St Joseph's Hall decided to collapse on the Thursday afternoon, just hours before the event was to begin. And that led to the decision to move the speeches to St Gertrude's Chapel – a brilliant choice as the entire “feel” of the whole event was raised to a whole new level. In these beautiful surroundings we heard four very different, but totally absorbing, talks from library and special collections professionals: Erica Persak of the Kerry Stokes Collection speaking about the Nuremberg Chronicle, Dr David Wells from Curtin Special Collections, Bobbie Bruce from the WA Museum and, after lunch, a wonderfully light-hearted look at “stuff” by Lisa Wright from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

On Saturday, it was Archives' turn and we were treated to talks from Judy McGuinness on Santos Salvado, Jim Longbottom speaking about Abbot Catalan, Steve Vermont reading John Challis' paper on the cathedrals of New Norcia, and finally, a wonderful, even humorous (given the topic), paper from Fr Robert Nixon on the challenges faced in the translation of mediaeval and early modern Latin texts.

It was indeed an ambitious event. As a backdrop to these eight wonderful presentations, Erica Persak had arranged

for the Stokes Collection to lend us their Nuremberg Chronicle, printed in 1496, and this was on display in the monastery's beautiful Music Room throughout the weekend and for the following week. Complementing this extraordinary book were displays of other rare books, very kindly loaned to us by Bobbie Bruce from the WA Museum, and from New Norcia's own rare books collection.

John Challis' paper on the Nervi cathedrals was a most fitting introduction to the new *Dreaming Spires of New Norcia* exhibition which went up that week just before the ACL event. The *Dreaming Spires* exhibition takes a look at the proposed, but never realised, plans for four cathedrals to be built at New Norcia. Judy McGuinness' talk on Santos Salvado paved the way for the launch of the translation of Santos' letters in a new book by Judy and Eugenia Schettino. The book, *The Letters of Santos Salvado*, presents Santos' letters while he was at New Norcia between 1869 and 1879 and sales on the day of their new book broke all previous records. Jim Longbottom's display of his beautiful star gazing photos at New Norcia also resulted in substantial sales on the day. Both Judy's / Eugenia's book and Jim's photos are available from the Museum Shop.

To round off a perfect weekend, our old musical friends, Trés Classique, whom we have welcomed on many occasions over the years at the Studies Launches in Subiaco, gave a wonderful hour-long concert in St Gertrude's.



Erica Persak



Judy McGuinness

To sum up, it was a hugely successful weekend but an army of people was responsible so I would like to thank firstly the eight presenters without whom, clearly, the event would not have been possible. Just as importantly though were Kerry Smith who organised the library speakers, and Geoff Moor who opened the Abbey Press to interested persons on both days. I would also like to thank our volunteer Jim Longbottom who, quite apart from having a paper to present, also managed his Astrophotography exhibition and looked after the technology side of things (the projector, the EFTPOS machine, the microphone,

my pacemaker – only joking) on both days. I would like to add at this point that Jim not only handled the sales of his beautiful prints but very generously donated all the proceeds from those sales to New Norcia. Thanks Jim. And last, but by no means least, a huge thanks to practically all of New Norcia's staff and our other ACL volunteer, Vida, for making this a truly memorable weekend. Thank you.

Peter Hocking  
Archivist

## Dreaming Spires – the story of New Norcia's cathedrals

In the week leading up to the *ACL – A Closer Look* event at the end of October, a new exhibition was launched which had been some years in the making. Originally planned by the late Joy Legge, *Dreaming Spires* tells the story of cathedrals at New Norcia that might have been, but were never realised. Starting with Monsignor Hawe's early thoughts in 1918, through Abbot Gusi's dream in 1938 and on to Fr Urbano Gimenez' ambitious project for a Gothic-style cathedral in 1946, the exhibition concentrates mainly on renowned liturgical architect, Pier Luigi Nervi, and his design for a new monastery and cathedral during the 1950's. The archives are fortunate to have many plans and drawings of Nervi's creation, including a model that was created in Rome and shipped to New Norcia and which forms the centre piece of the exhibition. Nervi's plan, like those before him, never came

to fruition but the dream continued under Perth architects Henderson and Thompson. The exhibition features many of Nervi's as well as Henderson and Thompson's plans and drawings, together with full colour illustrations of the beautiful cathedral windows which were said to have been created in Rome and which are rumoured to be still there. Also on show, in a continuous loop, is a computer-generated film, made by University of Western Australia architecture students in 2016 as part of the Unbuilt Western Australia project, showing what the Nervi cathedral might have looked like if it had been built. I would like to thank Archives volunteer, Vida Whale, for her considerable input into establishing this exhibition.

Peter Hocking  
Archivist



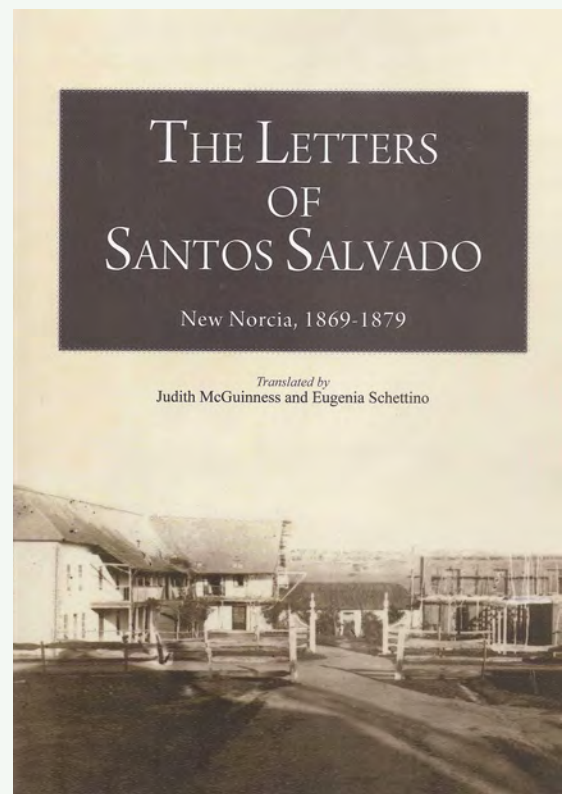
Left & Right: photo credit to Vida Whale



## New book – The Letters of Santos Salvado

At the recent ACL - A Closer Look function, the eighth book in the Abbey Press series was launched. The *Letters of Santos Salvado 1869-1879* is a translation from Spanish of the letters of Bishop Salvado's brother, Santos, during the ten years he was resident at New Norcia. Prior to his arrival at New Norcia, he had been the chaplain to Queen Isabella II, a position he resumed upon his return to Spain in 1879. Following Venancio Garrido's death, Santos became New Norcia's second prior. He was both highly educated and talented, an accomplished organist, chorister and collector and repairer of clocks, and he also introduced photography to New Norcia. His letters are a wonderful, often humorous, record of daily life at New Norcia in which he had to draw a fine line between brotherly affection and business.

The Letters were translated as part of the Abbot Placid Spearritt Memorial Scholarship undertaken during 2016-2020 by Judith McGuinness and Eugenia Schettino. Judy is a linguist with expertise in French and Spanish, whilst Eugenia is a native Spanish speaker and an accredited translator. Judy and Eugenia have also translated Santos' earlier letters prior to his arrival at New Norcia which we hope to publish as another work in the Abbey Press series at a later date. The book is available from the Museum Shop or online for \$29.99.



## Silence is Golden

While the monastic life normally provides for significant and important times of silence – the great silence at night, silence during meals, times for silent personal reflection and prayer, silence during the celebration of the liturgy – the monks spent a week (11-17 October) in *total* silence. The usual *horarium* (timetable) was altered to include a little sleep-in each day, less work, and more time for solitude, personal prayer, journaling, walking etc.

Due to travel restrictions, we were unable to secure someone to give the usual retreat conferences, but listened instead to recorded conferences from the late Benedictine nun Maria Boulding of Stanbrook Abbey (England), which she presented during the symposium at New Norcia in 1980. Despite being forty years ago, her material was remarkably fresh. This was due, I think, to her reflections on monastic spirituality being grounded in sacred scripture and solid theology. Along with her experience of living monastic life, and a good dose of light-heartedness and humour, the monks were offered plenty to ponder.

Each monk, of course, hears what is offered in a different way, not so much according to his level of understanding, but rather, according to what is going on in his life, and indeed, what God wants to say to him deep within the recesses of his heart. Through Maria's words "*in our emptiness, there is scope for God*", I personally was reminded of my need to believe and trust that, no matter what, God is there to fill us with whatever we need to walk our individual and communal journey through life.

We abandoned the books we were reading during meals in the refectory and listened instead to two excellent papers "*Spiritual Combat*" and "*Peace of Heart*" written by a French monk Fr. Bernard Ducruet, one time Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, translated by our dear friend from Pluscarden Abbey (Scotland), Fr Giles Conacher.

It is our custom to conclude this time of retreat with a picnic day. This year, it took the form of Sunday lunch at the revamped Bolgart Hotel. We were pleased to invite the little group who provided music ministry at Mass to join us. We enjoyed a lovely meal, good wine, and broke the week-long silence with great conversation.

Abbot John



The group enjoying lunch at the Bolgart Hotel

# Pallottine Family Enjoys Retreat at New Norcia

The Pallottine Family WA, an associate group of the Pallottine Order, visited New Norcia for a one-day retreat on October 21. The theme of the retreat, presented by New Norcia's Fr. Robert, was "The Three Marys of the Gospel", focusing on Mary the Mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany as models for the Christian life. Participants at the retreat said that their day at New Norcia was an uplifting and inspiring experience of prayer and reflection, and were particularly appreciative of the hospitality of the monks and staff. The Pallottine Order has a long and close connection with the New Norcia Benedictines, as it was their founder, St. Vincent Pallotti, who presented to Rosendo Salvado the icon of Our Lady of Good Counsel, which miraculously saved the monastery from a bushfire in 1847.

New Norcia is always delighted to welcome parish and religious groups for customised retreats, and can offer a variety of retreat programmes, accommodation and meals at a reasonable cost. Please do not hesitate to contact Fr. Robert at [institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:institute@newnorcia.wa.edu.au) with any enquiries.



Above: Fr Robert Nixon (centre) with delegates from The Pallottine Family WA

## Institute for Benedictine Studies, 2022

### From the Director

The times in which we live are deeply uncertain on many levels: it often seems as if our world, our society, and our Church are being assailed by unexpected and unpredictable tempests. In such conditions, the inner life of the spirit is of paramount importance. Amidst the turbulent fluctuations of passing material things, the human heart is increasingly drawn to eternal realities—God, the soul, and the love which is both the means and goal of our final and everlasting salvation. Our need for God has never been greater. For, in the words of Pope Francis, "God is the light that illuminates the darkness, and a spark of divine light is within each of us."

In 2022, 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. Our tranquil and scenic environment and the quiet prayerfulness of the monastic routine form the perfect setting for seeking peace, enlightenment, renewal and clarity.

In pace Christi,

Fr. Robert Nixon, osb

### Programme

**February 25-27**  
Benedictine Experience Weekend I

**March 4-6**  
Lenten Retreat

**March 25-27**  
Study Weekend  
A Course in Reading Gregorian  
Notation for Musicians

**April 1-3**  
Writing Your Spiritual  
Autobiography

**April 29 - May 1**  
Love Stronger than Death: The  
Martyrs of the Diocletian Persecution

**May 27-29**  
Benedictine Experience Weekend II

**July 15-17**  
St. Bonaventure: The Journey of the  
Mind into God

**August 5-7**  
Benedictine Experience Weekend III

**August 19-21**  
Study Weekend  
An Introduction to Church Latin

**September 9-11**  
"Letting Go"

**September 30 - October 2**  
Meister Eckhart: Seeking the God of  
Radical Otherness

**October 28-30**  
Benedictine Experience Weekend IV

### Costs

Participants are asked to contribute \$250, which covers the course expenses and full board for two nights (Friday & Saturday) at the Monastery Guesthouse. It also includes entry into the Museum & Art Gallery.

### For Enquiries & Bookings

Please visit our webshop at [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au).



# Abbot John celebrates Catenian High Mass at St Mary's Cathedral

St Mary's Cathedral in Perth was filled to capacity; including 150 members of the Catenian Association at the 11.00 am High Mass on Sunday 7 November celebrated by the Abbot of New Norcia, Father John Herbert; the first time he has presided at the Cathedral.

The annual Catenian Commemorative Mass has traditionally been held at St Mary's each November; this year in remembrance of its 170 brothers who have passed away since the Association was first established in Western Australia in February 1977, including ten members during 2021.

Special guests this year were six visitors from South Australia, where in March 2021 the first South Australian Catenian Group was formed, initially with nine members now escalated to twenty-five, with more Catholic men likely to join before the end of the year.

The Catenian Association has treasured a strong bond with

the Benedictine Community of New Norcia for over forty years, and during this time members have volunteered their services in many ways, including frequently visiting the monastic town for day trips, retreats, Sunday Mass and for other special events and functions.

New Norcia has also always been a priority on the annual itinerary of Catenians and wives from the United Kingdom, where the Association was founded in 1908.

After Mass, Abbot John was the guest speaker at a lunch held at the Duxton Hotel in St George's Terrace in Perth attended by about 130 Catenian brothers, wives and friends.

In his captivating address the Abbot talked about the strong relationship that the Catenian Association in Western Australia has shared with the Benedictine community over the past four decades.



*Abbot John celebrates Mass at St Mary's Cathedral*



*From left: President of the Catenian Association in Western Australia Chris Downey, Abbot John Herbert and Vice President of the Association John Murray*

## Adelaide Visitors at New Norcia

Four Catenian members, two with accompanying wives, were treated to a wonderful and unique experience at New Norcia on Wednesday 10 November, during their brief visit to Western Australia to attend the Association's Commemorative Mass at St Mary's Cathedral.

As the Adelaide City Group of the Association is the first group formed in South Australia, the main purpose of the visit was to familiarise themselves with Catenian conventions and practices and to bond with Perth members.

Apart from the Commemorative Mass and lunch, the visitors attended several meetings of established circles and were kept occupied with city sightseeing and shopping.

The visit to New Norcia was, undoubtedly a memorable highlight of their brief stay. They were conducted on a tour of the monastery by Abbot John Herbert and enjoyed midday prayers, lunch in the Refectory, a piano recital by Father Robert, a guided tour of the town with Abbot John, and finished at the museum and gift shop.

An experience they will surely share with their fellow members in South Australia.



**Both articles by Peter Johnston**





## Gold for New Norcia's Olive Oil

New Norcia's olive oil has been awarded Gold at the 2021 West Australian Olive Awards, in the category of Class 1 - *Boutique volume, using oil sourced from a single grove.*

We congratulate Ian Smith and his team and thank them for all their hard work during the year to manage the olive grove, pick and sort the olives and bottle the oil.

There were only 300 bottles of oil produced this season. The limited edition 2021 New Norcia Olive Oil is available from the Museum & Art Gallery or online from our giftshop.



New Norcia's Ian Smith accepts the award at the West Australian Olive Awards Night





# Weddings at New Norcia

In the past few months New Norcia has been fortunate to host the weddings of Courtney and Corey Foster (granddaughter of locals Keith and Bobby Hunt); as well as Anna and Joe Ipsen (daughter of locals Emma and Shane Kelly). We thank them for sharing with us the following photos from their special days.



*Corey and Courtney Foster*



*Anna and Joe Ipsen*

## Memorable Functions at a Unique Location

If you are exploring options for an event in a unique and beautiful part of Western Australia, New Norcia could be worth considering.

The New Norcia Hostel is well equipped for a special celebration, with its terrazzo-tiled veranda or first floor balcony with sweeping views over New Norcia. Our catering department provides delicious meals, with various options available.

Tucked away in a secluded part of the New Norcia township, the Old Convent is a courtyard residence. Originally the home of Spanish Benedictine Sisters, this heritage listed building is full of atmosphere and character stretching back over 100 years.

These buildings and others, including the two semi-enclosed Mediterranean inspired Arcades behind St Ildephonsus' College, are available to hire. For more information, please contact Joyce on (08) 9654 8018 or [groups@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:groups@newnorcia.wa.edu.au).



From: Mrs Shirley Brokenshire

1st September 2021

To: the wonderful lady in the Office,  
Monastery Guest House  
New Norcia WA 6509.

I just want to say a huge thank you for your prompt attention in rescuing my little flip phone from Room 12 on Thursday morning 26th August 2021 and for posting it to me straight away. I received it on Tuesday 29th and have since given it a good talking to!

The phone had slipped off one of my bags by the head of my comfy bed without me noticing it. As I thought to myself while I was driving towards Katanning — my son usually rings me each Thursday, it was then I realised my phone was not in my pocket. I knew exactly where it would be. Fortunately he had not tried to ring me because he knew I would be driving.

My offsider communicated with the leading car and we stopped. I got your phone number off the other driver and rang you straight away. Thankfully you were able to find it where I said it would be and rang my offsider to say you had found it. What a relief that was. I then drove on without a concern and said to Gerry “isn't it wonderful to be dealing with trustworthy people”.

So thank you again. Please find enclosed a small donation towards your cause.

The six grannies (four who are well over 80) enjoyed our overnight stay in the Monastery Guest House. We were on the last leg of our trip up to Pindar to see the wonderful Wreathe Wild Flowers and other wild flowers in between. God's wonderful creation is so breathtaking. We took the opportunity to go this year due to the wonderful season and due to health reasons a couple of the grannies probably won't be able to make it in 12 months time.



To Abbot John, Joyce, Christine +  
all staff.  
Thank you very much for your  
wonderful hospitality. Everyone  
had a fabulous weekend & we  
look forward to staying with  
you again next year.  
Kind regards  
Joan  
Masters-Liam + Michele Dempsey-Dayle



# Christmas at New Norcia

Please Join Us

## Christmas Eve

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December

Vespers 6.30pm

Vigils 8.15pm

Christmas Night Mass 10.30pm

## Christmas Day

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> December

7.00am Lauds

Christmas Morning Mass 9.00am

Midday Prayer 12.00noon

Solemn Vespers 5.30pm

with Exposition & Benediction

## 29<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Carol Service

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January

*Featuring the Georgian Singers*

Afternoon Tea in the Parlour 4.00pm

Service of Readings & Carols 5.00pm

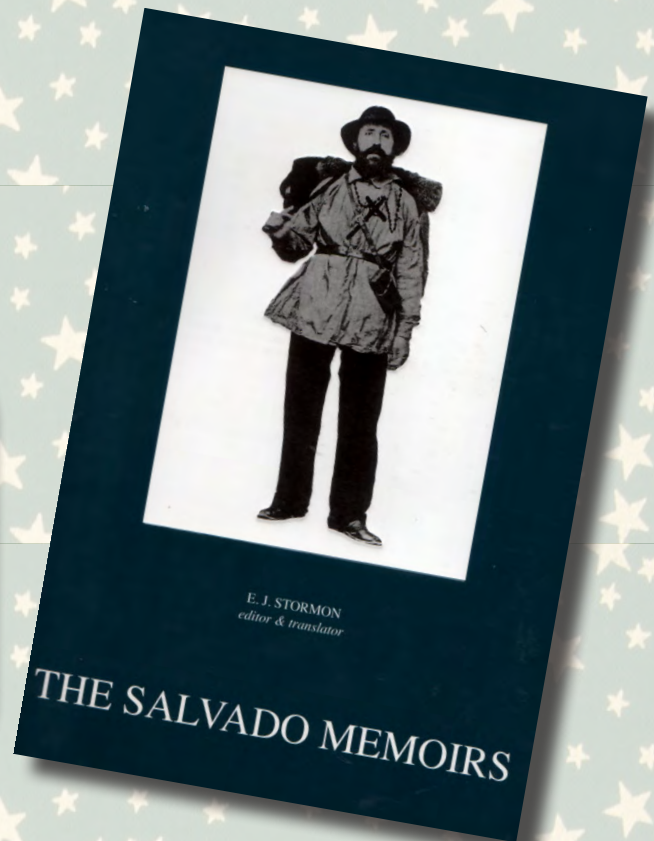


**NEW NORCIA**  
BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY



# Christmas Gift Ideas at New Norcia

For a range of unique Christmas gift ideas visit [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au)





# Gifts found at New Norcia Roadhouse







# BEETHOVEN GREATEST SONATAS

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19 MARCH 2022 | NEW NORCIA HOSTEL

Ludwig van Beethoven was one of the most original and inspired of composers of all time, and his piano sonatas are recognised as among the masterpieces of classical music. In these works, which caused a great sensation at the time, he was rebellious, daring and original, and showed himself to be the foremost performer of his time. Nevertheless, he was aware that he was losing his hearing even from a young age, and so there is a certain sense of fighting against the inevitability of fate in most of his music. This recital will offer four of Beethoven's best loved sonatas; namely, the *Pathétique*, the *Moonlight*, the *Tempest*, and the *Appassionata*.

The evening will commence at 6.30pm at the New Norcia Hostel. A light supper and drinks will be served.

Tickets are \$90, all inclusive. To book, please visit [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au).





The monastic community  
and everyone at New Norcia,  
wish you a very happy and  
holy Christmas,  
and abundant blessings in  
2022.

*Feliz Navidad / Bon Nadal / Boas Festas  
Bones Festes  
Buon Natale / Joyeux Noël  
Frohe Weihnachten / Feliz Natal!*



Oratory, Holy Trinity Abbey, New Norcia