



Australian Catholic Historical Society

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Australian Catholic History Resources: Reading for a Lockdown

The Australian Catholic Historical Society has made available a new suite of resources on special topics in the history of the Catholic community in Australia.

A page on Architecture, Art, Drama and Music displays the breadth of Catholic culture, while one on Intellectual Life shows the depth of Catholic contributions to philosophy, theology, literature and the theory of society.

The Timeline of Australian Catholic history has proved especially popular. Other pages are on Catholics charities, Catholic involvement with indigenous Australians, Women in the Australian Church, Irish Catholics, and the sexual abuse crisis.

ACHS Vice-President Professor James Franklin said “Each page gives an easy-to-use overview of the topic, with a wealth of links for further browsing. Anyone, from school student to leisured retiree, can quickly gain an insight into any aspect of the rich Catholic heritage of our country.”

Founded in 1940, the ACHS has a long tradition of talks, Journal and newsletter. With its program of monthly talks in Sydney (and approximately three-monthly ones in Melbourne) suspended due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Society determined to make its knowledge widely available in a new and accessible format. It is ideal reading for a lockdown.

ACHS President Dr John Carmody welcomed the resources: “As would be expected of an organisation which deals with the story of a ‘universal’ Church, the Australian Catholic Historical Society has always sought to look both inwards and outwards; indeed, forwards as well as backwards. We’re concerned with individuals as well as institutions; with parishes as well as nations; with philosophy as well as pragmatism.”

“We welcome new developments in the understanding of our story and for the distribution of that story. For that reason, we have recently refurbished our website and diversified its contents. It is an important and enduring part of our mission that, thereby, we will enthuse a new and younger generation about the value and pleasure of our history. We are what our history has made us: we cannot understand any aspect of ourselves without understanding our history and that understanding is important for us all.”

A page of Podcasts and Videos includes links to newsreel footage of major events, from Melbourne's St Patrick's Day parade of 1932 to Mary MacKillop's canonisation. Newsreels give a sense of looking directly into the past.

Just added is the 1925 silent film of *Around the Boree Log*, based on the much-loved poems on Irish Catholic rural life by Narrandera priest "John O'Brien".

To view the resources, visit: <https://australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/history-resources/>

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St Carthage's former Catholic Church, Silverton NSW (photo: Tim Nichols)