

RHesiS

newsletter of the religious history society

March 2003

Rhesis, for those without a copy of Liddell and Scott to hand, is the classical Greek word for a speech or declamation.

The Society exists for the following objects:

- * to promote the study of all fields of religious history
- * to encourage research in Australasian religious history
- * to provide means by which the long-term supporters and individual subscribers of the Journal of Religious History can enjoy a more direct involvement in the work of the Journal.

some words from the president

It is a pleasure to prepare my first report as President of the Religious History Society. The inauguration of the millennium has been accompanied by some momentous events. As historians, we may be accustomed to researching the highs and the lows of human nature and achievement, but it is less comfortable to feel the sickle of history sweeping past in our own times.

The Society held its third biennial conference in association with the Australian Historical Association meeting in Brisbane from 3 – 7 July 2002. As from 23 July 2002 the Society has been affiliated with the AHA at a modest cost. We welcome moves initiated by former AHA President Jill Roe to foster the affiliation of historical societies with our national body. We are grateful to Regina Ganter and the AHA conference organising committee from Griffith University for allowing us to continue our successful piggyback on the larger conference which brings many benefits to us, particularly on the administration side. Thanks are also due to the RHS conference organiser, Sarah Ferber, who invited our keynote speaker Professor Stuart Clark of the University of Wales to address our conference, Religion and Science. Professor Clark's paper, entitled: "The Reformation of the Eyes: Apparitions and Visual Deception in the 16th and 17th Centuries" considered the early modern debate about the way in which visual impressions were conveyed by the senses, what was the scientific standing of religious apparitions, and how were events such as the appearance of ghosts manifested. Professor Clark explored the complex relationship between natural and religious explanation. Illuminating for RHS members and conference participants some of the more obscure confines of his new work.

The RHS sponsored six sessions, though only a relatively small number of papers were specifically addressed to the Religion and Science theme. Among the highlights, Avril Hannah-Jones looked at the debate concerning gay and lesbian Christians in the Uniting Church; Sophie McGrath looked at church attitudes to the woman suffrage issue; Greg Cuthbertson considered the attitude toward the British

Empire sustained by the Wesleyan diaspora in South Africa; Malcolm Prentis examined the case of John Mathew, and Lachlan Paterson the crossing of boundaries in the mid-nineteenth century Maori Society. On the keynote theme, Peter Harrison provided a conceptual examination of the framework of early modern science; Peter Sherlock looked at concepts of time and space in the universe of Thomas Lydiat; Greg Warburton looked at the mentality of misfortune; Charles Zicka assessed Sigmund Freud's 1923 study of the possession and exorcism of Christoph Haizmann, and Jenny Spinks provided an iconographical examination of images of unnatural birth in sixteenth century Europe. Papers for the RHS conference can be considered for publication in an issue of the *Journal of Religious History*.

Overall, the high level of interest shown in the religious sessions of AHA augurs well for the strength of our discipline. It was good to note that the sessions of the Religious History Society have provided a way of gathering together students and scholars from beyond the confines of Australian history to meet at the AHA. This fulfils an earlier vision of AHA. This fulfils an earlier vision for the AHA that has increasingly been dominated by Australian history in more recent years. One excellent feature of a number of RHS sessions at the AHA was the fruitful collaboration and discussion between historians of South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. I hope that this might be something we can develop more explicitly at future conferences.

The last meeting of the AHA was also the opportunity for the election of new office bearers. I have taken over from John Gascoigne, who has worn a double burden as Editor of the *Journal of Religious History*, as well as conference organiser of our Adelaide conference. Under his leadership, the *Journal of Religious History* has developed its international reputation as one of the leading journals in our field attracting contributions from all over the world and publishing leading edge research in all its chronological and geographical branches. We thank him for his productive and enterprising editorship borne despite an ever increasing research and administrative load at the University of New South Wales. Sophie McGrath has taken over as editor of the RHS Newsletter, RHesiS; Judith Godden is secretary, and John Gascoigne has the job of treasurer. Fortunately, Blackwells continues to allow generous discount to RHS members for their subscription to the Journal, and this is also the way in which we maintain our membership list.

Planning is now underway for our fourth conference to be held in my home city of Newcastle, NSW from 5 – 7 July 2004. We are still considering our options for a keynote speaker to address the theme of the RHS conference. After negotiating with the executive, we have decided to abandon the theme earlier announced for 2004 of "Sex and Religion" and align the RHS theme directly with the theme of the AHA, namely "Visions." This has a number of benefits, including the assurance that our chosen keynote speaker will also be supported as a keynote for the major conference.

I look forward to welcoming you to Newcastle for the 2004 conference. I hope that we will be able to introduce you to some of the fascinating religious heritage of the Hunter region of NSW and to hearing papers present new visions of religious history.

Hilary M. Carey
President, Religious History Society.

some words from the newsletter editor
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As you are aware, I have just taken over as editor of the newsletter and it would be great if we could re-establish the correspondents from the various universities and other institutions associated with the Religious History Society. The 1999 edition of the newsletter carried most interesting reports from the correspondents. This time round Jennifer Clark from the University of New England wins “the correspondents’ award” for being “at the ready” with a comprehensive report.

However, I must admit that, owing to complicated circumstances, the correspondents were given only a short time to get their reports together. Also, some of the correspondents were away while others were no longer located at the nominated institution. Thank you very much, however, to those who made helpful suggestions and prompted individuals to send in information which would be of interest to the members of the Society.

We will endeavour to be better organised next time. All, individual members as well as correspondents from the institutions, please feel free to send me relevant information in the field of religious history at any time and I will file it away for our next newsletter. See below for my postal address, fax number and email address.

Dr Sophie McGrath
Australian Catholic University
Locked Bag 2002
Strathfield 2135
Fax: 02 9876 4609
s.mcgrath@mary.acu.edu.au

**“Memory and Commemoration”, Medieval and Early Modern History
Conference, University of Melbourne, 5-8 February, 2003.**

Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern History held its very successful fourth conference early this year in Melbourne. This conference was part of the sesquicentenary celebrations of the University of Melbourne. Throughout the Conference a special exhibition entitled “From Bologna to Melbourne: Universities and the world of Learning” was on display.

The Plenary Speakers, who provided variety and challenge were:

Judith Richards, La Trobe University, on “Sex, Gender and Monarchy in Early Modern England.”

Paul Strohm, Oxford University, on “Water Flowing Underground: Fifteenth-Century Chronicles and Shakespeare’s First Tragedy.”

Patrick Geary, University of California, Los Angeles, on “Women in Origin Myths from Herodotus to the Twelfth Century.”

Dale Kent, University of California, Riverside, on “Michele del Giogante’s House of Memory: Laying the foundations of culture and identity in Renaissance Florence.”

Not unexpectedly religious history papers were much in evidence at this Conference. Interesting examples were:

“The Break with Augustine: Joachim of Fiore’s Third Age of the Holy Ghost,”
 Matthias Riedl (Friedrich Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)
 “Senses Working Overtime’: the Bodies of the Possessed in Early Modern France.”
 “The Treasures of Lichfield Cathedral and the Reformation”, Pamela O’Neill
 (University of Sydney).
 “Clothing in the Sacred Space: Representations of the Magi in Renaissance Italy”,
 Catherine Kovesi Killerby, (University of Melbourne).
 “Commemorating Pope Martin I: An account of Pope Martin’s Exile”, Bronwen Neil,
 (Australian Catholic University).
 “Pope Gregory and an Unknown Contemporary Biography of Bishop Gregory of
 Agrigento”, John R.C. Martyn, (University of Melbourne).
 “The Eight-Circle Cross-Carpet Page in the Book of Kells”, Denise Doyle, University
 of Sydney).
 “ ‘Dark Corners of the Land’: Religious Dissent and Witchcraft Cases in Early
 Modern Wales,” Sally Parkin (University of New England).
 “Medieval Ways of Remembering Cistercian Women ... and Medieval Ways of Not
 Remembering Them”, Elizabeth Freeman (University of Tasmania).
 “Issues of Fact and Fiction, Biography and Autobiography – the Life of Argula von
 Grumbach”, Peter Matheson (Melbourne College of Divinity).
 “Idol Threats: the Destruction of Religious Images and Memory in the Reign of
 Henry VIII”, Michelle MacDonald (University of Melbourne).
 “ ‘Let not the witness of faithful women ... be spurned’: Memory and Gender in the
 ‘Life of the Blessed Hermann-Joseph of Steinfeld’”, Sabina Flanagan (University of
 Adelaide).
 “Abesses, Princes, Queens and Pretenders: English Nuns and Royal Patronage in the
 Seventeenth Century”, Claire Walker (University of Newcastle).
 “The Religion of a Lawyer: William Blackstone’s Anglicanism”, Wilf Prest
 (University of Adelaide).
 “Archbishop Laud and the Scottish Revolution of 1637”, Ian Breward (Uniting
 Church Archives , Victoria) (and many more)

One cannot peruse the abstracts of the papers presented at this Conference without
 concluding that “all cannot be gloom and doom in the history world in Australia.”
 Also evident is the “seamless garment” nature of history – so much of the work being
 done in the medieval and early modern periods provides essential background for
 historians of later periods. It is pleasing that a considerable amount of the work
 being done in the medieval and early modern periods is helping to develop women’s
 history and consequently round out mainstream history. Also evident from the
 conference abstracts is the highlighting of religion within the general historical
 context of a subject, accentuating the essential humanity of the discipline of history,
 which provides the natural meeting place for the other disciplines. Indeed papers
 were presented by scholars specialising in such areas as English Literature and the
 Fine Arts not to mention a mathematician who contributed in the stream “Labyrinths
 and Space”!

The Conference was very well attended and a large proportion of the papers were
 presented by postgraduate students of a high standard. To encourage these budding
 academics the ANZAMENS had offered a \$500 prize for the best paper presented by
 a postgraduate student. The short list of three and the winner were announced at the
 Conference Dinner.

The Organising Committee of ANZAMENS 2003 “Memory and Commemoration” and their many supporters, institutional and individual, are to be congratulated and thanked for providing a forum for such a rich feast of scholarship to enrich Australia in particular and contribute to the international discourse in these areas.

Forthcoming Conferences and Seminars

History and Art History Graduate Summer Seminars 14–28 June 2003, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA

The Erasmus Institute sponsors summer seminars each year for advanced graduate students in the dissertation stage of their graduate work. (Postdoctoral scholars revising a dissertation for book publication are also eligible for the graduate seminar.) The purpose of the seminars is to offer scholars a chance to enrich their research by relating it to the intellectual traditions associated with Catholicism in particular, as well as to those of other Christian traditions and the Abrahamic religions more generally. A professor highly regarded in his or her field leads each of the seminars, focusing on the members’ individual projects over a two week period. The Institute provides meals, lodging, transportation, and a \$600 stipend for all participants.

The summer 2003 seminars will be housed on the campus of the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, one hour west of Boston. One of the graduate student seminars will focus on History and will be led by Margaret Anderson, Professor of History, University of California at Berkeley. The other graduate seminar focuses on Art History and be led by Elizabeth Johns, Professor Emerita, History of Art, University of Pennsylvania, and Visiting Fellow, Centre for Religion, Ethics and Culture, College of the Holy Cross. Both seminars will draw on the current work of the participants will the aim of stimulating and refining members’ research by more effective application of Catholic and other Abrahamic intellectual traditions. Applicants should submit a completed form (available on website – see below), two letters of recommendation, a curriculum vitae, and a statement of intent (no longer than three double-spaced pages) that:

- * describes the applicant’s current scholarship
- * specifies how this work draws upon Catholic or other Abrahamic intellectual traditions
- * explains what the applicant wishes to achieve by participating in the seminar.

Although the official due date was 17 February, 2003, applications will be accepted until the seminars are full.

Send all application materials, including letters of recommendation to Erasmus Institute Summer Seminars, 1124 Flanner Hall, Notre Dame IN 46556 – 5611.

Email enquiries: erasmus@nd.edu

Website: <http://www.nd.edu/~erasmus>

Australian Association for the Study of Religion 4 - 6 July 2003, Griffith University

The AASR Annual Conference will be held in the Multi-Faith Centre on the Nathan Campus of Griffith University. Papers are being called for in March. The Conference will include the Charles Trust Lecture; the Penny Magee Memorial Lecture; AASR Presidential Address; academic papers on the study of religions including strands on Teaching World Religions in Secondary Schools and Multi -Faith Dialogue; a Post Graduate Student Forum; and a Forum for Teachers of Studies in Religion and Religious Education.

Australian Association for Byzantine Studies (AABS) Conference XIII, 2003

This conference will be held at the University of Adelaide, 8 –10 July, 2003. The theme is: Feast, Fast, or Famine: An international conference on food and drink in Byzantium.

Two international speakers of outstanding reputation will deliver keynote papers which will be open also to the general public: Professor Eunice Maguire (Curator, John Hopkins Archaeological Collection and Director of Museum Studies, History of Art Department, John Hopkins University; Professor John Haldon (Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman, and Modern Greek Studies, University of Birmingham.)

In addition, the young scholar Dr Dionysios Stathakopoulos (Institut Fur Byzantinistik and Neograzistik, Universitat Wien) will present the fruits of his research into the topics of cannibalism, epidemics, and famines in the early Byzantine world.

Papers are invited from scholars on any aspect of eating and drinking in the Byzantine world. The possibilities are vast including the relationship between hospitality and politics; material objects associated with food and drink; the portrayal of food gathering or consumption in art; restriction of diet (fasting/famine); Diet and medicine/health; poisons; the economics of food production; transport; the sociology of eating and drinking; the treatment of food in literature; regional industries; and the provisioning armies. Papers which address the topic metaphorically (e.g. music or poetry as food for the soul) are also welcome.

Deadlines for submissions: 15 March 2003. Conference organisers: Dr Paul Tuffin (paul.tuffin@adelaide.edu.au) and Dr Wendy Mayer (wendy.mayer@adelaide.edu.au)

Details of registration, accommodation, and transport can be found on the AABS website at: <http://www.mcauley.acu.edu.au/AABS>

Oriente Lumen II conference, Melbourne, July 8-11, 2003

Convenor: Lawrence Cross, ACU National. For details see the website www.acu.edu.au/earlychr under Conferences.

Histories of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe, Brisbane, 7 – 9 July, 2003.

This conference is being held by the Centre for the History of European Discourses at the University of Queensland.

The conference is billed as “an exciting intellectual event, providing a unique opportunity for scholars to engage with international and Australian specialists who are in the forefront of research.” The focus of the conference will be the early modern genre of “histories of heresy” and their role in contesting and transforming the categories of heresy that had been forged in medieval Europe.

Given the extraordinary longevity of the idea of heresy, the papers will have broad scholarly appeal, but will be particularly useful for scholars working in the areas of theology, philosophy, and the history of religious, juridical and political thought.

Venue: Queensland Art Gallery. For further information contact the Centre’s Project Officer, Dr Peter White. uqpwhite@uq.edu.au/heresy.

Religious Institutions and the Roman Factor in Western Europe, 1802 – 1914.

In spring 2004, in the Belgian Academy in Rome, the Advisory Committee of the project, “The Vatican and Religious Institutions 1802 – 1914” will organise a colloquium on the above theme.

The Project is being financed by the Max Wildiers Fund under the auspices of the Scholarly Research Fund of Flanders. The host institutions are the Belgian Historical Institute of Rome and the inter-faculty research centre on Catholic life of the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. The aim of the project is twofold: firstly to develop a guide to the archives of the religious generalates in Rome; and secondly to promote comparative research on religious institutions.

It is expected that the colloquium will give a boost to research on religious institutions in Europe. Its proceedings will be published.

The themes of the colloquium are: The Role of the Curia; The Role of the Nuncios; The Position of the Local Bishops; Rome and the Various Types of Religious Institutions; The Implementation of Vatican Instructions; The Beatification or Canonisation of the Founder; The Position of Missionary Institutions.

Proposals for papers are welcomed and should be one page approximately in length. For each of the themes both case studies as well as general surveys may be presented.

For more information contact Sofie Leplae by email: sofie.leplae@kadoc.kuleuven.ac.be or Professor Jan De Maeyer: jan.demaeyer@kadoc.kuleuven.ac.be

International Congress of Historical Sciences, 3 – 9 July, 2005

Australia has the honour of hosting this important international Congress at the University of New South Wales. The Congress will include a section on “Religion

and the Public Sphere.” For more detail see the Australian Historical Association website: <http://www.theaha.org.au>

Journal of Religious History – Editor’s Report

The Journal of Religious History publishes articles which relate to all branches of human history connected with religion. The bulk of its articles relate to the history of Christianity in the West but we actively encourage the submission of articles related to other traditions and cultures. One of the aims of the journal is to promote the publication of articles relating to the history of religion in Australian and New Zealand and most of our issues include at least one article from this field. However, articles range from the ancient world to contemporary North America and Europe.

Since 1999 the journal has increased its numbers from two to three with the addition of an issue devoted to a particular theme – the other two issues publish a range of articles exploring a wide range of themes. Since 1999 special issues have been devoted to the Tudor divine, Richard Hooker; millenarianism; African religion and national identity; and the Dead Sea Scrolls. The 2003 special issue will be devoted to missionaries and indigenous religion, the 2004 to lay devotion in early modern Europe and there are plans for a 2005 issue on visions, and a 2006 on religion in colonial Latin America. Such special issues usually have their origin in conferences including the Religious History Society conferences which have been held in conjunction with the Australian Historical Association in 1998, 2000 and 2002 with another planned for the Newcastle meeting in 2004. Every two years the Bruce Mansfield Prize (named for the founding editor) is awarded for the best article for the preceding two years. Another feature of the journal has been its wide ranging review section which covers most aspects of religious history including non-Western topics and religious traditions other than Christianity.

In a time of shrinking library budgets the journal has been successful in keeping its institutional subscription base at around 350 together with about another 70 individual subscribers (about half of whom are members of the Religious History Society). The following figures for the institutional subscribers give some idea of the circulation of the journal: Australia and New Zealand (64), UK (20), Continental Europe (46), North America (186), Japan (4), Rest of the World (30). The circulation of the journal is likely to increase quite considerably with the increasing prevalence of online subscriptions: already 254 libraries subscribe in this manner and our publishers, Blackwells, are actively promoting such subscriptions.

After a four year term as editor and, before that, four years as book review editor I shall be handing over the editorship to Drs Nick Doumanis and Nick Eckstein. Dr Doumanis in turn will hand over the role of Reviews Editor to Dr Carole Cusack (Religious Studies, University of Sydney). They will continue to be glad to receive submissions, ideas for special issues, and of course they would value the work of those able to serve as referees and reviewers.

Book Review

In 2002 Matthew Dillon (University of New England) published *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion*. This book examines the role which girls and women

played in the religious life of Greek cities, in both Greece itself and also in the Greek cities of southern Italy, Sicily, and Alexandria in Egypt. The main period covered is 489-336 BC, but some attention is also given to the sixth century BC.

The evidence for women's role is both literary and iconographic, and attention to the latter is a key part of the book. Illustrations are drawn from a wide variety of iconographic media, including cult statues and temple carvings, and depictions of women in cult roles on grave reliefs, vases, wooden plaques and terracotta tablets.

A main methodological concern is to assess the significance of girls' and women's roles: whether these roles were important in themselves, or simply adjunctive to males roles. The nine chapters deal with women as dedicators, the public religious roles of girls and adolescent women, women priests, women-only festivals, women at the margins of Greek religion, prostitutes and foreign women, the religious transition from girl to wife and mother, women as impure due to biological functions, and lastly, women and mourning rituals.

This book concludes by arguing that girls and women had very important religious roles, probably more important for the religious life of the typical Greek city than that of most men. Fathers and husbands did not allow girls and women to participate in religious rites simply as an escape valve from the restrictions of this patriarchal society but rather women asserted their religiosity, and men recognised the importance of the divine role of the virgin, wife and mother.

Jennifer Clark (UNE)

Recent Publications

Bruce Kaye (ed.) 2002 *Anglicanism in Australia: A History*, Melbourne University Press.

E,Nelson, S.Smith, Grimshaw (eds) 2003 *Letters from Aboriginal Women in Victoria, 1867 – 1926*, University of Melbourne. (Available from the Department of History, University of Melbourne, Victoria 3010, Australia, for \$37 plus \$4 postage, cheques/ credit cards accepted).

Hilary C. Rubenstein, Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Abraham J.Edelheit, William D.Rubenstein 2002 *The Jews in the Modern World: A History since 1750*, Oxford University Press.

Ira M. Lapidus 2002 *A History of Islamic Societies* (2nd Edition) Cambridge University Press.

Steve Bruce 2002 *God is Dead: Secularisation in the West*, Blackwell.

Roger C. Thompson 2002 *Religion in Australia: A History*, Oxford University Press.

Shelia MaCreanor 2001 *Sainthood in Australia: Mary MacKillop and the print media*, Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, PO Box 1508, North Sydney, NSW 2059.

Christine Choo 2001 *Mission Girls: Aboriginal women on Catholic Missions in the Kimberley, Western Australia, 1900 – 1950*, University of Western Australian Press, 2001.

William R. Shank (ed) 2002 *Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History*, New York, Orbis.

Frank Turner 2002 *John Henry Newman: The Challenge to Evangelical Religion*, Yale University Press.

News from the University of New England

Religious history has traditionally been strong at the University of New England and various activities in this area in the last year demonstrate that this still holds true.

With Studies in Religion as a discipline booming at UNE, with a little over 580 undergraduate students enrolled this year, it was fitting that the School of Classics, History, and Religion recently hosted the annual conference for the Australian Association for the Study of Religions (AASR). Papers were presented to the conference on a broad range of topics including witchcraft, cults, prehistoric and classical Greek religion, biblical criticism, the Qur'an, religion and civil society, African proverbs, the poetry of Hopkins and Merton, the theology of ANZAC, and religious education in schools. Participants at the conference included scholars from as far away as South Africa and Canada, but also many locals attended.

Two public lectures were highlights of the conference, the first by Dr Marion Maddox from Victoria University, New Zealand, entitled "All in the Family: Women, Religion, and the Australian Right." Dr Maddox spoke of the Lyons Forum and its influence on John Howard's conservative policies affecting women and motherhood. Dr Benjamin Penny from ANU, gave the second keynote address entitled "The Body of Master Li: Doctrine, Corporeality and Iconography in Falun Gong". Dr Penny spoke of the way Li Hongzhi, the founder and leader of Falun Gong, is presented to practitioners and the general public, the claims he makes about what his body can do, and the images of Li which have striking parallels to images of the Buddha and to Mao Zedong.

Lynda Garland's paper [at the latest AASR conference] on humour, mockery and abuse in the lives of 8 – 10th century Byzantine saints developed from work on Byzantine humour begun at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington DC, where she was a fellow during 1997 and 1998. Hagiography is still a relatively untapped source for Byzantine civilisation, whose propensity to laughter and mockery has also been seriously underestimated, if not entirely ignored. The 119 extant lives of saints who lived between AD 700 and 1000 provide biographical information about patriarchs, monastics, hermits, nuns – and even married women who achieved sanctity despite their husband's disapproval. In their interactions with the world around them, these saints show how intrinsic a part of life abuse and mockery were to the Byzantines, and give us unique examples of ridicule directed against the saint and by the saint against his/her critics and the establishment. These lives therefore provide unparalleled information about Byzantine attitudes and behavioural conventions, including insight into the civilisation's approach to jokes, insults and entertainment,

and evidence from hagiography will comprise a chapter in the forthcoming monograph on Byzantine humour between 537 and 1453. General access to these lives has been made relatively easy through the existence of Dumbarton's hagiography data base, on which Lynda was invited to work during her stay there. The data base, now completed, is available for consultation online at <http://www.doaks.org/hagiointro.pdf>.

Frank Bongiorno is currently researching the history of New Thought/Divine Science in Australia (1880 – 1930) and in September 2002 presented a paper on this subject at the Conference, Unauthorised Knowledge: Non-conformist Thought and its Influence in Australia and Beyond in the Centre for Cross Cultural Research at the Australian National University,

Jennifer Clark and Majella Franzman published "A father, a son, my only daughter: memorialising road trauma" in *RoadWise*, the Journal of the Australian College of Road Safety. This paper examined the proliferation of roadside memorials and emphasised the relationship between the declining authority of the church in mourning rituals and the rising interest in the roadside as sacred space. This theme will be explored in more detail in a forthcoming piece called "Roadside Memorialisation: Constructing new Sacred Places in the landscape."

Jennifer Clark presented a paper to the AASR conference entitled "Speaking out: Methodists on Yirrkala, 1963". This paper examined the way in which the Methodist Church was forced to deal with issues from the Yirrkala land rights dispute in Arnhem Land in 1963. The dispute resulted in the Yolngu sending the Bark Petition to Parliament. The Methodist Church controlled the Mission Station at Yirrkala and a conversation arose within the Church as to who had the right to speak for Aborigines. This paper forms one chapter in a forthcoming study on Race and the Coming of the Sixties to Australia. Jennifer continues to work on a long running study on church closure.

Update from ACU National

At the Australian Catholic University (ACU) Charles Rue's thesis on the history of the Columban Society in Australia was submitted and passed during 2002. Clara Geoghegan expects to submit her Ph.D. on Bishop Crane, first bishop of Sandhurst, later this year.

In 2001, in the 75th anniversary of its foundation, St Rita's College, Clayfield, Brisbane, decided to fund a postgraduate student through ACU to undertake a thesis on the history of the college, with a view to later publication. This was advertised as a M.Phil. Scholarship and elicited a number of responses. The successful applicant is Anna Barbaro, who is enrolled on the Brisbane Campus of ACU National.

Anna is situating her research within the historical genus of convent high school education as it evolved in Europe and was transplanted to Australia. She has found many attendant questions, with social, religious and educational implications.

From Massey University, New Zealand

Dr Chris van der Krogt, an expert in the history of Catholicism in NZ, has been appointed to Massey University Palmerston North. Professor Gerald Pillay, Professor of Theology at the University of Auckland, and an authority on Pentecostal movements and African theology, has departed for Hope University, Liverpool.

Some activities around the country: discussion of the production of a Dictionary of NZ Religion; a joint team working on themes in the history of NZ religion has been organised from Otago University; Susan Thompson has completed her thesis on the history of NZ theological institutions.

An annual NZ Religious History newsletter is prepared from St Johns College, and may be received by contacting her on J.Crawford@auckland.ac.nz

Of Interest

The Religion, Literature and Arts Society is advertising its 2003 lecture series, to be given by Dr Tony Swain (University of Sydney), entitled: "Unreasonable Religion: The Primacy of the Arts in Religious life". All lectures will be held in the Woolley Building, University of Sydney, at 6.00 p.m. on the following dates:

30 April: This Playhouse of Infinite Forms.

7 May: Forgotten Words (China)

14 May: Bodies of Dreamings Colliding with Land (Australian Aboriginal)

21 May: Unreasonable Religion (drawing together strands)

The Society's new web address is:

www.arts.usyd.edu.au/Arts/departs/religion/rla/index.htm

Useful Documentary Information

Bruce Kaye is posting on the Australian Anglicanism website, which is devoted to key texts in the history of Australian Anglicanism, "A select index of contemporary references to the 1850 Bishops' conference and subsequent debates."

Website address: <http://www.anglican.org.au/archive/main.htm>

An extraordinary publication

There is no disputing the significant role that religious orders have played in history in general and in religious history in particular. Available now, presently only in Italian, are nine volumes of a projected ten volume dictionary of religious institutions, *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione* (DIP). This mammoth work claims to cover "the history, spirituality, inner structure of every monastic, mendicant, military, hospitaller Order, Congregation as well as secular institute whether existing or extinct."

Anyone interested in gaining more information is invited to write to:

Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione
Via Domenico Fontana, 12
00185 Roma (Italia)

FOURTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

OF

THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY SOCIETY

WILL BE HELD

5-7 JULY 2004

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

THE AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE, NSW, AUSTRALIA

THEME: Visions, Visionaries, Revisioning in Religious History

For ongoing information concerning the keynote speaker, conference details and call for papers see:

after May 2003 the RHS website

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/department/hi/rhs/>

Society for Religious History – Office Bearers 2003 - 2004

President: Dr Hilary Carey, Department of History, Newcastle University, NSW 2308, Ph +61 2 4921 5209; fax+ 61 2 4921 6940; email: Hilary.Carey@newcastle.edu.au

Convenor, Constitution Committee: Dr Bruce Kaye, Anglican Synod

Secretary: Dr Judith Godden, University of Sydney

Treasurer: Assoc.Prof. John Gascoigne, University of New South Wales

Newsletter Editor: Dr Sophie McGrath, Australian Catholic University

State and International Correspondents

* New South Wales:

Dr Jennifer Clark, Department of History, University of New England, Armidale NSW 2351; ph: + 61 267 732127; email: jclark@metz.une.edu.au

* New Zealand:

Dr Peter Lineham, Department of History, Albany Campus, Massey University, PB 102 - 904, North Shore MSC, Auckland, New Zealand; ph: +649 443 9687; fax: +64 9 443 9640; email: P.Lineham@massey.ac.nz

* Queensland:

Professor P. Almond, Department of Studies in Religion, University of Queensland, Brisbane 4072; ph: +61 7 3365 2154; fax: +61 7 3365 3071; email: P.Almond@mailbox.uq.edu.au

* South Australia:

Dr David Hilliard, Department of History, Flinders University, GPO Box 2100, Adelaide SA 5001; ph: +61 8 201 2225; fax: +61 8 201 2566; email: David.Hilliard@flinders.edu.au

* Tasmania:

Dr Richard Ely, Department of History and Classics, University of Tasmania, GPO Box 252 – 281, Hobart; fax: +61 3 6226 2392; email: r.g.ely@utas.edu.au

* United Kingdom:

Dr David Nash, History Department, Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane Campus, Headington, Oxford OX3 0BP United Kingdom; ph: +44 1865 483584; fax: +44 1865 484082; email: dsnash@brookes.ac.uk

* Victoria:

Dr Peter Sherlock, History Department, University of Melbourne, Victoria 3010; ph: +61 03 8344 4079; email: Sherlock@unimelb.edu.au

* Western Australia

Dr Bill Leadbetter, Community Services and Social Sciences, Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley WA 6050; ph: +61 8 9370 2910; email: w.leadbetter@cowan.edu.au

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