

# Providence La



Mary MacKillop  
HERITAGE CENTRE

Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre Newsletter

Welcome to the Summer edition of 'Providence Lane', Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre's, usually, quarterly newsletter, delayed by covid lockdowns. Mary MacKillop established us as a house of providence and, as the audio in Mary's Room states, "all people are welcome here as in Mary's time." We hope our newsletter reflects that ongoing welcome.

## A CONVERSATION WITH JOHN HALDANE

On Friday, 12 November, while most Melbournians (and thousands of others elsewhere) were following the memorable live screening of Bert Newton's funeral from St Patrick's Cathedral, across the road at MMHC a small group was experiencing a memorable and enjoyable experience of our own over morning tea with a delightful Scottish couple – Professor John Haldane and his wife, Hilda.

In general, our apartments usually provide short-term accommodation to our guests but John and Hilda have been here for some months while John is engaged at ACU nearby. As Professor of Philosophy of Education (one of his titles), John is leading an important educational, cultural and societal project in partnership with the Archdiocese of Melbourne and Catholic Education Melbourne.

A quick check on Google will give a breath-taking list of John's qualifications and achievements as philosopher, commentator, broadcaster and former papal adviser to the Vatican. His impressive CV in one paragraph includes the title of 'conversationalist'. What it doesn't say, however, is that both John and his wife Hilda are 'at home' with themselves, are delightfully unpretentious and are both great story-tellers. It was while sharing a good informal "Aussie" cuppa that we had the benefit of their wonderful Scottish/Glaswegian humour as they shared stories of their experiences around the world and their encounters with people from all walks of life including Popes, royalty and the renowned JK Rowlings of Harry Potter fame.



Needless to say, we all enjoyed the time together and were very grateful to John and Hilda for sharing it with us. Unfortunately, a good deal of their time in Melbourne has been spent in lockdown so hopefully, now that we have fewer restrictions, they will have opportunity to see something more of Melbourne and perhaps regional Victoria.

Thanks Ted for organising this pleasant gathering, which included Andrea Grant, Director of Catholic Identity, Mount St Joseph Girl's College, Helena Goldsmith from Catholic Mission and Identity MACS and staff and volunteers at MMHC. Special thanks to Yuvina for her part in seeing to the practical needs for our gathering and to Diane for the delicious Devonshire tea and Rita for the equally delicious cake.





### HERITAGE PLAQUE INSTALLED

It is with much gratitude that I thank Sr Patricia for what she does behind the scenes, especially initiating and following up with local councils and other community organisations to keep MMHC on people's radar to ensure that the legacy of Mary and the SOSJ remains known.

In the photos above you will notice the blue plaque that adorns MMHC's heritage fence. Patricia led the process to obtain the plaque with Heritage Victoria. There is no rest for Patricia as she liaises now with City of Melbourne to have Wayfinding signage that leads to the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre! Thank you Patricia for helping me learn the dates when different names were used for the building:

- 1902 – St Joseph's Providence
- 1920 – St Joseph's Hostel
- 1997 – MacKillop House (as the Hostel had closed in 1996)
- 2007 – Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre.

The plaque was installed on the day that Rev. Dr Max Vodola, priest of All Saints' Parish, Fitzroy visited. Max will be celebrating Mass in honour of Mary MacKillop's birthday on Sunday 16 January at 10am followed by morning tea in the parish hall, to honour Mary's life and legacy and pray for the ongoing work of the Josephite Sisters. You may also be interested in reading about the [birthday of St Mary MacKillop](#) on 15 January, by Sr Joan Healy as she reflects on the life and times of Australia's first saint.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Mary MacKillop had a radical vision of the way the Order of the Sisters should be structured – she didn't want the Order to be subject to direction by the Bishops of particular dioceses, and every Sister was to help with the work, regardless of background.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

It is with much excitement that I announce MMHC now has a [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) account, with intent to reach a far greater audience. This development has been led by Sr Rita and Yuvina from MMHC with intention to use the social media platforms to highlight our activities, and schools and former workplaces that had an affiliation with the SOSJ. Please join with us as we promote the spirit and charisma of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph by checking in regularly in 2022 as we reveal artifacts, quotes and interesting information related to Mary and the Sisters as follows:

- Museum Mondays** Showcases an image of a museum object with brief description
- Tribute Tuesdays** Recalls schools/institutes where SOSJ worked in Victoria
- Wisdom Wednesdays** Provides inspirational quotes/ reflections written by Mary MacKillop
- Treasure Thursdays** Promotes Gift shop, books, weekly best buys, teaching resources
- Family Fridays** Aspects of Mary's family will be provided weekly

**2022 Josephite Calendar**




Thank you to everyone who supported us by purchasing a 2022 Josephite Calendar and sorry to all those who missed out.

**For all merchandise visit the  
MMHC Gift Shop, order by email  
[admin.mmhc@sosj.org.au](mailto:admin.mmhc@sosj.org.au)  
or phone 03 9926 9300.**



## WITH GRATITUDE

2021 has seen us having to say goodbye to a number of our long-term team members some of whom have moved on to new roles in new places and others who have chosen to retire to explore new horizons.

Thank you for all your hard work and commitment over many years to make the Centre what it is today.

- Garry—CEO
- Maria—Facilities Coordinator
- Trudy—Volunteer (Museum)
- Sr Helen—Museum Coordinator
- Lia—Administration Assistant
- Marj—Volunteer (Gift Shop)
- Sr Mary—Volunteer (Gift Shop)
- Breta—Volunteer (Gift Shop)
- Margaret—Volunteer (Accommodation)
- Sr Fran—Volunteer (Administration)



### THE MACWOODS BOOK CLUB

Julian Tenison Woods:  
'Father Founder'  
Margaret M Press rsj



### THE MAC WOODS BOOK CLUB

When in lockdown, what does one do to keep the brain alive and the staff connected? Start a book club, of course! So thanks to Maria Fracalossi in Tasmania and some technical support from Ted at the Mary MacKillop Centre (working from home, of course) we signed on in August.

We met online weekly on Monday nights at 7.30 p.m. to read and discuss Sr Margaret Press' book on Julian Tenison Woods. We attacked a chapter each week and found ourselves lost in dates and places as Julian explored his early religious life attempts and later his parish ministry and scientific explorations.

The scope of Julian's life and work took amazing twists and turns and his contribution to church and science was faithfully combined. How he managed it all without the supports of communication, technology and travel that we have today is astonishing.

Julian was seen as a complex character but a great contributor to Church and society as well as the founder of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart and the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

*Wherever this may find you, I with all my heart, wish you a very happy Christmas and a bright and happy New Year... Though many of us will be far apart, we can be united in spirit, and pray for each other at the Crib, and at the Altar. Rest assured I shall not forget any of you – and you will not forget me either, will you? Your ever-loving Mother Sr Mary of the Cross.*

- Mary MacKillop , 7 December 1899



## MARY MACKILLOP RESPONDS TO THE PANDEMIC BY CREATING AN OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

COVID created its challenges and interestingly many opportunities about rethinking how organisations operate. At MMHC COVID density limitations impacted on the delivery of MMHC programs due to the number of people that could be in a Museum room at any one time. This had significant impact especially on our school class group sizes.

Kate our administration person, with that warm, welcoming, inclusive disposition that visitors find on arrival to the Centre, convened a working group to capture ideas for an alternative functional area and teaching space. We wanted the space to be interactive with the aim to engage classes using images; value adding to the teachability of the space. The group came up with the idea of creating a space that had a mural, turf mats and moveable dividers made from shop pallets. It was identified to have the mural complement the focus on the Victorian story as reflected in the museum.

Kate led the development of this outdoor classroom and contributed significantly to the design of the beautiful mural that now adorns our visitors parking area. We thank Regina Byrne and Chris Sage from [Hullabaloo Studios](#) the artists who gifted their time and talents to bring our vision for the mural alive. We thank Regina and Chris for donating this contemporary large scale wall mural depicting the significant events in the life of Saint Mary's Victorian story; the mural is 4.8 m in length. The mural will now proudly be used in the years ahead as another 'vehicle' for telling the story of Mary MacKillop's work in Victoria.



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