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The Anglican Mens Society Australia

AMS Australia Newsletter - April 2021

From the National Chair:

In the lead up to Australia Day this year, I was more than a little offended when the Prime Minister sought to draw an equivalence between the experience of the convicts on the First Fleet and the plight of our First Nations peoples in 1788 when he said, “When those 12 ships turned up in Sydney, all those years ago, it wasn’t a particularly flash day for the people on those vessels either.”

In a single throwaway line, he dismissed over two hundred years of injustice suffered by our First Nations peoples, who have been systemically dispossessed, disadvantaged, and discriminated against since that day in 1788.

Of course, many corners of the Internet treated the Prime Minister’s comments with scorn, including satirical news sites like The Betoota Advocate.

I also ventured to comment on Twitter, with what was intended to be irony, on a post I read about violence inflicted on First Nations people by an early governor in NSW, tweeting, “Of course it wasn’t a particularly flash day for the Governor either.” The reaction was swift and brutal as people expressed offence at my post, misunderstanding its intention and point. As soon



**2021 Senior Australian of the Year:
Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM**

as I saw the response, I deleted the post and apologised. This, of course, only inflamed things and the pile-on began.

I was already having a bad day, so I withdrew, deleting my Twitter account and going for a run to clear my head and reflect.

As a Bishop, and therefore a community leader, I needed to reflect upon the significance of perception, especially in a medium where the reach and scope for misunderstanding are wide. It was a salutary lesson for me about how I engage online. In particular, I found myself considering the difficulty of having meaningful conversations when there is not already a meaningful relationship. This is particularly true when we try to discuss sensitive or controversial issues.

The Bishop of Newcastle, Peter Stuart recently recalled three essential characteristics, first suggested by Rowan Williams, that aid the journey towards building community and real relationships.

These three characteristics are honesty, peacefulness and accountability.

Peter Stuart expands these as he reflects on how we might be the Anglican Church of Australia in these challenging times, with distinct expressions in different Dioceses:

“Honesty is not simply telling the truth to one another. It is also about understanding what kind of being/person we are. No one of us has infinite scope of time to realise our aims and objectives; no one has endless time at our disposal, and no one of us is exempt from risk, internal or external.

Peacefulness is not the denial or evasion of conflict, rather it is the resolve to engage actively in sustaining relationships that address difference and disagreements as they arise.

Accountability begins with the habit of listening



attentively to others with a view to contributing our skills and gifts to secure what is best for them.”

It seems to me that these three things are increasingly important in a world where polarisation so often takes us to a place where proper relationship and constructive conversation become seemingly impossible.

Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann AO, 2021 Senior Australian of the Year, also offers invaluable insights that speak into this space:

“What I want to talk about is another special quality of my people. I believe it is the most important. It is our most unique gift. It is perhaps the greatest gift we can give to our fellow Australians. In our language this quality is called *dadirri*. It is inner deep listening and quiet still awareness.”

She continues:

“We have learned to speak white man’s language. We have listened to what he had to say. This learning and listening should go both ways. We would like people in Australia to take time to listen to us.”

Perhaps *dadirri* is the gift we need at this time: this time in our nation, in our Church – the capacity to actually listen to each other with quiet, still awareness. Real listening is something that is hard to do when our only thought is about our next nasty rapid-fire riposte. Real listening is not possible when we only know each other through Tweets or Facebook posts or sound bites. *Dadirri* might not bring a change of mind and won’t miraculously bring agreement, but it might just bring the beginnings of relationship and the hope of understanding. It’s not a bad thing for us to practise as we wonder anew about the future of the Anglican Men’s Society. As we listen to those from across the Australian church, who are also members of AMS, what might we learn from one another?

You see, we will not always agree, but listening brings understanding which leads to respect. when we can understand and respect one another we have the foundations of a solid relationship and a place from which we can really talk.

I’m not sure I’m ready to venture back on to Twitter; probably one social media account is enough for me at the moment. However, I do have a renewed commitment to honesty, peacefulness and accountability as I work out, day by day, what it means to be a Bishop in the Church of God and a Christian seeking to make my way in this fractured world.

+Jeremy



AMS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

After much discussion it has been decided to take a bold step and to plan the 2021 AMS National Conference for Launceston from Monday October 25- (‘This day is called the Feast of Crispin...’) to Wednesday October 27- a mid-week Conference!

Further information about the Conference will be made available shortly together with the Registration Form which will have full accommodation and programme details together with costs for the Conference .

Note: Current anxiety over COVID-19 outbreaks should not deter Members from deciding to attend at Launceston in October.

Should the situation change- we will adapt.



LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES



BILL BRADY WELFARE ORGANISATION INC.

Ivan Holt OAM– BBW Secretary Report for 2020.

With a total of three lockdowns in Melbourne this year due to Covid-19, there were no meetings of the Welfare fund after the AGM in March, 2020. However by phone and e-mail we made three donations as follows.

Bush Church Aid, Victoria	- \$500
Mission to Seafarers, Dampier, WA	- \$500 – cyclone damage
Orphanage at Dodoma, Tanzania	- \$500

When posting out the diaries in November we advised the members and supporters of these donations and they responded with donations of over \$900. We were very heartened by this response, as with low interest rates and no fund raising activities due to Covid-19, there was little income for the fund.

The AGM was held on Wednesday 3rd March, 2021 at Mitcham where John Greenslade joined the management Board. The management team for this are:

President - Warren Cole OAM

Secretary - Ivan Holt OAM

Treasurer - Geoffrey Murphy

Board members – The Rev. Tom Morgan and John Greenslade

The following donations were made on 3rd March, 2021:-

OAC Ministries – Mervin Jensen	- \$500
Bush Church Aid, Victoria	- \$500
Wycliffe Bible Translators – Swann family	- \$500
John Maryoe, Theological student	- \$500

Yours in W. F and S.

News from Queensland:

There will be changes 'at the top' in the Queensland AMS as Andy Brodersen has indicated he will stand down from the position of General Manager.

That leads into - at the Conference in Launceston in late October this year some national office-bearer positions will become vacant and members should give consideration to whether they would like to accept one of these responsibilities.

There will be more about the National Conference in future Newsletters.



A shipwrecked sailor spent several years on a deserted island. One morning he was thrilled to see a ship offshore and a small boat pulling out toward him!

When the boat arrived, its occupant handed the marooned sailor a bundle of newspapers and said: "With the captain's compliments. He said to read through these and let us know if you still want to be rescued."

SAID HANRAHAN by John O'Brien'

"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan, In accents most forlorn,
Outside the church, ere Mass began, One frosty Sunday morn.

The congregation stood about, Coat-collars to the ears,
And talked of stock, and crops, and drought,
As it had done for years.

"It's looking crook," said Daniel Croke; "Bedad, it's cruke, me lad,
For never since the banks went broke Has seasons been so bad."

"It's dry, all right," said young O'Neil, With which astute remark
He squatted down upon his heel And chewed a piece of bark.

And so around the chorus ran "It's keepin' dry, no doubt."
"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan, "Before the year is out."

"The crops are done; ye'll have your work To save one bag of grain;
From here way out to Back-o'-Bourke They're singin' out for rain.

"They're singin' out for rain," he said, "And all the tanks are dry."
The congregation scratched its head, And gazed around the sky.

"There won't be grass, in any case, Enough to feed an ass;
There's not a blade on Casey's place As I came down to Mass."

"If rain don't come this month," said Dan,
And cleared his throat to speak —
"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan, "If rain don't come this week."

A heavy silence seemed to steal On all at this remark;
And each man squatted on his heel, And chewed a piece of bark.

"We want an inch of rain, we do," O'Neil observed at last;
But Croke "maintained" we wanted two To put the danger past.

"If we don't get three inches, man, Or four to break this drought,
We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan, "Before the year is out."

In God's good time down came the rain; And all the afternoon
On iron roof and window-pane It drummed a homely tune.

And through the night it pattered still, And lightsome, gladsome elves
On dripping spout and window-sill Kept talking to themselves.

It pelted, pelted all day long, A-singing at its work,
Till every heart took up the song Way out to Back-o'-Bourke.

And every creek a banker ran, And dams filled overtop;
"We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan, "If this rain doesn't stop."

And stop it did, in God's good time; And spring came in to fold
A mantle o'er the hills sublime Of green and pink and gold.

And days went by on dancing feet, With harvest-hopes immense,
And laughing eyes beheld the wheat Nid-nodding o'er the fence.

And, oh, the smiles on every face, As happy lad and lass
Through grass knee-deep on Casey's place
Went riding down to Mass.

While round the church in clothes genteel
Discoursed the men of mark,
And each man squatted on his heel, And chewed his piece of bark.

"There'll be bush-fires for sure, me man,
There will, without a doubt;
We'll all be rooned," said Hanrahan, "Before the year is out."

Father Hartigan, aka 'John O'Brien' was a Catholic priest at Narrandera, NSW for 27 years and wrote versus all about life in the country for his own amusement.

DIRECTORY OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OFFICE BEARERS.

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