

# ANGLICAN MEN'S SOCIETY

The National Council in Australia

## NEWSLETTER

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### FROM BISHOP JOHN STEAD – AMS National Chairman

Recently we have had the privilege of hosting the Rev'd Canon Dr Robin Greenwood in the Diocese of Willochra as well as facilitating his visit to the Dioceses of Grafton, Newcastle, Rockhampton and Canberra & Goulburn.

Robin's most recent book *Sharing God's Blessing* is an encouragement to have conversations. He draws a distinction between discussions and conversations. Discussion has its root back in Latin, *discussion*, which means 'examination' and/or 'judgement'; Robin goes so far as to say it is grounded in the idea of 'cutting apart', i.e. it's about making a point and winning an argument, coming to a judgement. On the other hand conversation is a talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged. Conversation has a Latin origin, *conversation*, meaning 'living among, familiarity, intimacy'.

Discussion and conversation come from almost different ends of the spectrum – the first is about making a point, winning an argument; the latter, about relationship, intimacy and the exchange of ideas.

How can the Anglican Men's Society encourage more conversations rather than discussion? How can we create the climate where relationships and intimacy can blossom as we talk with each other paying as much attention to what we hear as we do to what we say; indeed

spending more time listening than speaking.

Greenwood's book *Sharing God's Blessing: How to renew the local church* offers us a way of engaging in conversation. There is a free down loadable section of the text on the SPCK website:

<http://spckpublishing.co.uk/free-downloadable-extract-from-sharing-gods-blessing/>

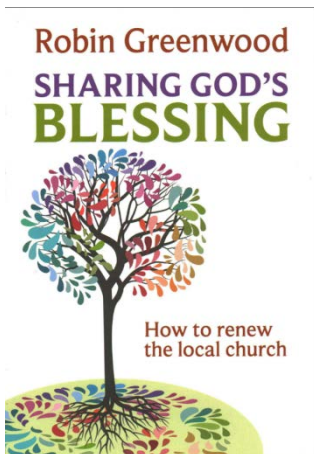
In addition there is a YouTube clip of Robin Greenwood talking about the book at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s32tjU2acko>

How can we allow ourselves to make conversation a more central part of what we do together?

How can conversation inform how we meet together next year for the National Gathering in Brisbane?

I would commend this book to you or at the very least the free download.

Peace & Joy,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Stead', written in a cursive style.

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### ST. OSWALD'S DAY DINNER – MELBOURNE

On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August a dinner was held at All Saints', Mitcham to celebrate St. Oswald – Patron Saint of AMS. 60 members and guests enjoyed a spit roast and were entertained by Mervin Jensen of OAC ministries. While not a fund raising event many were seen buying the snowball packets which AMS Melbourne sell to raise funds for Welfare. A very good evening for AMS, members and friends of AMS.

### NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

In a first for AMS in recent years, a one day Council Meeting was held in Melbourne, based at the Park Royal Hotel Tullamarine on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September. While the venue was not cheap it proved to be very convenient for interstate delegates. Most delegates made the starting time of 10am but Harry Giann from Sydney did not make his flight. The Meeting consisted of delegates from Melbourne, Brisbane, Newcastle, Willochra and Tasmanian Dioceses – 12 in all. The more important items discussed are listed below.

**Membership:** The Secretary reported that total membership is currently 174.

**Revised Admission Service:** This service was revised in modern English by The Rev'd Trevor Smith of Melbourne and was approved.

**National Accounts:** The National Treasurer reported the following balances as at 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016 – NAB Cheque Account = \$588.55 and ADF Account, Melbourne Diocese = \$8005.00.

**National Mission Project:** After some discussion it was decided to continue our support for the Amani Development Organisation Inc. in Tanzania during 2017. For the year 2015 AMS Nationally had donated \$21,669 as reported in the June Newsletter.

**Annual Fees:** These are unchanged for last year. \$20 per member paid to the National Secretary with the annual membership listings.

**AMS Diary for 2017:** Only 320 were printed so be early with your order if you require some diaries. Please article below.

**Life Membership:** Warren Cole the Lay President of the Victorian Province was awarded Life Membership as he completes ten years as in this position. He had recently announced that 2016 would be his last year as Lay-President.

**National Triennial Conference in Brisbane – 2017:** The Queensland delegates advised that his would be held on the weekend 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 at the Watermark Hotel, Wickham Terrace, Brisbane. Some sponsorship has been obtained for this event. This weekend celebrates Scandinavia in Brisbane so the Sunday lunch will be at the Danish club.

**Promotion of AMS:** A brochure prepared by the Secretary was circulated to delegates and later sent to all Diocesan groups for discussion. It was felt that some revision is required to make it more attractive for younger men. Also a folder outlining the achievements of the Amani Development Organisation in Tanzania was circulated.

### **The traditional Lord's Prayer.**

Both AMS Orders of Service include the newer version of the Lord's Prayer which was introduced to the Australian Prayer Book in 1995 as an alternative prayer to the traditional prayer. There was a motion at the meeting that we revert back to the traditional version for the AMS services. After discussion it was felt that if individual branches wish to use the traditional version, they are free to do that as a group decision, but there is no need to alter the AMS services.

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## **MELBOURNE BOOK FAIR**

The annual AMS Book Fair has grown into a great community event at Holy Trinity, Oakleigh. With some 10,000 books on show in many categories it involves considerable people power over several days. Now a mecca for S/H book dealers to restock their stores and many regulars we have come to know many of them. We thank many members and friends of AMS who turn out and help in provide the people power for this event.

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The Longford Branch of the Anglican Men's Society inducted Robert Sowter as a Member at a Morning Tea meeting at Gordon Millar's place on St Oswald's Day, August 5. Unfortunately Chaplain Jo Pyecroft was unable to attend so the service was conducted by National Lay Vice Chairman Trevor Cowell. Robert was warmly welcomed especially recognizing that his grandfather the Reverend W.H.McFarlane was Rector of Christ Church Longford between 1940 and 1946. A great Morning Tea was supplied – and served - by Gordon and Roy. Very much a Pleasant Friday Morning

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### **Servants and Leaders - Eminent Christians in their Own Words**

By Grahame Downie – with a Preface by Bishop Tom Frame.

Published by Halstead Press - \$28.95

Twenty seven Church leaders of all persuasions and prominent lay Christians have opened up to being interviewed by Canberra - based journalist Grahame Downie over a period of forty years on issues and feelings that mattered to them. Most are very well known and their stories make – to use a maybe overused but in this case deserved, phrase - riveting reading. Cardinal George Pell, Desmond Tutu, Peter Hollingworth, Owen Dowling, George Browning, Peter Jensen and many others, (not all of them still alive) talked to Grahame Downie openly about their beliefs, doubts, controversies - there are quite a few! - embarrassments - quite a few of those, too! - triumphs, disappointments and personal and global concerns.

Mark Coleridge - currently Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, is quoted by Grahame Downie “ Not for the first time, the Catholic Church in Australia and elsewhere is passing through a deep and permanent change, which may in some ways be death, but which is also birth”.

Now how many times have AMS members at meetings suggested that organisations ‘death’ but still AMS lives on.

Interestingly Mark Coleridge and Graham Downie had a more tortuous relationship than Downie had with many others of his subjects. And Downie lets his views about that be known.

The interview with the late Owen Dowling is particularly interesting not least for Owen's comments about the media - and Graham Downie's approach to what was an ‘interesting’ period in Bishop Owen's life.

This is not a book on theology or doctrine: rather it gives more than glimpses into the lives of these Servants and Leaders - if you wish to ‘catch-up’ with some key moments in the life of (former) Governor-General Peter Hollingworth - you can do it in this volume.

As interesting as these personal 'stories' themselves is that of the author Grahame Downie – “blind since birth”- who built a wonderful reputation as a journalist with *The Canberra Times*. Bishop Tom Frame in his Preface offers that “Graham’s interviews were good when they first appeared (as news reports or featured articles) and they are even more valuable now” Most readers will find at least one ‘interview’ that resonates personally.

## Trevor Cowell

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### AMS Pocket Diaries – 2017

The AMS Diaries for 2017 are now available thanks to the efforts of Trevor Cowell and the Longford Branch in Tasmania. The Melbourne Diocesan Council had produced these since they were first printed in 1978 however with falling sales it was announced at the 2015 annual conference that Melbourne would no longer underwrite the cost of production. It appears that mobile phones are now taking over from personal diaries. These items however do provide good promotion for AMS. Only 320 No. were printed so be early to secure your copy - \$6 each – please contact Trevor Cowell. Postage is now \$2 for one diary!



### Longford Branch, Tasmania - activities

This photo is of some Longford members splitting the substantial timber from two trees recently felled in the Christ Church grounds.

The blue gums were assessed as posing a danger to people walking through the grounds - and to a group of historic headstones in the church cemetery.

Highly skilled tree surgeons were contracted to fell them and cut the timber into 'wheels' which AMS members - and another - then split for firewood a couple of seasons ahead. Proceeds from the sale will be used by AMS for a variety of causes in the coming months.

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#### DIRECTORY OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OFFICE BEARERS.

**Chairman:** The Right Rev'd John Stead, PO Box 96, Gladstone, SA, 5473.

Tel: (08) 8662 2249 – Fax: (08) 8662 2027 –

e-mail: [bishopsecretary@diowillochra.org.au](mailto:bishopsecretary@diowillochra.org.au)

**Clerical Vice Chairman:** vacant

**Lay Vice Chairman:** Trevor Cowell, PO Box 22, PERTH, Tasmania, 7300

Tel/Fax: 03 6398 2507 - e-mail: [trevorcowell@bigpond.com](mailto:trevorcowell@bigpond.com)

**Secretary:** Ivan Holt, 3 Scarborough Road, Vermont South, Vic, 3133.

Tel: 03 9886 8516 - e-mail: [iaholt6@bigpond.com](mailto:iaholt6@bigpond.com)

**Treasurer:** Grahame Foster, 30 Upton St, Launceston, Tas, 7250

Tel: 03 6331 8551 e-mail: [oceanic@internode.on.net](mailto:oceanic@internode.on.net)

**AMS WEB PAGE:** [www.amsnational.org.au](http://www.amsnational.org.au)

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