



PO Box 57
Kent Town, SA 5071
SA.Companions@sosj.org.au

Winter 2022

July 2022 Newsletter



*"Let God's spirit guide
you in your choice."
MMK 1898*

A Special First Birthday

By Julie Langman

Last year on the 18th of April, in the Bethany Centre at Kensington, the **Mary MacKillop Walk** was launched. On the 1st of May this year, we celebrated its first birthday as part of the History Festival of South Australia. About 25 people took part in a guided walk, finishing back at the Mary MacKillop Museum for birthday cake and morning tea.



Mary MacKillop Museum Board
Members cutting the cake

This Walk is a commemoration of Mary MacKillop's story and legacy in the Kensington-Norwood area for the 11 years that Mary was based there from 1872 to 1883.

Springing from the dream of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods, they co-founded a new religious order and started a school in

Penola in 1866. Just over a year later, Mary arrived in Adelaide where young women flocked to the new Sisterhood and many schools were established. Within two years of arriving in Adelaide, Mary and the Sisters ran 21 schools in the city and country.

Our Kensington story commences in 1872 during and after the time of Mary's excommunication. The early Jesuit priests, realising that Mary's excommunication was invalid and unjust, sheltered and encouraged her during the crisis. In August 1872, Mary MacKillop and the Sisters moved into a villa on a triangular property in Kensington which was initially purchased by Fr Reynolds on behalf of the Sisters. It became the Sisters' first official Mother House. In 1875 ownership of the property was transferred to Mary MacKillop, with assistance from long-life friends and philanthropists, Joanna and Robert Barr-Smith. In 1876 a further building was erected to accommodate the rapidly growing congregation. That building is today the St Joseph's Chapel. The Chapel, the Aboriginal Garden and the Museum in the Mary MacKillop Precinct are all part of the Mary MacKillop Walk.

In Loving Memory compiled by Pauline Morgan rsj



Sr Robert Aitken was born in Adelaide, South Australia on the 6th of August 1930. She was educated by the Sisters of St Joseph and, on leaving school, worked as a clerk and was active in the Therry Dramatic Society and in the YCW. She excelled at sports, enjoying music, singing and was blessed with a strong and beautiful singing voice.

In 1953 she was professed as Sr Mary Robert of Our Lady of Good Counsel and trained as a primary school teacher. After a few years Sr Robert learned to drive and began working on the Motor Mission. Every weekend Sr Robert visited Aboriginal people who were in hospital.

Over the years Sr Robert gained qualifications in Theology, Aboriginal Studies and Aboriginal Languages. From 1987 onwards the call to walk with, support and simply be with Aboriginal Peoples was her main ministry. She was able to engage with everyone she met, and children loved to be with her.

Sr Robert supported the Kura Yerlo Board for 30 years and was a founding member of the SA Josephite Reconciliation Circle, remaining an active member until a few weeks before her death. She joined gatherings that called for justice and attended every session of the Hindmarsh Island Royal Commission.

There is a moving description of death being like a gentle pause between one breath and the next. On the morning of the 7th of May 2022, Sr Robert had a gentle pause between one breath and her next, and found herself in eternity with the God she loved and had served so faithfully.

Marie Kathleen Victory was born in Peterborough, South Australia on the 26th of February 1943. She was the ninth of eleven children having a deep affection for her parents and each of her siblings.



Marie attended St Joseph's School in Peterborough and her early years in her family and school planted in Marie a warm sense of God in her Church and Faith community.

In 1960, Marie entered the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, taking the name 'Mary Phillip.' After her profession Marie trained as a teacher in North Sydney.

When in 1964 Marie returned to South Australia, there began a generous and creative commitment to teaching. Marie loved little children and wanted the best for each one while working in nine different schools.

To her delight, Marie was appointed to the Hectorville Parish in 1999 and in her ministry shared a special gift of compassion with families suffering bereavement. She brought generosity and enthusiasm to her ministry, all the more admirable because for much of the time she was battling various health issues.

After fourteen years, Marie concluded her ministry at Hectorville but remained connected to the people. Marie's health continued to deteriorate. Her final days were spent at Calvary-Flora Residential Community where she passed away on the 28th of May 2022.

May Marie now enjoy the beauty of her heavenly home as she rests in the arms of her loving God.

***“Remember, there is, even on this Earth,
a day of bright reward for all your
prayers and faithful perseverance.”***

MMK 1874

Adelaide Holocaust Museum by Bridgette Barrett and Julie Langman



On Sunday the 22nd of May 2022, Josephite Companions, Sisters and friends visited the historic Fennessey House in Wakefield Street in the city which houses the Adelaide Holocaust Museum.

The initial idea of this visit was the fact that Emanuel Solomon and Mary MacKillop were known to each other and both happened to be active in Adelaide during the 1800's.

Emanuel Solomon was a Jewish businessman and politician, establishing the Adelaide Hebrew Congregation. For Catholics, Emanuel is especially remembered for the assistance he gave Mary in 1868 and again in 1871, giving her rent-free housing so that the Sisters had somewhere to live, so they could continue to assist those most in need.

Emanuel's actions throughout his life testify to the fact that race, religion and status were of no consequence in interpersonal relationships. Mary also saw no class, race nor religious boundaries, but purely assisted those who needed help. Emanuel was a Jew, as was St Joseph, and Mary's faith and her whole life were shaped by St Joseph.

As we moved through the Museum, we were all reminded by the text and images, that many people were killed during the Holocaust for no other reason than being Jewish. In June, the World Day of Cultural Diversity highlighted the richness of the world's cultures and the essential role of intercultural dialogue for achieving peace and sustainable development. Let us follow the lead of Emanuel and Mary in listening to others and assisting where we can and standing up to needless violence.

The Museum is dedicated to preserving the stories and voices of Holocaust survivors, especially six survivors who later made South Australia their home. One story was about

Eva, the youngest survivor of the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp. Eva was about 12 months old when she was found in the arms of her dying grandmother in April 1945. She was later adopted by an uncle in England and came to Australia as a *Ten Pound Pom*. These and other Holocaust stories in the Museum encourage all South Australians to call out prejudice and racism. The Museum's education programs inspire the community to speak out and stand up for a more compassionate world.

One in our group asked, "Why did Hitler hate the Jews so much?" There is an article displayed in the Museum titled 'History's Oldest Hatred.' It explained that throughout history the 'Jewish problem' has always been a phenomenon of the Non-Jewish world. Europe's Jews had historically experienced persecution due to deep-seated religious, social and economic prejudices. The rise of nationalism and racism in the nineteenth century saw the creation of the term antisemitism, which reflected racial rather than religious hostility towards Jews.

Australia was not immune from such hostilities, where in 1938 the Australian Federal Government received a letter from a representative of the Returned Services League in Sydney stating: "We view with alarm the serious influx of German and Austrian Jews into this country, as we consider it will be detrimental to our standard of living in Australia."

In the Anne Frank Gallery, there are exhibitions that trace the history of the Holocaust. Rather than to shock, it encourages visitors to think about hate-speak, antisemitism and acts of terror that must never be repeated.

Visiting the Holocaust Museum was an experience that dwelt less on the actual horrors of the Holocaust, and more on the importance of Holocaust education. The Museum's education programs, exhibitions and collections try to motivate visitors to develop ethical values and encourage action against prejudice and intolerance towards others. It shows that we must try to eliminate the conditions that allow genocides to occur.

Recycle - Reuse - Re-purpose

by Cathy Young

A cold, rainy day greeted over 30 people for World Environment Day on Sunday the 5th of June at the Bethany Centre. Lucia Ciocca and Pauline Gear were our guest presenters.



Lucia's introduction was through a YouTube clip with an environmental theme sung by a group of English children. With their parents, their thoughts about keeping our planet safe were introduced musically.

Lucia looked at the encyclical *Laudato Si'* by Pope Francis, which focuses on connecting care of the natural world with justice for the poorest and most vulnerable people. Lucia distributed a handout and gave us some good reading and good food for thought.

Pauline's presentation gave us an interesting insight into how to **avoid** buying more than you need, **reusing** as much as you can, and to think how to **renew** and **re-purpose**. Pauline gave information on what was happening in her own council which may be different to how other council areas deal with recycling, etc.

However, we were offered lots of useful ideas for recycling, such as collecting soft plastics which can go into the recycling bins at many supermarkets. Also, our green bins take all our garden waste and dog poo, and the environmental bags from local councils can be filled with food scraps. And if you have cardboard pizza boxes that are too soiled with food and oil, they too can go into the green bin.

Another really good tip Pauline shared with us, is to use a large clear plastic bottle, make a slit down the side and fill it with bottle tops and even jar lids. I'm doing that now!

I personally thought that Pauline was talking to the converted. Where were all the others? I, and others too, brought things from home to be shared, and what was left over Pauline took with her to be donated to charity shops.

Lucia rounded off the afternoon with Pope Francis' prayer for Environment Day which was set to music. And as a token to take away with us, we were given the very sustainable gifts of seedlings (tulips and the like) in newspaper pot plant containers – a great illustration of sustainability!

Being such a cold day, hot soup was enjoyed during coffee time.



Recycle your printed Newsletter

When you have finished with the newsletter, a good recycling idea is to pass it round for others to read.

Re-purpose your used Stamps

Stamps for the Missions are still being collected! Those that are donated are then processed, parcelled up and sold. The money raised goes to **Mary MacKillop Today** for the Missions in Brazil, Peru and Timor-Leste. Many thousands of dollars have been raised in this way.

Please send your used stamps, leaving a 1cm border, to:
Used Stamps, Locked Bag 3031, Burwood, NSW, 1805

cont from page 1

Adjacent to the Museum is the Mary MacKillop Park and memorial to Max Harris. Max Harris was a poet and journalist, as well as an agnostic. When he discovered the story of Mary MacKillop, he 'fell in love with her' and became her most ardent promoter. Max was the writer who took Mary's story beyond Church circles. He advocated for her recognition as a *Saint for all Australians*. Max died and was cremated on the 19th of January 1995 which, coincidentally, is the exact day of Mary's beatification. Max's ashes are interred under the rock in Mary MacKillop Park.



Mary MacKillop Park

We continue past Mary MacKillop College where we learn that the Josephite schools' motto was inspired by the words used by Mary MacKillop in a letter she wrote to her Sisters just before her death in 1909: "Love one another; bear with one another, and let charity and love guide you in all your life." Still used today by schools in the Josephite tradition, the Latin motto is "In omnibus caritas." Or if translated into English, "In all things love."

The Mary MacKillop Walk meanders past a house once lived in by a most generous and popular local doctor, Dr Benson. For many years he offered his services for free to the Sisters and to the poor who lived in the area. He died in 1877, leaving little provisions for his wife and children. Mary MacKillop wrote, "His too generous heart never allowed him to save." However, after his death, Mrs Benson said to Mary, "He told me you would be kind." And she was – arranging free education for the Benson children.



Benson Memorial
on the south-east
corner of High St
and Portrush Rd

Another inclusion is the Norwood Parade Cultural Plaque which acknowledges the historical importance of Mary MacKillop to the wider community. Here Mary is acknowledged as a *Social Reformer – Mary was a courageous woman who challenged the social mores of 19th Century Australian society, its social injustices and social ills.*

At the time of Mary's excommunication James Woods, the brother of Julian, lived in Franklin Street. When Mary was abruptly expelled, it was to James' nearby house that she fled, and found welcome shelter. Sr Catherine Clark rsj said of Mary MacKillop, "She never derided her oppressors." However, James Woods, a staunch supporter of Mary and the Sisters, leaked the true story through the local newspapers much to the embarrassment of Mary. James was utterly outraged at the treatment received by Mary and the Sisters from the Bishop and some priests. The house that James and his family later moved to in George Street, Norwood is included in the Mary MacKillop Walk.

Mary had to move constantly during the five months of her excommunication because she feared those who supported her would get into trouble. For a time, Mary rented some cottages. With the support of the Jesuit priests, it was business as usual for Mary. Although she was not permitted to communicate with her Sisters, she did! Mary was able to offer much needed support and even accepted new members into the Order.

We continue on to the Church of St Ignatius, which was where the Sisters were reinstated in a ceremony in March 1872. Nearby is the site of a Catholic Refuge. In this refuge Mary and the Sisters cared for single mothers, former prostitutes and women newly released from prison. A commercial laundry became the main source of income, and the Sisters worked side by side with the women.

The Mary MacKillop Walk incorporates other sites but it's over to you to make this your own experience. There is a free booklet available at the Museum or go online. The Walk can be self-guided or you are welcome to join a group for a guided walk on the first Sunday and first Wednesday of each month, starting at 10.30am from the Museum.

Our Josephite Partners

Living in the Spirit of Mary MacKillop

- **St Joseph's Old Scholars Association**

An Old Scholar is anyone (female or male) who has ever been connected to a Josephite school or college in Australia, as a student or teacher. Our Association has been in existence for over one hundred years.

Another successful Luncheon was held at the Lockleys Hotel on the 22nd of June. Sr Theresa Swiggs spoke about her ministry in supporting needy families with the Nazareth Community. With the aid of a raffle, we were delighted in presenting Theresa with a cheque for \$550 to continue her ministry.

The St Joseph's Old Scholars congratulate Ms Sonia Nelson in being appointed Principal of Mary MacKillop College from 2023. We trust Ms Kath McGuigan will enjoy her retirement after 12 years as Principal.

- **Mary MacKillop Old Scholars Association**

The Association continues the friendships and encourages the building of life-long networks amongst past students and staff. It also fosters justice and compassion, hospitality and concern for those in need and has a special relationship with the Sisters of St Joseph.

Our Annual Reunion Dinner this year will be held on Friday the 28th of October. Everyone is always very welcome to join in and connect with other Old Scholars.

Our popular Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/179768134304>) keeps people in touch with each other. Make contact and share your news.

- **Mary MacKillop Precinct – Bethany, Museum and Chapel**

- Museum and Gift Shop – open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 4pm

The Museum has a display of some of the South Australian story including Mary's early companions, and the history and legacy of the Josephites.

The Gift Shop has many products available for sale including the monthly *Southern Cross* magazine, books, cards, Ethica products and much more!

Order online through www.marymackillopadelaide.org.au

For phone orders or other information call 8130 5910.

- St Joseph's Chapel

We are pleased to announce that the Chapel is now open to the public every day from 10am to 4pm.

- Bethany Centre

Check out the *2022 Events Programme* which offers workshops, reflection and retreat days. Details online through www.marymackillopadelaide.org.au or collect a copy when visiting the Museum.

- Spotlight on Mary MacKillop: Monthly Morning Cuppa

This new venture started in June and continues every month on the 8th from 10.30am – 12.30pm. Join us in Bethany for opportunities to enrich our appreciation of Mary's story and legacy. There will be storytelling, songs, reflection as well as a cuppa, cake and chat – the 3C's. All are welcome! No registration and no cost!

Enquiries: phone 8130 5900 or email infos@sosj.org.au

Mary MacKillop

A Woman of Faith



Introduction

Mary MacKillop devoted her whole life to following Jesus and helping others, especially the poor and marginalised. Mary radiated God's love and energy to everyone she met, showing courage and determination even in the most challenging of circumstances. Mary persevered to make a difference, creating a legacy of helping others and doing so with a Josephite heart.

Opening Prayer

God, source of all goodness, who has shown us in Mary MacKillop a woman of faith living by the power of the Cross, teach us, we pray, by her example to live the gospel in changing times and to respect and defend the human dignity of all in our land. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 6:25

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

Take some time to allow these words to speak to you.

Prayers for our Community

- ✳ That the Church, inspired by the example of Mary MacKillop, may continue to reach out to those in need.
- ✳ That our faith community may be inspired by the example of Mary MacKillop to be extraordinary in the ordinary things we do.
- ✳ Just as Mary MacKillop suffered many difficulties throughout her life, may we be blest with patience, humility and the grace to persevere through our own struggles.
- ✳ For those in our community who are suffering, sick or in need. May the healing power of Christ be with them.
- ✳ Inspired by the life and example of Mary MacKillop, we pause to pray in the quiet, for our own needs (pause a minute).

From the Pen of Mary MacKillop

"Pray earnestly and with loving confidence." 1873

Blessing

Through the example of Mary MacKillop,
May we learn to recognise God's will for us and trust in God's providence.
May Mary's life of service awaken in us
A deep respect for the poor and a strong will for justice.
May we share in her courage,
See with the eyes of Christian love, and learn from her holy deeds.
Amen.

Action

Like Mary MacKillop, spend some time praying earnestly and with loving confidence to our God who knows all that is in our hearts. Allow the heart of God to enfold you.