

Archivally Speaking

No. 7 — July 2010

An occasional newsletter for those interested in the history of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch.
Preserving the foundations of tomorrow's Diocese

The next Archives Day

Sunday, August 22nd, 1.30pm
Cathedral House, Barbadoes Street,
Christchurch

STAINED GLASS

Bernard Hempseed will be speaking about stained glass in churches, in particular about a booklet he has produced recently about the windows of St Joseph's church, Temuka, the restoration of windows and how to photograph them.



For catering purposes please RSVP to mhhh@xtra.co.nz or phone Christchurch 03 358 8758 before August 16.

Windows; looking through, and looking at

It is stating the obvious to say we

FROM THE ARCHIVIST

use windows to bring light into our houses, schools, offices etc, and mostly we use plain glass because we like to look out onto the world beyond.

In something of a contrast to this, the architects and window designers in the great medieval era of stained glass used the windows of their gothic churches less with concern for lighting the interior, as for holding the light in the window itself.

They wanted the window to

capture and hold the light of heaven. The window space was to be a channel through which heaven could be experienced as entering our world.

Eight hundred years later, every year, thousands of world travellers plan their journey being careful to visit and marvel at the incredible beauty of the colours in these windows.

The English actor Charles Laughton once said of the windows of Chartres Cathedral:

“When I was a kid I had Mother Goose stories read to me and I remember lying in bed at night thinking of Aladdin's cave with its heaps of rubies and emeralds, amethyst and topaz scintillating in the darkness. It takes a good deal to top a child's imagination of the glittering beauty of precious stones, but the stained glass windows of Chartres Cathedral did that.”

Kevin Clark

Increased heritage classification for St Mary's



In February this year the Board of NZ Historic Places Trust upgraded the registration of St Mary's Church, Hokitika, from Category 2 to Category 1, the highest listing possible.

The registration brings to three the number of Category 1 churches on the Coast, the other two also being in Hokitika. It recognises the importance of this building to Hokitika and to the West Coast generally.

It brings to five the number of category 1 churches in the diocese, the others being Ashburton, the Cathedral, Waimate and the St John of God chapel. There are also 7 category 2 churches.

HIBERNIAN PHOTOS ADDED TO COLLECTION

The photographic collection in the diocesan archives has been boosted recently by the gift of a CD from Ray Morris containing 53 photos from the earlier years of the Hibernian Catholic Benefit Society in Canterbury.

St Patrick's 82 branch of the Society was founded in 1873. Over time a number of other branches were formed in the wider Christchurch area — St Mary's Christchurch North, St Teresa's Riccarton, St Peter's Beckenham, St Joseph's, St Matthew's female branch, St Paul's Dallington, Sacred Heart Addington, St Patrick's Kaiapoi, St John's Leeston, St Patrick's Lincoln, St Joseph's Lyttelton, St Denis' Woolston, St Thomas' Rakaia and St Joseph's Rangiora.

Over the years, some branches were forced to close or amalgamate with their neighbours, due to hard financial times, and more recently declining membership has seen more of this. All the branches mentioned above are now amalgamated with St Patrick's 82 branch.

The photos are from a collection in storage at the Ferrymead historic Lodge Hall in Christchurch. They form an important historical record of members and their contribution to the Society, as well as providing a rare insight into the earlier years of the Society.

In some cases, the photographs do not include names, due to the passage of time, but this is something family members may be able to rectify by viewing the photos and adding names.

Remembering our priests

For 170 years priests have worked in what is now the Christchurch Diocese, in parishes, in schools and in special ministries.

Up until now there has been no comprehensive listing of their names—various parishes, as they celebrated their significant anniversaries, have recorded

the names of their former priests, and the recent computerisation of baptismal records has enabled the names of priests officiating at baptisms to be listed.

Now, however, thanks to the work of diocesan archivist Father Kevin Clark and a small band of helpers, the names of those priests who have died have been listed in a publication called a necrology.

There are more than 400 names listed, but as Father Clark says, it is an ongoing work. Many details such as death dates and places of burial have yet to be found. The necrology has been published now in the hope it will bring forth additional names and other information.

The book, arranged in order of date of death, features on the cover a photo of St Joseph's church Temuka, designed by Father Louis Fauvel SM who died in 1904 and is buried in Sydney.

