

# Archivally Speaking

No. 6 — September 2009

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

## A FOCUS ON CHURCHES

*Next Archives Group Day*

*Sunday October 11, at 1.30pm*

*Cathedral House, Barbadoes St, Christchurch*

*Our next Archives Day will look at some of the Churches in the Diocese, past and present.*

*Guest Speaker: Dr Ian Lochhead, author of the book "A Dream of Spires". Ian will be looking at architect Benjamin Mountfort and his Catholic connection.*

*Also: Our most prolific church builder—a presentation from Michael Hanrahan on Fr John Claude Chervier SM and the churches he built.*

*And: To test people's powers of observation, (and have a little fun), an exercise in matching photos of churches with their architect.*

To help providing afternoon tea we would like to hear from everyone who intends to be there. Please RSVP to Michael Hanrahan at [mhhh@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mhhh@xtra.co.nz) or to Merle Conaghan on Christchurch 358 8758

The history of the Church in our area of the South Island reaches back to 1840 when the first priests came to Akaroa. At that time we were part of the Wellington Diocese and remained so until the Diocese of Christchurch was founded in 1887. It is therefore some 169 years since the Church began its work in the area of Canterbury, Westland and Chatham Islands. "A Suitable Temple," the story of

### FROM THE ARCHIVIST

#### Photos Speaking Loudly

the building of our Cathedral, is well received by all who read it. Now, Michael Hanrahan, its author, has almost completed a work which is the result of his aim to produce a compilation of photographs of all the churches ever built in what is now our diocese. The photos are in colour wherever possible and are

accompanied by a generous amount of text.

I like photo books. They speak loudly.

The pages of this book speak very loudly indeed. They speak of Faith, Hope, courage; of perseverance and of the priorities of ordinary people. This book will reward browsing and reflection. The photographs are little mementos of our own fellow people of Faith.

*Kevin Clark*

## Some Useful Websites

[www.matapihi.org.nz](http://www.matapihi.org.nz) is a site that contains material from many New Zealand libraries, museums, universities etc. Images range from historical photographs to paintings and drawings as well as a number of sound files. Images can be ordered through the site from the institution holding them.

[www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz). This site has an increasing number of New Zealand's early newspapers available for searching or browsing. They are arranged by region or by title and more are added from time to time. You can print an article as it appeared in the paper or have it converted to computer generated text you can edit.

[www.thecommunityarchive.org.nz](http://www.thecommunityarchive.org.nz) is the website of the National Register of Archives and Manuscripts. It is a very user friendly site, searchable, giving the location of specific collections of material held in institutions throughout New Zealand. There is also the ability to ask questions and post comments.

### YOUR NEWSLETTER

To help update our address list, would you please check the address we have used and let us know if changes are needed

To help reduce the expense, (which we meet privately) would everyone who would prefer their newsletter emailed as a PDF please let us know.

If you have friends interested in being a member of our group, please put them in touch.

## Can You Help?

We are undertaking a project to gather together into one place information about all churches that have existed in the Diocese, past and present.

This information includes a photo of each church where possible, and it is with some of these photos help is needed.

There have been 177 churches in the diocese since the first was built in 1840 (there could be some we haven't found out about but we think that's the lot). This does not include chapels or shared churches.

We have photos of 162 of them. That leaves 15 to find, mainly in Christchurch and on the West Coast. We are aware some photos won't exist, but there are some, especially in Christchurch itself, from relatively recent times, that someone may have a photo of, perhaps as the background to a wedding or school group.

There will be a draft copy of the work to date at the Archives Group Day.

### *The missing photos that should be somewhere are:*

- The first **Beckenham** church, 1928-1956 (became classrooms).
- The first **Hoon Hay** church, 1952-1956 (became classrooms).
- The first **Riccarton** church in Peer St. It was used as a church 1926-1929 then we believe at some stage was used as a classroom by Villa Maria and known as the Church in the Meadow. In 1949 it was moved and became the first Sockburn church and still exists as part of the Sockburn parish centre, but it's a photo at Riccarton we're looking for.
- The second **Barrytown** church, 1911-1954 (burnt down).
- The **Poerua** church, 1953-1996 (now a holiday lodge).

### *Others that will be a little harder to find but could exist are:*

- The first **Addington** school/chapel 1879-1898 that we believe continued in use as a school shelter shed or similar. It was built of mud brick.
- **Marsden** church 1876-1916 (burnt down).
- The first **Morven** church in use up to 1895. Corrugated iron. Became a shelter shed in the Waimate School grounds, still there in the 1960s.

### *And the ones we don't think we'll find, but you never know, are:*

- The first **Akaroa** church 1840-1859 (perhaps a sketch or painting)
- **Maori Gully**, still there in 1895.
- The first **Nelson Creek** church 1869-1874
- The first **Notown** church, built 1871, later used at Ngahere, now at Shantytown.
- The second **Notown** church built 1884, fate unknown.
- **Okarito** opened 1868, fate unknown.
- **Try Again Terrace**, built 1868, fate unknown.

If you have a photo of one of these that you could lend, please get in touch with Michael Hanrahan, 03 308 8853 (evenings), [mhhh@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mhhh@xtra.co.nz) or 48 Philip St, Ashburton 7700.