May Conference

The Early Church: Cults & Controversies
Welcome to our March 2015 Newsletter. Since our last newsletter SSEC has had four very enjoyable events as follows:

In early October, Professor Alexander Weiss (Leipzig) gave an enlightening talk on the topic: Local Colour in the Canonical and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: “Reality effect or markers of authenticity.” This was very well attended by SSEC members.

In late October we were delighted to hear from Associate Professor Boyo Ockinga (Macquarie). His topic was The Egyptian Background of the Exodus.

In November, Dr Don Barker (Macquarie & SSEC Secretary) gave illustrated lecture - with slides on: Care taken in Producing Ancient Manuscripts. This was followed by discussion, and Q & As.

In December, we held the SSEC end of year/ Christmas Event. It was also the 27th anniversary of SSEC and Macquarie University’s 50th Birthday. It is gratifying to note that SSEC has been in existence for more than half the University’s life. What a record!! You will notice on page 3 the SSEC celebration cake. Our speaker was Dr Peter Edwell, with his Topic: Recent View of St Nicholas Church at Myra.

We have several upcoming SSEC events for the beginning of 2015. We also have a number of other events where guest speakers are brought to Australia by other organisations, such as Australian Institute of Archaeology (AIA) & where SSEC members are invited to attend. You can read about these on page five. These are summarised in the calendar of events on page 13.

In addition, we are well underway in making plans for our 2015 Annual May SSEC conference and Conference “curtain raiser” events. The conference theme will be “The early Church: Cults and Controversies.” The keynote speaker is Professor Paul Trebilco from University of Otago. Read more about these two events on page 3 & 4.

As in previous years, we are expecting speakers of international reputation. Thank you to Karyn Young who is our 2015 Conference Manager & special mention to our volunteers who regularly give their time to process subscriptions and to attend to SSEC emails & enquiries.

A Registration form for the conference is included with this eNewsletter, and also on the SSEC Website.

Note: Full conference program, with list of speakers/topics will be on the SSEC website (in due course). This program will also be available on paper, please leave a message if you require this is writing - SSEC office (phone 9850 7512).

Once again, thank you to all SSEC members who attend our events & continue to make them a worthwhile learning experience.

Professor Alanna Nobbs AM
President SSEC

“The unique emphasis of our Society is one of history; the study of Early Christianity in its Jewish & Graeco-Roman Setting.”

SSEC Newsletter

SSEC Newsletter is published three times a year for the Society for the Study of Early Christianity.
March 2015 Edition : Number 81
Chief Editor: Prof Alanna Nobbs
Editor: Peter Eyland
Website & Newsletters: Mrs BJ Eyland
Contributions: SSEC Members

Next newsletter due Mid July 2015.

For further information about the Society for the Study of Early Christianity, to update your contact details or to subscribe to the SSEC Newsletter contact:

Email: SSEC@mq.edu.au
Website: www.mq.edu.au/ssec/events
Telephone: SSEC office (9850 7512), Dr Don Barker (9850 9962), Professor Alanna Nobbs (9850 8844), Ancient History Office (9850 8833)

Cover Photo on eNewsletter: Guest Speaker at the upcoming May conference. Professor Paul Trebilco (Otago)
Conference Eastern Christianity
Convened by Ken Parry

Christianity in Crisis: Eastern Christians in the Middle East and their Diaspora Communities

On 12 December 2014, a day conference was held, convened by Ken Parry. Attending were a number of scholars and representatives from the Christian communities currently affected by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East.

It was a wonderful opportunity/forum for the general public, community members, & the media to hear speakers give historical background and commentary on the minority Christian groups in the Middle East who are coming under increasing pressure, and the impact this is having on their communities in Australia. The rapidly declining numbers of Christians in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and the Lebanon is resulting in some communities becoming larger overseas than in their original homelands. The implications of this for Australia are considerable, but these are not presently being addressed by politicians and policy-makers or discussed in the media.

This was a free event sponsored by the Faculty of Arts as part of its community outreach program and the Society for the Study of Early Christianity. The Co-op Bookshop provided a bookstall and refreshments were made available.

Invited speakers:
- Dr Ken Parry (Macquarie),
- Dr Peter Edwell (Macquarie),
- Prof Rifaat Ebied (University of Sydney),
- Dr Ross Burns (Macquarie),
- Bishop Anba Suriel (Coptic Orthodox Church),
- Metropolitan Mar Meelis (Assyrian Church of the East),
- Metropolitan Mor Malatius (Syrian Orthodox Church),
- Bishop Robert Rabbat (Melkite Catholic Church),
- Bishop Tarabay (Maronite Church),
- Bishop Haigazoun Najarian (Armenian Apostolic Church),
- Archbishop Jibrail Kassab (Chaldean Catholic Church),
- Metropolitan Paul Saliba (Antiochian Orthodox Church).

SSEC Celebration Cake December 2014

The following items outline “SSEC in focus”, or the future direction of the Society.

- One of the major events for the society is our annual conference - Saturday 2 May 2015.
- The SSEC AGM is also held on the Saturday and is an opportunity to vote for new committee members to assist in the running & planning SSEC activities for members. We thank all current SSEC committee members and hope that they will be prepared to continue in their roles for future years. We extend our appreciation for their valuable support.

SSEC Conference 2 May
“The early Church: Cults and Controversies.”

SSEC holds its annual conference in May each year. Join us this year: Sat 2 May 2015.

Our visiting speaker for 2015 will be Professor Paul Trebilco (University of Otago), shown on our front cover. He studied Chemistry at the University of Canterbury, then did a Bachelor of Divinity at Otago before completing his PhD in the New Testament in 1987 at the University of Durham.

He has published work on the Jewish and Graeco-Roman backgrounds to the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, the apostle Paul, early Christians in Ephesus, the relationship of Scripture and Church tradition, and the Self-designations used by

We are very pleased that Paul is coming to speak to us.

At our “Conference Curtain Raiser” on the Thursday night, 30 April 2015,

- Chair: Professor James R. Harrison, (Sydney College of Divinity)
- Light Supper provided afterwards with tea & coffee.

Our day conference will be held on the Saturday 2 May 2015. See below for details.

We believe that this conference will be very special and will further promote the study of Early Christianity and the cults and controversies surrounding.

Please mark these two dates into your diaries.

SSEC Day Conference Details

The early Church attracted much controversy from the very beginning. The apostle Paul spoke at Athens about looking for the truth. At Lystra and Derbe, Paul and Barnabas were taken for gods. A riot began at Ephesus over Paul’s mission.

The Conference will look at the interaction of emerging Christianity with existing cults, philosophies and ideas.

The programme includes the following speakers:

- Professor Paul Trebilco (Otago) Topic: Identity Formation in Earliest Christianity: Constructing Outsiders in New Testament Letters
- Professor James R. Harrison (Sydney College of Divinity & Macquarie) Topic: Ephesian Cultic Officials, Their Benefactors and the Quest for Civic Virtue: Paul’s Alternate Quest for Status in Ephesians
- Dr Christopher Forbes, (Macquarie) Topic: TBA
- Dr Bernard Doherty (Macquarie), Topic: Superstitio nova ac malefica (“A New and Wicked Cult”: The Social Construction of a Roman “ Cult Controversy.”
- Lyn Kidson (Macquarie PhD Candidate), Topic: False Teachers or Disputing Sophists?
- Q&A session, to conclude the day.

Our Venue for 2015 is Robert Menzies College. 136 Herring Rd North Ryde NSW. (on Macquarie Uni campus).

- Conference Start time: Registrations from 9:00am to 9:30am, with first speaker at 9:30am, concludes approx 5:00pm.
- We would appreciate you registering early for catering purposes.
- Receipts for 2015 will be sent via email to keep costs down. Paper receipts will be available at the conference registration desk.
- Parking will be available in nearby streets, or for a small sum at Macquarie University, or at Macquarie Shopping Center.
- We suggest travelling by Public Transport, nearest train station is Macquarie University. There are several government bus stops located nearby.
- There is very limited disability parking at the venue, please phone the SSEC Office in advance to book one of these. Enquiries to Karyn Young, Conference Manager, at the SSEC Office.

Conference costs as follows:

- Normal Rate: $145
- Alumni $140
- Financial SSEC Member: $130
- Pensioner (age, disability or carers): $95
- Students: $55
- Part day at $25 per lecture (or $20 SSEC/concession).

Conference Fees: (includes morning & afternoon tea and lunch) Conference attendees will also receive a “Book of Notes” with all topics, abstracts, speakers bio, and further details about the conference. Cost includes GST.

Register Now!

- Download the SSEC Conference Registration Form in PDF format (204 kB)
- Note: As further details become available they will be loaded onto the SSEC Conference Website. SSEC 2015 Conference Website
SSEC Conference Proceedings Website - we hope to have photos & biography of our speakers, full details of their topics, abstracts and copies of their papers/handouts &/or slides loaded onto the SSEC website after the conference (subject to authors preferences, copy-right, and publishing requirements etc).

We also hope that conference papers will appear in future additions of the SSEC eNewsletter.

Each year we are honoured to have international guest speakers. In addition local academics, papyrologists, archaeologists, numismatists and historians come to speak at our conference.

SSEC events

Upcoming Seminars

Mon 20 April 2015: Professor Alanna Nobbs (Macquarie, SSEC President). Topic: Christian Responses to Persecution in the Late Roman Empire. We are very much looking forward to hearing Alanna speak.

Wed 9 September 2015: Carole Ferch-Johnson (PhD candidate Avondale), Topic: Comprehensive presentation on “Communication through Hands that Do”.

Thurs 12 November 2015: SSEC end of Year / Early Christmas Event. Put this date in your diaries. Although we can not announce the Speaker or the topic, because of travel arrangements &/or publishing commitments - we have definitely booked the room, and are working on someone very special. We hope to see you there!!

Professor Tessa Rajak

The Sir Asher Joel Foundation is delighted to announce the forthcoming annual oration by its Visiting Fellow, Professor Tessa Rajak on 17 March 2015 at 6:00pm for 6:30pm lecture at the North Shore Temple Emanuel, 28 Chatswood Ave, Chatswood.

Tessa will speak on Masada in the 1st and 21st Centuries. She is a renowned British historian specialising in the cultural and social history of Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman periods and Early Christianity. Light Kosher supper, RSVP for catering purposes to Dr Gil Davis - gil.davis@mq.edu.au.

The spectacular fortress of Masada on the Dead Sea was the last stronghold to fall to the Romans three years after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE. The suicides of some 960 defenders and their families, as dramatized by the historian Josephus, has entered collective memory as a legend of resistance to the last. It has inspired Jews from mediaeval martyrs to the Shoah. Now it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a major tourist attraction. We will revisit both the story and the remarkable archaeology of Masada. We shall then look into Masada's iconic role in Zionist history and in Israeli society, concluding with some discussion of recent critiques of the ‘Masada myth’.

Visit of Dr Ron Tappy to Australia

Sponsored by AIA (Australian Institute of Archaeology), Dr Ron Tappy (Pittsburgh Theology Seminary) will be in NSW from 10-16 May 2015. We have arranged to have him talk at Macquarie University on Tuesday 12 May 2015. His topic will be: Strangers at Home: The Give and Take of Life in the Borderlands of Judah.

Dr Ron Tappy is the G. Albert Shoemaker Professor of Bible

Dr  Ron Tappy (Pittsburgh Theological Seminar)
and Archaeology. He also serves as director of the Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology and as the project director and principal investigator of The Zeitah Excavations, an archaeological field project at Tel Zayit, Israel. He is a leading authority on the archaeology of Israelite Samaria. Enquiries to Dr Keimer kyle.keimer@mq.edu.au

Other Events for SSEC

Coptic Evening later in the year
We plan to hold a Coptic Evening later in the year. At this stage we are still negotiating speaker and topic. Enquiries to Dr Malcolm Choat by email on malcolm.choat@mq.edu.au

New Testament & Early Christianity (NTEC) Post Graduate Group
This postgraduate group, meets monthly on Fridays at 11:30am, convened by Dr Don Barker. This meeting regularly features skype with Professor Laurence Welborn (Fordham USA), and discusses current research topics. Further details Dr Don Barker by email to don.barker@mq.edu.au

If you wish to support this group and make a donation to Wider Biblical Manuscripts Research Project then click here to download the donation form.

SSEC Events in later months, will be loaded onto the SSEC website, www.mq.edu.au/ssec/events when details become available.

SSEC awards
Chris Dixon Medal 2015
The Chris Dixon Medal is awarded jointly by the Society for the Study of Early Christianity (SSEC) and the Centre for the History of Christian Thought and Experience (CTE).

This annual medal honours the memory of Chris Dixon who received her doctorate posthumously in 2009.

This year’s medal is awarded to: Dr. Julien Ogereau. His doctoral thesis, Paul's Koinonia with the Philippians: A Socio-Historical Investigation of a Pauline Economic Partnership was awarded “The Vice Chancellor’s Commendation” for Academic Excellence.

Julien was also a former SSEC supported Tyndale scholar.

Book Launch - Julien Ogereau (Humboldt)

This book was based on his Macquarie PhD thesis, supervised by Professor Laurenciar, and

On the strength of his thesis, Dr Ogereau won a prestigious Humboldt fellowship in Berlin. Since June 2014, he has been a research assistant in the research project (B-5-3) Authorization of Early Christian Knowledge Claims in Greece in the theological faculty of the Humboldt University in Berlin.

L to R : Dr Julien Ogereau (Humboldt) & Professor Laurence Welborn (Fordham/Macquarie)
SSEC grants

The following lists some of the scholarships, grants, programs and initiatives that SSEC Members support. Please accept our deepest thanks.

Excavating in the Holy Land

Thanks to the generosity of the Sir Asher Joel Foundation and other donors, students have the opportunity to excavate in the land of Israel. Currently we are jointly conducting a dig at the biblically-known site of Tel Azekah where, it was said, David went to fight Goliath (1 Samuel 17).

If you are interested in what we are doing and/or would like to help please contact Dr Gil Davis – gil.davis@mq.edu.au or 0439-817299

Jordan Scholarship

Note: the Jordan scholarship, previously announced is on hold for now.

Engaging Rome and Jerusalem: Historical Essays for our Time

E.A. Judge (author), Selected and edited by Stuart Piggin (Australian Scholarly Publishing: Melbourne), this book will be launched on 11 March 2015 by Associate Professor Tom Hillard and Dr Paul Barnett.

SSEC members are welcome to attend the book launch, in Chatswood NSW at 6pm, Wed 11 March. Numbers are strictly limited so RSVP promptly, to events@publicchristianity.org.

Engaging Rome and Jerusalem brings together forty of Professor Judge’s most popular writings. They diagnose the angst and contradictions of modern civilisation in terms of the unresolved tension between classical and biblical thought, and address issues in contemporary life from political conflict and democracy to public and private schooling, women in the church and the meaning of history.

It is hoped that this book will be on display at the SSEC May 2015 conference, and will be available for SSEC members to purchase for the special price of $35.

SSEC travel

Tyndale House Travel Grant 2015 & 2016

It is our pleasure to announce that the Tyndale Travel Grant for 2015 was awarded to James Unwin. This was provided by the generous donation of an anonymous donor.

As this newspaper is being produced, James is currently travelling to Tyndale House. We will publish James’ travel report in a future newsletter.

As a bit of background each year, the Tyndale Travel Grant scholarship is provided by a donation by a SSEC member or members.

These annual scholarships enable students to travel to Cambridge UK, to visit Tyndale House in January each year, in conjunction with the warden of Tyndale House and via special arrangement with the Macquarie University Ancient History department. These grants are very worthwhile for the individual students, for SSEC, and for fostering and supporting Macquarie University study and research into Early Christianity.

Scholarships or travel grants cover the cost of airfare, transfers, accommodation, library costs, for a few weeks and we are seeking an amount of $5,000 each year. The grants provide a worthwhile study environment and access to world class libraries, research facilities and/or archaeological sites for research.

We are very fortunate to have already had 3 anonymous donors to help us towards the Tyndale House Travel Grant for 2016, but we still need to fund these scholarships, ongoing and into future years. If you feel that you can assist with a special donation, either anonymously or perhaps in memory of someone, please contact Professor Alanna Nobbs on (02) 9850 8844, or by email at Alanna.Nobbs@mq.edu.au

SSEC Travel Grant

The SSEC travel grant of up to $500 per application is available competitively to Ancient History post graduate students at Macquarie University who
are or are willing to become SSEC members, in order to promote their research and completion. If you are interested please contact Professor Alanna Nobbs by email at alanna.nobbs@mq.edu.au

SSEC Small Travel Grant
—Report of Thanks
by Emlyn Dodd (PhD Candidate Macquarie)

Viticulture and Ancient Wine Production
In June, 2014 I was extremely privileged to receive one of the SSEC postgraduate student travel grants to assist with conducting research in Turkey, Greece and Italy.

The primary purpose of this research trip was to actively participate in the Antiocheia ad Cragum Archaeological Research Project (ACARP) and link the objectives of my doctoral research with the current excavations on site at Antiocheia. The site has strong links to Early Christianity with multiple Late Roman churches built both within and outside the city walls (in varying states of preservation to this day). The excavation season was productive with extensive analysis taking place on the ancient wine press located near the northeastern temple. This press was first discovered in 2012 and had not yet been studied in such detail.

As the viticultural specialist on site I was called upon by the Director, Professor Michael Hoff, to investigate and explain key features of the chronology and use of the wine press. By the end of the season some significant steps forward had been made in our understanding of the press and some early questions posed by my doctoral research had been answered.

As a result of my time on site, I am now also investigating the links between wine production and ritual as well as the paralleled increase in popularity of local wine and acceptance of Christianity in this region during the Late Roman period.

The SSEC Travel Grant has been vital to the timely completion of my doctoral research and has been of great assistance not only towards my primary research goals but also in expanding upon secondary possibilities. I would like to express my utmost thanks and gratitude to the SSEC (in particular Professor Alanna Nobbs) for both assisting in my research project and for making it possible.

Request: Missing Inscriptions

SSEC has had this special request about missing inscriptions, and we are seeking any information that anyone may remember about this.

Dr Alessandro Vella in the Vatican is working on a little known catacomb in Rome, named after Saint Tecla, on the via Ostiense. Inscriptions from there have been lost. The inscriptions were excavated by Armellini in the 1880s. A certain Father Antonio Ferrua visited the catacomb in 1948 and met the owner, Marquis Serafini, aged 84, who remembered, when he was young, many inscriptions fixed to the walls of the house. But then ‘an Australian prelate’ was allowed to take them away as evidence of martyrs.

This is a very fragile clue, but it looks as if the removal was with official sanction, so the inscriptions should not have been lost. Does Saint Tecla and her missing inscriptions ring a bell with anyone? If so, please contact Prof RT Ridley: (r.ridley@unimelb.edu.au) who is in contact with Dr Vella.

Hansen Coin Exhibition

This exhibition opened on Friday 20th Feb in the Museum of Ancient Cultures at Macquarie Uni. The exhibition focuses on the third century & will be of interest to anyone interested in Roman ideology, emperors, Church history in the lead up to the great persecution and Constantine.

The exhibition will on for the next 3 months in Building X5B Level 3 Open 9:30am - 4:30pm Monday - Friday. Please call ahead to ensure the museum is open when you plan to visit: Ph: (02) 9850 9263 Entry is free.
The Armenian Church in Chennai (India)
by Gillian Spalding-Stracey
PhD Candidate

In September 2014, thanks to the generosity of SSEC, I was able to visit the Armenian Church in Madras (Chennai) following my attendance at a conference in India.

The Armenian church in Madras is little more than a curiosity today. In its heyday it was a focal point for a thriving community of Armenian traders. Merchant families, who migrated in the 17th and 18th centuries from New Julfa, a suburb of Isfahan in modern-day Iran, settled here and in other trading centres in India.

Armenian Street, on which the church is located, took its name from the community and its church. It is a narrow, north-south thoroughfare close to the port. It is not far from the British-built Fort St George and the imposing Indo-Saracenic buildings of the Madras High Court. It was, and still is, a place of trade and commerce.

The street today is congested and chaotic and it is easy to miss the large wooden doors to the church. To step through the doors is to enter another world. Directly ahead of the entrance is a short but prominent bell tower in the middle of a leafy courtyard, with hens scratching in the dirt among fallen frangipani blossoms. The graves of some three hundred and fifty Armenians form part of the paving of the compound. The entrance is part of a colonnade which runs along Armenian Street, above which the caretaker lives and which, until around the 1970s, was the residence of the last remaining priest.

The church is to the north of the entrance and bell tower. It is a narrow space with its sanctuary in the eastern wall. The church is relatively unadorned; the altar is stepped and simple, with a newly painted fresco incorporating the iconic Armenian image of Mount Ararat. Aside from a few surprising Portuguese design elements, the church and buildings are unremarkable. Conversely, its history is remarkable and poignant.

The town of Madras, as Chennai was known until relatively recently, did not exist until the East India Company purchased land north of the existing settlement of Mylapore in 1640 and built Fort St George. Madras then developed into an important trading port, and the first Armenians are thought to have arrived there around that time, though it is likely there were established communities in that area as early as 1517, before the arrival of the Portuguese.

Madras supported a prosperous Armenian community. The success of the Armenian merchants soon made them rivals of the East India Company, evidenced by events such as the British Admiralty’s confiscation of a cargo from the Armenian vessel Santa Catharina. So wealthy was this community that they were able to fund schools and printing workshops in Venice, Paris, Isfahan, Moscow and Calcutta.
The Armenians, for their part, had no imperialistic aspirations. They had come from a pluralistic environment and adapted well to life in India.

A wealthy member of the community, Shahamir Shahamirian established an Armenian printing press in Madras in 1772 and authored a republican constitution for Armenia in 1787, more than a century before the existence of an Armenian state. The first Armenian newspaper, the Azdarar was launched in Madras in 1794.

The original church building dated to 1712. In the 1740s rivalry over trade in India escalated between France and Britain. The centre for French operations in South India was Pondicherry, some 150 kilometres south of Madras and there were frequent skirmishes between the opposing sides. The Armenian community had gained the reputation of supporting the French and the French Governor, the Marquis de Dupleix, was successful in persuading wealthy Armenian merchants to settle in Pondicherry. In Madras there were ground battles with losses on both sides and, during one such engagement, the French contingent hoisted their flag on the Armenian Church. In the French siege of Madras in 1758 there was bombardment from both sides and the church building was destroyed. The church was subsequently rebuilt in 1772.

Unfortunately, there is no information about what the original building looked like. The 1772 building followed the Portuguese style, with little hint of Armenian design elements in the church buildings. This is probably a reflection of the fact that the community in diaspora seems to have made efforts to integrate with local communities. Their alliance with the Portuguese community is well documented.

Almost the only distinctly Armenian elements are in the gravestones which are abundant in the courtyard. The most notable is a carved stone cross, said to have been brought from Armenia, which marks the grave of the Reverend Haroutiun Shmaronian, founder of the Azdarar newspaper. The other graves bear distinctive motifs such as flowers and skull and crossbones are identical to Armenian graves elsewhere.

In conclusion, it is the history of this church and its former community, rather than any unique architectural features, that makes it worth a visit. It gives us a glimpse into the world of this once thriving Christian community who traded and put down roots in this part of the world. It is also a reflection of India’s varied Christian heritage. Aside from the St Thomas tradition, the Portuguese and the British with their well-documented legacies, the Armenian church in Madras is a monument to yet another dimension to India’s Christian heritage.”

Please Note: The electronic version of the SSEC newsletter is slightly longer at thirteen (13) pages than the paper version at eight (8) pages. It also contains more useful features such as “click on links” and larger fonts.

Bequests. If you would like to leave a Bequest to the Society for the Study of Early Christianity Macquarie University, please phone Professor Alanna Nobbs on (02) 9850 8844 or email me at Alanna.Nobbs@mq.edu.au
Stop press

Vale: Gwen MORRIS
30.10.26 ~ 2.10.14

It is with the deepest regret that we announce the passing of Gwen Morris on 2 October last year. Gwen was aged 88. As you may know she served as Secretary in the Department of Ancient History in its founding years. She worked with Professor Edwin Judge & Professor Alanna Nobbs in the early days.

Many faculty members will remember Gwen before she retired. She was also a member of SSEC for the last 27 years. She will be sorely missed by all members of SSEC and by all who knew her.

Get Well Professor Welborn

All the members of SSEC offer best wishes for a speedy recovery to Professor Laurence Welborn who undertook an eye operation on 20 February. We are very sorry to hear that Prof Welborn will not be able to attend the SSEC Conference in May, and we hope that he will be available for a visit us later in the year.

SSECfacebook

Follow us on Facebook! Thanks to Jennifer Irving for making this a reality & for Alice Baker for agreeing to be the administrator of our Facebook group. Try this link to join us on facebook
http://www.facebook.com/groups/152884928081983/?bookmark_t=group

Academia.edu

Try this link to follow us on “Academia.edu”; Go to the SSEC Academia page. or copy this into your browser
http://mq.academia.edu/SocietyfortheStudyofEarlyChristianitySSEC

Other Events of Interest to SSEC Members

Macquarie Ancient History Teachers’ Conference. Fri 20 March, Robert Menzies College. SSEC members welcome. Enquiries to Continuing Education by email to Ahistconted@mq.edu.au

MAHA events
• Fri 6 March, Drinks @ 6:00 pm, Lecture @ 7:30 pm, MAHA Beginning of the year function. Dr. Julian Droogan will present a lecture: Archaeology and the Materiality of Religion: A look at the town of Bundi, India. Museum of Ancient Cultures Seminar Room, 3rd Floor, X5B.

MAHA SAC (Macquarie Ancient History Association: Student Activity Committee) has advised the following events:
• Tues 31st March - 6-8pm Y3A T1, ancient movie night including the video of the department from the 90’s. Video is called It began in Clay. This is not to be missed if you want to see your lecturer or Professor from 25 years ago.
• Wed 1st April - 6-8pm in the function rooms of the campus hub (C10A) is the “just a minute” battle royal between student and staff members.


SSEC Seminar Reminders

Please let us know your email address, and we can send you a brief reminder about SSEC seminars and other events of interest.

If you also wish to receive the Newsletter electronically, and you are not already getting it this way - please let us know - it will help us save on printing and postage costs. Please send a brief email to SSEC@mq.edu.au

Fundraising Calendar

Later in the year, the Museum Appreciation Society expects to be working on a calendar for 2016 to assist in fundraising for the Museum of Ancient Cultures. This calendar will be highlighting the Israel digs which provide the major opportunity for Macquarie University students to participate in overseas excavations, and which are sponsored through the generosity of donors to the Archaeology of Ancient Israel Program. We expect the calendar to be available to purchase later in the year. If we hear more, then we will let you know.
non-SSEC events

Macquarie Ancient Languages School (MALS) – Winter School – Mon 6 to Fri 10 July 2015
The Macquarie Ancient Languages School offers a wide range of courses in Classical and Koine Greek, Latin, Egyptian Hieroglyphs, Classical Hebrew, Coptic, Akkadian, Sanskrit and others. Among the selection on offer at the 2014 Winter School were an introductory course on Celtic Languages, a Latin course on the Vindolanda Tablets, intermediate courses in Aramaic, Akkadian and Hieratic, and an advanced course on the Linear B Tablets. To add your name to the MALS mailing list, email: mals@mq.edu.au
website: www.anchist.mq.edu.au/mals.html

Continuing Education Programme - Cost $220 per unit. Dates for Session 2 of 2015, & the full list of units on offer will be available on website Go to Continuing education website.

Macquarie Ancient History Association (MAHA) – For enquiries 9850 9965, 9850 8833, or email: ancienthistory@mq.edu.au or website: www.ancienthistory.com.au/news.php

Face to Face with the New Testament Dr Don Barker, a Papyrologist at Macquarie University, leads this seminar for special interest groups. Dr Don Barker on 9850 9962 or email: don.barker@mq.edu.au

The Australian Centre for Egyptology & the Rundle Foundation
• Annual Mini Conference, Sun 29 March 2015 at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. Time: 1:00pm. Cost $33.00
• Annual Dinner, Sat 13 June 2015, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. Time: 6.30pm for 7:00pm. Cost $70.00
• Annual Conference Sat 8 August 2015, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. Time: 10:00am. Cost $75.00 per person
Further details and booking forms can be obtained from our website www.egyptology.mq.edu.au or from the A.C.E. office (02) 9850 8848 or egypt@mq.edu.au

Macquarie Asian Historical Research Society (MAHRS) – For enquiries please email hugh.waugh@mahrs.org : on the MAHRS website www.mahrs.org and on the MAHRS facebook page http://www.facebook.com/MAHRS.org

The Sir Asher Joel Foundation supports the participation of Macquarie people in archaeological field work in Israel through an agreement with Tel Aviv University. It offers scholarships and brings a Visiting Fellow to Australia each year. For further information please contact Dr Gil Davis by email: gil.davis@mq.edu.au or phone: 0439-817299.

Centre for the History of Christian Thought and Experience - runs seminars fortnightly on Thursdays at 6.00 pm. For further information contact A/Prof Stuart Piggin 9850 8816, or email: stuart.piggin@mq.edu.au

Post-Seminar optional tour, May 22-24, 2016. The seminar has been rescheduled for 2016. Seminar cost is $US995; Optional Tour $US395 (in double occupancy). Seminar leader : Dr Rosalinde Kearsley, Macquarie Uni, assisted by Dr Mark Wilson, Asia Minor Research Centre/Regent Uni, & local epigraphers from Akdeniz Uni. Enquiries to Mark Wilson at email: markwilson@sevenchurches.org

Journey of St Paul and Classical Greece educational trip June 4-20, 2015. Download Brochure. Enquiries to Dimitri Kepreotes (SSEC Member) by email dkepreotes@rocketmail.com
**SSEC Calendar of Events 2015**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Venue &amp; Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 17 March</td>
<td><strong>Professor Tessa Rajak</strong> (Reading, Oxford) Sir Asher Joel Visiting Fellow 2015 Topic: Masada in the first and twenty-first Centuries. Light kosher supper, RSVP for catering purposes to Dr Gil Davis - <a href="mailto:gil.davis@mq.edu.au">gil.davis@mq.edu.au</a></td>
<td>North Shore Temple Emanuel, 28 Chatswood Ave, Chatswood Cost $5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 20 April</td>
<td><strong>Professor Alanna Nobbs</strong> (Macquarie) Topic: Christian Responses to Persecution in the Late Roman Empire. Light Supper provided</td>
<td>W6A 310 (Doc Centre) members $5, alumni $7, non members $8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 30 April</td>
<td>Conference curtain raiser: The early Church: Cults and Controversies • Speaker: <strong>Prof Paul Trebilco</strong> (Otago), SSEC Visiting Fellow for 2015 Topic: The Artemis Cult in Ephesus and the Johannine Letters’ • Chair: <strong>Professor James Harrison</strong>, (Sydney College of Divinity) Light Supper provided</td>
<td>Museum of Ancient Cultures - X5B 321 members $5 alumni $7, non members $8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 12 May</td>
<td>Brought to Australia by the Australian Institute of Archaeology (AIA) - Dr <strong>Ron Tappy</strong> (Pittsburgh Theology Seminary) is the G. Albert Shoemaker Professor of Bible and Archaeology. Topic: Strangers at Home: The Give and Take of Life in the Borderlands of Judah. Enquiries to Dr Keimer <a href="mailto:kyle.keimer@mq.edu.au">kyle.keimer@mq.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Museum of Ancient Cultures - X5B 321 no charge - confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibly Wed 10 June</td>
<td><strong>Speaker: James Unwin</strong>, (PhD candidate Macquarie) Topic: Gladiators and the New Testament Date is not yet confirmed. Further details on SSEC website in due course.</td>
<td>Possibly W6A 310 (Doc Centre) members $5, alumni $7, non members $8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Later in the year</td>
<td>A Coptic Evening is being planned. <strong>Speaker: TBA</strong>, Topic: TBA. Enquiries to Malcolm Choat by email to <a href="mailto:malcolm.choat@mq.edu.au">malcolm.choat@mq.edu.au</a> Date is not yet confirmed. Further details on SSEC website in due course.</td>
<td>Possibly W6A 310 (Doc Centre) members $5, alumni $7, non members $8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 September Wed</td>
<td><strong>Speaker: Carole Ferch-Johnson</strong> (PhD candidate Avondale) Topic: Comprehensive presentation on “Communication through Hands that Do”</td>
<td>W6A 310 (Doc Centre) members $5, alumni $7, non members $8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 November Thurs</td>
<td><strong>SSEC End of Year/ Christmas Event</strong> (Date is confirmed) <strong>Speaker: TBA</strong> <strong>Topic: TBA</strong></td>
<td>Museum of Ancient Cultures - X5B 321 members $5, alumni $7, non members $8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Macquarie University enforces parking charges up to 8:00pm daily. Parking charges are $6 for 1 hour, $10 for 3 hours, $30 all day. (rates for 2015). As SSEC seminars start at 7:05pm, attendees need only pay for one hour.

**Note: TBA = To Be Advised.** Further details will appear on the SSEC website as soon as they are confirmed.

**Phone:** SSEC Office (9850 7512), Dr Don Barker (9850 9962), Professor Alanna Nobbs (9850 8844) or Ancient History Office (9850 8833)

**Website:** [www.mq.edu.au/ssec/events](http://www.mq.edu.au/ssec/events) **Email:** SSEC@mq.edu.au