



MONSIGNOR HAWES HERITAGE

December 2025

NEWSLETTER

A Note From the Chair

Dear Members and Friends of MHHI and the John Hawes Foundation,

Can I begin by wishing you all a very Merry and Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

I am writing this note on the last day of Advent, 24 December, and I am busily preparing for Christmas. In morning Prayer today, the antiphon to the Invitatory Psalm 24 resonated in me. It read, "Know today that the Lord will come: in the morning you will see his glory".

This was music to my ears because most mornings I awake and feel somewhat overwhelmed and even abandoned as I look up and see the mountain of conservation works required on Hawes' buildings and the puny resources we have at hand.

Psalm 24 goes onto say, "Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place?"

I contemplated whether the heritage of Hawes is a blessing or a curse. I then realised that this depend on your attitude.

This is illustrated this time of the year in the Christmas Carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas" which celebrates the giving of gifts in the Christmas season. There are partridges, calling birds, drummers and gold rings etc.. In 1983 a version of this Christmas Carol came out that starts off with sincere appreciation being expressed for the gifts as they come along until the gifts themselves become problematic, with pandemonium setting in when calling birds cause havoc to the partridge in the pear tree and the vet bill amounts to 32 pound! Things fast turned "pear shape"!

We can sit back and look at the mountain, despair and take a valium or we can accept the challenge of the mountain the Lord puts before us and climb it to his Holy Place!

It might seem naïve even fool hardy to set out on such a journey but it is in faith we do so, knowing God walks with us and will shower unimaginable blessings upon us. We must have the faith that "moves mountains"!

With this faith, God will send us 10 Lords a leaping, 8 maids a dancing and more, to volunteer to do God's work and gold rings galore to pay for it all. So to all our leaping Lords and maids milking (OUR VOLUNTEERS), a very sincere thank you for all you do. You are inspirational!

Can I also thank all the members and friends of Monsignor Hawes Heritage Inc for their ongoing support, donations and encouragement—you are the givers of "gold rings"!.!

This year we will embark on two major conservation projects, the Utakarra Chapel (for which we have gratefully received a \$50,000 grant from the WA Heritage Council and the Mullewa Precinct Project which will conserve what I call the "pure Hawes" buildings of Our Lady of Mt Carmel and the Priesthouse and curtilage of Mullewa.

So let's step out in faith, hope and courage and scale the Mountain of the Lord so that we can stand with heads erect in the Holy Places Hawes and our predecessors have left us!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Fr Robert (Chair MHHI)



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Coming Events

- Launch Virtual Reality Tour (proposed for 17 Feb)
- Camino San Francisco : 24-26 July
- Mons Hawes Heritage Tour (proposed for 16 August)
- Plus more to come!

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ON



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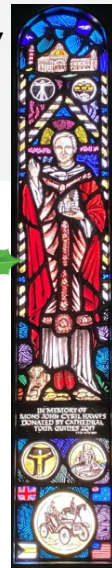


Wishing all our members of MHHI a

Merry Christmas

and a

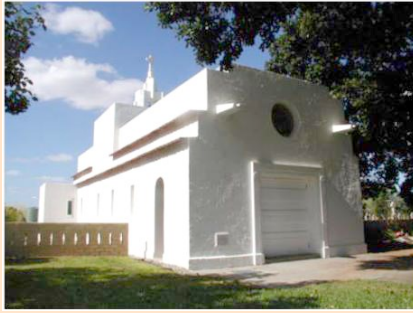
Happy New Year!



90th Anniversaries: Hawes' buildings news



San Spirito Chapel Utakarra



We are thrilled to announce that a \$50,000 grant has been received from the Heritage Council for conservation works on Hawes' San Spirito Chapel, Utakarra Cemetery. The Diocese of Geraldton has agreed to match this amount. Conservation work is expected to begin in early 2026. Designed by Monsignor Hawes in 1936, this building requires extensive works due to significant rising and falling damp problems — the bane of heritage conservation! This grant will install a new waterproof membrane for whole roof and repair the bell cot thus permitting further works to be carried out externally and internally as funds become available.



St Mary in Ara Coeli, Northampton



This picturesque church designed by Monsignor Hawes celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2026! Its foundation stone was laid on 24th May 1936 and was opened on 20th September 1936 by Bishop O'Collins in the presence of Monsignor Irwin, Monsignor Hawes and a large crowd of locals and dignitaries. At the opening, Hawes described this church as “. . . the finest and most impressive church in the Diocese.” Hawes said the building was a poem in stone and much like a “musical composition where each piece expressed an underlying melody that throbbed through it as a motif, the motif of “spirituality”, in this case, where everything points upwards to **God**. Stay tuned for details to take place in 2026 to celebrate this landmark Northampton Church.

The Heritage of Church Music - Young Choristers



With the appointment of the Diocesan Director of Music, Jacinta Jakovcevic, 2025 has seen the enhancement of the musical landscape of St Francis Xavier Cathedral and indeed the Diocese with the formation of the “Cathedral Young Choristers”.

This is a fine example of how the heritage of music can enhance a heritage building! This group comprises young singers from across Geraldton (and even one from Northampton!) singing at liturgies in the Cathedral and at community events: the Young Cathedral Choristers have already been invited to sing at the launch of the Multicultural website, the Festival of Lights at Stow Gardens and Geraldton's Carols by Candlelight. They have also sung at the annual Blessing of the Fleet in October: a Geraldton tradition dating back to the 1950s.



This group is part of a long and continuous tradition of the Church training young musicians in the heritage of Church music and song that spans the ages from ancient to contemporary times.



EVERY CENT ADDS UP

Thank you to everyone who continues to support our Containers for Change recycling efforts! Since MHHI joined this scheme in November 2023 we have raised \$1009.40 for the conservation of the heritage of Monsignor Hawes.



Remember the 3 easy steps:

- ➔ Collect containers with the 10c symbol on them
- ➔ Place them in a box or bag and label them with this code: **C11199094**
- ➔ Deliver them to a collection

THANK YOU



By becoming a Member of MHHI you will help conserve his heritage!



Ordinary Membership

- \$25 per annum

Corporate Membership

- \$100 per annum



JOIN TODAY - GO TO

www.monsignorhawes.com/membership

Recent events



It has been a very busy couple of months event-wise as we near the end of the year: here is a short panorama

Blessing of the Fleet

The annual Blessing of the Fleet took place on October 19 : a tradition going back at least 60 years. Fr Robert Cross headed the blessing and the St Francis Xavier Cathedral Young Choristers led the singing—on the Madonna's boat the *ENRYBO*!



Crowning of Our Lady (above); Fr Robert Cross conducting the Blessing of the Fleet (right)



The Young Choristers on the Madonna's boat (above)



Volunteers' Christmas function

Our volunteers do an amazing job all through the year conducting the Cathedral tours, welcoming visitors to the Museum, organizing and conducting special tours, so it was their turn to be treated to a thank you function on Wednesday 3rd December (St Francis Xavier's Day): the feast day of the Cathedral and the Diocese.

Also included in the thank you function were members of the Cathedral Choir!



After the food, there was a festive quiz - our quizmaster Linda Thuijs (above) did an excellent job!



Our volunteers certainly enjoyed the quiz - and had a great time socialising—under the watchful gaze of Monsignor Hawes (above right)!



Dominie's 95th Birthday!

Year of Hope Pilgrimage!



Dominie's 95th birthday 7 December 2025 with choir singing happy birthday boy!





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ESCAPE ?**



***THE
HERMITAGE***



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Arts & Crafts of
John Cyril Hawes**

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Another initiative of MHHI

Activating the Monsignor Hawes Heritage Trail and Supporting Regional Tourism and Regional Communities through the provision of unique heritage accommodation!

Presentation Sisters 250th Anniversary



On the 7th of December the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary descended upon Geraldton to celebrate their glorious heritage in the Geraldton Diocese that traces its origins to Nano Nagle in Cork, Ireland, in 1775, 250 years ago!



**John Hawes Foundation Donation Form for
Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church Precinct Project**
Enhancing Regional Revitalisation and Strengthening Community Social Wellbeing

**Making your donation to Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church
Precinct Project**

Thank you for considering supporting our fundraising efforts to help restore and conserve Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church Precinct. Please complete the form below and send it to the provided address.

If you would like to make a bequest in your Will please contact us on how to go about this.

Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church Precinct Project



Donation details

FIRST NAME SURNAME

COMPANY NAME DATE
(If applicable)

POSTAL ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER EMAIL ADDRESS

I wish to donate \$ _____ to Our Lady of Mt Carmel Precinct Project

Payment details

Direct Bank Transfer Details for the John Hawes Foundation:
Acc Name: Mons Hawes Heritage Incorp **BSB:** 086 006 **Acc No:** 26 493 5344 **Ref:** Surname + Initial + Mullewa. Cheques can be made payable to **Mons Hawes Heritage Incorp Fund** and posted to the **John Hawes Foundation** at the address below.

Contact details for Fr Robert Cross

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