Australian Union of Jesuit Alumni

Observations by Andrew Horsley
World Union of Jesuit Alumni
Oceania Representative WUJA
2001 - 2026

In 1997, **Fr Peter Hans Kolvenbach SJ** was the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, a Congress was held at Saint Ignatius' College, Riverview, Sydney. This was organised by John Bowie.

Over the years, **Fr Des Dwyer SJ** would regularly hold dinners and events at Manning House, Sydney University and other parts which I would attend.

Under the Statutes of WUJA, the objects of the World Union are:

1. To preserve and develop bonds of friendship, communication and solidarity among Jesuit alumni throughout the world.
2. Encourage Jesuit alumni to co-operate actively with the Society of Jesus in its various missions, particularly in education, spiritual life, community service and social justice.
3. To help Jesuit alumni to stand by the education which they were given, based on Christian humanism and Ignatian spirit.

In 2009, Fr Des asked me if I would be the **Oceania Representative** at the WUJA Congress in **Bujumbura, Burundi**. I was happy to do this. At the time, **Fr Adolfo Nicolas SJ** was the Superior General of the Society of Jesus.

Following Bujumbura, the next Congress was held in **Medellín, Colombia** in 2013 which I also attended. Fr Adolfo Nicolas was still the Superior General.

On 6 November 2015, Jesuits from the Australian Province blessed the **Bunya Pine** which was planted at Riverview to commemorate the election of our first Jesuit Pope. Carlos Gianicolo, Secretary, WUJA commented –

> "The Bunya Pine will be a testimony to the two qualities of resilience and adaptability to the many challenges we face every day for the coming generations of Jesuit students of the first Jesuit elected Pope who came from southern latitudes.
>
> We are part of the footprint that this generation will leave behind it. The pine will grow at a very slow pace but its longevity will be a proof of endurance".

The Bunya pine continues to flourish at the bottom of the garden near the road down to the boatshed at Riverview on the Lane Cove River, Sydney.

In June 2017 the WUJA Congress was held at **John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio**. The topic was "*Finding God on the Frontier – United as Women and Men with Others*".

WUJA held a Council meeting in Rome from 14 - 18 September 2016. On the afternoon of Wednesday, 14 September, WUJA President Alain Deneef led a visit to Ignatian places – the Gesù, the Church of St Ignatius and the Camerata, where Ignatius lived next door. I visited these places some years ago when **Fr Ferruccio Romanin SJ** was Parish Priest at the Church of St Ignatius.
On Saturday 17 September 2016, we had a private audience with **Pope Francis**. The audience was in one of the large meeting rooms in the Vatican and the Holy Father spoke for about 10 minutes. He spoke in Spanish and a text was released in English. Pope Francis then greeted us individually and warmly welcomed us.

The **WUJA Council** met in **Panama City** from 1 - 4 August 2019, 2022, following the Latin American Congress

Main constituents of the Australian Union of Jesuit Alumni are:

- Old Ignatians' Union, Riverview (OIU) – Tambourine Bay Road, Lane Cove, NSW, 2066
- St Aloysius' College Old Boys' Union (SACOBU) – 47 Upper Pitt Street, Kirribilli, NSW, 2061
- Old Xaverians' Association (OXA) – Corner of Studley Park Road and Nolan Avenue, Kew, VIC, 3101
- Newman Old Collegians' Association (NOCA) – 887 Swanston Street, Parkville, VIC, 3052
- Old Ignatians' Adelaide (OIA)– 2 Manresa Circuit, Athelstone, SA, 5076

Fr Ross Jones SJ designed the AUJA insignia.

Fr Michael Ryan SJ has always been highly supportive of Alumni events in Australia and internationally.

Alumni events:

- All the Presidents of AUJA met in the Juana Mateo Room, St Aloysius' College in May 2017 where the Provincial, **Fr Bryan McCoy SJ** led a session on Jesuit Alumni Associations, at a dinner at the Ron Dyer Centre in 2018 **Fr David Strong SJ** spoke to us about his then recently launched two volume *A History of the Jesuits in China* 1842 - 1954.
- **Fr Quyen Vu SJ**, Provincial addressed us on "*What does the Society of Jesus expect of its Alumni in Today's World*" held at the Ron Dyer Centre on 18 August 2021.
- **WUJA** held a Congress in **Barcelona** 13 - 17 July 2022 which was opened by the **Superior General Fr Arturo Sosa SJ.**
- In February 2023 I attended the **10th National Congress** of **Jesuit Alumni Associations of India in Patna**. From there I visited **Hazaribagh**, well known to Australian Jesuits.
- **Professor John Haldane** gave a dinner address at the Ron Dyer Centre on the topic "*Applying Jesuit Philosophy in Today's World*" on 23 May 2016. At the same venue **Professor Greg Craven** Vice Chancellor Australian Catholic University addressed us on "*The Idea of Catholic Education Today*".
- In 2014 **Fr David Braithwaite SJ** hosted drinks at Jesuit House Broadway and spoke to us on the Cardoner Project which is an important Jesuit ministry.

In appreciation,

Andrew Horsley
Oceania Representative
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