

In the beginning

Anglican Cursillo
in New Zealand



Diocese of Wellington

DIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

LAY DIRECTORS 1988 - 2008

Roger Barker
Tony Hassed
May Carrell
Robin Whithead
Tom Joll
Jill Woods

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS 1988 - 2008

Brian Carrell
Ian McLellan
Margaret Barber
Ross Downes
Rory Redmayne
Anne Aspden

The First Ten Years

1. Conception and Birth, 1986 – 1988

The beginnings of Cursillo were both serendipitous and inconspicuous. Late in 1986, after a turmoil of three electoral synods in quick succession, the Diocese of Wellington at last had a new diocesan bishop. This was Brian Davis, then Bishop of Waikato. Earlier that year he had also been elected by General Synod as Archbishop of New Zealand.

One of his first objects after being translated to Wellington was to strengthen the diocesan sense of unity and mission. Waikato had been a regular participant in the 'Pastoral Conferences' promoted by Australian Anglicans. These occasions of drawing clergy and laity together from across diocesan boundaries and both sides of the Tasman had enlarged the vision and enriched the ministry of many participating dioceses. Brian Davis saw this as something that could make a difference in his new diocese. With the next of these conferences planned for May 1987 in Canberra, and obtaining the support of Standing Committee, he proposed that three people from the Diocese of Wellington attend this gathering. Despite some initial resistance, he persuaded Archdeacon Doug Weaver to lead the group, along with his wife Norma who was much involved in Young Wives in the diocese. Having reluctantly consented, Doug then suggested the Revd Rosemary Anderson from the Wanganui area as the third member of the group.

Archdeacon Doug Weaver Reminisces

Let Doug Weaver describe in his own words how all this led to the birth of Cursillo in New Zealand:

"When the registration papers arrived, I found among them a green form suggesting that one should attend a Cursillo weekend to be held prior to the Pastoral Conference. I knew nothing about Cursillo. ... I realised that if I attended two Conferences for the price of one, maybe that would be better diocesan stewardship.

"... The Clausura is now a blur, but I remember suggesting that Cursillo may one day come to NZ. ... There was [another] meeting that was to change my life. Archbishop Brian had a Mission Conference in Singapore. There he spoke to George Browning [a suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Brisbane], who suggested that Brisbane could bring Cursillo to NZ, and our bishop agreed. When he returned home he called me and asked me 'to make the arrangements for the Cursillos which the Brisbane Diocese would run the following June' [1988].

"I had not the slightest idea where to start. God was faithful. A Canadian couple, Steve and Noralee Olsson, called one Sunday afternoon. They had heard that 'Cursillo' was coming and wondered if they could help. As both had been on Team in Canada, they knew about Team meetings, 'giving talks', and other mysteries that a candidate knows nothing about. So, we were a team of three. I would travel to Palmerston North most weekends and we began our planning. I made a lot of mistakes!"

Planning and persuading

A decision was made to focus on the north of the diocese, with four Australian-run Cursillos located at sites to be found from Palmerston North through to Wanganui. In mid-December 1987 Brisbane clergyman the Revd Bruce Worthington was brought over for a five-day visit to help with advance preparations. He was first introduced to Brian and May Carrell in the strategically placed Parish of All Saints Palmerston North. They immediately saw the potential of

this movement and offered their support for its introduction into the Diocese of Wellington. Another All Saints lay woman, Anne Hay, signalled her willingness to come on to the planning committee.

Along with Noralee, Stephen and Doug Weaver, this core group now numbered six. From January 1988 they agreed to meet regularly to get the project off the ground. Down in Wellington, Bishop Hapai Winiata was also introduced to Bruce Worthington before Bruce returned to Brisbane for Christmas services, and he gave the project his blessing.

Meanwhile Doug Weaver over the following six months tirelessly (but not always fruitfully!) worked his way around the diocese, visiting or writing to every Vicar and Archdeaconry in an effort to create interest and gain support. He comments on this grinding experience: "It was an uphill battle. Many clergy already had Cursillo condemned in their ignorance and some would not forward my letters to their Vestries!" The Diocese reluctantly (and only following personal arm-twisting from Archbishop Brian) released a pump-priming grant of \$2,500 to cover booking fees for the sites chosen, and the costs of materials to be produced locally. (This sum was later repaid to the diocese in full, since which time Cursillo in this Diocese has been entirely self-funding.)

The Brisbane team arrives

In the coldest and most miserable weather imaginable, the Australians arrived in mid-June 1988, for this three-week exercise. They had left Queensland with the temperatures at 30°C+! There were 44 Aussies who had to be accommodated in and around Palmerston North for the duration of their visit. Each had paid their own airfares; some had taken a portion of their annual holidays or leave without pay to be part of this trans-Tasman team. By that late stage a bare minimum of Kiwi candidates had been enlisted for the four Cursillos that the Australians would lead. Bishop George Browning joined them part of the way through the mission.

Their hosts found them all delightful guests but, as sedate Anglicans, mysterious in their movements. Several times they would disappear from their quarters in the bitterly cold early hours of the morning, and just as suddenly appear again, hungry and frozen, during the afternoon. One group were stopped by police in the pre-dawn winter gloom and asked their business at such an 'ungodly' hour! To their hosts they were tight-lipped about all they were engaged in. The clergy often came and went in formidable black cassocks, the laity strangely sporting brightly coloured knitted scarves. But never a complaint about climate or conditions from any one of them.

Quaker Acres on the outskirts of Wanganui was the location of the first Cursillo in New Zealand – Women's 1 with 16 candidates and Norma Weaver as an observer.



Women's 1

Immediately following this, Men's 1, at the same site, had only 10 candidates. The targets for each had been 25! On both occasions, Australian team members well outnumbered Kiwi participants. But these two pioneering Cursillos produced some outstanding NZ Anglican Cursillistas who over the next two decades were to play key leadership roles in establishing the movement on these shores.



Men's 1

In contrast Women's 2 was held a week later with a full number of pilgrims at the Arahina Girl Guide Centre in Marton with Anne Hay and May Carrell on 'Back Table' as observers.



Women's 2

The following weekend Men's 2 was held on the St Michael's Marae in Palmerston North.



Men's 2

Both were not only fully booked and eagerly anticipated but also similarly productive of future leaders of ability. In mid-July the Australians left, some to take opportunity for a NZ tour, others to fly back to Brisbane. We were now on our own. Cursillo had been birthed in Aotearoa NZ.

2. Infancy and growth spurt, 1988 – 1990

Within a few weeks of the departure of the Brisbane team, and with the flush of enthusiasm and fresh vision engendered by the first four Cursillos raising the hopes and expectations of a wide-ranging group of lay and ordained Anglicans across the diocese, Archbishop Brian Davis wrote to Brian Carrell as Vicar of All Saints Palmerston North inviting him to accept the position of 'Director for Cursillo in the Diocese of Wellington'. (The Archbishop had only just returned to the diocese from attending the 1988 Lambeth Conference.)

His letter went on to interpret this role as being his 'personal representative responsible for gathering a team to continue the Cursillo Movement outreach in the Diocese'. In October thirty-six keen Cursillistas from those first four Cursillos met in Palmerston North and without dissent assured the Archbishop of their personal commitment to grow Cursillo in the diocese. This was an 'epiphany moment'. All present were invited to anonymously submit names of those they would like to see in leadership roles. On reporting these to the meeting, Brian was asked to invite the Archbishop to nominate Roger Barker (at that stage a lay person) as Diocesan Lay Director, May Carrell as Cursillo Director, Doug Weaver as Post Cursillo Director, Stephen Olsson as Treasurer and Cathy Barker as Secretary.

On 26 November this enlarged 'Diocesan Secretariat' met at Otaki under Brian Carrell's chairmanship. One of its first decisions was to identify and appoint key people in the various parts of the diocese to promote the selection of further candidates for future Cursillos. These appointments included Archdeacons Doug Pullar (Waitotara-South Taranaki), Doug Weaver (the Wairarapa), and the Revds Penny Jamieson (Wellington) and Jerry Ngatoa (Maori Pastorates). Other pressing tasks and responsibilities were also matched with appointments – Dawn Walden, Nick King, Bill Douglas and Gennor Hansen to be 'area co-ordinators', Chrissie McLellan communications officer (producing the first form of a NZ Cursillo magazine), Joan Gilchrist resources controller, and Lisa Johnson diocesan palanca co-ordinator.

Planning ahead

Two weeks later the inaugural Secretariat again met, this time in Palmerston North, a few days prior to Christmas. Such was the commitment of newly appointed members, there was a full attendance! Strategies were determined to build on the enthusiasm created by the launching of Cursillo in the diocese. These were designed to commend it as widely as possible as a ministry offered by the diocese and not just yet another para-church activity.



Early NZ Cursillo leaders – Brian Carrell, Phil Woodmass, May Carrell, Doug Weaver, Cathy & Roger Barker

More significantly, the first steps were taken to plan five Cursillos for the following year, three for men and two for women. Lay directors were selected for these Cursillos. May Carrell would lead W3 and Sue Collins W4. One unexpected encouragement for the Secretariat was to learn that fourteen men and five clergy had signalled their availability as team members for men's Cursillos during 1989.

It was decided that Phil Woodmass, a dairy farmer from South Taranaki, would act as Lay Director for all three Men's Cursillos, with Gerald Olds, a farmer from Raetihi, as Proctor. For M3 the Spiritual Advisers would be Brian Carrell and Ian McLellan, for M4 Doug Pullar and Graeme Pilgrim, and for M5 Ian McLellan and Jerry Ngatoa. A combined training day for the first of these, M3 and W3, was set down for Saturday 4 February, with further days to follow at three-weekly intervals. A training programme was agreed upon. The men's preparation would include a sleep-over at the beginning of April. Men's 3, the first of these entirely Kiwi Cursillos, was scheduled for Quaker Acres at the end of that month. With such a motley band of unseasoned Cursillo neophytes, time was at a premium. And besides all this there were still parishes to be run, cows to be milked and families to be fed!

1989 Cursillos

Gradually applications for both men's and women's Cursillos drifted in. Meanwhile handouts such as Group Reunion cards were written, revised and printed. Piece by piece the Australian material was culturally adapted to Kiwi-speak. Talks were sweated over. Cooks devised menus. Chrissie McLellan prepared chocolate treats. Essential equipment was acquired.

These 1989 Cursillos took place as planned: M3 at Quaker Acres (Wanganui) in April, W3 at the Catholic Pastoral Centre in Palmerston North in May, M4 also at Quaker Acres in June, M5 at the Pastoral Centre over Labour Weekend, and W4 further south at Nikau Lodge later that same week. Team members had been asked to make themselves available for two weekends, giving the same talks. Some men were prepared to be team members on all three men's Cursillos that year. Such was their commitment and enthusiasm.

1990

As early as 1990 the vision of the Wellington Diocesan Secretariat began looking beyond its own bounds. In May that year an informal invitation was extended to the Waikato Diocese to send some husband and wife candidates to the October Cursillos as a way of commending Cursillo across its northern border. Dunedin was also identified at this early stage as a diocese that could benefit from Cursillo. (Twelve months later the Revd Rory Redmayne was sent north by Penny Jamieson (W2), a Wellington Cursillista who had just become Bishop of Dunedin, to take part in Men's 10 in order to 'sound out' the suitability of Cursillo for that Diocese.) Then in July 1990 it was decided to send a small deputation to an Australian Leaders Workshop planned for later that year in Brisbane. Ross Downes, May Carrell, and Phil and Cheryl Woodmass agreed to represent the Diocese. By this time the need was being felt to become better informed about such extended Cursillo programmes as Workshops.

With the expansion of Cursillo in the diocese and ever-widening plans for the future, the Secretariat also took new shape. After three years of pioneering enterprise Doug Weaver announced his intention to stand down and May Carrell was asked to assume his responsibilities as Post Cursillo Director, in turn handing over her role as Cursillo Director to Sue Collins. Membership of the Secretariat was increased by the addition of Nancy Wenden and Carryne Algie, followed later by Ena Orchard, Jenny Henson, Phil Woodmass, Brian Barkla and (when Brian Carrell was elected Bishop in Palmerston North) Ian McLellan as DSD. Peter Totman was invited to convene a working party to revise the makeshift Cursillo song book. Lisa Johnson

submitted a design for an indigenous Cursillo logo to feature on all publications. This was accepted and continues to identify all New Zealand Anglican Cursillo literature.



The four Brians!

The last Men's Cursillo for the year, M8 at Quaker Acres, included among its candidates Archbishop Brian Davis. It is recalled as the Cursillo that featured four 'Brians' among its participants – in addition to the Archbishop, Brian Peters, Carrell and Barkla were on team!

3. Propagation and Expansion, 1991 – 1998

One fruit of the visit to Australia was the introduction of Cursillo Workshops as a follow-up to 3-day Cursillos. These were designed to revisit the teaching themes of a Cursillo but delve into them at greater depth and draw out their application to life in greater detail. The first Workshop, led by Phil Woodmass, was held in 1991, a second led by Mike Hadley-Jones the following year, another with Sue Collins as leader the next year. By the end of 1997 ten of these weekend Workshops of concentrated study and reflection had been held.

Called to Ordination

A totally unexpected outcome of the renewal of faith and commitment engendered by the Cursillo experience was the way a number of Cursillistas, especially those from rural areas, became aware of a vocation to ordained ministry. One of the earliest of these was Wellington Cursillo's first Diocesan Lay Director, the talented Roger Barker. He was ordained deacon late in 1991. This meant he was no longer able to continue in his role as DLD. His replacement that year was Tony Hassed from Tawa Parish. Tony was to serve with distinction in this capacity for six years, and take Cursillo in the Wellington Diocese to new heights.

Over succeeding years there were others who, following their Cursillo experience, also heard the call of God to ordination: among them women such as Sue Collins, Jenny Henson, Dawn Illston, Tracey Peters, Bev Chatterton, Pat Olds, Gaylene Anderson, Elizabeth Snowsill, Moorie Robinson, Barbara Rudd, Janice Brown, Christine Allport, Dot King, Liz Greville, Sandy Williams and Kay Stevens; men such as Phil Woodmass, David Cole, Merv Jones, Steve Thomson, Peter Barleyman, Tom Joll and Chris Crow; and Tikanga Maori minita such as Bill Te Awe Awe, his wife Jackie Larkins, and Koebi Hart.

5th Birthday

In July 1993, the 5th Birthday of Cursillo in New Zealand was marked with a full day's party including the cutting of a cake, and concluded with a Eucharist in All Saints Church, Palmerston North. Rosemary Anderson (Aust W21) and Ian McLellan (M1) presided; Roger Barker (M1) preached; Peter Totman (M1) played the organ. Lay Directors of the thirteen Men's and thirteen Women's Cursillos, and of the three Workshops to that date were honoured. These Lay Directors were:

W3	1989	May Carrell (W1)	W9	1991	Bev Chatterton (W2)
M3,	4 & 5	Phil Woodmass (M1)	M9		Allan Anderson (M3)
W4		Sue Collins (W2)	W10		Kath Pullar (W3)
W5	1990	Nancy Wenden (W2)	M10		Brian Barkla (M1)
M6		Chris Bendall (M2)	W11	1992	Marion Cooper (W4)
W6		Cheryl Woodmass (W2)	M11		Gerald Olds (M2)
M7		Garry Read (M4)	W12		Marilyn Totman (W2)
W7		Jenny Henson (W3)	M12		Peter Anderson (M8)
M8		Roger Barker (M1)	W13	1993	Rita Muggeridge (W1)
			M13		Ross Algie (M3)

Rural Revival

Another unanticipated but significant impact of Cursillo on the Diocese of Wellington was the way in which it led directly to a rejuvenation of life and lay involvement in many country

parishes that otherwise were facing closure of churches due to paucity of committed members, insufficient income, and lack of lay leadership. Cursillo consistently produced people who were keener to worship, willing to provide leadership, generous givers, and who had a vision for the church and its role in their community. This impact was especially seen in rural areas; it was less apparent in city parishes. (Later, the transference of the South Taranaki region to the Diocese of Waikato would be greatly facilitated by the support provided by Cursillistas in that area for the proposal, and through the energy they were prepared to put into making this historic shift work well.)

Servant Community

A Servant Community was first established in 1990 under the direction of Phil Woodmass. Initially there was little understanding of what was the exact role of a Servant Community. But to have a Servant Community appeared to be essential. Australia had one. The Cursillo Manuals required it! It appeared that its task was to work alongside the Secretariat, to be the 'praying arm' of the movement, having a pastoral role in the care of Cursillistas, planning Workshops and growing the leadership. A great vision, but as the number of Cursillistas grew in the diocese, it was felt that Wellington Cursillo would be better served with Area Servant Communities. Sue Collins was appointed to oversee the establishment of these. Initially the areas were based on diocesan Archdeaconries.

Among key people in achieving some success in this direction was Doug Weaver. Under his personal oversight and through his creative energy the Wairarapa Servant Community became a model for others.

This need for a better understanding of the principles lying behind the Cursillo vision and methodology was addressed in two other ways. First through the running of Workshop live-in weekends, as already noted, and secondly through establishing Days of Deeper Understanding. Both of these were considered as follow-up programmes to 3 Day Cursillo. To attend a day rather than a live-in weekend became a more attractive proposition, and these eventually became the rule with Workshops the exception. It was intended that sponsors as well as pilgrims attend these days.

Beyond the Diocese of Wellington

Following the first return visit to Brisbane Diocese in 1990 by a group of four Wellington Cursillistas to take part in a Cursillo Workshop, Cursillo in Australia suggested that NZ be officially represented each year at their national secretariat meeting. This offer was taken up and as a result ACMANZ came into being, the Anglican Cursillo Movement of Australia and New Zealand, for the mutual benefit of both sides of the Tasman. From 1992 Tony Hassed was the most frequent Wellington representative; others also sometimes made the journey. But Cursillo in New Zealand was rapidly taking a new shape.

In June 1994 Brent Bruce as an 'outsider' obtained a place as a pilgrim on M15. He had read about Cursillo in the course of his EFM studies and felt strongly that here was something of value for the Diocese of Christchurch. His conviction was strengthened by his experience at this Cursillo and by his Vicar in Merivale Parish, the Revd Craufurd Murray, who had made his Cursillo in Gloucester in 1988. Together their enthusiasm convinced their Bishop, David Coles, that he should include attending a Cursillo as part of his study



leave while in the USA. Out of all this came an invitation to Wellington to bring Cursillo to Christchurch.

After much planning and intense preparation, in 1996 men's and women's teams from Wellington, led by Tony and Sue Hassed, worked together to introduce Cursillo to the Diocese of Christchurch.

While this was taking place, arrangements were also well in advance for another equally enterprising expansion of Cursillo. Evan and Rae Cross of Waitara in North Taranaki, part of the Diocese of Waikato, had attended a Wellington Cursillo and commended it strongly to their diocese. With the support of the Waikato Diocese, others from North Taranaki and the Waikato came to Cursillos and formed a nucleus of people keen to see Cursillo introduced to their diocese. This came to successful fruition in 1997, with Cursillos for men and for women, run by teams from the Wellington Diocese led by Adrienne Downes (with Helen Simpson, now deceased, as Proctor) and Brian Barkla (with Phil Woodmass as Proctor), at St Mary's Diocesan School in Stratford.

This all had repercussions for ACMANZ. New Zealand Cursillo now had three participating dioceses, with the need for its own national oversight. It was realised that the ACMANZ arrangement was no longer appropriate. A separate national council for NZ was to be formed. These arrangements were to be completed at the 10th birthday celebrations of Cursillo in New Zealand. When Tony Hassed completed his term as DLD he would be replaced by May Carrell, while he would become National Lay Director of the New Zealand Anglican Cursillo Council (NZACC).

The 10th Birthday

The site for the 10th Birthday celebration in April 1998 was El Rancho, Waikanae. Of the 270 who attended, 117 came across the Tasman from Australia. A number of these had been members of the original teams that brought Cursillo to this country. All three NZ Cursillo dioceses were represented. Sadly, due to the illness that led to his death later that same year, Archbishop Brian Davis, scheduled to be the dinner speaker, could not make the occasion. Some novel last-minute innovations filled this lamented gap. Talented music leadership was provided by the Revd Peter Nunn, his wife Barbara and Jenny Henson.



The Speakers' platform, El Rancho, 1998

Just prior to the weekend, ACMANZ met at El Rancho for the last time as a combined Australia New Zealand Cursillo body. The Executive of the NZ Council was commissioned during the weekend – Tony Hassed as NLD, the Revd Michael Taylor of Christchurch as National Spiritual Director (NSD), Christine Moir of Wellington as National Secretary (NS), and Brian Carrell as National Episcopal Oversight (NEO). In addition, representatives from each participating diocese would form a National Council. A milestone had been reached!

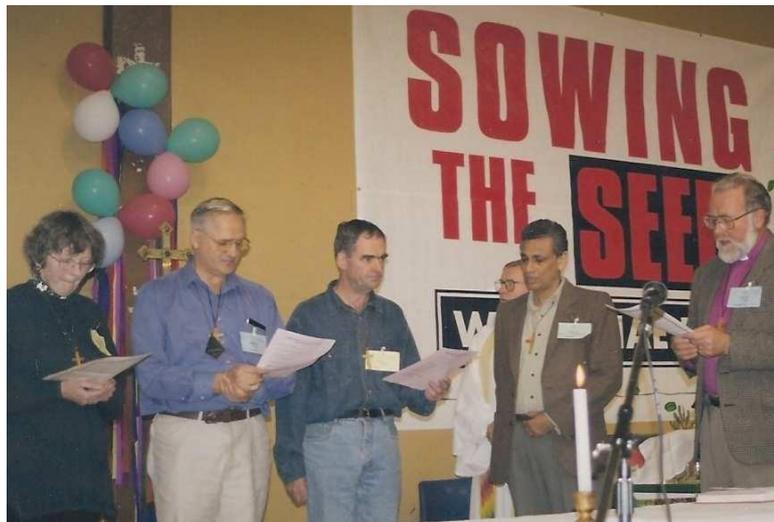
Status Update 2008 ...

A further ten years have passed. Meanwhile the Diocese of Dunedin has been gifted Cursillo from the Diocese of Christchurch. Cursillo in the Diocese of Waikato now stands tall in its own strength and is hosting pilgrims to their Cursillos from the Diocese of Auckland. Anglican Cursillo has assisted in the introduction of Catholic Cursillo to the Catholic Diocese of Auckland. Wellington Diocese this year holds Men's 31 and Women's 31 3-Day Cursillos. Some dioceses have diversified into holding combined men and women's Cursillos. Wellington has also branched out into running an adapted form of Cursillo in one of this country's larger prisons.

Currently Keith Gover (Gore, Dunedin Diocese) is NLD, the Revd Rory Redmayne (now of Christchurch) NSD, the Rev Brenda Walker (Christchurch) NS, with Bishop David Coles (now of Dunedin) as NEO. May Carrell continues as editor and producer of a lively Kiwi Cursillo magazine.

The still unfolding details of all these later years of Cursillo in NZ have yet to be written.

Ultreya!



Bishop David Coles (R) commissioning NZACC Executive at Waikanae in 1998.

Christine Moir, Michael Taylor, Tony Hassed,
Bishop Tom Brown (obscured), Arthur Jayasandra, Australian NLD looking on.

'In the beginning . . .' was written by Bishop Brian Carrell at the request of the Wellington Diocese Cursillo Secretariat to mark the 20th Birthday of Cursillo in New Zealand, September 2008.

Copies available from the Wellington Secretariat.