

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY  
OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY  
*Faculty of Arts*



# SSEC newsletter

ISSUE 92 — AUGUST 2020



**Dr Bruce Fairgray Harris, AM**

## **SSEC** FOUNDING PRESIDENT HONOURED BY THE CROWN.

On the Queen's birthday 2020, at his age of 99,  
**Dr Bruce Fairgray Harris**, Cherrybrook NSW, was  
appointed a Member in the Order of Australia 'for significant  
service to higher education, to veterans, and to the  
community'. His lasting service continues to this day.

In 1986 as Associate Professor of History he retired from the  
School of History, Philosophy and Politics, having served two  
terms as its elected head (1979-1984). He taught across  
many areas of Ancient History, with a specialty in Greek  
history, language, and thought. A collective tribute to him on  
his retirement was published as Vol.16.1 (1986) of 'Ancient  
Society: Resources for Teachers', the Macquarie journal of  
which he had been founding editor in 1971.

In 1987 he was appointed founding Chairman and  
subsequently elected President of what was to become the  
'Society for the Study of Early Christianity' within the Ancient  
History Documentary Research Centre.

By 1942 young Bruce Harris had completed the BA in  
Auckland University College, winning senior scholarships for  
Latin and Greek. He graduated instead into the army,  
resigning a commission at home in order to volunteer for the  
NZ Expeditionary Force. In Egypt he was re-commissioned,  
and by 1944 was commanding the NZ artillery at Monte  
Cassino.

In 1946 a Rhodes scholarship took Captain Harris to Balliol  
College, Oxford, where his tutor for 'Greats' was Russell  
Meiggs. From 1950 to 1969, becoming an Associate Professor  
in the Auckland Classics department, and adding graduate  
degrees in Divinity and PhD (on Dio Chrysostom), he became  
a leader in NZ public education as Chairman of the Council for  
the group of state 'Grammar Schools' in Auckland. On  
transferring to Macquarie in 1970 Professor Harris was quickly  
recruited to comparable commitments, for example as  
Chairman of the History Teachers' Association of NSW.

As a true veteran on various fronts Bruce Harris's great  
community gift has surely been to disarm contention by  
declining to have a war with anyone.

E.A.Judge.

## **SSEC** Newsletter

SSEC Newsletter is published twice  
yearly for the Society of the Study of  
Early Christianity.

**“The focus of the Society is  
on history: the study of  
Early Christianity in its  
Jewish and Graeco-Roman  
setting.”**

**August 2020 edition:** Number 92

**Editors:** Lesley Mascall  
Alanna Nobbs

**Contributions:** SSEC Members

Next newsletter is planned for  
March 2021 —  
deadline for contributions is  
4 February 2021.

**Opinions expressed in all articles  
reflect the views of the author.  
The Society takes no stand in such  
matters.**

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

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Telephones:  
SSEC office — 9850.8844  
Secretary: Karyn Young  
President: Dr Chris Forbes  
Ancient History Office — 9850.8833  
**(in emergency only)**

Website: [mq.edu.au/ssec/events](http://mq.edu.au/ssec/events)



**Click here** for SSEC  
Facebook link.



**From the President’s desk:**

Welcome back to our Newsletter, as we look forward to resuming activities after the easing of the “lock-down”. It was most disappointing that our Annual Conference, and other meetings, had to be cancelled, and all other functions.

The cancellation of the conference also meant the AGM could not be held, and the committee voted in in 2019 has continued for the time being. The 2020 AGM will now be held at the end of the year. (See Calendar, p.10)

The good news is that we anticipate holding the Conference planned for 2020 in May 2021, as well as various other monthly events.

We look forward to seeing you in November at the Christmas function, and AGM, and to resumption of regular events in 2021.

Stay well, and stay safe.

**FROM the SECRETARY (Karyn Young)**

SSEC supports students who are involved in the history of early Christianity, including The Tyndale Scholarship, small travel grants, the various SSEC prizes and the Patricia Geidans Prize. See report in this newsletter.

SSEC has a very important role to play in investigating the history of early Christianity with its non-sectarian, historical approach, allowing a freedom to investigate this particular area of ancient history with academic rigour. Many SSEC members who were and are pursuing research in to the history of Early Christianity have been supported by SSEC and have won international recognition.

SSEC is indebted to Lesley Mascall, Kerrie Worboys, and members of the committee who handle much of the business of SSEC, and assist with the conference and seminars.

Thank you to Gareth Wearne, and Louise Gosbell for managing the SSEC Facebook site, and to Gareth Wearne, Lyn Kidson and Margaret Mowczko for managing the website.

On behalf of SSEC, I would like to thank all the speakers who so willingly present outstanding papers at our seminars and conferences on a completely voluntary basis.

As always, a big thank you to our wonderful and loyal SSEC Members. Your support through membership and donations allows SSEC to make a valuable contribution to the study of early Christianity.

Upcoming **SSEC** events - for details, see Calendar of Events on the last page

For your diaries: next year’s **SSEC** ANNUAL DAY CONFERENCE will be on Saturday, 1st May, 2021, at Robert Menzies College — with the theme “**God and Mammon: The Economy of the Early Churches**”.

As for 2020 Conference, which had to be postponed, provisionally we have eight speakers.

Cost:	<b>SSEC</b> members	\$130	Pensioner (age)	\$95
	Alumni	\$140	Full-time students	\$55
	Non- members	\$145	Individual lectures, per lecture	\$25
			<b>SSEC</b> concession rate, per lecture	\$20

All 2019 conference talks were filmed, and most are accessible through “trybooking” for \$15 per talk. Just click here: <https://www.trybooking.com/BEZGD>.

If you attended the conference you can have access to these at no charge, by contacting [karyn.young@mq.edu.au](mailto:karyn.young@mq.edu.au).

## SSEC AGM 2019

As the SSEC AGM due to be held on Saturday, 2nd May, 2020 was postponed, the 2019 officers are caretaking, and are as follows:

**President:** Chris Forbes

**Vice-President:** Alanna Nobbs

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Karyn Young

**Committee Members:**

Don Barker, Bruce Barnes, Stephen Burford, Malcolm Choat, Peter Eyland, Lyn Kidson, Lesley Mascall, Margaret Mowczko, Ryan Strickler, Gareth Wearne.

Many thanks to these and to the earlier retirees from the committee — Samuel Cook, Lydia Gore-Jones, Leigh Hess, Paul March, Bronwen Neil, Sue Price, Gillian Spalding-Stracey – for your invaluable contribution to the Society.

## SSEC CONFERENCE 2021

For your diaries: next year’s SSEC conference will be on Saturday, 1st May, 2021 — with the theme “**God and Mammon: The Economy of the Early Churches**”.

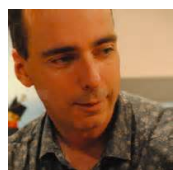
★ Call for papers by **20 November 2020**.

Please supply firm Topic, Bio, Hi-res portrait photo and abstract for consideration of the SSEC conference sub-committee — **unless your paper was approved for 2020, in which case please just confirm your availability**.

## SSEC PEOPLE, and other items of interest

The Society itself and a kind donor with family associated with **SSEC** have assisted in funding Coptic teaching in the department.

There have been many changes with staff. For details please consult the [staff list](#).



The Ancient History Department head is Professor Ray Laurence, a Roman archaeologist with a particular interest in Pompeii.

**SSEC** events — draft programme, pending easing of lock down, is printed on the back page.

**SSEC** co-operates with the Sir Asher Joel Foundation which supports the participation of Macquarie people (and the public) in archaeological field work in Israel through our agreement with Tel Aviv University, and offers post graduate scholarships and brings a visiting fellow in Early Jewish studies to Australia each year.

32 Macquarie students and three high school teachers participated in the excavation of Khirbet el-Rai, Israel, in January this year. The site generated enormous publicity around the world when it was identified as the lost biblical city of Ziklag, home to King David when he was a mercenary for the nearby King Achish of Gath (modern day Tel es-Safi). Located in the lush Judean foothills about 30 km southwest of Jerusalem, Khirbet el-rai dominates the route from the coast to the interior. The students worked with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Antiquities Authority and made some extraordinary discoveries including a 'Smiting Baal' figurine and a small bronze calf

redolent with connotations to the story of the Golden Calf in the bible. The excavations also featured a Macquarie-first on-site chemistry laboratory where the students learnt the basics of sample collection and analysis. Dig organiser Dr Gil Davis noted how proud he was of the tremendous work ethic displayed by the students in challenging conditions. He thanked the donors especially the Roth families who sponsored the dig and Mr Isaac Wakil AO who sponsored the laboratory as well as other donors who provided scholarship assistance.

Read the full story [here](https://lighthouse.mq.edu.au/article/april-2020/Rare-figurines-uncovered-at-lost-biblical-city): <https://lighthouse.mq.edu.au/article/april-2020/Rare-figurines-uncovered-at-lost-biblical-city>

You can contact Drs. Davis ([gil.davis@mq.edu.au](mailto:gil.davis@mq.edu.au)) or Keimer ([kyle.keimer@mq.edu.au](mailto:kyle.keimer@mq.edu.au)) for more details.

## SSEC awards

### PATRICIA GEIDANS PRIZE FOR 2020

This prize is awarded for the best thesis in the Master of Research programme in the broad area of Early Christian and Jewish Studies. The prize was not awarded in 2019, but in 2020 the winner is Patricia Dean, a long-standing SSEC member.

Patricia Geidans OAM received her Australia Day honours in 2009. She was a founding member of the Society, for many years SSEC's Secretary and attended many of the SSEC functions. Pat generously left a bequest to the society which will be put towards offering a future post-doctoral fellowship in the history of early Christianity.

## SSEC SCHOLARSHIPS

The **Macquarie/Tyndale Cambridge Travelling Scholarship** is kindly funded by some SSEC members who designate donations for this purpose.

It is our pleasure to announce that the Macquarie/Tyndale Cambridge scholarship, for travel in 2020, was won by **Charles Thorne**. Congratulations to Charles.

Our congratulations also to the winner for 2021 — **Gillian Spalding-Stracey**.



Previous winners of the Tyndale Scholarship are:

2009: Bernard Doherty and Gerald Donker  
2010: Murray Smith  
2011: Shin Min Seok  
2012: Bradley Bitner  
2013: Julien Ogereau  
2014: Lyn Kidson  
2015: James Unwin

2016: Lydia Gore-Jones and Rory Shiner  
2017: Benjamin Overcash  
2018: Marty Feltham  
2019: David Evans  
2020: Charles Thorne  
2021: Gillian Spalding-Stracey

Details on applying for this and other Ancient History scholarships are on the Ancient History website, [scholarship page](#). Further enquiries: Phone 9850 8833 (Dept of Ancient History Office) Email: [ancienthistory@mq.edu.au](mailto:ancienthistory@mq.edu.au)

## SSEC POSTGRADUATE TRAVELLING GRANTS.

Each year SSEC offers up to 4 travelling grants to members who are also postgraduates enrolled in higher degree work in Ancient History at Macquarie. These are awarded competitively and are worth up to \$500. Please apply to the secretary outlining your proposed travel, how it helps your thesis completion and how the money is to be spent. It may not, by University rules, be spent on air travel but can be used for conference registration or accommodation, for internal travel, etc. All refunds are given after the presentation of receipts. Winners are asked please to provide a short report for the following SSEC newsletter.

At present this is subject to travel being allowed.

### Non SSEC awards:



Congratulations to **Dr. Lyn Kidson**, who has been awarded the **Macquarie Gale British School in Rome scholarship** for 2021, for her project: "Coins of the New Testament world: the intersection between early Christianity, imperial ideology, visual communication, and the Roman economy". She summarised her project thus: "There is at present a reconsideration of the role of imagery on Roman coins and what can be

learnt about their significance for their users. I will be designing a model so that the imagery and inscriptions on Roman provincial coinage can be brought into dialogue with the New Testament. My question is how do the NT writers interact with this imperial ideology, especially in their allusions to imperial imagery that was consistently used on coins? This project has significance for reading the NT and other writers of the early imperial period such as Philo of Alexandria, Plutarch, and Dio Chrysostom.”

#### The **ALANNA NOBBS PRIZE**

This prize is awarded for the best thesis by a woman student in the Master of Research programme — presented by Australasian Women in Ancient World Studies.

This prize was awarded in 2020 to Madeline Jenkins.

### **Ancient History Affiliates:**

#### **Macquarie Ancient History Association (MAHA) –**

For enquiries 9850 9965, 9850 8833, or

**email:** [ancienthistory@mq.edu.au](mailto:ancienthistory@mq.edu.au)

**or website:** [www.ancienthistory.com.au/news.php](http://www.ancienthistory.com.au/news.php)

**Macquarie Ancient Languages School (MALS)** offers a wide range of courses in Classical & Koine Greek, Egyptian Hieroglyphs, Classical Hebrew, Akkadian, Coptic, Sanskrit and others, including Hieratic and Aramaic.

The program, timetable and application form will be available on the Ancient History website at <http://www.anchist.mq.edu.au/mals.html> To add your name to the MALS mailing list, email: [mals@mq.edu.au](mailto:mals@mq.edu.au)

#### **Australian Centre for Egyptology**

email: [egypt@mq.edu.au](mailto:egypt@mq.edu.au)

website: [egyptology.mq.edu.au](http://egyptology.mq.edu.au)

**Continuing Education Programme** - Cost \$160 per unit. Dates for sessions, and the full list of units on offer are available on the department's website. [click here](#). **Late enrolments are currently being accepted.**

One student remarked “This course provides a wonderful opportunity to learn about the various aspects of ancient Greece, and gave access to top class teaching without exam stress.”

ARTICLE by **Dr. Daryn Graham**

### **The Earthquakes of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

According to Matthew's Gospel, after Jesus died:

‘And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city [i.e. Jerusalem] and appeared to many.’



Matthew's testimony that this earthquake occurred in this time and place sits well with the nature of earthquakes produced by tectonic plate shifts throughout Judea and the wider region. During the first and second centuries AD, earthquakes occurred in the Judean region regularly. Produced by the tectonic Dead Sea Rift Valley, approximately

one hundred large scale earthquakes have taken place over the last twenty-two centuries, occurring on average at least once every sixty years. Of these, seismological evidence indicates seventy-one occurred throughout the Judea-Samaria region.

Small-scale, localized tremors occurred more regularly, practically on an annual basis. However, larger scale tremors produced more damage. Byzantine chronographer, John Malalas, states a series of earthquakes hit Syrian Antioch in 65 BC, damaging civic buildings. Josephus states also on 1st September 31 BC, Judea was hit by a destructive earthquake that resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands. The next attested earthquake in the region was that which occurred at the crucifixion of Christ, followed by another during the resurrection three days later. The next hit Antioch on 9 April AD37, as recorded by John Malalas, on account of which, the emperor of the time, Gaius (Caligula) rebuilt it in monumental fashion. Archaeologists have also found signs of this particular earthquake at nearby Defneh and Al-Quds. According to John Malalas, an earthquake again hit Antioch in AD 47, and Tacitus states yet another hit it in AD 53. Archaeologists have also discovered evidence in the form of coins beneath collapsed debris at Petra, minted during the reign of the Nabataean king Rabbel II (reigned AD 71–106), suggesting that an earthquake occurred during, or soon after, his reign. In addition, at Masada, archaeologists have unearthed coins from the so-called 'potter's workshop' dating to Trajan's principate beneath debris which they have found points to an earthquake there, as well, sometime between the years of his reign (AD 98–117), or shortly thereafter. Coins minted in AD 110/111 have also been discovered by archaeologists underneath collapsed debris in building VII at Masada, indicating that yet another earthquake took place there in that year or soon thereafter. It unclear whether or not these coins indicate the occurrence of just one seismic event or three separate earthquakes. The last major earthquake of the New Testament era is there is that which occurred in Antioch in AD 115, which reportedly destroyed most of the city's infrastructure.

The most destructive earthquake to hit Judea in the Roman period was that which, as mentioned earlier in this paper, occurred on the night prior to the battle of Actium which raged on 2nd September 31 BC between Octavian (Augustus) and Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra, near the west coast of Greece. This earthquake's epicenter was reputedly, according to Josephus, near Jerusalem. Josephus adds that although the king Herod's (the Great) Judean forces escaped injury since they happened to be encamped in open fields west of the Jordan River all that night, Judea's civilians were caught unawares since they were asleep in their houses when the earthquake hit, resulting in losses of life and property. In the *Jewish War*, Josephus provided a very rounded mortality figure of 30,000 human dead as a result of this single earthquake. However, although approximately ten years later as he wrote the *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus downsized the number to 10,000 deceased, such numbers nevertheless reflect the chaos, confusion and mayhem that took place. At the time, this earthquake was seen by Jews as signs of the dawn of a new era in Jewish and world history. Under the Romans, apocalyptic literature associated earthquakes with eschatological battles between good and evil.

Nevertheless, the single earthquake that was commemorated by first century Christians as the main pivotal point in world history was that which occurred during Christ's crucifixion. The search for evidence for this particular earthquake resulted in the past in assorted claims, the most notable being that of scientist G. Lavvas, who in 1998 informed media he discovered a crack in the earth's surface inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the traditional site of Golgotha, which he claimed must have been caused by this particular earthquake. The crack is still visible there, and measures 12cm long extending west-east. However, soon afterwards, professional geologists found this crack was in fact water erosion that had weathered the soft limestone surface under the church's man-made foundations. Intriguingly, Matthew does not state that the earth's surface itself was cracked in any way. Rather, Matthew's Gospel records that only certain rocks, presumably around Jerusalem, split, and indeed, splits in rocks can be seen all around Jerusalem to this day.

More tangible proof for this earthquake came to light thirteen years later in 2011, when professional geologists J. Williams, M. Schwab, and A. Brauer discovered using core samples of sediment near the ancient town Ein Gedi, west of the Dead Sea, south of Jerusalem, evidence of the 31 BC earthquake, and also of the earthquakes of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. According to these geologists, the earthquake evidenced by the sedimentary rock core samples took place in AD 31, plus or minus five years. According to Williams, Schwab, and Brauer, this earthquake was energetic enough to disrupt the sediment of rocks around the Ein Gedi region, and perhaps beyond. The fact that the disruption in sediment in these core samples appear close to the ground surface, indicates that this particular tremor's epicenter was close to the ground surface. Williams, Schwab, and Brauer have concluded that this scientific evidence corroborates perfectly with the Gospel of Matthew's reference to the earthquakes of Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

Darkness held ominous positions in contemporaneous Jewish beliefs at the time. It was a sign of God's judgment, and once again, of battles between good and evil. Jews also believed that earthquakes and darkness were both signs of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Josephus, states that during one night of the Pentecost festival immediately preceding the start of the Jewish War (AD 66-70), one particular earthquake took place at night, accompanied by sound of a voice from heaven saying the words, 'let us remove from here.' According to Josephus, this event heralded the critical point at which the escalation into eschatological war became inevitable, as God switched sides from Jews to the Romans, because of the decline of morals among Jerusalem's leaders and their lack of repentance to God. Similarly, Tacitus states that this same voice was declared by the Roman gods: it was they who were departing the temple. In any event, both Josephus and Tacitus positioned that these events marked that Jerusalem's fate was sealed. However, it may be argued that Matthew, by referring to the earthquake and darkness at the same time during Jesus Christ's crucifixion, implies to his Jewish and Gentile audiences that Jesus's death was the moment when God was victorious over evil as he atoned for the sins of humankind.

The view that the darkness of the crucifixion was caused by cloud cover is still popular. However, recently, modern historians have produced a fresh alternative argument. They posit that the darkness of the crucifixion was, in fact, caused by surface dust produced by the earth vibrations caused by the earthquake of the crucifixion, itself, resulting in a dust storm that caused this darkness. Seismologists concur that this is not an altogether uncommon sign of earthquakes. The most famous examples of this phenomenon were observed during the New Madrid earthquakes of 1811 and 1812. Given NASA records indicate solar eclipses occurred on 19th March AD 33 and 9th March AD 34, and that the moon's shadows of these eclipses actually passed over the southern hemisphere, not the northern hemisphere, these could not have passed over Jerusalem during Christ's crucifixion.

Although Matthew states clearly that the darkness of Christ's crucifixion started around the round figure of noon, and seems to imply that the earthquake occurred at Christ's death at the equally round figure of 3pm, these references can be harmonized with the above scientific evidence. For, the relevant language of Matthew's Gospel at this point is clearly apocalyptic. Flowing with succession one event after another, it may be argued that this passage reflects Jesus's use of apocalyptic language in the temple of Jerusalem in Matthew 24:7: 'For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places'. Although Jesus's apocalyptic language in this case regards future events, those events are not necessarily in order, in line with Jewish apocalyptic language usage, but are brought together because of their associations with the end of the age.

Thus, what we may have in this case is a story inside a story—a discourse used to illustrate and expand on the crucial event of Matthew's narrative—that of Christ's death. As recognized especially in Mark, Matthew's main source, 'sandwich techniques' were common among ancient sources as discourses of various lengths. Thus, by moving from the cross to other spaces in and around Jerusalem experiencing the torn



curtain, the earthquake, the rocks splitting, and the resurrection of many saints, and then back to the cross, Matthew reminds his audiences of the deeper realities of the death of Jesus in the wider cosmic context accompanying it. Thus, Matthew appears to bring this context together with the cross to emphasize the greatness of Jesus and the greatness of his death, ushering in the beginnings of a new age in which forgiveness and atonement are to be found in himself. Moreover, as the resurrection of saints that accompanied Jesus' own resurrection, so too the believer is reliant on the atoning power of Christ's death. For Matthew, it was imperative to notify his audiences that Jesus's death was the decisive move on God's part on behalf of believers. Later generations of early Christians would develop these concepts further, circulating beliefs that this particular earthquake was a sign of God's judgment on humanity's wickedness in crucifying Jesus, and also that this unique all-conquering salvation is to be found in Jesus alone.

In the next breath, Matthew states that the rocks around Jerusalem split and that a number of saints buried nearby were resurrected and entered the city. According to Raymond Johnson, Matthew deliberately included reference to these resurrections to parallel Jesus' resurrection and show their lesser importance to Jesus' greater resurrection, highlighting his divinity. However, as Johnson finds, these details may be unhistorical, since Matthew uses similar language to Ezekiel 37:1-14. However, other modern historians argue these resurrections to be a partial fulfillment of Pharisaic prophecies that the Messiah would arrive in Jerusalem from east of the Mount of Olives and that the hill would split open and dead arise—a tradition still held by Orthodox Jews, hence, the desire to be buried near the Mount of Olives in order to be those first raised. Therefore, Donald Hagner and Ben Witherington III argue Matthew included the resurrection of these saints to indicate a fulfillment of these Pharisaic prophetic beliefs. From Matthew's use of language these saints' tombs were actually opened after Jesus's resurrection, for Matthew states that these 'saints' were resurrected and walked into Jerusalem shortly after Jesus' resurrection. We do not know exactly who these 'saints' were. Our earliest extant source outside Matthew that mentions them is Ignatius's *Letter to the Magnesians*, which states that certain 'prophets of old' were visited by Jesus after his death in Hades, who he then 'raised them from the dead' with himself on resurrection morning. Later Christian sources also mention Adam, Moses, Job, and Simeon and his sons as among those who were resurrected. In any event, historians do not know what these resurrected saints did after they appeared in Jerusalem, or what they did for the duration of the rest of their lives. In fact, the only event in Matthew's collection of signs is the tearing of the temple curtain.

According to Matthew, at dawn on resurrection morning, a 'violent earthquake' took place. Matthew states in full:

'After the sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.'

Matthew's emphasis that this tremor was 'violent', or more literally 'great' (μέγας), a term missing in Matthew's description of the crucifixion earthquake itself, may indicate that the resurrection earthquake may have been more intense than the crucifixion earthquake, as aftershocks can at times be. Aftershocks are still common throughout the Levant after the initial tremor. As Cassius Dio states, after the AD 115 earthquake in Antioch, for 'several days', 'Heaven' sent many 'shocks.'

Opinions expressed in all articles reflect the views of the authors. The Society takes no stand in such matters.

## SSEC CALENDAR OF EVENTS AS AT 1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2020

DATE, TIME and location	EVENT
<p><b>Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 – 7pm</b></p> <p><b>Christmas Event and AGM</b></p> <p><b>ART-25WWC-C211 Intercultural</b></p> <p><b>(in the new ARTS Precinct)</b></p>	<p>Speaker: Prof Emerita <b>Alanna Nobbs</b> (Macquarie University)</p> <p>Topic: <b><i>Why do we celebrate Christmas on 25<sup>th</sup> December?</i></b></p> <p><b>If event is affected by COVID, you will be notified by email.</b></p>

Costs: The SSEC Committee voted to abolish all entry costs for meetings. There is instead a strictly optional gold coin donation.

**Parking** after 6pm is free.

There is easy public access to the University by both bus and train.

For further details, please visit the SSEC Website:

<https://www.mq.edu.au/about/about-the-university/faculties-and-departments/faculty-of-arts/departments-and-centres/department-of-ancient-history/engage/the-society-for-the-study-of-early-christianity> or contact us as follows:

**T:** +61 (2) 9850 8844,     **E:** [SSEC@mq.edu.au](mailto:SSEC@mq.edu.au) (email is preferred)