

Marist Street Names in New Zealand *Elizabeth Charlton*

Romans built roads initially for military purposes – to move troops from one battleground to another. They also derived commercial benefit from them. Evidence of naming streets after people can be found since Roman times – think of the Via Appia, named after its builder the censor, Appius Claudius Caecus, who started its construction in 312 BCE.¹

British tradition was to name streets after

- Geographical features, e.g. Fleet Street in London named after the river.
- Industry
- Landowners.

Alois Greiler started research on streets named after Marists in Germany. He then discovered Father Tony King's 1988 leaflet, *The streets where you live: Fifty years of Marist history at Toongabbie 1938-1988*, and became curious as to what recognition there was for Marists in New Zealand street names.²

In New Zealand, from the apparent haphazard naming in the 1800s (Church Road near the Mission Estate is so named for when Walker Kirkham was asked where he lived, he said the road with the church)³, local authorities are now subject to the standard AS/NZS 4819:2011: Rural and urban addressing for street names. They also follow similar processes for the proposal and adoption of new street names, with the following criteria being included

- Easy to pronounce
- No duplicate in the surrounding area to assist emergency services
- Recognition of local history and culture

The earliest naming of street after a Marist had occurred by 1852 when a map of Akaroa, New Zealand's sole French colony was produced – showing Viard Street. Marists were present when the first French settlers landed from *L'Aube* in 1840. The street was rebranded "**Rue Viard**" in 1960 when the Akaroa Promotions Association wanted to make Akaroa appear more French.⁴

Father (later Bishop) Philippe Viard (1809-1872), first bishop of the Diocese of Wellington, which included Akaroa until the erection of the Diocese of Christchurch in 1887, visited there once before his appointment as bishop – during Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier's second trip to Akaroa on board his mission vessel, *Sancta Maria*, in November 1841.

The next naming was in honour of Father Delphin Moreau (1813-1883), founder of the Church in Dunedin before New Zealand's southern-most diocese was erected in 1869. The municipality of St Kilda (now part of Dunedin) had tendered for the formation of **Moreau Street** in 1877.⁵ Bishop Patrick Moran, the Diocese of Dunedin's first bishop was not a supporter of the Society and requested that all Marists leave the diocese. This street naming within ten years of Moreau's departure is an indicator of the esteem in which his contributions were held by the local community.

The third street is also located in the South Island, in the town of Leeston, south of Christchurch. **Chervier Street** is first mentioned in 1905, named after Father Jean-Claude Chervier (1833-1901).⁶ Builder of the first church in Leeston in 1869, in 1890 or 91 Chervier

¹ Smith, William, William Wayte, and G. E. Marindin. *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. 1890, London: J. Murray. Page 946–954. Retrieved from

https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=NngPAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA946&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

² See the contributions by Greiler and King in this volume.

³ Ian L. Mills. *What's in a name: the streets about Napier*. 2007, Napier, NZ: Thinker Publications.

⁴ Email from Akaroa Museum, 9 June 2017

⁵ <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ODT18770228.2.22?query=moreau%20street>

⁶ <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/EG19051004.2.8?query=chervier%20street>

moved there into the presbytery built by the Catholics of the district. A new, larger church was opened in 1894 on High Street. Chervier Street is directly behind this.⁷

Another South Island street is **Ginaty Lane**, Christchurch. Named on 31 January 2001 this street honours the Very Reverend Dean Aloysius Lawrence Ginaty, who was the founder of Mt Magdala, a residential home for deprived women. The home was staffed by Sisters of the Good Shepherd. The Aidanfield subdivision recognises them and former residents of the home at Halswell in the street names.⁸

It would be remiss not to find Saint Pierre Chanel sm (1803-1841), the Apostolic Vicariate of Western Oceania's first martyr, recognised on both islands.

- **Chanel Grove**, Waterloo, Lower Hutt is located on land formerly belonging to the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions (RNDM), which was subdivided in 1961.⁹

- **Chanel Place**, Prebbleton was approved at a Selwyn District Council meeting on 4 September 2002. This land was developed by the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch.¹⁰

Brothers have always been an integral part of the Society in New Zealand. The Hawke's Bay mission area, established in 1851 contains two streets acknowledging them.

- **Johns Road**, Napier was named after Brother Florentin Françon (1816?-1903). Florentin, whose Christian name was Jean [John], signed agreements with his anglicised Christian name and appears in the local newspapers of the time at Mr John Francon. He worked with Brother Basil Monchalin until he left for Sydney in 1869. The earliest mention found to date in newspapers of Johns Road is 1920.

- **Basil Road**, Meeanee was named after Brother Basil (Michel) Monchalin (1814-1898) who worked this land alongside Brother Florentin. The name first appears in newspapers in 1914.

In 2007, the last street to be named, **Michel Colombon Close**, Whangarei was after the first brother to arrive in New Zealand in 1838, Brother Michel (Antoine) Colombon (1812-1880). Colombon left the Society in 1841, though he remained working for the mission until 1847. He remained in New Zealand, dying in Reefton as Antoine Michel.

In the same development, the first Marist priest to arrive, Father Catherin Servant (1808-1860) was also acknowledged with **Catherin Servant Close**. These streets were named in the subdivision of the Society's land adjacent to Pompallier College, which was founded by the New Zealand Province in 1971.

In the agenda of the Whangarei District Council, Works and Services Committee for 26 April 2007 are listed the other suggestions presented for the two closes respectively;

- Peter Chanel and Claude Bret (1808-1837), a member of the first group of Marists to leave France who died en route to New Zealand. A theological volume belonging to the latter is held by the Colin Library at Good Shepherd Theological College, Auckland.

- Suzanne Aubert (1835-1926) and Marie Nizier. Aubert, foundress of the sole New Zealand-founded congregation, the Sisters of Compassion, found support with the Marists for her congregation. She also cared for Father Jean-Antoine Séon in his old age. Aubert was declared Venerable by Pope Francis in December 2016. Brother Marie Nizier (Jean-Marie) Delorme (1817-1874) was Chanel's companion on Futuna.

The city with the most Marist names is Upper Hutt, some 30 kilometres north of Wellington, in which St Patrick's College Silverstream is located.

Redwood Street was named after Archbishop Redwood (1839-1935). In 1876 Henry Petre transferred land to Archbishop Redwood representing the Catholic Church which was duly leased to the Brown family in Upper Hutt.¹¹

⁷ <http://www.gcatholic.org/churches/oceania/41807.htm>

⁸ <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/PlaceNames/ChristchurchStreetNames-F-G.pdf>

⁹ Personal communication from Hutt City Archives, 27 May 2017.

¹⁰ Email from Selwyn District Council, 30 May 2017.

Seon Place, Clouston Park was selected by Arthur Clouston, developer of the Clouston Park Estate, which opened on 18 March 1954. Father Jean-Antoine Joseph Séon (1807-1878) assisted Father Jean Forest with the mission station in the Hutt Valley, taking periodic charge of it during Forest's absences for health, permanently taking over as superior in 1861. He made the decision to build St Joseph's Church in December 1863 at the corner of Pine Avenue and Main Street in Upper Hutt and by February 1864 the chapel was ready for opening.¹²

Dowling Grove was named after Father John W Dowling (1889-1971), first Rector of St Patrick's College, Silverstream from 1931 to 1937. The college owned the land.

It is thought that **Forest Road**, Pinehaven, may have been named after Father Jean Forest (1804-1884) who founded the Hutt Mission in June 1850.¹³

The Marist with the most streets named after him is Father Antoine Garin (1810-1889). Garin arrived in New Zealand in 1840. He ministered in the north, in Auckland and then moved to Nelson, at the top of the South Island in 1850. Garin had great influence in education in Nelson.

- **Garin Heights**, Atawhai, Nelson was approved in 1990. The street is very close to Wakapuaka Cemetery, where Garin is buried.¹⁴
- **Garin Grove** and **Antoine Grove** are found in Richmond, a locality bordering on Nelson. They would date from the 2000s and are in the vicinity of Garin College, a co-educational Catholic secondary school, which opened in 2002.
- **Garin Way**, Auckland named on 15 November 2006 by the Eastern Bays Community Board is found in the Mount Wellington Stonefields quarry development.¹⁵ This acknowledges Garin's contribution to the establishment of the Church in Auckland where he ministered among others to the Irish Fencibles in Howick.

There are also two examples of streets named after Marist properties.

- **Mission Road**, Mission View. This road overlooks the Mission Estate in Greenmeadows, Napier. It was originally named Holland Road until the residents requested the name change in 1986.¹⁶
- With the development of the former Futuna Retreat Centre property in Wellington, the townhouse development around the Chapel was named **Futuna Close** in 2002.¹⁷

What is striking from this compilation is that of the 20 names 17 were selected by the wider community. With the earliest naming occurring by 1852, this is an indication of how intertwined the Marist story is with the foundation of this country.

¹¹ Lynly Yates. *Upper Hutt Street Name Origins Master*. 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.lynly.gen.nz/HVUHLNDStreetNameOriginsMaster.pdf>

¹² Lynly Yates. *Upper Hutt Street Name Origins Master*. 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.lynly.gen.nz/HVUHLNDStreetNameOriginsMaster.pdf>; Bernard J. Cullinane. *Mission to the River Hutt. A history of the Catholic Church in the Hutt Valley and the Parish of Saints Peter & Paul, 1850-2000. 2002 Lower Hutt, NZ: Parish of Ss Peter & Paul.*

¹³ Lynly Yates. *Upper Hutt Street Name Origins Master*. 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.lynly.gen.nz/HVUHLNDStreetNameOriginsMaster.pdf>; Bernard J. Cullinane. *Mission to the River Hutt. A history of the Catholic Church in the Hutt Valley and the Parish of Saints Peter & Paul, 1850-2000. 2002 Lower Hutt, NZ: Parish of Ss Peter & Paul.*

¹⁴ Email from Nelson City Council, 26 May 2017.

¹⁵ <http://www.aucklandcitylibraries.com/getdoc/063fec9f-fa37-4e14-95f8-44cb74893ccb/aucklandcitystreetnames.aspx>

¹⁶ Ian L. Mills. *What's in a name: the streets about Napier*. 2007, Napier, NZ: Thinker Publications.

¹⁷ Wellington City Council Archives database entry. Retrieved from <http://apps.wcc.govt.nz/collection/results.do?view=detail&db=object&title=allitems&lastTitle=allitems&lastMenu=simple&menu=simple&id=453419>