
ABOUT THE AUTHOR
DAVID RUSSELL



**former Director of Music at
St Mary's Cathedral Choir**

David Russell joined St Mary's Cathedral Choir in 1953. He remained connected with the Choir until 2008, serving as **Director of Music for the last 33 years**. David trained at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and has been intensely involved in the Music Education of young children. He has also lectured in Music Education at University level. His work with the Cathedral Choir includes several overseas tours, which gained a reputation for the Cathedral's music on an international front.

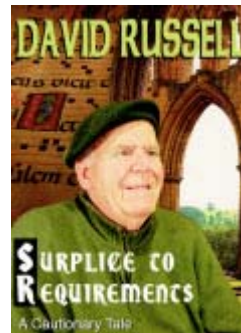
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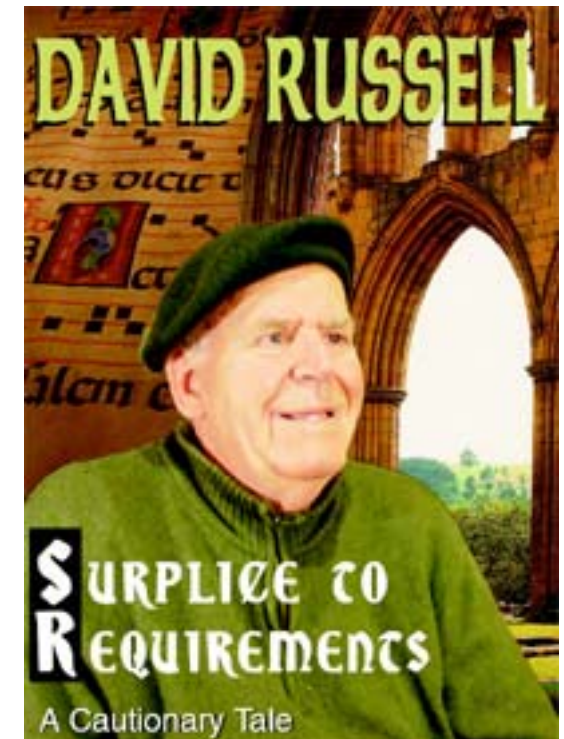
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**SURPLICE TO
REQUIREMENTS**

*A Cautionary Tale
by David Russell*



A SUMMARY

by Daniel Saw

This book, *Surplice to Requirements*, started life as a series of reminiscences by David Russell. With the intention of leaving a record of what was achieved from 1976 through to 2008. These are the "Glory Years" (as it is titled in the book) of St Mary's Cathedral Choir, under the musical direction of David Russell. It grew to encompass David's youth and later covers more recent events into which he was drawn.

From the story of "**Early Days**" in 1940's Australia, through to maturity and excellence in musical education. He has led many overseas choir performance tours and has received international recognition as an excellent conductor of choral music. In 1993, David was created Papal Knight of the order of Saint Sylvester.

Surplice to Requirements covers the **Australian adventures of a catholic childhood in the 1940s and 50s**, including Scouts and the early days of St Mary's Cathedral Choir. Then, after a successful tertiary education, the ubiquitous trip to Britain by Sea and the discoveries of Europe. He returned to Australia in 1967 when Fr Ron Harden still ran St Mary's Cathedral Choir.

The core, "**Glory Years**", covers the raising of musical standards at Sydney's St Mary's Cathedral under David's stewardship as Musical Director, culminating in the Sydney Papal Mass of 2008.

Despite these many great achievements, borne of a life dedicated to the **preservation of the rich musical inheritance of the Roman Church**, the final chapters are dedicated to a cast of characters beyond description. Many of whom can't be named, but their transcripts are quoted.

When it was alleged, by the DPP, that Mr Russell had witnessed a deplorable event, the Cathedral Administration was quick to sack him. Having proven his innocence by fact, and cleared his name through evidence; the task of re-employment remained.

Leading to Action in the Industrial Commission (NSW) where the Deputy President read a short summation of his findings, which included the wonderful words; ***"I find the termination of his employment harsh, unreasonable and unjust"***.

It's all here, up to and including the Court of Appeals. No wonder this last part is titled "**Outrage**".

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Cathedral Churches have acted as a strong point of interest for authors ever since Victor Hugo's *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*. The brooding presence of a large significant building as the background to tales cautionary or otherwise provides a perfect stage for the foibles of the human condition to display them for all to see. This story is another in the genre, with two exceptions. Firstly **the story is true** and secondly, it concerns a group of people intimately connected with the life of the cathedral, the members of the cathedral choir.

St. Mary's Cathedral, in Sydney, is an imposing landmark and has the unique benefit of being surrounded by parkland with views to the harbour. It is the mother church of Australian Catholicism and wears its Benedictine Heritage graciously. For unknown reasons there is a sense of confusion around the attempts to remove the Director of Music from his post. Certainly there is **significant evidence of a conspiracy of silence**. This leads to an extended court case.

Just like many Churches in the Western World, these last decades has seen it have to deal with issues such as Child Abuse, Authority, a Royal Commission and an engagement with modern civil legal practice that poses the conundrum "How is the law improved to better serve justice".