

IN TOUCH

NURSES' MEMORIAL CHAPEL
NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2008



P O Box 29 323 CHRISTCHURCH

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Chapel Committee send greetings and good wishes to all our members.

Over many, many months we have found it very difficult to find supervisors to open the Chapel on Sunday afternoons. At our January Committee Meeting, and after a lengthy discussion, we made the decision to permanently close the Chapel on Sundays.

Having tried for a year to find a Treasurer to replace Doreen Van Hassal, our very pleasant past Honorary Auditor, Ann Morrison, has come forward to fill the vacancy. We do appreciate the years of demanding service Doreen gave to the Chapel.

Jean Johnson has not fully recovered from her September 20th leg injury. Until further notice, Helen Cummack will remain in charge of the day to day management for afternoon supervisors. If you are unable to do your duty or going on holiday, please notify Helen of your dates. And if you require use of the car park, ring Helen—389 3318.

Over the past year we have lost some of our very valuable and loyal supervisors. The Committee acknowledges with gratitude the time you have so graciously given.

If you know anyone who would be interested in joining our band of supervisors, please ring Helen.

Early January the Christchurch Press printed the story about the removal of the Greymouth Memorial Pillars at Grey Main School. The article included the names engraved on the pillars. Two of those listed were victims of the "Marquette" disaster, 23rd October 1915.

NZ Medical Corps Pte B S Fricker
Nurse Hellena K Isdell, of Kumara

The Committee passed on this information to the Mayor of Greymouth, for which he was very grateful.

Book launch in the Chapel is planned for August, date yet to be set.

"ANZAC Nurses World War I"

Author Peter Rees of Canberra has been commissioned to write this history. He and his wife visited Christchurch two years ago; to visit our Chapel and Burnham Military Museum. He has given particular attention to the "Marquette". And be prepared for some new information.

He has also organised for the family of Marie Cameron, Matron on the "Marquette", to present the Chapel with her photograph and medals which includes the "Royal Red Cross". What a treasure!

The new stained glass window put in the Chapel, 20th September 2007, "The Nurse kneeling in Hagley Park" amongst the daffodils, remembers training days at Christchurch Hospital. It has been so much admired, and particularly by Christchurch nurses who have happy memories of spring in the park, and daffodils in jam jars in their bedrooms.

Lorraine Shannon
President

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, May 24, 2008, at 10.30 am

A short meeting will be followed by morning tea.

This is a good opportunity to catch up with everyone.

Changes on the Trust

The Nurses' Memorial Chapel Trust, which is responsible for the protection and administration of the Chapel, is made up of representatives of the Friends of the Chapel, NZ Historic Places Trust, NZ Nurses' Association, Returned Services Association, Canterbury Area Health Board, Civic Trust and up to two co-opted members. It in turn delegates the management of the Chapel to the Friends of the Chapel who over the years have done a really wonderful job in this capacity. The system works well and meets all the legal requirements.

Recently the Trust accepted the resignation of Bill Utley with considerable regret. Bill was one of the "originals" to sign the Trust document and then served on the Trust for all of its 17 years. During that time he rarely missed a meeting, was a valuable contact with the Area Health Board and always took an interest in Chapel activities. In Jennie Hamilton's words Bill was "always a very positive influence and we really valued his support".

The task of saving the Chapel was no easy one. If it hadn't been for the vigour and determination of the group led by Jennie and Fiona Ciaran, it clearly would not have happened. They were up against a Board that wanted to demolish the Chapel to make way for the rebuilding programme. At the time Bill had been on the Board since 1970, was chairman of their Works Committee and was bound by the Board decision. After the Minister of Conservation issued a Protection Notice to save the Chapel and the Board's plans changed, his readiness to serve on the Trust and his support since speaks for itself.

Bill's place on the Trust, representing the Area Health Board, has been taken by David Morrell who is a current member of the Board. For many years David served as a Hospital Chaplin and more recently he will be remembered as the manager of the Christchurch City Mission.

The two remaining "originals" still on the Trust are Jennie Hamilton and Pam Wilson. As Regional Officer at the Historic Places Trust in 1989, Pam worked hard to get the Protection Notice on the Chapel as quickly as possible and it was this move that ensured that the Chapel was left intact.

Mark Holdsworth
Trust Chairman