

# IN TOUCH

The Friends of the Nurses'  
Memorial Chapel  
Newsletter - December 2024  
[www.cnmc.org.nz](http://www.cnmc.org.nz)

Welcome members to 2024. The Christmas season has come around very fast hence this newsletter is a little late as we all navigate the busy season. We are looking forward to a restful summer, which is looking like the weather will be very hot and dry. We feel for those of you who live in the rural areas and the recent fires. The Chapel will be closed over the festive season from 22 December and reopening on the 8th January 2025.

## Events at the Chapel

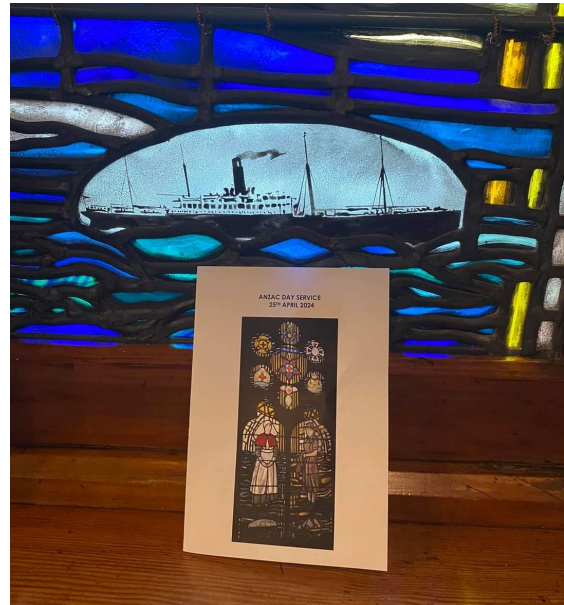
We have had a few weddings at the chapel this year which is a delight to see. Nursing Classes have held their anniversaries.

We had a Xmas celebration in November to thank the volunteers for the outstanding work you all do to keep the chapel open. This year members of the Chapel Trust and Friends Committee joined the celebration. Thank you to Sharon Minchington and Heather Symes who helped with the catering.

## ANZAC DAY

*2018 Dawn Service wreath – Cranmer Square*

The ANZAC Day Service was held at the Chapel this year for the first time since reopening in 2018. There was a great turnout with representatives from the



Defence Force, RSA, The Trust and Friends Committee and members. It was a very moving service with Cheryl English speaking, Rick Acland reading the names of the Nurses who lost their lives and the playing of the Last Post. We will be hosting another ANZAC Day service next year on 25 April 2025.

The white crosses were placed on the grass in the Chapel Garden the week before ANZAC Day.

## AGM

The AGM was held on May 11th at Manawa in Antigua Street. I was voted in as the new president of the Friends of the Nurses Memorial Chapel. Thank you to Pip Mason the outgoing President who has been at the helm for many years and has done an outstanding job. I have big shoes to fill!

## Christchurch Hospital Trained Nurses who Served in WWII and Jayforce

A project is underway to put together a resource folder with a brief biography and photo of each nurse who served. The folder will be ready for the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII (2 September 2025) and displayed in the Chapel.

If you have information and/or photographs of any of the nurses that you would be willing to share I would be very grateful. Thank you.

Andrea Grieve

[andregrieve@xtra.co.nz](mailto:andregrieve@xtra.co.nz)

## Museum News



Anne August, the great niece of *Marquette* survivor, Victor Peters, NZEF has kindly loaned his medals to the Chapel. A talented musician, conductor and music teacher, Victor was awarded an OBE in 1947. His wife was a Christchurch-trained nurse.

Alex Prentice's archival papers and eyewitness accounts of the **No. 1 New Zealand Stationary Hospital from 1915 to 1918** are on line on the Chapel's website:  
<https://www.cnmc.org.nz/resources/museum/prentice-papers/>.

This was made possible with generous help from Micrographics NZ and Neil Helliwell's expertise. We hope that scholars will find this archive more accessible.

Next year marks 80 years since the end of World War 2, so our focus is on a display to remember those many Christchurch Hospital trained nurses who served. Andrea Grieve is meticulously researching their lives, and has discovered many interesting gems. We hope that this exhibition will be of interest to schools as well as the families of those marvellous nurses. The project

includes our Jayforce nurses who served in the aftermath of the nuclear destruction from 1945 to 1947.

Ralph McNabb has kindly given the Chapel twelve copies of his late wife Sherayl's excellent book "100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing 1915 – 2015." As a Chapel fundraiser, the book is on sale for \$20 per copy. Our thanks to Ralph for his generous gift.

Sherayl McNabb also maintained an on-line national database with over 3,000 service women (mainly military nurses). Since her death, the website is no longer visible, but it has been archived by the Auckland War Memorial Museum. We have approached the RSA, hoping that this valuable resource can be restored.



Reunion Dinner of Christchurch trained nurses, Egypt, December 1940. From left: Sisters Worn, Hill, Crauford, Davidson, Dewar, Price, Gunn, Jamieson, Stewart, Coghlin, Reader, MacMillan, Fairweather, Fiering.

Special thanks to the museum committee for their contributions – too many to list but so appreciate. Museum update.

## Chapel Parquet Floor

The Chapel floor has sustained some damage from around the Sales table at the back of the chapel. Protector pads have been placed on the chairs. Just a reminder to be careful when moving the chairs that they are not dragged along the floor. Christchurch City Council for the outcome.

## Calligrapher

The struggle to find a calligrapher to continue with entries in our beautiful Memorial Book continues. Robyn Bisset and Pip Mason are working hard to get this sorted

## Memorial Book

Thank you to Lauren Harcourt who has spent a lot of time indexing in alphabetical order, the entries in the Memorial Book. The Index is in a Red Folder in the Vestry and a digital copy is now available on the chapel computer. This should make it easier to find entries when visitors are looking.

## Website

The website is fully operational for the purchasing of all resources making ordering easier. Don't forget you can also pay your membership via the website.

## Resources

We have a plentiful supply of tea towels cards, garden maps, tote bags and Anna Rogers book "Stand for All Time" available. We now have available ANZAC Poppy Brooches, which have been very popular. A big thank you to Andrea Grieve who initiated the poppy brooches. Andrea has a few knitting fairies who have been helping make the poppies. We will have these available for purchase on line next year.

## Heritage Week

Heritage week held in October was very successful. The 'Rose of No Man Land' was the theme. This was a tribute to WW1 nurses who cared for wounded and dying soldiers from the Front Line. Photographs and programmes of 1914-1918 concerts were on display and were set up by the Museum committee and Cheryl English. The 'Accord' String Quartet played live music and on the other days Chapel Organ Music and recorded music from WW1 played. A big thank you to all those who made this so successful.

## Canterbury RSA Donations

A huge thank you Trust Member Neill Price for organising donations from the RSA branches in Canterbury a total of \$1,000 is very much appreciated, to help with our operational expenses.

## Volunteers

We have welcomed 3 new volunteers this year and have said goodbye to some of our long serving volunteers. Thank you for all your service.

Our volunteers continue to support the Chapel by doing a shift once or twice every 4-6 weeks to enable us to keep the Chapel open 3 days a week. If you are a volunteer and not able to fulfil your allocated shift, please, using the volunteers contact list try to find someone who may be able to swap with you. Volunteers are all very obliging and will help if they can.

If you have a friend or know of someone whom you think would enjoy being a volunteer, please let me know. We are always looking for new people.

## Membership

We are always trying to build our membership, so if you know of any past or present nurses who would be interested in joining the Chapel family, please encourage them to do so. When renewing your subscription please ensure all your details are up to date for us to accurately maintain the data base. All membership fees can be paid through the internet banking or through our website. Please include your name and subscription amount.

Please confirm we have your correct membership details, and you consent to the Chapel sending you newsletters and updates on Chapel events by emailing [chapelfoc@gmail.com](mailto:chapelfoc@gmail.com)

The Friends Bank account number is  
Westpac 03 1707 0017417 000

Have a safe, enjoyable and festive season.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Steph Cook  
President