

The Friends of Old St Paul's Society Inc

Christmas 2023 Newsletter



Dear Friends,

We are looking forward to welcoming you, with your family and friends, to our **Annual Citizens Carol Service on Tuesday 5 December, 6.30 – 7.30 pm**. The Church doors will open for entry at 6.00 pm. This Christmas we will again be joined by players from the hugely popular **Hutt City Brass**, with director Matthew Stein. You can see more about the band in action here: <http://www.huttcitybrass.org.nz>

We are delighted that our choir will be **Marsden Collegiate School's premier choir, Altissimo**, with director Maaike Christie-Beekman. One of 24 choirs chosen from throughout Aotearoa to perform in the 2022 Big Sing Finale, Altissimo won a Gold Award and was commended for its passion and commitment. Marsden's **famous Hand Bell ringers** will also be playing.



Marsden Collegiate School's Gold award-winning Altissimo Choir

The service will be led by Revd Stephen King from St Peter's on Willis Street, with the Wellington City Missioner, Revd Murray Edridge, and will last about one hour. Children are especially welcome.

Our Carol Services have a long-standing FOSP Christmas tradition of bringing **pantry goods** to donate to families in need. This Christmas your gifts will go to the Wellington City Mission to support its Social Supermarket. Please bring non-perishable, packaged pantry goods as generously as you are able, so that we can send City Missioner Murray home with a full carload. And do consider including a special Christmas treat!

We are excited to announce that our **Friends new website** is live, so you can quickly check out what is coming up at Old St Paul's, read stories about the Church's history and people, and much more. Do check it out and let us know what you think: <https://www.friendsofoldstpauls.org.nz>

The Church is looking magnificent, with the Christmas tree and decorations going up and the Christmas shop now open. Come in to admire and check out the lovely gifts, decorations and cards in the shop. The Heritage NZ team is also in the process of refreshing the displays and installing new story boards which contain interesting details about the building and its history and special points of interest. You can find out what's happening at Old St Paul's and Heritage here: <https://visitheritage.co.nz/whats-on/friends-of-old-st-pauls-christmas-carol-service>

The Friends are thrilled to announce that **Old St Paul's original tenor bronze bell** is now on display in the belfry porch. Sent away for repairs in 1940, the tenor bell has been on a long, diverse journey.

For some years it served as the school bell for Kuranui College in the Wairarapa. On its return to Wellington it hung in front of St Barnabas, Khandallah, where it proved irresistible to passing locals and was eventually damaged and threatened with burial as a judder bar.

Fortunately, the bell was tracked down and rescued by a determined trio: Jane Aim, Terry Barrett, and Janet Raphael. It then underwent some years of restoration by former National Museum conservator Jack Fry.



What Jack achieved was amazing, as you can see from before and after pictures!

Last Friday morning the bell was welcomed back to the Church and the new exhibition blessed by Kaumatua Peter Jackson.

The bell is the only one surviving from a set of three that were installed in the Church in 1887.

Looking ahead to 2024, the Friends' AGM will be on Tuesday 19 March, starting at 5.30 pm.

We are delighted that **our speaker will be well-known writer and historian Kate Fortune** from the Friends of Bolton Street Cemetery. Many early Wellingtonians and parishioners of Old St Paul's lie in the Bolton Street Cemetery, so come along to hear some fascinating stories and enjoy a glass of wine with us.

Please share our newsletters with your family and friends. We would be delighted to have them sign up and join us so the Friends can continue our tradition of strong practical support towards the preservation of Wellington's most beloved heritage building. If you have received this newsletter by post or would like to receive our quarterly e-newsletter, please contact Carla at: fospmembership@gmail.com

Thank you for your support this past year. With the Friends' Committee, I wish you and your families a happy and blessed Christmas and summer break. We look forward to welcoming you at Old St Paul's on 5 December at the Christmas Carol Service.

Ngā mihi nui,
Elizabeth Kay, Chair

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