

Friends of Caroline Chisholm

NEWSLETTER

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Carole Walker's research has discovered new letters from Florence Nightingale documenting the nursing reformer's connection with Caroline Chisholm. It is the subject of this issue's lead article. The letters were written to another famous Victorian, who went on to become a social reformer like Mrs Chisholm.

Other positive developments in England are the refurbishment of the Chisholm grave in Northampton and the commissioning of a new stained glass window in Holy Sepulchre Church in the same town. Carole Walker supplied the

information about the two projects and the colourful images. As you will read, donations from Australia have been requested by the Holy Sepulchre parish. All friends of Caroline Chisholm are encouraged to donate whatever they can to these worthy projects.

The human interest story in this issue relates something of the O'Donnell family and of Mrs Chisholm's role in reuniting them. Despite her criticism of the bounty system and the character of some bounty immigrants, she worked to bring together parents separated from their children.

Florence Nightingale and Caroline Chisholm

Various biographies of Caroline Chisholm suggest that Florence Nightingale was her "friend and pupil". Such references, however, were not properly annotated and it has been extremely difficult to find original documentation that backed up the suggestion. Finding anything to substantiate a relationship between Caroline Chisholm and Florence Nightingale has always been tantalisingly just out of reach.

However, a chance reading of a book on Florence Nightingale by I. B. O'Malley - *A Study of her life down to the end of the Crimean War*, published in 1931, picked up a brief reference to Caroline Chisholm. This time the reference was notated. It referred to a letter from Florence Nightingale to Henry Edward Manning, later Cardinal Manning, dated June 28th 1852.¹ Tracking down Cardinal Manning's papers proved difficult. The papers were formerly kept at a church in London where, regrettably, over the years some of the papers had been destroyed by flood and fire.

Scholars like Shane Leslie and the Abbé Chapeau used some of the documentation in their biographies of Manning² and a small amount ended up in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster. Other parts of the archive were distributed to libraries in Oxford, Angers³ and



Photographic Reproduction
of Florence Nightingale (c. 1860);
image sourced from Wiki Commons.

America. Finding one specific letter was like looking for a needle in a haystack where part of it had been destroyed and part of it distributed to other areas.

But one should never give up — luck does sometimes give a helping hand! After following several different avenues of research the letter came to light in a library archive in America.⁴ In the letter of the 28th June 1852 Florence Nightingale wrote that she "went into

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Florence Nightingale and Caroline Chisholm (cont.)

the country yesterday to organize something for Mrs Chisholm". This does seem to suggest that Florence was helping Caroline Chisholm.

Another letter dated the 29th June 1852 from Florence Nightingale to Manning informs him of Caroline's address in Islington; gives the times that Manning may find her at her premises; that she had a meeting at the National Mission Hall, Applegate; and takes the liberty of enclosing a note of introduction for Manning to Caroline Chisholm. This certainly confirms that Florence Nightingale did indeed know Caroline. She would not be offering a letter of introduction to someone she did not know. It also indicates that in all probability Manning followed up Florence Nightingale's suggestion and went to meet Caroline at her home at 3 Charlton Crescent, Islington.

Together with Florence Nightingale's letters that were found at the Wellcome Institute in which Florence asked her mother to contribute a subscription for Caroline Chisholm, and Florence

Nightingale's letter, following Caroline's death, to Sir Harry Verney seeking his assistance in securing Caroline's pension for her daughter,⁵ Florence Nightingale's letters to Manning, at the very least, certainly corroborate and endorse the fact that Florence Nightingale knew Caroline Chisholm and occasionally worked with her.

1 Manning was received into the Catholic Church in 1851 and ordained a Catholic priest soon after.

2 *Cardinal Manning, His Life and Labours* by Shane Leslie, 1921 and *The Conversion of Manning — Reflections after an hundred years* by the Abbé A. Chapeau, vol I.

3 The Bodleian, Oxford, Chapeau Papers at the University of Angers.

4 Pitts Theology Library Archive and Manuscripts Department, Emroy University.

5 See *A Saviour of Living Cargoes — The Life and Work of Caroline Chisholm* by Carole Walker, 2009.

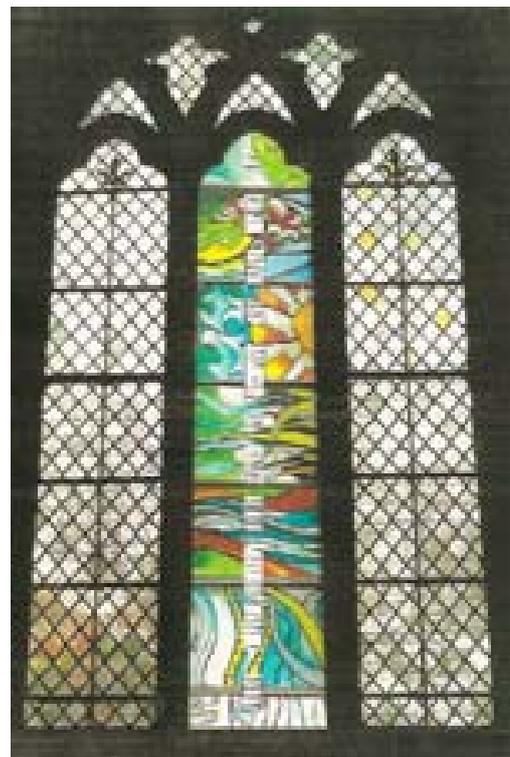
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Stained Glass Window and Refurbishment of Grave

Issue #7 of the Newsletter had a short article about the proposed new stained glass window commemorating Caroline Chisholm in Holy Sepulchre Church, Northampton.

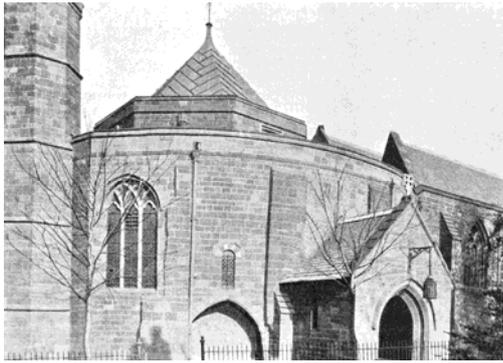
Students at Caroline Chisholm School in the town prepared some designs for the window, and these have been incorporated in the final design by Rachel Aldridge, a local artist. Just over half of the estimated cost of £7,000 has already been raised, part of it by the School. The parish of Holy Sepulchre would welcome donations from Newsletter readers and others wanting to support the project. (See details at the end of this article.)

Caroline was baptised in Holy Sepulchre's, and she and Archibald were married there, as were Caroline's parents. Also, her parents are buried in the Church grounds by the lych-gate. The round of the Church, which was completed in 1108 by Simon de St Liz, a returning Crusader, is based on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It is rich in history and faith.



This is an artist's impression of the commemorative stained glass window. It is to be installed by May, 2015.

Stained Glass Window and Refurbishment of Grave (cont.)



The original round of Holy Sepulchre Church is evident in this late 19th Century image. So, too, is the unknown photographer's shadow. The image is from *The Treasury*, January, 1905,

Installation of the new stained glass window is to be completed in time for the celebration of Caroline Chisholm in the Anglican Calendar on the 16th of May, 2015.

The monumental masonry on the grave of Caroline and Archibald Chisholm is in urgent need of renovation and repair. The grave is in the Billings Road cemetery in Northampton.

The need for a complete refurbishment may be seen in the colourful image. Behind and partly screened by the Spring flowering of daffodils, the plinth has settled unevenly. Above it, the marble monument with the inscription and the cross is leaning to the left. The marble needs to be carefully cleaned, so that the inscription can be easily read and the surface preserved.

If you look closely, you will see a crack in the cross, just below the arms. When the refurbishment gets underway, the cross will need to be replaced in the event that it cannot be repaired or should it break during the work.

Carole Walker reports that steps are now being taken to have the refurbishment carried out. The stonemason's quotation of £1,204 has been accepted, including the proviso that an additional £340 will be incurred if a replacement cross is required.

After consultation with the Conservation Department and other authorities, the paperwork was submitted to the Borough, which has approved the refurbishment application. The work, which is expected to begin soon, will take three months.

The overall cost for the refurbishment will be £1,544 if the cross must be replaced. This equated to AUD\$2,790 at the end of July. The unmet project cost for the stained glass window exceeds AUD\$5,400.

Those who would like to contribute to these projects can send a cheque to the Friends of Caroline Chisholm, PO Box 232, Wendouree, Victoria. 3355. A consolidated deposit will then be made to the English bank account. Your donation will be applied first to the grave refurbishment and any excess monies will go to the stained glass window project.

If anyone would like to make a direct deposit for the grave refurbishment and stained glass projects, the relevant details are:

HSBC account known as Caroline Chisholm Grave Refurbishment, branch code 40-30-24, account no. 33849066, in England.



Photograph of the Chisholm grave, taken in April, 2014, by a Holy Sepulchre parishioner.

Cradio uses new media in the Church's new evangelization. It has just released an interview with Clara Geoghegan about the life of Caroline Chisholm and how she changed so many lives and remains a prophet of the laity. Listen to and download the interview on: <http://cradio.org.au/talks-and-resources/>

Reuniting Children and Parents . . . for the Good of All

Martin and Margaret O'Donnell arrived in Port Philip aboard the Royal Saxon on 17 July, 1841. Their respective ages were recorded as 34 and 28. Both were farm servants from County Clare in Ireland, and each earned the bounty payment of £19 for the immigration agent who recruited them and paid for their passage. According to the ship's record, Martin could read and write but his wife could do neither. No children accompanied them.

In fact, they left at least four dependent children behind because that is how many were reunited with their parents through Caroline Chisholm's advocacy and facilitation. After a 110-day journey on the Sir Edward Parry, they arrived in Port Philip on 24 January, 1848. Their names and ages at that date were: Joseph 17, Francis 15, Bridport (aka Bridget) 12, and John 9.

The not-always-reliable O'Donnell family history identified three older siblings left behind — Michael, Patrick and Malachy — and another four children born in the colony [cf. "jasons family history" subweb of <http://sites.google.com>]. A number of colonial sources refer to a Malachi O'Donnell, the 1841 Census, undertaken in March, recording him (aged 21) and his wife and unclaimed letters remaining in the Geelong post office in 1842 for a person of that name and also for Martin O'Donnell. The family history did not mention these references, which might not, of course, pertain to Martin and Margaret's son of that (variously spelt) name.

The separation of Martin and Margaret from their seven children could at first glance seem to be the heartless outcome of the bounty arrangements. At the time they emigrated, childless couples and those with children of working age were favoured so long as the married male was less than 40 years of age.

Martin's stated age of 34 upon arrival ensured he avoided exclusion on age grounds. The prospects for selection by the agent would have been improved by denying parentage of the four younger children. Acknowledging the three eldest children would have effectively undermined his chances of selection, even though

one or more were likely to be of working age. To have included them, he would need to have admitted to a higher age and thereby be deemed too old to qualify for the bounty.

The historical sources located for this article indicate Martin was indeed older than his stated age of 34. His headstone recorded his age at death as 46, which, if true, made him 39 when he arrived in the colony. The newspaper accounts of his death by accident on 27 April, 1848 describe him as an "old man", when the contemporaneous use of that term, as best I can determine, was for people in their mid-fifties onwards. As well, there is uncertainty in the family history as to his date of birth and whether he had an earlier marriage.

Martin died after the horse he was racing ran him into a tree. Margaret died on 7 September, 1877, and her death registration gave her age as 69. This would mean she was about 33 years of age when she arrived in the colony, not the claimed 28. In their desire to emigrate to a better life in Australia, both lied about their ages and left their children behind. The precise reasons for the family's separation by emigration would not have constrained Caroline Chisholm. Working for the good of all, she made arrangements, while in the United Kingdom, for the O'Donnell children to travel on the Sir Edward Parry, along with another 71 children. After their arrival in Port Philip, they went to their parents' farm at Fyans Ford, near Geelong.

Martin and Margaret O'Donnell were not alone in their lack of veracity. Writing to the Colonial Office in London in 1841, the Land Board advised it was aware that some "Shipowners provided ineligible applicants with forged references of age, occupation and character" and that the Board "had no means of disproving the statement of the emigrant" [cf. R.B. Madgwick, *Immigration into Eastern Australia, 1788-1851*, page 159]. The Board could not withhold the bounty on suspicion only. Mrs Chisholm had also criticised the selection process and the general inadequacy of the bounty system.

Rodney Stinson