



**Futuna Chapel Trust
Annual Report 2025**

WELCOME TO OUR 2025 ANNUAL REPORT.

With tensions escalating around the world and national growth proving to be almost unattainable, 2025 has generally been regarded as a challenging year. It probably won't be remembered fondly by many.

Similarly, the Chapel experienced its fair share of woes.

A carefully planned and bespoke roof replacement requiring all the skills that architect (and long-serving Trustee) [Dr Peter Parkes](#) possessed was given the green light and Peter, together with the crack construction team at [L.T. McGuinness](#) and the extraordinarily wise oversight of retired engineer [Win Clark](#), swung into action in June 2025.

Little did we know that the Chapel was going to be our very own Pandora's Box. The need for a scaffolding system the like of which had never been seen in NZ before, the ubiquitous presence of asbestos, rotting timbers, long term leaks, spalling concrete and the roof slumping all conspired against us. The extended time to complete, with consequential cost increases, coincided with perhaps the most difficult time to raise funds to finance the project.

At the time of writing the roof remains shrouded in plastic yet, the end is very much in sight with a February/March completion now anticipated. Having had a look under the covers, I know the final result will be well worth the wait! The permanent shroud (Italian porcelain (origin, Fiorano Modenese – not from Turin!)) will shimmer and surely make this already stunning Karori landmark an even more special place to visit and admire.

We remain incredibly grateful to the patience of the Futuna neighbourhood who have endured flapping, clattering and banging throughout the year. We take some comfort in knowing that they will soon have an even more remarkable sentinel welcoming them home each day.

2025 IN REVIEW

At the beginning of this year, and shortly after I assumed the role of Chair, I set our trustees a number of objectives for the year which were lifted from our Strategic Plan. Here they are, with a report card to follow on our accomplishments.

1. Improve the visitor experience

- Development of engaging educational collateral for use by school groups and hand-held interpretive guides for use by trustees and volunteers at Open Days;
- Video productions capturing the stories of the Chapel and have them looping on Open Days;
- Music series – continuation of the Colours of Futuna;
- Discussion series – lectures/debates on a range of relevant topics;
- Lecture series – continue our fabulous architecture lecture at the close of the year.

2. Develop and improve relationships with key stakeholders

- Achieve closer relationships with mana whenua and the wider Maori community;
- Development of closer relationships with Roman Catholic Church representatives here and abroad;
- Whakapapa - continue to build on our strong relationships with the Scott and Allen families – completion of the John Scott Heritage / Biography together with the Jim Allen Heritage.

3. Roof replacement project

- Manage the approved project through to completion;
- Develop a Fundraising Strategy to ensure we meet the full cost of the project.

How did we go? I would give us a strong pass mark: B-. This grade would be considerably higher if our fund raising had been more successful. We are incredibly grateful to our many supporters for their contributions, and we will continue fund raising through 2026 to meet our contractual and financial obligations.

EDUCATION RESOURCES

Patron Gregory O’Brien added his design flair to work that trustees David Marshall, Elizabeth Cox and Nick Bevin had completed on producing age-related educational material for use by visiting school groups as well as the development of a visitor pamphlet (now available on our [website](#)). David’s team collaborated with Niki Fisher from Hutt International Boys School to produce these resources and we are delighted with the result. We hope you will enjoy them when we re-open in 2026.

We would like to acknowledge the ongoing contributions by [Rieger Print](#) to this project.

Trustee Elizabeth Cox (in addition to completing her magnum opus ‘[Mr Ward’s Map](#)’) has been continuing her compilation of oral history supplementing our understanding of John Scott’s architectural and family heritage. Elizabeth completed thirteen interviews with some of John’s Scott’s clients and builders who built his projects, mostly in the Hawkes Bay, and one in the Wairarapa.

The [Alexander Turnbull Library](#) has agreed to add these interviews (with the agreement of the interviewees) to their collection, to supplement their holdings of Scott material. There they will be available for future researchers and will add to the understanding of the chapel and John’s work.

To supplement this collected written material, the Trust over the years has recorded (mostly by video) many historical events, stories and lectures that enrich our appreciation and understanding of the Chapel and architecture generally. The cataloguing and production enhancement of these videos has been completed.

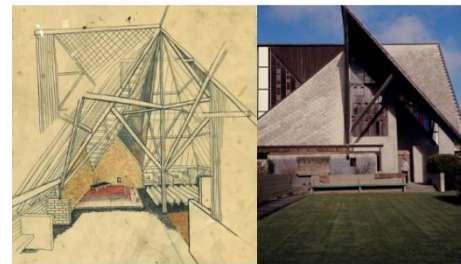
Each video will be accessible from our website from early 2026 and will provide a rich resource for not only our more casual guests but also those completing assignments and other research on this listed heritage building and Karori taonga.

We would like to acknowledge the considerable time and effort put into this project by Tony Donovan.

The [Warren Trust](#) has generously contributed to cover the costs of both the education and video archive project – we thank the Trust for its ongoing support.



Guide to Futuna Chapel



Welcome to Futuna Chapel

Nestled in the tranquil suburb of Karori in Wellington, Futuna Chapel is a remarkable fusion of history, art, architecture, and spirituality. Its design is a unique integration of Christian, Maori, and Pacific influences, creating a space that resonates with both cultural heritage and modern innovation. Whether you're here to explore its history, reflect in its serenity, or learn about its significance, we invite you to discover the stories behind this unique space.

Futuna Island and Saint Peter Chanel

Futuna Chapel takes its name from Futuna Island, a small and remote French territory in the South Pacific. Arriving there in 1837, Peter Chanel, a French missionary priest and member of the Society of Mary Order, lived on the island until his tragic death four years later. The first Catholic

martyr of Oceania, Peter Chanel was canonized in 1954 and subsequently became the Patron Saint of Oceania.

Located at the heart of the Futuna Retreat Centre, which was established in 1948, the Chapel was opened in March 1961. Due to a fall-off in usage of the centre, the Marist Order sold the Karori property to a developer—with the Chapel included—in 2001. Five subsequent years later, during which time the Chapel came close to being demolished, the building was purchased by the Futuna Chapel Trust, which has administered it since. While it is no longer affiliated with any religious group, the Chapel's purpose remains effectively unchanged to the present day. In way of its serene atmosphere and its symbolic blending of diverse cultural and spiritual elements, the Chapel's mission is to foster unity and understanding, to act as a bridge between cultures, faiths, and between the arts and architecture communities and the general public.

EVENTS

[Colours of Futuna 2025](#)

Despite having to close the Chapel in June to undertake the roof replacement, our Colours of Futuna Music Series was unaffected. Many varied sounds from around the world filled the Chapel each Sunday between April and June. Whether your taste is classical, world folk, up-tempo, baroque...there was a concert to pique all interests. As in previous years, we are extremely grateful to [Wellington City Council](#) for their support of this series.

Watch out for our 2026 series which will build on this highly popular and successful programme.



Klezmer Rebs

It was our intention to commence a new Discussion Series at the Chapel this year to provide a setting which would encourage and inform listeners on a variety of issues whether political, musical, scientific and at a local, regional, national and international level.

The Chapel offers a wonderfully intimate environment which presents a unique opportunity to host uplifting and thought-provoking presentations, conversations, debates and the like and there does not seem a more appropriate time to launch such a series.

While the roof replacement project put paid to this idea, we are considering launching this series in 2026 and would welcome your input and feedback on subjects of interest. Please email us on futunachapel@gmail.com to let us know of any particular subjects or guest speakers you would like to hear from.



Michelle Velvin

[Futuna Lecture Series 2025](#)

Futuna is well known for its annual lecture series typically presented by an architect of international renown. This year the Chapel collaborated with Australia's [Murcutt Foundation](#) and had the privilege of bringing to New Zealand Burkina Faso-born architect and Pritzker Prize winner 2022, [Francis Kéré](#).

Held at venues in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, Francis attracted the largest audience numbers for the Futuna Lecture Series since its inception in 2011 with in-person audiences totalling over 900 and the live stream watched by 100+ people in NZ, Australia, United Kingdom, USA, Japan and France.



Krakerjack

Media coverage of these presentations reflected the intense interest in Francis and his work with appearances on Jesse Mulligan's afternoon show on Radio New Zealand as well as coverage in [Architecture Now](#) magazine and multiple other outlets.



Trustee Nick Bevin with Francis Kéré at Old St Paul's Cathedral, Wellington

'Kéré reminded us (via a foray into a curated selection of his works) that architecture can and does have a role to play in soothing societal ills. He is the inaugural recipient of the Murcutt Pin awarded by the

Murcutt Foundation to recognise architects creating positive change by working with communities. His buildings display a sense of care for their communities and a refreshing reminder of innovation'

- Architecture Now Magazine

Francis was a true gentleman and his humility and sincerity made for a very moving presentation. The Trust were delighted to be able to donate 20% of ticket sales to the Kéré Foundation to support the work being undertaken in Gando, Burkina Faso.



Francis Kéré presents at Old St Paul's Cathedral, Wellington

The Futuna Lecture is a highly regarded annual event which wouldn't be possible without the generous support of our sponsors [APL](#), [AGP](#), [Dulux](#), [Roofing Industries Ltd](#), [Plytech Panels](#), [Big River Panels](#), [Warren Trust](#) and the Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington branches of [NZIA](#).

While [Metalcraft Roofing](#) ended its sponsorship with Futuna this year, but we are indebted to their twelve years of strong support for the Chapel. Thank you, Metalcraft!

[Annual Open Day](#)

We thank the owners of Alington House in Karori for making their family home available for what we billed as the 'Alington House Tour'. In April many visitors were able to view this example of the work of architect [Bill Alington](#) and were able to combine their visit with the haunting sounds of Gary Wilby playing in the Chapel in the Colour series.

[Italian Design Day](#)

Italian Design Day is celebrated throughout the world so why wouldn't a nation with a reputation for flair like no other, use the charm of Futuna Chapel to celebrate?! On 21 March the newly appointed Italian Ambassador, HE [Cristiano Maggipinto](#), hosted a talk and panel discussion at the Chapel. [First Light Studio](#) from Wellington and [Studio Akau](#) from Northland brought a fascinating perspective on how design and inclusion can help mend the 'fractures of humanity'.



We hope to make this a regular feature at the Chapel. I would like to thank trustee Carolina Izzo for organising this event in conjunction with the [Italian Embassy](#).



Trustee Nick Bevin thanks Studio Ahau for their presentation.



Johnathan Custance shares his presentation

[Three Joyful Homes](#)

While we were not able to host the regular Futuna event for the [Aotearoa Festival of Architecture](#) at the Chapel, with the kind support of the [New Zealand Institute of Architects](#) and the [Victoria University of Wellington Architecture School](#), the Trust was able to host a tribute lecture to the late Sir Ian Athfield. A different and interesting angle was taken to this architectural presentation by occupants (past and present) of three notable Athfield houses in Eastbourne and Hawkes Bay. The audience enjoyed the very personal accounts and memories of experiences from lives lived in what truly are [Three Joyful Homes](#).

Our thanks to Spencer Logan, the Jamieson family and Jonathan Custance for sharing their fascinating insights.

RELATIONSHIPS

Developing relationships with tangata whenua and the catholic community is an ongoing desire for the Trust. We acknowledge relational absence, a silence or gap that is itself part of the building's meaning. We have planned opportunities to progress this important phase of exploration for the Trust which we will effect in the coming year.

ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT

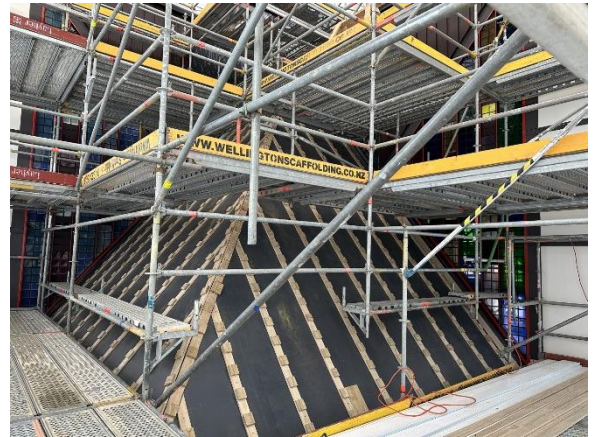
Our major 2025 objective was to manage the approved project through to completion and develop a fundraising strategy to ensure we meet the full cost of the project.

To put us in the very best position to deliver on these goals we contracted Wellington's premier construction company [L.T.McGuinness](#), who know the Chapel well having carried out remedial work over the years; and [Cocreate Fundraising](#), a professional fundraising organisation headed by John Henton.

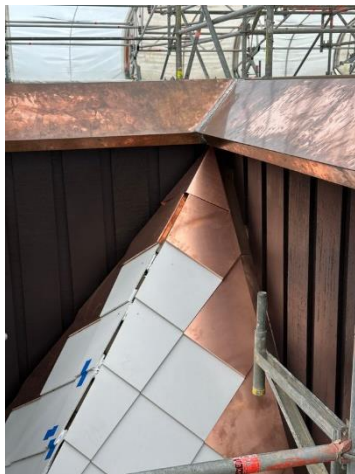
Our heartfelt thanks go to both these organisations who have been outstanding in their innovation, dedication and commitment to the project. Thank you!

The Trust remains excited about this project and while it has been challenging on many levels, the Trust is looking forward to its completion in March 2026.

We aim to re-open the building in April 2026 and to have completed our fundraising shortly thereafter. We can assure you that under its plastic shroud the Chapel has never looked better and is in fact improved upon its original construction with a result that will last for years to come! Dr Parkes and the team in consultation with the Scott whanau, has painstakingly researched and restored each original architectural detail, from the colour scheme to the overall materiality. Win Clarke's attention to each engineering detail has been of immeasurable assistance.



We have provided regular updates throughout the year on both the construction project and the fundraising campaign. Suffice it to say here that we are hugely indebted to those of you who have helped the Trust financially. We also cannot commend more highly the dedicated team at LTM which has gone well above and beyond; they are true artisans.



If reading this report jogs your memory to make a donation, we would be very, if not *eternally* grateful! Our financial reserves have been well and truly exhausted completing the largest project the Trust has embarked upon since its original acquisition. Any contributions, large or small, would be most welcome and can be made online at www.futunasfuture.org.nz



We will be making a final push to reach our financial objective in 2026 so watch out for videos that will appear on our website from none other than NZ Grand Designs presenter [Chris Moller](#) as well as architect and comedian [Tim Ross](#). These will complement the existing video of support by [Kevin McCloud](#).

Finally, some well-deserved thanks and acknowledgements.

Many thanks to our highly committed group of volunteer trustees who have been involved throughout another year. Special thanks go to [Dr Peter Parkes](#) for his outstanding management of the roof replacement project and to [Nick Bevin](#) for his unceasing fundraising efforts and for expertly organising another fine Futuna Lecture. Each and every trustee has made a fine contribution to the smooth running of the Chapel in many and various ways. In addition, the work carried out by our financial and marketing & communications manager assists us more than they know!

We farewelled our long-serving Patron and a trustee this year. [Chris Cochran](#), well known and highly respected Conservation Architect retired after eight years as Futuna Chapel Trust Patron. Trustee Barbara Fill also made a significant impact and contribution in her relatively short time on the Trust and we were sorry to see Barbara stand down in August.

The Trust was delighted when well-known Wellington poet, painter, author, curator, editor and long-standing Futuna Chapel trustee, [Gregory O'Brien](#), accepted the role as Patron. Thank you, Gregory, for your ongoing unstinting support of Futuna!

SPONSORS AND ASSOCIATIONS

We would like to acknowledge and thank our family of sponsors for their support: [AGP](#), [APL](#), [Alexander Turnbull Library](#), [Big River Panels](#), [Dulux](#), [FL Bone](#), [Heritage Studios](#), [LT McGuiness](#), [Molloy Joinery](#), [Riegers Print and Copy](#), [Roofing Industries Limited](#), [Warren Trust](#), [Plytech](#), [Wellington City Council](#).

The Trust continued its memberships and/or associations with • [Glenn Murcutt Foundation](#) • [National Gallery Victoria](#) • [Heritage NZ](#) • [Historic Places Wellington](#) • [Karori Historical Society](#) • [Petone Historical Society](#) • [Wellington Architectural Centre](#) • [Docomo](#) • [Lilburn Trust](#) • [VUW School of Architecture and Design Innovation](#) • [Nikau Foundation](#) • [New Zealand Institute of Architects](#).

Finally, this annual report would not be complete without reference to the passing of [David Kernohan](#) in April 2025. David was a stalwart of the Chapel and a founding member of the Trust who had only stepped down a couple of years ago. David was a giant and a gentleman. It is highly possible, if not probable, that Futuna would not exist today without the considerable effort and foresight that David displayed more than twenty years ago. A fine and wonderful legacy. Thank you, David!

Look out for our programme of events throughout 2026. We look forward to welcoming you back to Futuna Chapel!



Ian Pike
Chair, Futuna Chapel Trust

