



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for NZ Federation of Historical Societies

April 2008

Federation Annual Conference 4 April to 6 April 2008 Hosted by Helensville & Districts Historical Society

A very successful conference was organised by the team from Helensville this year, as their district catered for and hosted delegates and observers from 22 member societies of the NZ Federation. Proceedings began on Friday evening at the Masonic Hall on Kowhai Street in Helensville township with an official welcome and society reports by those attending, followed by a supper.

Saturday morning found Federation members breakfasting at the historic Helensville Railway Station's café, which included a look at the fascinating collection of railway memorabilia and exhibits on show. The large group



Helensville Pioneer Museum.

Photo credit: Kenneth Stringer

divided up to go on the Helensville Heritage Trail, and then had morning tea at the Pioneer Museum. Later that morning (what a packed morning it was!) an illustrated lecture on the history of Parakai was given at the museum's old Courthouse building. Parakai is noted for its domain, hot springs, and in the past its beautiful boarding houses.



President Neil Algar (*left*) and Immediate Past-President Robin Astridge (*right*).

*Photo credits:
Kenneth Stringer—left;
Editor—right*



After lunch at the Masonic Hall, staff from the Wellington office of Archives New Zealand made a slideshow presentation of the variety and scope of the vast amount of records held by the department in their offices at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. As they said that afternoon, it would be a very uncommon New Zealander who would not find records lodged in Archives New Zealand relating either to themselves or their relatives.

The Annual General Meeting then took place. A proposal to increase all fees across the board by \$10, with the exception of those societies with 20 members or less, was approved by the delegates.

Next issue due out June 2008

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the NZ Federation of Historical Societies Inc.

Our patron once again is Dame Anne Salmond.

The new committee for 2008-2009 is:

Neil Algar (President – Matamata)
 Kenneth Stringer (Vice President – Waikato)
 Neil Curgenvin (Secretary-Treasurer)
 Robin Astridge (Cambridge)
 Wynne HaySmith (Helensville)
 Jack Ingram (Tauranga)
 Noeline Lofthouse (Waikato)
 Terry Sutcliffe (Remuera)
 Lisa Truttman (Avondale-Waterview)

Terry Sutcliffe was welcomed as a new member of the Executive Committee. Robin Astridge stepped down as President and was heartily thanked by those present for his tremendous work. He will be engaged as the Federation's liaison officer, helping to establish contact and network links between the Federation and other historical societies in New Zealand.

Our financial reviewer is John McKay.

That very busy Saturday continued with a visit to Silverdale Museum, and concluded with an excellent catered dinner at the Masonic Hall, which included wonderful musical light entertainment and sing-along.

On Sunday, those of us who stayed on met up at the Helensville Museum once again to be bussed out to Parakai Wharf for a wonderful boat trip up the Kaipara River and out onto the South Kaipara Harbour, before returning to disembark at Helensville close to the museum. Commentary from Ngati Whatua and European historians made the trip fascinating, and certainly increased an understanding of the history of the district for those who came along. (I must add that your humble editor found having a cup of coffee with tomato-and-cheese crackers while on a boat on the Kaipara Harbour was a wonderful experience.)

The conference finally ended with a packed lunch at the Helensville Museum, followed by brief congratulatory speeches and expressions of thanks to Wynne HaySmith and the Helensville Society's team. They put in a lot of time and hard work to make the 2008 an acclaimed success. Well done, Helensville – the 2008 Conference will not be forgotten for some time to come.

The next conference, in 2009, will be hosted by Matamata Historical Society – and the year after that, in 2010, West Auckland Historical Society have offered to be our hosts.

Society News & Views

WANTED!

YOUR NEWS!

Send your news
to the editor for
the next issue.

Contact details on
front page.

Ashburton

The Ashburton Museum and Historical Society have operated a successful school holiday programme at the beginning of this year, and as at March were concentrating on the installation of a timeline to mark the 150th anniversary for Ashburton this year.

One of the newer displays at the Museum is commemorative china — items produced during the 1920s and 1930s to commemorate various happenings in the town. On show (as at March) are items depicting the Post Office, Methodist Church past and present, County Council building and the Domain.

Birkenhead

Birkenhead Historical Society are still talking to North Shore City Council about extensions to their museum. These extensions will involve moving the Guides building which the council owns further back. The Society first made their submission to extend in 2002 in another direction but this was rejected. The Society are making submissions again for this to be included in the local annual plan.

Mangere

The society celebrated its 25th birthday in 2007, and “in the heat of the moment”, as they told us at the 2008 Conference, they decided to write a book: *The Changing Face of Mangere, a Rainbow of Memories*. It has been written by members and

friends of the Society and compared the area when they came to live there and now. If you grew up anywhere in the greater Mangere area, you will find something to whet your appetite and bring memories flooding back.

The cost is \$15.00 plus \$1.00 p&p (total \$16.00) and is available from M.H.S. c/- Val Payne 58 Church Rd Mangere Bridge 2022.

Matamata

Much of the activity of the Society was carried out at the Firth Tower Museum. Volunteers worked in teams doing housekeeping, construction, machinery, archives, photographs, displays and on the planning for the proposed addition to the Mark Madill Shed. Recorded working bee hours were 1746, plus hours at other times spent working for the museum.

Planning for a project to enlarge the Mark Madill shed and install a properly displayed exhibition of our large agricultural machinery was advanced. Matamata Piako District Council as owners of the reserve and all the buildings had no objection, but the Society had not completed the formal plans and application for full consent. Fund raising will be required when final approval is gained.

Mount Albert

The Mt Albert Historical Society has been up and running for nearly two years now. We have an energetic executive committee ably lead by Mary Inomata. Our membership is now in excess of 130 members with numbers still increasing. We set up an annual events plan that basically covers one or two visits to a local place of interest, another visit further afield, one speaker in-house, a members' 'show and tell' and a Christmas cocktail party at Alberton House. We research local history stories and produce three newsletters every year. To illustrate: our next event will be a speleologist talking about our local caves and lava flows which will be very interesting as our area is covered in evidence of past volcanic activity. Associated with this, our newsletter is currently recording the shameful destruction of Owairaka, our local mountain. (Any one who has memories or stories of the ballast line which carted scoria down to meet the trunk line, please contact Carron at Rumbaugh@xtra.co.nz or 09 846 1313) We welcome new members and fees are minimal. If you would like to join, even just to receive the newsletters, phone Kathryn (09) 846 5227 or Susanne (09) 846 6569

NZ Fencibles Society

New Zealand Fencible Society Inc.
Celebration 21 YEARS 1987 - 2008.
Saturday June 28th.
Buckland's Beach Yacht Club.

Half Moon Bay.

All Members and Past Members welcome to join the celebrations.

See website for details.

www.nzfenciblesociety.org.nz.

North Shore

North Shore Historical Society is making contact with local intermediate schools with offers of book prizes in social studies and history. We already have a great working relationship with Belmont Intermediate School, with a cup and book prize awarded to top students.

Onehunga

The Onehunga Fencible & Historical Society have recently put a considerable amount of time into redeveloping their local heritage walks — and developing a successful one at the Waikaraka Cemetery. The Auckland City Heritage Festival, held in September each year, provided the incentive for the Society to update their existing walks information, taking into account the changes in Onehunga over the past 10 years. The Festival has been an inspiration for the Society to present Onehunga's heritage to a new audience each year.

Otahuhu

On 18th March our Society hosted a social meeting for the Onehunga, Avondale, Blockhouse Bay and Otahuhu historical societies. There were others invited but unable to attend.

The meeting was arranged by David Verran of the Auckland Public Library and the speaker was Judy Grieve of the Historic Places Trust (Auckland Branch). Judy gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Trust and its work.

Otaki

The latest journal published by the Otaki Historical Society has been favourable reviewed on National Radio, in the programme "Sounds Historical with Jim Sullivan". A new exhibit at the Society's museum, "Market Gardening in Otaki" has opened as at March. The museum address is 49 Main Street, Otaki.

Parnell

Parnell Heritage, with just over 100 members, are working on a range of activities. They place a lot of emphasis on their annual history competition for children, and have started an oral history programme. With support from Auckland City Council, a promotional brochure has been produced to attract new members.

West Auckland

President of the Society Trevor Pollard has re-

ported in the April newsletter that Waitakere City Council have assisted financially and gave permission for the iconic waterwheel beside Mill Cottage in Henderson to be pulled out from beside the creek over the Christmas period and repaired. More timber decay was discovered which required additional epoxy resin and two large steel plates to be bolted on for support, as well as repairs to eight paddles. All fixed, the wheel was lifted back by crane and reinstalled.

The Society are conducting a series of historical walks around the Henderson area, which are attracting considerable interest. In addition, to promote the Society and raise its profile, the idea will be trialled to hold traditional dinners staged in the historical setting of Mill Cottage. Numbers will be limited for each function, but it does sound like an interesting way (and delicious!) way to celebrate local heritage.

Our new Liaison Officer

From Immediate Past-President Robin Astridge:

At our recent AGM, held in Helensville, your Executive Committee sought and was given for a pilot programme of a Liaison Officer. I have been chosen to action such a pilot programme and have been charged to visit both existing Affiliated Societies and any other carefully selected Society/Group that has aims and objects that are similar to Federation's. The aim of the programme is to get our existence known over a wider area, offer assistance where we can, increase our membership and also that of *New Zealand Legacy* circulation/subscription. The intention is to write to those selected and set up a formal meeting time to discuss our aims and objects, publications and where we maybe able to help in local matters.

The areas of Hawke Bay and Wairarapa have been selected for the preliminary venture into the field. These were areas where accommodation will not be a major financial burden (great to have family scattered in these places!) and travel is by car alone.

A budget of \$500 was placed before your Executive and at the AGM and approval given to proceed. The budget was prepared on the basis of \$0.25 per estimated kilometre to be covered and \$100.00 for gifts in lieu of accommodation for the five nights that are expected to be needed to cover the areas designated.

Planning is well in hand for the venture that will take place later this year due to prior commitments (an extended overseas trip!). Will keep you all posted on outcomes!

NZ Historic Places Trust

Auckland area office

Public speakers seminars:

May/June 2008; Friday Lunch time

Bookings are essential.

Please register your place with the NZ Historic Places Trust Auckland office.

Phone 09 307 8896

Email infonorthern@historic.org.nz

Adam Wild — “Polar Heritage - Minus six degrees of separation”
Queens Ferry Pub - upstairs function room, Vulcan Lane, Auckland City, 9th May 2008, 12 midday

Denys Oldham — “Old Government House”
At Old Government House (Auckland University grounds), 23rd May 2008, 12 Midday

George Farrant — **Topic to be announced**
At Auckland Town Hall, 30th May 2008,
12 Midday

Richard Wolfe — “Kiwiana as Heritage”
NZ Historic Places Trust – Long Room Third Floor,
2 Durham Street East, Auckland City, 6 June
2008, 12 Midday

Cost: A donation or koha would be appreciated.

More info on the website www.historic.org.nz.

Otago/Southland area office

The NZHPT Board considered a proposal from the Otago/Southland Area Office to register part of the Dunedin Harbourside as an historic area at its meeting in Oamaru on 4 April. The office's proposal for registration late last year signalled the end of 6 years of research on the harbourside area by Trust staff, in consultation with the Dunedin City Council.

NZHPT Otago/Southland Area Manager Owen Graham said recognition, both locally and nationally, of the city's harbourside would be a real positive to plans for the future of the area.

It is widely understood that the Dunedin harbourside area was a front door to the world for the region in the 1860s after the discovery of gold in Central Otago.

The NZHPT Board decision on the Dunedin Harbourside historic area registration was confirmed on Friday, 4 April.