



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for NZ Federation of Historical Societies

June 2008

An old-time meal at Henderson's Mill Cottage



A lovely night out chatting about local history and tales from out of the past, while tasting and enjoying an old-fashioned meal — this is West Auckland's Heritage Dinner.

Margaret Black and Fay Pollard (above) along with Trevor Pollard and Jim Black (right—as Henderson & McFarlane, Henderson's pioneers) involve the guests at each meal thoroughly in the history and folklore of West Auckland. If you enter the Mill Cottage dining room without much knowledge of what it was like for the pioneering families of the district, such as the Corbans (and Trevor is an expert on that family's history in Henderson), then be assured you will know much more by the time you leave later that night.

Your editor can heartily recommend this as a different way to enjoy heritage — and a filling meal! Phone Margaret (09) 838-8789.



Photos:
WAHS

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

Auckland Regional Gathering 2008— Mt Albert Historical Society

Further information will come in the September issue of *Keeping in Touch* — but Mt Albert Historical Society's co-chairman Rendell McIntosh has confirmed that the 2008 gathering will be held on Sunday 9 November. Mark your calendars.

Helensville Heritage Day

The second weekend in November is promising to be a busy one in the Auckland/North Auckland region. The Helensville Historical Society has joined forces with the Helensville Historical Railway Trust, the Helensville Business Association, the Lions Club of Helensville, the Riverside Heritage group, the Rodney District Council and local iwi to promote and acknowledge Helensville Heritage Day. This year's inaugural one day celebration will take place on Sunday 9 November with plans for it to become an annual event.

More information to come in the September newsletter.

Society News & Views

Ashburton

President B T Stroud reported in the Society's May newsletter that "a series of projects are currently being developed to attract public attention to the District's features, to act as an educational extension to our core activity, and to assist with fundraising." More shall be revealed in upcoming months. Planning is also continuing for the new museum building.

Avondale Waterview

A local Auckland City heritage signage project which the Society has been involved with since 2003 has recently been concluded with the erection of one of (hopefully) two signs in the Avondale Mainstreet area. Unfortunately, the Society's name was left off the list on the sign of those who contributed towards the project (in our case, with research and information). Fortunately, a member of the local community board came to the Society's assistance and has put forward a recommendation that the sign be amended.

In other news, this year seems to be a bumper year for groups asking to hear heritage talks by the President, with seven so far, and bookings at the moment for six more up to October. The subjects have been far-ranging, from Avondale's Gardens to other area histories, and even the story of One-

hunga's zoo. The Society's Rosebank History project is set to begin in earnest next month. This will be a three-year project, initially focussed on the horticultural history of the area, but may (pending researchers being found) cover the industrial and general social sides as well.

The Avondale Primary School Reunion organised by Society members was a great success — \$500 donated from the proceeds to the school, and the remainder (around \$2400) banked ready for Avondale school's 150th anniversary in 2010.

Birkenhead

The prices to be gained for scrap metal have led to the theft of Birkenhead Society's copper piping under their museum two months ago by person or persons as yet unknown. Nearby Birkdale Primary has been hit as well, losing their brass door handles and fittings, and a war memorial in the area was completely stripped of metal. President Ray Johanson has spoken out about this to local media — and the Society have had to lump the cost of replacement plumbing. The vandalism to the war memorial has especially upset the locals.

Eastbourne

Progress is being made on their database project, as at April this year. "We are close to appointing a person to create a database to hold the catalogue of the Society's historical collections. The contract is for 6 weeks and it is envisaged that volunteer Society members will continue to add to the catalogue. This will be a long-term project. Our thanks go to the Hutt City Council for the generous grant which has enabled us to commence this project."

The Society is looking forward to having some of their records available on the Internet and having their own website.

Franklin

Congratulations to Franklin Historical Society, celebrating 50 years this year. "At our last committee meeting there was some discussion as to how we should celebrate it. It has been suggested that from 18th to the 23rd August we have a photographic display including some of the early settler families and historic photos of the local area. We also hope to include photos from the display that was used at the opening of Franklin The Centre." As at May the society hoped to be able to move into new rooms in the former Borough Chambers shortly.

Kaikoura

Congratulations to Kaikoura. The society will celebrate 40 years on 26th July 2008 with a day of celebration and fun at the Memorial Centre from 10am to 4pm.

Lower Hutt

According to the society's April 2008 newsletter, work continues on preparing a publication of the history of the City's street names, building on the earlier work *Lower Hutt street names* (1992). It will include Eastbourne, Petone and Wainuiomata for the first time, involving all four historical societies, and updates the information on Lower Hutt itself. The compiler is Alison Carey. The society's May newsletter announced that the title, decided after a competition (complete with chocolate fish prize), is to be *Valleys and Bays: The street names of Eastbourne, Lower Hutt, Petone and Wainuiomata*. The competition winner declined both publicity and the chocolate fish.

The Society also has a new logo, depicting the 4th Hutt Bridge with its Chinese willow pattern design, a tree, and a dog beside the tree looking out towards the bridge.

Mt Albert

Mt Albert held a recent successful event: a talk about the caves in Auckland. 70 people attended which was remarkable and showed how societies have to think laterally when getting speakers. Not only on traditional matters like people/places/old etc but natural resources. (Your editor attended and I must say it was an interesting presentation, complete with slideshow. Very well done!) Plans are underway to start an oral history recording programme in the area with equipment being purchased.

New Zealand Fencible Society

Congratulations to the New Zealand Fencible Society who will celebrate 21 years at their AGM on 28th June. According to President Don Gallagher: "This is a time to celebrate the distance we have travelled in researching our Fencibles, from those very early years to today's extensive records."

Onehunga

(My thanks to the society's secretary, Ernie Bacon, for preparing and sending the following to me. — Editor)

The Onehunga Fencible & Historical Society Inc, meets on the third Wednesday each month except December and January at 7.30 pm in the Blockhouse in Jellicoe Park, Onehunga. A guest speaker is invited each meeting. Visitors and prospective new members are free to attend and welcome. Contacts are: President—Colin Freland, (09) 636-9532, and Secretary — Ernie Bacon, (09) 634-1731. The Society have several walks organised and groups are welcome to take part in these by arrangement. One walk is around the Waikaraka Cemetery where many notable Onehunga and national personalities are buried.

Jellicoe Park contains three buildings which the

OF&HS is responsible for: the Blockhouse, Laishley House and a double-unit Fencible cottage (Journey's End). The last two are open to the public on the 1st and 3rd Sundays each month from 1.30 pm till 4 pm, the Blockhouse by arrangement. Originally this area was known as Green Hill, then later Green Hill Reserve and then Blockhouse Reserve. It became neglected and over grown with grass and weeds and the Mayor at the time, John Park, suggested a name change to Jellicoe Park in honour of the then Governor-general Earl Jellicoe. The park was duly cleaned up and footpaths and flower bed laid down. An archway made of stone from the Mt Smart Quarry was erected at the main entrance in memory of the servicemen who lost their lives in the 1914-1918 war. The opening ceremony took place in May 1923 with Earl Jellicoe present.

Other features in the park are a drinking fountain in front of the Blockhouse donated by Mr and Mrs Buchanan in memory of Daniel Neilson a respected resident and businessman of the borough for over 50 years; a children's play ground in one corner near the swimming pool; and a fountain honouring John Park. This was built in the 1950s.

Parnell

Planning is underway for a nice variety of events during the year along with the annual history contest. Parnell members recently put a lot of effort into completing a personalised letter drop to Parnell residents. This meant hand writing on each envelope, then stuffing a letter/brochure inside, and having people deliver the 2,800 envelopes. The big effort was very successful with over 100 new members signing up. It also meant that now every house hold in Parnell is aware of the organisation. They are still working on getting a web site underway. All going well that will start with involvement with a local school soon. They are also still picking up some interesting items on sale via Trade Me. Interestingly the price of old postcards featuring scenes of local places is slowly increasing.

Queenstown and District

In the Society's Summer 2008 issue of the *Queenstown Courier*, their President Brian Bayly made comment regarding how the limitation of the society's objects clause in their constitution, which in turn cannot be altered due to another clause specifically prohibiting any such change, may mean that "it is dangerous for the society to pursue any future planning issues." He raised concerns that there is a danger to the society, should it continue to take action over planning issues, with the exception of variations to the local District Plan. "The society's objects have been considered in depth at least twice — once by the Environmental Court where Judge Shepherd stated, 'There was no question that those having management of the society's

affairs had been entitled to lodge and pursue an appeal in its name.' It also recorded that issues raised by the society were outside the scope of the objects of incorporation and that any order for costs awarded against the society were a matter between the society and its members."

At the time of the latest issue of the *Courier* received, there were no indications that the society would wind up and try reincorporation with a new set of rules.

Silverdale & Districts

The society is currently celebrating their fortieth anniversary and the Pioneer Village in Silverdale is reported to be looking quite festive. The hall in the school house has a new red wallpaper, thanks to the professional skill of Paul Blackwell who donated his time free of charge. "It warms the old building up considerably." When the old paper was ripped down nearly two years ago the society's members thought that it would be replaced within a few weeks. Instead it has turned into a fairly major upgrade, with the old scrim having to be replaced with gib board, displays removed, replaced or renovated and repairs to the building itself. The South Auckland Charitable Trust supplied money for new carpet runners and the roof has a new coat or three of paint thanks to money from the Lions Foundation.

The society have also produced their very first society publication and in keeping with the theme it has a red cover. It is called *Why the Hibiscus?* and tells the stories behind local place names. It would make an excellent present for friends and relations with ties to the district - copies can be bought from the Pioneer Village or at Vera's stall in the Silverdale market.

West Auckland

Historical items, formerly granted to the Avondale Waterview society in 2002 from Rose Hellaby House, have now been returned by agreement with AWHS to West Auckland to add to the collections at Mill Cottage. A mural is proposed to be installed at the cottage's car park, "tastefully depicting West Auckland historical scenes" according to the society's newsletter.

Other Organisations

Kete Horowhenua

<http://horowhenua.kete.net.nz/>

An attractive bookmark included in a pack of member societies' newsletters forwarded by our Secretary Neil Curgenvin led me to explore an

online heritage database started last year, in conjunction with the Horowhenua District Council and Levin SeniorNet. "Kete Horowhenua is a community built digital library of arts, cultural and heritage resources for and about Horowhenua, New Zealand. Horowhenua Library Trust are responsible for the creation and ongoing development of the site. This Horowhenua Library Trust project is carried out in partnership with Horowhenua District Council and Levin SeniorNet, and was funded from the National Digital Strategy : Community Partnership Fund. You can read more about Kete Horowhenua and what we're trying to do at <http://blog.kete.net.nz>"

Auckland Heritage Festival 2008

Auckland City Council's Auckland Heritage Festival 2008 will involve more than 100 events throughout the city between 20 September and 5 October.

The Auckland Heritage Festival is a citywide festival, with an exciting, diverse and interactive programme of events and activities stretching throughout the isthmus and Gulf islands.

The festival aims to encourage people of all ages to celebrate, embrace and learn about Auckland city's unique natural, social and built heritage.

Popular events from previous years will return, such as the Heritage Auckland High Tea, Night at the Civic, open days and guided walking tours – and new events will be introduced to appeal to a wide audience.

This year's theme is "Sense of Place" – why we are in Auckland, how we live here, and why the city is what it is. All festival activities will link to the unique elements of our city, including the diversity of our communities, landscape and history.

Arts, Culture and Recreation Committee chairperson, Councillor Greg Moyle, says that with such a wide, varied programme, there really is something for everyone to enjoy. "Volcanoes, machines, islands, animals, buildings, fashion – there really is no other festival that offers such a rich, diverse array of events. The stories of Auckland will amaze and astound locals and visitors alike. Auckland City Council is once again proud to be able to offer people the chance to discover, experience and celebrate our wonderful heritage."

The Auckland Heritage Festival is on from 20 September to 5 October and is just one of more than 60 free events Auckland City Council produces each year. Visit www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/heritage or phone (09) 379 2020 for more information.