



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for NZ Federation of Historical Societies Volume 2 Issue 3 September 2008

**NZ FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES
CONFERENCE & AGM, MATAMATA
20 to 22 March 2009**

Hosted by Matamata Historical Society
“History brought to life”

Firth Tower Museum, Matamata. Photo: Elizabeth Dodd

Come to Matamata to learn about its fascinating past, the geology of the Matamata district, some Maori history, why Firth Tower was built, the story of large scale and later small scale farming, and the development of dairying and the racing industry in Matamata up to the present day.

Attend a welcome function on the Friday evening. Rise early about 5.45am to witness race horses training and swimming at the Matamata Racecourse.

Following the Federation AGM and the reports from the various historical society delegates and morning tea, there will be a series of talks about aspects of Matamata History. These will continue after lunch until afternoon tea is served.

In the later part of the afternoon take a guided tour around a heritage trail, as part of the proceedings, to see some of the historic sites mentioned in the addresses given at the conference earlier in the day. Visit the location of Wiremu Tamihana's house, still marked by karaka trees, and the place where the first butter and cheese factory in the Matamata district was built in 1886. Two new dairy factories stand here today. View the Matamata farms and countryside as you are driven along the route, the sites of earlier creameries and schools and the spectacular Wairere Falls. See the memorials on the

Next issue due out December 2008

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side of the road which commemorate the 1963 Douglas DC-3 Skyliner crash and the 1970 Kaimai Tunnel collapse before arriving back at the Firth Tower Museum.

On Saturday evening enjoy dinner and entertainment in a restaurant built as a replica of an early dairy factory at Waharoa. There will be lots of time to talk to other delegates and visitors.

A barbecue breakfast at the Firth Tower Museum will be the first attraction on Sunday morning. After that, experience an open day at the Firth Tower Museum. Drink billy tea made by Captain Rob under the shade of a willow tree next to the woolshed and look at the Museum displays, which illustrate the talks of the day before. These include the early 19th century homestead with the story of the McCaw family and a cabinet displaying some Firth Family memorabilia; dioramas in the Firth Tower depicting the original Firth Homestead with surrounding farm buildings, and Firth's river port at Stanley Landing. Climb to the look-out at the top of the Tower for the view over the countryside; see the display stands showing farming in the Firth and McCaw eras in the Firth Shed, the extensive farm machinery collection, and the many other historical attractions of the museum.

After lunch stay longer to enjoy the many other attractions of a country museum open day or take an optional visit to the famous Hobbiton village used in the movie set of "Lord of the Rings", or stay an extra day to experience this interesting visit. Remember that "The Hobbit" is going to be filmed at this same venue in the near future.

Enter in your diary now.

A registration form and programme will be inserted in next Legacy.

*For further information contact Colin Kemplen, email: thekemplens@xtra.co.nz
or Neil Algar, email: neil.algar@xtra.co.nz*

The latest news to hand about the Auckland Regional Gathering hosted by Mt Albert Historical Society is ...

Date : Sunday 9 November 2008

Venue : Alberton, 100 Mt Albert Road, Mt Albert. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the lovely old house, built in 1863, being open to the public. Refer web site www.alberton.co.nz for further details about the house.

Programme includes : A hosted walk in the morning viewing the historic St Lukes graveyard & church. After the walk participants will be able to bring their lunches to Alberton and enjoy a picnic lunch within the grounds or on the veranda.

After registration at 1pm and official welcome at 1.30 will be a departure from usual formats, in that Mt Albert Society will hold an education afternoon from 1.45 pm to 3.30, on the topics of computer programming, web site developments and archiving.

A chance to "mix and mingle" with fellow representatives and enjoy afternoon tea refreshments will start at 3.30-4.30pm .

Cost to attend : To be confirmed. Our goal is

Auckland Regional Gathering: Mount Albert November 2008



to keep the fee to a nominal amount, anticipated to be \$8-\$10pp

There may be a limit to two people per historical society able to attend, due to venue seating limits at Alberton. MAHS are happy to assist with bookings at the nearby Mt Albert Lodge Motel should any "out of towners" require accommodation.

More details coming soon in your mailbox. For further details contact: Rendell McIntosh, ph 09-846 7367.

Email alberton@historic.org.nz

Helensville Heritage Day

Helensville's Heritage Day will be celebrated on Sunday 9 November. 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 the event.

A Historical Home and Garden Tour including the Helensville Post Office promise to be among the highlights. Another treasure will be "Te Makiri" a gothic style farmhouse built in 1866 for Judge John Rogan.

The programme starts at the Helensville Museum where tickets will be available. The fee of \$10.00 per adult or \$20 per family will cover all activities for the day.

The exhibit's room at the Railway station will be



open and planners hope for a train from Auckland that day.

It is hoped that Helensville Heritage Day, a community event which welcomes all who are interested in the history of the fascinating Helensville area will become an annual event

Photograph above from the collection at the Helensville Museum

Federation Executive Committee visit to ... Waiheke Island 4th to 6th July 2008

Waiheke Island is a beautiful place that is situated in the Hauraki Gulf off the coast of Auckland. It has a rich history and members of the Waiheke Island Historical Society are only too pleased to show fellow historians around their community. The committee of the New Zealand Federation of Historical Societies has a policy of organising events which include member societies. However, some societies are in areas, which are too remote to hold mass member functions. Nonetheless, these societies need to feel part of the Federation, so the committee has decided to hold at least one of its meetings per year in these regions. This enables it to meet members of the local society and to appreciate the work that these people put into preserving their heritage. Hence, the committee organised a visit to Waiheke Island from Friday 4th to Sunday 6th July. The committee of the Federation would like to thank Judith Phillips for acting as our guide and other members of the local society, who gave us lunch and showed us through their historic village.

Our first major destination was Casita Miro Winery, owned by friends of Neil and Mrs. Algar, so we were treated to 'an Algarian Spanish Winter Table.' This consisted of wine tasting and Spanish dishes.

On Saturday, the weather turned to rain and became worse throughout the day. Nonetheless, we

were able to enjoy Whittakers Musical Experience. Lloyd and Jean Whittaker demonstrated many antique instruments, which included: harmonicas, concertinas, piano accordions, harpsichords, pianos, pianolas and organs. One of the highlights was hearing Paderewaki's 1897 nine-foot Bechstein concert grand piano. Whittaker's museum is well worth a visit, especially by anyone who is interested in music. The rain did not cease through the day, so after lunch we transferred our committee meeting to Saturday rather than Sunday.

Sunday produced better weather. The committee were very kindly granted permission by Jeanette Norwood, proprietor of Larkfield in Oneroa (where Lisa Truttman stayed during the weekend) to use her computer to view the work-in-progress on the Federation's website. Many thanks to Jeanette and her husband Brian for their hospitality to the committee that morning. Saying goodbye to Lisa who left the island early, the rest of us drove around the island after collecting our guide, Judith Phillips. We stopped at the pioneer cemetery, then Man-o-War Bay, and next came a delicious lunch for us prepared by Betty and other members of the Waiheke Island Historical Society committee. After lunch, we had time to view the historic village. Finally, we left the museum, but visited a local toy collection prior to our departure. The return trip on the car ferry was rough with waves spraying salt water onto the vehicles. In fact, we had to put the van through a car wash on the way home. Waiheke Island is worth a visit and the local society will welcome any group to the area. Hence, I recommend that member societies in the Auckland region plan a weekend visit to the island.

Society News & Views

Most of the Federation member societies (and NZHPT) in the Auckland City area will be involved with events taking place during the Heritage Festival there from 20 September to 5 October. For more information, go to: www.aucklandcity.govt.nz, and click on the link for the festival.

— Editor

Cambridge Historical Society

Society members and staff from Te Awamutu museum have been hard at work cleaning and repackaging items ready for the new storage. The Society's computers are now on broadband, "nearly up and running with all the bells and whistles."

"We have a new security system," the Society advise in their August newsletter. "The lad who helped install it found the old system which was installed in 1984 and said, 'Gee, I wasn't even born then.'"

Eastbourne Historical Society

The Society advised in their August newsletter that the first steps have been taken to computerise the records of its unique collection of Eastbourne and Bays history. The collection has evolved over many years, thanks to the dedication of Society members, and includes photographs, postcards, books, plans, oral histories and ephemera.

Epsom & Eden District Historical Society

The Society's book *The History of Epsom* is back on sale. Their website www.epsom-eden.org.nz/sales.asp for further details.

Morrinsville Historical Society

It was reported in the *Waikato Times* in early August (thank you, Robin Astridge, for sending the clipping) that the Society "is attempting something it says no other town in New Zealand has ever done — digitally documenting the 11,000 people who live there ... Morrinsville is celebrating its 100-year anniversary as a town this year." Everyone will be photographed, and the town's businesses are helping to create a "then and now" history of Morrinsville.

Otahuhu Historical Society

From their annual report: Owen Boscawen, who had the idea to form a historical society, passed away this year, aged 82. He was the second president, a life member and patron for two years before resigning because of ill health.

On Wednesday 4th June, Wilma and Bruce Madgwick represented the Society at the opening function of **Walsh Brothers to War Birds**, a project between the Papakura Historical Society and

the Auckland Museum. The Walsh Brothers flew their flimsy bi-plane on an initial flight in Manurewa on 9th February 1911.

Society member Heather M. Murdoch-Hall was a member of the Jubilee Committee to celebrate the 150th existence of what was originally called the Otahuhu District School in August. This was a major milestone in the school's history.

The celebrations got off to a fine start on Friday morning the 8th August 2008 with performances by the school's cultural groups. To commemorate the 150th Jubilee a 'Peace Garden' was constructed and a plaque was unveiled at the site by the Hon. Mark Gosche. Another plaque on the site of the Fencible well, near where the Headmaster's house had been, was also unveiled.

Otaki Historical Society

The society's museum is closed at present for renovation, but was expected to be open again from Saturday 9 August with a photographic exhibition about the making of Griffins' biscuits at their Lower Hutt factory. This travelling exhibition has been very well received elsewhere, and it is expected to be of interest to Otaki people, many of whom have worked at Griffins.

Papatoetoe Historical Society

Congratulations to Papatoetoe Society for their 20th birthday on 20 September 2008.

Parnell Heritage

Protecting Auckland's character zones: Auckland City Council recently wrote to 13,000 households seeking feedback on a proposed modification to Plan Change 163. The Plan Change provides protection for Residential Zone 1 and 2 properties built before 1940. The Council are looking to remove the demolition controls from around half of the Residential 2 properties, in response to a legal appeal against these controls by three lawyers and the NZ Heavy Haulage Association.

A campaign to keep the protection has been initiated by Federation member Parnell Heritage, with support from Remuera Heritage and several other Auckland historical societies. More than 750 submissions were received by the Council, with most wanting the protection to remain. Parnell Heritage has recently been granted legal status in the appeal and will keep us informed of developments.

Letters of support from other historical societies would be very welcome - please email Kate Tolmie Bowden on tolmie.bowden@xtra.co.nz.

Patea Historical Society

The Society held their 40th Annual General Meeting in August. The President, Jim Baker,

reported that the Society formed in October 1967 after a meeting convened by the Patea Public Relations Committee. This year the Society has been able to recover and restore machinery from the local freezing works site for create a display commemorating 100 years of the freezing industry in the district, sited on the main street.

The Society has also pledged money from its funds towards the redevelopment of the South Taranaki District Museum.

Petone Historical Society

The opening at Trentham Military Camp (in June) was a great success. Two talks were arranged, the first by the Camp Commander who spoke on the history of Trentham Camp and the second by the invited speaker, noted military Historian Peter Cooke. Peter gave an outstanding address on defence in the past.

The Society's display on the Petone Naval Artillery Volunteers went up in the Library on Tuesday 10 June.

Porirua Historical Society

In July, Porirua Society reported that their president, Tony Cross, attended the annual General meeting for the friends of Porirua Hospital. After the meeting he had discussions and good rapport with some of their officers. They hope to work a lot closer together in the future and provide some support for their preservation efforts.

The Society put in a submission supporting Ngati Toa in their objection to the development of the property at 5 Sunset Parade, Plimmerton. The main cause for objection is the excavation that has to be carried out to create space for car parking under a two-storey building on a site that is of both historical and archeological importance, plus spiritual significance to the Tangata Whenua.

Remuera Heritage

Remuera Heritage is having a busy year in 2008. Considering that we were incorporated in April last year we have grown from strength to strength with numbers of members, involvement in Auckland City Council Planning and Zoning issues, including particular properties subject to Resource Consent for demolition, and general meetings and events. Currently the major Planning issue is Plan Change 163 which is subject to challenge in the Environment Court. Subsequently the Council sent residents of Zone 2 maps showing areas of houses for which they were proposing Resource Consent would not be required to demolish the current pre 1940 house. Remuera Heritage was active in 'spreading the word' that residents should make a submission to the proposed amendments. Mayor John Banks hosted a workshop on August 18th for representatives of organisations

who had made submissions, and one of our Committee is on the smaller working party which resulted from this.

The programs last year and this year have been consistently varied and interesting to both members and visitors with talks on heritage architecture, colonial furniture, archival film footage, memorabilia and story sharing, outdoor walks and visits to Remuera's many wonderful volcanoes.

NZ Film Archives put together footage of old Remuera and Newmarket movies for us, (some of which predated sound), and showed this at a very successful and interesting film show. Many in the audience were exclaiming at the trams which they had been used to, and the 'I remembers' flowed as scenes involving the old shops, houses, fashions, early vehicles were shown.

Silverdale & Districts Historical Society

The Society have published a new book by Robin Grover called *Why the Hibiscus?: Place names of the Hibiscus Coast*. "This is not just a list of names," according to the Society. "Robin has linked the areas together with a short history and anecdotes of the early settlers. It is illustrated with photos from the Society's photo collection. Copies are available from the Society at \$15 each (plus \$2 p&p). Cheques should be made payable to the Society, and sent to P O Box 27, Orewa.

West Auckland Historical Society

The Society inaugurated their *West of Eden* historical journal in July, and produced a very attractive publication celebrating the history of West Auckland. Further issues will be produced on a regular basis. Cost for non-members of the Society is \$9 per issue.

Other Organisations

History collecting at Pt Chevalier, Auckland

The staff at Pt Chevalier Community Library in Auckland are seeking reminiscences of life in Point Chevalier during the 1930s-1950s - including memories of days at school, radio plays, methods of transport, the Ambassador Theatre, fashion and shopping. These will be collated and turned into books available from Pt Chevalier Community Library for loan or purchase.

Contact:
judith.armstron@aucklandcity.govt.nz
phone (09) 374-1322 (press 0)



North Shore City's 2008 Heritage Week includes over 40 events that will take place across North Shore City. Taking place between the 1st – 9th of November, Heritage Week promises to be an amazing time to learn more about, become more involved with and most importantly to celebrate our North Shore heritage.

Events scheduled to take place include Historical Movie Nights at the Lake House in Takapuna. A gathered array of short films will seemingly transport you back in time with stunning historical footage accompanied by a local historian and a live pianist. Other included events range from Heritage Homes Tours, Heritage Walks, Tea Dances and Historical Readings by local artists. *Civic Sculptures on the North Shore* will also be taking place to commemorate our shared Heritage on the Shore.

To add to the heightened excitement of this year's celebration, North Shore City has in the works a captivating production that will be taking place at 7.30pm on November 9th at the Bruce Mason Centre in Takapuna. 'Here Now, Heritage Tomorrow' - A musical journey through time' promises to be a spectacular end to a week centred on remembering our past as we look to the future. It will celebrate and showcase all things heritage through music, dance, theatre and fashion and will also include the game show Name That Tune.

For more details on North Shore City's 2008 Heritage Week call Cassie Tilby at (09) 486-8668 or visit our website after the 1st of October: www.northshorecity.govt.nz/heritageweek.

**NZ Historic Places Trust news
from www.historic.org.nz**

Clark's Mill Rumbles On

A small and dedicated group of Oamaru heritage volunteers have had their commitment and vision endorsed in July by a surprise grant from one of the most heritage-aware councils in the country, the Waitaki District Council. The Clark's Mill Restorers are the recent recipients of a \$5000 grant made

by the District Council in wrapping up its community support funding for the period in question. The money is to be spent on providing information panels and interpretative displays to Mill visitors, so that they can tour the mill without the need of a guide.

Clark's Mill was part of the early Totara Estate and both are located respectively 12 kilometres and 8 kilometres south of Oamaru. It was from Totara Estate in 1882 that the first shipment of frozen export meat was sent to Britain, establishing New Zealand's economic direction for the next century.

Archaeological loss irreplaceable

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust was pleased in August that Whakatane District Council has owned up to its mistake, and today pleaded guilty to unlawfully destroying archaeology at Puketapu Pa Scenic Reserve - but says that's only small consolation.

"Puketapu pa is part of a wider, nationally significant heritage landscape of 21 defensive pa perched on the escarpment overlooking the Bay," says the Historic Places Trust's Lower Northern Area Manager, Gail Henry.

"The earthworks carried out by the Council in 2007 were in disregard of the Historic Places Act, and destroyed forever valuable archaeological information from one of the country's most treasured heritage landscapes".

Pilot's House Gets Historic Recognition

An important survivor of early New Zealand colonial history, the Pilot's House, near the mouth of the Wairau River in Marlborough received top recognition in July by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust with a Category 1 registration.

**Looking for the history of St James
Anglican Church, Mangere Bridge,
Auckland**

St James Anglican Church in Mangere Bridge will celebrate 150 years on 25 July 2009. All those who had associations with the church during its long history are invited to help provide information on its story.

- Were you married there?
- Did you attend Sunday School, Bible Class, Guides or Scouts there?
- Were you confirmed there?
- Did any of your family have a funeral service there?

Any information, please contact Alan Bray, phone (09) 6366260.