



# *Keeping in Touch*

Newsletter for NZ Federation of Historical Societies    Volume 4 Issue 2    April 2010

[www.nzhistoricalsocieties.org.nz](http://www.nzhistoricalsocieties.org.nz)



## **NZ Federation Conference and Annual General Meeting**

**19-21 March 2010**

**at West Auckland**



More inside. Photographs on this page, courtesy Bill and Barbara Ellis (Torbay Historical Society).

### **NZ Federation of Historical Societies Publication Loans Scheme**

Don't forget: if your Society needs that extra bit of help in ensuring your research book makes it out there before the public, the Federation does have a loans scheme to assist. Contact our Secretary Neil Curgenven, PO Box 1625, Paraparaumu Beach 5252, or email:

[ncurgenven@gmail.com](mailto:ncurgenven@gmail.com)



### **Calendar 2010**

**May through August 2010**

**Ka Takata Whenua o Waihao  
Exhibition, Waimate Historical  
Museum**

**June**

**Wellington Region Promotion  
Council's Heritage Month —  
Heritage and the Environment**

**18 September –3 October**

**Auckland City Heritage Festival**

Next issue due out July 2010

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



## NZ FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC

### Annual Report for 2009

*Presented at the 39th AGM, held 20 March 2010, by President Neil Algar.*

The Federation started the year with 84 member societies and ended with 84. Despite the efforts to recruit more members there are many who still do not see the advantage to themselves or to the sector to be worth the trouble. A major difficulty is in the length of New Zealand, and attempts to consolidate the land mass are proving unsuccessful short term.

Activities during the year included:

**Development of the website**, which is the place more and more people look to for information. It includes details of the Federation itself and its activities but has numerous linkages with an increasing number of member societies and events all over the country. For those who do not have their own websites, because it has seen the advantages to members the Federation has made arrangements with Dash Design for their assistance at a moderate cost.

**NZ Legacy** has had two issues and provided interesting reading, with an intention for one issue each year to be on a particular theme and one general. Each also included some information about the Federation's activities and members have been encouraged to submit material to the Editorial Board. *Legacy* is published for members' benefit.

**Keeping in Touch (KIT)**, the newsletter, efficiently produced by Lisa Truttman was brought out more frequently and is aimed much more to give up-to-date information on what is happening.

**The Publication Scheme** which was stated a few years ago was used by several members. Although it originally was intended to advance short term finance to members where needed, in fact the useful advice offered has helped some members to organise their own funding without a loan. A great service from Neil Curgenven.

**The National Conference and AGM** was held in March at Firth Tower Museum, Matamata. A

good attendance enjoyed the weekend but suffered as always from the previously mentioned problem of distance which prevented many members from attending.

Over time **visits** are being made to areas of the country where there are societies that are not members but for their and the Federation's benefit we would like them to join. Past President Robin Astridge, the Federation's Liaison Officer, is doing this, but this year as President I attended and addressed the Northern Museums' Association AGM at Dargaville and appreciated the number of societies and their enthusiasm.

A submission was made to the Minister of Land Information on a government policy relating to **the ready availability of cadastral maps held by LINZ**. The matter was brought to the Federation's attention by a non-member, and the submission was made on the principle that information of all sorts held by a government department should be easily accessed by, in this instance, someone doing historical research. The Federation committee is prepared to make representation where it appears the needs of researchers, whether members or not, are not being met. The reply was not entirely satisfactory in that although digitisation and improved archiving should make it easier the complainant has found the system increasingly difficult and potentially expensive. The Federation hopes the Minister has taken the point.

**Regional Conferences** have been continuing during the year, organised regionally in the name of the Federation and they brought members together in a way more practical than does a national conference. In the regions events and visits were organised but they are not listed in this report.

While many of the Federation's activities related to events in particular locations, such as visits to historical sites and regional or national conferences, most of the important work listed in this report is in matters involving communications not dependant on physical attendance.

There is no doubt that historical societies and museums generally, but especially the large number of the smaller organisations we represent, do not attract the support they need in recording and preserving the history of the country. Communities value the work of historians and historical societies and appreciate being able to refer to the material they archive and the books they publish as well as to the articles they write for newspapers. Of course

insufficient funding of historical societies is always the greatest difficulty - it is a national characteristic that we want the best but are less ready to pay. However, although politically 'think big' has had a bad name, it is the big museums that get the lion's share of capital funding from government, as they did even when funds were not as tight as at present. It is only when a large group speaks out on important issues that central or local government take notice, In the past, an attempt for government funding to assist the many small units the Federation represents were entirely unsuccessful which is one of the reasons the Federation is trying to recruit more members.

Although this report has accounted for some of the problems of historical societies it can't list the amount of work being done and the pleasure their members take in the work they do. It is refreshing to move among them and see the time and trouble taken in observing, recording collecting and preserving. Even though much that could be done still has not been done there is a great deal of satisfaction and pleasure in it, and no-one is bored.

Thanks are due to members of the committee who although they are busy in their own lives and in the work of their societies have spared the time and effort to bring their wide range of abilities to manage the affairs of the Federation. It is a pleasure to work together as a team, and on their behalf I present this report.

**Neil Algar**

### **Society webpages on the Federation website**

Interested in having a web page on the Federation's site? Contact Wynne HaySmith (cwhaysmith@clear.net.nz) or the Editor for more details.

### **SHARE THE MESSAGE**

If this issue of *Keeping in Touch* came to your society by **email**, why not forward it to others in your society so they can read it too?

**Do YOU have an important event coming up in the next 12 months (or longer)???**

**Let us know, so we can include YOUR EVENT on the newsletter calendar.**



## **The 2010 NZ Federation Conference 19th, 20th and 21st March Hosted by West Auckland Historical Society**

At least there's one thing to be said for the drought conditions experienced by the upper part of the country this year — a fine weekend was virtually guaranteed for this year's AGM and conference at West Auckland.

Our hosts provided an enjoyable Friday night icebreaker at Mill Cottage, the historical society's base. Saturday morning involved a morning tea at the Corban Estate, before the conference travellers boarded the bus to head to Huia Museum and Hall, the latter being the venue for the AGM itself. On the way, points of historical interest were pointed out by WAHS members Trevor Pollard and Bruce Harvey, with guest commentator John Walsh, Waitakeres Ranger.

Your committee members remain the same as from last year:

President: Neil Algar (Matamata)

Vice-President: Kenneth Stringer (Waikato)

Secretary/Treasurer: Neil Curgenvin (Bulls)

Committee Members:

Robin Astridge (Te Awamutu)

Wynne HaySmith (Helensville)

Jack Ingram (Tauranga)

Noeline Lofthouse (Waikato)

Lisa Truttman (Avondale-Waterview)

Next year's AGM and Conference is to be hosted by Tauranga, April 8-10, 2011.

Lunch was served in the hall, and those attending split into two groups so that everyone had a chance to look around the adjacent Huia Museum. The bus trip then continued out to Whatipu.

In the evening, a dinner at the Titirangi RSA was accompanied by traditional Scottish songs by WAHS member Jim Black, and a talk on his family's origins in Henderson by Assid Corban.

Sunday's farewell was started by an early morning BBQ at Corban Estate once more, followed by a concert by Rachel Sutherland at St Michael's Church, and a tour of the Corban Estate and its heritage features.

## Gabriels Gully Goldrush 150th Celebrations 2011

From the Clutha District Council website:

<http://www.cluthadc.govt.nz/Lawrence2011.htm>

“Gold, in the payable form, was first struck by Gabriel Read near Lawrence on 25th May 1861. Read, an Australian-born prospector was initially told he was on a ‘wild goose chase’ but his discovery, in the gully that now bears his name, changed the course of history and laid a foundation for both Otago and New Zealand. By July 1861, the Tuapeka area was very much immersed in the gold rush, with the district’s population swelling to over 11,000 compared to the less than 6,000 in Dunedin at the time.

“In 2011, attention will again turn to Lawrence as it celebrates 150 years since what was essentially the birth of our nation. Realising the significance of such an occasion, the Lawrence Community will be hosting a four day celebration, Gabriel’s Gully Goldrush 150th from Friday 18th to Monday 21st March 2011.

“The four day celebration will feature a drama which re-enacts the Goldrush with treks and walks to take us back in time to the 1860’s. With music, historical tours and displays, visual art, drama and family games and fun, there’s something for everyone, young or old.

“Come and celebrate the past connecting with the present and be part of this national celebration. Diary the dates now – 18th to 21st March 2011.”

### A trip to Lawrence in 2011?

**The Federation Committee would like to know if any members would be interested in an Federation-organised trip to join in with the celebrations next year. If so, please send an email to The Editor,  
[historian@avondale.org.nz](mailto:historian@avondale.org.nz).**

**Thank you.**

As it so happened, a year ago this month a memorial was unveiled to the first discoverer of gold in the district — one Edward Peters, in 1859. As happens often in history, his story is one where, were it for different circumstances,

his would have been the name lauded and commemorated by the now-famous gully. Had he found more than just  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ounce, such as the 7 ounces in Read’s original find two years later, the 150th celebration would have been last year, instead of next.

### **The Governor-General’s speech at the unveiling of the Edward Peters Memorial, Glenore, Central Otago**

12 Apr 2009

Reproduced with permission.

<http://www.gg.govt.nz/>

May I begin by greeting everyone in the languages of the realm of New Zealand, in English, Maori, Cook Island Maori, Niuean, Tokelauan and New Zealand Sign Language. Greetings, Kia Ora, Kia Orana, Fakalofa Lahi Atu, Taloha Ni and as it is the afternoon (Sign)

May I specifically greet you: Alan Williams, Chairperson, Glenore Manuka Trust and fellow trustee, Nancy Allison; Hamish Anderson, Deputy Mayor of Clutha District; Ratilal Champaneri, President of the New Zealand Indian Central Association; Edward Ellison, Kaumatua of Te Runanga o Otakou; Distinguished Guests otherwise; ladies and gentlemen. And in the context of today’s gathering, may I add the greetings: Namaste, Namashkaar, Sat sri akal, Salaam walaikum, Kam cho.

Thank you for inviting my wife Susan and I Glenore for this celebration to mark the 150th anniversary of Edward Peters’ discovery of gold. May I then pay my respects to the land on which we stand and the surrounding districts which 150 years ago yielded up gold and which brought people and investment and wealth such as added weight to the development of this province Otago and our country New Zealand.

Since ancient times, gold has held a fascination for man. Nations have gone to war over it. Civilisations have been founded on it and others destroyed because of it.

Like a double-edged sword the discovery of gold has made some individuals rich whilst ruining the lives of others. As the British writer Samuel Butler, who lived in New Zealand about the time of Peters’ discovery so cannily noted: *“Though wisdom cannot be gotten for gold, still less can it be gotten without it.”*

The development to which I referred brought people from many parts of the world; Australia, the US, and China. In that context came Edward

Peters, an Indian man known locally as "Black Peter", who is believed to have been born in Mumbai and came to Otago in 1853 as a cook on the sailing ship *Maori*.

He took "French leave" from the ship, and as required, having spent a required six weeks in gaol, settled in the province, heading south to this area to working on the new farms being established.

Little would probably have ever been known of him after that if he had not been helping two other shepherds move some sheep across the south branch of the Tokomairiro River in late 1858.

According to Alan William's history, the party had camped by the river edge and after their evening meal, Peters took the wash basin down to the river's edge. Cleaning up the dishes, and having worked the Californian gold fields, he decided to pan for gold. He ended up finding sufficient gold to be turned into a ring that is now held by the Otago Settlers Museum.

But as the saying goes, all that glitters is not gold, and it was Gabriel Read, who having learned of Peters' find, set off looking for gold and in 1861 laid claim to finding gold in Otago. It was Read, rather than Peters that received £1000 from the Otago Provincial Council for his find and who has gone down in history as the discoverer of gold in Otago. Such is fortune's fickle hand.

The gold rush changed Otago forever, with the thousands from throughout the world being lured to New Zealand to prospect for gold. It is estimated Dunedin's population more than doubled from less than 13,000 to more than 30,000 in the space of six months in 1861.

Parliament was petitioned in 1885 for recognition of Peters' discovery. While a parliamentary committee decided he had not established his claim, it recommended the government pay him £50 if a similar amount could be raised by public subscription.

Such was the affection with which he was held in the community, and the support of local MP Vincent Pyke, that the money was quickly raised. It provided a pension for him until he died in 1893.

No doubt historians will continue to argue about who was first to do what and when for many years to come. However, it is important that Edward Peters' story not be forgotten. I would therefore like to congratulate the Glenore

Manuka Trust and all those involved in organising for organising this memorial to him to be erected.

Edward Peters' story also speaks to us today of those first Indian migrants to New Zealand. Until the period after the Second World War, people of Indian origin lived here in relatively small numbers. Among them were my parents, who had migrated to New Zealand from Fiji in the 1920s, their own parents having migrated from India to Fiji.

New Zealanders of Indian descent have contributed to our country's economy and society in a number of ways through participation in many disciplines from business to medicine, the law, sport and academia to name but a few.

Like all migrants to New Zealand, whether they were from Asia, Pacific or Europe, and whether they came on canoes, sailing ships, ocean liners or aeroplanes, they were all seeking to build a new and better life here in New Zealand. As noted New Zealand historian, the late Dr Michael King, once wrote: *"In a country inhabited for a mere one thousand years, everybody is an immigrant or a descendent of an immigrant."*

And on that note, I will close in New Zealand's first language Māori, by offering everyone greetings and wishing you all good health and fortitude in your endeavours. No reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, kia ora, kia kaha, tēnā koutou katoa.

### **NZ Federation of Historical Societies: Survey on administration fees charged by historical organisations**

Thanks to the 16 respondents who completed the survey. There are some similarities and some discrepancies in what historical organisations throughout the country are charging, or not charging.

The fee for photocopying ranged from 10 cents up to 50 cents per page. One organisation requested a donation to be made for copying, rather than a set fee. One charged commercial companies a higher rate while members/students or family researcher were given free copies. Most organisations didn't charge a fee.

Most don't differentiate if the request was from a commercial company, student or historical society. One charged \$8 for an A5 B/W and \$12 for an A5 colour copy.

Most don't charge for taking prints of photos, paintings or cards.

Most don't charge for helping with secretarial or research purposes. Some had a small fee for commercial requests and free for members/historical societies while some had a donation policy.

Most don't charge a fee for their logo to be featured.

Half said that they were keen to have/learn if a standard charge system could be introduced to historical societies to ensure a consistent message for anyone enquiring around the country. There was definitely support for establishing some form of national criteria/same fees. At the moment it appears that some commercially minded organisations are reaping the benefits in charging higher fees and using that money towards their administration expenses while others are providing a complimentary service and are content to keep doing same. Hopefully there might be some common ground in the future to ensure that every historical society was making a charge for services - to ensure it covers administration time and effort and can go towards yearly expenses.

*Rendell McIntosh, Parnell Heritage*

### Where does Keeping in Touch go??

This is what I need **YOU** to tell me.

When this issue comes out of your inbox or your post box — what happens to it?

Is it presented to your committees?

Do any of your society's other members get an opportunity to see it?

When we advertise upcoming trips and events, are these publicised in your own newsletters?

How often are your newsletters published?

Have you any suggestions regarding content and presentation?

Let me know your thoughts, either by email or post. My contact details are on the bottom of the front page.

— Editor

## Other Organisations

### Positive dialogue from HPA review meetings

The NZHPT, along with Ministry for Culture and Heritage officials, has completed its nationwide round of meetings with Branch Committees to discuss the review of the *Historic Places Act* (1993).

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage has been undertaking this review that includes proposals that branch committees will not continue in their present form and that the Government takes responsibility for appointing all members of the NZHPT Board.

NZHPT Chief Executive Bruce Chapman said the face-to-face meetings helped further explain the proposals and commenced discussion about ways the important work Branch Committees do can continue into the future.

Mr Chapman said Branch Committees were now considering alternative ways forward and he anticipated further discussions in the months ahead with heritage advocates in expectation of the proposed legislation proceeding.

“It's now a matter for discussing how local heritage groups can continue and work with the NZHPT to ensure New Zealand's heritage continues to be identified, protected and appreciated.

“There will be no change to the range of membership benefits currently enjoyed and NZHPT will continue to encourage volunteer input into heritage advocacy.”

### Shipwrecks part of Taranaki's heritage

The wrecks of two historic ships that featured in the New Zealand Wars and sank off the Taranaki coast in the 1860s are being proposed for national recognition by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

The paddle steamer *Tasmanian Maid* and colonial steam transport *SS Alexandra* shipwrecks are nationally rare examples of in-situ remains from the New Zealand Wars. Both ships lie in relatively shallow water, on the Kawaroa Reef off New Plymouth and at Puke Aruhe in north Taranaki, respectively.

## Society News & Views

### Avondale-Waterview

We organised a successful 150th birthday commemoration for Avondale's oldest building on 8 April, the former Presbyterian St Ninian's Church (now owned by the Auckland City Council). It has been closed to the public since 2007 due to concerns regarding lead paint contamination and structural cracking of the roof — but we will keep insisting and reminding our Council, even through the Super City transition, that the building means a lot to our community and is not to be discarded or ignored. We have had support and interest from neighbouring historical societies in this, which is heartening.

Our local Community Board assisted us with \$720 towards the cost of printing 200 copies of a commemorative booklet for the 150th birthday, put together by the Society, and these were distributed to the public free of charge.

AWHS have also succeeded in supporting the incorporation of Auckland's newest historical society, Pt Chevalier. Their chairman attended the Federation conference this year as a guest.

### Cambridge

A Society museum promotion involving marbles has spread to the shopping centre in Cambridge. Recently visitors to the museum were asked to vote for the most popular exhibit and display there by placing a marble alongside. (The winner: the museum's telephone exchange which allows visitors to plug into and listen to a series of 24 audio narrations). Now, the marbles are out and about in the township, hidden away in shops by museum curator Eris Parker and her team. The person who finds the most marbles during Cambridge's autumn festival, 28 April to 2 May, will win a prize. (*Report: Cambridge Edition, 7 April 2010*)

### Kaikoura

The Society advised in their December newsletter that a book is being written on Marlborough's 150 years since separation from Nelson, celebrated in October last year. They asked that any material on the history of

the area be forwarded to them, who will then send it on to Blenheim.

The Society's museum has obtained a piece of one of the piles of what was locally known as the New Wharf (officially opened in 1909), along with one of the Muntz bolts used when it was constructed.

### Mangere

Val Payne's new book on the Mangere Hospital was reported in March to be well on the way towards the publishing stage. "Most older people in this area will remember the hospital," the Society's newsletter said. "Some of them could also have helped out there assisting in feeding the patients at mealtimes. We have been very frugal and are able to afford to publish this work ourselves."

### Matamata

*From their annual report:*

"When the owner of the site which includes the old Thames Valley Electric Power Board Building in Firth Street applied for planning consent to demolish it to increase his chances of selling, the Society objected. At the hearing the problem was acknowledged by everyone, and consent was not granted unless demolition proves essential before the property would sell. In that event there will be a commemorative stone erected on the site."

### Papakura

Work is in progress for the redevelopment of the Accent Building on Great South Road where the Society's museum is based. "What an exciting transformation the complex will be," the Society wrote in their February newsletter. "No lifts or escalators which, incidentally, are more often not in operation than they are useable. A wide modern walkway from the Great South Road will welcome you to come look, relax and enjoy a coffee from the café and experience the new ambience of the Library and Museum." A grand re-opening is planned for October this year.

### Patea

The Society is continuing with its bimonthly field days. Usually, these are journeys out to a

particular part of the landscape of the area, to listen to the history on site. In December, a group of twenty went to Whenuakura and the landscape at Ohinemutu and Hukatere, while the one in February involved a power point 'walk' down the main street of Patea, constructed by archivist Terry Tamakehu from pictures of early Patea.

As the *Patea & Waverley Press* reports, "The Society has been encouraged by the numbers attending the field days but is keen to generate interest in history among a wider range of people. For those who attend, it is a chance to become more familiar with the landscape that underpins much discussion of documented historical events that involves these places."

### **Rotorua**

It is with regret that we note the passing of Donald (Don) Murray Stafford, MBE, CBE (1927-2010) who died on 5 April. He was Rotorua's official historian, and patron of the Rotorua Historical Society. Hundreds of

mourners gathered on Te Arawa's paramount marae, Te Papaouru in Ohinemutu to honour Don Stafford who, it is said, single-handedly kept Rotorua's history alive for generations. His books will be found on bookshelves around the country (including those of the Editor of this newsletter), a testament in part to his tremendous work. My thanks to Audrey Henderson for sending up clippings from the local papers on the funeral and memories of those who knew him.

### **Avondale College Reunion Labour Weekend 2010**

Carole Jamieson (nee Bergamini)  
Phone: 09-449-1994 or 021-132-9273  
or 2010 School Reunion, c/- Avondale  
College  
47 Victor Street  
Avondale, Auckland 1026  
**Register now**  
[www.avcol.org.nz](http://www.avcol.org.nz)

## **ISLANDS OF HISTORY Conference**

### **NORFOLK ISLAND, 18-25 JULY 2010**

All historians are invited to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of the Professional Historians Association (NSW) which will be held on Norfolk Island in July. The conference will coincide with the UNESCO decision about granting World Heritage listing to the historic convict sites at Norfolk Island, which is situated midway between New Zealand and Australia.

Thirty historians, archaeologists, museum curators and heritage specialists from New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Caledonia will evaluate aspects of South Pacific history in the light of recent research. Some of the issues that will be discussed are – French and British convictism, heritage tourism, Christian missionary influence, shipwrecks & maritime heritage, the use and misuse of history at historic sites, the spread of Polynesian languages, the politics of writing history. Inspections and site visits will be an integral part of the conference.

Bring your family and friends for a mid-winter holiday as well – even those who are not historians will enjoy the outdoor activities offered on this idyllic island. The Professional Historians Association has negotiated very reasonable accommodation packages which include travel from Auckland.

The conference program and details of accommodation options can be downloaded from the PHA (NSW) website: [www.phansw.org.au/documents/conference2010.html](http://www.phansw.org.au/documents/conference2010.html)