



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for New Zealand History Federation Inc

Te Kotahitanga o nga Hitori o Aotearoa

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June 2021

2021 Conference and AGM at Waiuku

President's Report, presented to the Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand History Federation Inc, Saturday May 1 2021, at Waiuku Museum

Welcome to all of you at this general meeting, and thank you for coming. My sincere and grateful thanks to Richard Garvey and his team here at the Waiuku Museum for hosting us this year.

For many of us, 2021 means we are still affected by the administrative and personal reactions to the Covid-19 pandemic. Lockdowns, health fears, cancelled meetings and abandoned plans have affected us all in the local heritage sector. That said, I am still very glad that we live here in New Zealand during this worldwide crisis.

My thanks also to the members of the Executive Committee that, with no AGM last year, ventured into the environment of working to administer the Federation outside some areas of the constitution, to keep things ticking over. David and Susan Verran in particular have looked after our finances and membership list very well. The phrase "a safe pair of hands" more than describes their stewardship of this most important part of the necessary administration. That they've arranged and brought to the table today not just one year's financial report, nor two, but three – catching up for the one which was required for the 2019 year – is thoroughly appreciated by myself and the rest of the committee.

Our Patron, Robin Astridge, effectively the Federation's historian, has worked to put together a 50th anniversary booklet which we've included in the packs free to those of you full member delegate representatives attending today. If anyone else would like a copy, they will be available for \$10 each. It makes interesting reading – even Federation has a heritage story of its own.

You'll see on the agenda one important constitutional change which the committee has recommended for your decision, that regarding the form of payments the Federation will be able to make electronically from this point forward. This is a measure we have to address and provide for in the rules, which your incoming committee will then set up with the Federation's bank, the BNZ. Given the current pandemic situation, we decided to delay putting forward for consideration a number of other proposed changes to the constitution – but within the next two years, this will have to be addressed by a general meeting of our members. Especially with the pending passage of the new Incorporated Societies Act this year, which will also trigger necessary changes to our constitution, and possibly those of your own societies.

To that end, and with regard to any other legislative or other types of changes that will impact the way the member societies and organisations operate, Federation will continue to distribute information, links and other sources to try to help you through the changing landscape, via *Keeping in Touch* and special events/meetings where we can.

May the rest of 2021, and on into the future, be more certain, positive, brighter and encouraging for all of us. Thank you.

Lisa J Truttman
President

Some points from the AGM

My thanks to Kenneth Stringer, our current Secretary (and our Vice President) who has very kindly submitted a draft set of minutes for the meeting, so I have something to work with while reporting back for you readers.

We had 17 delegates attending the AGM this year, representing 18 member societies, plus a room full of additional observers in the second-floor meeting area at the Waiuku Museum. After around 90 minutes of members' feedback session, we got stuck in with the AGM. Members outline the various challenges their societies were facing, not all pandemic-related — but the overall impression and energy I felt was one of optimism. Despite a lot of things happening, a changing world, tightened budgets, anxious members, we all love history, and love telling people about what is special of each of our patches of this country. We're all facing great challenges right now, in the NZ History Federation's 50th year — but if the words I heard in that room and the determination in the faces there is anything to go by, we will come through this.

We were at last been able to present a financial report for the 2018 year to members at this AGM, along with the ones for 2019 (hold over from the cancelled 2020 AGM) and the latest, for the year 2020. A huge vote of thanks to Susan and David Verran who arranged with a reviewer, collated the back accounts, and maintained the current ones so that we could see where we are at financially, as well as with regard to memberships. The situation financially has improved somewhat from the way it was in 2019. Sadly, both Susan and David stepped down from Committee at the meeting, due to other commitments. Thank you both for all your efforts to help Federation keep going.

With the approval of the meeting, a rule change to the constitution allowing the Federation to use electronic banking due to the elimination of cheque transactions by our bank this year was passed. The committee will be setting up internet banking, with the same level of signatory authorisation as with cheques, shortly.

The meeting agreed to continue to suspend *NZ Legacy* for another year, the matter to come up again at next year's AGM. When the Committee recommended that there be a subsequent reduction in the subscriptions given that *Legacy* is still not being produced, the delegates strongly disagreed and voted to retain subscriptions at the current levels, helping Federation recover from the 2019 status.

At the election of officers:

Patron: Robin Astridge

President: Lisa Truttman

Vice-President & Secretary: Kenneth Stringer

Treasurer: To be appointed by the Committee

Committee members: Kathryn Parsons, Robin Astridge

We hope to be able to co-opt two new members by the end of July at the first committee meeting, including a new Treasurer.

The new committee also has the task of finding a host for next year's conference and AGM.

The Saturday and Sunday bus trips at Conference had to be cancelled unfortunately, but those who went on the boat trip on the harbour came back with words of glowing praise of a great afternoon. The dinner that night at the Kentish Hotel was superb. All in all, a successful conference, wonderfully organised by the good folks at Waiuku Museum in these trying times. Thank you all, once again.

NZ History Federation's new email account

As part of Federation's recovery, we've tried regaining access to the "historyfederation@gmail.com" email account. However, after a number of requests made to him, the immediate past secretary has declined to give the committee the password. This account was set up some years ago in order that general correspondence for the Federation could be sent to one place, and filed in the internet cloud. It has been used as the contact email for NZ History Federation conferences, AGMS and other Federation-related events in the past.

Fortunately, expecting this situation would arise, soon after the 2021 conference we inaugurated a new email account in early May. This is:

nzhistoryfederation@gmail.com

This is installed on the website.

So we advise our members, and the public, that the email account "historyfederation" has been unfortunately blocked from the Federation's access, and that all communications from that address are not to be taken as official emails from the Federation, nor are they sanctioned by the Federation committee. The content of all emails that have been sent by members of the Federation to that account are also now beyond the administration and control of the Federation, so in terms of the Privacy Act we hope that there are no breaches of the Act brought about by any sharing or usage of any information or content belonging to those corresponding with that account or contacting the Federation in the past. We cannot prevent any possible breaches of that Act, or any other Act or regulation in terms of that account, until such time as access to it is restored to the Federation committee.

Auckland Regional Gathering 2021 at Silverdale

Sue Healy from the Silverdale & District Historical Society has advised that this year's gathering will be on Friday 20 August. More info as to programme and other details will be sent out as they come to hand next month.

Land record searching at Toitū te whenua Land Information New Zealand

In case readers weren't aware, in February this year Toitū te whenua Land Information New Zealand freed up public access to land title and survey searches by setting up part of their website where, on credit card payment, they will email you the documents you're after. See:

<https://www.linz.govt.nz/land/land-records/search-for-and-order-land-record>

For more information as to how it works, and the search page itself:

<https://lrs.linz.govt.nz/search/>

At the moment, titles and survey plans cost \$5 each, but in November 2021 there will be a slight price increase. This service should help free up heritage research around the country into the back-ground of many of our historic places.

An idea for complimentary historical society membership

This sounds like a nice idea for historical society memberships. Otahuhu Historical Society noted in their latest newsletter (June 2021): *“Complimentary membership is given to all members who have celebrated their 90th birthday. If you celebrated your 90th birthday in the twelve months preceding 31 March 2021 then please contact us so that our records can be updated.”*

Local Heritage Stories in Libraries

Late last year, I was approached by Auckland Council to be part of a project that took place in the first half of this year, involving a series of talks given in the Whau Local Board area here in Auckland. Seven talks were booked in by the Avondale, Blockhouse Bay and New Lynn libraries combined, although one that would have happened in March didn't because of lockdown. Still, six did take place, and for three on request I did handouts of the talks, which can be seen at the Publications page of the Avondale-Waterview Historical Society website under Whau Heritage Stories 2021:

<http://avondale.org.nz/publications.htm>

In addition, all six talks were recorded by Auckland Libraries, and will appear on their Soundcloud website soon. The whole project (including the postponed March talk, which I converted into a book published in May, and a full presentation as part of this year's Auckland Heritage Festival) was supported financially by the Whau Local Board. The project also included three articles in a local publication.

The reason I'm saying all this here is that — I think this sort of project would be a great idea for other areas and historical societies to take up or consider, not only here in the Auckland Region, which has dozens of local libraries with which to team up, but around the country as another avenue (territorial authority and other funding permitting) to help raise awareness of our local histories. I've already had contact from a local school in the area, keen to get in touch to sort out some sort of local history learning programme as part of their pupils' studies. The talks drew modest numbers in audiences, the most around 25 one afternoon, but because of the recording done by Auckland Libraries, they've become less ephemeral and more durable. The side-products of the handouts printed out free by the libraries and book (the handouts were easy to prepare, because they're basically the text I used for the talks) added to the experience.

I'm hoping the idea is taken up by other Local and Community Boards working in with their own local historical societies.

Lisa J Truttman
Avondale-Waterview Historical Society

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If you have a page on the NZ History Federation website — check it out. Is it up to date? Has your organisation had a change of contact person, opening times, even a location for your meetings?

Or, if you're a Federation member but you don't have a webpage — why not join our site? \$50 + GST one-off charge for new pages, one update per year free.

Contact Kenneth Stringer k.stringer@xtra.co.nz or Lisa Truttman re any updates or for more info as to pages.