



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for New Zealand History Federation Inc

Te Kotahitanga o nga Hitori o Aotearoa

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April 2023

NZHF Conference at Morrinsville Saturday 25 March 2023



Thank you, Morrinsville, for hosting what turned out to be an inspiring and thoroughly enjoyable conference this year. I've heard nothing but praise since for the wonderful efforts of the great team at Morrinsville Museum and Historical Society, who provided us with first-class facilities for the AGM, Aotearoa NZ Histories Curriculum workshop by Kay de Lautour, members' reports, and the sumptuous morning and afternoon teas! The bus tour of the township was informative, and the dinner (and kapa haka entertainment) capped off a memorable day that was also full of chat amongst the attendees, sharing of ideas, and a relaxed, positive atmosphere.

Thank you also for opening your delightful museum for us to look around. You're a credit to your community.

Next year — Taumarunui and District Historical Society have volunteered as hosts. More info as it comes to hand.



NZ History Federation Annual General Meeting 25 March 2023 Presidents Report

Past year

The challenges to those in the local history sector in New Zealand have continued in this decade thus far. My report last year touched on this. Long-standing societies are considering whether or not to continue, with ageing memberships, the rising costs of facilities (their maintenance as well as community leases), the cost of living crisis affecting many of us – and looming later this year, the rounds of constitutional reviews for incorporated societies (including the NZHF itself) which will begin from October for the next two and a half years, until April 2026.

Your committee has felt the loss this year of Robin Astridge deeply. I personally miss him very, very much. Your committee is that much smaller now, and we could really do with more positive, energetic team-players around the meeting table. The likes of a Robin Astridge would be very hard to find, though. As always, I do say that we would appreciate help from new people who believe in local history and in supporting local historical groups, societies and organisations, for their sake.

Membership

We have 67 full members, and 11 associates, but there are at the moment a number of members who have yet to re-subscribe for this year. We won't know until after 31 March just how many remain.

Bank

Further to last year's report where it was noted that the Bank of New Zealand still had the old name for the Federation instead of the name we've had for some time now – I can report that this has been sorted. It did take a few phone calls, and the bank's realisation that they couldn't see everything they printed on the top of their own statements, so we had to show them the error.

Website

Last year, I wrote about a challenge for your committee in terms of the website. In 2022, we found a website host, dived into the concept of WordPress, and migrated information from the old site to the new. It was definitely a matter of quickly learning and adapting of skills, but at least we do now have a site up and running which we can change as required without going through a third party. Thus there is no extra cost every time you, our members, need to have details on the directory changed as, for example, your officers or your opening hours change, or you want to add to what you do for your communities. All that can be sorted now at no cost (just some time at our end logging in and tinkering). The \$50 + GST fee for a new page was thus wiped; we don't care how often you contact us to change things, we'll do it for free for our members.

I still need to tinker a bit with the site. Work on page appearance, perhaps add back issues of KIT, and content details for back issues of Legacy. But at least it is online, complete with

functioning contact form, and comes already geared to be mobile-friendly for the smartphone generation.

Facebook

The numbers as at 19 March this year were 1,666 followers, 769 post reach over past month. It's still a quiet corner of Facebook, but at least it still costs us nothing, and provides an extra avenue of contact.

All said and done, I heartily thank the Federation executive committee of 2022-2023 for all their hard work and help over the past year: our Vice President and Secretary Kenneth Stringer, our Treasurer Alan Bray, and committee members Kathryn Parsons and David Wong. Repeating what I wrote last year: as always, (and as all the past Presidents have said in years gone by) I appeal to our membership for new members for the committee. There is a lot of work to do, but with skill, competence, good heart and energy, we can get things done.

Lisa J Truttman
President

Morrinsville's Nottingham Castle Hotel

Being able to see a bit of the interior of the famous Nottingham Castle Hotel in Morrinsville in March this year, I was intrigued enough to look for more on the history of the landmark building.

The first hotel in Morrinsville, actually a bar attached to a store rather than a true pub, was the Piako Hotel. The location seems to be uncertain. One description from the 1920s, long after it had ceased to be either a store or a hotel, described it as being in Studholme Street. If so, it was quite near where the first Nottingham Castle was later built. This Piako Hotel sprang from Mowbray and Evans' store which was in existence in October 1875, when the new Waitoa Highway Board used it as the place where ratepayers could inspect the Rate Book. Two months later, George Evans applied for a publican's license for "a new house at Te Awa (Piako)," which had "ample" accommodation and was "some 25 miles from any other licensed house ... absolutely needed by travellers." There was some reservation on the part of the chairman of the licensing committee. The location was an "out of the way" place, without police supervision. But, considering the license had to come up for renewal in six months, they'd see how things went by then. Apparently, everything did work out – the Piako Hotel's license was renewed, for £5, in June 1876. On 15 July that year, the Waitoa Highway District ratepayers held their annual meeting at Mowbray and Evans' store.

In late December 1876 however, one John Wood purchased an acre of land from Thomas Morrin, at the corner of Studholme and Hamilton Road (Thames Road). He showed the *Waikato Times* his plans at the time, designed by Hamilton architect (and later first Mayor



The Nottingham Castle Hotel, ca 1916. William Archer Price. Ref: 1/2-001141-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. natlib.govt.nz/records/23120816

of that township) Isaac Richardson Vialou. Wood's hotel was two-storeyed, with 20 rooms, verandah and balcony. On the ground floor was to be a bar, bar-parlour and tap-room, large dining room, two sitting rooms, larder, storeroom, plus a spacious entrance and staircase to a private sitting room upstairs and bedrooms.

John Wood's origins are not all that certain, but he claimed that he hailed from Nottinghamshire, as did his wife Sarah. He appears in the narrative here in New Zealand in Hamilton, where by October 1872 he had a butcher shop in Hamilton East. Somehow, he came to decide that becoming a hotel owner was the next step in his business career. Perhaps he had heard

from those coming through the new township forming in the northern Piako district that there was likely to be a need for purpose-built hotel accommodation in the area. By May 1877 anyway, his new venture was well underway, taking settlers' orders at the new hotel site on behalf of George Mason's nursery in Hamilton for all of the Piako district.

Alexander Crawford had, by then, taken over Evans' Piako Hotel. When it came time for the annual license renewal, Wood took on Crawford before the committee, his Nottingham Castle Hotel easily being granted a license, while Wood successfully objected to the renewal for Crawford's hotel. The main grounds for the loss of license for the Piako Hotel was that there was still a store being run on the premises, and the township had no need for two hotels (plus Wood's Nottingham Castle was superior in terms of accommodation etc.) Crawford protested, appealed, and even petitioned Parliament, but to no avail. Wood had won the battle, brief as it was, and the Nottingham Castle Hotel continued its story in the Morrinsville that grew up around it.

In 1880, Wood sold the hotel to Robert Samuel Brown, and moved to Te Aroha. There, he went back to being a butcher, but in 1881 was briefly in partnership with John Allwood as co-proprietors of another Nottingham-themed hotel, the "Robin Hood and Little John." Their partnership dissolved however within months.

John Wood's wife Sarah died at the age of 47 years at the Waikato Hotel in Hamilton in 1883. She was laid to rest at the Hamilton East cemetery. According to a news report at the time, Sarah Wood was said to have been "the first person to drive a vehicle from Te Aroha to Paeroa. Mrs Wood performed the feat in face of the opinion of many old 'whips' that it was an impossibility." John Wood remained at Te Aroha, until his butcher shop there was consumed by a disastrous fire in 1896 which destroyed nine other buildings. He died at Hamilton on 2 September 1921, aged 84, "a good old pioneer gone to rest," and was buried beside Sarah at Hamilton East.

Back at the Nottingham Castle, Brown had financial problems by 1886, probably exacerbated by the construction of a second hotel in Morrinsville in 1881-1882, the Phoenix, which almost immediately attracted Waitoa Road Board meetings and served as their offices, and attracted the lucrative traffic from Te Aroha. Wood called in a mortgage on which Brown defaulted, and sold the hotel to John Logan Campbell under power of sale. Keeping himself afloat financially in turn, Campbell transferred the property to the Bank of New Zealand in 1888. Towards the end of that year, the Nottingham Castle's financial difficulties were given assistance by the destruction by fire of the Phoenix Hotel in December, and transfer of its license to the Nottingham Castle in 1889, once more the only hotel in the township.

From this point, and for the next three decades, the Nottingham Castle was also popularly referred to as the Morrinsville Hotel, although it probably had not actually changed the name. Auckland brewer Louis Ehrenfried bought the Nottingham Castle from the bank's realisation arm in 1893, so ultimately (after the union of Campbell's brewing business with that of Ehrenfried) Campbell came back into contact with the Nottingham Castle's story from 1897. Campbell and Ehrenfried sold the hotel to land agent Wenzl Schollum from Puhoi in 1903. Schollum would retain ownership through the period when the old hotel was destroyed by fire in 1913, only to be rebuilt the following year.

In 1926 came news of another hotel about to be built on the Hamilton-Morrinsville Road, named the Morrinsville Hotel. Despite protests from sectors of the community at Morrinsville, this was granted a license in 1927. This hotel came to be owned by NZ Breweries (like the Nottingham Castle) by the 1970s.

Schollum finally the Nottingham Castle back to Campbell & Ehrenfried in 1951. It was transferred to NZ Breweries in 1971, which became Lion Breweries in 1980, then became Lion Corporation in 1986, and then renamed Lion Nathan Ltd in 1990. The Matijasevich family took over ownership in 1995.

Lisa J Truttman

*Part of the interior of the Nottingham Castle Hotel, Morrinsville.
Photo taken 25 March 2023,
by author.*



NZHF Annual General Meetings — it's a numbers game

A delegate wrote in after the Morrinsville conference this year, asking about the "51st" numbering for the Annual General Meeting and Conference. Was the numbering wrong?

No, just reorganised. The late Robin Astridge was also the Federation historian, keeping record of changes in officers, the AGMs, etc. He prepared a marvellous table of the AGMs and Special General Meetings from the inaugural AGM back in 1971. But, we have now realised, he didn't count the first meeting as number 1. The list of AGMs, which can be found on our website here:

<https://nzhistoryfederation.org.nz/agms-and-conferences/>

are as follows.

1	1971 Hamilton	
2	1972 New Plymouth	
3	1973 Wellington	
4	1974 Queenstown	
5	1975 Whanganui	
6	1976 Turangi	
7	1977 Nelson	
8	1978 Auckland	
9	1979 Wellington	
10	1980 Picton	
11	1981 Rotorua	
12	1982 Cambridge	
13	1983 Otaki	
14	1984 Ohura	
15	1985 Te Awamutu	
16	1986 Ashburton	
17	1987 Porirua	
18	1988 Birkenhead	
19	1989 Patea	
20	1990 Auckland	
21	1991 Queenstown	
22	1992 Rotorua	
23	1993 Timaru	
24	1994 Paeroa	
25	1995 Ashburton	
26	1996 Henderson	
27	1997 Picton	
28	1998 Balclutha	
29	1999 North Shore	
30	2000 Cambridge	
31	2001 Gore	
		In 2002 special meetings were held in Cambridge 29 June & Timaru 13 July after failing to get a quorum at the appointed March 2002 AGM which was to be held in Timaru
		32 2003 Hamilton (strictly, an SGM rather than an AGM, but it has always been numbered as one of the latter.)
		33 2004 Hamilton
		34 2005 Rotorua
		35 2006 Foxton
		36 2007 Pleasant Point
		37 2008 Helensville
		38 2009 Matamata
		39 2010 Henderson
		40 2011 Tauranga
		41 2012 Levin
		42 2013 Dunedin
		43 2014 Te Awamutu
		44 2015 Wellington
		45 2016 Auckland
		46 2017 Okato
		47 2018 Thames
		48 2019 Hawera
		Second break, no AGM/Conference in 2020 due to the pandemic.
		49 2021 Waiuku
		50 2022 Onehunga
		51 2023 Morrinsville



Member Reports to the NZHF Conference

Here are some of the reports to hand as presented at the conference on the afternoon of 25 March. Each delegate/spokesperson was given around 5 minutes to speak within the 90 minutes time allotted in the programme — but even the last speaker who expressed his concerns that he was rushed with his presentation actually started speaking at seven minutes before 5pm (according to my old fashioned dial analogue watch, checked against the smartphone), so everything was on time. My sincere thanks to those speakers who took part and shared their stories, successes and challenges with those gathered at the conference, and to the Morrinsville Museum team for their excellent technical support and timekeeping!

Cambridge Museum

Cambridge Historical Society and Museum has 141 memberships, and as many of these memberships are actually couples and families, we like to think our actual member number is closer to 200 people. Post Covid, the Society has worked hard to re-engage with our friends by holding a range of events including gatherings at local heritage spots, like the Ross Bros Museum, as well as walks and talks.



We had a Winter Series last year focusing on Collectors, on this occasion of Art. Three Society members invited us into their homes and described what and why they were collectors. It was such a success we will be doing a similar focus on Collectors this year.

2023 has started with a roar with our first guided walk two weeks ago which focused on the Mysterious Moon Creek, and next month we have Lyn Williams presenting the “Dead Tell Tales” at Hautapu Cemetery. If you’d like to keep in touch with our events, make sure to subscribe to our What’s On newsletter via our website.

Within the Museum itself, visitors have returned to pre-Covid numbers. Indeed, poor summer weather has meant we had our highest number of visits yet in Dec, Jan and Feb.

Last year we collaborated with Kirsty Wyndham, Librarian/Inquiry Broker at Cambridge East Primary School and Cambridge’s community of learning, Te Kāhui Ako o Te Oko Horoi to produce a website called “Investigating Histories”. Following on from this, the Museum is now part of Te Kāhui Ako teacher’s programme which is developing learning activities for the History Curriculum. To be valued in this way by teachers is exciting.

The Society and Museum’s vision is to awaken wonder and curiosity about Cambridge’s people and places. Through our strategic goals we are reaching out to the Cambridge community both digitally and physically with our collection and research archives.

We value our partnerships with our town library which holds a Heritage Month and Family History month, every February and August respectively, to DigitalNZ, which is providing a platform to share our images, and to local event organisers who provide us with opportunities to go beyond the Museum walls and to talk directly to our community. One weekend in November alongside the Rotary’s Garden Festival, for instance, we held a pop-up exhibition of our photographs from the 1960s, 70s and 80s at a local retirement village and managed to get the names and stories of many of the people in the photographs.

One of the perks of being a member of the Society is our bi-monthly newsletter sent to most by email (although available as a paper copy if you prefer). Our March edition was opened by 74% of our members and of these 60% clicked on at least one of our “Read More” links to articles or events. It’s great to know our membership is engaged with what we are doing.

Eltham

The Eltham & Districts Historical Society has been in existence for over 50 years now. In that time we have acquired our own building, an old Bank of NSW in the centre of Eltham. Over that last two years we have been doing an external upgrade of the building, including a new roof, double glazed windows and a new paint job. The next plan is to upgrade the interior with underfloor insulation and better storage arrangements.



We have built up a large collection of newspapers, books, photographs and maps. We have custodianship of the only set of the Eltham Argus newspaper dated 1904 – 1967. We have been gifted the entire Connell Collection from Connell Photography which closed around 1980. This includes Glass Plate negatives, Acetate negatives, 35mm film and candid photos. We embarked on a scanning programme several years ago, and to date have scanned 20% of the estimated 30,000 acetate negatives.

The Society has a small hard-working committee; 26 financial members and over 2000 Facebook followers.

For the future we would like to see more active financial members, and an increasing awareness of our presence in Eltham & Districts.

Maree Liddington

Admin/Secretary

Eltham & Districts Historical Society Inc.

Franklin Heritage Forum

Awhitu Peninsula Historical Society

One of our members, Clyde Hamilton, received the Queens Service Medal in the New Year's Honours. Clyde has been a member of the group for many years (became a life member) and is known for his writing of local and family history.

We were presented with family records including business, receipts, Home Guard records, Hunter Bus Services timetable. A wonderful collection of local times gone by.

Sales of the current 'Heads, Harbour and Hills' book went well and all are sold. An extensive updated version is being written. The 2023 calendar has been popular.

There was research for the oldest buried person in a cemetery on Awhitu Peninsula - Margaret Gray, 23 May 1874 at Waipipi cemetery.

We are in need of new members but our small committee works well to collect and preserve our local history.

Franklin Historical Society Report

After protracted negotiations the Franklin Historical Society's efforts to save Pukekohe's Heritage Railway Station have come to nought. KiwiRail did not want to include the historic building in their station upgrade and there was no support from the local board. Sadly the building has been sold down the road.

The intention is for it to be relocated to Harry Mowbray's development at the former dairy factory site at Matangi.

There have been plans by Auckland Council to upgrade Roulston Park, home to Pukekohe's Pioneer Cottage. These plans have been on going for a number of years with various alternatives tabled. One concern is that the park might lose its recognition as a war memorial, the purpose for which it was originally gifted to the community. Currently Auckland Transport are wishing to use the area where the remnants of the actual war memorial remain to improve the intersection on the ring road. It is to be hoped that a suitable outcome will be achieved.

Visitor numbers to the cottage have remained fairly steady and we are expecting school visits to resume shortly. Our public meetings have been well attended. The *No Maori Allowed* television documentary certainly created lively discussion at the meeting that followed.

We have continued to receive donations including a number of interesting items from the Dell family recently, a local saddlery firm that had been in business in Pukekohe for 106 years, closing in 1991.

Franklin Vintage Machinery Club

We are back to having our monthly meetings with another tractor trek planned for January. A visit has been made to the Hauraki Club. A book/magazine collection of over 120 items had been received and will be lodged in the library, Ian had been down to Milton in relation to the NZ Ploughing Championships.

Mercer Art & History Museum

Summer weather has impacted visitor numbers however we remain positive about the future with Mainline Steam developing their base at Mercer rail. With Covid behind us we are inviting groups back for visits, especially retirement villages. We are well positioned for visitors to combine visits with other local historic sites at Tuakau, Rangiriri and Pokeno. Mercer Museum is looking forward to celebrating our 10th year and we are working on ways to celebrate. Some possible ideas that have come to light are: inviting groups to morning tea, publishing some stories, connecting telephones for visitors to use, and updating displays.

Papakura & District Historical Society

(Elsewhere in the reports)

Patumahoe History Group Report

Facebook page now has 1.7K likes 1.8K followers. Apart from giving the research we had done on and given to the Mauku Victory Hall committee for their 100 year celebration of the hall which was held on Sunday the 27th of November not a lot of activity has been happening in the last 2 months. There is still copies of the reprint of our book Patumahoe History and Memories for sale.

Pukekohe East Church Preservation Soc.

We have only had a few open days. The criteria for burials in the graveyard is being formulated and will be completed next year.

Queen's Redoubt Trust

The Education Centre continues to be open but school visits have been virtually non-existent during the Christmas vacation. We have continued to build the blockhouse on the SE bastion of the redoubt, and it is now almost complete. Sales of our book on the Redoubt continue well, and the book on blockhouses in the New Zealand Wars by our Chairman, Dr Neville Ritchie, is expected to be published soon, as the first in a series of bulletins by the Trust.

The plan change the WDC are proposing to allow, without notification, the erection of housing up to three stories tall on our north boundary along Selby Street is now mired in lawyer speak. We are fortunate to have Jennie Hayman on our side who has generously agreed to work for costs only. My advice to other heritage groups is to try and not become involved in any planning/ heritage issue involving lawyers. We believe the hearings will be in July.

We had a break in at Queen's Redoubt in mid January but only limited damage. A locksmith looked at our keypad door locks and proclaimed them rubbish. They have now been

augmented by heavier locks on both doors to the Education Centre. It was a pointless exercise for the perpetrators, because we seldom leave money on the premises, and they ignored the library!

Tuakau and District Museum

We recently returned a framed WWI photo of Wilfred Ernest Wagener along with his memorial plaque and accompanying letter from Buckingham Palace to the Wagener family in Houhora. The items were donated to the museum in the late 1980s and have no known local provenance. Wilfred never lived in the Tuakau district and when he enlisted he was working at Ohaupo. The Wagener family were delighted to have the items offered to them and told us that the photo and plaque will be displayed in the newly restored Wagener/Subritzky Homestead that was built in Houhora in 1860.

During the past few months two of our newer museum volunteers have been creating a pollinator garden at the back of the museum. They recently organised a seed/plant swap at the museum and hope to make this a monthly occurrence in the future.

The museum was the victim of vandalism earlier this year. Three of the front windows were smashed. The culprit has been found by police and apparently offered to pay for repairs but as yet we have not seen any of the \$417 it cost us to replace the windows.

We now have the internet available at the museum. We are extremely grateful to John Bums owner/operator at Whero Net for the free installation and Tuakau ITM for allowing us to piggy-back on their broadband plan.

Waiuku Museum

We've seen a steady increase in visitor numbers of late, with the number of school groups coming to the museum now back to pre-covid levels and an increasing number of groups from retirement villages and other social organisations from other areas. We've also benefited from the package deals promoted by the 'Ratahi operators offering a trip out on the harbour combined with a visit to the museum, which is proving popular.

We are currently in the process of renewing the lease from Council for the land we occupy, and also to get landowner consent for an additional building on the reserve. Both these are proving to be quite complex and time consuming.

Matamata

President's Report March 2023

My thanks to all our volunteers, to Lesley, our secretary and Samantha, our Treasurer, who continued to work through the Covid stoppages under difficult conditions. The Historical Society is in good heart with a variety of projects lined up. Six weekly meetings take place with MPDC but we feel that the old Reserve Committee served the purpose of communication and planning better.

The Archive section is having processes clarified and the Vault is to be PastPerfect "mapped" so that it is easier to find articles deposited there with upgrading of all storage



boxes and files. Quotes have been received to bring the whole computer systems up to date and are being considered. Internet access to all buildings will enable QR codes to be used on displays so that visitors can access videos to show working machinery etc.

The outside machinery is established in our new machinery park and is being repaired and restored. Our thanks to Swaps for their generous contribution to the preparation of the site.

There has been much debate about the use of our Heritage Room and a list of protocols was given to MPDC which have been accepted meaning that the room will no longer be advertised for parties and seminars will only be booked with MHS permission. We had to go back to the original grant applications for the building to clarify its purpose.

The Book Fair was once again a great success and excellent fund raiser for the Society. Op shop week also contributes to the funds.

Buildings are being routinely well maintained, the church re-roofed and the Tower closed at this time because of possible earthquake damage.

At Open meetings of the Society interesting and varied speakers have appeared especially three men who were in the Kaimai tunnel collapse. Their information will be included in a display in our railway carriages when they are re-furbished.

We are still trying to fulfil all the necessary details so that the 100-year-old shed and donated by Henry and Natalie Watson, can be installed behind the Homestead.

The grounds and gardens of the Reserve are looking splendid. We were happy to trial free admission on Sundays during the summer time.

Belinda Rowson

Morrinsville

Mandated Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories curriculum: Morrinsville Museum contracted a person to extend our reach into schools. Following initial contact with Morrinsville Intermediate School, the trial school for the Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories curriculum, in April 2022 the whole staff came to the museum to become familiar with what we could offer to support the teaching of local history. In May, all nine classes attended a session with two museum facilitators and the Intermediate School teacher of the local Māori history, James Higgins. We have continued our school visits this year after an intensive time with two

schools attending in the latter part of last year. We started 2023 with a visit over two days of the Year 7 & 8 classes at St Joseph's School. It is not a case of doing the same activities each time as we get differing requests. This has expanded our repertoire of sessions with schools, depending on their needs and the year levels involved. We offer learning activities and then follow up this teaching with these schools to ensure we can continue to support their needs.



Our People: These six panels which are rotated each year tell the local stories of people who have helped develop the character of Morrinsville. After some initial research and a process to gain approval for the content of the panel from the family involved, they are printed ready for an opening. We had two openings this year because of a clash of dates and one family having people from Perth attending. Seventy five people attended the two openings.

NZHF Conference: Our hosting of the national New Zealand History Federation conference in March was a great opportunity to get to know other members and share ideas. Some members of the Waikato Museum's Network attended as well. There seems to be an interest in the topic of schools and the new Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories curriculum.

Refurbishment of the South Wall: Finally, we have approved the design and budget for our new refurbishment of the south wall of the Exhibition Hall. It will cover a range of displays that shows how dairy farming helped develop the town. Even though it will be very busy over the next few months, we are all very excited about the prospect of having some continuity and flow on the left hand side of the museum.

Bette Blance

President of the Morrinsville Historical Society Incorporated
March 2023

Mt Albert

MAHS is in good heart. It currently has just under 80 members, of which we regularly get 30-50 attending speaker events. We have an enthusiastic committee and have many ideas for the future.

The Covid Lockdown years have reduced membership numbers and caused many planned events to be cancelled. We experimented with holding events via Zoom but this was not popular, as our members value coming together for social engagement. In 2023 we are holding monthly member events, alternating between speakers and more interactive events such as local history walks and show and tell meetings.

Speakers we have had recently include:

Bill Hodge on NZ since the 1970s

Ross Fergusson on the history of kiwifruit in NZ

Debbie Dunsford on her new book – the centennial history of Mt Albert Grammar School.

Our normal venue, Ferndale House, is owned by Auckland Council and has been under renovation for several months. We look forward to returning in April. We currently rent two rooms in this house, but Auckland Council's proposed rent and fee increase may mean we need to surrender these and find alternative accommodation for our relatively small physical collection.

Sadly, we lost our Patron, Alice Wylie QSM, in February this year. She was Deputy Mayor of Mt Albert for many years prior to the super-city amalgamation and was a staunch supporter of the suburb and of our Society. Mt Albert Historical Society will be hosting a community memorial service for her in the Alice Wylie Park in Mt Albert on 2 April 2023.

We are providing written content through our quarterly Newsletter and website. Recent projects include the history of a major roading realignment, and identification and mapping of maternity homes in the area.

Current significant projects include:

- * photographing every house/property in the district to ensure we have our own record our rapidly changing streets
- * Recording the history of shops
- * Transcribing Wises Post Office Directory entries for our streets
- * Systematically researching the history of our estates, subdivisions and streets

We are preparing to undertake an Oral History Project. This will be the Society's second Oral History project, the first done in 2009-10.

Lynley Stone, Delegate.

North Shore

North Shore has had a rough year, in much the same way as other organisations, historical or not. Covid did hit us in several ways but our problems were not caused by its arrival. For the last three years we have been fighting to find a way to carry on and this year we gave in, finding the strength to tell members (only last Saturday) that our AGM in May will be our last meeting. There were no strong reactions to this announcement then and since. The committee had decided in February on a planned timetable to implement the decision, and this disclosure was the first step along the way.

There are a number of reasons for this closure but I have to stress Covid is not the main culprit as many of our problems were developing long before it struck the country.

Before we finally expire we will set about putting our society in order with the disposal of some equipment, including our library, which is being offered firstly to our members who built it up over the years. Our financial assets will be divided following the dictates of the incorporated society's regulations.

This leaves me now to express our appreciation to the Federation and the various executives over the years, and to all other Federation members who have assisted us since our founding in 1974. We wish you well for now and the future.

Personally, having attended the meeting to create the Federation, and the later inaugural one, in Hamilton during the 1970s, I will miss my attendance and interesting occasions over fifty years attending the AGMs in the North and South Islands - plus the regional gatherings. I have been an ordinary member for all that time, so will be able to take part in some way.

Thank you.

John Webster,
President, North Shore Historical Society, 25 March 2023.

Papakura and District Historical Society

In 2022 we celebrated 60 years of the PDHS and 50 years of the Papakura Museum.

Society and Museum are in good heart despite loss of members during Covid and concern about Auckland Council cost-cutting. As a result of recent Facebook advertising, we have had several new members (currently 75) and numbers at our last meeting reached pre-Covid figures. Nonetheless our Museum Manager spends much time on seeking grants for exhibitions, etc.

PDHS activities:

- * Monthly meetings with speakers on a range of historical subjects. Twice a year we make sure that the speaker is someone engaged in local research (Papakura or Manukau/ Franklin)
- * Trips - formerly regular monthly trips open to all, but problematic, and now ad hoc targeted trips.
- * Papakura Sentinel newsletter bi-monthly. Contains regular original research.
- * Volunteers and oversight of the Papakura Museum

Papakura Museum:

We are proud of our Museum which serves the area well. It is supported by Auckland Council and the Local Board, and we have good relations with one of the two major local iwi, while working on developing relationships with the other. We also rely on grants.

Staffing - Admin Manager (part-time). Curator, Research officer (part-time), and Front-of-House/ Social Media, supported by a team of volunteers.

Activities:

Exhibitions: Standing History of Papakura District undergoing gradual renewal, a Military Gallery which is being remodelled (Rings Redoubt artefacts from archaeological survey) and Short term

Special exhibitions - Currently Anne Frank (from Amsterdam/ NZ Holocaust Centre), previously some local original material (Lens on Papakura, Soaring! - gliding)

A large area of wall is going to be shared with our two major iwi (who have recently had taonga returned) and who will be enabled to tell their stories. Funding has been made available for this.

Also short-term displays organised by volunteers, and talks about the exhibitions.

Collection: with volunteers the whole collection is being checked and re-catalogued. Working towards a digitisation of photographs. Accessioning new material.

Heritage Walking Map - with tours organised during Auckland Heritage Festival and since.

Research being conducted by several people into several aspects of the local history.

Education: Some of the special exhibitions have had an education focus for school-age children.

We have been analysing the Aotearoa NZ History Curriculum and are responding to approaches from several schools (1 year 2, 1 year 3, 2 years 4-8 so far this year) to work with their pupils, preferably in the Museum but also at school. Future modifications on the local iwi display will contribute to this.

Exhibition and display need to work hand in hand.

Social media: Our new Front-of-House/Social Media person is putting effort and skill into keeping our website and Facebook page up-to-date and active. Also an independent Papakura Then and Now Facebook page is generating interest throughout the community.

Tairua

I think it is fair to say that we have had a busy and successful year.

We lost one committee member but he was replaced by two new younger members, so now only 75% of our committee is "retired".

We have over 50 "Friends of Heritage" who for their annual sub of \$20/household receive several newsletters each year and are invited to meetings with guest speakers (usually 2-3 per year).

Although we made little progress on our website, our outreach to local schools or with our local hapu, on several other fronts we have made good progress:

Panels: a new double-sided panel was erected on Queens Birthday weekend on the themes of gold mining and kauri gum; and another is almost completed about our wharf/port and local shipwrecks. We have several others in the pipeline.

Publications: at Labour Weekend we launched our 4th publication, "Tairua in the News" with over 100 pages of photos and text from local newspapers covering the six decades 1960-2020. There were over 70 people at the launch and we have already sold over 150 copies and needed a reprint. Our next publications will be about local iconic baches and historic buildings. A small booklet on the origins/ meanings of local street names is now also on sale at our Information Centre.

Fundraising: our main event this year was 4 days of 'food, fashion and fun' held in November with Jo Seagar as our special guest. This comprised a Roaring '20s night; a sit-down dinner cooked by Jo; a 50's cooking and fashion parade; and an Antiques Roadshow. All events were very well attended and we raised over \$15,000 for our building fund, raised our profile and involved many people across the community. A garage sale on Anniversary Weekend raised another \$1,500.

Building: We have had 4 meetings of a Steering Group set up by TCDC to advance this project to extend our library by adding on a heritage centre. It is in the budget for 2022-24 and the architect has presented his first concept plan which we have commented on. It will provide us with 150m² of display space plus a mezzanine floor of 50m² for admin and storage.

Finally, a new book was published in November 2022 entitled "A History of New Zealand in 100 Objects". It includes things like the Treaty of Waitangi, Pompallier's printing press and Captain Cook's cannon and we were delighted to see that the third item in the book is Tairua's famous fishing lure dated between 1292 and 1332.

Thank you.

Thames Museum

The museum is run entirely by volunteers: we have no paid staff and receive very little uncontested assistance from our district council - \$2,182 a year.

In 2022 Kaumatua Wati Ngamane granted us permission to use the name Te Whare Taonga o te Kauaeranga, and with this we shifted our focus from being simply a "settlers' museum" (which is not to under-value the settlers in any way) to representing a much bigger and truer picture of our district's story.

We worked closely with Craig Solomon, Ngati Maru's museum advisor, in the preparation of a purpose-built Taonga Maori Gallery. This was a first for the museum although it had been on the museum's wish list for many years.

The gallery opened in July 2022 to tie in with the celebration of Matariki.



A centre piece is Doug Pick's model of Te Totara Pa. It measures 3 metres x 1.5 metres; some of you may remember it from its time at Cambridge Museum.

The new gallery is proving popular with school groups - teachers and pupils, New Zealanders and overseas visitors.

Thanks to translators who gladly gave their time to the task, the Taonga gallery is almost entirely bi

-lingual **Te Reo** Maori and English. We are thrilled that 2 toki have recently been dated to around 1300 or 1400 CE.

During the 2021-2022 period, we received a lot of support from our Thames community which has helped us emerge from the Covid downturn.

Thanks to the Museum Hardship Fund, we have significantly upgraded the museum's security with CCTV, intruder and smoke alarms.

Again thanks to the Hardship Fund, we have improved physical access to the museum by installing a very low profile track for the main sliding door, so eliminating two short ramps which were difficult for some people to negotiate.

In 2021 we began a long-overdue stocktake. For the first time in many years, we now know what we have and where it is, and have found treasures that we didn't even know we had. Many of our artefacts are now accessible on Digital NZ. Another volunteer, Chris, has dedicated many hours to scanning all our donor and accessioning documents going back to when the museum was founded in the 1970s.

We have put a lot of effort into improving the visitor experience, with new cabinets, refreshed displays, QR codes to more information in the key display areas and rack cards with additional information about the displays. The QR code to the call of a brown kiwi is proving especially popular. We are looking at introducing NZ Sign Language and a STQRY (Story with a Q - stqry.com) tour.

With the closure of the Thames i-SITE we have assumed the role of de-facto information point, a free service which out-of-town and overseas visitors certainly appreciate.

The last months of 2022 and January this year saw visitor numbers steadily climbing, with the return of tour and school groups and overseas visitors. January was the best month we had had for a long time.

Sadly, road damage caused by the cyclones has seen a significant downturn again in visitor numbers. The closure of the Kopu-Hikuai Road, SH25A, linking us to the eastern side of the peninsula, will not be a quick fix.

In the months ahead, Thames will have to work hard to attract visitors, and nowhere more so than in the heritage sector where we are active members of Thames Heritage Network which embraces all the town's many significant heritage attractions.

Thames must discard the "Gateway to the Coromandel" image and promote itself as the wonderful destination that it is. We are working on increased community involvement and attracting more local people to the museum.

Looking ahead, our dream is to enlarge the museum and to upgrade our storage facility; to

Other news from the members

Chinese NZ Oral History Foundation

At the Morrinsville Conference, David Wong, President of the CNZOHF, spoke about the series of books he has put together over the past few years which provide lists of those Chinese who entered the country and were obliged, due to government regulation at the time, to pay a poll tax. I asked David to write something about his work for KIT.

Background to four books:

Looking for a Better Life: the Poll Tax records in Auckland,

Looking for a Better Life: the Poll Tax records of Wellington, the Certificate of Registration 1903-1950 and Chinese Miners returning home.


In the 1870s Ah Chee, from the Guangdong province of China on route to Australia had disembarked in New Zealand looking for a better life. From the 1950s my mother Alice Ah Chee and her brothers and cousin May Sai Louie told me about the 'Ah Chee history' but I didn't know how to find more about Ah Chee's life in New Zealand.

In 2002 the Labour Government apologised to the Poll Tax descendant community of New Zealand and supported the preservation and maintenance of their history and culture. In the mid 2000s Miss Lisa Truttman, a historical researcher, asked me what did I know about the Ah Chee history, I sadly said "not much, just glimpses of information from some of my Ah Chee uncles and aunts." Lisa generously said "I have a news article about Mr Ah Chee's 1886 marriage in Auckland, would you like a copy??" I was thunder-struck, at last something definite. So began my discovering more Ah Chee's life in New Zealand and published this a few years later.



A few years later Lisa Truttman said that Archives New Zealand had a collection of all the records of the Chinese who had paid the poll tax in Auckland. We visited Archives in Māngere and for about 3 days copied the information of about 1,500 Chinese from the Head

Looking for a better life: Chinese gold-miners returning home

From
Reverend Don's records (published in James NG's Windows on the Chinese Past Vol. 4)



以往紐西蘭





Lisa J. Truttman & David Wong Hop MNZM 黃德衛, 英女皇勳章
2021

Supported by
Kuo Min Tang, (Auckland Branch) 中國國民黨, 紐西蘭, 屋脊支部.
Ronald & Yoland Ng Hoy Fong
The Chinese New Zealand Oral History Foundation (Inc) 紐西蘭口述歷史基金會
The family of the late Alice Ah Chee & Francis Wong Hop, (David & Susan [dec'd]
Stationery City Glenfield

Looking for a better life ...

The Chinese Poll Tax Certificate records in Auckland



CERTIFICATE

Under Section 7 of "The Chinese Immigration Act, 1881"

No. 1

Date of issue: 21st June 1881

Name: Wah Hing

Born at China

Apparent age: 30

Former place of residence: Launceston

Arrived by ship Wah Hing

From Wah Hing







(This form to be retained by the Collector)

David V. Wong Hop
with Lisa J. Truttman
2018

Supported by
Kuo Min Tang (Auckland Branch)
Ronald & Yoland Ng Hoy Fong
The Li family of Porana Point, Takapuna
The Chinese New Zealand Oral History Foundation (Inc)
Alice Ah Chee & Francis Wong Hop Family: Joana, Margaret, David & Susan

The Poll Tax on Chinese of New Zealand 1850-1890

紐西蘭華人的頭稅

Lisa J. Truttman and David Wong Hop 2022 MNZM J.P (Rtd)

Supported by
Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust Foundation
Kuo Min Tang, Auckland Branch (Estb c 1916)
Chinese New Zealand Oral History Foundation (Inc)

the Families of:
Ronald & Yoland NG HOY FONG and Jared & Karen Hoy Fong
Alice AH CHEE & Francis WONG HOP (Joan, Margaret, David & Susan [Dec' d])

ISBN: 978-0-473-63369-1

Office's portion of the Poll Tax Receipt books, that were in books of 50 or 100 records.

In late December 1885 the boat Waihora arrived from Sydney, a tax of £10 was paid before the steerage passengers could enter the colony of New Zealand included Ching She, aged 18 years. The Customs Officer's used a quill and ink and wrote what he heard, I examined the entry and the word looked like Ling or Lian, and many years later Archives New Zealand read this as Ching She, at last I had found when my maternal Great Grandmother Miss JOONG Ling She had arrived in NZ.

Lisa and I started to compile the "Looking for a better life, the Poll Tax Certificates in Auckland" and published this in 2018. It was a brief history of the poll tax and Auckland, prominent Chinese and lists of names in Alphabetical order, when they arrived and their ages, females who came, details of the boats they arrived on and gave a copy to the Mangere branch of Archives NZ.

Two more complete Poll Tax Lists: Archives New Zealand helped us further and confirmed that there were complete lists of Chinese (ie 'Series") for who arrived and the Poll Tax paid in Wellington and the 'Aliens' Certificate of Registration who had left from Dunedin 1903 to 1950. Chinese remained aliens unless they decided to 'naturalise.' That was possible until about 1910.

Before 1880: Many Chinese had come to New Zealand before the Poll Tax era and worked in the South Island's gold fields, about 400 signed Young Hee's anti-opium petition and Reverend Don recorded that about 400 miners had returned to China. This was the basis of 'Looking for a better life: the Chinese miners returning home" that included lists of those Chinese miners, when they arrived in New Zealand, where they worked or lived, family details, when they travelled to China etc.

These books details of many of the Chinese who came to New Zealand looking for a better life.

Contact David Wong for details on his books:
todayinnz@gmail.com

Papatoetoe

I visited the new Papatoetoe Museum, operated by the Historical Society, on Wednesday 8 March when it was first open to the public. This is the fruition of a long process for the Society, since they learned that they would have to vacate the previous site. As the Society's latest newsletter says: "Well done to everyone who has been involved and helped in the relocation of the museum from the Depot site to the Papatoetoe Chambers. It has been a huge job to sort, redistribute, relocate and display the items. Eke Panuku Development Auckland has been very supportive of the society re-establishing the museum at the Papatoetoe Chambers and met the relocation costs."

Congratulations, Papatoetoe Historical Society, and thanks to your volunteers for the chat that day.



Tauranga

Tauranga's new-look newsletter, published this month, is impressive.

[https://issuu.com/taurangahistoricalsociety/docs/th_s_newsletter - 2023 april](https://issuu.com/taurangahistoricalsociety/docs/th_s_newsletter_-_2023_april).

The society's president Debbie McCauley and her team have produced a stunning full-colour publication which is a shining example of what local history and modern publication design can achieve together. I'm personally looking forward to future issues.

From the President's letter:

"Dear Members & Supporters,

"Thank you so much for your support of the Society and Brain Watkins House Museum as we walk backwards into the future with our eyes fixed on the past | kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua. This whakatauki or 'proverb' speaks to Māori perspectives of time, where the past, the present and the future are viewed as intertwined, and the past is central to and shapes both present and future identity.

"In February Cyclone Gabrielle lashed much of the country and earthquakes have followed — we send our aroha to those badly affected. This has led me to reflect on the storms that the Brain family weathered at Brain Watkins House during their 98-year residency.

One that does tickle my fancy, but would have been incredibly frightening, was the violent eruption of Mount Tarawera in 1886. During this time the Brain family's terrified horse was brought inside the hallway of the house for its own safety.

"This is just one of the many stories that make our house museum a unique and treasured taonga for which we are merely acting as kaitiaki — carers, guardians, protectors and conservers."

