



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for NZ Federation of Historical Societies

Volume 5 Issue 4 October 2011

www.nzhistoricalsocieties.org.nz

Auckland Regional Gathering, August 2011

The following comes from Otahuhu Historical Society's September newsletter. A much better summary than I could provide!

*Photos are by Bill Ellis, Torbay Historical Society
— Editor*

On Sunday 28 August Mary Gillespie and Elaine Read attended this gathering hosted by the Avondale-Waterview Historical Society and held in St Ninian's Church in Avondale.

St Ninian's was built between November 1859 and March 1860 and was opened on April 8, 1860. The adjacent cemetery is the second oldest in Avondale and predates that at Waikumete. Auckland City Council bought the building and the remaining surrounding land, including the cemetery, in the late 1980s and the property



was converted to community use. The building was closed to the public in 2007 and after renovations it has recently reopened for the community.

The first presentation was by a group of enthusiastic ladies who have compiled the book *Legacy of Occupation*, a collection of stories of occupational therapy in New Zealand between 1940 and 1972. They took us on their journey of why they considered it important to tell these stories, how

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.



Calendar 2012

1 April

The Karaka Historical Society Vintage Day Contact karakahistoricalociety@gmail.com

27-29 April

NZ Federation Annual Conference and AGM at Levin, hosted by Horowhenua Historical Society

11 August

Auckland Regional Gathering, hosted by Mangere Historical Society

Next issue due out February 2012

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or email historian@avondale.org.nz

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

they compiled and funded the book and finally arranging to have the material archived within the Sir George Grey Special Collections for future generations.

Gail Fotheringham, Community Services Advisor at Auckland Council, then outlined three Council led projects that have set out to promote historical knowledge and increase a positive sense of identity within the community.

The Blockhouse Bay Living History Project is a digital storytelling initiative in which older people share their memories of events in Blockhouse Bay. This is the pilot of a continuing project which other organisations are invited to run with. A copy of the DVD is available to be viewed in our rooms.

Days of Future Past is an intergenerational project that passes on the wisdom and knowledge of older people as they are interviewed by younger relatives. It is broadcast every Monday at 4:20pm on Planet FM 104.6 a not-for-profit community radio station based at the Mt. Albert campus of Unitec. In these conversations between generations, young people talk with older people about one piece of advice for generations to come, and older people talk with young people about how it is to grow up in today's world. This weekly intergenerational dialogue aims to increase respect and understanding between generations and to pass on local history and knowledge.

The third project is the Kuia and Kaumatua Oral History Project which encompasses workshops designed to enhance pride in Maori identity, local history and connections across the generations.

Thank you to Lisa for organising this pleasant and informative day. Next year's gathering is to be hosted by the Mangere Historical Society.

The statistics: Avondale-Waterview HS hosted on the day 31 attendees, plus guest speakers. In the afternoon, those who attended the Wurlitzer Concert at the Hollywood Cinema reported back that they enjoyed themselves immensely — good to hear. On behalf AWHHS, I'd like to thank the following organisations and societies for coming along and helping make the Gathering special:

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?

Committee members of NZ Federation of Historical Societies

Birkenhead Historical Society

Blockhouse Bay Historical Society

Chinese New Zealand Oral History Foundation

Mt Roskill Historical Society

Otahuhu Historical Society

Onehunga & Fencibles Historical Society

Papatoetoe Historical Society

Pt Chevalier Historical Society

Remuera Heritage

Silverdale Historical Society

Tauranga Historical Society

Waikato Historical Society

West Auckland Historical Society (also serving as our caterers, supplying a thoroughly enjoyable lunch!)

Avondale Library

Avondale Community Society

Auckland Council

"Legacy of Occupation" team

— Lisa Truttman

"Living History" DVD offer

The Living History project organised at Blockhouse Bay by the former Auckland City Council with the Mental Health Foundation was a topic at the Regional Gathering. This from Gail Fotheringham, Auckland Council:

Blockhouse Bay is one of the special districts of Auckland, tidy and compact, contained virtually in a square. The southern boundary is on the coast of the Manukau Harbour, to the east is Mt Roskill, to the North there is Avondale, and to the West, New Lynn and Titirangi.

The aim of the Living History project was to capture some of the experiences older people have of life in the bay – giving a wider platform to stories that only close family and friends may otherwise have heard.

The contributions of this generation are as important as "bricks and mortar", shaping not only the landscape of the area but also the attitude that has maintained the "village" feel and contributed to what the bay is today.

If any Auckland Region society would like a free copy of the DVD, contact Gail on 09 354 2047 or Gail.Fotheringham@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



**NZ Federation of Historical Societies
2012 Annual Conference and AGM
27-29 April at Levin
Hosted by Horowhenua Historical
Society**

At the time of publication, these were the details to hand:

NZ Federation Secretary Neil Curgenvin is preparing details regarding Conference/AGM 2012. From the minutes of the latest Federation Committee meeting, in August:

The intention is to (this side of Christmas) promote and get firm placements for a bus from Auckland, initial costings being prepared. The bus would head south via SH1, and return via SH3, giving a historical commentary where possible. Arriving Friday evening, the scene would be set for a social evening. Saturday morning would cover local historical places of interest and after lunch two workshop-type sessions before the AGM and Association members' activities reports. The dinner would include some light entertainment. Departure Sunday morning with morning tea at Bulls.

More information to come.



Advocacy Assistance

Over the years a number of affiliated societies have requested written support for activities in which they are involved. This may be for such things as confirmation of being a member of Federation for a grant application to support for a major project (such as a new building for a museum). In most instances this support has been readily forthcoming from Federation – mainly on an ad-hoc basis!

At a recent Executive meeting it has been decided to formalise the process for such advocacy requests due to an increased demand for such action.. This will be done by adding an Advocacy Request form to Federation's website:

www.newzealandhistoricalsocieties.org.nz

which can be filled in on line. A paper copy will be available on request from:-

Liaison Officer
Federation of Historical Societies Inc
517 Puniu Road
Te Awamutu 3800

Any requests will be circulated to Executive members, a decision reached and a prompt reply given.

Have a look at our web site for further information and the form.

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.

Society News & Views

Birkenhead

The Editor attended the Society's October meeting, where Brian Potter gave a very interesting talk on Birkenhead and Surrounds in 1963, using Google Earth's installation of historical aerial photographs available online. The Birkenhead area appear to be very fortunate (earliest photos back to 1963), as most of the rest of Auckland and New Zealand at the moment are only covered up to around 1999-2002 — but hopefully, this will be extended.

With an internet connection, Google Earth, and a room of locals who avidly recalled and pointed out sites of interest on a landscape now changed by progress — Brian's talk was a refreshingly different idea for guest speaking before a society.

Eastbourne

From the Society's August newsletter:

Isabel McIlraith, an Eastbourne resident for over 75 years and a founding member of the Historical Society, died recently at the age of 104 ... In 1933 she married Frank McIlraith and moved to Eastbourne, where Frank worked in the Post Office. ... A keen embroiderer, Isabel was a long-time member of the Wellington Embroiderers Guild; she also did many years of voluntary work on textiles at the National Museum, for which she was made an Honorary Associate of the Museum ... Isabel and Frank were stalwarts of the Eastbourne Historical Society,

and were both made Life Members in recognition of their 30 years on the committee. Isabel was particularly famous for her 'tussie-mussies' — the Victorian posies she created from flowers on her cottage garden. A publisher friend suggested she write a book about them, and the result, published in 1983, was a great success, running to several editions.

Helensville

Reprint of *Pioneering Women of South Kaipara*.

(From NZ Legacy, Vol 23 No. 2, 2011)

This book was first published in 2000 by the Helensville & District Historical Society as a millennium project, based on material collected for Suffrage Year in 1993, and has now been re-launched as a second edition this year. Sixteen more entries on the pioneer women of the district have been added, including Helensville's first businesswoman, the Auckland Rugby Referee's Association first woman member, Waimauku's first Postmistress, and the first woman registered as a veterinarian in New Zealand. Extra help in this edition for researchers and librarians is the addition of a 14-page index to the book.

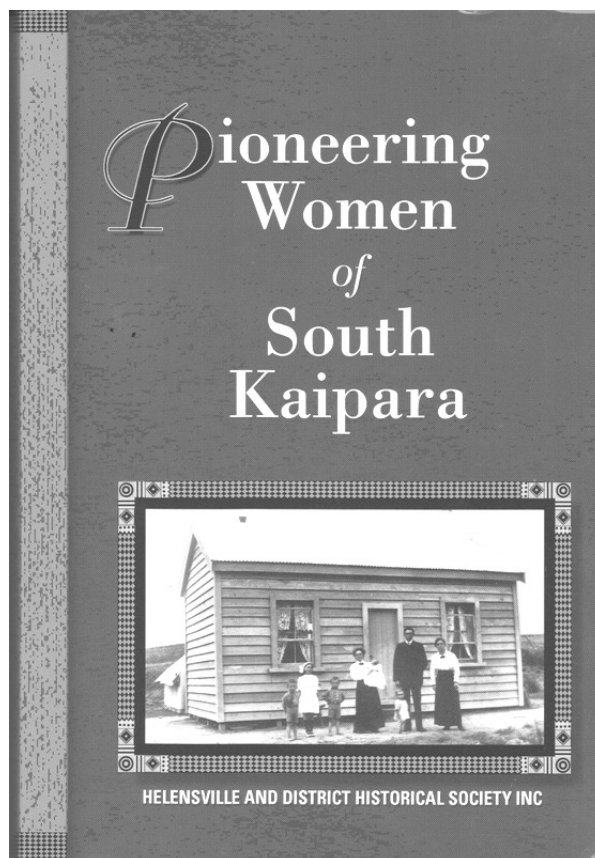
The book is well illustrated throughout, the photographs of the women neatly complementing the wealth of information from the stories, each one giving future generations of readers an idea of what life was like as pioneers in the landscapes of our past. These women worked hard for their families and for the greater community. Their descendants remember the smells of home cooking, the washing lines used for drying skeins of wool, the loneliness and isolation of early families, the support of Maori to the earliest colonial settlers, tips of fingers lost while misjudging the chop of an axe while despatching a chicken, and both the joys of birth and the sadness of death as each life is lived.

The book is available from the Helensville & District Historical Society, Box 133 Helensville 0840, \$40 plus \$6 p&p. 454 pages, softcover. The book can also be ordered via email, with online payment available (contact Sue Hadwin at helensvillemuseum@xtra.co.nz.)

Kapiti

From the Society's July newsletter

The little Joan Sherley Reserve overlooking the sea at Raumati South was opened by the Mayor, Jenny Rowan, on April 11 last as a fitting tribute to a woman who had been associated with the area for 77 years ... Joan was awarded the QSM in 2005, and was presented with two civic awards for her services to the community ... The historical society is delighted her memory will be preserved in the Joan Sherley Memorial Park by the sea. Kapiti Historical Society President, Tony Froude, and Treasurer Martin Kaiser spoke of her contribution to the society over the years.



Mangere

From emails from Val Payne, Mangere Historical Society:)

“Our new Archives are found in Room 17 Mangere Town Centre off Orly Ave. Entry is from the west facing door that goes into the CAB. Phone 281 0302, email

mangerehistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Our official opening is not until mid November but the archivists are there every Monday from 10a.m. to 12.30 working hard to get everything sorted and set up.

“After many, many months of talking to people at Council, firstly that of Manukau and now the Auckland Council, we have at last been assigned some ground floor rooms to use for our Historical Society Archives. Our previous ones were located up some steep stairs that meant that the elderly Archivists had to lug filing cabinets, cupboards and data up to this small room. It leaked in the winter and was sweltering in summer.

“We took the Council Officer to see what we were putting up with and the rain came just as we looked at our room and we had to put an (historical) chamber pot under the drip to catch the unwanted excess of water. We were handed the key to the area we had been asking for and were assured that the lease would come in the mail! This bloke then went overseas for a couple of years so I waited impatiently for the appropriate papers to arrive. Nothing. I rang and was told

that we had to make an application before we would be considered!! I assured the lady on the other end of the phone that we already had the key and had moved our things in, so possession is nine tenths of the law as far as we were concerned.

“We have been given the model of the newest bridge and approaches to Mangere Bridge and Onehunga by the Manukau Harbour Crossing/ Fletchers Construction group. We are so happy to have room to accept this large gift and know that there could be no better place to have it on display. Yahoo!! Our previous room was inaccessible to those members who had arthritic knees and hips, heart and respiratory problems. Once it is all set up we can actually have our own members come and visit as well as make it available for interested folk to come and do their own research, assisted by the information we have on hand. This has re-enthused everyone about this essential part of our Society. It just proves that if you keep on working towards your goals, you can eventually succeed.”

— Val Payne

(Editor's note: Mangere Historical Society will be the hosts for the 2012 Auckland Regional Gathering of Historical Societies. Keep an eye on the newsletter for further information)

Manurewa

On 30 July this year, Gwen Chadwin Wichman (1917-2011) passed away. From the "About the author" blurb on the back cover of her 2001 book, Soaring Bird: A History of Manurewa to 1965:

“Mrs Gwen Chadwin Wichman (nee Kelly) was born in Whangarei in 1917, but moved with her family to Manurewa in 1927, where she has lived ever since. She was educated at Morrinsville and Manurewa primary schools and Epsom Girls Grammar. Her first job was in her father's drapery store in Manurewa. She later worked at Enos S Pegler's Land Agency and, from 1938, for nine years as an office assistant for the newly formed Manurewa Borough Council.

“In 1947 Gwen married Roy Wichman, another Council employee, and they had three children. Gwen's interests include gardening, church activities, her family, and her pets. She has been involved in a number of community organisations, and is a founding member (1981) and secretary of the Manurewa Historical Society.

“Gwen's interest in writing goes back to the age of eight, when she was one of the contributors to the *New Zealand Herald* “Boys and Girls” page, edited by Elsie K Morton.”

Gwen Wichman also wrote A Brief History of Manurewa in 1990. Our condolences to her family, friends, and to the Manurewa Historical Society for their loss.

— Editor

North Shore

The Editor attended the Society's October meeting, where Robin Astridge, NZ Federation's Liaison Officer and immediate past president, spoke on what turned out to be an intriguing topic, one we must all wonder about: why we (in this case, he) join historical societies. He took the audience along on an account of his journey (and Robin is still journeying) from joining the now-recessed New Plymouth Historical Society, through to presidency of that society, attending Federation conferences, and becoming President of the NZ Federation.

I hope he repeats the speech at a national conference at some point.

Onehunga

From the Society's newsletter, in August:

Some sad news: one of our members, Sheila Mary Weight (né Weeks) passed away on the 15th July at the wonderful age of 89 years. Sheila was well known to many of us, especially those on the roster as she was the ‘key lady’ for those who don't have a key to open up. Sheila was born in England and was with the RAF during WWII, she was also a Radar instructor. In her spare time she would visit the war wounded in the hospitals and it was there she met Peter Weight, who was being treated for shrapnel wounds. He, being a New Zealander, returned home, but later Sheila travelled to New Zealand and married Peter Everard Weight in 1947. As well as being a JP and a member of the Museum of NZ, she also helped in the Red Cross shop, but those were only some of her part-time activities. Sheila was said to be a great cook, so with six sons she must have got a lot of experience. They and their families and friends will surely miss her, just as we will, and all Society members send condolences to them on the loss of such a caring mother and friend.

Papakura

(From emails received 12 August)

I was rung last night to tell me that Mary Jocelyn Brown (93) had passed away. Jocelyn was a Papakura Historical Society stalwart for many years and served on Federation Committee from 1993 - 1996. She hosted many an executive meeting at Papakura Museum during this time - her late husband Arthur's cheese straws being an eagerly sought after snack at these meetings! Jocelyn attended all AGMs during her committee time and proved a good friend to Federation and a wonderful travelling companion when we toured the South after one AGM there - in fact I can remember helping her celebrate her 80th in Temuka! She hasn't enjoyed good health in recent years so was not prominent in matters historical though evidently still retained a great interest in these matters. Just thought I would let you know as the newsletter may not have

gone yet and a note will let others know who may remember her.

--Robin Astridge

I used to see her at Christmas functions when held at Highwic as Jocelyn's mother was a sister-in-law to Alfred Buckland - being the sister of his second wife. The maiden name was Frodsham - Jocelyn's mother married Mr Hesketh - and when at Highwic used to remember the family and that as a young girl she was allowed to view from a distance the burning of the Newmarket School, which then was opposite Highwic. She gifted some photos of Highwic a few years back - I collected them from her.

— John Webster

Our condolences to her family, friends, and to the Papakura Historical Society for their loss.

— Editor

Congratulations to Papakura Historical Society on the publication in August of their new-look newsletter, *The Papakura Sentinel*. This is packed with information not only on the society's activities, but clippings from out of past newspapers about the district. A wonderfully put-together publication.

Parnell

The Society published the inaugural issue of the *Parnell Heritage Journal* last month. The price is \$15.00, postage \$2.50 (for 1-2 issues per mailing). Orders received at: P O Box 37479, Parnell, Auckland 1151.

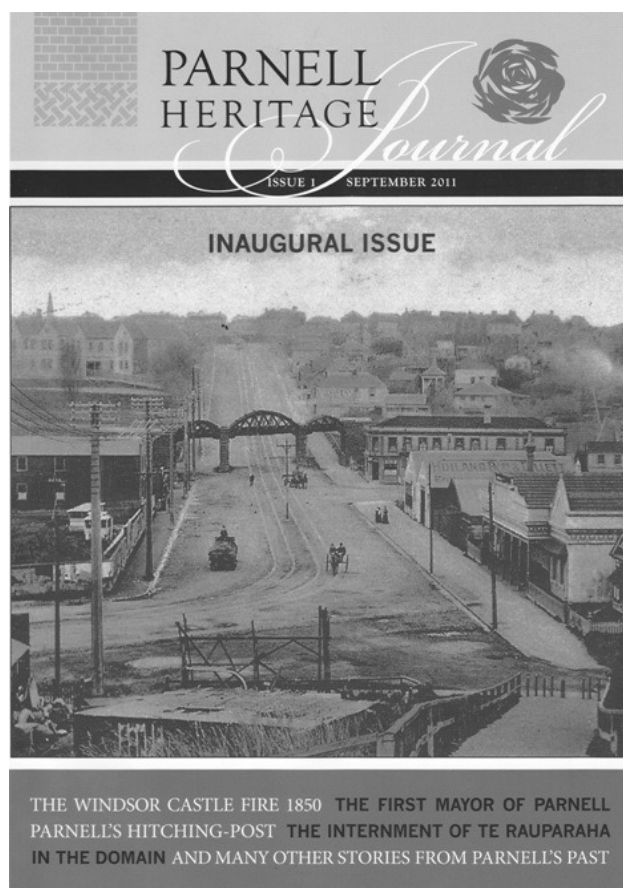
Patea

According to the Society's Annual Report (published August 2011 in the *Patea & Waverly Press*), the society have continued their focus on bi-monthly field days, attracting 20-25 people each time, and continues to support the South Taranaki District Museum, two appointed members from the Society on that trust board. The Society provided a \$12,000 loan to the museum to assist with the completion of the new building. The Society's committee "is considering a writing competition among the schools in South Taranaki; the subject must be of a historical nature and suitable prizes to be divided among possibly two levels."

Petone

(From their August /September 2011 newsletter)

"We have been busy. One of the most pressing needs for our society is to have a good look at ourselves and see what we can do to attract more members and improve what we do. We have enlisted one of our younger members Nik Zangaropoulos to lead us in a strategic review. This is important because we are



gradually fading away and Nik is a very astute business man. We have found that at present our median age is about 70 and that our numbers have diminished over the past few years by about 50%. What do we have to do to encourage the next generation to take an interest in the history of Petone? Our most pressing need is to attract new members and we hope that Nik can help supply some answers to this.

"It was interesting to note just how much we have achieved over the years and how many projects we are still involved in. There is still a real place for our society in Petone."

(The Friends of Petone Museum have now wound up.)

"It is sad but a wind up meeting of the Friends of Petone Settlers Museum was held [in July]. The Friends was launched in 1980 but over the past few years has not been having meetings or showing much help to the museum. It was decided that the funds still in the Friends account should be used for digitalising and protecting items in the Museum. Now the museum is run by the Dowse and it is the only place for the social history of the city. It is no longer just a Petone place. It was pleasing, however, to note that there is an agreement that our Historical Society will have a special relationship, through the Dowse, with The Settlers Museum and still be able to have a voice. There is little need for a separate entity at this time."

Porirua

(From the Society's September newsletter)

In response to our submissions to the Porirua City Council's Annual plan, digitalisation of historical records is to be undertaken as part of normal workloads for the local history section of the library. The library has been producing microfilm copies of some materials and is also producing digital format copies. Further work is planned in 2011/12 to add archives management software to the current library system.

Over the years we have asked for a permanent historic display that illustrates the history of Porirua, at the entrance of Pataka Museum. The Council had advised that this is an ongoing project and is expected to be completed within the next 12 months.

Silverdale

(Notes from the Society's September newsletter)

"The wet weather arrived at a perfect time. The men could not start on erecting the new storage shed, which has been sponsored by the generosity of Ian Boocock, and we are waiting for the council processes to be completed on the plans for the extension for the fire engine. So needing something to keep themselves out

of mischief they decided it was time to remove the old scrim from the front two rooms of the school house and line them with gib board. That meant moving all the furniture of course, giving the rooms a new paint job and putting up new wallpaper. Never before in the history of the society has so much been done so quickly by so few.

"The men probably thought it would end there, but the chance to revamp a display which has been virtually in the same form for at least thirty years was too good to pass up. The bedroom was set up originally in one of the front rooms of the parsonage, now used as the gift shop (gallery). In those days the chapel and the parsonage were all we had, and the Herb Society worked out of the little room next to the kitchen which the gallery now flows into.

"Then the society acquired the school house. The gallery began life in the back of it and Margaret Stevenson had the front two rooms as an archives/reading room and photograph display space. A few years later the gallery and the display bedroom swapped houses, Margaret's domain moved to the back of the school house (sunnier and warmer) and the bedroom and parlour took on the appearance they have had ever since. It really is time for a change! The

Queenstown Historical Society 2012 Calendars

On Sale Locally & by Mail Order



2012 Calendar

In 2012 we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the discovery of gold in the Arrow River, the centenary of the Earnslaw, and fifty years of Glenorchy Racedays.

14 historical photographs.

The A4 calendars are perfect gifts for posting, and are our main fundraiser.

Price: \$15 if bought directly from Society members or from Hamills at Remarkables Park, or with a mark-up if bought from the Lakes District Museum and some other outlets.

Mail Orders: \$17 (to include postage)

Send orders with return address to:

Historical Society Calendar Sales, P.O.Box 132, Queenstown

rooms will soon look quite different, and with the usual domino effect, other display areas will have to be re-done as well to accommodate items which no longer have a home. Fortunately we have the new station house to fill.”

West Auckland

Still in transition after the establishment of the Super City, Auckland Council Libraries decided to cancel their

Want to swap, give away, buy or sell something?

Feel free to contact the Editor. I'm happy to put up notices for members for anything you would like the rest of the Federation to know about.

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 Curgenvin**, PO Box 1625, Paraparaumu Beach 5252, or email: ncurgenvin@gmail.com

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involvement with the J T Diamond writing competition this year, normally organised in conjunction with West Auckland Historical Society, in order to prepare plans for a wider regional competition in the near future. However, WAHS decided that their area still deserved to have a competition despite this — and successfully organised the competition this year themselves.

Their prizegiving night was held on 27 October, in the old Waitakere City Council Chambers at Henderson, and was well received by guests and competition participants. This competition remains a good opportunity to foster an interest in local history in the youth of today.

End Thoughts

Displaying historical 'baccy

Regarding the recent passing of the law to stop tobacco/cigarette advertising via posters & adverts, how does this affect museums and historical societies with museums in areas that tobacco and production of it was grown - and is displayed as part of the historical display in their museum?

West Auckland, I think, covers the Riverhead tobacco trade (I have an empty packet of "Riverhead Gold " but won't show it to anyone NOW!). Napier/Hawke's Bay could also be accounted for as would Nelson. I'm sure there would be a concession to museums to display the old posters & photos - but maybe not!? And I think Te Papa had a display of tobacco growing in their social history area - but that place changes all the time so may not have it currently.

John Webster

Do you have insurance for your photographs, books and archives?

After making several phone calls to Societies within the Auckland Region, it is evident that there is a variation in how these items are covered. Although the buildings are insured, in some cases the contents are not. Several societies do have their material digitised and this is stored off site. Also I have been advised that if buildings are secure, have fire protection and items stored in metal cabinets, insurance is not really necessary.

Any suggestions would be appreciated

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