Auckland Regional Gathering
5 September 2015

Hosted by
Torbay Historical Society

Calendar

2015
21-22 November — Christmas at Couldrey House, Wenderholm (see inside)

2016
31 January — Onehunga & Fencible Historic Society Northern Onehunga Walk. (details inside)
29 April to 1 May — NZ History Federation national conference and AGM, at Auckland
11 June — Waikato/Bay of Plenty Regional Gathering at Hamilton
August — Auckland Regional Gathering at Helensville

Photos: Bill Ellis

Next issue due out February 2016
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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the New Zealand History Federation Inc.
Our thanks to Torbay Historical Society for hosting a wonderful morning and lunch at the St. Mary by the Sea church hall in Deep Creek Road, Torbay, followed by afternoon tea in the always wonderful Vaughan Homestead at Long Bay.

Fourteen societies were represented, along with representatives from the NZ History Federation executive committee, and associate members of Federation Robin Astridge and Herb Farrant. Apologies were received from Papatoetoe Historical Society, Don Gallagher of NZ Fencibles, and Friends of Coulready House.

The Societies who were represented and took part in the Societies Update session during the morning were: Waikato, North Shore, Silverdale, Mangere, Matamata, Helensville, Onehunga, Otahuhu, Mt Roskill, Puhoi, Remuera, Glenfield, West Auckland, and Birkenhead.

Otahuhu Historical Society gave this review in their September newsletter:

“This year’s Auckland conference was held at St Mary by the Sea Church Hall, Torbay on the North Shore followed by a tour of the Vaughn Homestead at the Long Bay Regional Park. About forty people attended from a number of different societies and it was interesting to hear from each of them what they had been doing throughout the year and how they are overcoming the problem of declining membership. Embracing new technology like Facebook, joining forces with other societies and publicising a unique feature of their area seem to be a common theme.

“The Federation offers considerable support to societies that wish to enhance the visitor experience to their area through the STORY platform whereby visitors can access large amounts of information in any language about a site via their mobile phone. This technology clearly has potential to attract large numbers of tourists. The Federation also provides support with printing costs for publications ...

“The relatively recently established Puhoi Historical Society that showcases the Bohemian early settlers attracts overseas visitors from Eastern Europe looking for relatives as well as local families through offering traditional dancing for children and adults. It recently received funding from the Czech Government for its projects.

“After a delicious lunch we heard the story of the founding of the Torbay area starting with the Tainui waka camping out in Waiake Bay for a few years. It must have proved too hilly for them, as they eventually headed for the Waikato across the Otahuhu Portage. Well known colonial settlers around Torbay included an Englishman, Irishman, Scotsman and a Welshman. The local street names tell the story - Glenvar Road, Glamorgan Drive and Killarney Street. Actually the Scotsman’s name was Brown, after whom Browns Bay was named and an Englishman Charles Cholmondeley-Smith settled on Glenvar Rd, growing tobacco that was exported to the USA and afterwards establishing a vineyard and the Glenvar Wine Company.

“George Vaughn was another Englishman who settled in the area from Shropshire, the family farming the area that later became Long Bay Regional Park, for over 100 years. The original homestead built of puriri and kauri, purchased by the Auckland Regional Council, was taken over in 1993 by the Torbay Historical Society who was given five years to renovate it for community use. The result is extraordinary example of a successful community project.”

Next year’s Auckland Gathering will be hosted by Helensville & Districts Historical Society, set for August 2016 at this stage.
Claire Lanyon (Auckland Museum) on the portable digitization machine used to add information and scans of objects onto the Cenotaph database.

Living Heritage Awards: Living Heritage is an online bilingual initiative that enables NZ and Pacific Islands schools to develop and publish online resources, based of heritage treasures in their community.

Fancy an outing on the 5th Sunday of the Month?

On the 31st January 2016, the month’s 5th Sunday, the Onehunga Fencible & Historical Society will be repeating their historic walk of the northern area of Onehunga.

It will start at 12.00 noon from the Blockhouse in Jellicoe Park corner Quadrant Rd & Grey St., Onehunga.

Bookings desirable—RSVP by November 15. Ring Cyril 636-7997 or email unclecyril@vodafone.co.nz. At the completion, approx 1.30 pm to 4.00 pm our 3 historic houses will be open for viewing with the archives, also available to anyone interested & not doing the walk. This event will also be advertised locally to members of the public.

HIBISCUS COAST FLORAL ART GROUP presents...

Christmas at Couldrey House

Saturday 21 Nov & Sun 22 Nov 2015
10 am - 4 pm
at Couldrey House, Wenderholm Regional Park

Join us to experience the elegance of a by-gone era as this historic home is florally decorated for Christmas. Bring the family and enjoy a great day out and maybe do a little Christmas shopping.

Attractions: [weather permitting]
* Craft Stalls, Refreshments, Raffles
* Vintage Cars
* Local & Vocal Choir - Sat pm
* Kumeu Brass Band - Sun pm

Tickets $5 per adult (children under 15 free)

For further information phone:
Judy 09 426 1020, Marilyn 09 416 9227
or tickets available at the door
Ashburton Museum

(From the latest newsletter)

“Every day at the Museum brings new things. It is exciting to receive archives from individuals and organisations. Recently we have been gifted a collection of Billy Thomas architectural plans from Rodger Bradford and we have received a collection of large glass negatives depicting photographs of early Rakaia taken by a commercial photographer. Wonderful images of places, people and even a train crash. Michael has had some of the images developed in a special process—$500 did not go far, but what a wonderful addition to our history. Our Museum has one of the largest collections of negatives in New Zealand, so we are delighted that Kathleen has been selected as one of ten people to receive specialist tuition in dealing with negatives. It is certainly another benefit of being a department of Council, for we would have struggled to meet the costs.”

Coromandel Heritage Trust

(From their August newsletter)

“Congratulations to QSM Geraldine Dunwoodie for services to heritage, David Wilton for the Community Archaeologist’s award (more below) and of course the Waikato/Bay of Plenty heritage design award for the new archive building. As well, the WWI book written by Trust members, From Gold Mine to Firing Line, has been very highly praised. It’s also very rewarding to find we are being visited for advice by out-of-town groups wanting to build archives - from Cambridge, Hamilton and Kapiti.

“Our out-front volunteers in the reading room and on the reception desk continue to be much appreciated by our visitors, and our behind-the-scenes volunteers are kept very busy dealing with incoming items. These volunteers give many hours of their time to The Treasury and it is only with their help that we have been able to function to such a high standard. We have achieved a lot of the goals identified in last year’s strategic planning workshop. The biggest issue still to address is securing funding for a curator and assistant and to help with running costs. The work entailed is much greater than ever envisaged. Although this shows there was a need for what we are doing, there is a heavy workload for some of the volunteers which needs to be lessened.”

Matamata

Unfortunately, at the time of preparing this newsletter, I haven’t received an obituary for Robert David Stanley, husband of Joan, stalwart of the Matamata Historical Society, who died 15 August 2015 at Pohlen Hospital, Matamata. He was author of a number of books on history and geology, and will be missed by all who knew him. My heartfelt sympathies to Joan and the Stanley family and friends.

Mercury Bay

(From their September newsletter)

“Spring will soon be here and the usual influx of tourists and holiday makers will be invading our peaceful little town. I hope that during the last days of July many of you attended the Buffalo Commemoration and Home-coming Week that ran from July...
27th to August 2nd, and that you found it both enjoyable and interesting to learn more about the wreck of HMS Buffal\(o\) and her crew, and I hope you took part in some of the fun as well.

“For me a lasting memory will be the laying of the wreaths on the wreck by Hotwater Beach Surf Lifesaving Club members in their rib rescue craft, while on shore members of the Royal Navy and the Royal New Zealand Navy stood to attention and saluted, and a lone piper played a lament as he walked down the beach. The waters of the Bay sparkled in the sun and the bay was full of local yachtsmen taking part in a race for a cup made from teak wood from the Buffalo ....

“An official thankyou was made by the representative of the Royal Navy to the local descendants of the Ngati Hei iwi who had cared for the crew of the Buffalo for several days after the fateful wreck 175 years ago, and buried the two sailors in the Hukihuki cemetery.

“The Shipwreck Ball was a tremendous success and raised funds for the Hot Water Beach Surf Lifesaving Club. A Town v Country Rugby game was played in town and I just have to mention the most beautiful Banner depicting the Buffalo which members of the local Quilting Club have made as a lasting and fantastic exhibit. It is now hanging in the Mercury Bay Museum. It is an amazing piece of handwork, do come and admire it.

“It was amazing the interest that was shown by people from all around the world, who were descendants of people all connected with the Buffalo. Several were descendants of the two Scotsmen who built the vessel in India in the early 1800's and one was a descendant of the first captain. Captain Neish, who sailed the vessel (then called the Hindustan), from India to UK, with all the families aboard.”

Mt Roskill/Puketapapa

(From their President’s annual report, 2015)

“It gives me great pleasure to present this third President’s report. It is almost four years since a small group of us first met to explore the possibility of forming an historical society for Mt Roskill. We have much to be proud of. While we are still small in number we have had some major achievements which have put us on the map. Our grant of $1400 from the Puketapapa Local Board has all but been spent mainly on researching built heritage and purchasing a storage cupboard. The remaining grant money will be used to photocopy old land maps. We were fortunate that St David’s in the Fields allowed us a space in one of their rooms to store our resources but we had to vacate the building while earthquake strengthening took place. We now have to decide what we are going to do with the cupboard and our resources seeing we are not having regular meetings.”

Patea

The Society has started their own Facebook page — it can be found here:
www.facebook.com/Patea-Historical-Society-750643491700446

Pleasant Point Railway

(From the Society’s August newsletter)

“Many years ago the late Graham Radcliffe gave your archivist a series of old steam wagon photographs which he had copied from glass negatives. Unfortunately no details came with the photographs, other than what could be gleaned from the prints themselves. The wagon here, a Sentinel, belongs to MacBeth Bros., Steam Haulage Contractors, Waimate, and is seen with a number of narrow gauge railway coal wagons at the Pleasant Point end of the Hanging Rock bridge. The date is unknown, but my guess is 1920s or 1930s. Perhaps the wagons have come from a coal mine in the Kakahu area and are destined for a coal mine beyond Waimate? If anyone knows the answer please let me know!

“Now MacBeth Brothers of Waimate are interesting, as I can find absolutely nothing about them at all, other than their name emblazoned on the front of their truck!

“The bridge however does have an interesting history. It appears that it was a joint project between the Geraldine and Levels County Councils, with both Councils raising loans to pay for it; the Geraldine Council attending to its construction. Tenders were advertised
in May 1908 with a closing date of 17th June 1908. Acceptance of tenders was delayed over a technicality relating to the loans, but by October 1908 it was reported that the contractor had made a satisfactory start to the bridge and associated protective works. The *Timaru Herald* of 22nd June 1909 stated: “The approaches to the Hanging Rock bridge are now finished, and users of the road in this locality find the bridge a great convenience.” There does not appear to have been an official opening of this bridge. The Geraldine County Council’s engineer at that time [Mr F.W. Marchant] noted in his report to Council members in July 1909 that the total cost of construction had been £2,923 2s against the tender price submitted by the successful contractor Messrs Black of £2,919 15s 6d.

“The 1909 bridge was badly damaged in the 1945 and 1951 floods and was replaced by the present bridge in 1954; that bridge being officially opened by Governor General Sir Willoughby Norrie on Monday, 22nd November 1954. The cost of the 520ft reinforced concrete bridge was quoted as £20,000.” (Mark Denne – Archivist.)

**Porirua**

Congratulations to the Porirua Historical Association on their 50th anniversary in October this year. This was celebrated with a “high tea” on 17 October.

*From their August newsletter:*

**How We Started**

In 1965, Porirua was granted city status. As part of the celebrations the Papakowhai Homestead was furnished in the Victorian manner with the help of the Dominion Museum, (as it was then known) and in collaboration with the Porirua City Council and the new owners of the Homestead. Over 10,000 people visited the homestead during this time and the administrative committee set up to be in charge of this operation realised that there was a great need for a local historical society and for a museum.

“After the Homestead was closed to the public, sometime in September 1965, the committee set about arranging a meeting of interested people in the community to discuss the possibility of forming such a group. Mr Alf Mexted convened this meeting and the inaugural meeting for the Porirua historical Association was 16th of October 1965 where it was decided to cover an area from Tawa up to Plimmerton, also including Pauatahanui, although it was acknowledged that they already had a separate association. Mr Alf Mexted chaired the meeting and he said that the main object for the society would be to further promote past present and future history of the district and in keeping and preserving historical photographs.

“Bob Cater was recorded as being present at their next meeting which was held on Thursday, 2 December 1965. At this meeting a guest speaker, Mr Arthur Carmen of Tawa, gave an interesting talk about Elsdon Best. He suggested that the articles by Best, recently relocated by the Alexander Turnbull Library, be published by the Association as their first important project. Somehow our Association never completed this task but fortunately the Tawa Historical Society has done this successfully.

“However, our Association has over the years been able to assist members and others with the initial costs for historical publications. It has promoted local history through bus tours, colonial dinners, conferences, and regular meetings. In recent years the trend has been to sponsor public seminars and this has been relatively successful.

**Silverdale**

The Society have a request for a camp oven. “We would dearly love one for our Bushman’s Hut and it may be that some museum has a spare one. Phone/ Fax: 09 426 8272.”

*(From their September newsletter)*

“We have just acquired the original red wooden mail box from the old Silverdale School.

“In 1966 Mr A C Jones the Chief Auckland Postmaster opened the first model school post office in the Auckland area at Silverdale School. At that time the School was in Foundry Road in what is now the industrial area. The Postmistress was 12 year old Judith Bird.

“Senior pupils were taught to manage the little Post Office. Mail was delivered to the school and sorted. Letters posted in the post box were franked undated with the school’s stamp and delivered every weekday in a canvas bag to the Silverdale Post Office.

“Requests for envelopes with the school’s stamp were received from all over the country and on one occasion an envelope was sent to Silverdale in England.

“The Post Office was closed some back and when Silverdale School moved to its present Millwater site in 2008 the mail box was left in the old building which has now been demolished.
Other Organisations

Calling all small, quirky museums ...

(From an email received from Top Shelf Productions)

Calling all small, quirky museums full of rich stories that are dying to be told and hidden treasures that need to be on display. Are you struggling to get people to see your exhibits? Facing the threat of closure? We want to help!

We are looking for New Zealand museums to be a part of our factual television series focused on helping revitalize local historical sites and museums. Must be available for filming for one week between December 2015 – March 2016.

Email Brioni the problems you would like rectified and photos of your museum on: brioni.gray@gmail.com

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A new full-colour, 272-page collection of 60 favourite stories from New Zealand Memories

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Heritage South Heritage Forum 2016
Heritage for the Future
12-13 March 2016
Bill Richardson Transport World, Invercargill

CALL FOR PAPERS
Heritage South Trust holds a biennial forum in order to bring together those who are interested in celebrating Southland’s heritage. It is a time to share ideas, stories and discoveries. The heritage in Southland is vast. It encompasses oral histories through to built heritage and everything in between. The theme for the 2016 forum is Heritage for the Future. The aim of the forum is to discuss ideas around how our heritage can be preserved, valued, interpreted and can continue to engage future generations of Southlanders and visitors to the South. Workshops and tours during the forum will provide further opportunities to discuss how others have found creative solutions to some of the challenges of heritage presents. Reflecting upon the Heritage for the Future theme we invite proposals from speakers for 20 minute papers/presentations or 6 minute Pecha Kucha presentations.

Please send a 250 word abstract of your presentation by 6 December 2015 to: southlandheritageforum@xtra.co.nz

We have a microfiche reader that we would like to get rid of. I know nothing about it, it was given to my dad when he was doing the family tree. He is no longer with us. If you know anyone looking for one could you please let them know.
Janine Burke 0272295196
I live in Richmond, Nelson
If your organisation belongs to the NZ History Federation, for a one-off price of $57.50, with free annual update, you can have a page on the Federation’s website. Perfect for telling the whole world who you are, the wonderful things you do, and how to contact you. We currently host pages for the following members:

- Bulls & District Historical Society
- Feilding & Districts Historical Society
- Franklin Heritage Forum
- Karaka Historical Society
- Mangere Historical Society
- Mount Albert Historical Society
- Otahuhu Historical Society
- Papatoetoe Historical Society
- Tauranga Historical Society
- Waikato Historical Society

Want to know more? Contact Wynne HaySmith (cwhaysmith@clear.net.nz) or the Keeping in Touch Editor for more details.