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***Sentinel extends Christmas Greetings to all our readers, with best wishes for 2025.***

The '24 year has flown; we have had good times, shared grief over the loss of members and dear friends, welcomed new members. Meetings and trips have been interesting and we thank all those who have contributed in planning and organising. None of those jobs are easy. The Museum has had some spectacular exhibitions, and the staff, interns and volunteers have all contributed to it.

I would like to thank the *Sentinel* team who have contributed throughout the year, regular contributors like Wendy Deeming, Alan and Neville (in cahoots), Edna and Terry who help with the final proofread and dispatch, Phil and Erwin who have always provided information on speakers and trips, and anyone else who has responded in any way. I always welcome contributions—memoirs and research, and Society or Museum news. Anyone who has an urge to write or help with editing, please see me. I am looking ahead, and collaborators are needed.

The main item in this issue is about the photo on the wall by the Museum reception desk (also displayed elsewhere in Papakura). It is the photo that keeps on giving, as many of us have pored over the details. It has also appeared in previous issues because it illustrates so many stories, but now Neville and Alan have produced an article just about it, on the grounds that there is so much more we have been able to tease out of it. “A picture speaks...”

**And now, for Christmas, may love, joy, peace, trust and hope be yours in uncertain times.**

*Rob Finlay, editor*

**PAPAKURA & DISTRICT  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Monthly Members’ Meetings: 4th Thurs, 1pm – 3pm  
Regular Saturday heritage Trips to places of interest

**PAPAKURA MUSEUM**

**Open: Monday—Friday, 10am—4.30pm,  
Wed open till 6 pm, Sat 10 am—3 pm**  
Accent Point Building, 209 Great South Road  
Ph.: (09) 298 2003 [www.papakuramuseum.org.nz](http://www.papakuramuseum.org.nz)

# Object of the month

Wendy Deeming



**Plaque marking the end of World War II.** Ardmore was constructed during World War II by USAAF forces stationed in Auckland. and was intended to be used as a base for B-17 Flying Fortress bombers. Due to developments in the Pacific War it was never used for that purpose, but was instead used by the RNZAF. Ardmore became an important base for training New Zealand pilots and returning servicemen as part of the post-war demobilisation effort.

*Accession number 10731*

*Donated 17 May 2018*



**Fijian masi (tapa cloth).** Tapa, made from the bark of the paper mulberry tree, is found across the Pacific. In Fiji, it is known as masi and is made exclusively by women. Masi is made by stripping the bark from the plant, separating the inner bark, and beating it with a wooden mallet, usually on a wooden anvil. Fijian masi (tapa cloth) has customarily been used for ceremonial occasions such as weddings or the conferring of a chiefly title. The method of decoration differs from place to place, and has changed over the years. The different kinds of masi include masi kesa (stencilled), masi kuvui (brown or smoked), seyavu (white or plain),

and masi vakarerega (yellow). The different colours reflect a person's rank in society, with white or brown masi used by those of chiefly blood. The uses for masi are also very diverse.

*Accession number 21346*

*Donated May 1983*

Thank you to all our members who renewed their subscriptions for the current year.  
(If you have not paid for a renewal, this may be the last copy of the Sentinel you receive.)

## Society News and Events.

### October Meeting—Thursday 24 October: Phil Sai-Louie spoke on History's Great Lies.

Phil first spoke of two deliberate hoaxes—the fairies at the bottom of the garden created by two girls with drawings and a camera and publicised in 1890 by Arthur Conan Doyle, who had an interest in the occult. The girls later admitted the hoax. More elaborate was the Piltown Man reported in 1912, which excited the scientific community. Bone fragments were presented as belonging to a missing link. In 1953 they were confirmed as a deliberately constructed hoax.

Other errors that have crept into common knowledge include the suggestion that no Nobel prize was ever presented for mathematics because a mathematician had seduced the wife of the (unmarried) Nobel, accounts constructed around the death of the reputedly indestructible 'mad monk' Rasputin in Russia, and conspiracy stories around the death of T E Lawrence (of Arabia).

He finished with some examples that strongly suggest we should not get our history out of Hollywood.

### November Meeting: Thursday 28 November—Lindsay Digglemann- 'Legend of King Arthur'. Lindsay, who lectures at Auckland University (and had taught more than one in the audience), is a respected authority on early and medieval Europe.

His opening statement: Arthur is 1% fact, 99% myth. Lindsay proceeded to substantiate his statement. Much of what we read in history is how people adapt the past to serve their own purposes.

The real Arthur was a late Romano-British warlord active when the Anglo-Saxons arrived in Britain.

The available information is limited: there are 6th century references to the Battle of Mons Badonicus/ Mt Badon; Gildas writes about Mt Badon but not Arthur, Bede makes no mention of either in the 8th century, Nennius mentions Arthur as a leader at Mt Badon in the 9th. It was Geoffrey of Monmouth, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century 'renaissance' after the Norman arrival, who expands on the story in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* in the 1130s. He was Welsh but had Norman blood. He created an origin myth for Celtic Britain, with Brutus of Troy. His Arthur is a British Celtic hero who conquers Britain, parts of Scandinavia and France, and in his final battle against Mordred he is wounded but not dead, and may return – the 'once and future King'.

Also in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century were other vernacular versions, including Wace who is the first to mention, in passing, a Round Table. William Newburgh c1190 dismisses Geoffrey as 'laughable work of fiction.' Other stories were developed by Chretien de Troyes. In the late medieval period there were other accounts, including the Welsh Mabinogion, written in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, possibly using oral traditions.

Arthur was popularised by Thomas Malory when he wrote *Morte d'Arthur* c 1485, which became a best-seller with the benefit of Caxton's printing-press.

At different periods in English politics, Arthur has been used to authenticate leaders and unify Britain.

Edward 1 – 1272-1307, who tried to unify Britain by defeating the Welsh (successfully) and the Scots, claimed to have unearthed Arthur's tomb in Glastonbury, built a Round Table at Winchester and quoted Geoffrey of Monmouth at length in a letter he had drafted for the Pope's eyes.

By the time of Edward III - 1327-77, Camelot, which previously moved from Caerleon to Winchester, has now arrived in Windsor where he put up the Round Table.

Henry VII, first Tudor monarch, who united the Roses after Bosworth, named his first son Arthur.

Arthurian imagery was also used in the imperialist 19<sup>th</sup> century by Tennyson and the pre-Raphaelites.

### **Forthcoming PDHS meetings:**

There are no meetings in December—unless someone wishes to convert their Christmas Day celebrations into a PDHS activity. And January is a lethargic bye. But the year stirs into life in February.

### **February: Thursday 27 February 2025: Sharlene McClay on Pest-free South Auckland**

[Pest Free South Auckland](#) supports Auckland Council's regional Pest-Free Auckland initiative to protect biodiversity and restore council-managed land, and runs a ***Moth Plant competition*** from 4 March to 10 May. Worried about introduced pests? Moth plant, Taiwan cherry, rats, stoats and possums? Past mistakes and current remedies ***can be changed. Come along and hear what we all can do.***

### **Trips:**

#### **On Thursday 31 October 2024 we visited the Railway Enthusiasts Society Clubrooms**

situated in the old Onehunga Railway Station building which had been relocated to their headquarters in Alfred Steet, Onehunga in 1962.

We used our own transport to get there and had some 7 participants.

On arrival mid-morning we were greeted by Alan Verry, a long-serving volunteer and a most able speaker; his information covered the whole of New Zealand and was exceptionally interesting.

The hosts went out of their way with tea, coffee and biscuits served at a large table in the main room of the building whilst the talking went on.

Apart from a number of railway memorabilia on display the walls were fully covered with many photographs.

All together a very worthwhile and memorable trip enjoyed by all.

Erwin de Raad/ Trip Convener

**November 'trip', on 21 November** – was Christmas lunch at DINE, at MIT, where students train for the hospitality industry. Thanks to Mary Ann France for organising this enjoyable occasion.

### **Next Society Trip**

#### **Rangitoto Island**

**18 February '25:** trip arranged with the Rangitoto Island Conservation Trust. Transport will be by train into Britomart, then the 10.30 am ferry (direct) to the island. at (Cost \$58 per person). Returning on the 2.30pm sailing. The Manager will host us at the Museum Bach. (This will involve a donation of \$10 each or \$100 for 10 or more people). There will also be free time (to hike to the summit or swim?) The deadline for registration is Tuesday 11 February. Indication of interest has been requested. Please contact Margaret Gane (022 158 8064 OR [margaretigane@gmail.com](mailto:margaretigane@gmail.com)). NB This trip is not suitable for those who use walkers but a walking stick is okay.

## Positively (eng)Aging

Papakura held its first Positively Aging exhibition in Accent Point building between the Library and Museum Thursday 14 November. A good selection of groups were represented, including the Local Board which organised the event, Auckland Council, and a lot of voluntary groups which enrich the community.



As the pictures above show, a keen group of young-in heart and positively aging (dare I say that?) members, in particular our two Wendys (Deeming—behind the camera) and Gibson, Christine, and the Carsons cheerfully personed a desk with information about the Historical Society and the Museum, with books for sale, while other members looked after other organisations (we have a broad range of interests) or walked around in an encouraging and positive way. There was considerable interest.

Thanks to all who contributed. We hope this will be a regular event.

## Papakura Museum

### Exhibitions:

**Dearly beloved: Papakura Church History—the four mainstream churches—** presented by Tyler Ross-Doone, closing 13 January.

**Tatau—Samoan Tattooing and Photography Tatau: Tatau Samoa ma ata pu'e.** This Te Papa travelling exhibition will close on 1 February. It has attracted much interest. The opening day included Samoan, Cook Island and Hawaiian presentations and activities.

**All Ablaze—** celebrating 100 years of the Papakura Volunteer Fire Brigade (February to April 2025). It will run alongside activities by the Fire Brigade and Art Gallery (which occupies the old premises.)

### Museum Talk: held on Saturday November 9 at 12.30pm.

**Paul Brobbel spoke on The life and works of artist Len Lye.** Paul who is the leading authority on New Zealander Len Lye, was the curator the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre, and is currently CEO of Uxbridge in Howick. Although best known locally for his kinetic art, Lye was an innovator in art films. He drew extensively on Maori, Australian and Pacific cultures and was a close friend of Robert Graves.

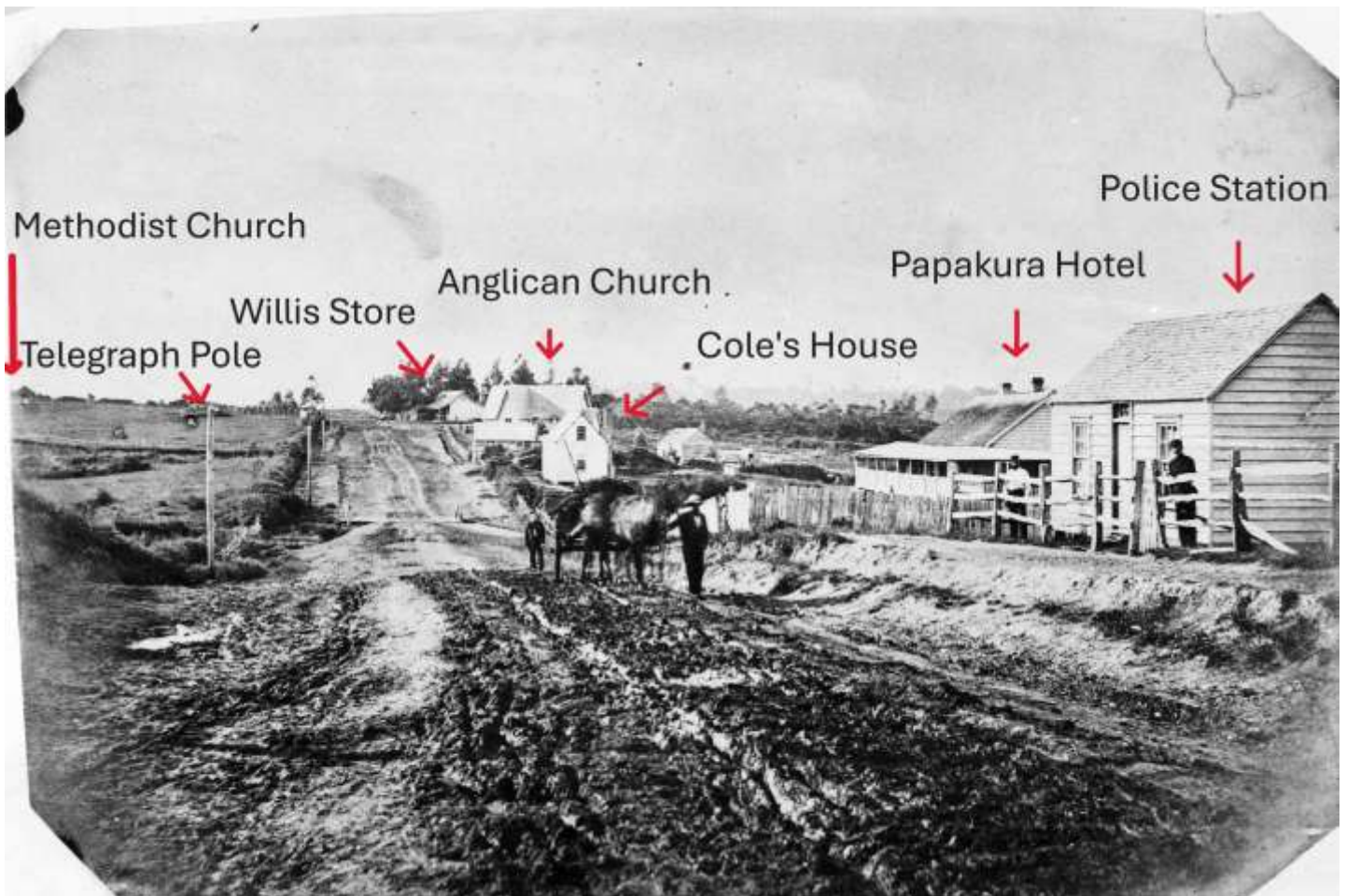
It was a very interesting talk which was followed by some convivial and highly intelligent conversation.

# A picture is worth *at least* a thousand words

## Papakura's oldest known photograph

Alan Knowles with Neville Williams

Early photography was a game changer in the world of visual representation. Before its invention, people had to rely on skilled artists to capture their likeness through painting or drawing. However, once photography came onto the scene in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, it revolutionised how we could preserve moments in time. The first successful photograph was taken by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce in 1826, and from then on, photographers began experimenting with different techniques and chemicals to improve image quality. Daguerreotypes and tintypes quickly gained popularity as more accessible forms of portraiture, allowing everyday people to have their picture taken for the first time. Although early photography required long exposure times and cumbersome equipment, it paved the way for modern-day advancements in technology, permanently capturing a moment in time and gave us a glimpse into the past like never before.



Great South Road. Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Wellington, E-209-q-2-108-2. With permission. Labelling added by authors.

## Identifying the photograph

The earliest known photograph taken of Papakura is the well-known image that presides over the reception desk in Papakura Museum. This image has been referred to a lot in articles, exhibitions and displays, for good reason. The image captures the recently built Great South Road and some of the early buildings and the topography of Papakura village in its infancy. Researchers and writers have used this image in histories, and some have attempted to describe the image itself. The picture is a priceless tool for researchers of Papakura history as its many features can be used to construct Papakura's rich and varied story.

This article attempts to demystify some of the current interpretation and discuss new research that sheds a clearer light on this historic image. The photograph was found in the *Charlotte Stewart Ruck* album held in Auckland War Memorial Museum which contains a multitude of historic images from across early New Zealand and Australia taken from between 1859 and 1873. From the outset the image has caused confusion, which led previous researchers down the "garden path" or to miss the photograph's significance altogether. The handwriting located directly beneath the image in the album states "*The Gt South Road, New Zealand at Otahuhu*". Why it was labelled Otahuhu is anyone's guess, but Otahuhu was a main centre, gateway to the south and early Fencible settlement, so an understandable mistake could perhaps have been made. At some point the image was correctly identified as Papakura when the image was digitised. There also has been confusion about the photo's orientation, with sources saying the image was taken facing north, but we can safely deduce the image is taken facing south. How can we say for certain? Well, the Anglican church which still exists to this day is located on the right hand side, which, unless we are directionally challenged, tells us that the image was taken facing south from about where the Wendy's restaurant and KFC are today. (I know those two buildings well!)

## Who was the photographer?

Currently the photographer is officially unknown so we were keen to uncover who could have taken this image. My initial thoughts were, well how hard could that be? The number of people running around taking photographs at this point could surely be counted on a clumsy butcher's left hand! The person wouldn't have been able to whip out their iPhone, take a selfie and upload it to their social media accounts. To cart around all the gear to take even one photograph would be a story by itself. The main piece of equipment was the view camera; these were large, bulky and not exactly ideal for travel. The photographer would also have had a tripod, bags of glass plates or metal sheets. On top of this, images at this time were developed using the wet plate process, which required that the photographer needed to coat the glass or metal immediately prior to taking the photograph and then develop it before the chemicals dried. This meant that the photographer needed to have access to a darkroom basically next to where the image was being taken. A travelling photographer such as this one, using the wet plate process would have needed to carry around a full set of chemicals for devel-

oping the plates as well as some kind of portable dark room. On top of all that, the photographer would have needed a light proof cloth and a magnifying loupe for checking focus on the ground glass screen of the camera. In light of this, even capturing this image would have been a minor miracle but it suggests that the photographer was at least some sort of professional. To my surprise a search of trusty old "Papers Past" uncovered a rather large number of individuals who specialised in photography at that time, mainly in the Auckland region. The majority were photography studios for portraits and doubled as academies for those wanting to learn the newly- (excuse the pun) developed art.

Working along the lines of deductive reasoning (which I'm sure Sherlock Holmes and Colombo would be proud of), many of the candidates could be crossed off the list. Two were left standing.

One was William Temple, an Irish born soldier-surgeon who was attached to the Royal Artillery Regiment. Temple arrived with his unit in 1861 when plans were under way for the invasion of the Waikato. Soldiers were put to work on building the Great South Road which was exhausting back-breaking stuff, and soldiers complained of having to do the work of convicts. Temple was the regimental surgeon who obviously wasn't going to pick up a spade and assist with the road building, so with time on his hands he acquired some photographic equipment and took up photography as a hobby.

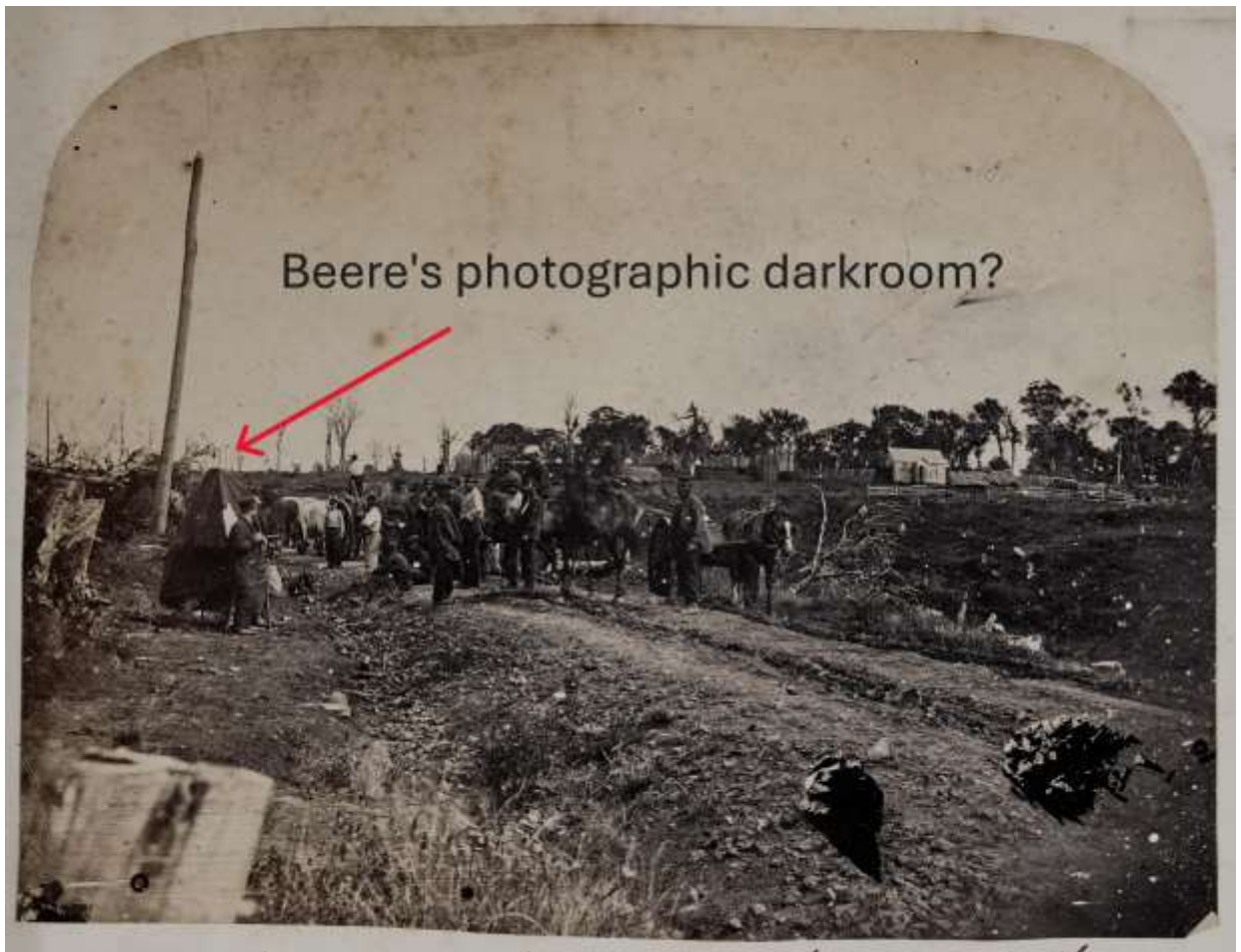
During 1862 and the beginning of 1863, Temple recorded the gradual progress of the Great South Road which was constructed through swamps and hills covered in dense bush. The images that he took now form part of the priceless historic record that recorded this important period in South Auckland's history.

The second candidate is Daniel Manders Beere who came to New Zealand in 1863 and undertook work in various locations around the North Island as a surveyor and engineer. Beere was born in Ireland and served an engineering cadetship with an uncle who was a well-known bridge engineer. Beere was a gifted artist and sketched railways when the opportunity arose. He subsequently travelled to Canada and went into business with his uncle, William Armstrong, who with Humphrey Lloyd Hime, established the prominent engineering, surveying and photographic firm, Armstrong, Beere and Hime. Based in Toronto, the business specialised in both civil engineering and photography. It was at this point that Beere started to learn the wet collodion process that was the cutting-edge photography technique of the time.

In 1861 the business had dissolved and Beere relocated to New Zealand where he was initially a surveyor for the Auckland Provincial Government. From here, Beere began photographing the South Auckland region, the recently built Great South Rd, and even got participants to stage reenactments for him of the Waikato conflicts. Amazingly, the mobile darkroom that would have been needed to develop the glass photographic plates may have been captured in the image of a commissariat convoy towards the front, which was in the same album—see over.

In our opinion, the mystery photographer of the Great South Rd, Papakura image is Daniel Manders Beere.





PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS  
OF THE  
PROVINCE OF AUCKLAND.

J. VARTY

**B**EGB respectfully to call the attention of the public to this SERIES OF VIEWS of the Province of Auckland, which are executed by the Messrs. BEERE in a very superior style, and comprise, besides spots of minor interest, those which have become memorable as the scenes of the conflicts and struggles which have occurred during the present Maori rebellion.

The price of each view is 5s., mounted on cardboard, and the following is a list of the subjects:—

1. Matakana
2. "
3. "
4. "
5. Kawau (the Governor's residence)
6. "
8. Matakana
10. Auckland (Wesleyan College, &c.)
11. Waiatapu, Kaukapakapa
12. Helensville, Kaipara
13. Maori Encampment at Helensville, Kaipara
14. Tarawa Paore, Kaukapakapa, Residence of Mr. Bonee
15. Waiatapu, Kaukapakapa
16. Maori half-breed
18. Maori War Dance, Kaipara (Ngatahatua tribe)
19. Drury Camp
20. The Queen's Redoubt
21. Naval Camp, Maungatawhiri Creek
22. Meremere
23. Rangiriri
24. "
25. Church at Rangiriri, and graves of men killed in action
26. Ngatahatua
27. " King Matutaeta's Palace
28. " Tomb of King Potatau First
29. Waikato River, from Meremere
30. The Cemetery, Auckland
31. View from the Cemetery, Auckland
32. Auckland Annual Regatta
33. Do. do. do.
34. Do. do. do.

VARTY,  
CANADA BUILDINGS, QUEEN-STREET,  
AUCKLAND.

Above: A commissariat convoy on its way to the Front (Great South Road), New Zealand. Auckland War Memorial Museum PH-ALB-501-p5-1 (1) JPG

As the advertisement to the left indicates, Beere would mount his images on card, giving a distinctive rounded top effect, and sell them. Beere also captured the first known images of the famous Pink and White Terraces before the eruption of Mt Tarawera in 1886.

The list (items 19-29) shows clearly that Beere had travelled to the Waikato following the invasion force in 1863-4.

Beere eventually left New Zealand, moved to Australia, and died in Melbourne in 1909.

## When was the image taken?

Getting a date for the image has been our main focus, and we knew that the originally recognised date that the National Library had accredited of 1870s -1880s was in need of revision.

The image provided several clues which would point to a more accurate date. Buildings identified are, the Constabulary House (with two men standing outside looking curiously at the camera), the Papakura Hotel, Cole's house, James Black's house, Anglican Church and the Willis store which are all lined up on one side of the road. The other side is very swampy land, but the telegraph poles can be seen as well as a bridge crossing a creek which would have run to Cole's mill, the rural feel is very evident in the wider setting.

Carefully analysing clues that could give us a more accurate date for when the image was taken, we brilliantly found two points of interest. The telegraph poles were recorded as installed in 1863 so we can instantly date the image after that year. We also noticed that the Willis store building (located at the far end of the image) has only one storey. It is known that Willis store had a second storey added in 1867, so the latest year we can place for the image is 1867. Ergo, we have no hesitation in confidently placing the year that the image was taken to between 1863 and 1867.

## Who are the two men outside the constabulary house?



Detail, enlarged.

Having established the date of the image we get a more defined window to identify these men. It has been traditionally accepted that one of the men is Constable Andrew Thomas McKnight, but now we have established that the image was dated between 1863 and 1867, this is unlikely. The earliest reference that we could find to McKnight in Papakura dates to 1877 when he was involved with an inquest about an infant girl found in the Papakura River. Assuming that the image was taken during the 1870s or 1880s earlier researchers concluded that McKnight must be one of the men. However, the newly established earlier date rules this conclusion out.

McKnight was born in Ireland in 1837 and eventually emigrated to New Zealand. He married Kate Edward Shepherd and raised seven children, four girls and three boys, who were all Papakura-born. A search of *Papers Past* names him as the Papakura District Slaughterhouse inspector in 1878, involvement in what sounds like an aggressive arrest of an escapee Charles Adams in 1883 and participation in the shooting of Frederick Plummer. By 1895 McKnight left the police and farmed in the Waikato. His life took a downward turn, his marriage ended, and he took on the assumed name of John Mitchell. He fell on hard times, was declared bankrupt and died in 1912 aged 75.

We suggest in this article that the men are either Constable Thomas McCaffery, Constable Thomas Campbell or Constable John King. The first attested reference that exists of Constable McCaffery in Papakura dates to 1864 when he brought Mr. James Hamlin before a magistrate after clocking him speeding through town. The exact words are for “Furiously galloping his horse through and about the village of Papakura, on Wednesday, the 7<sup>th</sup> instant (Last Market Day), much to the danger of lives of the inhabitants”. McCaffery was active in Papakura with court appearances where he gave evidence of larceny, drunkenness, swearing, robbery and disorderly behaviour in various cases. McCaffery is last mentioned as being in Papakura in April 1868, and moved to Auckland Central before being posted to Thames at the end of that year.

The second is Constable Thomas Campbell who first appears in a court case that took place between McCaffery and Robert Clow in May 1866. Campbell regularly appears in court cases over the next two years including one in 1867 where he charged Mr. Edwin Turner for leaving a dray loaded with timber on the public highway and Slippery Creek tollgate causing passing horses to shy and putting the riders in danger. Other mentions were in May 1867 in a case about a stolen pair of boots, and again where Mr. Thomas Robertson was charged, on information given by Campbell, with swearing profanely, using blasphemous language and being drunk.

Campbell was kept busy in cases involving disorderly behaviour, drunkenness and petty theft over the next few months. In February 1868, Campbell was in a court case involving several drunk men leaving the Globe Hotel. The following day Campbell warned the barman at the hotel against selling drink on the Sabbath. Mr. Walter of the hotel took objection to this, and told Campbell that if he dared to go into his house without being asked he would order him out. When Campbell refused to go, he then grabbed him and physically attempted to march him out with Campbell resisting. Campbell argued his case before Captain Mellsop who agreed that a case of assault had clearly been proven, but wanted to be lenient as Mr. Walter was sorry for what he had done. A fine was set as punishment which Walter had a week to pay. The matter didn't end there though, as Walter had taken a dislike to Constable Campbell and concluded that Campbell was acting like Wyatt Earp in his policing method and started a petition to have him removed from the police and McCaffery reinstated. The

petition was sent around the district and was signed by thirty people. This combined with the fact that the salary for a constable was being cut to 20 pounds a year meant that Campbell soon after submitted his resignation in 1868.

The third, short-lived, candidate is Constable John King who first appears on record in June 1864 and disappears by September 1865. King pops up in court appearances, providing evidence for the prosecution in cases of theft, disorderly behaviour and the 1864 Pokeno murder.

### Telegraph poles



Detail, enlarged

Visible on the left in the image are the telegraph poles which were essential infrastructure for the expanding telegraph systems that began earlier in the century. These poles supported the wires that carried telegraph signals over long distances, enabling faster communication between regions. The development and use of telegraph played a key revolutionary role in the growth of the tele-

communications industry. Early telegraph poles such as those visible here were typically made from kauri and were debarked, charred and tarred at the butts. Kauri was chosen because it was strong enough to support the weight of the telegraph wires and could be treated to resist weathering. Telegraph poles were often quite tall, typically ranging from ten to thirty feet, and were spaced about one hundred to two hundred feet apart. The height allowed the wires to be elevated above the ground, minimising the risk of interference from people, animals and vehicles. Telegraphs allowed messages to be sent across long distances in minutes, a vast improvement over previous methods like mail or messenger services which could take days or weeks. Following the arrival of equipment from England in early 1863 General Cameron gave orders to the Quartermaster General's department to construct a telegraph line from Auckland to Pokeno. This work got underway in March of that year and by July had reached Drury.

### **Cole's House, The Anglican Church (Christ Church) and Willis Store.**



Detail, enlarged.

Much has been written about these three buildings in numerous sources, so we won't go into detail here. Cole's house belonged to George Cole (not the English actor from the TV series *Minder*) but one of the pioneer Papakura immigrants, from Wales. Cole called himself as a miner but in reality was skilled in multiple trades, a key to success in early New Zealand. He purchased section forty and eventually more blocks which encompassed a wide area of land, owned an inn and built the well-known Cole's Mill. The house shown is Cole's fourth house after his previous one located in Coles Crescent next to the mill burnt down.

The Anglican Church is the only building in the photo that still exists in the area and is much the same. Construction of the chapel began in 1861-62 and was very much modeled on ancient English churches which would have reminded the early settlers of home. It was named Christ Church, but is also known as Selwyn Chapel, after George Selwyn, Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, as it was one of the churches built on the architectural design associated with him. It was opened by Selwyn in 1862. After the Great War, the chapel was expanded with a stone frontage to include a memorial to the fallen.

The Willis store was founded by Robert and Jane Willis who were the leaders in retail in the early

years of the Papakura Village. Their first store was a raupo whare which was reported as built in 1853 on the corner of the Old Wairoa Road. A van operated by the Willises regularly travelled to Auckland to pick up supplies during the 1860s. A new single-storey wooden store on the corner of Queen St built in 1856 is the building visible in the image. This was replaced by a double storey building on the same site in early 1867, as mentioned above when discussing the date of the image.

## The house of James Black and other features

The structure located behind the house of George Cole is the house of James Black. Black was the earliest recorded occupier of the section. He was a labourer and more than likely the town sexton (grave digger). The house to the right of Black's was on land owned by Joseph Wilson and this building is now located in the Howick Historic Village.

Closer inspection reveals that there are in fact two horses pulling the cart up the newly constructed Great South Road. Keen-eyed observers will also notice a bridge on the lowest point on the road over the stream from the present-day Roseland's carpark. This stream flowed through to Cole's Mill providing a vital water supply. Very keen-eyed observers will see the very top of a structure located in the distance on the left-hand side; this is the top of the first Methodist Church roof.



Contemporary view of the same stretch, 2023. Photo R Finlay

This article has attempted to discover the provenance and identify the features of Papakura's first known photograph. We believe we have correctly identified the photographer as Daniel Manders Beere. Our research has confidently deduced a date range of 1863-1867, using the date of installation of the telegraph poles and the construction of the second storey of Willis's store in 1867. By establishing this date range, we narrowed down the identity of the police constables to three possible candidates, McCaffery, Campbell and King. This firmly eliminates McKnight from consideration. We present these points as original contributions to the existing knowledge of this image. We welcome any additions or comments as this precious image no doubt holds more clues to unlocking the history of early Papakura.

*Thanks once again to Neville Williams whose research has formed the basis of this article.*

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## More on Thomas Campbell, constable

Thomas Campbell was one of the *Viola* settlers who arrived in Kirikiri as part of the Waikato Settlement Scheme in 1865. He was a remarkable character and some of his descendants still live in the area (and visit the Museum).

He had been a policeman in Inverness, Scotland, before emigrating with his family. He quickly became one of the leading lights in the Kirikiri community. While he had run foul of the publican, Walter, he had other motives for leaving the police here in 1868. Like many others he left Papakura for the gold boom town, Thames, where he worked as a teacher and actively campaigned for temperance. (Maybe Walter felt he was over-zealous.) He and his family spent some time up North in Kaiwaka where he was the teacher and lead Presbyterian lay preacher. Although he later returned to Thames, possibly as a baker, the family held on to their Papakura connection. A son, Thomas Duncan Campbell, married Annie Hall in Kirikiri, and they returned to live here with their family. Annie Campbell has featured in the *Sentinel* as one of our pioneer photographers.

# Posts of Christmas Past

## Editor Rob investigates Christmassing between 1848 and 1865 with *Papers Past*

Tinsel, sparkling conifers, holly and plastic wrapped in shiny paper for the kiddies. Santa parades and jolly rotund men with big white beards and hearty ho!ho!ho!s calibrated to not scare the littlies. Lavish carols in the park, Christmassy muzac in shops, lines of traffic streaming off to visit distant relatives.

I did a check to see what the Auckland newspapers in the 1850s and 1860s (the first years of the small Papakura village) made of Christmas. There papers were *Daily Southern Cross* (1843-76), *New Zealander* (1845-66) and *New Zealand Herald*.

First searches were for 'Santa' and 'Father Christmas'. Yes, there were 186 references to Santa; martyrdoms in Santa Cruz in the Pacific, the dictatorship of Santa Anna in Mexico, Indian attacks on the Santa Fe railroad, Garibaldi's advance sweeping up the village of Santa Maria. Lots of politicians, conflict, missionary activity, shipping and California gold. But no Santa Claus, and 'Father Christmas' was also conspicuously missing in action.

'Yule' was more useful, as was 'Christmas'. And as the *Daily Southern Cross* editorial (right, 25 December 1863) indicates, Santa gets a look-in. (And so does Drury. But it was raining—it would have been 'dreary Drury' indeed.) However 'Merry' was in vogue, and has a habit of shining through even in the different setting. The newspaper came out on Christmas Day.

What about 'the Grinch'? Not named, but how about the ad below on Boxing Day!? (*New Zealand Herald*, 26/12/1855) The Grinch had an alias, "Miss Scott". Keep away from her establishment in Cobourg St. (Or did I misread her?)

### MISS SCOTT'S ESTABLISHMENT FOR YOUNG LADIES.

MISS SCOTT begs to inform the inhabitants of Auckland and the neighbourhood, that, as she gives no vacation this **Christmas**, she is now ready to receive Boarders as well as Day Pupils.

### CHRISTMAS.

Now Christmas is come,  
Let us beat up the drum,  
And call all our neighbours together;  
And when they appear,  
Let us make them such cheer,  
As will keep out the wind and the weather.

THE public amusements which are provided for those who wish to enjoy a "merry Christmas" are necessarily few here. We have not yet reached the perfection of older colonies, where railways and steamboats convey the excursionists to pleasant rural and seaside retreats. Our public conveyances may be summed up as being confined in the Onehunga and Drury "buses," and a cab-stand in Queen-street would be looked upon as a phenomenon which would demand instant investigation by his honor the Superintendent. The truth is, that a kind Government or a speculative company has not provided us with ready means of transit from the closer atmosphere of the city to the invigorating air of a country retreat. We must hire our own "traps;" we must engage our own boats; or in other words we must for the time being, be cab proprietors or ship owners, if we desire to go beyond the threshold, without submitting to the fatigue and unpleasantness of a "tramp." O thou destroyer of "a merry Christmas"—Rain—since we have commenced to write it has commenced to pour; and it has driven out of our mind all the beautiful sentiments that we intended to convey to our readers. Our motto, however is, "A merry Christmas." We might talk about "King Christmas," that jolly old fellow with the wine-bowl flowing over, the "mistletoe," the "Christmas carols," the Christmas dinner, the story-telling, delightful fictions, the "yule log," the pantomimes, &c. But Christmas after the old English style is not for us. We may make ourselves happy and sociable, but we cannot realise those tender, cherished associations which are only to be understood by those who live amongst and know the customs of their native clime. The amusements presented to the Auckland public are few; but they are such as will be enjoyed without unnecessary ostentation, and will, at the same time, keep up the old Christmas feeling, which we all so much wish to cherish.



**PAPAKURA.**

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

December 24.

THE Christmas vacation for the children attending the Papakura school, the examination of the pupils, and the distribution of prizes, took place in the school-room on Friday afternoon.

The school was pretty full, and the examination was conducted by the Rev. Mr. Norrie and the Resident Magistrate, Charles Mellsope, Esq., in the presence of their painstaking teacher Mr. Falwell. These gentlemen examined the children in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and scripture history, and the answering throughout was most satisfactory; in fact, Mr. Mellsope said he never heard children answer so well at any school or seminary. The prizes were very nice indeed, and much thought of by those who got them. Among these of the female portion who particularly distinguished themselves, may be mentioned Martha Cole, Charlotte and Fanny Willis, and E. Falwell; among the boys, young Master Norrie, Isaac and Thomas Cole, John McWilliams, and John Flynn.

The Examiners said the thanks of the inhabitants were in a special manner due to Mr. Falwell, for his unremitting care and attention to the children.

After a few suitable remarks from the Rev. Mr. Norrie, the children scattered, after wishing their teacher the compliments of the coming season.

26/12/1864).

And a few days later, the community came together, despite the rain, to enjoy a range of activities. (*New Zealander* 29/12/1864)

**Meetings** held on the fourth Thursday of each month in the Library Meeting Rooms opposite the Museum, the talk first at 1 pm, then business and afternoon tea provided by PDHS members (for \$2 gold coin). PDHS members arrange interesting speakers.

**Museum Talks** periodically on Saturday afternoons.

**Events are advertised** here, on the screen in the Museum window and on our blog and Facebook pages. Please check for updates and Museum news.

**Trips** are usually held monthly except during winter.

Watch notices for transport arrangements and cost. Cost is \$5 more for non-members, but anyone is welcome on a first come first aboard basis. Please register early and advise if unable to attend as numbers may be limited.

**To register for trips, please ring Dave at (09) 2984507**

Visit Papakura Museum on

Website: [www.papakuramuseum.org.nz](http://www.papakuramuseum.org.nz)

Our blog: <https://papakuramuseumblog.wordpress.com>

The Papakura Sentinel is a bimonthly magazine of the Papakura & District Historical Society. Your contributions are welcomed. Please send directly to editor Rob by email: [pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz](mailto:pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz)



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When, in 1870, Prince Alfred visits Auckland, Police Sergeant Patrick Kelly is put in charge of protecting Tom, the prince’s baby elephant. When Fenians intent on assassination arrive, Kelly unexpectedly finds himself in the thick of the action. Tom also lends a trunk.

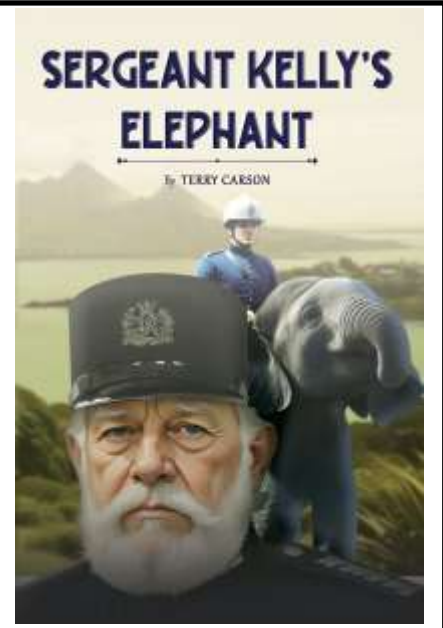
This new novel written by Terry Carson can be obtained from [www.alibipress.co.nz](http://www.alibipress.co.nz), or as an e-book from Amazon KDP, Smashwords, Kobo, and all the major e-book distributors.

Or just ask Terry the next time you see him.

A great Christmas Present! (Ed)

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