

The Papakura Sentinel

Number 50



Contents:

Museum Musings— Kay Thomas, Manager .page 2
 Museum Artefact de Jour—Brenda Perrypage 3
 LOCAL
 Tracks and stations (Part 6)—page 4

Papakura Station memories—Errol Buchan page 7
 Railway plantation—Rob Finlay page 8
 Of myths and men—Terry Carson page 10
 Interviewing.... Lone Cussen, Curator page 12
 PDHS and Museum news page 14-15

Editorial

Once again it has become my pleasant duty to write the editorial for the Christmas edition of the *Sentinel*. What a year 2020 has been. As both Rob and I have previously written editorials about the effect of a certain virus, it is my intention in this last editorial of the year to do my best to ignore it. We are all sick of hearing about it. We do hope that all PDHS members, family and friends have an enjoyable Christmas. In line with the spirit of the Season, let’s be positive and reflect upon how much better off we are than many around the world. We should celebrate our good fortune and hold the important people in our lives close. Your editors look forward to seeing you again at club meetings in the New Year – with us all optimistic for a better 2021.

In this issue of the *Sentinel* you will find plenty of holiday reading. Museum Manager Kay will be providing some festive Museum musings. However, Curator Lone will not escape as Rob will be posting details of an interview with the talented lady, long-time Society member Brenda Perry takes a turn to tell us about her ‘artefact de jour’ from the Museum storeroom, Rob will provide his last (?) article about our local railways, and Errol Buchan responds with memories of the Papakura station. Yours truly (Terry) who has been away on too many holidays recently to do serious research presents a light hearted article debunking some Christmas myths, and looking at some New Year traditions around the world. His reli-

PAPAKURA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Monthly Luncheon Meetings: 4th Thurs, 1pm – 3pm
 Regular Saturday Bus 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

ance upon on-line authorities may provoke more discussion about the myths, than answer any questions.

What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. Agnes M Pahro

Take care, be kind, and enjoy the break. Season's Greetings to all



MUSEUM MUSINGS

I am pleased to bring you the last Museum Musings of 2020. As we are all aware it has been a very difficult year for everyone. The lockdowns presented us with a real challenge in keeping the Museum operating. However, notwithstanding the uncertainties and closures, we still managed to present four exhibitions this year. We had Rob Finlay's *Tracks and Stations* see us over the holiday's then *Private and Public* exhibition, and later-on the *Kupe Sites* one. These photographic exhibitions were both loaned from Te Papa and showed us a variety of New Zealand images of a historical, cultural and geographic nature. As I write the *Art of War* exhibition is about to come to an end. We were very fortunate that local art collector Greg Moyle viewed our Museum as a worthy place to exhibit this important and valuable art collection. Before the end of the year we will be installing another travelling exhibition from Te Papa, this one a collection of bird images painted by the famous nineteenth century ornithologist Walter Buller, along with appropriate information.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PDHS Executive and the Museum volunteers for their hard work and support during the year. It was a combined effort by Curator Ione, myself, and the volunteers that enabled us to overcome the challenges of 2020 and to keep the Museum operating. Although we lost the coffee shop outside the Museum due to Covid lockdowns, we found we still knew how to make coffee in the kitchen and we were frequently spoilt with scones and other home cooking.

I'm sure that 2021 will also bring challenges but again our team will overcome them and we will have a good year. We have received a grant that will enable us to employ a part-time receptionist/social media person in 2021. This does not mean that we no longer require our reception volunteers but will give us some continuity on the desk and hopefully enable us to make our presence known more widely on Facebook, the Museum Blog, the outside screen and elsewhere. Keeping the Museum constantly out there in the social media has a great effect on our visitor numbers and public recognition.

Once again thanks to all those who have supported the Museum in 2020. I hope you have a safe and happy Christmas, and I look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Kay

Museum Musings is brought to you regularly by a member of the Museum staff.

Artefact de jour

for this issue is contributed by Brenda Perry, keen Museum volunteer

The illustrations show a German tinplate toy sewing machine made in the early 1900s. These decorated machines often had no maker's name, which is the case here. Flowers and nursery rhyme transfers were used as decoration. As these machines were very light in weight, a clamp was included, also a screwdriver for minor adjustments and to change the needle.



The Museum model is 15 x 9 cm at the base and 16 cm high.

[Information from Carol Head, Old sewing machines, Shire, 1982]

Tracks and Stations (6)

Three Ts North of Papakura—Tironui, Takaanini, Te Mahia

To the south of Papakura towards Pukekohe, all five stations (but not the Waiuku branch line) were open by the 1880s, and all have closed. But to the north there were no stations between Papakura and Manurewa until 1913 and of the three opened since then, two remain open. Each new station was a response to increasing local populations and demand. All three had to be modified with island platforms when duplication (double tracking) was begun after 1929. This stretch of track still has four road crossings, with regular accidents, sometimes fatal.

Takanini/ Takaanini

(Papakura 3.6 km/Tironui 1.7 km/Te Mahia 1.6 km).

Originally Lupton’s Crossing, Takanini was opened as a flag station on 1 November 1913 (at the same time as Wiri) to serve a growing village. But from the very start in 1875, trains would stop to take on water by the Papakura river between today’s Te Mahia and Takaanini stations.

ESTATE AGENT AND AUCTIONEER,
DEVONPORT.
H. F. OAKDEN, Auctioneer.

IMPORTANT AUCTION
OF
SUBURBAN LOTS.
SUBURBAN LOTS.

TAKANINI STATION ESTATE
TAKANINI STATION ESTATE
TAKANINI STATION ESTATE

SUBDIVIDED INTO
91 BUILDING SITES AND
FARMLETS.

AREAS $\frac{1}{4}$ TO 4 ACRES.

All adjoining the new RAILWAY STATION
8 MILES AUCKLAND SIDE OF
PAPAKURA.

This **SPLENDID PROPERTY**, which is on
the suburban railway line—fare 1s 6d return
from Auckland—will be Offered by

PUBLIC AUCTION

NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.

OPENING OF TAKANINI AND WIRI STATIONS.

On and after **SATURDAY, November 1, 1913**, Flag Stations for Passenger, Parcels, and Goods Traffic will be opened at Wiri (between Manurewa and Papatoetoe) and **Takanini** (between Manurewa and Papakura). For particulars of trains stopping at these stations see Poster Time-tables.

BY ORDER.

Left: NZHerald 26/2/14; above: NZH 25/10/1913. From Papers Past

The land was donated by locals. The initial fee for a trip from Auckland was 1/6 (15 cents) return.

Developers saw the new station as an opportunity. By February 1914, 91 suburban sections and farmlets of the Takanini Station Estate on each side of the new station, ranging in size from ¼ to 4 acres, were being advertised for sale. ‘There are few remaining opportunities of obtaining land close to Auckland and to the railway,’ announced the *New Zealand Herald* of 7 March 1914.

The local history of rail precedes the Takaanini station by many years. A fatal accident occurred on the line while the railway tracks were being laid in 1874. The driver of a ballast train was unable to stop when he saw a little two-year old girl on the tracks near the Papakura river. Her mother was bringing in the cows and the child had wandered off. The driver picked her up and took her to the doctor but she died within the hour. DSC 2/11/74. A call was made for fencing the line. There was correspondence in papers

over whether this was the first railway fatality in New Zealand: the conclusion was that it was probably the first in the North Island, although several fatalities in the South Island had preceded it.

Heavy rains in December 1875 disrupted traffic on the new tracks. The morning’s mixed train from Auckland bound for Mercer crossed the railway bridge over the Papakura river north of Takaanini, but at the southern end the embankment had been washed away and the sleepers were under two feet of water. A goods train following could not continue, and the engine returned to Auckland. The mixed train managed to make it to Buckland south of Pukekohe with the passenger carriages before it was stopped by further damage to the tracks. On the other end of this damage a train from Mercer was waiting. So the passengers were transferred: one train returned to Mercer and the other to Papakura bridge. Here the passengers waded across the stream and onto another train that took them to Auckland. NZH 11/12/75.

Breakdowns are always a hazard. One breakdown at Takanini on the evening of 12 October 1914 caused great inconvenience to the crowds at the NZ golf championships at Middlemore Park. Another engine had to travel out to replace the locomotive and many passengers were delayed by up to 1½ hours. (As a survivor of occasional rail mishaps, breakdowns or points failures I discovered the value of a mobile phone, a tool the stranded passengers of 1914 didn’t have. Imagine the consternation. RF)

There have been calls to shift the station closer to today’s Takanini centre away from the old village, but investment in the existing station including the carpark built in 2019 will guarantee it remains. (If you’ve wondered about why the name of the station is spelt with two a’s, rather than with the macron line above the a, the reason is that the spelling reflects the locally appropriate Waikato-Tainui usage.)

Tironui

(Papakura 1.7 km/Takanini 1.7 km)

For almost 50 years Papakura had two stations. The initiative for Tironui station, originally to be called Glenora, came from Papakura residents and the Town Board, led by the Rev C Wood. By January 1923 they



Left: Glenora race crowd (Papakura Museum photo); Below, NZH 16/8/29—notice of station opening.

had gained the support of the Manukau County Council because it was planned for the road that formed the boundary between the two authorities. Railways, the Town Board and County Council reached agreement on cost, the provision of land and water. It opened as a flag station, at the same time as the Te Mahia station, on 15 May 1926. It had a general waiting room and a ladies’ waiting room, passenger platform and men’s convenience, with an overhead bridge. It was used by punters at races at Glenora Park (see photo), for the Military Camp, especially 1939-45, and later for students at Ardmore.

PDHS members Wendy and Malcolm Deeming grew up close to the Tironui station, when the area was very different. To the West of the station was an area of light industry, including Piggott’s sawmill. Tironui Station Road West was part of the concreted Great South Road. On the east side round the intersection of Walters and Valley (now Porchester) roads, were a few scattered houses, with a couple of stores and a tennis court, and the Military Camp beyond. The rest

RAILWAY NOTICES.



NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.

TIME-TABLE ALTERATIONS.

On and after MONDAY, 19th August, the 2.31 p.m. Papakura-Auckland train will stop at **Tironui** and Mahia for passengers if required.

was dairy farms out to Ardmore. The station, on an island platform, with its small waiting room and bridge, was important for the family. Their grandfather used to go to meet his daughters there during the war years. Their father took the train to work, and their mother took them to Papakura for playcentre located below the Masonic hall, and to Dr Watson's by the subway. Until the Normal school was built, Wendy and Malcolm caught the mixed train to school in Papakura with the other children from Valley Road and the Military Camp. Wendy remembers running on occasion to catch the train—it would be a long walk otherwise. Frosts were often very heavy and the ramp over the bridge was slippery, so she had to haul herself up the bridge. They would put stones on the rails or try to drop apples into the funnel of trains, but the children behaved on the train—everyone knew you.

Malcolm used to accompany his father, a stockman at the Opaheke saleyards, to Papakura station, and help him load trains and shunt carriages. As his father knew the engine drivers, he was able to ride in the engine between Papakura and Tironui, and pull the chord for the steam whistle.

The station building was removed in August 1971 and the station closed to all traffic from 13 August 1983. It is not far from the new Takanini shopping centre, and there have been calls for reinstatement, but the investment that protects Takaanini stands in the way of Tironui. But if having stations at Drury and Drury West (ex Runciman) make sense for the future, the same logic should apply to Tironui.



Above: Tironui station today, at the pedestrian crossing looking south (left) and north, where the Takanini shopping centre can be seen in the distance. Old stations bequeath small reserves for the locals. The 'island' has gone.



[Aerial view of Tironui, Papakura, 1950. White Aviation. Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections Footprints 06067.]

The photo looks east over the Tironui Peninsula (Longford Park), the railway cuts across the middle in a long gentle curve, with the station in the centre of the photo, old Great South Road beyond. Walters Road runs towards the bottom right hand corner.

(Thanks to Wendy and Malcolm for sharing their experiences.)

Mahia/Te Mahia

(Takanini 1.6 km/Manurewa 1.8 km)

Locals negotiated with the Railway Depart-

ment, donating land and money, and Mahia was opened as a flag station at the same time as Tironui. It has endured, although not without threat.



During the duplication project in 1930s, 'this donkey engine and rake of trucks (left) capsized over an embankment after leaving the rails near Mahia station. Two men received injury, one being seriously scalded', not surprising with steam engines. (NZH 24/7/30)

JB 1206 on no. 124 passenger service between Te Mahia and Manurewa on 22 April 1957. J M Creber photo, with permission John Agnew

TWO MEN INJURED IN A RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT MAHIA, BETWEEN PAPATOTOE AND PAPAKURA.
While working on the duplication of the line from Papakura to Papatotoe, this donkey engine and rake of trucks capsized over an embankment after leaving the rails near Mahia station. Two men received injury, one being seriously scalded.



Crossings have always been a safety issue: even today there are fatalities from time to time. Just as Papakura crossings have been bridged (except at Boundary Road) there are plans over the next few years to separate road from rail traffic. There are plans to close Spartan Road and Manuroa Road to vehicles and to build grade-separated crossings at Taka St and Walters Road.

Papakura Railway Station—Memories

Errol Buchan

Trains have always been a cause of fascination for many younger (and some older) people. Reading the detailed articles about the development of the railway in South Auckland has stirred memories of the local station 70-80 years ago.

Entry to the station was not restricted by fences, though crossing the tracks was discouraged. The overhead pedestrian bridge was well used, especially until the suburban platform was built. The station was an interesting place to visit. An occasional schoolboy would break the rules and place a coin on the rails to be flattened by the next engine—not really acceptable to the Monarch whose head was disfigured.

The goods shed, located east of the main platform, served as a depot. It was only opened as required. Goods wagons were regularly loaded or unloaded here. The main line saw the express trains stop. There was a day-light express, and one overnighter to Wellington, also passenger trains to Rotorua and Taneatua.

Most of the regular activity concerned the suburban trains to Auckland, mostly running on an hourly timetable. These were hauled by smaller steam engines than the bigger expresses, but still gave off plenty of noisy steam and dark coal smoke. As the train crew liked to see forwards, the engine had to be turned before the trip back to Auckland. The engine was unhooked from the carriages, and taken to the turntable alongside the engine shed near Onslow Road. Here the engine driver and fireman had to balance the weight of the locomotive carefully on the turntable and then take up positions at either end and physically push the whole unit around until the engine could be driven off ready to join the train to Auckland.

Passenger services on board were controlled by the guard, often assisted by a younger porter. On most carriages the seating was fixed, with padded seat cushions and slatted wooden backs. On newer carriages, with leather seating, the seats had to be turned to the forward position at each terminus.

With the advent of the Second World War, the Military Camp was built in Papakura. The station saw regular troop trains with new recruits on their way to training, and also long trains of newly trainee soldiers setting off for their new postings, usually overseas. Later, numbers of American troops arrived, to be settled in the smaller camps hastily set up around the district. First were the US Marines on their way to the Pacific War, and later the Engineers, here to recuperate. As a youngster I was enthralled by the new sights and interested in the view from the railway overbridge. Jeeps were strange vehicles, and unloading of the vehicles the troops brought was a new interest.

The Railway Plantations



Recently someone brought in some old photos of Papakura, and among them was this photo looking down Broadway towards the railway. We've seen this view before but this photo is particularly clear. George Hardy was one of Papakura's good early photogra-

Photo :Papakura Museum, with thanks to the kind person who donated it.

phers (even if his neat handwriting needs a spellcheck). Where the bank is on the left would later become the corner of O'Shannessey Street. But it is the background that took my attention. So I have further cropped and enlarged it so we can look more closely towards the railway tracks. There is a railway crossing sign on the right by the cart, and a gate and fences into railway land. So that's how they got to Clevedon Road. (A pity the base of the light standard is in the way of a clearer view.) And then there is the tall stand of eucalypts. Everywhere Railways went they had plantations, and this one stretched from north of Broadway (and today's railway bridge) south to the station and beyond.

Papakura's plantation was particularly spectacular. We need to remind ourselves (and Auckland Council) that one of the glories of Papakura has

always been its trees, (including the remnant at Kirk's Bush and the Butterworth extension over the road. Kirk's bush was the venue for many happy picnics, and , where others might describe themselves as 'farmer', 'platelayer' or 'storekeeper', Arthur Butterworth was proud to be a 'bush owner'.)

The fact that the bluegum trees on the railway reserve at Papakura were considered to be the finest specimens of the tree growing in New Zealand was mentioned this week by Mr. D. Weir, a member of the Papakura Town Board. This view was also supported later by Mr. A. Willis, president of the Papakura Beautifying Society, when he was told of Mr. Weir's statement. Mr. Willis said the trees were planted by the Railway Department some time between 1880 and 1890, which was not long after the construction of the line. The trees were planted by an old man who took them from pots. The whole of the reserve was planted with trees, but the majority of them were cut down to provide a sports area. He considered that it would be a great shame if those remaining were ever all cut away.

Auckland Star, 28 January 1933, Page 8



Papakura prided itself in the trees of the railway reserve, as the 1933 item from the *Auckland Star* (left) shows. All early photos show trees extending on each side of the station.

By 1933, most had gone to provide a sports area, (Papakura pools and Massey Park) but Albert Willis expressed a hope that this 'chainsaw massacre' would be the last. (And we too can hope.)

Elsie K Morton was living at Red Hill and going to Papakura school in the 1890s. In 1927, as an established author revisiting her old school for its 50th anniversary, she described the 'noble plantation of eucalypts behind the station, known as the Reserve.... A whole forest of splendid trees, mighty of trunk, smooth-barked, with vast spread of branches, rose from a wilderness of bracken taller than a man's head. A narrow track ran through the Reserve from road to station.' *NZH* 10/12/1927 The children loved the shortcut it gave them to school and the opportunity to play around the station, to the annoyance of the stationmaster.

The photo left (from Papakura Museum) shows the remnant in the 1950s. The trees were removed in 1963.

Of Myths and Men

Terry Carson

One of the joys of Christmas is the sense of familiarity we get each year as the usual decorations and images appear. There is the December nativity scene with the animals and the three Kings around the manger of the baby Jesus. The fat, jolly, red coated Santa Claus also seems to be everywhere. However, at the risk of being a spoil-sport many of our current Christmas beliefs are on shaky ground.

If you love the usual Christmas practices feel free not to read any further in case some of your fondest beliefs are challenged. But don't worry, it is a free country, and when it comes to enjoying Christmas you can believe whatever you like and makes you happy. Let us look at a few myths and beliefs.

There is a belief that Santa Claus in his current form was invented by Coca Cola™ for an advertising campaign in the 1930s. Not so, say the researchers loud and clear. The fat jolly red-coated Santa was very common in the nineteenth century and there are plenty of similar images from the early twentieth century before Coca Cola™ entered the scene. Another common Christmas myth was that Prince Albert introduced the idea of the decorated Christmas tree to England. Trees, earlier undecorated, and later decorated were around as a Christmas item in England long before Prince Albert arrived on the scene. There was however, a photograph in the *Illustrated London News* in 1848 showing the royal family around a Christmas tree that generated great excitement. It pays to bear in mind that before Victorian times and the invention of photography very few English folk had ever seen an image of their monarch or members of the royal family (except perhaps on a coin), and basically had no idea at all what they looked like or how they lived. The average Englishman would never appear at the Royal Court, or at a place where they might see a painted portrait of the ruling monarch. Photography changed the whole perception people had and understood about the Royals.

Christmas is very associated with music. *Jingle Bells* is a favourite Christmas song. However, *Jingle Bells* originally had nothing to do with Christmas at all, but was written in 1857 by American, James Pierpont to celebrate Thanksgiving. The Happy Christmas brigade borrowed the song later. Even famous Christmas carols are not always what they seem. *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* is attributed to Charles Wesley, probably the world's most prolific hymn writer. The carol was indeed written by Wesley but his original words were, 'Hark how all the welkin rings, Glory to the King of Kings.' Another clergyman republished it with the 'welkin rings' being changed to 'herald angels.' Wesley was apparently not too pleased at this liberty being taken. If you are wondering what on earth a welkin ring is - the answer is that welkin is an archaic word for the sky or heavens and Wesley was talking about a loud joyous noise being made under the heavens. It probably was an apt description for Wesley as many of the early Methodist meetings were held in the open air with up to 20,000 worshippers being present, and there was undoubtedly much lusty singing of some of the 6,500 odd hymns Charles Wesley wrote during his lifetime.

Also in the 'did you know' category is the fact that good King Wenceslas was not during his lifetime actually a king? He was a Duke but such was his fame that shortly after his death the Holy Roman Emperor Otto (962-973) posthumously gave him the regal title. Writings about Wenceslas began shortly after his death and the story of his piety has been around since the 10th century.

A tradition in my house was that every Christmas Eve I read the famous story, *The Night before Christmas* to my young daughters when they were tucked up in bed just before lights out. As we are a bit mad as a family, I was also expected to provide the accompanying sound effects as well as read the story. Sometimes the clatter of the reindeer hooves on the roof was quite deafening, not to mention the sounds of Santa coming down the chimney. I had always believed that the story was written by Clement Clark Moore, but apparently there is an

argument over this. The story is that the poem was first published anonymously and sometime after it became popular Moore put up his hand and said he was the author. Most people accepted this but some distant relatives of Moore claimed that their old father had quoted the poem many years before it was first published. Some of their neighbours supported this claim. Many of the images in the story seem to suggest Dutch traditions that tie in with the background of the opposing family. The issue of the authorship was never satisfactorily settled so it looks like Clement Moore has cemented his place in popular Christmas culture largely by default.

I will be getting onto dangerous ground to try and deal in detail with some of the religious questions that perplex Biblical scholars, such as, the date of Jesus' birth, the number of the Magi, and whether the birth actually took place in a stable. These experts point out that no-where in the Bible is the date of birth of Jesus actually given. The 25th December was decided by the Church hundreds of years after the event and after various changes in calendar computations. It seems more a case of celebrating the event rather than claiming it was the exact date. Apparently there is a reference in the Bible to sheep grazing in the fields at the time of Jesus' birth. Experts point out that in December in Bethlehem sheep were usually housed inside as it was too cold outside and there was no feed. For those who like the hymn about the Three Kings, the Bible certainly refers to the Magi visiting Jesus (only referred to in the Testament of Matthew) but how many is not clear and there is no Biblical evidence that they were Kings. Some scholars and apparently many early Christians believe they were astrologer/priests, possibly from Iran. The description of them as wise men appears in the James I authorised version of the Bible and that has been the popular belief ever since. Possibly people assume there were three Magi because only three different gifts are named. Some scholars also suggest that the whole stable notion comes from a miss-translation of a Greek word. It is suggested that Jesus was born in a Bethlehem house that in common with the times had part of the house given over to keeping animals under cover. It would be quite consistent that he was put in a manger and that the host family animals were nearby.

Perhaps fortunately many of the New Year beliefs, practices and traditions around the world usually have little to do with religious beliefs. I don't think the belief that the colour of the underwear you are wearing on New Year's Day affects the sort of year you will have is likely to be found in any mainstream religious text. Apparently the colour of your undies is viewed importantly in a few South American countries. If you are looking for a big romantic New Year it is recommended that you wear red. There is a colour chart giving all the lifestyle options. In Ecuador burning scarecrows at midnight on New Year's Eve is recommended along with any photographs you don't like about the year just finishing. Apparently in Denmark throwing unwanted crockery at the front doors of your friends is a desirable practice. You know how many friends you have by how big the pile of broken plates is on the front door step. In Spain, as the bell sets to toll midnight, you are expected to have twelve grapes in hand and to eat one as each strike rings out. I imagine if grapes are not handy wine could be a good substitute? In the Philippines at New Year people allegedly try to use as many round objects as possible as the shape represents coins and wealth. In line with the motto, 'out with the old' there are parts of Italy where people throw unwanted old furniture off their balconies at New Year. In these more civilised times it is mainly soft furnishings that are now thrown. Those of Scottish heritage will know all about 'first footing.' The recommended gifts for the first folk to cross the threshold in the New Year to bring include coins, coal, bread, salt and a dram of whisky. Mass kissing is said to be popular in Venice. Perhaps you cool off in the canals afterwards? In Boise in Idaho, USA they welcome in the New Year by dropping a giant potato from the sky. I hope it never catches on in Pukekohe. Onions could bring a tear to the eye here. Dropping things from a great height seems to be an American fixation with giant possums, giant marshmallows, and a giant fish also featuring in different places. In Romania people dress up as animals and dance from house to house

If you are wondering about New Zealand and can't remember how we welcomed in the last New Year the answer seems to be that thousands turned out to watch firework displays. In Auckland the one from the top of the Sky Tower featured lasers and animation for the first time, and was synchronised with a display from the harbour bridge. Probably it was a bit more spectacular than throwing old crockery at the neighbour's front door but less personal.

I'll leave the last word to our Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. In her Christmas message in 2019 she predicted that 2020 would be a big year, and went on to hope that we would all spend quality time with our families. She was correct in that prediction and we did get to spend quality time with our families but not in the way she probably intended!

Interviewing our staff: Lone Cussen, Curator

Lone Cussen, who will soon be Lone Channell—she will remain IC, has been with us for two years now, and has become a very integral part of our staff. Her enthusiastic and professional attention to the collection, exhibitions and displays has helped keep the Papakura Museum in the eye of the public and her friendly personality plays a part in the good running of the team of staff and volunteers. She is a qualified Museum Curator, who worked previously in the Auckland Museum.

I have made a habit of interviewing members of our staff, and gave Lone time to find her feet before I... forgot my intention. But I finally caught up with her—she graciously sacrificed some time—and here is the product of our conversation. Nga mihi, Lone. I only asked three broad questions.

'What does a Curator do?'

The answer is different at Papakura Museum than what it is in a big Museum. In her previous job at Auckland Museum she was part of the Human History team, working as a Collection Technician. At Papakura Museum she is responsible for all the collections, exhibitions and displays— it's much broader. It's always nice to have variety and to have different people involved. She appreciates the good team of volunteers. With collections the expertise is in handling and storing things correctly, knowing what is unstable in certain conditions - moisture, temperature, and light. You need to know what items are made of and how they respond. Plastics deteriorate when exposed to oxygen, heat, and sunlight, and are troublesome. There's a certain smell when plastics are degrading. In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s they were all the rage, so although people often view plastic as something super modern, museums have a surprising amount of it. She modestly comments that collection care is mostly intuitive.

'Looking back over the last two years, what were the highlights and challenges?'

The Military Gallery was a real achievement, developed (in 2019) from scratch, and involved preparing a lot of text. The (Papakura) Police exhibition was fun and interesting. She appreciated working with the Police Museum, interaction with different people, setting up 'Coffee with Cops' at the café. Farmers centennial exhibition was also interesting. (Other exhibitions involved working out arrangements to borrow from other museums or working with other people.)

The main challenges involved working within our means—lack of funding, lack of the right supplies—to do the job properly. There was a lot of uncertainty—year to year, hand to mouth, and that can be frustrating.

Especially this last year with Covid-19, and its effects, like insecure funding. Uncertainty has been hard to

deal with; her income has been in doubt at times, and the extra work wasn't easy. Exhibitions were up in the air. The Art of War had to be reorganised three times before it was finally on show. Overall, the lockdowns were disruptive.

But lone has remained positive, is still here, and is looking forward to a better year next year.

'Looking ahead?'

lone is looking forward to the Warbirds exhibition in March. It is in collaboration with the Warbirds Association and will have a local flavour. It will be nice to do one of our own exhibitions again.

And there are promising areas of funding. Having a paid receptionist will take a load off Kay and lone. If one is on leave, there won't be a need to wrangle your other jobs to cover.

lone is looking forward to a break and a fresh start in 2021.



As are we all.

Thank you lone.

Best wishes for the holidays and for the New Year with all it brings, from all our readers!

Rob Finlay reporting.



PDHS business & the AGM

The AGM was held on October (we checked in advance that it would be legal to hold it so late— and it was) and was only the 4th of five meetings during 2020.

Reports were provided by the President and the Manager and Curator. Despite all the interruptions and inconveniences the Society is in good heart, and the Museum has weathered the storm well.

Three of our stalwart members were thanked for their contributions over many years with flowers and gifts as they stepped back from some of their responsibilities. Patricia Neate, who has been Vice-President, resigned from the Executive. Annette Gunson and Corallie Hart who collected names and payment for trips, and organised trip raffles, have relinquished these roles. Many thanks to each.

Honorary positions:

Hon Solicitor: Patrick O'Halloran

Hon Auditor: Peter O'Reilly

Patron: Theo Thomas

Election of officers:

President: Margaret Gane

Vice-President: Brian Leonard

Treasurer: Erwin de Raad

Secretary: Rob Finlay

Executive committee:

Corallie Hart

Wendy Deeming

Celerina Balucan-Robertson

Brenda Perry

Peter Costar

Terry Carson was welcomed back into harness.

The Trip Committee: David Smith has stepped up to the challenge of collecting names and money for trips, and has already begun with the Christmas gathering.

So in future, the person to approach to register for trips (and pay for them) is Dave.

He can be contacted at **(09) 2984507**.

Exhibitions over the last year:

Farmers 100 years—& there was TV exposure

Rosehill College Art

Tracks and Stations—9 local stations

Public and Private (Te Papa exhibition)

Kupe Sites (Te Papa exhibition)

Art of War (G J Moyle private collection)

The revamping of the Military Gallery

Forthcoming exhibitions

Buller's Birds, with mural by local artist Pascal: December to January

War Birds: local exhibition, February to March

Thanks to members, volunteers and to Phil for organising the speakers.

PDHS, the Museum team and your editors wish all our members, friends, volunteers, visitors and readers

A very Happy Christmas

And a safe and 'normal' New Year

NOTICES

Monthly Meeting February 25, at 1 pm: THE CHANGING FACE OF NZ STAMPS, Phil Sai-Louie

Monthly Meeting March 25, at 1 pm: WHO KILLED JFK? Rod Baldwin surveys the suspects

Trips and meetings are being planned for next year and will be publicised in the February *Sentinel* and advertised in the Museum screen.

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS: See previous page, and see the exhibition

RECENT:

November meeting: 26 November at 1 pm—our final meeting of the year. Paul MacQuibban talked about the **History of cartoons**, and how they commented on politics & society

November trip: The annual Christmas lunch held on **Saturday, 28 November** at 12.30pm at Red Earth, Papakura, was a pleasant opportunity to relax together.

Remember: David Smith (09) 2984507 will take registrations and payment for trips

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Library Meeting Rooms opposite the Museum, starting with the talk at 1 pm, continuing with business and afternoon tea (for a **\$2 gold coin** minimum). All are welcome. Phil Sai-Louie arranges our interesting speakers.

Events are advertised 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 on the fourth Saturday of each month two days after the meetings. The bus leaves from East Street behind the Access Point building at 10 am, unless otherwise stated. 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 are limited.

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

Visit Papakura Museum on

Website: www.papakuramuseum.org.nz

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

Facebook : www.facebook.com/PapakuraMuseum/

The Papakura Sentinel is a bimonthly magazine of the Papakura & Districts Historical Society. Your contributions are welcomed. Please send directly to Terry or Rob by email: pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz



The Papakura Museum & Sentinel are supported by



Ad-space

Seasons greetings

Wanted: to hear from people who might be descended from Te Akitai and the *Viola* and *Resolute* settlers who lived in Kirikiri, East Papakura. Your stories and photos of the people and their homes and district are valuable.

Contact: R Finlay at pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz or visit Museum

Would you like to advertise to our readers? \$10 or donation for this space / \$5 or donation for half space

Become a member of the Papakura & District Historical Society

Please complete the following

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address: _____ **Email:** _____

Annual Subscriptions \$25 (1st July - 30th June: Free for those 90 years and over)

Are you Interested in daytime/evening speakers? Daytime ___ Evening ___

Are you interested in volunteering? (We **love** volunteers!) ___

Are you interested in joining our bus trips? ___

You will receive *Sentinel* regularly. Please pay at Papakura Museum or online— ANZ 060401 0241593 01