

# The Papakura Sentinel



Number 64

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### ***Greetings/ Kia ora koutou to all our readers,***

We hope you have been enjoying the little late interlude of autumn between the summer that hardly was and the coming winter. It certainly is a pleasant nod to 'normality'.

A lot has been happening, and here are some items. The opening of the Anne Frank exhibition on Wednesday 15 March, attended by spokespeople of the NZ Holocaust Centre, some of Papakura's Jewish families and blessed by Nga Tamaoho. A midweek trip to Queen's Redoubt and Pukekohe East Church, places connected to the Waikato War. Eight school visits—St Mary's, Karaka, Papakura Central, Rosehill School. The NZ History Federation annual Conference at Morrinsville on Saturday 25 March, attended by four members, where the theme was Education, and we were impressed by the Morrinsville Museum and town—a great opportunity to meet like-minded people. We were sad to hear of formerly strong societies closing down, and we are determined to remain strong so we can tell our stories. In the last month several people have joined the society—we always welcome new members. Quite a few members expressed their concerns in the questionnaire on the Auckland Council 2023-24 budget. Our Facebook pages are proving their worth, and I am elated that 5 people, representing 4 former Kirikiri families that I had not previously had information on, have been in touch, providing valuable new strands to the story that will in due time be woven in with the rest. Thanks to these people who are enriching our history.

This *Sentinel* has a feature article by our curator Alan Knowles about what is happening in the Museum this year, and another by Iain Wakefield on the house whose history he enriches by living in and researching. Recent events prompted Kara to write about a local flood in 1953. I interview our multi-talented Front of House, Anna Part (and that is the only part - ahem - I play in this issue) apart from signing off on this editorial, with best wishes to all.

As editor I am not responsible for all the content but dutifully present the words of contributors, even if Alan tends to exaggerate at times.

**Rob**

### **PAPAKURA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Monthly Members' 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](http://www.papakuramuseum.org.nz)

## Anna Part, our 2023 Front of House

Interview by Rob Finlay

*Anna, the friendly face that greets visitors, comes with a different accent, so I asked her about growing up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA.*

**Anna:** My parents were both High School teachers, Mum in the humanities (English, Speech and Debating) and Dad in History, Law and Government. I was taken to museums since I was little. We had lots of travel rather than an up-to-date TV or car. We travelled to Europe, Mexico, all over the US. In summer my parents often applied for fellowships that took us to places like Massachusetts or Minnesota. It wasn't till High School that I realised that not everyone's parents had summer off. I love to travel. That's why I am here in New Zealand.



I love New Mexico; the desert, I'm never sick of the sunsets, the food—not Mexican or Tex-Mex, because New Mexico has one of the highest populations of indigenous people, Pueblo people like Dine (Navaho) and Zuni nations. It's a minority-majority state—non-white people are more than half the population.

*Anna came to us from the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History, and that raised the next question:*

**Anna:** My first museum job was the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science where I was a theatre attendant for a big screen and planetarium and gave lectures. I then spent a year abroad in 2014 and got a History of Design degree in the UK in 2019, at the Victoria and Albert Museum—my favourite place—and the Royal College of Art. I applied for an internship at the Nuclear Museum, and created a virtual exhibit on the history of atomic packaging and advertising. It was my first in-depth introduction to nuclear history, but I had some knowledge just growing up in Albuquerque, as it's close to Los Alamos and Trinity where the Bomb was tested. A high proportion of NM people have a connection to nuclear testing and research, as there are still two large national laboratories in New Mexico. My biggest takeaway from working at the Nuclear Museum is that radiation is everywhere and is not a big deal if treated with special caution. I believe it does a good job of presenting historical facts about nuclear weapons in a neutral way that allows visitors to come to their own conclusions (despite the fact that the museum was run by the Military when it first opened.)

I joined the collections department—dealing with accessions and researching new acquisitions. When the Museum took over the assets of the Atomic Heritage Foundation, I organised the website, answered requests from media and movie makers. I did podcasts and I'm still work on virtual events from here.

The most interesting thing is the connections all round the world. I met a physicist from Oak Ridge National Lab at a Rotorua hangi last weekend—it's a small world.

*I asked: What are your roles here, and what are you enjoying about your time in New Zealand?*

**Anna:** I'm on Reception, dealing with immediate questions. And I also look after Social Media—Facebook, Instagram, the Website and the TV window screen. (There are other, dormant accounts including YouTube, which could be used in the future.) I also help with Education. The best thing was visiting three classes at Central School, my first visit to a New Zealand school. There were kids practising the haka outside. I enjoy interacting with kids in the Museum.

The two best things about New Zealand are the scenery—it's so beautiful, I love the water all around; and the people are chatty, welcoming, kind and interesting.

*Anna is doing a great job. I'm grateful for her Facebook posts which have 'discovered' Kirikiri descendants, and for her support with education and school groups.*

## LOOKING BACK — 5 JULY 1953, LOCAL FLOODING

Kara Oosterman

Does anyone remember the flooding at Drury on 5 July 1953? [This date differs to the one offered below. It is confirmed by newspaper reports.]

The event is mentioned in the book produced for Drury School's 125<sup>th</sup> Jubilee (1857-1982) '*Chalk, Cheese & Chimney Pots*':

During the devastating flood of 1951/52 [sic] the Hingaia stream burst its banks and flooded the area between the Great South Road and the Presbyterian church. A home and a poultry shed containing thousands of chickens were washed away. The people of the district rallied around and in a very short time the family who had lost everything were clothed, housed, and given all the support they needed to see them through.

In short, heavy rain caused flooding throughout Manukau and Franklin. The Waikato River overflowed its banks at Aka Aka; the Wairoa River overflowed at Clevedon and Hunua; houses at Drury were inundated; the approaches to the Black Bridge at Hingaia were washed away. Frontpage headlines included: 'Flood Hits Boroughs, Farmlands; Damage Bill High' (*Ribbon*, 8/7/53). 'Aka Aka Fighting Against Flood Waters', 'Franklin Damage is Worst in History' (*Waiuku News*, 10/7/53). [Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections MJ\_3256]



Details provided with the image, left, state that 'Mrs. Monk was rescued from this house at Drury and that thousands of battery hens were drowned.' [Note, a mirror image of this photo was also found, so the author is not certain which is the true image.]

### WHO WAS MRS MONK?

**Mrs Monk** was the daughter of Ettie May and John Thomas MEEK, born 22 February 1902, and baptized Ethel May. Her parents lived in Parnell, where her father was employed as a carter by an Auckland cordial maker. In 1904 the couple had a second daughter, Ruth Lockhart Meek. When Ethel May was just three and a half years old her father was tragically

killed in an accident on Karangahape Road. While climbing on to his horse-drawn cart one of the horses suddenly bolted forward. John fell to the ground and was run over by heavy wagon wheels. He was only 25 years old, his widow 23. Not coping on her own, with two small children, the widow married her brother-in-law, an Auckland fireman. She regretted the decision and 'took up' with an 'old flame'. Divorce and another marriage followed — the third in 5 years. The last marriage gave some stability to her young daughters' lives.

In 1921, at the age of nineteen, Ethel May became the wife of Leonard James Monk who was 21. I can only assume that Ethel was unaware, when she married, that her husband was in the second year of a sentence of three years' probation, handed down in 1918, for theft.

In 1922 Ethel's only child, Ernest Leonard James, was born. By 1925 the family of three was living in Devonport. Electoral rolls consistently show Monk's occupation as piano tuner/music teacher. In August of that year Monk was again on probation for theft. A custodial sentence of one year followed in 1928.

Ethel had had enough. By 1927 she was living in Drury (c/o Miss Lydia Fielding, Waihoehoe Road) and Ernest was enrolled at Drury School. Drury was Ethel's home for the next 27 years — right up to the flood.

Edward went on to Otahuhu Intermediate at the age of 11. He probably completed his education at Otahuhu College. By 1946 he was a cabinet maker living in Papatoetoe with his wife Doris. Following the flood Ethel lived in Papakura at various addresses (Elliott Street, Onslow Road, Great South Road) until her death in May 1992. Ernest had predeceased her in 1990. She is buried at Papakura Cemetery (Anglican section).

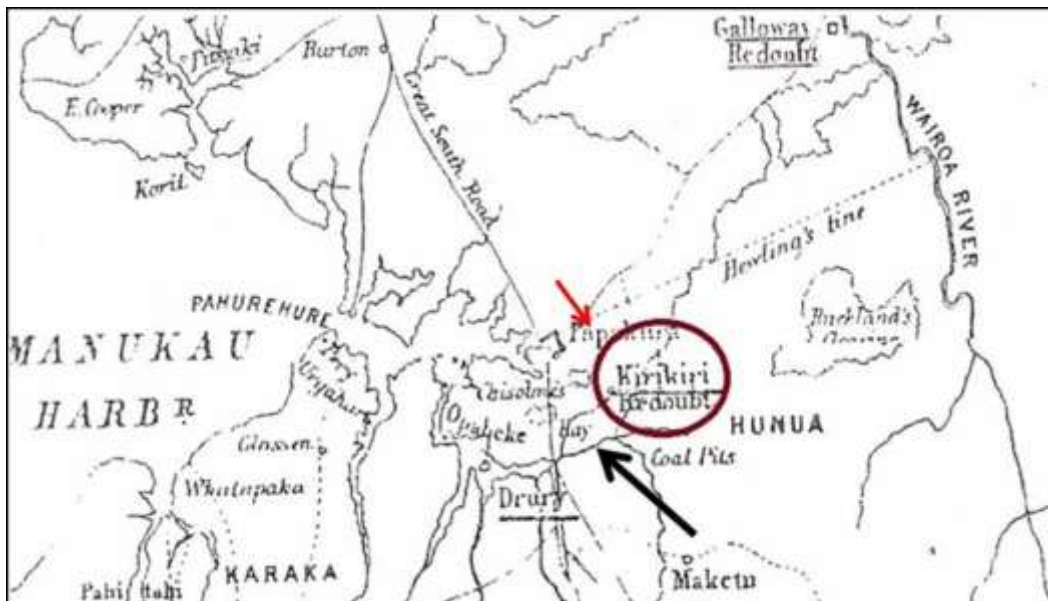
**[FIELDING ROAD:** Lydia Louisa Fielding was the daughter of Sidney Fielding, who farmed on Waihoehoe Road. Fielding Road bears the family name and runs from Waihoehoe Road through to Fitzgerald Road. Two sons also farmed in the same location, Edward, and Alfred Sidney Fielding.]

# Papakura Museum 2023

Alan Knowles (Curator)

Well, it seems hard to believe but as I'm writing this, we are in March already! Not long till Christmas! Anyway, Rob has asked me to report on some of the exciting things that will be happening in the Museum this year, so where do I begin?

**The military gallery** will be getting a major revamp with the installation of new exhibits and displays. One of the major projects will be the installation of the permanent **Rings/ Kirikiri Redoubt exhibit** being worked on by a team, namely Iain Wakefield and myself with contributions from Rob Finlay and Neville Williams. The significance of the redoubt and the archaeological assemblage was discussed in *Sentinel* no 62. A purpose-built cabinet will enable the artefacts to be shown to their full potential and newly-worded panels with images will complement the display. A new large touch screen will enable visitors to interact with the display and give 3D views of what the Redoubt will have looked like in its prime. Also, visitors will be able to view images of the many finds at the redoubt such as ceramics, stone ware, glassware, clay tobacco pipes, militaria, numismatic (coins), and how these finds provide information about the many activities at the redoubt. The display already has attracted a lot of attention from academics, researchers and media who have been in contact wanting to either assist or asking for more information. An educational programme and handling collection will be developed that will enable school groups to interact with the artefacts and aid in reinforcing the new school curriculum on the significance of the New Zealand wars.



Detail from 'The seat of War, Waikato District', 1864. New Zealand and Pacific Library Collection 'Auckland South 1864. Hist 6A' [Portion]. Kirikiri Redoubt is circled and situated just to the north of a tributary of Hay's Creek (black arrow) and well to the south of the project area (red arrow).

Image courtesy of Clough and Associates



A selection of miscellaneous items recovered during the excavations of the Ring's Redoubt encampment: a) a brass J. Terry & Co. carpet bag lock plate; b) a brass lock plate likely from a wooden or leather trunk; c) pressed copper alloy cricket belt buckle; d) a blue milk glass cap/closure for an unknown item; e) the copper alloy grip from a dip pen; f) machined heavy duty brass cleat-like item; worn as a pendant

Image courtesy of Clough and Associates





Figure 6.44 Clothing fixtures, buttons, and the scrap of textile retrieved from the archaeological investigation of the Ring's Redoubt encampment: a and b) examples of brass hook and eyelet clothing closures – the larger hook and eyelets were sewn into the greatcoats, while the smaller ones would have been used with the dress tunics; c) the small scrap of linen textile; and d) examples of pressed brass trouser buttons

Image courtesy of Clough and Associates

The newly acquired **war medals of Cecil Roy James** will be displayed in the military gallery along with panels containing images and written text in time for AN-ZAC day. An article about Cecil James featured in *Sentinel* no 63 tells his story in more depth. To sum up again, Cecil James was part of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, Auckland Regiment, 1 Battalion during the First World War. He was badly injured during the Second Battle of the Somme and died on March 30th, 1918, aged 21. His name appears on the Papakura Monument as well as the WWI memorial inside Selwyn chapel, Papakura. Cecil James has a strong Papakura history, his father was Papakura postmaster, and his sisters went to school here as well as later running a shop in Papakura. It has been a wonderful achievement for the museum to acquire these medals and provide them bring them back “home” where they belong.



*Auckland Weekly News* 1918

A regular question I have from museum visitors is “Where’s **Vietnam?**”. And before I answer, “It’s located at the eastern edge of mainland Southeast Asia,” my standard response is “It’s coming”. The Vietnam conflict is the obvious missing engagement from the military gallery. More than 3000 New Zealand military and civilian personnel served in Vietnam between 1963 and 1975. Thirty-seven men died on active service with 187 wounded. Many Vietnam veterans are still alive, and Papakura Museum has a large diorama-type display and boards which nicely tell the Vietnam story and will fill this gap. Local military collectors have offered to loan artefacts for display which will make for an exciting showpiece. The display will be installed by September this year and will tie in with the theme of this year’s Auckland Heritage Festival: Peace, Love and Protest.



Another new feature will be the replacement of the model aircraft in the cabinets located in the tent. The aircraft that will be placed there will be more representative of types that operated locally such the RNZAF P-40 Kittyhawk and Corsair. The Model Room located in Papakura has also offered to loan several stunning aircraft models for display. Staying on this theme, another project in the pipeline for the military gallery is a diorama of **Ardmore Airfield** as it looked during its heyday in WWII. This is being built by local model maker Tim Young who built many of the models featured in the recent Soaring! exhibition.

Air to air view of Corsair NZ5552 over RNZAF Station, Ardmore. Image courtesy of the Air Force Museum of New Zealand

Our ultimate plan is to gradually replace and update the permanent displays and wall text as time and finances will allow.

The first major project in the works is a **dedicated wall for local iwi** which will tell the story of Te Akitai and Ngati Tamaoho, the major iwi in the area. This display will be in full partnership with both Te Akitai and Ngati Tamaoho and will borrow the concept that the Te Papa has instigated within its museum called Mana Taonga. Mana Taonga is the cornerstone and guiding principle for Te Papa, and at its very foundation is the recognition that there are living relationships and connections between taonga and their cultures of origin. The Mana Taonga concept acknowledges that communities have rights to their taonga by virtue of these relationships. It acknowledges the role of communities in the care and management of Taonga at Te Papa and the willingness to engage as well as mediate in new ways. Mana Taonga is central to Māori participation and involvement, and in a very tangible way it connects iwi to the museum via the whakapapa or genealogical relationships of taonga and its knowledge. The principle places people at the heart of the museum as a way of focusing on what's important within the contemporary world, and so ensures that the museum remains relevant and connected with its communities. The iwi wall within Papakura Museum will use the Mana Taonga concept as a guide that will connect taonga with the local iwi of Papakura. The taonga on display, and associated stories will be selected and told by local iwi and rotated regularly. This will truly put Papakura Museum at the forefront of museum practice, keep the Museum displays fresh and provide a meaningful as well as tangible connection for local iwi. This project is very much a work in progress but come 2024 this new wall will be installed.



Great South Road, Papakura.(1860s)

Photographer unknown: Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand Ref: E-309-q-2-108-2

The early image of **Great South Road, Papakura** that is located on the wall next to reception will be added to with modern day images taken from the same place. This will enable all visitors to interact with this historic image better (not just the historians!) and connect with Papakura history more effectively. In addition to this an information panel highlighting areas of interest will be added. Our resident researcher and Papakura history encyclopaedia Neville Williams has uncovered new information about the image such as a more accurate date for when the date was taken (1865-1866) and the identification of the first Papakura hotel located next to constabulary building in the foreground. No known images exist of this hotel, so this is an exciting discovery from an image that continues to keep giving. Other historical images of Papakura are being reproduced as large panels which will replace some of the images which have hung since the museum's inception.

Museums now have a major focus on making their exhibits more **interactive and 'hands on'** to tell stories and enhance the museum experience for younger visitors more effectively. Papakura Museum has some exciting plans in the works to make the collections more interactive. The Museum is looking into several things such as handheld audio sets that visitors will be able to carry around within the Museum providing explanations on specific artefacts. Also, we plan on adding to the interactive exhibits aimed at our younger

visitors such as the “old school” experience complete with desk, writing implements and various old-fashioned learning aids.

The museum will again be hosting Andy Wang and his team for the **International Day of Light** with a Saturday date yet to be confirmed. This event proved to be popular last year with hands-on scientific activities and demonstrations.

The **educational resources** are being updated to better cater to school groups and provide a first-class educational experience, supporting the new Aotearoa New Zealand History Curriculum. Rob Finlay does amazing work in developing these resources, delivering informative lessons that are catered specifically for individual school visits and acting as the Museum’s representative. The Museum is currently reproducing high quality historical maps of Papakura and its districts that will be a wonderful resource for educational and research purposes. Our handling collections which provide opportunities for students to handle artefacts are being added to and revised, and will continue to act as a central focus for a student’s museum experience.

**Managing the museum’s collections** is vital ongoing work, but a corner is being turned! For the past few months, a **collection review** has been undertaken which involves systematically going through the storage area and ensuring that the artefacts are properly housed and accessioned, and located in the correct area. Items deemed to be of no relevance to the Museum are being disposed of in an appropriate manner. Papakura Museum enjoys close connections with MOTAT, and their registry team have offered to give us their time and resources to help guide us in the very latest museum practices. The conservation team at MOTAT is also assisting in identifying potential hazardous objects within the Museum collection, and the best methods of dealing with potentially dangerous objects.

**Cataloguing of the photographic** collection also continues. We have ascertained that a new collection management system is needed to catalogue the photos to provide an easy way of searching for images within the collection. There is good news here: Papakura Museum is part of an exciting initiative spearheaded by the Maritime Museum that will enable us to install a world class collection management system and to digitise our collection. The Maritime Museum’s objective is to provide a digitisation support hub, customised as required, so that institutions, whatever their current digitisation status, can bring their cultural and heritage taonga into the public domain – boosting access and participation. Moreover, the aim is also to build and sustain digitisation skills, knowledge, and consistency across the sector, to bolster this work into the future. As far as Papakura Museum is concerned, we will get assistance with setting up the workflow: photography, linking files to their provenance and data, as well as establishing a secure digital archive for the new digital assets. At the same time, we will also get assistance in training and upskilling our staff and volunteers so we can plan and continue our own digitisation initiatives. In the meantime, volunteers are assisting in transferring the existing information we have about each photo in our collection onto a list which can then be loaded into our

existing database. From there this updated information will eventually be transferred onto our new collection management database. This will enable images, such as this newly-discovered image of Youngs Beach taken by early Papakura photographer George Hardy, to be accessed by a wide audience.



Youngs Beach Papakura, (1910-1925). G Hardy. Courtesy of Papakura Museum.



Papakura Museum enjoys close ties with Massey University and The University of Auckland postgraduate museums studies programmes which means that we will get students willing to help us undertake this work. From the students' point of view, they can put this as work experience in their CVs which are so very important when attempting to secure a position within the museum world. The Museum is also offering the opportunity to undertake the Certificate in Museum Practice for interested staff and volunteers, as an investment such as this will only make the Museum stronger in the future.

The handling and educational resources are being updated by Rob and myself in order to meet the needs of visiting school groups. Also assisting with **education** is our new front of house staff member Anna Part. Anna has a strong museum background with amazing social media and website skills so Papakura Museum will now have a very strong **online presence** and a slick website that is effective and user-friendly. (There is an interview with Anna on page 2. Pop in and say hi! )

Papakura Museum showcases four major **exhibitions** per year and 2023 is shaping up to be an exciting one. The exhibition **Soaring!** was on display all summer and has attracted much interest and many visitors. The exhibition was put on with the full support of Auckland Gliding Club, and told the story of the Club, which celebrates its 90th anniversary this year. Panels contained information about the Auckland Gliding Club's history, simple explanations on concepts such as lift, thermals, principles of flight, how gliders have been adapted for different uses and some stunning air to air images of gliders. Also featured were scale models of various gliders, early Auckland Gliding Club film footage from their days based at Ardmore Airfield, a cross section of a glider wing and various gliding artefacts. The exhibition offered visitors the opportunity to win a ride in a glider from Drury courtesy of Russell Thorne of the Auckland Gliding Club.



The recent *Soaring!* Exhibition

Image Courtesy of Papakura Museum

Commencing on March 16th Papakura Museum is the Anne Frank exhibition **Anne Frank, let me be myself**, which will run until June 13th, 2023. Developed by the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam and viewed by more than 10 million people in 80 countries, this exhibition explores what life was like for Anne Frank and her family as they faced the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany and its occupation of the Netherlands. Using the family's experience to explore events in war-torn Europe and the Holocaust, the exhibition asks each visitor to consider what they might do in similar circumstances. It not only highlights themes of identity, prejudice, and discrimination in the past, but also in society today through contemporary stories of six young people coping with ethnicity, gender, and disability issues This exhibition was created by the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam and brought to New Zealand by The Holocaust Centre based in Wellington.

Following this exhibition, Communications (Old School Tech), All Ablaze:Fire in Papakura, Girl Power, Papakura Then and Now photographic exhibition and the Grand Prix at Ardmore are all future exhibitions in the pipeline. Details of these and when they will be on will be revealed closer to the dates but will encompass both 2023 and 2024.

Papakura Museum and the Papakura and District Historical Society are wanting to restart afternoon or weekend **public talks on topics of interest**. The current plan is that these will be run in the museum bimonthly on



Wednesday evenings commencing at 6.30pm or Saturdays at 1 pm. The focus will be on topics of local interest with guest speakers but would also incorporate other subjects of historical interest. The time slot would enable people to attend who are normally unable to be at the Society's lunchtime meetings during working hours.

**2023 is shaping up to be a busy but exciting year for the Museum.** While I have this opportunity, I want to acknowledge all those involved and without whom the Museum would cease to exist. Firstly, the Papakura Local Board for their ongoing financial support and the PDHS executive who set our strategic direction. Our museum relies heavily on the work of volunteers and in addition to the "Wednesday ladies" - Wendy, Coralie, Brenda and Carolyn, we have Dena Gilmour and Malcom Deeming (Monday mornings), Edna Carson (Monday afternoons), Vern Hudson (Wednesday mornings) and the Friday crew of Anthony Gayner, Anne Megget and Oksana Pudalio. Neville Williams will often be found poring through documents, databases and maps, adding greatly to our knowledge of the past. The Saturday volunteers, coordinated by Margaret Gane, include Celerina Balucan-Robertson, Pat Neate and Dave Smith. Dena has done amazing work with the Museum's textile collection and is now cataloguing the photograph collection with Edna. Vern assists on Wednesdays (you name it, he does it!), Anthony is a young student studying archival management who is assisting updating the collection database, and Oksana is assessing conditions of artefacts and updating our collection database. Papakura Museum invests in the development of future museum professionals and sponsors interns as well as volunteers who are wanting to undertake the certificate in museum practice. This enables volunteers to focus their time by working on a specific project and the opportunity to attain a museum qualification. Our staff, consists of Museum Administration Manager Kay, who for over 20 years has worked tirelessly in her role overseeing the Museum operations, securing finances, and keeping the Museum amazingly clean! Kara, who is our museum Researcher, always provides first class service to people with research inquiries, creates eye catching displays and fills in other roles when needed. Our Front of House, Anna, who has in a short time seamlessly blended into the team and gotten our online presence looking sharp! And lastly, a big thank you to Rob Finlay whose contribution to the Museum never goes unappreciated. Rob is editor/writer for Sentinel, secretary for the Historical Society, runs the Museum's schools educational programme, and researcher, and, along with Neville Williams, leads the **Papakura Historical Walk**.

Make sure you pop in regularly and see us. Exciting times are here!!

### **Additional notices:**

#### **The first Museum Public talk:**

##### **Wednesday 3 May, 6.30 pm: Virtual Heritage Walk with Rob Finlay**

You may have missed the walk when it was offered in the Auckland Heritage Festival and other occasions or would like the story before you do it, or you may just wish to be an arm-chair walker. This talk will give the background story on visible reminders of Papakura's past.

#### **Movie to be shown at Hawkins Theatre:**

**Shackleton, the greatest story of survival**, on 20, 21 & 26 April.

## Living on the rim of a volcano

### The History of 'Whyhoihoi', 111 Fitzgerald Road, RD1, Drury

Iain Wakefield.

It gives me great pleasure to relate aspects of the history of my house in Drury. It has been standing for approximately 167 years and it has a few stories to tell.

In the 1830s, the local district was known as Tauranga (*sheltered anchorage or landing place*) by local Māori, mostly from the tribal groups of Ngāti Tamaoho, Te Akitai, Ngai Tai and Ngāti Pou. Early European missionaries had been travelling in the area from 1834.

In 1851, the first depasturing licence (or lease) was granted to George Cole of Papakura at Tuimata but that lease lapsed the following year. In July 1852, Thomas Runciman acquired that 'Depasturing Licence' and 'Licence for a Defined Run' [NZer 4 Aug 1852, p4]. Thomas, Isobel and their four children were the first European family to settle south of Slippery Creek (the Otuwairoa Stream in the Awa Paheke district).

The first written record of 'Waihoihohi' would seem to have been on the survey 'Plan of certain farms situated south of Slippery creek and Matiwaka' published in November 1852.



Plan of certain farms situated south of Slippery creek and Matiwaka 1852. SO 200

#### Note:

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References and permissions provided on request.

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On 24 December 1853 James Farmer purchased allotment 26 (and 29,30 and 31, Parish of Opaheke, County of Eden), Parish of Opaheke, under Crown Grant DI A3.53 which was entered onto the Record on 24 April 1854. The total area of that purchase was 623 acres, 3 roods, 0 perches and the price was £311/7/6 (approximately 10 shillings per acre). He was to use the paddocks to run cattle.

James Farmer worked for William Brown and John Logan Campbell in different roles around Auckland between 1847 and the 1880s when he returned to Scotland. He also had an important political career and was a successful investor in various mining companies.

Above right: The Honourable James Farmer;

Right:1853 Deeds, Waihohihohi, Drury



HON. J. FARMER.

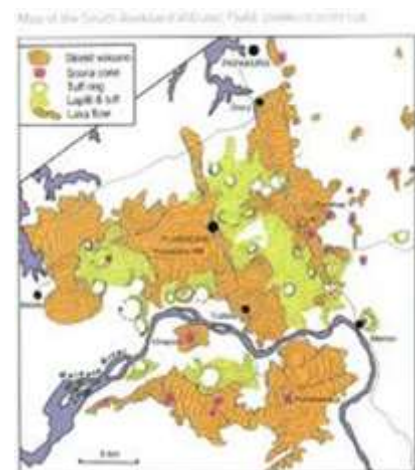
Below: Reverend Thomas Norrie 1850s

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, Thomas Norrie was being ordained as a Presbyterian minister by the Presbytery of Brechin on 15 May 1855. Four weeks later Norrie married Elizabeth Angus Steven in Glasgow on 12 June 1855. Soon afterwards they set off from Gravesend for New Zealand with Reverend John and Mary Kinder, 91 others, eight Southdown rams and a Durham bull on the *Joseph Fletcher*. They arrived at Auckland on 17 October 1855.

Early the next year, Norrie recalled, 'When he first came to Papakura, he was greatly disappointed; but he consoled himself with the reflection that although there were only very few houses there, at all events Drury would be something like a village. Judge of his disappointment when after riding round the bush (for there was then no road through it), he asked a man he met how many houses were in Drury, and received the answer – there are no houses at all'



Later in 1856 or thereabouts my house was built on a small rise (the Fitzgerald cone) which was the rim of a shield volcano with swamps to the north-east and south-west. It was situated about half a mile from what was to become the centre of Drury.



Left: Whyhoihoi, Drury on the edge of the volcanic rim. Clough and Associates, 2021.

Above: Map of South Auckland Volcanic Field



The Norrie family moved into this house and it was the Manse for the next four years. The first Presbyterian session was constituted in the house on 24 March 1857.

On 19 October 1857, at the property now known as ‘Whyhoihoi’, the second Norrie son (Ebenezer Steven Norrie) was born. [*The New Zealander*, 24 October 1857, p3]



What do we know of the immediate neighbourhood? Whyhoihoi translates as ‘a sound made by rapid water’. Drury was described thus: ‘Gentlemen fond of Sport will find the above an excellent opportunity, as the neighbourhood abounds with wild Duck, Teal, Pigeons, &c Parties wishing to recruit their health will find the locality one of the most delightful and salubrious in the Province’ [*The New Zealander*, 11 November 1857, p4]. There were large areas of bush nearby.

Photo left: bush on the adjacent Chamberlin property

Below: Whyhoihoi then and now



The house had pit-sawn timber joists, gable-ends, purlins and studs (typical in the pre-1860 era) and may have been constructed with recycled timber. Subsequently circular-sawn timber using steam-powered machinery was used. Dating for these findings is problematic.



Above: Basalt foundations



Right: Underpiling – tōtara and pūriri



Above: Early timber floor boards in attic





Left: Pit sawn joist and early sawdust insulation

Right: Early cut nails in timber floor boards



September 1858, Reverend Arthur Purchas discovered seams of coal on Farmer's land [*The New Zealander*, 18 Sept 1858 p3] and the Waihoihoi Coal Mining Company started mining on 24 September 1858. This was probably in the hills beside Macwhinney Drive. The coal was taken by a 400-yard tramway and then by bullock teams to the Drury wharf and then onto the wharf at Onehunga. Latterly, a horse-drawn tramway extending to Abraham's Point [27 Bremner Road, at the junction of Ngakoroa Stream and Slippery Creek] replaced the bullock road. It was opened on 1 May 1862 but closed less than 12 months later because of transport costs, the poor quality of the seam and poor returns.

Two months later Ferdinand von Hochstetter and his expedition of geologists arrived in Drury and stayed at the Farmer's Hotel. [This hotel has been well described by Edna Carson et al in *The Papakura Sentinel* 2022, volume 59, p3]. The group confirmed local coal seams and deposits of fire clay and potter's clay nearby. It also noted the presence of both a church and an hotel.

'Drury itself consisted of an inn and a church. At a greater distance there were some scattered farms. The Drury Hotel, or "Young's Inn" so-called after the name of the proprietor, was, so to say, the last outpost of civilisation towards the South'.

In June 1860, the Norrie family moved from Waihoehoe to the new Manse at the Beach Road traffic-lights, Papakura, with their three children, Thomas, Ebenezer and Ellison. Ultimately the Norries were to have 14 children unfortunately including 3 stillbirths.

Left:  
Whyhoihoi  
with adja-  
cent staff  
tents

From mid-1861 on, the house became the military head-quarters and residence of General Sir Duncan Alexander Cameron, the General Officer Commanding the Imperial troops in New Zealand. His staff officers camped around the house. Troops of the 65<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Yorkshire North Riding) Regiment were also quartered around the house, and troops of the 70<sup>th</sup> (Surrey) Regiment then the 2/18<sup>th</sup> (Royal Irish) Regiment were camped nearby to the south and west of Drury. Cameron quartered at the house until at least mid-1863 with occasional use until at least late January 1864.

Military thinking from June 1861 concentrated on the occupation of Māori land in the Maori King's country. Therefore, the Great South Road needed to be extended as a military road into the Waikato. This commenced from Drury on 1 January 1862. At this time, the camp around the house was in the process of being formed, and logistically, this also allowed the troops to be supplied by both sea and road.

Two months later, the neighbourhood was described thus – “Drury is a pretty and thriving village” ... “Drury is already in a more forward state than the neighbouring village, and there are many indications of its rapidly progressive rise. The land is more generally fertile, and the vicinity of the coal mines, limestone, and other minerals are much in its favour ... There is a large inn, with extensive out-premises, at Drury, and the neighbourhood is studded with many fine and fertile farms”. [The New Zealander, 29 March 1862, p3]

Drury was ‘the nearest village where the settlers of Ramarama [Maketu], Pukekohe [East] and Bombay [Williamson's Clearing] could obtain stores and catch the coach to Auckland.’ Local produce moved from the district by dray/packhorse to Onehunga and Auckland or by boat to Onehunga.

The Invasion of the Waikato started when the Maungatawhiri Stream was crossed on 12 July 1863. At that time, the 65<sup>th</sup> Regiment left the Waihoehoe paddocks to move to build the Alexandra Redoubt at Tuakau. Various regiments (and the Militia in late 1863) move onto those empty paddocks.

In August 1863, during an episode of intense irregular fighting in the Hunua ranges area there was a report that six families (a total of forty people) took shelter in the house [Daily Southern Cross, 6 Aug 1863, p5].

Four months later, in December 1863, it was noted that ‘Dr Mouat [chief of the medical department] has recommended the establishment of a general military hospital in Drury, for men belonging to the colonial forces. It is likely, if the arrangements can be made, that Farmer's house will be appropriated for this purpose.’ [Daily Southern Cross, 21 Dec 1863, p3]. However, initial reports were not good. Under the head-

Right: Lieutenant-General Sir Duncan Cameron KCB (von Tempsky, 1864)

Middle: Photo by Dr William Temple of the 65<sup>th</sup> Regiment camp

Lower: ‘Map of the country between Auckland and the River Waikato’ 1863



line 'Auckland Militia Camp, Drury' the *Daily Southern Cross*' own correspondent declared 'It is surely high time that a proper hospital was erected here. Any man who happens to get in hospital, of ours at least, is in some instances put into a miserable hole where the bodies of the dead were only a short time before, and some of their belongings still there. The bed the poor miserable patient occupies is the cold bare ground'. [*Daily Southern Cross*, 26 February 1864, p3]

A report in March 1864 opined 'What a change a few months has made in the appearance of this place [Drury]. It now begins to assume quite an important position amongst our out-settlements, and bids fair very shortly to vie with the best of them. There can be no other high road to the Waikato, than through Drury, and the Creek which well might be called a river. The Poilroad [perhaps toll road], the Coal mines, and the contemplated Batteries, all tend to render Drury a place of considerable importance. There is a vague rumour that certain parties have made discoveries of gold, not far from Drury, and are for present keeping such information to themselves. Should this be the case, and it is more than probable, Drury will, in a very short time, become a populous neighbourhood. It is supposed that there will be three thousand troops located at Drury all the winter, as the most convenient position for them. Houses are springing up in various quarters, but many more are wanted, and probably after the forthcoming Land Sale, will be built. At all events Drury must go ahead.' [*The New Zealander*, 12 March 1864, p3].

However, after the end of this period of intense activity, the neighbourhood of Drury went into decline. This lasted for many years [for a description see *The New Zealander*, 10 March 1864, p3].

In March 1870 Farmer conveyed the entire property to James Tannock Mackelvie. Only weeks later Mackelvie advertised thus: 'Pheasant Shooting – to let, for the season, 1700 Acres of the Waihoihoi Estate, Drury, formerly the property of James Farmer, Esq, MGA' on 23 April 1870. As an afterthought, it was added that 'trespassers will be prosecuted and dogs destroyed' [*Daily Southern Cross*, 28 April 1870, p2].

Mackelvie had arrived in Auckland in 1865 as the new junior partner in the mercantile company Brown Campbell and Co. He invested successfully in 25 gold mines in the Thames district. He donated his vast collection of drawings, paintings, books and antiquities to the city of Auckland during the later stage of his life and after his death.

Mackelvie then on-sold the property to Henry Chamberlin on 28 July 1870 for £1000. Chamberlin already owned the adjoining land to the east and resided in a house on Drury Hills Road.. By September 1875, Chamberlin had subdivided the farm (which now totalled 2123 acres) and offered lots for sale with only modest success. Fitzgerald Road was created during this process of subdivision. Henry



Above: James Tannock Mackelvie (Halkett, 1884); Left: Elizabeth Chamberlin with ostriches in 1903  
Below: Henry Chamberlin.



THE LATE HON. H. CHAMBERLIN.



Chamberlin died on 12 April 1888 after having fallen down one of his coal shafts. Mrs Chamberlin was to become nationally famous as a breeder of ostriches (for their very fashionable feathers). It is said that Henry's will had required her not to remarry or she would forfeit her rights to the estate and only receive one shilling a week in remuneration instead. She never remarried. She died in 1929.

David McBurney purchased 110 acres from the widowed Mrs Chamberlin on 15 October 1892 and in either 1894 or 1896 (reports vary) the top floor of my house was removed 500 yards to become a separate residence at 120 Flanagan Road, Drury. It was called the Flanagan Homestead.



Left: Flanagan Homestead

On 6 July 1921, the site of the land was reduced to 3.1.35 acres in a separate title by Fanny Flanagan for Miss Henrietta Bernard and Miss Helen Barnes. This reduced the size of the title to its current dimensions.

Over the next four decades there were only minor changes in the structure of the house although the house verandah on the east side had been enclosed at some stage.



Left: 111 Fitzgerald Road, Drury 1963

Keppoch and Alyson Maben moved into the house in July 1978. They had a novel idea of offering a 'cottage for cats'. They set up a cattery at the end of the adjacent barn in 1979.

The house was featured in an edition of the *Auckland-Waikato Historical Journal* [1993, number 63, p12] on the Redoubts of the Great South Road.

Over the boundary fence to the south, the adjacent Camphill Lifestyle Subdivision created nine new individual lots in October 1994.

The Mabens sold the house to Edwin and Elizabeth Waters in July 2003. They renovated the building considerably before selling it to me on 4 July 2008.

In the time since, there have been major infrastructure developments in the immediate area as approximately 51 hectares of land are now being developed to become the new Drury Town Centre over the next decade or so.



Left: 'A cottage for cats', *Franklin Times*, 3 April 1979

Right: Cameron's H.Q. and 65<sup>th</sup> Regiment Camp.





# NOTICES

## MEETINGS: (held in the Papakura Library Meeting Room):

**April meeting, Thursday 27 April at 1 pm. Janet Pates (historian Tuakau Museum):  
Waikato River: from Tuakau to the Sea.** On the history of the Lower Waikato.

**May meeting: Thursday 25 May at 1 pm. David Arrowsmith will present a cross-section of historic slides taken by his father Donald, an English immigrant and farmer at Mauku.**

## MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS:

**March—June: Anne Frank exhibition with school focus.**

## TRIPS:

**Saturday 29 April—to new Papatoetoe Museum by train. Lunch to follow at the Station Restaurant.**

**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** 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 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**

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**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](mailto:pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz)**



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