

BIRKENHEAD HERITAGE

— SOCIETY INC —

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sat 9th July: St Andrews Hall 2-4pm

172 Hinemoa Street:

Marcia Roberts – Will present some history of Pacific exploration: Captain Wallis on the *Dolphin*, Tupaia of Tahiti, and Captain Cook.

Sat. 13th August St Andrews Hall 2-4pm

172 Hinemoa Street: Celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Bring your memories or memorabilia of

Royal visits or special occasions
The Queen visited New Zealand in

**1953-1954, 1963, 1970, 1974, 1977,
1981, 1986, 1990, 1995 and 2002**

**Sunday July 10th 24th : Aug.14th 28th
Farrington House Museum Open 2-4pm
44 Mahara Ave., Birkenhead**

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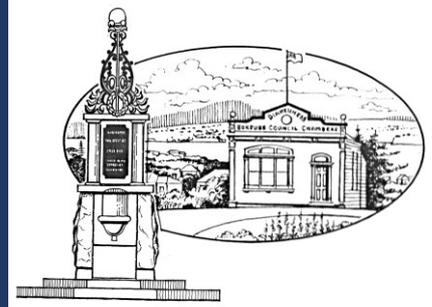
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July - August
2022

Our long standing Committee and Life Member Anne Farrington passed away in early May.



Anne Farrington

Enjoying the company of children visiting Farrington House, the old villa she and her late husband Edward donated for the Birkenhead Heritage Society Inc. Museum

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CONTACT US

President - Erica Hannam
birkenheadheritage@gmail.com

Vice President – Brian Potter 483 3400
Vice President – Colleen Durham 483 4001

**In Memory of Anne Farrington,
Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit
Justice of the Peace
Life Member of Birkenhead Heritage Society Inc.**

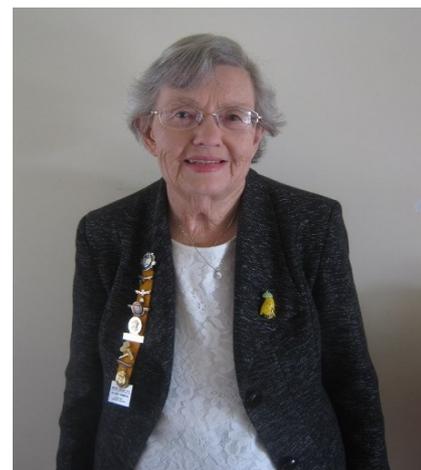
Anne was born and raised in Australia, and she shared her interesting story with the editor some years ago.. She lived in Cairns, Queensland, where she worked for the Colonial Sugar Company (parent company for the Chelsea Sugar Refinery). “With a friend we were planning a trip to New Zealand.” Not knowing anyone here Anne wrote to the Auckland office asking for local information. By chance a cousin of Edward Farrington was working in the office and as most of the staff were married she suggested Edward reply. They wrote for about two years but the friend became romantically distracted and the trip was called off. Edward decided to visit Australia, and a visit to Cairns resulted in later wedding plans.

In 1953 Anne came to New Zealand, with wedding plans underway, she worked in the city office of the New Zealand Sugar Co. Ltd. She was welcomed into the Young Wives group at All Saints Church before she was married. They were married on the 15th November 1954. She and Edward were very involved in all aspects of the Church life over many years, the choir, fundraising, concerts, and Edward was later on the Vestry.. Anne completed Accountancy examinations and encouraged Edward to do the same.

Once their two children arrived they were involved in their activities. Over the years they had their own home built, and enjoyed an active family life and travelled overseas. Anne also had her brother with diabetes come to live near them. Sadly Edward had died some years after the founding of Birkenhead Heritage Society, and the transfer of his relatives former villa to Mahara Ave. for the Museum..

In 2017 we congratulated Anne Farrington who had been recognised for her long years of service to the community with the MNZOM.

Since 1975 Anne had been involved with Soroptimist International, at local, regional, national, and international levels. Soroptimist International was founded in 1921 in Oakland, California and sought to bring about change to the lives of women and girls worldwide – transforming lives through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities. The name comes from Latin *Sorer* meaning Sister, and *optima* meaning best – interpreted as ‘best for women’. The Association was awarded Consultative Status with UNESCO in 1949, and ESOCEC (Economic and Social Council) United Nations in 1950.



In New Zealand the organisation had set up a refugee relief committee for people escaping Europe during WWII. From the start it involved business and professional women and Anne has held a range of leadership positions with her local North Shore club, as Regional President of the Upper North Island clubs, and Treasurer of the Maori Scholarship Trust. She served at the national level as Treasurer and Trustee of a Scholarship Trust for education ‘for women over 25 years and on a course of study’, and various regional Scholarships towards furthering girls’ education. Anne also served on the Council of the Federation of Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific, a member of the team which chose the Soroptimist International Programme focus for the next four years, and Treasurer of the umbrella organisation comprising four Federations.

Locally Anne had led the Women’s Fellowship of All Saints Anglican Church in Birkenhead, and Parish Auditor for 20 plus years, and completed a similar valuable task for the Birkenhead Heritage Society for many years. Anne continued to support the Birkenhead Heritage Society, holding Committee Meetings in her home. Providing her advice and knowledge willingly to assist the smooth running of the Museum and Society. She has been the financial reviewer for the Annual Report. She understood and explained the various documents required, for the Ten-year Council lease, and grant application processes. Anne and Edward were early neighbours' of Brian Potter, so has a lifetime of contacts with the family. Anne has been a wonderful hostess and friend and she will be greatly missed by many people, as well as by her precious family. Anne was able to meet her newly born 2nd Great-grandchild born just before she passed away. We owe Anne a huge thank you for all she has done, she will be remembered long after her sudden loss after a short illness on the 7th May 2022.

43rd Annual General Meeting of
Birkenhead Heritage Society Inc. 11th June 2022
Members and visitors welcomed by Marcia Roberts
and the following President's report presented.

Birkenhead Heritage Society - the last 12mths. during Covid restrictions.

- **8th May 2021**, the **AGM took place**, Coral Malcolm presented “**Memories of growing up in Birkenhead.**”
- **12th June: Meeting postponed** by lockdown. The Government was providing people time to access vaccinations.
- **10th July “Stories Day”** discussing the theme, “**Where did our N.Z. ancestors come from?**” Sitting at the round tables, sharing and recording family origins.
- **14th August – MOTAT Trip** – by member's cars. A fine winter's day looking at Telecom's history, here Brian Potter shared his knowledge of the equipment, Morse-code, teleprinters, long-distance cables that lead to telegram and telephone communication. A visit to Potter stone cottage, learning the story of the home plus a café break.
- The next three months **Meetings were cancelled due to the 100 days Lockdown.** (ie. September, October including the Auckland Heritage Festival, and November). **Farrington House remained closed for the rest of 2021.**

The closing of Glenfield Historical Society was completed at the end of 2021, with the transfer of their remaining funds to Birkenhead Heritage Society. We have expressed our appreciation, and invited their remaining members to join us.

Over Christmas & New Year celebrations some easing of Lockdowns occurred, movement within N.Z allowed, and gatherings permitted with some increase in numbers.

The bi-monthly Newsletters continued, members on their own were phoned to check they were managing. Regular checks of Farrington House Museum, lawns mown & shrubs pruned continued, but visitor numbers remained low when opening was possible.

We commenced the 2022 New Year well:

- **12th February - Brian Potter presented “The Gem of the Waitemata – The History of Beach Haven”** overheads illustrating the growth of the suburbs. **However** - in **Lockdown on 15th**.
- **March 2022 Meeting was Cancelled; increasing Omicron cases again.**

The **Easing of Covid Lockdowns enabled-**

- **9th April 2022 – Brian Fitzpatrick presented ‘Rambling Recollections – 95 yrs. in Birkenhead’** Recalling his families 3 generations, and his own early years living on Birkenhead Point.
- **9th May Sunday - Farrington House open 1pm to 4pm; to respond to the Auckland Council proposed new planning rules that will override some of the Unitary Plan's existing Special Character Areas.** **Erica Hannam, & others** concerned for Northcote and Birkenhead Points heritage homes, provided feedback to the Council, **Danielle Grant, Kaipatiki Local Board member was present.** Thirty + people visited the Museum.

14th May – the AGM postponed: clashed with NZ History Federation Conference at Onehunga.

We remembered our members who have died in the past year. Warren and Margaret Hutchinson in 2021. In 2022 Ann Warman, Anne Farrington, Marion Wilkes, and past members Ron then his wife Patricia Cane. Another long term local resident and President of the Fencibles Assn. who has spoken to our Members was Don Gallagher, who died recently following a fall.

In June 2022 it is obvious we are living amidst major World events. A brief summary was presented, with the full overview below.

This is our 3rd year of COVID 19. At our AGM a year ago, we were wearing face-masks, distancing from others, and periods of isolation became the norm. Concerns were held for possible 'super spreader' events.

- By mid-year 2021 Testing sites, then Vaccination sites throughout N.Z. were established.
- Vaccinations began for essential workers, the elderly, then down each decade to reach those over 11yrs.
- Many Schools and businesses were closed - Grocery stores and food retailers remained open.
- Working from home, and on-line classes for school children became the norm.
- Omicron, the new variant was identified in N.Z. in mid-December 2021.

The situation now

- Late May 2022: over 11 million vaccine does given in N.Z. 80.7% vaccinated (2 doses plus booster).
- RAT (Rapid Anti-gen Tests) now available. MIQ (Managed Isolation Quarantine) has stopped.
- Overseas travel restarting, and visitors once more can enter N.Z.
- Retail shops, and businesses open once more, but many people are still working from home.

Difficult times for everyone; small Societies such as ours; big public events, schools, business and retail shopping all affected by the lockdowns. Infections still continue, with new variants of virus arising.

Meanwhile both in New Zealand and Europe other events were unfolding in February 2022

Masses protested outside Wellington Parliament against the Mandate requiring Covid Vaccine passes & masks. Strong & polarising opinions were expressed /voices of 'anti-vaxers' /'conspiracy theories' /and 'fake-news' over 28 days (6/02 to 2/03). There was restraint by those seeking a peaceful resolution. There were no winners, eventually after missiles thrown and fires lit, barriers were removed, some arrested for violent actions, and the crowds went home. Viewed via the media it was the unknown outcomes that were concerning.

Across the globe: On 24th Feb. 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine, primarily to gain access to Black Sea ports. This unfortunate event is still unfolding, with expected shortages of wheat, shipping delays, loss of life - infrastructure, villages and cities is still unfolding, 6.7 million refugees have already fled – at the time of writing.

It is time for me to step down after 5years as President. I thank our members for their support, and our Committee who together have maintained our programmes, and Farrington House through very challenging times. Thank you to Jenny Goodwin who is unable to attend today, she has resigned as Treasurer/Secretary after a number of years in the position. In recognition of Brian Potter, his skills, knowledge, and ongoing support, it is my pleasure to present, on behalf of the full Committee of 2022, a Life Membership Certificate to him.

The Financial Report was circulated on behalf of Jenny Goodwin.

The following members were nominated, and elected as the new Committee.

President: Erica Hannam. Erica has business & website experience, ideal skills to lead BHS.

Vice Presidents: Brian Potter and Colleen Durham. Treasurer: Stuart Durham

Committee: Elizabeth Collins, Dorinda Duthie, Marcia Roberts. All elected unopposed.

Secretary: New member Michelle Taylor volunteered to become Secretary, she was then nominated, elected & welcomed to the team. Signed: Marcia Roberts President (retiring)

Following the 2022 43rd Annual General Meeting David Verran shared material that previous Librarian Brenda Knight had collected on early settler Phillip Callum. We learnt of his arrival from Ireland, his various activities in Auckland before, and after he built a brickworks, and later the Hotel on Northcote Point.

The drawing of raffles followed, then afternoon tea with our 22 members who were present.

Book Review ctd:

Book Review : The Secret Diary of
Charlotte Gatland: Author: Patricia Denni

If you think delving into the past is boring you only need to read this book in order to bring historical people and events truly alive. Although this novel may not be an actual diary, as no such diary has been found, it is a tale based upon two decades of research by the author Patricia Dennis who is Charlotte Gatland's granddaughter.

The events which are narrated by Charlotte Gatland span four countries from the United Kingdom to New Zealand, to the goldfields of San Francisco, and briefly Australia. The novel begins in 1847 and ends in 1884 which was a time of great change in New Zealand society. Charlotte was born into a military family and her story begins in the Tower of London Barracks on her nineteenth birthday. Although the family was comfortably off, with retirement pending and enough saved for a secure retirement they made the decision to relocate the family to New Zealand as part of the Fencible scheme.

The scheme provided a house and land for retired military men and their families in return for a commitment to help fight Maori should the need arise. However, for Charlotte and her family all did not go to plan as on the difficult voyage out in 1847 Charlotte's father died, maybe of malaria, leaving her mother a widow with Charlotte and three other children in her care. Upon arrival in Auckland it became apparent to Charlotte and her family that all was not ready for them in Onehunga. After a few days of waiting, the newly arrived settlers were able to start the long walk from the small colony of Auckland to the Fencible site at Onehunga arriving in December 1847. At the half-way point the weary travellers rested and food was provided by those who were already settled at the Onehunga settlement. Tents were the only option for many as few of the houses had been completed.

Race relations between Maori and the early settlers in Onehunga were initially friendly with Maori welcoming the newly arrived pioneers with ceremony and a hangi which was most welcome. Maori also traded with the new settlement providing food in return for other items such as sugar, flour and other commodities. The early community, of which Charlotte was part, was dependent upon Maori in order to meet their physical needs and later on Charlotte found great comfort in Maori spirituality. However, despite this early interaction and dependence, Charlotte made it clear that a certain distance was to be maintained. It should also be remembered that against this backdrop of friendly relations, in other parts of New Zealand relations between Maori and the Crown were not so friendly for it was in the 1840s, for example, that the Northern Wars and the Wellington region wars occurred.

After about a month in Onehunga the Gatland family moved to Auckland, life remained difficult. Money was tight and the family was forced to rely upon meagre savings and menial tasks such as mending. Charlotte and her family were well connected through the military, other colonists, and the church, it was these institutions which provided physical assistance and work along with friendship. Financial assistance at times provided by members of the wider family. The family was eventually provided with Fencible land, a site only, at Howick but the family decided that Auckland provided better opportunities.

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In 1849 Charlotte married William Gilbert and started her own family. Unfortunately happiness was not to last for Charlotte because her husband died in Australia while searching for gold. In 1855 she married her second husband Eric Craig, a botanist and businessman. Life was very comfortable. However, the reader is reminded of the dangers lurking in the background of early society from diseases such as the measles, whooping cough, and smallpox. In the 1860s, the areas settled by pakeha also faced a very real threat of invasion by Maori which caused economic, physical and mental distress. The growing colony also faced other problems such as fires which the early settlers were ill-equipped to fight due to the undeveloped infrastructure.

Shipping was of major importance for transporting goods and passengers around New Zealand at a time when roads were undeveloped. Water could also be treacherous with shipwrecks and drownings. Housing was often a problem for the settlers in the new colony of Auckland. Initially supply did not keep up with demand, then many houses were left vacant when the imperial troops returned to the United Kingdom, and when the capital moved to Wellington in 1865. Despite all these hardships there was respite with social gatherings from small informal groups through to larger formal balls. Entertainment was also provided through opera excerpts and theatre. This book has it all - class, religion, poverty, deceit, race relations, loss, epidemics and the importance of the family. It is a very good yarn and the reader is left in no doubt about the difficulties faced by the early pioneers in this very new and difficult environment.

Thank you to member Diana Hill for reviewing this book from our Farrington House Museum.



Ann Farrington at the re-opening of Farrington House with the vintage car, 13th February 2021

Editor: Marcia Roberts