

# BIRKENHEAD HERITAGE

— SOCIETY INC —

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November End of Year Celebration

2pm at St Andrews Church Hall  
172 Hinemoa Street, Birkenhead

A light hearted 'Throw your toys out of the Cot.'  
Come along with a reminder of your younger days  
a tin soldier, a soft toy, a book or perhaps a photo,  
or item to show!! Share the memories. Bring a  
friend, some food to share – optional.

### Saturday 9th February 2019

Topic /Speaker – in next issue; Jan.-Feb.  
2pm at St Andrews Church Hall

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By Elizabeth Collins and Brian Potter  
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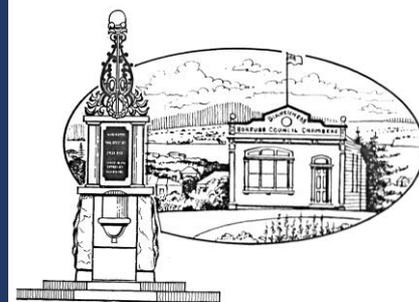
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November  
– December  
2018

### Auckland Heritage Festival

This year's Festival held during the October school holiday saw over 40 people through Farrington House, many people from out of the area came to renew connections with places, or families who once lived locally. Photo displays were prepared for Farrington House and Birkenhead Library where Colleen & Marcia, (below) spent time mounting the photos on the theme –

“NGA IWIO TAMAKI MAKAURAU  
Celebrating The Heritage Of Our People”



The four Heritage Walks attracted 82, with two down Hinemoa Street viewing the lovely homes and hearing stories of early residents. The two afternoon Chelsea Walks were focussed on stories from former workers, we were joined by the new guide appointed for the Sugar Works Tours.

Chelsea Bay Bakery and Eatery opened 27<sup>th</sup> Oct., Factory Tours by a special Chelsea Train available Mon. to Fri. Bookings; [chelsea.co.nz/chelseabay](http://chelsea.co.nz/chelseabay) or ph. 481 0744 Cost Seniors \$20

## CONTACT US

President – Marcia Roberts 418 0397

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

## 1914-1918

### Remembering the end of WWI

By Elizabeth Collins and Brian Potter

New Zealand is about to mark the hundredth anniversary of the Armistice which ended the conflict in the First World War, and to remember the soldiers who never came home. Amongst them were the young men who had attended Birkdale Primary School, one of the oldest schools ( dating from 1894) on the North Shore.

In memory of the lost soldiers Birkenhead Rotary donated a large memorial rock with a brass plaque showing the names of those ex-pupils with the words 'From Strawberry fields to Poppy Fields,' referring to the Birkdale strawberry gardens widespread in the district a hundred years ago. The memorial which stands on the corner outside the school was planned and organised by Keith Rogers of Birkenhead Rotary with the staff of Birkdale Primary School.

The memorial was unveiled on Anzac day 2015. I attended the event as a relative of one of the past pupils, Lawrence Collins, whose name features on the brass plaque. The children of Birkdale Primary took part in a remembrance ceremony with music and dramatic presentations about the First World War.

Twelve native trees, pohutukawa, totara, rewarewa, karo and ribbonwood, were planted in a bush area at the school, each one labelled with the name of a soldier. The trees are a replacement for a row of mature pohutukawa originally planted in their memory soon after the First World War. They were removed by the education board to provide space for a new school building when the population of Birkdale increased.

This is what is known of the lives and service of the soldiers who are named on the memorial at Birkdale Primary School. Their names are also to be seen on the Roll of Honour for the Auckland Province at the Auckland War Memorial Museum and Birkenhead War Memorial Park.

The WWI  
Memorial  
at  
Birkdale  
Primary  
School

Photo:  
Elizabeth Collins



(Bugler) Donald Roy Treacher (12/267) was born in England. He was nineteen, working for the Standard Insurance company when he enlisted early in the war in the Auckland Infantry Battalion. He attended Birkdale School in 1906 to Standard 6, and Auckland Grammar which was at that time the nearest Secondary School.

In 1914 he embarked for Egypt and Gallipoli, seeing action in the role of both soldier and bugler. He was 'mentioned in dispatches' but was killed in action in June 1915.

The Auckland Grammar magazine says



BUGLER D. N. TREACHER.

'He was at the landing at Gallipoli and was reported missing at Quinn's Post whilst raiding a Turkish trench on the night of June 8<sup>th</sup>.' The Lone Pine Memorial in Turkey bears his name.

**1914 – 1918 ctd.**

Bertram Rudolph Fair (21237) joined the 2nd battalion of the Wellington Infantry Unit Battalion, B Company, 16th Reinforcements in 1916. When he embarked for England on the 'Mokoia' he gave his mother Mrs E M Rich of Birkdale Rd Birkenhead as his next of kin and his occupation as a shepherd. At 'Sling Camp' near Salisbury in England the battalion trained for the battles on the Western Front in Europe. They reached Etaples in France in November 1916 and joined the British in the field in battles from the Somme and Messines to Passchendaele, all scenes of horrendous bloodshed. Bertram was killed in action at Messines, Belgium, on 20th April 1917 and is buried at La Plus Douve Farm Cemetery, Belgium.

Joseph William Moore (11076) was the son of Lydia and John Moore who owned a dairy farm in Birkdale Road almost opposite Birkdale School. Joseph was a carpenter in civilian life. He departed New Zealand for Suez on the 'Ulimaroa' on the 19th June 1916 with reinforcements for the 1st battalion, New Zealand Rifle Brigade. After the evacuation of Gallipoli he was then sent to the Western Front where he fought with the Wellington Infantry Regiment and was killed in action on 8th June 1917 at the battle of Messines in Belgium, where he is commemorated at the Messines Ridge Memorial British Cemetery.

Stanley Hadfield (44722) joined the 1st battalion of the Auckland Infantry Regiment 24th Reinforcement with his brother Tom in April 1917. His father and next of kin was Sam Hadfield. Stanley's occupation before the war was as a real estate agent. The Hadfield family owned orchards in Lancaster and Beach Haven Road (then Puriri Rd.) They were active in local body politics over many years, Tom Hadfield having been a member of the first Birkenhead Council in 1888. Hadfield Street in Beach Haven bears their name. Stanley was killed in action at Ypres, Belgium, on October 4th 1917 having experienced only four months of the war. He is buried at Tyne Cot Cemetery, West Flanders, Belgium.

(Sergeant) Donald McLean (12/2060) was the son of William and Charlotte McLean of Mokoia Road Birkenhead.

He embarked for Egypt from Wellington with the Auckland Infantry, 1st Battalion 4th Reinforcements, in April 1915, later promoted to Sergeant. After taking part in the Gallipoli Campaign he went on to fight on the Western Front where he was killed in action aged 23 near Ypres on October 6th 1917.

He is buried at Dochy Farm, New British Cemetery, West Flanders Belgium. His name is on the Roll of Honour at the Kaipara Memorial RSA at Helensville.

Laurence Earle Collins (31599) was the son of Alice and Selden Collins who lived in Tiritiri Road Birkdale and are buried in the Birkenhead Anglican Cemetery. They were instrumental in having St Peter's Church (now in Beach Haven) moved from Chelsea village to Birkdale Road. His mother Alice gave a bell for the church in memory of Lawrie.

He went to Auckland Grammar on a scholarship from Birkdale School and thence to Auckland University and Teacher Training College and was a pupil teacher at Northcote School and a House Master at Dilworth School. He embarked for Europe in November 1916 with the 19th Reinforcements, Auckland Infantry Battalion.



PRIVATE L. E. COLLINS.

## 1914 – 1918 ctd.

During the campaign on the Western front Laurence Collins volunteered as a stretcher bearer and saved the life of his commanding officer, who although badly injured, returned to England and survived the war. Lawrence was wounded at the storming of Messines and recovered but a shell killed him six months later 'in the field,' aged 22, on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1917. His grave is at Hooge Crater Belgium and his name is on the Rolls of Honour at Dilworth School and Northcote Borough.

Frederick William Beer (54809) gave his occupation as a carpenter when he enlisted and left for Europe in July 1917 with the Auckland Infantry reinforcements to join the campaign on the Western Front. His family were winemakers who lived in Tiritiri Road Birkdale and in the 1950's their vineyard still occupied the land on Birkdale Road which is now part of the Birkdale Intermediate School grounds. After a year of huge casualties in Europe, Frederick was killed in action in France on 20th July 1918. He is buried at Gommecourt Wood New Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. His next-of-kin given as his wife, Mrs. J. Beer, care of a Dunedin address.

Roland Wolstenholme (5506) the son of James and Miranda Wolstenholme of Devonport, Auckland, enlisted in the Wellington Infantry Unit. His occupation, a carpenter. He fought with the New Zealanders in the campaign on the Western Front but he died of wounds, aged 21, on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1918 only two months before the Armistice. His photograph appeared in the Weekly News with the caption 'Private Wolstenholme of Devonport.' He is buried at Bagneux British cemetery, Gezaincourt, Somme, France. He is on the Stanley Point Primary School's Honours List and the Devonport War Memorial.



(Lieutenant) Julian Cornelius Brook (12/600) was the eldest son of a long-serving and respected headmaster at Birkdale School also named Julian Brook. His family came to Birkdale in 1897 from Waipu and lived in the school house.



He was educated there and later at Auckland Grammar and Auckland University where he gained a Law Degree. He was practising Law in Kohukohu when the First World War broke out.

He enlisted in the Auckland Infantry Brigade in 1914 and at Gallipoli he was promoted from private to lieutenant.

After a war injury Julian Brook returned to New Zealand for a period to recover then joined the New Zealanders again in the final campaign on the Western Front which ended the war.

(Lieutenant) Julian Cornelius Brook was killed at Bapaume on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1918 and was buried at the Adanac Military Cemetery, the Somme, France. He has many memorials, one on the Brook family grave in Glenfield Cemetery, another on the Hokianga Arch of Remembrance and the All Saints Memorial Church at Rawene.

1914 - 1918

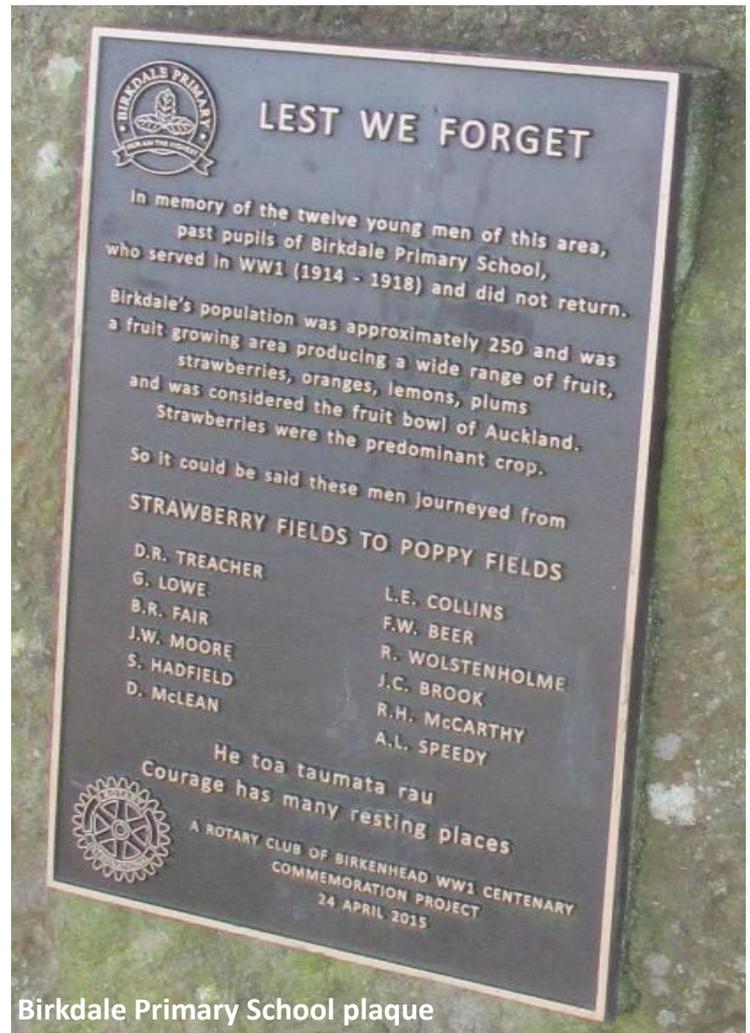
(Lance Corporal) Ralph Henry McCarthy (10484) was the son of Maud and Henry McCarthy of Hauraki Street Birkenhead. During the campaigns of the First World War Ralph served in the Number Two Engineers Field Company and earned the rank of Lance Corporal as a Telegraph Despatch Clerk. He is named on the NZ Post and Telegraph Roll of Honour, and the Northcote Borough Roll of Honour. He died of wounds on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 1918, at the age of 26, eight days after the fighting finished, and is buried at Sever Cemetery, Rouen, Seine Maritime, France.

Alfred Lloyd Speedy (46398) was the son of Marion Ellen and J H H Speedy who was the chief engineer in charge of the early construction at the Colonial Sugar Refinery Company at Chelsea in the 1880's. He was responsible for the wharves there, for damming Duck Creek as a water supply and planning housing for the workers. Alfred Lloyd Speedy attended Birkdale School between 1907-and 1911 and worked as a warehouseman. He enlisted in the Auckland Infantry Regiment and was a rifleman in the NZ Rifle Brigade on the Western Front. Alfred Lloyd died at the age of 22, four days after the Armistice, on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1918 and is buried at Etaples Military Cemetery. Speedy Crescent in Glenfield bears the family name. On record is a request was sent to the North Shore Council requesting a plaque in his memory be placed in Speedy Crescent.

*Footnote:* If readers have information about these soldiers or families we would love to hear from you. The name of G. Low featured on the plaque not included in the above descriptions as our research has been unable to establish his identity.

*Resources :*

- On-line Cenotaph Auckland Museum
- Archives New Zealand
- Matthew Wright, *Western Front: The New Zealand Division in the First World War 1916-18*, Reed 2005
- Auckland Grammar School Magazines 1917-18
- Photos ; On-Line Cenotaph Auckland & Wikipedia,



Birkdale Primary School plaque

**Armistice Day** is celebrated to commemorate the soldiers who fought in World War I. It refers to the suspending of military operations, and was concluded by Marshal Foch and Adm. Wemyss (Allies) with the civil and military representatives of Germany. Modified several times, concluding with The Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The truce signed at Compiègne, France went into effect on the **11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour 1918.**



2018

## **In September we completed a very successful bus trip to the Silverdale Pioneer Village.**

This time the elements were kind to us, a perfect calm, warm sunny day. Our members enjoyed a tea/coffee break with biscuits on arrival, and listened to a very interesting talk on the settlement of the Wade. Some of the challenges faced by the first pioneer European settlers, the building of the first and subsequent bridges. At that time transport was by sea and people built their small cottages and stores at the limit of navigable creeks and tidal estuaries.

The Maori called the waterway Te Weiti which became over time the Wade – in 1911 the locals met to discuss a new name and decided on Silverdale – perhaps because of some local silver popular trees.

We heard stories about the first Pub, and various means to keep customers, plus the lawmakers happy. The tiny settlement around the Wade River grew, timber yards, and later cement works built.



We learnt of some of the issues and different values between settlers. Two moved north from Birkenhead, Isaac Rhodes Cooper land owner, and Major de Jersey Grut who had tried farming at Duck Creek.

We toured buildings with various displays showing the activities within, from the blacksmiths to the small post office and store, the school room, and the tools of farmers and handyman. A new specially built archives room with air humidity control. Tables to sit and enjoy the sunshine, lovely gardens with spring flowers and a very welcoming team of volunteers.

Photo: Colleen Durham

### **Kathleen Sharkey**

24 February 1940 - 16 October 2018

After several months of failing health our member Kathleen Sharkey passed away in October. We will remember her cheerful smile and contributions to our meetings with her son Ken. Several of the Committee and members were able to attend the celebration of her life at Maria Assumpta Catholic Church in Beach Haven where she and her husband were founding members. Her early New Zealand family came from Belfast where her grandfather and an uncle worked on the grand staircase of the *Titanic*. She had learnt typing, and mastered driving a car at an early age. She raised a family of five children with her husband, joining in church and many other activities. Her article on making Jam and preserves featured in our last Newsletter. We know she was enjoying her time at Bert Sutcliffe, and the kind care she received. Kathleen shared her enjoyment of life with many people, she will be well remembered by her family, including 6 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren., and her friends.

The Committee continue to open Farrington House on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. We keep the lawn under control., and attend to the collections We have received quotes for repairs and then painting of the Farrington House and will report on progress when we have been successful applying for funds

**It seems too early, however it is time to wish every one a Happy Festive Season, and good health as we move towards Christmas and then the New Year of 2019, from Birkenhead Heritage Society Inc. President and Committee.**

Editor: Marcia Roberts