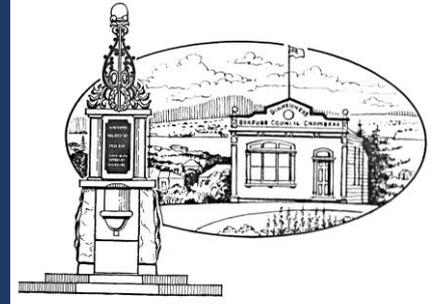


# BIRKENHEAD HERITAGE SOCIETY INC

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## September - October 2019 Newsletter

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2-4pm**  
**St Andrews Church Hall, 172 Hinemoa St.**  
**Brian Potter presents: Chelsea Sugar Refinery Building a Community.** (Trfd. from August)

### Our Heritage Festival Events

**Wed. 9<sup>th</sup> Fri. 11<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1.30-3.30pm**  
**Children's Event: Discover the activities children enjoyed on their journey to New Zealand by ship at Farrington House**  
**44 Mahara Ave. Bookings ph 4180397**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2-4pm**  
**St Andrews Church Hall, 172 Hinemoa St.**  
**Historian Megan Hutching will present**  
**Stories collected over many years through oral history interviews. 'Oral history interviews are journeys – both through time and place.'**

**Guided Walks**  
**Clay, Sugar Cane & Cottages**  
Wed. 9<sup>th</sup> October 10.30am to 12.00 noon  
**Hammonds Highbury Heritage Walk**  
Thurs. 10<sup>th</sup> October 10.30am to 12.00 noon  
Both meet by main Library entrance, Rawene St.  
Bookings at the Library, ph 486-8559  
Arranged by the **Birkenhead Town Centre** and **Birkenhead Heritage Society**

**Birkenhead Residents Assn. Photo Competition:** entries by 31<sup>st</sup> Aug. www.Birkenhead.org – then displayed in Library  
Themes: Community, Environment, Heritage.



**Auckland Heritage Festival 2019**  
Celebrating Journeys the Heritage of our People

**Stories celebrating journeys will be on display in Farrington House Museum at 44 Mahara Ave. Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2-4pm**

**Free Auckland Heritage Festival programmes will be available at the Library, and Farrington House. The daily varied programme covers the whole Auckland area, runs for 3 weeks this year, through two weeks of School Holiday, plus an extra week. Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October .**

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*Our appreciation for sponsoring printing to Trish Love*

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### CONTACT US

President – Marcia Roberts 418 0397

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

**In Memoy of**

**Elizabeth Kennedy Morton Walker Durham (Betty) Nee Watson**  
**13 May 1920 – 4 September 2018**

My mother was born in Glasgow and came to New Zealand when she was about 2-1/2 years old. Her parents, when I was a child, lived on the beach at the bottom of Stafford Road, on the right-hand side opposite Stafford Park. This section is now empty with the Stafford Road off-ramp cutting across the seaward end. This is where Betty and her 3 younger sisters, Wilma, Lillian and Lesley, grew up while her parents ran the grocers shop in Queen Street, just down the hill from Gordon (Onewa) Road.

Betty married Gladstone James Orlando Durham on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1943. They lived in the house they built at 86 Salisbury Road. Where the dairy is now there was a big double garage which housed Dad's truck and their car (Dad was a carrier until I was 5). The section went right down to Eskdale Road and we had chickens and fruit trees. Mum didn't like the bottom of the road because it was cold and damp during the winter. We moved to 33 Salisbury Road during Easter 1963.

This was a half acre section and our address was actually 33-35 Salisbury Road. Part of the section was the edge of bush which probably ran down to Eskdale Road and over to Verbena. Mum and Dad had a large vegetable garden, and a rose garden at the bottom of the driveway which won at least one award from the Beach Haven Gardening Circle. Despite the gardens it still took me 2-1/2 hours to mow the lawns. Mum and Dad knew all our neighbours and were friends with all of them.

Before she married; Betty worked at Milne + Choyce in Queen Street, City. That probably stopped when Sandra came along. When she went back to work she was in the bakery at Foodtown and at Self Help in Highbury. She also worked in the showroom at LD Nathan in Fort Street, City. Betty retired with Glad in 1980 and they went to the UK and toured Europe for a month by coach with Ray and Hilda Booker. They had a few trips to Fiji and Norfolk Island and they always seemed to be being searched whenever I could meet them in the baggage hall.

Dad was a carrier until 1959 and then worked for Bob Inwards in the Lube Bay and Service Station at Birkenhead Transport, as well as driving buses until about 1980. He and Mum had 30 years of happy retirement together – tending their gardens, indoor bowls at the RSA, Birkenhead Heritage Society. Dad went to Probus and Mum also was also in the Birkenhead Women's Bowling Club. Once retired they didn't have time to work.

After Glad died in July 2010 Betty stayed at No.33 but found the upkeep too taxing and moved to Northbridge on 17 January 2014. She had lived in the same house for more than 50 years and in the same road for around 70. She was involved in various clubs at Northbridge, as well as the Heritage Society and introduced Colleen and I to the North Harbour Tripe and Onions Club at the Birkenhead RSA.

No doubt we didn't visit as much as we should have over the years but in the first half of 2018 I wasn't working much and we saw more of her. Mum was in and out of North Shore Hospital around the middle of the year as her legs had ulcerated. She moved to the rest home about May and finally to the hospital at Northbridge about October. By this time she wanted to die and couldn't understand why God hadn't taken her. Betty died before 6am on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018. She had been talking to nurses at about 4am and when they went back later she had gone. The hospital manager Sue said "she had seen a gap in the clouds and went for it".

**In Memory**



**Betty and Glad Durham**

Betty had always said that she wanted to be cremated but didn't want a funeral. She wanted this to be quick and without fuss. I think she is happy to be reunited with Dad and knowing that she left Sandra and I and four grandchildren well provided for.

Prepared by Stuart Durham

Glad and Betty Durham were foundation members for the Birkenhead Heritage Society and continued their involvement until their passing – contributing to the success of many events and the running of the Society – Glad as Committee Member from the beginning and as Treasurer from 1989, until he died in 2010. They were present on many of the Bus trips, with Glad driving in the early days, taking phone bookings, and Betty collecting the money. Betty wrote 'Memories 1991' and 'Building a House after the War.' and Glad wrote 'A Young Lad's Life in the 20s' and 'A Nasty Four Lettered Word – WORK' which are included in *Life, Laughter and Love In The Early Years* printed by the Society in 2004. Glad was also a powerhouse of energy in the establishment and operation of our museum.

Betty and Glad will be remembered by many of our members, and their contribution to Birkenhead live on in the Society archives, and in Birkenhead's local history. With the continuing contribution by their son Stuart, and daughter-in-law Colleen on our Committee.

Marcia Roberts

**The Polish Heritage Trust Museum 125  
Elliot Street, Howick**

The Polish Museum recently held a Seventy-five Years photographic exhibition of the Polish children of Pahiataua, in New Zealand, as part of the Auckland Festival of Photography.

The item below from their website relates to the recent talk by Richard Cootes, (May A.G.M.), and his visit to the site of one of the Great Escapes from a WW2, P.O.W. camp.

**“Stalag VIII A & B in Silesia**

Family members of Allied POWs from WW2 have contacted the Polish Museum this year to find out more information about Stalag VIII A & B in Silesia under German control.

Stalag VIIIA Gorlitz was originally a Hitler Youth Camp, modified to house approx. 15,000 Polish prisoners from the German September 1939 offensive. POWs of various nationalities were soon crammed in until the Long March in May 1945, which claimed further victims.

Stalag VIIIB Lamsdorf housed British and French prisoners in WW1 and in WW2 Polish prisoners were sent there from the German September 1939 offensive. Later, approximately 100,000 Allied POWs of many nationalities, including Poles, New Zealanders and Australians were sent here and a camp within a camp was set apart for Soviet POWs. In 1945, the Soviets in turn kept German POWs here.

Silesia is a historical region of Central Europe located along the Oder River, mostly in Poland, with small parts in the Czech Republic and Germany. In Polish, it is known as Slask and the historical capital is Wrocław. There have been many political border changes, with both local and national rulers in this region.

Find out more about Silesia and regional Poland at the Polish Museum in Howick.”

Check their website

<http://www.polishheritage.co.nz/>

or ph. 533 3530 to arrange a visit..

Museum Hours:

Tuesday - Friday 10 - 4 Sunday 12 - 5

**100 Years Ago**

**Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board  
A History of its Buildings and Endowments**

**Report published in 1919 states**

“The beginnings of the Auckland Hospital can be traced back to the infancy of colonisation in the Dominion. In the “1840s” at a date which does not appear in the official records -- possibly because of the loss of many public documents in the wreck of the “White Swan” when conveying the appurtenances of Government to Wellington, on removal of Government from Auckland.”

“Certain allotments or parcels of land, mostly in Towns and Suburbs of Auckland were marked out and distinguished on the Charts of New Zealand as a Site and Endowments for, or towards the maintenance and support of a Hospital or Hospitals at Auckland for the relief of the sick of all classes of Her Majesty’s subjects, and of other poor and destitute persons.”

“Doubt on the validity of later Crown Grants resulting from the loss of documents required an Act of Parliament, as early as 1856, to grant certain lands to Trustees as Reserves for a Hospital and for Grammar Schools.”

Some Facts and Figures 1.04.1918 to 31.03.1919

|                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Resident Medial Officers             | 7          |
| Registered Nurses                    | 23         |
| Probationers (in training)           | 157        |
| Total Beds                           |            |
| Auckland Hospital                    | 611        |
| Costley Home                         | 344        |
| Patients no. varied per year.        | 500 to 620 |
| <u>Total treated during the year</u> |            |
| Operations                           |            |
| Major                                | 2576       |
| Minor                                | 933        |
| Average days’ stay Akld. Hosp.       | 29.5       |
| Average days’ stay Costley Home      | 276.4      |

Mr. Wm. Wallace was a Member of the Auckland Hospital Board in 1919, representing Birkenhead Borough, Northcote Borough and Devonport Borough. Birkenhead Borough Council. The levy for the 1918-1919 year was £408.18.5

## 1862 A Grand Excuse

On reading the history of the Auckland Hospital Buildings and noting 'the loss of many public documents in the wreck of the "White Swan." a quick search found -

"No human lives but many irreplaceable government records were lost when the steamer was wrecked on the Wairarapa coast.

The 1862 parliamentary session was the first held in Wellington. The "White Swan" was carrying politicians and records from the capital, Auckland, to which southern members had refused to travel. After the ship struck a reef, the cases of documents were hoisted on deck but proved too heavy for the ship's small boats. Thrown into the sea in the hope they would float ashore, they were last seen heading for Chile.

The distinguished passengers spent four nights top and tailing in a nearby woolshed, easing their discomfort by barbecuing drowned animals and draining washed-up casks of wine and spirits. Meanwhile, MHR Robert Graham rode overland to Wellington to intercept the steamer "Storm Bird," which soon rescued the castaways and their surviving luggage.

Governor George Grey had fared little better, his ship blown almost to the Chatham Islands by a gale. When the parliamentary session began a fortnight late, the Fox ministry soon fell. The episode played a role in the decision to make Wellington the capital in 1865. After the 1862 session ended two Auckland MHRs, including Graham, embarked for home on the Lord Worsley and had the misfortune to be shipwrecked a second time.

Many an archivist unable to locate a file has silently thanked Captain Harper for his inattention that fine Sunday morning. 'I'm sorry, but the document appears to have gone down with the White Swan.'

NZGovt History website.  
National Library  
of New Zealand

## Last Voyage of the S.S. WHITE SWAN

This favourite fast-sailing and comfortable vessel, with about fifty passengers on board, left Napier at about 5 p.m. on Saturday, 28th June, (1862) with a moderate easterly breeze which veered round in the night to W.S.W. When the passengers retired to rest at about 10 p.m. the vessel was making 10 knots an hour or more, and the hope was indulged of reaching Wellington early on Sunday afternoon. The weather was fine and the motion of the ship comparatively easy.

At six o'clock the next morning the day just breaking, those of us not already awake were aroused from our slumbers by a smart jarring shock, lasting scarcely a second. Said one gentleman "has she struck anything?" to which another replied, "No, it's only the sea," and turned to go to sleep again.

Others thought it was the shock of an earthquake, but the vessel proceeding and nothing more being heard for five or ten minutes, it was generally thought that nothing of any consequence had happened, till the steward came into the cabin, and in a cool and collected manner requested every-one to get up and go on deck immediately. This it may be well imagined we were not long in doing, many only half dressed; the report being speedily circulated that we had struck a reef and were going down, the fore-hold being in fact already nearly full, the water up to the men's beds in the fore-castle before they knew anything about it.

The danger was intensely felt, but whilst much excitement and alarm prevailed, there was, happily, no confusion. In the meantime the captain had put her head in to shore from which she was distant probably between two and three miles."

*NB. At dawn, in fog, the White Swan struck rocks south of Riversdale on the Wairarapa coast. The ship steamed ashore at full speed to avoid sinking rapidly.*



The White Swan sank 29<sup>th</sup> June 1862

NEW ZEALANDER, VOLUME  
XVIII, ISSUE 1705, 16 JULY 1862

This newspaper was  
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Auckland Libraries.

## Celebrating 1979 -2019

The Birkenhead Heritage Society has been fortunate to have a number of long serving Presidents and Committee members.

Opposite – Glad Durham, Alec Utting and Anne Farrington cutting the 1979 – 2004, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cake.

The 1979-2004 Cake recorded those in office to 2004 – with updates to 2019 below.

### President

|                   |             |                        |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Cyril Crocombe    | 1979        | (Died while President) |
| Edward Farrington | 1980 - 1996 | (Died while President) |
| Alec Utting       | 1996 - 2000 |                        |
| Ray Johansen      | 2000 - 2009 |                        |
| Brian Potter      | 2009 - 2011 |                        |
| Ray Johansen      | 2011 - 2017 |                        |
| Marcia Roberts    | 2017 -      |                        |

### Secretary

|                     |             |                |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Messrs A. Tanner    | 1979        |                |
| Alec Utting         | 1989        |                |
| Terry Simpson       | 1996        |                |
| Mrs. K. Bland       | 1998        |                |
| B. O'Brian          | 2000        |                |
| Mrs Colleen Durham  | 2001        |                |
| Mrs Maureen Andrews | 2010 - 2017 | Sec./Treasurer |
| Mrs Jenny Goodwin   | 2017 -      | Sec./Treasurer |

### Treasurer

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Mrs M. McCutcheon   | 1979       |
| Mrs A. Cheshire     | 1980       |
| Mrs. J. Goodwin     | 1982       |
| Mr. Allan Tanner    | 1983       |
| Mrs. Adeline Tanner | 1988       |
| Alec Utting         | 1988       |
| Glad Durham         | 1989 -2010 |

### Auditor

Anne Farrington

### Long serving Vice Presidents

John Malcolm, Lloyd Mumme, Colleen Durham, and Brian Potter.

### Committee Members over the years included,

Lloyd and Marjorie Mumme, Diane Tierney, Coral Malcolm, Stuart Durham, Keith Peachey, Keith Rogers, Rae Thomas, Tom Cotter, Mavis Thrall, Marcia Roberts, and Erica Hannan. Percy Alison wrote the Frank Larking book giving the copyright to Birkenhead Heritage Society.

This delightful poem was found  
in our archives, author unknown >>>

Editor: Marcia Roberts



### On Committee

*Oh give me your pity! I'm on a committee!  
Which means that from morning to night  
We attend and amend and contend and defend  
Without a conclusion in sight.  
We confer and concur, and defer and demur,  
And reiterate all our thoughts.  
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda,  
And consider a load of reports.  
We compose and propose, we suppose and appose,  
And the points of procedure are fun.  
But though various notions are brought up as motions  
There's terrible little gets done.  
We resolve and absolve, but we never dissolve,  
Since it's out of the question for us,  
What a shattering pity to end our committee,  
Where else could we make such fun. .  
(I am pleased to report we do confer and concur, and have  
some fun – but we do honestly, actually get things done! Ed.)*