

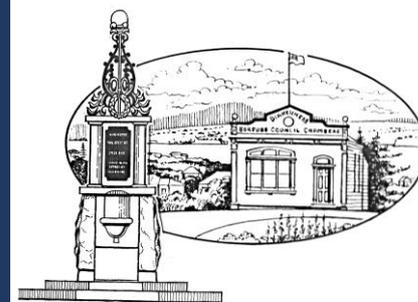
BIRKENHEAD HERITAGE

— SOCIETY INC —

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July – August
2018
Newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday 14th July – Guest Speaker -
Giuseppe Gallina on ‘The Settlement of
the Italians and the Development of the
Italian Community of New Zealand’
2pm at St Andrews Church Hall
172 Hinemoa Street, Birkenhead**

**Saturday 11th August – Stories Day -
2pm at St Andrews Church Hall
Come to hear, share and tell local stories –
special events, hobbies from the past, the
changing work environment, memories
that reflect the changing decades.**

CONTENTS

**2018 A.G.M. President’s Report
1842 - 1935 A brief history of Scows
1920’s Jazz, singers and entertainers
1927 Our Art Deco War Memorial**

*Our appreciation for sponsoring
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PAST EVENT

President’s Report - 12th May 2018

It is my pleasure to present the 39th President’s Report. Changes occurred in 1917, a new president and 2 new committee members. The programme continued with guest speakers, the Farrington House Museum opening hours, participation in the Auckland Heritage Festival, and a welcome increase in membership to 40, plus our three Life Members.

Reviewing the past year’s activities:

13th May, 2017 AGM followed by Coral Malcolm on ‘The Life of My Father Cliff Utting’.

10th June, Bus trip to Warkworth Museum.

8th July, Don Gallagher, presentation on the ‘Royal New Zealand Fencibles Corps’.

12th August, Stories Day.

9th Sept., Phil Sai-Louie on ‘National Anthems’.

30th Sept.-15th Oct. Auckland Heritage Festival;

2017 Theme ‘Motorways and Waterways’

Photo displays at Birkenhead Library and Farrington House (open 3 Sundays 1-4pm) Title - ‘Birkenhead through the Decades; Transport - Transition from Farm to City’

Guided Walks, ‘Highbury Heritage Walk around the Sugar Village’ and the ‘Original Sugar Workers Walk’ in co-ordination with the Birkenhead Town Centre Assn. Inc.

11th November, Christmas Event, Janice Chandler entertained with ‘Costumes and History of Uzbekistan.’

CONTACT US

President – Marcia Roberts 418 0397

Vice President – Brian Potter 483 3400

Vice President – Colleen Durham 483 4001

President's Report ctd.

19th January 2018, Noel Williams from Scotland spoke on Clement Wragge, Meteorologist, with photos and maps from Ben Nevis and information on his career before his move to Birkenhead in the early 1900's. Thirty six attended, including 2 descendants of Clement Wragge.

8th February, Motat Bus trip – High temperatures and low enrolments; the event was cancelled.

8th March Stories Day, attendance included Keith Peachey (Committee Member) and his wife.

14th April Silverdale Pioneer Village Bus trip – heavy rain warnings resulted in postponement.

Other actions by the Committee.

Participation in a number of Auckland Council Consultation Meetings called variously Design Thinking Journey, and People's Panel survey for the Birkenhead War Memorial Park. The outcome was called the Birkenhead War Memorial Park master plan development, consisting of a simple paper and cardboard model of combined suggestions for improved foot access, improved facilities and signage.

Follow-up of the presentation made to Kapatiki Local Board in 2016: re the naming of the 2 local Cemeteries resulted in the names Birkenhead Anglican Cemetery and Birkenhead Catholic Cemetery now appearing correctly on some Council websites. Consultation re signage ongoing.

Farrington House

At the Museum two working bees held, side door patched, lock freed for wheelchair access, cleaning and gardening carried out.

Labelling of exhibits – has not been achieved but is a task for the future. Tidying of the resource room has enabled easier access to the files.

Visitor numbers vary, local families call in, and some come from out of Auckland.

ANZAC Service, after the event a record number of visitors this year – 60 estimated.

A Girl Guides Group had a tour of the Museum by appointment and talk by Brian Potter.

Other Activities:

David Verran gave a talk to the Bert Sutcliffe Retirement Village Residents on the 'Origins of Verrans Corner and Local History.'

Brian Potter at Te Mana Hospital and Rest Home gave residents a talk on 'The Local Shoreline.'

The Society and Farrington House leaflet, and the membership forms updated.

We acknowledged the death of Adalene Tanner.

Website; 438 contacts during April.. Facebook an average of 1257 visits monthly. Most popular topic: 'Maori and Pakeha on the North Shore 1840-1926', 'Frank Larking' and 'What's Happening?'

Newsletter

The Newsletter format introduced in 2017 has been well received, we accepted an offer for free printing by Premium Real Estate, which is most beneficial and appreciated.

A huge thank you to our Committee.

Brian Potter and Colleen Durham Vice Presidents; Jenny Goodwin Secretary/Treasurer and Stuart Durham, Anne Farrington, Coral Malcolm, David Verran, and Past President Ray Johanson. Throughout the year Keith Peachey Committee member continued to participate fully, and we were saddened by his death on April 10th after a short illness.

David Verran joined the Committee for one year, we appreciate and thank him for sharing his local knowledge and expertise in recording history.

The Committee were re-elected, with Ray Johanson continuing, we are small in numbers.. We welcome anyone who like to join the Committee, or on the Farrington House roster.

In conclusion

A busy year, a learning curve as President – I enjoy getting to know our members. We look forward to another enjoyable year of activities. Thank you everyone for your support throughout the past 12 months.

Marcia Roberts
President

1842 – 1935

A brief history of local Scows

In the front bedroom at Farrington House are hung several old photos of scows – those picturesque work boats sailed the waters of the Waitemata and outer gulf from approximately 1873 to 1935. I was able to find a matching photo of the ‘*Waiti*’ in my father’s book collection ‘*Phantom Fleet the scows and scowmen of auckland*’ by Ted Ashby.¹

The first New Zealand scow or sailing barge was built in 1873 by Septimus Meiklejohn at Omaha. Captain Spencer had seen similar vessels on the American Great Lakes and as owner influenced the build of a boat with a flat bottom and deck, bluff-bowed (broad flat bow), with a schooner rig (two masted with fore-and-aft sails on both masts, and a bowsprit carrying jibs connected by stays to the fore mast).

Earlier in 1842 the Darroch family had arrived to the new settlement of Auckland on the *Jane Gifford*, landing on the beach at Mechanic’s Bay. They settled in Auckland for 10 years, where George, already qualified as a shipwright, soon set about building boats with his teenage sons James and Robert assisting. In 1852 they moved to the Mahurangi inlet where timber – pohutakawa, kauri and totara was available. Here they produced cutters, vessels with one mast a narrow beam and deep keel. They built the ‘Mahurangi’ (1865) and Wangarei (1867) used in coastal trade, and the schooners ‘General Cameron’ (1864) and ‘Golden Isle’ (1868). Shipbuilding continued, James taking over from his father, and son David (born 1859) married Vida, a daughter from the Meikejohn family.

It was David M. Darroch who developed the renowned Darroch boatyard. Darroch-built scows became a familiar sight around Auckland. The ‘Kapua’, ‘Daphne’, ‘Kitty

¹ Published 1975 by A.H. & A.W. Reed Ltd. (Wgn. Akld. ChCh. Sydney & London)



A photo of a Scow at Farrington House , one is called the ‘May’, later renamed ‘Waiti’ - built by Davey Darroch in 1892

Fraser’, ‘Owhiti’, and ‘Scot’ were loaded down with timber, shingle or sand from the beaches, and coal or firewood for the developing city. Some scows went overseas or used for trading further down the New Zealand coast.

The ‘May’ was a schooner, built at Omaha by Davey Darroch in 1892. She was damaged at Tokomaru Bay in 1906, stranded at Waiheke Island in 1915 and 1918 and at Coromandel in 1927. Later renamed the ‘Waiti’, the hull was later sadly left to rot away up the Tamaki River. She was 72ft. 2 inches long and 20ft 8 inches across the beam, a hull depth of 4 ft. 1 inch, although drawing more when fully loaded. Take a look at her photo flying before the wind with all sails aloft on next visit to Farrington House.

The scow is described by Ted Ashby as ‘a flat-bottomed cargo vessel of any rig’; and schooner ‘a fore and aft rigged vessel where the main mast is as tall or taller than the foremast’.

1842 – 1935 ctd.

Scows were built with a hold and strong decking for the transport of heavy goods. ‘One boat stood apart - the three-masted topsail schooner, ‘Eunice’, which was built in 1902. David’s sons Watt and Harvey, both shipbuilders of the Kauri era, remember her in endearing terms ‘as their finest ever.’ The Darroch yard was transferred to Stanley Bay in 1921, the firm then being known as D M Darroch and Sons. The last of the scows, ‘Ngahau’ ‘Owhiti’ and ‘Alwyn G.’ were built there.

Another pioneering shipbuilding family was the Mathesons. Shipbuilders from Scotland, they came to New Zealand via Nova Scotia where they spent 30 years following their trade. They built the ship ‘Spray’ then Captain Angus and Captain Duncan Matheson and 91 others sailed on the “Spray” as part of the group of 6 ships that reached New Zealand in 1857 and formed the Waipu settlement. Angus and Duncan Matheson taking up land in 1859 at Leigh, Omaha Bay, in a small bay that was to bear their name. They chose this as a better place to set up their ship-building business, a continuation of their operation at Baddeck in Nova Scotia.

Between 1864 and 1876 four of their ships were registered. The first of these was the ‘Saucy Lass’, schooner of 39 tons, and the others the ‘Coquette’, of 43 tons, the ‘Ryno’, brigantine, of 85 tons, and the ‘Rangatira’, cutter, of 27 tons, the ‘Three Cheers’, schooner, and finally the ‘Endeavour’, apparently an unregistered ship.

The scows made a great site racing in the Auckland Anniversary Regattas in photos from the early 20th century, 1904, 1905, 1911, 1912 and 1914 can be seen in Ashby’s book. He remarks ‘the owners crucified these big vessels when they installed engines in them.’ Their large hulks were visible up muddy creeks for many years, and some were lost on reefs and bars, they served the early pioneers well. One remains nearby on the mud at Oruamo or Hellyers Creek.

1920’s –Jazz, bands and entertainers

Lisa Truttman’ presented an interesting talk at the Annual General Meeting on the Pt. Chevalier Dixieland Cabaret, and the jazz music introduced by Canadian Frederick Rayner in the 1920’s and 1930’s. This led to further research for an article on the theme of jazz and local entertainment.



Earl Fuller (March 7, 1885 – August 19, 1947) a pioneering American ragtime and early jazz bandleader, composer and instrumentalist. Fuller helped the popularity of jazz in New York. He was playing jazz before World War I. (Wikipedia)

An early local entertainer was Henry J. Hayward who settled in Birkenhead in 1910, a pioneer of the cinema and ‘living pictures’. He earlier toured N.Z. with an Operatic show. He formed “Hayward’s Enterprises” then “The Fuller-Hayward Theatres Corporation”. He showed silent movies in the first Foresters’ Hall in Birkenhead in 1910. Later local Edward Patrick Lanigan provided the piano accompaniment from 1913-1928, adjusting his music to the moods of the film. In early 1940 the cinema was renamed the Kiwi, and was run by Auckland Cinemas Ltd. The old Foresters Hall went through a few name changes in the early 1960s, but the rise of television as a rival for family entertainment

1920's - 2018 ctd.

ensured its demise, and it closed on 31 October 1964. The hall then became a second hand shop and was later demolished. ²

The Birkenhead Municipal Brass Band was formed in 1917, practising in the Victoria Hall in Mariposa Crescent. A photo in *Birkenhead The Kauri Suburb*³ depicts the band playing in the Hinemoa Park Band rotunda in 1928. The Depression in the 1930's led to fund raising difficulties, sadly disbanded in 1933.

The late Warwick Stott from Birkenhead was a member of the Continental Brass Band, in the latter part of the 20th Century, touring overseas, performing at the Edinburgh Tattoo, and at many memorable National and local events.

Ray Columbus lived in Birkenhead in the 1980's, his songs and appearances on T.V. were legend. Who can forget his popular 'She's a Mod' - played with his backing group *The Invaders*. He was involved in the popular nationwide fundraising 24 hour long Telethon events during that time. He managed several artists successfully in the 1960's and 1970's as part of Warren's Fuller organisation.

He signed 'The Chicks' to Polydor in 1968 - the sisters Judy and Sue Donaldson were instantly recognisable with their matching haircuts and harmony rich pop singles. For a five year period from 1965 they were seldom off our T.V. screens or radio waves. Judy later settled locally.

Edwina Thorne jazz musician, trumpeter, vocalist, composer, arranger, owner of a 16-track recording facility and a resident in Beach Haven since the 1980's. Her parents were members of a Salvation Army Band who took part in the Annual Farmer's Santa parades when she was a child. Her late father was Lloyd Thorne Q.S.M who was compeer on "Brass Bands on Parade" for 20yrs and conductor

2. North Shore Heritage - Thematic Review Report

3. Muriel Fisher & Wenman J.Hilder Pub. B.B.C. 1969

1920's - 2018 ctd.

of the winning National Brass Band of New Zealand in 1980. Edwina completed a Music degree overseas and has continuously performed at numerous jazz festivals locally and in the U.S.A., including the New York Women's Jazz Festival, Lincoln Centre, Dewar's New York Village Jazz Festival and upward of 20 Festivals in N.Z.

Coffee Bars in cellars in High Street and downtown Auckland in the early 1960's featured dim lighting and jazz bands playing. Jazz was also a feature on the P. & O. liners that carried so many young travellers on their O.E. in shared lower deck cabins, before the era of air travel began.

Who can forget Radio Hauraki? The son of our former member the late Alice O'Callaghan was one of the 'pirates' that started broadcasting from the ship *Tiri*, from beyond the 3 mile nautical limit in 1966 before Broadcasting rules were changed

In May 2017 a pair of jazz musicians was chosen for the New Zealand Youth Jazz for their outstanding contribution to the arts at Birkenhead College. Luca Stumy and Lennox Grootjans play the guitar and drums, now studying for a Bachelor of Music in Wellington. Jazz has not faded away.



During the annual Auckland Heritage Festivals the Birkenhead Town Centre Association sponsors a jazz band to entertain visitors and locals.

Photo from the Assn. website

1927 Art Deco War Memorial

Birkenhead Council Borough Engineer Finch designed the War Memorial monument that is sited in the Nell Fisher Reserve. This memorial was crafted in 1927 in a beautiful art deco style.

“The base consists of two tiers of steps in concrete, octagonal in shape upon which is built a massive block of rough-key grey granite, indicating strength.

Four Polished red granite columns... fittingly represent the virtues of Duty, Service, Fidelity, and Justice.

Empanelled on each side, and between the columns, are four polished black slabs bearing inscriptions.

Surmounting these is a beautiful floral standard in bronze embodying the olive leaf and branch, and the victor’s wreath. The standard supports an opal globe enclosing an electric light which burns every evening from sunset to midnight.”⁴

Unfortunately the light no longer turns on, but it is worth stopping to admire and remember, at this lovely Memorial.

4. ‘Back Then... Volume Four’ by Colleen Christie: Birkenhead Library.



Birkenhead War Memorial, Nell Fisher Reserve with the old library behind. Photo *NZ History on line*.

**Thank you to all those who have paid their Annual Subscription
A reminder to those who have still to pay - these are now due.
May 2018 to April 2019: \$25 for single, \$35 couples/ family, \$5 junior.
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