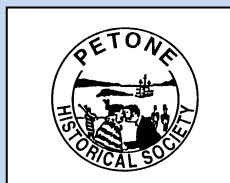




Petone Historical Society Inc.

October 2012 Chronicle



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143 Esplanade Petone 5012

1920's milk van in Petone

Vera and her sister in law with painting of Percy's Mill



Welcome to the October Chronicle

This year has passed very quickly and this will be our last Chronicle for 2012, although there will be another newsletter reminding you about the December film evening . A number of people have not been able to open our Chronicles so I am sending it in both Docx and also PDF. Please let me know if these still do not work .

Most returns for our questionnaire (there were some!!) seemed to like stories about Petone or Petone people. Some would like a calendar of future events that they can refer to. We are not always sure of what lies ahead but perhaps we should try to get more sure of what is coming up..

Presidents corner

As will be seen from this newsletter it has been a busy period of activity in Petone Historical Society circles. In addition to the promotional activities mentioned elsewhere in this letter, I made an appearance in the Environment Court together with other Petone advocates such as Pam Hanna from the Petone Planning Action Group to argue against the proposed Countdown development at the western end of Petone. The proposal to have a number of small shops appended onto this supermarket development in its own right might not sound threatening. It is difficult, however, to see how other similar operations could be prevented if this was allowed to proceed. We remain steadfast in our view that development is welcome, but it has to be compatible with the aspirations of Petone to be a progressive, vibrant community - with a main street that is a showpiece in terms of heritage and commercial appeal. Multi-purpose developments outside this zone clearly threaten those aspirations. Needless to say we will do whatever we can to protect the hard won improvements achieved in our town in the last two decades.

Cheers
Nik Z

What has taken place over the past two months.....

1. In August we had a very interesting talk on "The Cruise of the Raider Wolf" by Tony Howell at Lower Hutt Historical

Society meeting. A larger audience would have added to the night. It showed that not many of us were aware of the voyage of the German raider which sank many supply ships but always took the crew prisoner and left them on an island in the Pacific.

2. Our membership showed a continued increase increase We are now around the 70 mark. With some as far away as Auckland with ex Petone people who like to keep tabs on their home town.

3 Our end of year trip to Dursley gardens in the Wairarapa has attracted a good bit of attention with some 17 from our Historical Society signing up and a good number from Petone Probus Club. We have the opportunity of getting a 53 seater Deluxe bus for the trip and if we can fill the bus it will only cost \$25 for the day. Entry to the gardens (\$5) and Devonshire Tea (\$5) are the only other costs making a total of \$35. Prices will increase if we have to take a smaller bus. The Date for the Trip is **Saturday 3 November** leaving Petone Station at 10.15 a.m.,. If you haven't put your name down yet please let me know if you want to go. (5686449) We need about 16 more so ask your friends.

4. Plan Change 29 has closed with something like 250 submissions – we would have liked more as numbers do count. Most appear against the development in its present form especially the extension of small shops beyond Victoria Street. We now have to wait for the hearings. We would do well to offer an alternative to the existing plan.

5. Petone Community House celebrated the 125 birthday of the house .About 60 people attended the official launch of the book “Our House” and many more had a look over the house in the afternoon. About 80 books were sold but there are still more to sell at \$10 each. Just call in at the Community House or ring Roy (5686449)

6. W.Ballinger and A.Ballinger had a plaque laid in Jackson St as did Dick Joyce and Stuart Watkins at a ceremony in Jackson Street on 15th September. It was another great event with over 60 people attending plus bystanders. We were fortunate in having as our guests two granddaughters of Arthur Ballinger. The Ballinger name is on the oldest sporting trophy in New Zealand - The Ballinger Belt.

Heritage month has now ended and we had a number of activities going on about our stories and our heritage. We trotted out a number of small booklets showing the memories of individuals and these were displayed in the library and we have received a few more from people whose memories have been jogged by others. **YOU** should take time to write your own life's story for your future family to enjoy. This bulletin gives the memories of one of our earliest settlers Arthur Maidment.



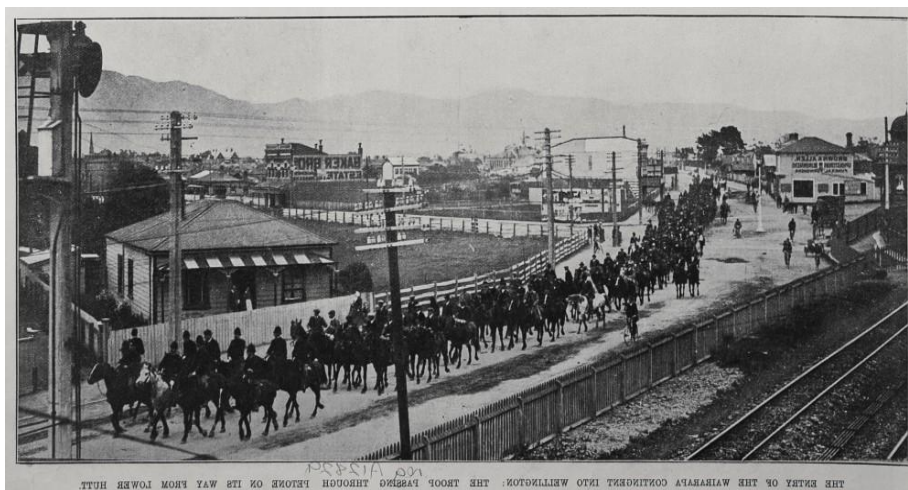
What is happening between now and February.

1. Mark November 22 in your diary. We are hosting a discussion with members of the N.Z. Historic Places Trust and hopefully, city councillors, town planners and as many of our local public and historical societies as we can persuade to come, The topic will be . “ Can we save our local heritage buildings”
2. Remember our Dursley Trip on 3rd November

3. Monday 3rd December . Lower Hutt Historical Society will be organising our yearly film at the Lighthouse. .
4. February. Possibilities: Heritage walk for the public. Setting a calendar for the year; and taking names for our A.G.M in March

Gerald Davidson ,who's research on Petone finds all kinds of things, wrote

You may wish to make mention in the next PHS newsletter of the digitisation of the photographic supplement which appeared in the Auckland Weekly News. This work is now up to 1927. The project is to 1943 and the balance are expected to be made available shortly. The work has turned



up a number of amazing images of Petone which were not held in any photographic archive, amongst them are a series concerning the first sod ceremony for the Waterloo Rd. branch railway, held at Percy's Paddock, in 1925, and the image of the first train pulling into Waterloo Railway Station in 1927.

There is an unknown image of the first ANZAC Day ceremony at Petone and another of the unusual parade held by the Petone Workshops in Wellington in 1914 of war transport manufactured here, and another showing Massey's Cossacks riding through Petone in 1913. The Weekly had a particular interest in recording the building of the Pipe Bridge, the development of Moera, and published an aerial shot of this part of the Hutt before it was cut up for housing. They were on hand to record the early flight the Walsh Bros. at Hutt Park in 1920. The Weekly published the usual panoramas from the Korokoro Hill showing the Workshops, the Gear, the Woollen Mills and Petone in general and also recorded the laying of the foundation for the Technical School. Their 1920 edition carries a range of images of the Historical pageant for the Prince of Wales, including one showing a "Captain Cook" landing on Petone Beach. A rather interesting image is dated 1912 shows a herd of dairy cattle in Wakefield Street. Another shows the "Maungaraki School" house in 1905. They published in 1904 a fascinating panorama of Lower Hutt as a rural locality. Sporting activities are not forgotten, but had a particular interest in rowing. The first photographs date from the time of the Boer War and there are a number printed of the celebrations at Petone. Gerald.

EARLY DAYS IN PETONE 63 YEARS IN HUTT VALLEY OLD RESIDENT'S MEMORIES

Evening Post, 1 August 1935.

The time when Petone contained only thirteen families is vividly remembered by Mr. E. ("Jack") **Maidment**, of 23 Elizabeth Street, Petone, who can recount many interesting details of the early

days. Mr. Maidment has grown with the town, and seen it change from a farming district (although never an important one) to an industrial centre.

Born just outside Blenheim nearly 75 years ago, Mr. **Maidment** was brought over to Wellington by his parents when he was four years of age, and the family settled in Horokiwi, which was then quite as important a locality as Petone. In Horokiwi there were the Cameron, McEwen, Ralph, Bassett, Damant, Sorby, Hobbs, Clarke, and Fisk families. The holdings were only small ones.

In 1872 the **Maidment** family removed to Petone. There were only thirteen families there then. Coming into Petone the families were as follows:—King, in front of the old workshops site; Sellars, opposite the present site of Sharpe's store near the Workingmen's Club; T. Riddler (still on the same site); Collett (back of the present site of Mr. A. Coles's house off the Hutt Road); Bassett, off the Hutt Road; Percy, near the Petone end of where the Hutt Road ramp now stands; **Maidment**, on the present site of the monumental mason's on the Hutt Road; Saywood, on the present corner of Udy Street and the Hutt Road; Scholes, where Campbell Terrace now stands; Jackson, in the same vicinity as Scholes; William Buick, on the present corner of Kensington Avenue and Huia Street; Buick, sen., on the present corner of Cuba and Emerson Street; Dave Buick, behind his father's house; Mudgway, near where Tennyson Street now stands.

In those days the only road of any consequence was the Hutt Road. It was 10 to 15 feet wide in some places, and 20 to 30 feet in others. There was barely room in some parts of the road for two carts to pass. The road was full of holes. When metal was put on the road it was frequently crushed into the holes by the wagons. Motor-cars would have been unable to travel on it, had there been such vehicles in those days. A coach, driven by Mr. Harry Death, used to go to Wellington from Taita in the morning, and be driven back at night, and Prosser's coach went to Taita in the morning, returning at night.

Petone in those days was divided up, into 100-acre sections. White's Line, the boundary of these sections up the Valley, used to be a swamp in winter, making access to them almost impossible, but it was fairly dry in summer. There was little grazing ground in Petone of much value. Over the paddocks there grew rushes, flax, and toi toi. Not a great deal of farming was done that provided a good return to the owner. Mr. Buick who was believed to have paid £1 an acre for his land, grazed a few sheep, and other property owners had cattle, but the land was so poor that it took about two acres to keep a cow. Streams ran down, from the hills, and at times covered Petone, down as far as the present site of Jackson Street, with water. Over the present site of the tobacco factory of Messrs. W. D. and H. O. Wills there would be about four feet of water all winter. During one or two large floods the whole of Petone was covered, with the exception of some of the raised portions of ground. In the Lower Hutt, near the present site of Hume Street, there was what was known as "the duck pond," there being some hundreds of ducks there.

MORE MAORIS THAN WHITES. In the early days of Petone there were more Maori whites. On the present site of the Petone West School there was a big Maori pa, containing six or seven families. Between the present sites of the railway crossing and Odlin's was the Te Puni ground, containing many whares. Mr. **Maidment** can remember having seen as many as 20 Maori canoes drawn up on the beach, these canoes being used for fishing purposes. The big pas, however, were at Naenae, Waiwhetu and Taita. The white boys used to play marbles with the Maori boys, who had a smattering of English and would talk nothing else. Mr. **Maidment** says he suspected that the elderly Maoris directed the children to play with and talk to the white children, so that their English would be improved and the conversational powers of their elders be indirectly affected.

Where Queen Street now stands was the site of the first Petone township. It was a favourite practice of the children to go down, there and hunt for coins. In the early days the vicinity of where

Campbell Terrace is now situated was raised land, with the consequence that it was a favourite spot for building.

The Hutt-Road was the first street in Petone, and after it White's Line was formed. The first subdivision was carried out about 1880 on the property that was originally held, by Mr. Sellars. The land concerned stretched between the present sites of the Petone West School and Sydney Street. The sections were 50 or 40 by 100 feet, and in Nelson, Richmond, and Fitzherbert Streets sections could be bought for about £10 each. Other holdings were cut up between 1880 and 1890. The sections sold very slowly. Because of the swampy nature of the ground, those who bought the sections often had to fill them in, or level them off as the case might be, some of the sections having sandhills on them.

It is only during the last forty years that Petone has begun to go ahead, states Mr. **Maidment**. Although he has lived in various parts of the Hutt Valley he has resided in Petone uninterrupted for the past forty years. Mr. **Maidment** leased 35 acres of land and a house in Petone between 1902 and 1912 for £80 a year, but by the time he left it the rates were about £80 a year. It was never very profitable to buy land in Petone as a speculation, says Mr.



Maidment, for the rates soon ate up any profit there was in the transaction.

Mr. **Maidment** has a proud record as a subscriber to the "Evening Post": he has been taking it for 52 years. He worked on the formation of a number of streets in Petone, and was also engaged in levelling the track for, the first railway line to run through the Hutt Valley.

Asked what families who were in Petone when he first went there were still represented, Mr. **Maidment** said that the only old residents of the very early days were Mr. Tom Riddler, Mrs. G. London, Mr. Arthur Percy, Mrs. Martha Englert (formerly a Miss King), Mrs. Jack Cotton, and Mrs. Rodger (the Esplanade); the two last named ladies having been, members of the King family, as was Mrs. London.

BEGINNING OF JACKSON STREET. What was the equivalent of Jackson Street in the early days ran down from the Hutt Road past where the Oddfellows' Hall and the "Chronicle" office are now situated, but could not be carried further because of Maori land. When the various owners started to cut up their property they put the street where it was best suited to their particular sections, so that was how Jackson Street was made crooked from the start. The street was formed in parts. For instance, for about twelve years it did not go past where the Central School is now situated, and there was a boundary fence across the road. When Jackson Street was extended from the Gear Company's premises to the Hutt Road the direction was decided by what the Maori owners of the land would allow.

Asked as to the early shopping facilities in Petone, Mr. **Maidment** stated that when he first came to the district the residents used to go to Lower Hutt, where there were three shops, or to Wellington. The first shop in Petone was that of Mr. Ray Johnson, on the Hutt Road; it being the post office and "Evening Post" agency, besides a general store. The next shop was on the present site of Webley's, on the corner of Nelson and Jackson Streets. In 1880 a man named Moss had a general store there. The next shop to be erected was on the corner of Jackson and Sydney Streets and was that of Mr. Dave Wilkie, who had a general store. On the other corner (where the chemist's shop is now situated) a man named Mayo had a grocer's shop. The early shops were general stores.

Jackson Street did not exist when Mr. **Maidment** first came to Petone; where it now stands there was only swamp, water, flax, and toi toi.

There were also in the early days no churches in Petone, and the Petone residents used to go to Lower Hutt for Divine worship.

[Mr. Maidment died on the 4th of December 1941. G.D.]

Memories of Petone.

We have quite a good collection of memories of Petone from people who either grew up or still live there. But we still want more. If you have some memories of 20th Century Petone jot them down and either e mail me or post it to the address above. We will be making a book soon but we still need any good photos of Petone that you have in your family albums that we can use to illustrate the stories. We can get some through the libraries but they do cost especially from the Turnbull.

Sometimes a photograph sets off a memory so photos with your thoughts about it are always welcome.

Some people obviously like some of people memories as we have had two or three taken from out display in the library!!

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Know anyone who would like to join our Petone Historical Society?

Name.....

Address.....

E mail

Phone.....

Join for only \$15 single or \$20 family .