

PORIRUA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION (Inc)

June 2013 Newsletter

CO M I N G A C T I V I T I E S

Tuesday 25th June

Meet 7. 30 pm at 5a Beach Road Plimmerton for a mid-winter get-together
to: discuss future events for the year and view a video on "the War Years", filmed mainly in the Wellington area. This will be on Brian's big-screen. Please confirm if you are able to attend, 2330709 or brianmosen@xtra.co.nz

Saturday 3rd August, 1.30 pm in the Helen Smith Community Room, Pataka

John and Hillary Mitchell of Mitchell Research will be coming across from Nelson to give a presentation to the Porirua Historical Association on *Aspects of the Wairau Affray*, the first post-Treaty armed confrontation between Maori and Europeans.

Hilary and John will cover:

- ⌚ precursors to the events of June 1843, in which rangatira of Ngati Toarangatira opposed the New Zealand Company's claim to ownership of the Wairau
- ⌚ immediate effects on Maori-European relations of the Nelson community (and further afield)
- ⌚ longer-term impacts, including the sale of Porirua to the Crown.

Portraits of some of the main participants by a number of artists, particularly Isaac Coates, will illustrate the talk. **Make sure you enter this event in your diary now.**

September: Bob Cater is going to give a talk and presentation on the Marine Hall at Titahi Bay. (the PCC has granted a reprieve on its plan to demolish the hall). Bob will provide information on the history of the Hall and by September it should be known how the community is going to be involved in saving this historic building.

Also in September the Mana U3A is going to arrange a seminar over three weeks on the History of Porirua. The actual dates and venue for session a still to be finalised. Members of the Porirua Historical Association in Genealogy Association will be invited to attend.

THIS AND THAT

The sad news this month is that Allan Todd has died. Allan has long been a member of the Porirua Historical Association, as well as our Auditor and also many other organisations in Tawa. His funeral will be held in the Union Church at 10.00 am this Saturday.

Heritage Month for the Wellington Region has again been changed to September this year and our participation will be discussed at the meeting on Tuesday.

There is the recent realisation on the part of the writer that the Wairau 'Affray', the subject of our meeting in August, was the only incident of armed conflict in the South Island over the ownership of land. It was also something that influenced historic events that occurred in Porirua.

The Gear Homestead Woolshed is another local historic building that has been under threat of demolition but is currently in the process of being repaired. The team doing the renovation work have uncovered the original foundation 'blocks' which consisted of cut native round logs sections that were soft and rotted. This original construction is being replaced by a combination of treated wood concreted into the ground and tied to the upright structure with heavy bolts. It is hoped that the slope of the structure will also be fixed to enable occupation once again by the various groups that use this facility.

Next year will be 100 years since the start of the First World War. Our Association along with many other organisations will be looking again at the "war to end all wars". However, this conflict was not the only crisis that impacted on people during the mid to late 1910's. Throughout 1918 and 1919, countries across the globe were affected by a highly contagious form of the influenza virus. It was the second wave of this virus that proved to be more dangerous and was called "great flu". It started in October and was properly brought in on troop ships returning from the northern hemisphere. This new variant of the flu travel rapidly and hit Wellington only a week after its emergence in Auckland in October. It eventually killed, throughout the country, almost half the number of New Zealand's war casualties, in less than two months. *Acknowledgement: Charlotte Bennett 2012*

The Porirua School is on its way to celebrating 150 years. The first school was built sometime before 30 September, 1872, and was situated about 50 yards past what was then the corner of the old main Road and Titahi Bay Road. It consisted of one room, with three living rooms being built in 1875 for living quarters for the teacher. By 1884 with the increase in population, the schoolroom was far too small, and in March 1885 members of the Education Board with the teacher a Mr Canavan, inspected a site for the new school. The pupils attending school from Titahi Bay Road on horseback or walked along a track between the edge of the bush and the sea, the road being eventually formed. On the other side the Mungavin and Thompson children walked via a track cut through the bush, on the Mungavin property. All the pupils attending school in the early days had to come either on horseback, by trap, or walk, until Education Department buses were introduced.

Although e- books seem to be the "in thing" hard cover publications are still coming off the press. One of these is "Meet me at Beggs" by Clare Gleeson. This in-depth history examines the rise and fall of the Beggs business organisation and its impact on the social history of New Zealand from piano manufacture, music publishing, concert promotion, musical retailing through to gramophones and radios. Beggs meant music to many generations of New Zealanders. A copy of this publication can be obtained by telephoning (04) 479 2554 or by <claregleeson8@gmail.com>

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