

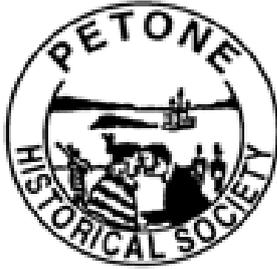


PETONE HISTORICAL SOCIETY inc.

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Chronicle February 2015



2014 committee

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Welcome to the first PHS Chronicle for 2015. I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and looking forward to a prosperous New Year. This promises to be another busy year especially for the committee But first some housekeeping matters.

- Our AGM will be our first meeting for the year and will be held on March 19th in the Library meeting room. Time 7.30 p.m. Hopefully as many attend as possible as it is the time we set out the programme for the year.

- It is important that people pay their subscriptions as early as possible. Last year we did not collect as many members subs as we should have. If you wish to resign (I hope not) please let us know. **Subs are due and a form is attached.** Our subs are as low as we can get them \$15 for a single person or \$20 for a family. Ruth Dickson will be taking over as treasurer from Joan Hewson this year. Joan has served as treasurer for a large number of years and deserves a rest.

- We will again be holding four combined meetings with Lower Hutt Historical Society this year. Two in Petone and two in Lower Hutt. Hopefully this creates a bigger audience for our speakers...

- Some of our activities planned for this year will be
 1. The publishing of our long awaited book on memories of the 20th Century Petone. Hopefully it can be launched in May.

2. We are exploring the writing of a Petone H.S,Journal for 2015. Ian Carson who not only produces the quarterly "Petone Scene" but is also the editor of the Otaki H.S. Journal has offered to edit it for us..

3. The 175 anniversary of the first settlers to land on Petone beach was recognised by the Hutt City Council holding a tribute on Monday 19th Jan. Anniversary holiday. Dressed up Settlers and a waka were all part of the fun.



4. On Sunday 8th March Historic Places Trust will be holding a Patrick Street Heritage Walk starting From Artspace Gallery on the Esplanade, from about 10 a.m
5. A most important decision that could affect our heritage area is the proposed amalgamation of all the councils in Wellington Region into one council with local Boards. This will be open for comment from the public. It is important that we try to protect the character and heritage that Petone offers.
6. The Old Jail Museum has had a busy time over the year although limited by the restricted opening hours due to lack of volunteers to man it, especially at weekends. The transformation into Santa's Grotto has been highly successful, Now the task is to reconstruct the museum straight after Christmas. We have some new displays to put up. Have you seen the TV in action yet? It has two programmes so far with a third to be added this year,. With the large number of cruise ships and the growing number of visitors to Petone it is a shame that we cannot show what we have to offer more frequently.
7. **The State Theatre** has now been demolished including the Jackson Street frontage where the small shops were meant to be earthquake strengthened. The developers stated that it was "impossible" to save the shops so they were given resource consent by the HCC officers, after advice from NZ Heritage, to demolish and replicate them without any further consultation with the shop keepers or with Jackson Street Programme. That is another slice of our Jackson Street heritage that is being lost.

THE STATE THEATRE. Mr Harry Waddington who then owned the Artic Ice Cream factory ,built the State Theatre in front of his ice cream factory as there was a pressing need for another Cinema in Petone. The State was opened on Friday 13th December 1935 and proved an instant success with its modern interior design. Many people had permanent reservations and it was common to find the same people in the same seats whenever you visited the theatre on a Saturday evening, after purchasing a copy of the Sports Post from the boy outside in the street. At the height of the cinema trade there were four Petone Theatres The Empire (which closed shortly after the State was built, The grand opposite the State in Jackson Street and the Palace in Kensington Av. The State only showed Fox pictures. It closed when television began to take over the entertainment. The building remained for a number of years and was tenanted by a church and other groups. It was sold and permission was given to demolish it and build apartments.



Taken by Ross de Rouffignac 2008/ The shops in front have been demolished

Taken after the demolition and will be rebuilt.

THE MEMELINK FAMILY AND THEIR ART

Petone has had a number of talented Dutch immigrants who came to work and live in Petone. The Memelink family are one of them. With the passing of Adriana on Saturday 10th January 2015 this story is very timely

Most people are familiar with Alfred Memelink's Gallery on Petone Esplanade, located where the Esplanade dairy and flats used to be nearby Patrick Street. He has made an outstanding contribution to our local art scene. Alfred is one of seven Memelink children(Harry, Alfred, Ingrid, Sonya, Kirsten Linda and Arnold the twins) and all have some interest in the arts of one kind or another especially music. Their father Henderikke (Hank), and Mother Adriana who immigrated from the Netherlands in the late 1950's were both very creative. It was natural that all their children became creative in their own way. Harry, the eldest is a wood turner of note.

Hank was an excellent craftsman and model maker who was extremely strong on detail, In an article published in Petone News Sept 7 1983 it says " Hank Memelink was a draughtsman by trade and his draughtsmanship is shown in his oil paintings and many adorned the walls of his home at 19 Udy Street but it is his skill in woodwork which was his major love. He made among many other items several violins a viola together with case and bow for his daughter. "



Adriana was always highly artistic in many ways. The children were all encouraged up to be as creative as they could be, in a big lounge with no T.V. In the 1970's the Petone Senior Citizens were very strong and they built their hall just behind the Petone Community House. One of their highlights of the year used to be their art & craft exhibition. Individuals and groups from all around Petone including the children had a chance to display their art over a couple of days, The Memelink family always had a great display on offer and it was always different.

. Adriana was very busy raising her seven children and used her skills as a seamstress by making many of her children's clothes. Later she took up nursing again and worked in the Hutt Hospital and local rest homes. After retiring, her music, art and personal expression became her real passion. After Hank died 13 years ago Adriana set about a voyage of self discovery. She left

Petone and bought a house high on the hills above the Hutt Valley. She called herself an eccentric and is always on the go creating and gardening. Her house was a gallery of sculpture, painting, and other areas of creativity. She also indulged her passion in music by being part of local choirs and orchestras.. She was continually creating opportunities for new life discoveries even into her 80's She has left a great legacy.

Alfred has much of his parent's creativity in him. By profession he is a marine engineer and it was when he first went to sea that he discovered his passion for watercolour painting. He took his paints along on a recent NIWA voyage to the Antarctic. . His water colours of the Antarctic became exceptionally popular. He is a Petone lad through and through and wanted to establish a gallery for both his own work and the other artists he knew. He purchased the old Esplanade dairy and flats building close to Patrick St., on the foreshore but difficulties with earthquake strengthening and led him pull the plug and demolish the building and start again from scratch. The new Gallery is now a popular one with up to 80 visitors a day during holidays and he also has room for teaching. Alfred also plays in a band which shows his creative versatility like his mother. The Memelink family illustrate the work ethic that so many of our Dutch families have shown.

WW1 1914 - 1918.....

April 25th 2015 will be the `100 anniversary of the opening of the Gallipoli Campaign.....

In 1914 when the call came a generation of young men marched away to war in Europe. The Petone war memorial names 127 who did not return. But no one names those whose lives were shattered or shortened by the effects of wounds, disease, and the apocalyptic experiences they had passed through. The outbreak of war may have struck Petone more than many places, since it has three main labour intensive industries, and because the town was situated near one of the Dominion's largest army camps at Trentham (from Susan Butterworth's "Petone – A History")

A scene at Wellington as one of the troopships carrying the main body of the Expeditionary Force was leaving

