



# PETONE HISTORICAL SOCIETY inc.

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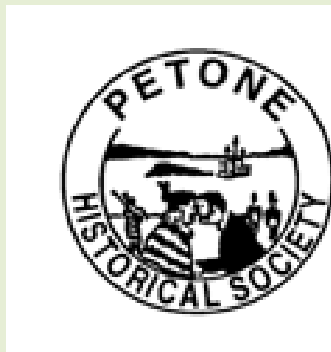
## Chronicle August 2015

Welcome to the August Chronicle

This edition highlights the activities scheduled for September, Heritage month . I hope the cold weather improves by then. It seems to be going on forever. I am not a cold weather person!

Activities already arranged for Petone by both the Jackson Street Programme and our Petone Historical Society include.

- The Jail Museum will be open 11a.m – 3 p.m. over September week ends. Those who are willing to go on a roster please mail Marianne ([ma.jenner@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ma.jenner@xtra.co.nz)) We are revamping the exhibits so that they can be easily stored when the jail is needed for Santa's Grotto. The large ones are being framed thanks to a grant from Pelorus Trust and we are trying to raise funds to get an easy system for hanging them.
- The Walk of Champions will see three more plaques laid for our ceremony on Saturday morning 10.30 a.m , September 12<sup>th</sup>. The recipients this year will be Naera Parata, N.Z. Maori Rugby team 1989; Paul Howell N.Z. Maori League 1993+ and Anthony Farmer N.Z. Maori League team 1993 + Finally the N.Z. Champion Rowing 8 in 1977.
- The Jackson Street Shops will again be showing their building's history in the windows.
- On Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September there will be another PHS bus tour starting at 2p.m. from Petone Community House. The 2 hour tour will highlight the history of Petone and show our changing landscape and what are proposed local developments. Cost \$10 for the bus. Book your seat with Roy (5686449)
- It is also hoped to launch our book on Memories of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Petone sometime during the month. Barbara Scott has been very busy in organising the memories and finding photographs but it has been a time consuming business and we thank her for her time and effort. It will be worth it.
- The updated reprint of Discovering Petone will also be available for people to use.
- The society is has purchased the STQRY programme which is an app to give you more information on our history.



### 2015 committee

#### President

Pam Hanna

#### Secretary

Roy Hewson

#### Treasurer

Ruth Dickson 5688440

#### Minute Secretary

Marianne Jenner

#### Committee

Basil Chan

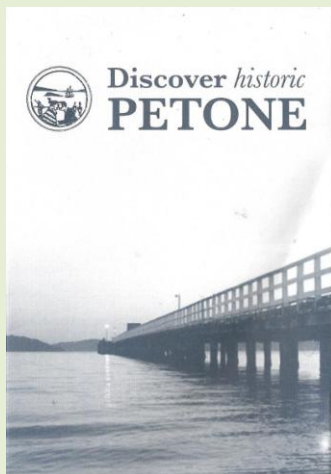
Barbara Scott

Alfred Memelink

Sylvia Allan

Hellen Swales

Leonie Dobbs



This is the cover of the revised pocket sized edition

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- There is to be a change in our Local History Societies Film evening which used to be held in early December. To avoid the December rush the film evening will be held this year on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30. Graeme Ross from LHHS has organised a 50 year old film called “Genevieve” a comedy about a vintage car race to Brighton. Many of our older generation may recall this film and would like to see it again. The film will be accompanied by some shorts as they used to have.. Cost including supper will be \$15 a ticket. which will be available from me in August

- **SPECIAL NEWS!**

We have just received a letter to say that we are a **Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards 2015 Finalist – Hutt City Region**



Two of us have been invited to the Hutt City Council awards evening on September 10 to hear if we have won. If so we get \$1000 and an invite to the regional finals. We have been nominated before without success so here is hoping

### OUR JULY EVENTS

- Last Thursday we launched our new revised “Discover Petone “ brochure, at the Settler’s museum. This is a pocket sized publication with most of the information plus others from the large brochure which we have distributed about 10,000 copies over the past 12 years. Let us hope this one does as well. It is certainly more convenient to carry. Mayor Ray Wallace untied the ribbon after the publication was blessed by Morrie Love chair of Petone Tenth. Most of our committee attended with other invited guests. Collect your copy from the jail Museum.
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- **Our combined meeting with Lower Hutt Historical Society was held on Thursday 23 July** in the Library meeting room. The guest speaker was Mary O’Keeffe a prominent Wellington Archaeologist and CEO of her own one person business. Mary is an inspirational speaker who has a real passion for archaeology. She spoke about her work in Wellington and around New Zealand and said how while TV showed archaeologists on their hands and knees sifting soil, there is another approach when machinery is used to shift top soil and she looks for artifacts as they work.. Much of her work is for businesses who wish to redevelop an area or building. She gave examples such as Plimmer arcade and Tisdall’s corner where unexpected finds were discovered during restoration e.g. Plimmers arc. She told us about Government House and how it was built on an asylum site and explained the significance of the walled area which had been known as Convict’s walk. She talked about discoveries of whole areas that showed how Maori lived, under the top soil which was removed by large machinery for new developments. She was able to reconstruct how life was lived by examining the shell piles and ovens and signs of gardens. A fascinating talk.

## PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP PETONE.

Among the people and families whose name are intrinsically linked to Petone are the Coles family. Born in London in 1864, Alfred Coles came to New Zealand from the Australian goldfields and worked in the hotel and restaurant business in Wellington, where he met his future wife, Mary Collins (b. Abbeyfeale, Limerick Ireland). They married at St Mary of the Angels on 31st August 1890.

He owned an Oyster Bar before owning a restaurant named Palmers and later took over the National Hotel in Wellington.



Alfred and Mary Coles

In 1900 Alfred and Mary sold the hotel and moved to Petone. Around 1903 Alfred owned four houses in Buick Street and seven in Queen Street. He also owned 25 acres of Mudgway estate towards the eastern end of Petone in the belief that the railway to the Wairarapa would continue along the seafront to the Hutt Park. That didn't happen. They still made a profit when the land was cut up for houses including the workers cottages in Patrick Street.

Four of the streets were named after members of the Coles family. Jessie was the name of the Coles aunt; Collin St was named after Mary Collins who became Alfred Coles' wife. William Street was named after Alfred and Mary Cole's son, William Patrick Coles, as was Patrick Street. All these streets were formed on what had been Alfred Coles land and were built around 1905/6. Patrick Street became the home of the first State Houses in New Zealand and has a category one rating with the Historic Places Trust and the houses were designed by 7 prominent New Zealand architects after a competition.

He built his family home at 85 Hutt Road and was the home of Alfred Coles who was the first in a long line of Coles to make their mark in Petone. A number of building materials used to build the stately home was shipped from England including the pressed iron interior ceilings that are still there today.

Alfred Coles served on the Petone Borough Council from 1905 to 1908. He became a Justice of the Peace in 1906, was President of Petone Rugby Club between 1909 and 1921 as well as president of the Petone Bowling Club. An avid Petone supporter Alfred Coles donated one hundred pounds to the Petone Rugby Club to cover the cost of free holding their first clubhouse and an incentive to win the local club championship in that area. The win did not eventuate but Alfred was so impressed with the game he stayed true to his word. He became a life member of the rugby and bowling clubs and the Petone Workingmens Club. He also played a dominant role in the establishment of the Dominion Dyers, a prominent dyeing and Laundry Company in Petone.

Alfred was in the N.Z. Army from 1917 -1919 as a quartermaster store sergeant. He was made a life member the Commercial Club in Nelson Street and was a private in the Volunteer Cycle Corps. Alfred died on 6 September 1948. Mary died on 7 September 1940.

Alfred and Mary had one son, William Patrick b.1897, who joined the Royal Flying Corp and was an accomplished rugby player representing Petone and Captaining Wellington. He Captained the Combined Services Team at Twickenham during his service aboard. ON his return William became a solicitor with Phillips and Coles (latter Phillips Shayel-George) law firm in Jackson Street Petone, followed by his second



son Terry and later on by one of his grandsons Gerard Coles based out of Wellington. He also served on the Petone Borough Council. William married Dorothea (Doris) Isabelle Rabe (b1902) in 1924 and they had three children Patrick, Terry Mary Ann.

Alfred's grandson Patrick also became a prominent Petone identity. He was manager of the Dominion Dye Works for many years and became deeply involved with the Petone Rugby Club as a player but mainly as an administrator along with his brother Terry who was the clubs solicitor for many years. Pat became president of the PRFC and chairman of the Petone Sports Association for some years. All Pats sons played for Petone Rugby teams with Paul playing senior 1<sup>st</sup> rugby with Tim also coaching through out the school boy's grades. Many of Pat's grandchildren have played throughout the grades for Petone with Jack and Peter current players today. This makes five generations of the Coles family to play for the Petone Rugby Club.

Patrick had a happy boyhood at 85 Hutt Road with its huge vegetable garden and orchard. His father William died of septicaemia aged 47 after reacting to medicine supplied after he cut the top off his finger. Pat and his wife Veronica (Ronnie) (Veronica Scullion) lived at 36 Britannia Street opposite the Sacred Heart School, for many years with their eight children Deborah, Tim, Paul, Gerard, Patrick, Mary-Kate, Mathew and Joanne all attending Sacred Heart primary school across the road.

Pat became involved in the local political scene when he joined George Gee's Petone United team and served from 1971 - 79 most of these years as Deputy Mayor. He and Ronnie and latter Deborah and her husband Greg Peters where strong supporters within the Catholic Parish of Petone dedicating many hours supporting Sacred Heart Primary School, the church and Assumption Nuns for the benefits of all in the community. Ronnie was involved in the initial set up of Britannia House, assisted the Saint Aloysius Cubs, Scouts and Sea Scouts and was awarded a national scouting honour "Chief Scout's Commendation" by the Governor-General in recognition of her services to the Scouting movement.

Pat's son Paul Coles joined the Petone Borough council's parks department and rose to become manager. After amalgamation he continued to work in the parks department eventually becoming Parks Operations manager for the newly formed Hutt City. He is now the Regional manager for City Care responsible for maintaining many council utilities assets throughout the region.

The home of the Coles family home remains on the Hutt Road although it was sold in 1949 to the firm William Cable who used it as flats for their workers. It changed hands on several occasion before being restored as a restaurant on conference centre named Alfred Coles House.



Alfred Coles House today



Pat and Ronnie on their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary.

*Most of the information about the Coles family was supplied by Lyn Riley Function Manager Alfred Coles House with additional info from Paul Coles*