

# ARTEFACTUAL



## An Occasional Newsletter of the Warkworth & District Museum

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### **PRESIDENT:** Derek Hoggart

Well here we are at the beginning of the busy season for everyone looking forward to Christmas Celebrations and this was the theme for our Float in the Santa Parade this year.

Thanks to all those who helped in making our float such an impressive display of Christmas Dinner on board an immigrant's ship. Our entry in the Parade reminds locals that they have a great Museum here on their doorstep.

The Museum continues to operate with our part time manager and treasurer plus a band of willing volunteers but, as ever, we can always do with more volunteers. If there are people out there who can spend a few hours a month to help in any way, please get in touch with us.

I leave my colleagues to tell you more of what is happening or has happened so far this year, and sign off wishing every one of our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### **MANAGER/CURATOR:** Victoria Joule

Wow, well where did this year go? This time last year I set out a plan detailing what I would like to achieve this year. I am pleased to say that most of the items on that list have been completed and then some! I can't believe the amount of work that has been achieved by our phenomenal group of Volunteers and oh how quickly the year has gone by. So what have we been doing since the last newsletter? Well we had our Open Day back in October. Unfortunately for us the weather was not at its best and the morning started off with thunder and lightning, along with the ever present rain showers. This had an impact on how much of our machinery we could get running, but the guys from the shed do a great job and as soon as the rain cleared it was business as usual. Despite the weather we had over 200 visitors that day, including a huge number of children who enjoyed the programme our Volunteer Yvonne Britton put together for them. Running at the same time as the Open Day (and to coincide with Auckland Heritage Festival) we also had a mini display of "Guess the Item" in Mahurangi East Library.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> November we participated in the annual Warkworth Santa Parade, and honestly this year's entry I think was phenomenal. Jenni McGlashan and Trevor Managh with help from their team of Volunteers converted the truck (thank you Tom Ashton) into the early settler ship "Spray", detailing the names of all those pioneer families which arrived on the ship along the sides. Jenni's team made new costumes (and yes, I was very proud of my lovely bustle!) for those of us to wear on board and we had a wonderful time.



The bar has now been set very high, and I don't know whether we could do any better next year!

Meanwhile, work inside the Museum has continued at a humming pace. We have new display cases for our Maori Taonga, all of which have been relabelled and we are currently having an information panel designed to give context to these items in respect to our local area. We are very grateful for the help, input and support of Ringi Brown from the Ngati Manuhiri with this work. Housekeeping, in terms of our policies and procedures continues, as does photographing, cataloguing and storing of new artefacts, and those we take off display.

School visits have continued, thanks to Brenda, and we were excited to have 189 students from Mahurangi College visit us to look into the lives of our early settlers. Textiles continue to work on photographing their collection (when not sewing costumes for the Santa parade!) and archives continue to help and support researchers who visit on a Wednesday.

The Kauri Museum at Matakoho will be opening their new exhibition on Tudor Collins "The Man behind the Camera" in December this year. As you will all know, Tudor was a Warkworth local and we are fortunate to hold a number of his photos and photographic items in our collection. We have been very excited to temporarily loan a few of these items to the Kauri Museum for the duration of the exhibition (2 years) in the spirit of inter Museum co-operation 😊

So, what about next year? Well, I haven't yet had time to put together a plan, but we do have a number of projects in the pipeline and group visits already booked. As it's the 150 years of the A&P show, we are putting on a larger display than we normally do. In addition to the running engines, look for our marquee which will have pictures, costume and items reflecting the A&P show over the years. We will also be selling our calendars (not many left) and the books 'Recollections of the Warkworth People' and 'Mahurangi Memories' in the marquee if you haven't already got them. In February and March we are also participating in a project alongside the Auckland Libraries which aims at capturing oral histories of our local residents, particularly focused on memories of WW2. Copies of those oral histories will be held in both Auckland Libraries and our own archives.

Finally a request for assistance. The Museum has a major IT project to embark on at some point in the near future. We desperately need to upgrade some of our Computers, and put together a system allowing for us to run a specific piece of Museum software across all of those computers. If anyone is out there, who has, or knows of someone who has an IT or Project Management background, and thinks they would like to Volunteer their time to help us get this project off the ground, I would love to hear from them!

Finally finally... I would like to thank all the hard working Volunteers for their time and effort this year. Without the Volunteers your Community Museum would not be able to function and the number of hours they give is truly phenomenal.

Wishing you all very merry Christmas, stay safe and don't forget to come and visit us 😊

PS – remember, if you have family, friends or grandchildren visiting we have a worksheet for children to complete whilst going around the Museum!

Victoria

### **ENGINEERING: Alan Britton**

The team in the Engineering (Big Shed) Dept have, as always, been busy with a multitude of tasks since the last news letter. The reports above and below all seem to have had an input by our Large 'staff' when all on deck are number 11, however fortunately we are rarely at full strength if we were it would make morning tea and lunch times even more crowded.

We have regretfully had an attempt at a break-in in the workshop, fortunately the alarm was triggered so we have a date and time of the event. Trevor Snr and Peter our two chippies - all though they are more than that – are to be congratulated with the work they put in to the construction of the Xmas Parade float, but there is no rest for the wicked as they will now be working on the museums display for the 150<sup>th</sup> A&P and Lifestyle Show on January 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> next year. We hope to have an enlarged display of agricultural and horticultural

machinery in our working and static display. Once again Warkworth Towing have agreed to convey and return the exhibits too and from the Show Grounds, a task they have done for the last four or five years and we are truly grateful for their assistance. Without them our presence would be minimal, the Auckland club will also be in attendance so we should have a good display to keep visitors amazed and informed.

### **DISPLAY: Jean Gardner**

Now that the Maori Display has been completed and the Christmas float has sailed past we are working on our large display for the A&P 150 year Anniversary. We have been given a large marquee and are working on a pictorial and word history of the show.

If any one has some historical items that they would be willing to loan us for display we would be willing to collect (not too large an item) and give back after the display.

I would like some more of the winner's ribbons for any of the events. Also if you have an old swimming costume or work gear from long ago. It is extremely hard to find work gear as most of the men would wear their clothes 'to death or rags'.

If you have any anecdotes about happenings they would also be welcome. I am including my personal email address for this. [alreoch@gmail.com](mailto:alreoch@gmail.com)

Thank you

Jean

### **TEXTILES: Jenni McGlashan**

#### **THEY CAME BY SEA**

In the process of researching how our pioneers arrived in New Zealand for the purpose of putting together a float for the Santa parade, I came across wonderful stories of the perils of crossing the ocean as a settler from Britain c 1860 - 80. The title of the float was "Pioneer Christmas Dinner Afloat" pardon the pun.

*"Conditions were extremely primitive, hazardous, uncomfortable, cramped, airless and arduous especially in steerage where assisted passage settlers were accommodated. Passengers were required to provide their own mattress and eating utensils, a tin plate, mug knife, fork and spoon all to be kept in a canvas bag.*

*Before boarding all passengers had a health check to eliminate as far as possible contagious diseases. This was repeated once on board with families being off loaded with suspected measles or small pox symptoms if found in children.*

*The captain reigned supreme and next in command was the surgeon who very often was a trained doctor who possibly had difficulty in finding employment on land and not always competent. Many times the treatment was to be purged with Epsom salts or castor oil. This put an extra strain on limited sanitation which often failed to work!*

*Next appointment and next in command was a matron often chosen from the passengers. She may not have had the ability to manage between 50 to 100 females in her care but would have been a mature person. Women's quarters were aft under the saloon or cabin class and as far from the men's and sailors' quarters as possible and separated from these by the married couples compartment. All single females from age 12 (even if travelling with parents) were required to endure rather austere locked up airless conditions with limited time on the poop deck but if rough weather was encountered they were confined to below deck with little to no air circulation. The heat of the tropics was equally vexing as were infestations of cockroaches, fleas, rats, lice and nits!*

*The first hurdle was to cross the Bay of Biscay notorious for rough sea conditions when most including the surgeon were stricken with sea sickness.*

*All passengers were formed into watches and all had duties within that watch which included allocated food collection and various housekeeping chores. This applied to all, whether pregnant, nursing a baby, minding young children or a single male. Trunks were brought up from the hold about once a month so a change of clothes could be made. One day of the week was allocated for laundry in salt water only and line drying space in the rigging was limited.*

*In the female quarters there was a routine to keep all gainfully occupied. It started with morning devotion followed by lessons in writing and arithmetic presided over by an appointed teacher from the passengers. Matron had a stock of calico, knitting cotton and other sewing requisites and in fine sailing conditions all females were required to participate in a handwork activity on deck as lighting below was poor and limited. A completed garment may have been awarded to the maker of a garment on the completion of the journey if she had a record of good conduct.*

*There were a few occasions when strict protocol was relaxed a little. It may have been a wedding, christening, concert or entertainment, crossing the equator or a religious service or festival eg, Easter or Christmas. On these occasions passengers often supplemented the allocated and rather boring food stores with items stashed in their sea chests to add a festive flavour to the occasion.*

*It was only the adventurous or desperate females who were prepared to travel the distance on assisted passage, so you may imagine there would have been feisty, rebellious strong willed persons in the mix. Some single pregnant females got on board with their condition being undetected by the surgeon. They were escaping the ire of family or community, especially Irish catholic girls. Single pregnant females were not accepted as assisted settlers as they would have had no means of support and a burden on the new country. One report told of 3 females who disobeyed orders to go below after a social gathering so the captain put them in irons attached to the mast. One confessed to her sin and was released but the others were left there all night. There were rebellions, disharmony between cultures and religions, mutinies, assaults and much stated dissatisfaction over food. Saloon or cabin class had fresh meat and eggs from stock carried on board but steerage survived on salted meat, rice, dried peas and rancid water.*

*The captain and surgeon were awarded a bonus at the end of the journey if there were no written complaints upheld by a court hearing.*

*The matron was also awarded a small stipend if her management was of a satisfactory standard.*

*So this is how our early settlers ventured to this new country, all seeking a better life. We have garments in the textile collection which made the journey under these conditions. They were precious to the owners as it was all they possessed so were cared for and kept."*

So spare a thought for our pioneers and ancestors who made this journey and treasure this memory as we treasure items in the museum collection with this history. Our team have been turning curtains into period costume to dress the participants for the float and the carpenters Peter and Trevor have worked on creating an image of a galley dining room within a ship so the museum can be seen participating and supporting the community in the Santa Parade.

Wishing you all a happy festive season. From the textile team.

### **ARCHIVES: Noelene Quedley**

It has been another hectic year with over 100 enquires about a variety of topics but to name a few, they are:

- Enquiries about various families who have lived in the local districts,
- historical location of properties in the districts
- district law and order,
- history of the Warkworth Town Hall,
- history of the Warkworth/Rodney/Matakana/Waiwera/Omaha A & P Shows and the steamers who brought the people up the Mahurangi River to them,
- Tudor Collins – the man himself, his collections and glass plates,
- sawmills, churches,
- WW11 Serviceman and the US Army camps,
- ship building and transport companies
- cassettes of taped interviews and family diaries.

These are researched and answered by a small band of approximately 5 volunteers who have also written various local Newspaper historical articles and scanned photos for the 2017 calendar and the 150 year Warkworth A & P Show display.

The enquiries come from visitors in person, other museums, letters, phone calls or emails.

We have also been researching and scanning photos for the Warkworth & Districts Museum marquee for the 150 Warkworth A & P Show on January 28-29<sup>th</sup> next year. The names of the shows have changed many times, and so have the locations, but has predominately been a great showing of cattle, horses, sheep, large and varied indoor and outdoor Exhibits, flowers, embroidery, crafts etc. In reading the accounts from the Shows from 1867 onwards, steamer loads of people travelled up overnight from Auckland with the steamers and boats calling into Waiwera to pick up more customers. There was often an evening concert held in the district to entertain the visitors.



We have recently been lucky enough to be granted a \$500 charity donation from the Warkworth RSA to enable us to make and display Maori Interpretation Board for the recently revamped Maori artefacts display and the grant has also enabled Archives to purchase some 17 archival boxes to transfer documents/ diaries into the correct type of acid-free archival boxes that ensure our documents will be better preserved for generations to come.

This is going to be a big project of documenting, checking, indexing and transferring these documents (a total of 400 + boxes are required). The project will tick along as we can afford to purchase The required archival boxes, CD's for transferring brittle cassette tapes and as the archives volunteers have time.

We wish you all a very happy 2017. Please come and visit us on a Wednesday if you are in at the Museum  
Noelene, Judy, Mavis, Christine and Wallace  
Archives

#### **EDITOR: Alan Britton**

Well that's another year done and dusted, well almost. There is just the expense, fun and festivities to get through. We all hope you have a good break and enjoy what we hope is the continuing good weather.

I recently re-read Harry Biolettis book "Warkworth Roundabout", in it he included a comment about the Warkworth Museum which I felt was worth repeating here. He was, along with many other local identities a strong supporter of setting up the Warkworth Museum and whilst referring to the museum site and the Parry Kauri Park he made the following reflection

*"At the back of the kauris are directions for a 15 minute bush walk. This provides the opportunity to discover more native trees including some Kauri 'rickers', a term applied to young kauris suitable for booms, mast and spars and derived from an old Anglo-Saxon word for a pole used in the making of hay ricks. During the walk one might well hear the call of the Tui, catch a glimpse of the native pigeon, a flash of the Australian parrots, the Rosellas and perhaps hear the raucous demand for attention from the émigré bird, the Kookaburra.*

*But for a quick trip back in time there would be those who might like to wander through the Warkworth and District Museum, a bygone and folk museum of the area. It is a repository for the memorabilia of the pioneers, of the life of the latter part of the last century and in the early years of this. One can spend a nostalgic hour amid the crocks and clothes of yesteryear, the minutes of the Girls Mutual Improvement Society of 1883, view Sir Charles Kingsford Smith's flying coat, see what a shingle knife is like and a hundred and one other things.*

*You might well be another visitor who could say 'I remember when we had one of those...'. "*

This was written in 1991 and not much has changed, Harry and his colleagues are regrettably no longer with us but their memories live on here at the Warkworth & District Museum.