

# ARTEFACTUAL



## An Occasional Newsletter of the Warkworth & District Museum

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### **PRESIDENT:** Derek Hoggart

I've had an interesting first three months in my new post. It has been a steep learning curve.

In mid July we appointed Victoria Joule as our new Manager following the resignation of Richard Simmons as reported in our last Newsletter. She has quickly stepped into the role and things are buzzing, see her report below.

We have virtually completed the construction of a new office for Victoria at the front of the Museum, so she can be more accessible to Reception Volunteers and Visitors. The footprint is approx. 3.45m x 2.0m i.e. 6.9 sq.m. At the time of writing we have just started moving desks and filing cabinets to the new location. With some more minor interior building work and some major clutter removal this will free up more display space at the rear of the Museum with a footprint approx. 7.65m x 4.0m, i.e. 30.6 sq.m. giving us a net gain of over 23 sq.m. display area.

We have a major problem with borer in the Museum. Victoria managed to get two experts from Te Papa to call in on their way through to Whangarei and give us some advice as to how to treat it. As a result we have just installed a 20 ft container on site into which we will put affected items for treatment. In addition we will need to buy or hire a freezer for some further treatment on some other items. More news on this next time.



Garden and repaired Bell Tower

Recently the Snells Beach Garden Circle had its annual Flower Show and at the end of the day donated a lot of their unsold plants to the Museum. Anne and Roger Dewhirst have been pricing these plants for us and incorporated them on the shelves into groupings of similar plants. I express my thanks to them both.

Jennie Ferguson, our Treasurer, has been on holiday for three weeks so I have taken over the job of making up floats for the Reception / Shop and collecting and banking our takings. It has opened my eyes to the amount of work that she does and remember she has also been looking after the plants area until a new volunteer steps in.

Finally I am pleased to see many new faces among our Reception Volunteers and Wednesday Workers. When I called in on Wednesday the Museum was humming with activity all round.

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

In my introduction newsletter I mentioned how lucky we were to have such a valuable team of volunteers who work really hard to keep the museum running. In this newsletter, I would like to acknowledge the wonderful support we receive from our local business community. I have been astounded at the extent of support in terms of both goods and services that we have received in just the last few months and would like to encourage everyone to support those businesses that support our Museum.

- Mason Contractors
- Sascha Brebner of Brebner Designs
- Northland Waste
- Flooring Xtra Warkworth
- Chemwash
- Quality Equipment

A full list is available on our website

I am very excited to announce that the Warkworth Kindergarten, located on Percy Street, has chosen the Museum to become a special place in the community for the children to visit. The aim is for the kindergarten to bring small groups of children to the museum on a regular basis. This we hope will enable them to find out more about our local area and to develop their knowledge of the history of our District along with an interest in our local community from a young age. We are looking forward to the visits starting later in the year!

## **ARCHIVES: Judy Waters**

As a child I loved to look in the door of the blacksmith's shop on my way home from school.

There was often a horse standing patiently waiting for new shoes.

The incandescent glow of the forge, the clang of the hammers and the hiss of the hot horseshoe as it was plunged into cold water were all totally fascinating to a small child.

The building, which stood next to the Plunket rooms, was already adjusting to change. Motor bodies were shaped and repaired in the front portion and in the back, the blacksmith worked.

The boys called him Swearin' Warin just because it rhymed so well.

Fortunately I do not have to rely on my childhood memories entirely because his son Trevor has written a small book entitled "The Warins of Warkworth"

I read that Mr Warin played the organ in the Presbyterian Church and that before there was a vet in the area he was often called out to tend sick horses.

These first hand experiences which have been recorded and donated to the Archives are so valuable.

Warkworth is fortunate that some of our early settlers put pen to paper and recorded day to day events.

Together with our priceless photograph collection and with some help from the old newspapers we can picture life as it was in earlier times.

Visitors are welcome in the Archives any Wednesday but if you can make an appointment we appreciate it.

From our hardworking team

Judy, Mavis, Christine, Malcolm and Wallace

## **ARTEFACTS: John Northcott**

Well, my new toy has finally arrived. I've got a scissors table on wheels. Despite its name, it has nothing to do with cutting; "scissors" refers to a lazy tong arrangement which allows its height to be adjusted.

So now, when I need to get a box of artefacts down from the rack, I can wheel the table alongside it, put on the brakes, pump the table to the correct height and slide the box on to it ready to be wheeled away to be worked on. I've already shifted a couple of boxes which were too heavy for me to lift by myself.

The safety of artefacts is much more secure. I no longer have to worry about dropping a box full of crockery or glassware. And, just as important, I don't have to worry about doing myself an injury.

### **ENGINEERING: Alan Britton**

A big change recently to the team in the workshop, new recruits are to hand and we now number 9. Fortunately we are rarely fully manned but we still have problems finding a seat in the Lunch room at morning tea and mid day unless we are quick of the mark.

Recent structural changes have kept our carpentry team of Trevor and Peter busy doing the finishing work to the managers' new office, carpet has recently been donated and by the time you read this Victoria should be in residence. They are now replacing the borer ridden timber in the upstairs kitchen display.

Dave and 'Young' Trevor our two electricians have also had an input in the office, wiring lights and fitting power points and Ray has installed the phone lines.

Elsewhere the 'blackhand' gang has been busy doing restoration and servicing of the many exhibits we have, a major project has been the Boothmac Hay Baler which was anticipated to be a quick job but turned out to be fairly extensive. It has had a thorough overhaul from engine through to the working parts and it will be getting a big run at the Open Day on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October.

A number of new exhibits have been completed which includes an old Post Drill, normally hand operated but this one has been modified and is driven by an Anderson Stationary Engine.

A visit to us on any Wednesday or at the open day will enable you to see first hand the work underway. We are also pleased that with the freeing up of space in the area currently occupied by the manager's office we will be able to bring some of the smaller exhibits into the main museum building.

**Alan, Trevor, Trevor, Ken, Don, Terry, Brian, Peter & Dave**

### **PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES: Wallace Wild**

The Photographic Archives department have been and will be very busy for the foreseeable future. We have had various enquiries from both local and overseas sources for images relating to local families and identities which have proved both challenging and interesting.

One of the ongoing projects we have undertaken is the scanning of the Charles Septimus Clarke diaries we have in our collection. He was an early settler of the Leigh district and kept a meticulous record of his daily life as a farmer in the area. These are a collection of 29 hand written diaries dating back to the mid 1800's, on into the early to mid 1900's.

Sadly we do not have the full collection of Charles Clarkes' diaries as a number of years are missing. So far 2700 pages have been scanned which represent just under half the 29 diaries so there are many more hours of scanning to be completed but we believe that this is a unique record of the day and needs to be electronically preserved in the event of some disaster befalling the original diaries.

## **DISPLAY: Jean Gardner**

Many things have been going on in the department, not all of them visible? The most visible of the developments is the nearing completion of the new office for our curator/manager.

The external walls have been completed to represent one of the older buildings that occupied the main street in Warkworth in days past. My vision is a street in old Warkworth. In the meantime the display area will be extended to include the former curators office and the foyer just outside it.



The Meiklejohn cases have had their display items changed recently. These now contain examples of children's clothing and the free-standing case contains an example of clothes from the 'flapper' era. You will notice in the very near future that some of the wooden displays are being removed for borer treatment and conservation issues. This is an urgent job and will cause some of the displays to be rearranged.

There is now a luggage trolley up on the second floor containing many of the cases that we hold. I have plans for this to be part of a display with a backdrop of the Kaipara Flats railway station. Beside it is as yet an empty display case which I will return some of the education items that had previously been in the cases that have been removed. This has been delayed due to the urgency of the identification and preparation for the borer treatment.

On a happy note I have a volunteer to help with this department who really likes cleaning (or says that she does) so she has been put to very good use and works like a Trojan.

## **TEXTILES: Jenni McGlashan**

Our team has grown to a fully occupied five which is enabling the textile department to progress with many tasks.

### **To introduce the team.**

Jenni McGlashan who endeavours to lead the team and keep ahead of this busy bunch so we all feel we have contributed to the effective running of the museum and the responsible care of the textile collection.

Jim McGlashan is our data base manager for both the hard copy and the computer. Jim is also sometimes the photographer on occasions and general helper for Jean in removing heavy display case fronts etc.

Nicola McLeod is our cheerful volunteer who will lend a hand where needed.

Heather Macferson is taking care of the little sewing jobs that we never had time for in the past.

Ann McDonald is attending to repair and stabilizing sewing chores which were always on the list but which we had to leave unattended while the process of photographing all items in the vast collection proceeded.

Christine Hough will join the team when young family and other commitments allow.

You will have noted we are predominately of Scottish stock either by marriage or birth and what a joy it is to spend time with these happy folk giving their time willingly when they can.

Our collection has almost out grown our storage capacity so we have to be more selective in adding to this significant historical store of memories. However we would still like to have the opportunity to consider items that have a history associated to the Warkworth District, represent a time past and in good repair.

Please make the museum your first contact if faced with disposing of textile or household items as only you can provide the interesting history.

We hope you visit the museum on a regular basis as our display manager is constantly changing items which keeps us all busy and provides Friends of the Museum with an opportunity to view the holdings of the museum.

### **EDITOR: Alan Britton**

In a moment of weakness I volunteered to take over the role of Editor of the newsletter from Derek and he accepted rather faster than I anticipated, we both may live to regret it. Derek and previous editors have done a sterling job in the past and I would like to acknowledge that and hope I can maintain the standards they have set. The difficult part is always getting contributions from the various heads of department and others who contribute; fortunately this edition has not been as bad as I had thought.

We would be interested to hear from you, the readers, as to what you would like to hear about from us For those of you reading this online please check out our new [Webpage](#) and our [Facebook page](#), both are updated regularly and they contain up to date information on the museum and its activities.

And a Big Ps

Don't forget the Museums Open Day on the 11<sup>th</sup> of next month, a chance see the big changes made since you were last here, see some of the old machinery in operation and to meet up with old friends.

Also I remind you that we continue to have our Saturday Markets, generally on the first Saturday of the month, and our regular Bingo, now in the Old Masonic Hall, at 7.00 p.m. on the first Monday of the month.

Stop Press.....

Victoria aided by her daughter officially cutting the ribbon to open her new office

