

HISTORIC PLACES

MANAWATŪ - HOROWHENUA

Newsletter of Historic Places
Manawatu—Horowhenua

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The Voice of Heritage

HISTORY IN SCHOOLS

The new primary schools history syllabus is posing challenges for those of us interested in local history and heritage. There is space in the syllabus for teachers to connect with local stories, but many feel ill-equipped about accessing these stories. Even where they are keen to present 'the local' (and not all are) know very little about the history of the Manawātū and what was distinctive about its past.

But those of us who have knowledge of our local history don't necessarily know how to present it to young children in a classroom setting. Cindy Lilburn and Margaret Tennant from your Historic Places Manawātū-Horowhenua committee have been meeting with other history/heritage people and with a group of teachers to see how we might assist with the development of resources for classes at different levels. The Heritage team at the City Library is supporting these efforts, and have employed Virginia Warbrick to organise 'Ka Mua Ka Muri', a series of gatherings where local history and heritage groups across a broad front can showcase their interests and expertise to teachers.

From the perspective of built heritage and heritage sites, there is now more display information available. This is no longer left to groups such as ours – Rangitāne and the Manawātū River Leaders' Accord have overseen information boards and other structures which tell the Rangitāne story, as you may have seen at both ends of He Ara Kotahi and elsewhere. The Palmerston North City Council has developed some signage, as at the Arena, but other opportunities have been missed because funding for historical interpretation is seldom taken into account, eg when transport upgrades are approved. Warren Warbrick and Cindy Lilburn are among those who have led fascinating walks and tours of historic sites in our area. Groups associated with the old power station and the Hoffman Kiln facilitate tours. The Regent Theatre, benefiting from the energy of trustee Tania Kopytko, has also hosted tours of school children. Caccia Birch House similarly opens up opportunities for children to connect with the past.



One of the Ka Mua Ka Muri expos for teachers held at the convention centre – in this case in November 2021. Virginia Warbrick, Manawātū Heritage, [2021BD_IMCA-DigitalArchive_035637](#)

Still, there's only so much time children can spend out of a school setting, so the next step is to produce, in consultation with teachers, some materials suitable for use in classrooms. This is going to be a challenge, but topics such as the railway, the flax industry and the rapid clearing of the forest can all be shaped to fit in with core themes in the syllabus. Also fundamental is Rangitāne history and the bicultural elements of our area's history, already being elaborated by Warren and Virginia Warbrick through *THEN: Histories of Pāmutana*, their historical tour agency. There's much to do, and we'll keep you posted!

Margaret Tennant

THE PALMERSTON NORTH MEDICAL MUSEUM



The former School Dental Clinic section

ics to midwifery, pharmacy to orthopedics [that's artificial limbs to you] and operating theatre equipment. Nurses are acknowledged and there is a specialty library. The largest and perhaps most unusual item is a locally invented iron lung from Australia which enabled victims of the paralyzing disease polio to breathe prior to the 1960s when vaccines made polio a rarity.

The museum's recent home is to be demolished and no other hospital space has been found. They have now moved into temporary storage ... fortunately hospital furniture is custom-designed to be wheeled around! The Palmerston North Medical Museum Trust is seeking funding for a new premises to display their collection. One proposal is to find a 1930s style bungalow to give the impression of a traditional doctor's office as background to the many items the museum holds.

The museum is a reminder of how medical knowledge has progressed over even a century. Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua will keep you up-to-date on the Trust's efforts to find a new home. We hope you will consider contributing when a solution is found.

Cindy Lilburn

It is with regret that we note a fellow heritage institution, the Palmerston North Medical Museum, has gone into recess. The museum was one of only four in New Zealand, two being at Auckland and Otago Universities which offer doctors' degrees and the last at the former Porirua Hospital reflecting its specialist use as a mental institution.

The Medical Museum was established over 40 years ago in 1980 and has since lived in various Palmerston North Hospital buildings. Its collections are particularly strong in hearing and eye testing equipment but run the gambit from dental clinics

HOFFMAN KILN

The highlight in the Hoffman Kiln Trust's past year was the official opening on March 25th, 2023, of a former garage on the site as a showroom covering the history of the kiln and the region's brick industry. At that time, the building was christened the 'Jim Lundy Building', so-named after the late historian, Jim Lundy, who did a great deal toward preserving the kiln, including writing the book 'Nine Thousand Bricks a Day' on the history of the kiln. His daughter Alison did the honours of unveiling the sign.

In 2024, the kiln celebrates 120 years since it was built. We are in the very early stages of thinking about how we might celebrate this. The former office block at the site – now about a quarter of its original size – is the current 'work-in-progress' at the site. That will also be used for display purposes in due course. It also has the facilities needed for 'spending a day at the kiln site' – such as the kitchen and toilet etc.

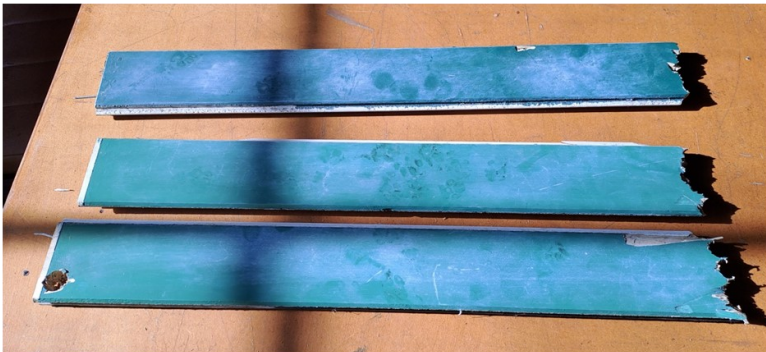


The opening of the 'Jim Lundy Building' – also known for short as "JLB" – with the various displays for visitors to see. The newly-lined interior of this building now looks significantly different to how it looked a year or two ago – but it's a bit chilly in mid-winter.

Val Burr

Palmerston North Electric Power Station Inc.

In 2024, the old power station in Keith Street will celebrate 100 years since it first generated electricity. While nothing specific has been organised yet, 'whatever' is likely to coincide with next year's History Week activities. We have been doing general tidying and sorting – all things differed due to the earthquake-prone status that interrupted many activities over a number of years.



Three boards from the upper half of one of the pair of storeroom doors at the back of the building.

On the down-side, the building has suffered several break-ins or attempted break-ins in recent months – including two during July. These involved people aiming to steal copper etc. that 'they' consider scrap. The attack that took place overnight on 13/14 July, saw the departure of a number of items – some of which we now have back via the local scrap metal buyer who had the misfortune to have innocently bought it off the thieves. They also damaged one engine. They even stole a large framed photo from the National Library collection (a copy luckily) showing the power station in 1935.

The thieves used an electric drill to cut through the timber, with a view to getting inside to take more stuff. This was part of a replacement double-door made to match the original pair that had suffered the same fate in 2002.

Luckily the thieves got their van hopelessly stuck in mud on the old railway track site directly behind the cemetery, and they had to abandon both the attempt and the van (and apparently their wheelbarrow) - and so this last attempt failed. The same people also stole copper from St. Peter's Church and a few other places around town. So they have been caught – to the relief of many.

Val Burr

Historic Places Manawatū Horowhenua Membership Subscription

Thank you for supporting Historic Places Manawatū Horowhenua through your membership. We value your membership and invite you to renew your membership.

If you have not been a member before, we welcome your membership and involvement in the Society.

Annual membership runs from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024	
Individual membership	\$20
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Payment:

By direct credit to the Historic Places Manawatū Horowhenua's bank account: 15 3977 0028377 00 with your name as reference

In cash at the AGM (to be on Sunday 24 September 2023 at Te Manawa)

2023 Mina McKenzie Memorial Lecture

'A History of New Zealand in 10 (sewing) Objects'

by Jock Phillip



Tepaeru Tereora's tivaevae. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

It was a difficult challenge writing a book which attempted to tell A History of New Zealand in 100 Objects; it is even more difficult attempting to tell such a history in about 40 minutes. So in this lecture I will look at just ten objects. They are linked by a theme which only became apparent to me once the book was completed and I looked at it afresh. That theme is the history of sewing in this part of the world. In this illustrated talk I will describe what I discovered, wholly without intention, about sewing and sewn objects. They include several fascinating objects from the lower North Island

When: Sunday 24th September, 2–4 pm

Where: Te Manawa Museum

All welcome. Free entry. Hosted by Te Manawa Museum Society.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Our AGM is on Sunday 24 September from 1 pm to 2 pm at Te Manawa, in conjunction with the AGM of Te Manawau Museum Society. It will be followed by the 2023 Mina McKenzie Lecture, to be delivered by Jock Phillips, his topic, 'A History of Aotearoa New Zealand in 10 (sewing) Objects.' (See the poster below.)

Now more than ever we encourage you to attend the AGM and also to renew your membership. Please suggest others join. Our membership numbers are in decline to a level which will ultimately affect our ability to advocate for heritage. This in itself is a problem, but new legislation around incorporated societies and charities means that the legal requirements around membership have become tighter. Organisations are required to meet a threshold of ten members in order to retain their status. These members have to be financial.

Your committee is prepared to do the work (though we would love to have the support of others prepared to serve), but we need the backing and support of a membership base. And if you would like to be on the committee but can't make the AGM, please let Margaret Tennant know, and we will arrange for a nomination: matennant@xtra.co.nz.

HISTORIC PLACES MANAWATU-HOROWHENUA COMMITTEE

President: Cindy Lilburn cindy.lilburn@xtra.co.nz

Secretary: Margaret Tennant

Treasurer: Nick Watson

Committee: Don Irvine, Ian Robertson, Margaret Tennant, Val Burr.