

JUNE 2016



**Tena Koutou
Katoa
Greetings to all
from
President DALE
WEBB**

I managed to start these few words at the end of May but somehow time has flown by and its now June. What those few days have shown me though is how much is currently happening at the moment in Marlborough's heritage world.

We had the last visit of our summer trips back in April when Lynne and John Walsh hosted us at their home, Woodbourne Farm. The stories of the Godfrey and Fairhall families the predecessors to the Walsh family, (the Walsh's now in the fifth generation of working or living at Woodbourne), the changes to the land use, the military and aviation history of which there are still many artefacts present made it a magic day for all who attended. Sunday the 29th May saw the first of this year's Sunday Series. Barry Holdaway gave a marvellous presentation to an absolutely full house on the life of the Rev Samuel Ironside and his wife Sarah, largely focusing on their time at Ngakuta Bay in Port Underwood. More on this year's Sunday Series later in the newsletter.

After listening to Barry I enjoyed a chat with Heritage Education Head Teacher John Orchard. John, who had helped Barry with the photos for the Ironside address told me he was preparing a presentation to the Blenheim South Rotary Club on what is currently happening at Brayshaw Park; what an industrious place. Most of you will have read in the Express, (if not I recommend you do) the story of Donald the tank engine currently under restoration by the Blenheim Riverside Railway Society. Donald has been able to steam for some time and it won't be that long before he can also leave his shed. John had also taken photos of the several new, high quality sheds the members of the Vintage Farm Machinery Society have been busy building in recent

months, lots of progress there. Those that went to our 60th Anniversary Dinner will know what a fine Clubroom the Vintage Car Club has; VCC like Vintage Farm are a very active group with about 60 members attending their regular social mornings as well as the rallies etc. they run. Any recent visitor to Brayshaw Heritage Park will have also seen the extension to the track being built by the members of the Marlborough Associated Modellers Society. The Modellers are another group that is making great progress. Finally, the 8th to 10th June is when the Marlborough District Council hear those groups that wish to speak in support of the written submissions they have made to the Councils Long Term District Plan. The MHS has made a substantial submission as have a number of other heritage organisations and we will be speaking in support of what has been written. Continuing on the theme of the Park though, our Museum and Archives building like all buildings in Brayshaw Heritage Park has a septic tank, not sewerage, there is no sewerage connection to the park, even for the public toilets. There is water but not sufficient to supply a sprinkler fire suppression system. The electricity supply is at maximum capacity and there is no fibre optic internet connection. The Brayshaw Heritage Park Administrators, the organisation that runs the Park and in which the MHS plays a significant part, believe the Park should have the same services the rest of Blenheim take for granted, and has made a submission to that effect.

A glimpse at some of the goings on in the Park where the MHS is based; there is even more happening in other parts of Marlborough. As an example of that some of the tours that are now available are also featured later in the newsletter. Heritage here is currently very alive and well thanks to the people that are supporting it. Many thanks for your part as we continue to celebrate and preserve Marlborough's Marvellous Heritage.

Dale Webb

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From the **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**



The latest exhibition in the Museum is “Silk”. Silk is one of the oldest fibres known to man, originated in China. The history of silk is both enchanting and illustrious.

The Legend

According to well-established Chinese legend, Empress Hsi Ling Shi, wife of Emperor Huang Ti (also called the Yellow Emperor), was the first person to accidentally discover silk as weavable fibre. One day, when the empress was sipping tea under a mulberry tree, a cocoon fell into her cup and began to unravel. The empress became so enamoured with the shimmering threads, she discovered their source, the *Bombyx mori* silkworm, found in the white mulberry. The empress soon developed sericulture, the cultivation of silkworms, and invented the reel and loom. Thus began the history of silk. Whether or not the legend is accurate, it is certain that the earliest surviving references to silk history and production place it in China; and that for nearly 3 millennia, the Chinese had a global monopoly on silk production.

The Silk Road. Though first reserved for Chinese royalty, silk spread gradually through the Chinese culture both geographically and socially. From there, silken garments began to reach regions throughout Asia. Silk rapidly became a popular luxury fabric in the many areas accessible to Chinese merchants, because of its texture and lustre. Demand for this exotic fabric eventually created the lucrative trade route now known as the Silk Road, taking silk westward and bringing gold, silver and wools to the East. It was named the Silk Road after its most valuable commodity – silk was considered even more precious than gold! The Silk Road was some 4,000 miles long stretching from Eastern China to the Mediterranean Sea.

A Well-kept Secret. The Chinese realised the value of the beautiful material they were producing and kept its secret safe from the rest of the world for more than 30 centuries. Travellers were searched thoroughly at border crossings and anyone caught trying to smuggle eggs, cocoons or silkworms out of the country were summarily executed. Thus, under penalty of death, the mystery of

sericulture remained a well-kept secret for almost three thousand years.

Sericulture Spreads to Europe. By the 13th century, however, Italy had gained dominance and entered the hall of fame in silk history. Venetian merchants traded extensively in silk and encouraged silk growers to settle in Italy. By the 13th century, Italian silk was a significant source of trade. Even now, silk processed (finished, dyed, printed) in the province of Como enjoys an esteemed reputation. Italian silk was so popular in Europe that Francis I of France invited Italian silk makers to France to create a French silk industry, especially in Lyon. By the 17th century France was challenging Italy's leadership, and the silk looms established in the Lyons area at that time are still famous today for the unique beauty of their weaving. In Medieval Europe, silk was used only by the nobility.



Sericulture Today. The nineteenth century and industrialisation saw the downfall of the European silk industry. Cheaper Japanese silk, especially driven by the opening of the Suez Canal, was one of the many factors driving the trend. Additionally, advent of manmade fibre, such as nylon, started to dominate traditionally silk products such as stockings and parachutes. The two world wars, which interrupted the supply of raw material from Japan, also stifled the European silk industry. After the Second World War, Japan's silk production was restored, with improved production and quality of raw silk. Japan was to remain the world's biggest producer of raw silk, and practically the only major exporter of raw silk, until the 1970s.

China gradually re-captured her position as the world's biggest producer and exporter of raw silk and silk yarn – proving that the history of silk follows its own boomerang principles. Today, around 125,000 metric tons of silk is produced in the world. Almost two thirds of that production takes place in China.

The other major producers are India, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Uzbekistan, and Brazil. United States is by far the largest importer of silk products today. As part of this Exhibition Peg Moorhouse has loaned some of her works made from silk and they are on display in the Museum Foyer.

PEOPLE

Staff News – Archivist Melanie Newman was at a Care & Handling for Libraries and Archives Conservation Workshop in Wellington on 26 May 2016. Keeping our staff skills maintained at the top level.

Miss Diane Trayling has been employed recently to assist with the cleanliness of the Museum and Archives.

A Preventative Conservation Workshop is being conducted by Te Papa Staff at the Museum on 22 June 2016 with most staff and some volunteers attending.

SOCIETY COSTS

As those of you that still write letters will know, from 1 July this year the price of postage will increase from 80¢ to \$1.00 for ordinary post. The cost of mailing this newsletter is obviously affected by that so we encourage ALL members that have **email** to please advise us so that we are able to email rather than snail mail to you. We understand some of our senior members do not have and don't plan to get email and that is understood. However, if you do have email but are getting this by normal mail we would appreciate it if you could advise the office (phone 578 1712) of your email address to help us manage costs.

LIVING CULTURAL TREASURE 2016



Five of the seven recipients of the Marlborough Living Cultural Treasure Award from left to right: Duncan Whiting 2013, Peg Moorhouse, 2012, Fran Maguire 2016, Clem Mellish 2016, J.S. Parker 2014

From the Museum perspective, we created the awards as a special way to ensure that the Museum remains relevant to Marlborough as it continues to change. Museums are the memory of a community, and one of our significant roles is to ensure that the achievements

of our people are recorded, acknowledged, and accessible for future generations. We invited members of the Selection Panel to join us this year as we have in the past, so that our systems and decisions are made in a way that is as fully informed and consistent as possible. I would like to start by thanking the Selection Panel for their assistance this year. We had 20 nominations this year, and there was a significant document produced for the Selection Panel to study, and finalise their thoughts as to this year's recipient. The task is one that has been growing each year, and is requiring an increasing level of cultural and community knowledge. There is always robust discussion, and it has always been my expectation that consensus will be reached by all members, and this has happened again this year. We have become more mindful of the extraordinary achievements of the people in Marlborough, and I can assure you all that there is no shortage of potential recipients in the future. This year, however, we have chosen Fran Maguire and Clem Mellish. Their achievements are extraordinary, inspiring, significant, and have enriched our community. I am especially delighted because each of the recipients has been able to show incredible creativity and cultural sophistication within their chosen fields. Museums around the world have collections that are made up of items made of stone, and almost equally durable items, made of ceramics and pottery. That both of our recipients tonight have been able to show something new and wonderful in their work, over their working lives, which we define as between 20 to 40 years, is extraordinary as they are building on foundations of human endeavour that were established tens of thousands of years ago.

One of the innovations this year is something that I think is a real step forward for the Awards. This year we decided that we would forward all of the nominations received to our Archives Manager, Megan Ross, who will add the nominations to the Marlborough Museum Archives Collection. We believe that the nominations will be a valuable record of how Marlburians feel towards our cultural icons.

THE SNAIL TRAIL

The kids were keen to find out more. We looked at some examples from the Museum collection, and talked about the three special native species that are found in the Marlborough region. Our sessions also included a reading of a wonderful book "Watch Out Snail!" that was illustrated by Margaret Tolland. Margaret is the education specialist at Pataka Art and Museum in Porirua. Margaret is a great illustrator and was one of my students when I was teaching at Christchurch College of Education, many years ago. The kids loved the story because it covers the predators which pose risk to their survival, as well as dramatic episodes related to the

carnivorous habits of the native snails. The final activity in the session involves inviting the children to hold our large scale polystyrene snail called Sheldon, who usually resides in our Natural History exhibition called "Wild Things". The background to these photos is the courtyard garden, so there are plenty of native Marlborough shrubs creating a great background.



MEMBER PROFILES

This time we feature life member Prue Matthews, well known historian, artist and author and recently retired archivist Joy Parker.

M.H.S. HONARY LIFE MEMBER PRUE MATTHEWS



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF THE MHS

Goodness me that is a hard one. I guess it would have been in the early 1970's that I became an Endowment member.

AND WHY DID YOU JOIN? When my late husband Nevil became President of the MHS in 1969, I became deeply involved in all aspects of the history of this Province. In November of that year Nevil produced the first of his Newsletters. As a touch typist it fell to me to record his notes and produce the stencils for the mail out to all members. Sitting up at night listening to the talk about Marlborough's history and the plans for the fast approaching Field Days he was planning, meant I had more than just a passing interest and I did my part in helping with the researching, planning etc.; it generally meant eating, drinking and sleeping history. The Archaeological sub-group became very active at this time so there was also Maori history for their field days. I had come from a family with a great interest in Canterbury history and its flora and fauna so it was no great transition to allow my interests to transfer to Marlborough. Because of Nevil's and my involvement with the MHS, my parents Harold and Elsie Matson also became greatly interested in this Province's history and joined the Society. It is no wonder then that my life took the turn it has.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE MUSEUM AND/OR ARCHIVES?

Originally I spent time at the Archives storeroom that Norm Brayshaw built on his property in Howick Road. Often young people under a government scheme were given the task of sorting and stamping items that were dropped off, so I would assist them if Nevil or Norm were not available. Someone had to be there sometimes while the "boss's" were at work. Quite an eye opener in a lot of cases as unless the "helpers" were given a specific long term job instruction, it was common to find them sleeping in a corner or reading or even painting their nails instead of working. The fact that the floor needed sweeping wasn't on the agenda so therefore, didn't get done until it was forcefully brought to their attention. The building wasn't dust proof so the broom's use was essential. Once the office room was built at Howick Road a different attitude to filing and researching took place. Nevil and I would often bring trailer loads of archival material like maps etc. to the property and from there it all had to be sorted. It was during these years that I really started taking more than just a passing interest in history as I researched with Nevil and assisted many who were writing history books at that time such as Henry Kelly and Ken Berry. Once the new archives and museum were built at Brayshaw Park there were hundreds of hours spent arranging the storage 'shirt boxes' into a recognised system which fortunately made it easier for me to do any research. I have spent time on the Committee of the Historical Society over the years and it was in 1995 that a group of us started up and produced the MHS publication, Marlborough's Past & Present. Once more I was able to research, write and illustrate for the society.

CAN YOU GIVE A COUPLE OF EXAMPLES OF WHAT YOUR PREVIOUS OCCUPATION INVOLVED? For me, history and art went hand in hand. I had spent time in the 1960's retouching and hand colouring formal photographs for Barrie Ford in Maxwell Road so had the materials and knowledge to highlight and upgrade the hand painted photo that Bert Kennington used on the cover of his book "The Awatere" in 1978. When the Beavertown Branch of the Bank of New Zealand booklet was compiled in 1977 it was great to illustrate it and that was probably the initial start of my art work for other publications as well as hand sketching letterheads, postcards and business cards. Nothing instant then and all done long before computers came into being with drawing, painting and photo-shopping programmes. It is always a thrill to see one of the many illustrations I have done being used in promotional material. I had a lot of fun doing a few illustrations for the MHS book "Click - A Captured Moment".

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR WORK OR INTERESTS? I have written or been part of a team writing three historical books, "Rapaura a District History", "The Strait and Narrow, Police history of Marlborough" "It's all about the People, A 150 year History of the Blenheim Workingmen's Club". Other books I have helped people with are so numerous that I even surprise myself when I see again what I have written or see my name in the acknowledgements. It gives me a great sense of pride to think that I have been able to be of personal assistance to them. Added to this short rundown of my historical life there is also the love and involvement I have had with all aspects of Brayshaw Park with the shops, the Riverside Railway, Vintage Farm Machinery etc. From The Riverlands Cob Cottage, the Museum in Havelock, The Museum in Renwick to the Edwin Fox in Picton, I have spent the best and most enjoyable part of my life ensuring there is a heritage to pass on to not just my descendants but to all future generations of this marvellous province. 2015 was an incredible year for me with the honour of being made a Life Member of the Marlborough Historical Society, a Life Member of the Marlborough Art Society and then to top these two off by being awarded the Queens Service Medal in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours 1st. That was the biggest surprise and honour for me and the most incredible acknowledgement of the years I have devoted to the heritage preservation of Marlborough.

IS THERE SOMETHING THAT MHS MEMBERS MAY BE SURPRISED TO KNOW? This may seem strange to mention here because it's not about me but with my involvement with the archives and the storage of Marlborough's original documents, it became obvious that the peoples "Bible" Old Marlborough, has in fact far too many mistakes and errors to be used as the final source of information when doing research. The

importance is to always go back to the original and not to rely on the written word of others unless it has been proven to be verified. The final word about me is that my family all come from a line of "long-liver's" so that hopefully it means I have a good 20 or more years ahead of me to devote to the MHS and the history of Blenheim and beyond.

RETIRED ARCHIVIST – JOY PARKER



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF THE MHS? since 1988, 28 years.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE SOCIETY? In 1988 I had retired from teaching and was researching Marlborough newspapers at the archives for someone who lived out of Marlborough. After my presence was questioned by an Archives member, Kevin Andrews suggested that I might like to join the MHS, which I did.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE MUSEUM AND/OR ARCHIVES?

I really enjoyed researching, and can remember the first enquiry I got was for information about Thomas Moon, an early gold prospector who had been at the Waikakaho. Later on I became more involved in indexing archive information, and had lately been indexing the Ward diaries, which took me two years to complete. My eyesight deteriorated so much though, that I had to give it up and recently retired from being a volunteer at Archives.

WHAT WAS YOUR PREVIOUS OCCUPATION? I was a primary school teacher for 32 years, at the Redwoodtown Primary School.

CAN YOU GIVE A COUPLE OF EXAMPLES OF WHAT YOUR PREVIOUS OCCUPATION INVOLVED? I began teaching standard 1 and 2 classes, then moved to the infant classes for about 7 years. I transferred back to standard classes after a decision was made to move all the infants into one large group. I did a period of what was called long term relieving between the births of our

2 children, teaching for four terms in a row until a relieving teacher arrived from England.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR INTERESTS? Keith and I started travelling internationally before I retired. Keith would save up two years of annual leave and I would take the middle or winter school term on leave and we would head off overseas, mostly to the United Kingdom. We had many memorable trips, sometimes by car and sometimes we would use a campervan or caravan for our travels.

IS THERE SOMETHING THAT THE MHS MEMBERS MAY BE SURPRISED TO KNOW?

I was a member of the Amateur Athletic Association in Blenheim, which was part of the Wellington Centre, and competed for many years primarily in track events. As a 50 year old veteran competing in Melbourne in an international meet I set a world record in my age group in the long jump and triple jump, although in those days it was called the hop, step and jump. I went to Melbourne initially to do some research, so the athletic event was really a side-line!

THE BEAVER NORM CLARK CARVED

Shortly before I retired as Registrar at the Museum, Steve purchased for the collection an interesting wooden beaver. At first glance he seems a bit incongruous, sitting there on his plinth mouth open, tail tucked under, but we all found he grew on us, with his

little pot belly and upraised hands holding a rugby ball. A beaver we could understand, but why a rugby ball? A silver plaque attached to his plinth says, "From the people of Blenheim 'Beavertown' on the occasion of the demolition of The General Post Office built in July 1878. Hand carved by N.A.T. Clark from cedar from the old P.O.". Master carver, Norm Clark, when asked if he remembered carving the beaver, said he did, but he couldn't remember who he carved it for or why, apart from commemorating the demolition of the old Post Office. On reflection, he remembered the cedar came from a crossbeam from the flooring, and he thought the rugby ball would be because rugby was the main sport in Marlborough at the time. The old Post Office, that once stood in Market Place where the Forum is now, was demolished in 1975, after Marlborough lost the Ranfurly Shield in August 1974 to South Canterbury. They had won the trophy with much fanfare in July 1973, and against all odds kept hold of it for a full season. Losing it may have prompted Norm to carve his beaver to commemorate the great victory, now gone like the Post Office. But who it was carved for still remains a mystery. Was it, perhaps, for display in the new Post Office?



Sadly, this question can't be put to Norm as he passed away suddenly at his home on 2 May 2016, before his planned exhibition in The Gallery at Havelock was opened. He had intended to borrow the beaver so it could be displayed amongst his other carvings as he had no other pieces from his 1970s work he said.

Jenny Pierson

18 May 2016

[Ed – The Museum has recently purchased an item from this exhibition with generous support from Mark Stevenson and Graham Brooks. It will be on display in due course with other items of Norm's work.]

FROM THE FRIENDS

The Friends of the Museum are hosting a Hearty Mid-Winter Feast on Friday the 1st July. If you would like to join them it will be limited to 18 guests, starting at 6.00pm at the home of Pete and Charlene Scott, 9 Evesham Lane, Springlands. Cost is \$75 pp, RSVP by 24 June to the Museum Office, phone 578 1712. Please advise any special dietary requirements when you contact the office. If you would like to become a member of "The Friends" the necessary form is at the

Museum office so either drop in and get one or give the office a call and they will mail one to you.

HERITAGE TOURS

Your Editor has recently been advised of two very interesting tours to the more distant and some would say more interesting parts of this wonderful district in which we live. Details below if you feel like some heritage and ecological adventure.

Driftwood Retreat & Eco-Tours

New Zealand's nature @ your pace



D'URVILLE ISLAND, FIVE DAY TOUR.

- See one of New Zealand's most remote places, accommodation, transport and meals are all organised for you.
- Learn more about the history of the area from Will Parsons your guide.
- A chance to see d'Urville Island and French Pass from a charter boat.
- The opportunity to have wildlife encounters with forest and sea birds and maybe seals and dolphin.
- Meet local identities and hear their first hand stories of this fascinating area.

Departure date: Monday 12th September 2016.

For more details contact Will or Rose on 03 5777651 or info@driftwoodecotours.co.nz

Read more about the tour here:

<http://driftwoodecotours.co.nz/durville-island/>

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Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence 2011-2016

Our Treasurer Robin Cox has sent us the following photo of the Perano Theatre which has been established at the site of the last Tory Channel whaling station. Robin is understandably very enthusiastic about this conjunction of heritage and tourism. To quote Robin – "This is how the inside of the Perano theatre now looks after E-ko Tours received permission to set up a DVD player for their commercial tours. Other groups can still use the theatre with DOC's sanction but not the projection

equipment without E-ko tours approval. I reckon this is a great example of heritage benefiting Marlborough."



And this is the poster of the E-Ko Tours trip to the Perano Theatre.

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Includes guided visit to the National Whaling Centre based in Picton followed by cruise on the beautiful Queen Charlotte Sound to the only restored whaling station in New Zealand and an immersion in the history of the area at the Picton Museum PLUS the chance to talk to a real whaler!

At the whaling station you will have the opportunity to see and touch actual machinery used in New Zealand's first industry.

See historical records of the lives and work practices of the men and women of the whaling era 1830-1944.

Try your hand at throwing a harpoon!

Handle tools used by the whalers!

We return to Picton Harbour and visit the Picton Whaling Museum where you can see hundreds of artefacts from the whaling era and hear the stories that surround them. In addition, we will introduce you to a REAL whaler who lived and worked during that historic era. (Available subject to good health)

Briefing time:
08:15; return 12:30

Costs:
Adults: \$99
Children: \$55

Group specials available upon request!

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Adventures for your Soul

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HALL OF FAME

tripadvisor

The Driftwood and E-ko Tours are great examples of the way are heritage is now becoming known to a much wider part of the community.

TRISKA BLUMENFELD BOOK

The recently published Triska Blumenfeld book is now on sale Retail \$45.00.



THIS YEARS SUNDAY SERIES

The last newsletter in April did not include all the details of this years Sunday Series as at that point not all presentations had been confirmed.

PROGRAMME

Unless advised to the contrary all presentations are in the Museum theatre, beginning at 2.00pm.

29 May – Reverend Samuel Ironside’s missionary work at Port Underwood 1840 to 1843.

This will be presented by well known Marlborough Historian Barry Holdaway. Barry has recently completed his book on The Wairau Bar; he has been researching for this book for a number of years. It will be published soon, we will certainly let all members know of the launch.

26 June – The New Zealand Land War – A New Perspective.

This will be presented by Marlborough Author Ron Crosby. Ron is a well known historian and author having written several books, the first of which was “The Musket Wars”

31 July – Marlborough Letters, Post Cards and Diaries 1914 to 1920.

This will be presented by Megan Ross, the Archives Manager at the Marlborough Museum. Megan is trained librarian but now knows a great deal of the content of the material she manages than simply what is in the Marlborough Archives.

28 August – Discoveries and Treasures in the Marlborough Archives Map Collection.

Melanie Newman, who will be presenting this topic, is the Project Manager for the Map Project in the Marlborough Archives. Megan Ross, the Archives Manager, initiated this Project a year or so ago and Melanie has discovered and catalogued a range of map treasure of which we were previously unaware.

25 September – Battle of the Somme 1916.

The Battle of the Somme began in July and went through to November 1916 with a peak in September. It brought a new level of reality to the world and New Zealand on the meaning of **War in the Industrial Age**. This presentation will be given by Mr Matthew Buck from Wellington. Matthew who is Senior Heritage Advisor to the NZ Defence Force and a respected military historian is currently researching the Battle of the Somme as part of his Defence position. This presentation may be in the Convention Centre as we feel it will be of interest to a wider and therefore larger audience than just our members.

Afternoon tea in the Museum Foyer, where applicable to follow the presentation on each occasion.

ENTRY TO ALL PRESENTATION IS FREE BUT A GOLD COIN DONATION FROM THOSE THAT ATTEND WOULD BE APPRECIATED.