

November

HISTORIC
PLACES

HAWKE'S BAY

2019

HB HERITAGE NEWS

Historic Clive Mystery Tour Sunday Afternoon 1st December 2019



Clive in 1947

Another opportunity to join Rose Mohi on a tour of three historic homes in Clive.

Meet at Evers-Swindell Park in Clive at 1:00pm . This is a self drive event and it is recommended that we car pool for the short journey from the park to the sites we plan to visit in order to cut down the number of vehicles and avoid congestion at the sites.

Afternoon tea will be served at one of the properties.

Please come prepared to do a little walking as there will be opportunities to look at gardens and grounds at the properties we visit.

Cost: \$25.00 per head including afternoon tea.

Bookings: Please contact our Secretary, Philip Irwin by phone (8700513) or e-mail (philipirwin@xtra.co.nz)

Payment: Mail your cheque to Clive Tour, 2 Arthur Close, Clive 4102. Cheques payable to Historic Places Hawke's Bay inc. Alternatively payment can be made to SBS Bank 031355 0727668 00 please include your name and phone the Secretary to confirm your booking.

Please note that registration is limited to 20 people to avoid overcrowding the venues.

Any further enquiries to Rose Mohi 8779474 or e-mail, rosemohi.nz@gmail.com

The Sailor's Grave-

by Trevor Fulton (Maritime Mishap Researcher)

Portland Island has a long and important history, dating back to the first migrations from Polynesia. It was originally named Waikawa, by the Maori chief Kahungunu, who visited the island looking for fresh drinking water, but only found salt water in a well. Waikawa means sour water. The northern sandspit area has an old Maori Urupa but the location was never revealed. Once the European traders and whalers arrived, the area from Wairoa east to Mahia Peninsula produced a huge casualty rate for shipping. Surprisingly, Portland Island was scene of only four of these wrecks.

The first known wreck was the schooner 'Queen' in 1866, after the skipper made the fateful decision to go through the passage between the island and the peninsula and hit a submerged rock. The next victim was the 309 ton Sydney barque 'Alexander Newton' which was totally wrecked on the western shoreline of Portland Island on Monday 18 June 1894. Three lives were lost, including her master, from the nine men aboard. The three mast scow 'Pirate', was wrecked on the eastern side of Portland Island in a gale on Friday morning 16 April 1897. The last known victim was a crayfishing launch named 'Aroha' in 1949, which broke from its mooring at the landing, during the night.

The 'Pirate' was the only shipwreck to leave obvious reminders. This fine boat was only two years old, the longest of the New Zealand built scows, at 130 feet and close to the biggest, behind the 'Zingara', which had a larger beam and tonnage. The 'Pirate' was launched from George Niccol's North Shore shipyard at Devonport, on 24 April 1895. The 'Pirate' was unlike most scows, who were deck cargo vessels, as she had a large hold for stowing extra cargo.

The 'Pirate' left Newcastle in New South Wales bound for Gisborne, loaded with 250 ton of coal on March 25, 1897. After coming through Cook Strait and up the east coast, early in the morning of Good Friday

16 April, she was hit by a terrible squall. The 'Pirate' was buffeted by big seas and strong winds, the three headsails were blown completely out by the heavy squalls. Those that remained and the mainsails were ripped to ribbons. She was put on a port tack to get her in the lee of the Mahia Peninsula, to shelter and make repairs.



Karl Berner's Grave on Portland Island

Under a makeshift jib, suddenly the land and breakers

appeared out of the squall on her leeward side. The mizzen was set and was headed sou'-sou'-east. This should have taken her clear, but when they were opposite the high bluffs of Portland Island, the wind completely died. Now uncontrollable, it needed just a couple of waves and she was washed into the breakers, leaving no other option but to beach the vessel on the eastern shoreline.

She was swept ashore over rocks at 5.00 am and the crew took to the rigging. She came to rest heavily but upright on a papa ledge with her back broken. The lifeboat was launched under agonising conditions at 7.30 am. As the crew were going to leave the vessel, one of the able seaman, Theodore Carl Berner, a native of Germany, suddenly dropped dead on deck. Captain Edward A. Steinbeck and other crew members lowered him into the ship's boat and got his body ashore. Once safely on the beach, a crew member scrambled up the steep cliffs and went to the lighthouse for help. An inquest into the death was held in a lighthouse keeper's house on Friday afternoon, which came to the conclusion, Berner died from failure of the heart, as there were no signs of any injuries. Karl Berner was buried on the island in a concrete encasement, on the cliff top where the crew had come ashore, ¾ of the way up the eastern shoreline of the island.

They built a headstone with a wooden cross and inscribed "Sacred in Memory of Karl Bremer, Born in Germany, Died 16th April 1897 on board the scow Pirate at time of stranding". Eventually on 28 April, the lighthouse keeper Charles Robson and his wife Rose erected a lovely picket fence around the lair.

The crew were taken off the island on Tuesday, after a passing Huddart Parker steamer the 'Anglian' heading to Auckland, was signalled by the lighthouse people at



In 1913, the wreck of the 'Pirate' still occupied a deserted part of Portland Island, rarely visited by humans

2.30 pm. At the Nautical Court of Enquiry in Auckland, the loss of the 'Pirate' was attributed to the Master mistaking his position, the sails being blown away meaning the vessel could not weather the island.

On 12 May, the

's.s.Dingadee' came to the island, with a Mr. Matthews and his men to dismantle and unload the 'Pirate'. Everything of value was salvaged from the wreck and was loaded on the 's.s.Dingadee'. On 27 June, the 's.s.Dingadee' arrived back at the island and spent the day transferring 30 tons of coal from the 'Pirate' into her holds. The coal was transported to Ahuriri, where it was unloaded.

The enterprising people in the neighbourhood travelled over to the island bagged the abandoned coal, directly off the deck or as it washed ashore. They would

sell it on the mainland for two shillings a sack. Decades later, coal was still coming ashore, worn smooth and clean like river stones. It was collected and used by the lightkeeper's wives to fuel their cooking ranges.



The sailor's grave after Tom Smith

For decades, the eastern coastline of the island was known as the Pirate's side. The children of the lighthouse keepers spent numerous hours playing on it.

By 1920, the hull of the old wreck was still intact, apart from the stern which had been torn off, and the interior was full of driftwood. The abandoned vessel had been driven hard into the cliff face by the numerous storms.

By 1947, the old hull of the 'Pirate' had broken up and all that remained was a long length of the port side washed up on the northern end of the island. In the early 1940's a small slip demolished the original picket fence on Berner's grave. In 1947, lighthouse keeper Tom Clark searched amongst the scrub and clumps of thistle plants and found the neglected grave. The frame and pickets of the rotting fence were taken away to the boat landing.

Generously in January 1949, Tom Clark tried to restore the grave site in his spare time, and the rubble covering the grave was removed. He replaced and repainted the picket fence. Tom Clark decided not to send the headstone to the Marine Store in Wellington for repairing, as the headboard was badly rotten and lettering almost weathered away, consequently not worth restoring.

On 12 January 1949, Tom Clark wrote to the Marine Department asking for a replacement. Internal Affairs would not agree to the request to conserve the headboard, as it was not listed as being of historical significance and not their responsibility. Henry Phillips at the Marine Store took responsibility and made a nice replica, returning the replacement headstone to the island. By 1981, the second picket fence had gone and the grave was repaired in 1988 by Will Coop.

The grave exposed in September 2013.

In 1999, the Department of Conservation took over administration of Portland Island on behalf of the shareholder's committee. They made the island predator free and introduced the endangered shore plover, who's population had been reduced to just a few areas on the Chatham Islands. The breeding programme went well until a rogue rat made its way to the Portland Island. Half the shore plover population on the island was lost,



The salvaged headstone



Karl Berner's new resting place.



2014, the grave at the bottom of the eroding cliff face



The impressive new lair on Portland land and the volunteers who created it



The restored headstone



before the rat was caught

On 25 July 2014, Helen Jonas and a volunteer returned to the island to release some young endangered shore plovers from an aviary. Next day, she discovered Karl Berner's grave had unfortunately fallen over the cliff into the sea. His skeleton had slid from beneath the concrete slab.

Helen Jonas tried to get a consensus about what to do. She got advice from Pam Bain senior Archaeologist at Heritage New Zealand, and four others. The police had no issues and the Public Health Unit and the Council Environmental Health Officer agreed to the remains being collected without any documentation.

On 30 July, Helen Jonas recovered all the remains which had not been taken by the numerous tides. She found the skull, eight bones and numerous parts of the pelvis and gave Karl Berner a new resting place on a gentle slope on the east side, just south of the island's landing strip. The new lair was crowned with some colourful stones and a little cross.

The Marine Archaeology Association in Wellington volunteered to restore the headstone for Helen Jonas. Sue Freitag sponsored an impressive information sign for the grave site and Eastland Building Supplies sponsored timber, so DOC staff and volunteers could erect a new picket fence.

Today, a beautiful reminder of Hawke's Bay's marine past, stands in a woody glen on a gentle incline on Portland Island. Few New Zealanders would know it exists, because Portland Island is so rarely visited

The Year in Review

Barbara Arnott's Chairman's Report for the year ended 30th June 2019

This year has been marked by submissions to Councils, work by members of the committee to advocate for the preservation and conservation of heritage sites in Hawke's Bay, and a lot of ongoing endeavour by the committee to research and record sites.

Your skilled committee continue to meet bi monthly in Napier at East Pier (thanks to the owners) and the Hastings District Library (thanks to the Council). The Events and Research Committees meet in the intervening month to focus on those activities.

I note the current members: Matthew Bonett, Susan Lopdell, Rose Mohi, Denis Pilkington, Dorothy Pilkington, Elizabeth Pisheif, Gail Pope and our hard working Secretary/Treasurer Philip Irwin.

The Councils' representatives are NCC - Annette Brosnan, HDC - Geraldine Travers and CHB - Charles Nairn.

This being election year we wish Annette and Ger-

aldine all the best and hope to retain these three representatives for the coming term. Matthew Bonnett has been nominated for the NCC and we wish him good luck. The more heritage advocates around the decision tables of the Councils' the more respect for our heritage.

The 2018 AGM was held on the 26th August in the Spencer Block of Napier Girls High School.

The Principal, Mrs Dawn Ackroyd, took us on the Napier Girls High historical journey and we explored the older parts of the school.

Two trips were planned and although only one was completed - a bus trip to Waipukurau focussing on heritage buildings - interest in the second trip to the Clive area was high and we plan to revive this trip next year.

We joined with HP Tairāwhiti at the Hawke's Bay Club for a dinner during their field trip to Hawke's Bay.

Submissions were made to:

NCC Mission Special Character Zone Hearing

Napier War Memorial

HDC Proposed development of the Hawke's Bay Farmers Coop Garage

National Archive and Library Institutions Survey

NCC Heritage Strategy.

Elizabeth Pisheif has been instrumental in delivering the start of an important piece of work for the region. Over 50 sites of heritage value to the community have been identified and researched for consideration of inclusion into the Heritage Schedule of the NCC. The collaboration between the Council and Elizabeth has been already of great benefit and if the sites are accepted heritage protection in Napier will take a great leap forward. This project for the last two years has been the theme of our regional network meetings with the aim of spreading this collaboration and work so that all Hawke's Bay communities and heritage groups feed into their relevant Councils.

The most significant way sites are protected is through the Councils' District Plans. We need to harness our heritage knowledge and work with Council planners and politicians to have these important places scheduled.

Denis Pilkington's Newsletters have been bright and informative this year. Denis is also our representative on Historic Places Aotearoa, our parent body.

Our committee well understands the need for a strong, robust national presence to advocate in Wellington for the regions and provide services that are mandated for all Historic Places

groups (eg. Insurance). HPA has not yet grown to a sustainable size with gaps in membership from some traditional historic groups. HPHB has ongoing



Barbara Arnott with Rosie Simpson and Sandra Hazlehurst at the 'AGM at Taruna

discussion on our local position in regards to our membership of HPA and would hope that other regional groups would support this national body.

HPHB facilitated the Fifth meeting of all Heritage Groups in Hawke's Bay. This annual event is important for:

Sharing of events, work and collaboration;

Focusing groups on the national picture (Heritage NZ attended our May meeting) Looking at what collectively we all can do to raise awareness of and protection for our heritage sites.

As long as the participants (representatives from each group in HB and appropriate Council staff) consider the meetings relevant, we will continue to fund and facilitate.

The work that has been undertaken by members of your committee has, in some cases, been extreme. An example is Dorothy's work on the Napier War Memorial. Tireless in her application of correct historical process and continually working to ensure that for the memorial site the right outcome is obtained. This outcome is, of course, not in our hands to make the decision, but Dorothy along with strong support has provided the right information to those on the Council.

This is just one example of the mostly "behind the scenes" beaver away that your committee does on a daily basis. I thank each and every one of them for their knowledge, passion and dedication to the increasingly important issues in heritage that are often left to wither without strong advocates and community support. I thank all of our members for their support during this year and look forward to more interaction in the next year.

A Building Worth Saving

In March this year the Hastings District Council outlined a proposal to create a new laneway through from Queen Street West which would utilise the site of the building at 225 Heretaunga Street formerly occupied by Envy Shoes. This would provide access to additional off street parking and a possible outdoor performance space in a similar arrangement to the laneway that was created last year in the next block at 311 Heretaunga Street West.

The concept initially is to retain the 1931 façade of the Envy Shoes building to form an archway above verandah level and also incorporate the art deco features on the internal walls of the building in the concept.

At the Queen Street end of the laneway (206 Queen Street West) stands the building that housed the former Hawke's Bay Farmers' Co-operative Association garage, more recently occu-

pied by Briscoe's whose colour scheme remains on the facade of the building, with other businesses also operating in the building's western side.

This site is now owned by the Hastings District Council, and their original proposal was to demolish part of the building to provide a parking area and access through the new laneway to Heretaunga Street.

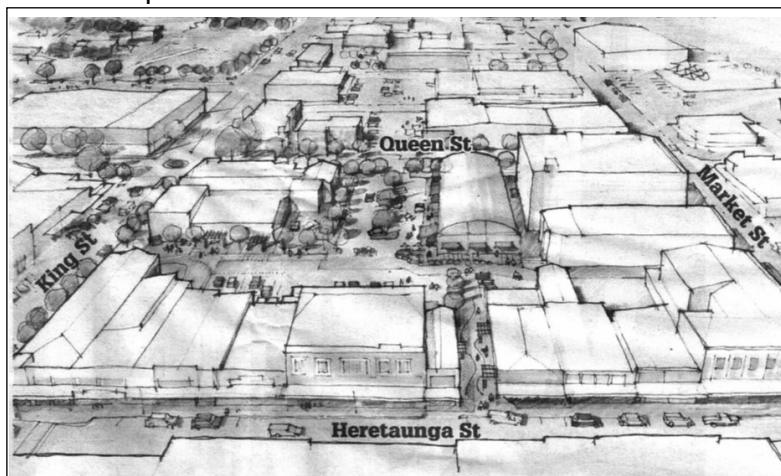
The demolition proposal sounded alarm bells with our organisation, not only because of the important community and commercial/agricultural history, but also the distinctive architecture of the building, with its three-bay barrel-vaulted roofline that is probably unique in Hawke's Bay.

The Farmers' Co-operative garage operated from this building from the time of its construction in 1927. They were the Hawke's Bay agency for Buick cars, and there was on the site, a show room, petrol bowlers, and a large workshop. Having survived the 1931 Hawke's Bay earthquake the building was extended to the west in 1934. Although it is difficult to fully appreciate the distinctive features of the building from Queen Street because of additions to the frontage since it was constructed, if you walk around to the rear of the building the profile can be fully appreciated.

The garage building is just one part of what was once a major business in Hawke's Bay, and next door is the building that was the head office of the Farmers' Co-operative Association, completed not long before the 1931 earthquake, and now one of Hastings' important survivors of the quake. Inside that building, on the corner of Market Street (now the IMS Building) there is a fine display of historic photographs starting in the foyer of the Queen Street entrance and running up the staircase wall. Both buildings are Category II listed with Heritage New Zealand and also on the Hastings District Plan.

Earlier this year HPHB made a submission to the Hastings District Council in support of a concept that would avoid demolition of the western bay of the garage building. We received a positive response and alternative plans were prepared utilising the western bay of the building as covered carparking. By using existing sky-

lights and uncovering the existing windows an area with plenty of natural lighting could be provided, with the added bonus of highlighting the distinctive steel roof structure. This revised design also included a proposal to sell the original eastern bay of the building to a private owner for redevelopment



A proposed new carpark and walkway for Hastings— HB Today

within the existing structure.

This is a brick and concrete building, and in spite of the original section surviving the 1931 earthquake the whole structure is currently rated as earthquake prone. Initial estimates received by the Council have indicated

that the cost of seismic strengthening could make the project difficult to justify as an economically viable restoration. To date, Council has also been unsuccessful in finding a buyer interested in redeveloping the original section of the building. We are continuing to encourage the Council to seek alternatives for strengthening and

Places Aotearoa and ICOMOS NZ AGM and conference in Gisborne.

In terms of cost, the Heritage EQUIP fund administered by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage is now emerging as a significant funding source for seismic strengthening of privately owned heritage buildings and the Ministry also administers the Regional Culture and Heritage fund, which is available to local council-owned properties. The Government is also being actively lobbied to legislate in line with policies in many other

countries, and reintroduce tax incentives for strengthening heritage buildings as recommended by the Tax



The Queen Street frontage today with the existing Windows covered



The building as it was immediately after the HB earthquake

future use, on the basis that we are aware of other buildings of similar age, including one in Napier, where similar steel roof structure has been retained and continues to maintain its original purpose with minimal alteration. There is also ongoing innovation in techniques for seismic strengthening of brick heritage buildings, some of which were explained in a video presentation at the recent joint Historic



The rear of the building. Where else can we see a façade profile like this?

Working Group.

The Farmers' Co-operative garage building could provide a distinctive focal point to highlight the commercial heritage of Hastings as part of the Council's project to improve parking and access for shoppers in Heretaunga Street East.

We hope that an economically viable solution will be found and we will continue to advocate for this, and offer our full support to Council's efforts.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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