

# BIRKENHEAD HERITAGE

— SOCIETY INC —

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## NEXT EVENT

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March - Stories Day**  
2pm at St Andrews Church Hall  
172 Hinemoa Steet, Birkenhead

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April - Bus Trip  
to Silverdale Pioneer Museum**

**Cost:** Bus: \$30 (Estimated)  
Includes admission and tour:  
Provide own lunch.

Devonshire Teas \$6

Tea/Coffee \$2 (with biscuit \$3)

Pick ups start Verrans Cnr. 9.30am

Farrington House 10 am

Return by 4 pm.

Bookings: Ph Marcia 418 0397

(By chq., cash or electronic trfr.)

Confirm by 11<sup>th</sup> April

**Account Number 12 3035 0511576 00**

– need to add ‘name’ and ‘bus trip’.

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### 1840 -1900s

Developing Birkenhead’s Roads

### 1840-42

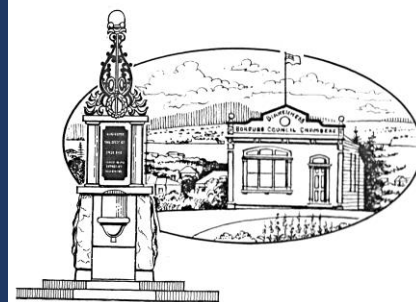
William Hobson Governor

## CONTACT US

President – Marcia Roberts 418 0397

Vice President – Brian Potter 483 3400

Vice President – Colleen Durham 483 4001



March -April  
2018  
Newsletter

## PAST EVENT

Due to small numbers of bookings the February MOTAT trip was cancelled.

However, we will remember this summer for the heat and humidity, Cyclone Gita’s visit to parts of the South Island, and the unusually green lawns from heavy February showers.

### 1840’s – 1900’s

#### Developing Birkenhead’s Roads

Through the Birkenhead Heritage Website some interesting questions arrive, ‘seeds sown’ for an article for our Newsletter.

A photo from 1907 of a “Reclamation work at Birkenhead Wharf, 1907” prompted the question “how public work went on at that time,..... was it paid employment, or would it have been a voluntary group come together to get jobs done in Birkenhead? “

Having recently read the History of Glenfield I was aware the first trails in our area of the North Shore followed the former Maori walking routes along the ridges. An earlier talk to the Society provided information about the Maori waka used on the harbour, with portage routes between the Waitemata and Manukau Harbours and north to the Kaipara.

## 1840's – 1900's ctd.

The land around the Waitemata harbour – Auckland - was not settled by Europeans until after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. The local Hauraki tribes were defeated by the northern Ngati Whatua in 1821 so most of the Auckland area, including the North Shore was abandoned. Some groups from a number of tribes resettled locally. In the late 1830's Ngai Tai returned to form a kainga (an unfortified village, home of the tribe or hapu in times of peace) at Northcote Point and North Head. Some Kawerau people returned to Kauri Point in 1835. The Ngai Tai left Northcote Point following the Mahurangi Purchase by the Crown.

Below is a letter about the Mahurangi Purchase of land, from the north side of the Waitemata Harbour all the way to **Te Arai** Point (about 10 km south of Mangawhai Heads).

***The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the CHIEF PROTECTOR. Auckland.—  
Purchase of Mahurangi from Thames Natives sanctioned by the Governor.***

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 14th April, 1841.

SIR,—

With reference to your letter of the 12th inst., submitting a proposal from the united tribes of the Thames to sell a tract of country in the vicinity of the Waitemata known as "Mahurangi," to the Crown, I do myself the honor, by the direction of the Lieut.-Governor, to convey to you his Excellency's sanction to the purchase being completed at the price mentioned in your communication.

SIGNED

WILLOUGHBY SHORTLAND.

The Protector of Aborigines, &c., &c., Auckland. (2).

(2) [AN EPITOME OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS RELATIVES TO NATIVE AFFAIRS AND LAND PURCHASES IN THE NORTH ISLAND OF NEW ZEALAND \(TEXT\)](#)

By [Rev. Henry Hanson Turton](#).

The purchase from tribes from Thames rather than the traditional land occupiers has been subsequently reviewed in various Waitangi Tribunal consultations. However, because of this purchase the North Shore as we know it has developed. Subsequently the New Zealand Company purchased large tracts locally but were found to be too expensive and sold back to the government in 1847. Some land went to the Catholic Church to finance a church school for Maori from other parts of the North Island. Closer access to the new settlement across the harbour meant Northcote Point was developed before Birkenhead.

In 1848 a system of dividing Auckland into administration areas of '100 hundred' placed the North Shore together as the 'Hundred of Pupuke'. (The '100 hundred' was an ancient term from Great Britain with origins relating to numbers of persons or households, not a specific land measurement.)

## 1840's – 1900's ctd.

Leased Crown land for cattle grazing provided revenue. In 1853 the local settler Henry Hawkins was elected the first warden in Birkenhead to supervise spending on the first roads and bridges, abolished two years later, the North Shore came under the Provincial Government. For road or ferry services locals had to petition the government, - in 1857 a petition was raised in protest of their regular ferry being diverted and shared with Devonport.

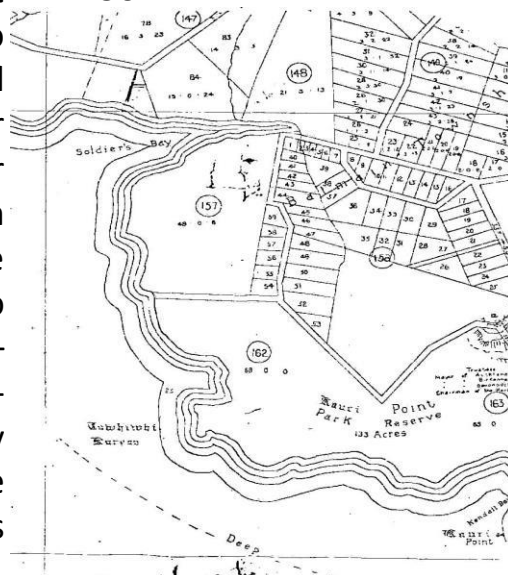
In 1868 the North Shore Road Board commenced operations to manage local roading facilities. An 1868 map shows 'paper roads,' now named Queen Street on Northcote Point, Onewa Road, Hinemoa Street and Mokoia, Rawene and Colonial Roads – the latter to access de Jersey Grut's farm. Initially muddy tracks would have developed from foot traffic between settlers' farms, taking shortest routes along boundaries.

McClure discusses that before 1870 farmers who owned a boat rowed directly across the harbour for stores and to sell their produce to markets in town. Settlers walked the difficult bush track to Stokes Point (Northcote) – using Hammonds foot-bridge over Little Shoal Bay Creek built 1882 – to the wharf and John Reid's whale boat ferry.

The first Birkenhead wharf was built by the Auckland Harbour Board in 1882. Increasing numbers of settlers required paths for walking, hand carts, pedlars, and then horses and gigs. The deep-water anchorage at Duck Creek provided an ideal site for the founding of the Chelsea Sugar Works in the early 1880s with an influx of tradesman for construction 1883/4. The Works built their own wharf and sugar boats.

A separate Birkenhead Road Board was formed in 1884, and a Borough Council from 11<sup>th</sup> April 1887. The first inspection of roads in September 1888. Their income came from rates. Initially road repairs were carried out by shovel and wheelbarrow by the council roadman. Margaret McClure mentions in lieu of rates some residents requested the right to 'work out' their rates. This was after a severe depression in 1888. "Jenkinson gave day labour, J. O'Neill was employed to assist the roadman paving the wharf footpaths." She does mention "When the cliff-side fell in a huge slip and ruined the road to the wharf ...a working bee of every man and boy in the district restored the road to the wharf." No date is given.

### Portion of Hammond's Map 1902



Cyclists required continuous 'ringing the bell while such bicycle is in motion' by the 1899 council by-laws. By 1901 1087 people lived in the Birkenhead Borough area, of whom 252 were ratepayers. By 1903 there were over 100 growers of strawberries, the most important local crop. It was in 1905 Charles Verran bought Mr Menzies carrying business and the Post Office agency at the Point. Horses and their wagons were carried on the top deck of the passenger ferry,

consideration needed to be given to tide timetables, and fishermen removed from the wharf. A horse-drawn bus was in service in 1910 to meet the ferries, 3d to Highbury and towards Birkdale or Mayfield (today's Glenfield) 6d. The routes for future roads had begun!

Source: *The Story of Birkenhead*, Margaret McClure, Birkenhead City Council 1987: *Birkenhead Heritage Society*. Newsletter 2004: *Birkenhead Historic Residential Neighbourhoods*, NSCC 2009.

## William Hobson First New Zealand Governor

The Friends of Symonds Street Cemetery on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2018 celebrated the 175 anniversary of William Hobson's death with afternoon tea at the Cordis Hotel followed by a presentation by Dr. Paul Moon.

**William Hobson** our first Governor had a difficult role and his life was cut short by his sudden death. "After a lengthy Royal Navy career in which he saw action in the Napoleonic Wars and was twice captured by pirates in the Caribbean, William Hobson (1792-1842) became New Zealand's first Governor.

Governor Bourke (of N.S.W.) had already sent him to New Zealand in 1838, and his report so impressed **Lord Glenelg**\* that when he decided, in December 1838, to appoint a Consul to New Zealand, he offered the post to Hobson. William Hobson took two months before accepting, on 14 February 1839, as he had been hoping instead to receive further promotion as a senior naval officer.

Sent out by Lord Normanby in 1839 with detailed instructions, he travelled first to Governor Gipps in Sydney, whose lieutenant he was to be, for further instructions. Hobson arrived in the Bay of Islands on 29 January but landed on 30 January to read his proclamation of appointment and arranged for a meeting at British Resident James Busby's house on 5 February, while the **Treaty** was being drafted. On the following day, 6 February, as the chiefs came forward to sign he greeted each of them with the words 'He iwi tahi tatou' (We are all one people).

At the end of 1840 New Zealand ceased to be a protectorate of New South Wales and

became a colony in its own right, with Hobson as Governor and Auckland as its capital city. The administration was short of cash and had frequent conflict with settlers, who were hungry for land and wanted control of the colony's government. After barely two years as Governor, he died from a stroke at the age of 49.

*Adapted from the DNZB biography by K. A. Simpson  
From the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*

\* **Lord Glenelg** (Baron Glenelg, Charles Grant, 1778-1863) was one of a group of humanitarian Anglican evangelicals prominent in British politics in the 1820s and 1830s. Glenelg was **Secretary of State** for War and the Colonies through the mid-1830s until February 1839. As early as 1835, Glenelg recognised that New Zealand British Resident James Busby was ineffective. This view was shared by Governor Bourke, his successor Governor Gipps, and officials at the Colonial Office. Nothing was done, though, until Glenelg formally advised Gipps in December 1838 that he was going to terminate Busby's appointment and replace the Resident with a consul. He gave some support to the New Zealand Association's attempts to develop a plan for organised settlement of New Zealand but resisted the New Zealand Company's defiant plans to create its own colony. Before leaving office, Glenelg approved early drafts of what would become Hobson's instructions. These were later heavily modified, becoming pragmatic discussions of the processes of possessing and administering the new colony and leaving them little more than an expression of humanitarian ideals.

'Charles Grant Glenelg', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/lord-charles-grant-glenelg>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 17-May-2017

■ **1950s**



From the Birkenhead Heritage Society Archives  
An early local bus showing a sign for Marama Terrace.



The Toll Booths for the Harbour Bridge located at Sulphur beach - was it 2 Shillings each way?



Reported last newsletter, the passing of founding member Adelene Tanner at age 97 years.  
Photographed enjoying a Birkenhead Heritage bus trip.



Road works for Highbury by-pass - beside Zion Methodist Church 1970's

■ National **EVENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**New Zealand History Federation Inc  
Conference and AGM THAMES  
16th March – 18th March 2018**

Includes:

..... Friday night .....

Lectures at Thames School of Mines

**Or Ceilidh, Irish Jigs, St James Church \$20**

..... Saturday .....

9.30 am Saturday **AGM** at School Room  
Thames School of Mines

11.00 am Opening of the **A and G Price**  
Story at the Thames Museum

Lunch options - plenty as there is a  
market in the street from 9.00am

1.00 pm **Presentation at The Treasury**

2.00 pm An informative **guided walk**  
along historic Shortland Street

Commencing at the Thames Wharf

..... 6.00 pm Saturday .....

Miners Dinner at Bella Pumphouse  
hosted by Rotary \$45.00 pp

Dinner with mid course entertainment  
and social, cash bar. As this is themed  
you are encouraged to come in suitable  
period dress.

..... Sunday .....

9.00am Assemble at Gold Experience

For an experience of your life

Conference Registration \$60 Dinner a/a

Neil Curgenvin 0272441348

historyfederation@gmail.com

Pay to New Zealand History Federation

BNZ 02 0959 0041718 00

■ **LOCAL ISSUES** \_\_\_\_\_

The major slip behind the Mokoia Road shops, on the slope towards Chelsea Sugar Works is frequently in conversation. Some members remember the cottages that previously stood there with a steep drop to the valley full of trees below. Another recalls fill from the harbour bridge approaches where the toll booths once stood was removed when the 'clip-on' extensions were added. Part of the fill was buried beneath the road and carpark built behind the shops.

The local clay is also causing deterioration in the local Historical Anglican and Catholic Cemeteries in Birkenhead Avenue opposite Pupuke Road.

Currently the Kaipatiki Board is holding Consultation Meetings for submissions on the future of Birkenhead War Memorial Park. accessed from Mahara Avenue and Birkenhead Avenue. The old grandstand is no longer safe and will require demolition. Public submissions on future Auckland Council Plans will need to be completed this year – individuals are encouraged to give their views as 'numbers' carry more weight in future planning.

**Editor** MARCIA ROBERTS

*Our appreciation for sponsoring printing to*

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