

LINCOLN & DISTRICTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

NEWSLETTER 14

April 2001

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We start the New Year in good heart. Over the last year there has been a marked increase in support for all heritage issues. Interest in old buildings, historical sites, and queries for information of former residents and past events have been a pleasing feature of our endeavours.

An indication of the extent of this interest was the attendance of 92 people at our field trip, the "Greenpark Roundabout" in October last. The lively crowd thoroughly enjoyed an afternoon in this unique area. This is mentioned elsewhere.

Once again our display of photographs at the Lincoln Christmas pageant was very popular and many people took the opportunity to purchase copies at a nominal cost.

Another positive change has been the Selwyn District Council series of meetings with historical societies in the district. We were a part of these and topics discussed were: equipment resources, advertising brochures, scanning and electronic storage of photographs, oral history update, council history update with the indication that a central archive for the district is to be established. Details of these meetings are discussed more fully elsewhere in this newsletter.

We have taken the first steps towards organising our records on a data base; we plan to scan and store our photographs on disk and place copies in our local library.

The Vision for Lincoln project team who are preparing a townscape plan have liaised with us on historic sites and buildings in Lincoln. A series of public meetings and workshops has stimulated further interest in heritage issues in the village.

I report with much pleasure that negotiations between Selwyn District Council and the Union Parish committee have been finalised. Liffey Cottage now proudly stands on reserve land vested in the Council. This has been made possible by the wonderful co-operation and good will of the Union Church over an extended period of time. We are indeed grateful to them for their co-operation, which closes moves which began over 20 years ago.

May you all have a happy and prosperous New Year.

June Switalla

SOCIETY NEWS

A Party in Appreciation:

On Saturday afternoon March 31 we invited representatives of the Union Parish to afternoon tea. This was done to express our appreciation of their part in making it possible to reserve that part of their property on which the cottage was placed. See the President's message. Malcolm Gordon outlined the work done over the years, and the church's willing co-operation at all times, to reach the present happy conclusion. Jim Maunsell responded on behalf of the Union Church. We enjoyed the cottage, a display of photographs relating to the cottage, as well as lovely sunny weather which topped off an enjoyable occasion.

Gifts:

Deirdre and Warwick Harris have presented the society with music for two song folios and Acts 1 of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, *The Gondoliers* and *The Yeoman of the Guard*. These belonged to Ethel Mae McNae, born at Little River in 1884. She was a sister of Richard Allan McNae born at Cass in 1882 and Deirdre's grandfather. Their uncle Andrew, Deirdre's great uncle, worked as a blacksmith in Lincoln from about 1885 until 1903 when he moved to Christchurch to establish a cycle making business in Durham Street. He married an Australian girl in 1885, and their three children, Andrew Archibald Lincoln (1886), Vera Pamela Stella (1888), and Walter Clarence (1890), were all born in Lincoln.

The names of the three children appear in the Lincoln Presbyterian Church Sunday School role for 1897. Andrew, whose wife Helen died in 1918, eventually moved to Melbourne where he joined his two sons, Lincoln and Clarence, who had settled there. He died in 1942 aged 87. Ethel Mae did not marry.

The music, housed in Liffey Cottage, is in keeping with the late 19th century setting for the cottage.

Maureen Dunlop, Springston, has gifted us an elementary geography textbook published in London in 1897. It deals with some 40 topics including land and water, the oceans, the races of men, latitude and longitude, the continents, animal life and so on.

Each chapter, usually two pages long, ends with a reminder, e.g. "Remember - Geography

describes the Surface of the Earth, its Productions and its Inhabitants."

Amongst other things it notes that "Europe is the smallest continent, but it is the most important. It contains most of the leading nations of the earth." It also tells us that Australia is the "largest island on the globe... belongs to Great Britain, and is ruled over by Queen Victoria." This interesting book can be seen in Liffey Cottage on any open day.

Harry Newman of Hoon Hay, Christchurch, has given us a *wash dolly*, also called a *peg dolly*. This is a wooden device, standing about a metre tall, and consists of a wooden shaft to which a wooden disc is attached at one end with a handle at the other. Four, five, or six pegs are fitted around the under side of the disc. The dolly was used as a primitive hand operated washing machine, used especially to wash stubborn dirt from heavy clothing. This is not an original object, but one which Mr Newman has built from a drawing, and can also be seen in Liffey Cottage.

Ruth Maunsell has given us seven photographs of some of Lincoln's better known buildings, as they were in 1996. These include the old St Stephens, Miss Gray's cottage, and the MAF Diagnostic station.

Dallas Howell of Hamilton has donated photographs, and other material, relating to the Knight family who once lived in Lincoln. Most are associated with Allen David Knight, born 1915 - died 1987, who spent his working life as a policeman. He was awarded the Queen Service Medal for his work. Amongst the photographs is one of Allen's older brother Henry, standing beside a van bearing the sign Henry's Supply Store, Lincoln. Our patron, Norma Habgood, remembers the family who lived for a time in the Liffey Cottage.

GREENPARK ROUNDABOUT

Our annual excursion explored the history of Greenpark and Alison Barwick who organised the outing reports: Nearly 90 members and other interested people gathered at the canal bridge, Duckpond Road, Motukarara, on Sunday, 29 October, at the beginning of an exploration of part of Greenpark.

After hearing about the canal and its building and function, we drove to St Mark's Church and from there to the nearby home of Jude and Bruce Blake where we examined an interesting collection of old gigs and carts, and saw what remains of the old creamery building, now incorporated into one of the Blakes' sheds. A number of us had escorted tours through the Blakes' home, an example of how a previously

undistinguished old house has been transformed into a home of much character.

We warmly thank Francis Eggleston and Walter Harris who spoke about the canal and associated drainage and farming issues; Margaret Watson and Neville Woods who told us some of the history of St. Mark's; and Jude and Bruce Blake who generously shared their home, garden and carts with us, as well as providing a delightful venue for afternoon tea and space for a small exhibition of photographs and an historical map of the Greenpark district especially drawn for us by Walter Harris and computerised for us by Stephen Wright of Selwyn District Council.

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES AND THE SELWYN DISTRICT COUNCIL

On the 21st November 2000 the Selwyn District Council met with representatives of local historical societies to discuss how best the council could help them preserve the history of the district. Gordon Malcolm reports: This was the second meeting of area societies invited by Douglas Marshall, manager of Corporate Services, and offering the council's support for the collection and storage of historical records in the district. It was well attended by representatives from Leeston, Dunsandel, Darfield, Hororata, Prebbleton, and Lincoln.

Scanning of early Photographs: The council is expecting to make available a service for scanning photographs and their storage on computer disk. Groups willing to use the facility will however need to provide an accompanying text, identifying the photographs and their historical interest, as part of a catalogue in the data base. In the future such records could perhaps go on a web site.

Present Storage of Records: Some groups reported having their own fire-proof safe (second hand); one society uses an old freezer unit which is apparently fire proof. For those whose storage of precious photographs etc. is under the bed the council can provide secure storage and later will have a proper safe available. The contact person is Christine McEvedy.

Council Archives: an index of historical material and archives of the district is available on the computer at local libraries. Any new material held by individual societies can readily be added to the data base.

Genealogy: People tracing family history can obtain records of district cemeteries and plans of cemetery plots with names from Christine McEvedy through the Leeston council office. Details can be faxed to the nearest service

centre. There is no cost except for photocopies.

Recording Oral History: The council does not have a dictaphone available for hire. The Ellesmere Historical Society has recently bought a quality machine with a donation from the Community Trust. A professional quality dictaphone can cost up to \$900.00.

Training in oral history is important to guarantee a good result; Stephen Wright has experience in this with the Ellesmere Society and is a good contact person in this regard.

History Trail Brochure: The Selwyn District Council will circulate the format of a brochure identifying, with a map, historic sites in the district. Societies could use space provided for information and photographs of sites in their particular area. The brochures would be made available to visitors, tourists, and interest groups. The council officer arranging this is Judith Pascoe.

Acknowledgements: Our thanks go to Douglas Marshall, Stephen Wright, Christine McEvedy and Judith Pascoe, all of the Selwyn District Council, for a very worth while meeting.

LINCOLN CREAMERY

We hope you have all seen the stone and plaque marking the site of the former creamery on the corner of Ellesmere and Tancred Roads. The creamery was the delivery point for milk produced by local farmers where it was separated and the cream taken to the Central Dairy Company at Addington.

The site, sometimes known as Schaffer's Corner, was owned by the Schaffer family for 107 years before it was taken over by Jan and the late Neill Owens.

The rock for the memorial came from Gebbies Pass and was erected by the Owens family in memory of Neill, and brought to fruition his plans for the site.

Parts of the creamery's foundations are still to be seen about 20 metres south of the memorial.

The society has a copy of a photograph of the creamery, the original of which is held by Jan Owens.

MOFFAT THE MILLER

Phil O'Malley, the great grandson of Henry Moffat, has written and published an account of the life of Henry Moffat, builder and operator of the Lincoln mill. He makes the point that Henry came to New Zealand as a wealthy young man who during his lifetime "made a remarkable contribution at the local level to the development of New Zealand during the nineteenth century." In addition to his contribution to the development of Lincoln he also played an important part in the

development of Flaxton, Wakanui, and Otautau, as flour miller, flax miller, timber miller, farmer and engineer.

Phil O'Malley not only tells us the story of Moffat's activities, but he takes time to reflect on the nature of the man, someone who today would be thought of as a workaholic and perfectionist. A man who was always willing to help the community in which he was living, Henry had his triumphs and his failures, his virtues and his shortcomings.

The account is well illustrated and includes photographs of the Wakanui and Otautau mills, but sadly none of the Lincoln mill which seem never to have been available, family photographs, and maps to illustrate the location of the mills.

This is a useful contribution to the early history of Lincoln and it is hoped that it is still available for anyone interested in obtaining a copy. Phil O'Malley lives in Christchurch; the book was printed by the Digital Print and Copy Centre.

THE PRICE OF MILK

In our last newsletter we reported on the cost of groceries bought in 1962 by Shirley Habgood and invited contributions from people who might have similar information. Leonie Meijer has a card informing customers of the cost of milk and cream at the time of the change to decimal currency in 1967. It states:

Milk:	Decimal Currency	Approx. price £ s d
½ pint	2 cents	2½d
1 pint	4 cents	5d
2 pints	8 cents	10d
3 pints	12 cents	1/2½d
4 pints	16 cents	1/7½d
5 pints	20 cents	2/-
Cream:		
¼ pint	8 cents	10d
½ pint	16 cents	1/7½d

A hand written note on the card tells us that a packet containing 25 milk tokens would cost \$1 (10/-0).

Customers were asked to tender the correct decimal coinage as soon as it was available, or to leave the approximate values as shown in the old £ s d. The prices as shown were approved by the N.Z. Milk Board.

Has any one else got similar information hidden away?

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

In about 1893 Robert W. Lochhead "came across the river Selwyn to Lincoln from the Leeston district to start out for himself in Lincoln as a young farmer." He had bought the Springs farm and ran it successfully for some twenty years.

Shortly after he arrived he married and

together the Lochheads took a great interest in the life and the welfare of the Lincoln area.

Besides being a successful farmer he was heavily involved with local development and had been an active member of the old Springs Road Board and of its successor, the Springs County Council; he resigned in October, 1914.

He was an enthusiastic member of the Lincoln Ploughing Match Association and for several years was president of that organisation. He was a member of the Lincoln Domain Board and was also involved with the Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association, an involvement relating to his great interest in farming activities.

Mr Lochhead had worked hard for the Lincoln District High School, formed in 1905. He was a long standing member of the school committee and was chairman for six years, during which time he was especially interested in the development of a "rural course". His interest extended to practical matters. For example, he always made his team of horses available when heavy work was needed around the school, and he was amongst those who stressed the importance of self help for the local community.

His work for education and agriculture was well known to staff of Lincoln College (now Lincoln University) who appreciated this interest.

The Lochheads sold Springs farm in 1913 and moved to Hororata. In April 1914 they were accorded a farewell function in the Druid's hall at Lincoln at which the local community expressed their appreciation of their involvement in local affairs.

We thank grand daughter Margaret Morrish for this information extracted from the Ellesmere Guardian of 22 April 1914.

THE BRIDGE ACROSS THE RIVER L1

The elegant new rails and lights on the Lincoln bridge certainly enhance the approach to the business centre of the township, and adds to the view from the opposite direction of which St Stephen's is the centre.

The L1 has been bridged for a long time, and as early as 1867 the Lyttelton Times reported that it was unsafe for heavy traffic. The next comment comes from a Springs Road Board report in The Press of 1873 when surveyors found that the bridge was sound, but that the planking was much worn and not worth asphaltting. The report further states that the Road Board had received a petition from Lincoln residents requesting that the bridge be raised to a higher level, but concludes with the recommendation that the work be postponed because of cost. Apparently a contract had

been let for The Press of 2 October 1873 records that J. Smart agreed to cancel his contract for asphaltting the bridge on payment of £1.1.0 (\$2.10).

Nevertheless it was obvious that a replacement was needed, and so in November 1873 the Road Board offered a bonus of £10.10.0 (\$21.00) for the best design submitted to it and which was to become its property.

Whether the bonus was ever paid is unclear, but a few months later the Provincial Government agreed to contribute £400.0.0 (\$800.00) towards the cost of a bridge designed by J. Anderson of Christchurch, provided that construction was supervised by the Provincial Engineer. Finally in May 1874 (The Press, 9 May, 1874) the Road Board resolved that "Tenders be invited for the erection of an iron girder bridge over the L1 River at Lincoln, according to the specifications and drawings prepared by the Provincial Engineer."

John Anderson, of the Canterbury iron foundry, was contracted as the builder in August 1874 and two months later J. Blackmore was appointed Clerk of Works. On December 1874 The Press reported that the new bridge, of iron girder construction, spanning 35 feet (11m) and 21 feet (7m) wide, with stone abutments, wing walls with iron railings, and a wooden floor was near completion.

When the original iron railings were replaced with wooden rails is not known, but it is interesting that the new railings are of similar materials to the first. It is apparent that the petition that the bridge be raised was met just over a year after it was submitted to the Road Board.

Any more information relating to the early history of the bridge would be greatly appreciated.

Neville Moar

IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret that we record the death of Mrs E. R. East, one of our founding members, on October 18, 2000. We extend our sympathy to Gavin and to other members of the East family.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

For those who may have forgotten their annual subscription please remember that it is now due. It is \$10.00 per annum.

Patron: Mrs Norma Habgood
President: Mrs June Switalla (3252078)
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