

# NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2016

## NEWS AND VIEWS

### Visit by the Marton RSA Women's Section

It was with great pleasure that we welcomed 17 ladies from the Marton RSA Women's Section to the Museum on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

We were so pleased on the feedback that we received from them, and we all thoroughly enjoyed showing them around the Museum.

The afternoon finished with afternoon tea in the Archive Room.

We will really enjoy welcoming them back again.

### New Roles at the Village

As many of you already know the Museum Rooms have had a complete make-over due to the hard work of Terry and Jo McCann.

We all especially love the new display in the Workshop Upper Room, and the easy access through the Fox Room to see the telephone exchanges.

You can read what has been done in Terry and Jo's article in our next newsletter.

After such a sterling effort and the great interest that they both have in helping to preserve our artefacts they have been invited to be the Museum Custodians.

This is a new and separate role from the committee, which means we will now have the committee members, and an expanding group of valued volunteers.

### New Members

We have two new members this year, both from outside the Rangitikei. So a big welcome to them.

They are :- Denis Coles of Levin

Joanna Easingwood of Auckland.

## CALENDAR OF 2016



### **Members Meeting**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> of March

Where: MHS Archives Room,  
Wellington Rd, Marton

When 2pm

Speaker: Mrs Jean McFarlane  
If anyone needs transport  
please phone either Maureen  
3276104, Rod 3276099 or Pat  
3276063.

To see old newsletters visit our  
website at:  
[tinyurl.com/martonhist](http://tinyurl.com/martonhist)

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## Marton School Reunion

This Labour Weekend 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October Marton School will be celebrating 150yrs of education.

In 1866 a two – roomed building was erected on the corner of Pukepapa Rd and High St. Responsible for this move were Mr W Henderson and Mr J Lambert. A levy of 3d to 9d, per week, was a charge on parents, hours daily were 10am to 4pm, with candles being used for light in the winter time.

In 1901 the school was given the status of Marton District High School and in 1907 the Technical school was built, still in High St.

In 1913 the new Marton District High School brick building was opened in Hereford St. In 1955 this original building was demolished due to earthquake risk.

In 1925 a new block for secondary department was erected.

This block has had many extensions and today is the main Marton School.

This school is proud of its long history and is now celebrating 150 years.

Time to renew old friendships and reminisce of days long past.

Contact: <http://reunion.marton.school.nz> or

[www.facebook.com/martonschool150](http://www.facebook.com/martonschool150).

## Dedication of Memorial – Paul Melody

On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 11am, the family of Paul will be placing a memorial in the cottage garden to commemorate his services to the Marton Historic Village.

Members are welcome to attend.

## Recent Research

William Hamilton Wilson – son of Robert Wilson, Heaton Park.

William was educated in Marton, and at Wanganui Collegiate and gained his first work experience of engineering at Cables Foundry in Wellington, studied electrical engineering at Kings College London.

He was an assistant electrical engineer to the East India Railway. He designed condensers and transformers required of radio telegraphy in WW1, and read papers before the Royal Society of London.

He was a Marton boy who excelled in an excellent career.

A lady from Australia visited to view Cherry Farm, originally a Cawood property. She was connected to the Phillipson Family.

The McIlwaine Family was being researched for a new publication.

We have also been doing research on the following families:-

Cawood, Prince, Beard, Whale, Aitken and Black.

# ROD'S REMINISCENCES

## School Daze

When I started at Marton Primary school, I was in the "Infant Block", that was in 1951 & 1952. The block was almost brand new at that time, but today it has all come, been and gone!

While it hadn't been open long, even then it must have been short of space because a little kink in the main corridor, opposite the staff room, was already set up as a temporary classroom, completely ruining the corridor's function to provide a thoroughfare from one end of the building to the other.

In 1953, when I was in "Standard 2" and no longer classed as "infant" we moved out to the first of the ubiquitous prefabs that were to predominate the school for a while. This was at the East end of the infant block. The "Brick Building", which presumably had been the entire Marton Primary school for a long time, stood over the way a bit towards Hereford St, and was viewed as a mysterious sort of place for the big kids. This building appeared to have a fairly ornate front facing the street for fancy visitors and a plain entrance door around the back near the cloak rooms for the common kids to go in and out.

The next year, Standard 3, I was placed in a combined Std 3/4 class in the brick building. This was good academically as it enabled a select few to get a good insight into some more advanced work. We had big hand-painted posters around the walls depicting the main points of the Treaty of Waitangi. In later years activists claimed that our generation was taught nothing about the Treaty – a blatant untruth. Maybe it just wasn't quite the version that they wanted taught.

The brick building had a large central hall with the ANZAC "Roll of Honour" prominently mounted on the wall at one end. The hall was used for "assemblies", group singing, and the odd puppet show or similar. The hall was also available for eating our lunch on wet days.

This year was also our introduction to earthquake drills. On the appropriate bell (or maybe it was a whistle) signal we had to rush out into the central hall and run out one of the few available main doors to the outside world. Whether there would have been much chance of making it out in one piece in time in a real earthquake, we'll never know. These days, no doubt, each classroom would have its own immediate exit door to the outside world. There was no suggestion that we should "duck & cover", or whatever. No doubt it was realised that old school desks would probably not stand up to heavy brick walls landing on them.

That was demonstrated some two years later, when we were all mightily entertained on at least one occasion, when the outer brick wall of what had been my Std 3 classroom was attached to a cable and literally pulled over. That was one almighty crash! Another day a chimney went the same way.

With the brick building gone, there was, of course, no hall for assemblies or lunch. Assemblies were held on the tennis court, provided it wasn't too wet. I can't remember what the wet day lunch arrangements were – possibly a designated classroom or two?

A school rule stated that pupils wanting to go up-town to buy their lunch had to "ask permission". I knew that pupils going "home" for lunch could leave without special permission, as I was one of those for a while. So I figured that if I was ever wandering around the street at lunch time, my status was no different to those who were walking home. I reasoned that I could only possibly be breaking a rule while I was actually halfway through the gate. Solution: nip out the gate as quickly as possible when no-one was looking. We all know that many government imposed rules appear just as idiotic today and often get the same treatment.

Meantime, in Std 4, we were in one of a set of newly installed prefabs hurriedly brought in so that the brick building could be abandoned. At first, these had only one outside door to service two classrooms. Some of the bigger boys in the class were given instructions on a possible method of forcing the windows on the opposite side of the room fully open, to provide a possible escape route in an emergency if the main door became impassable.

The next year extra doors were cut into each prefab's rear wall to provide a proper alternative exit route. These doors provided another benefit later on in association with our ink-mixing activities — but more about that next time. — *To be continued*