

# Marton & District Historical Society

'Preserving and Sharing Marton History'

## NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2019 NEWS AND VIEWS

### End of Year Outing for Members

This will be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November at Mooma (the old "Something Special" on State Highway #1) at 12:30 pm. At Mooma everyone will be free to buy whatever refreshments they want; so prepayment is not necessary. However we do need an estimate of the likely numbers; so please RSVP to Sharon on 327-7903 or Maureen on 327-6104 before Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Please meet at the Village at 12 noon where we will arrange transport and depart from there.

*Members who need pickup from home, please phone Maureen on 327 6104.*

### Future of our Treasurer's position uncertain

At the end of August, our valued Treasurer, Pat Hayman, had a nasty accident and has been unable to carry out any duties for us since then. Furthermore, she has now had to move away from Marton, and it seems very unlikely that she will be able to resume her duties as Treasurer.

The position of Treasurer involves much more than just keeping account of our finances. A very important part of the job is applying for grants to cover our day-to-day expenses such as power, phones and insurance, and then accounting for that expenditure to the grant providers.

Unless we can find someone competent and willing to take over these duties, our activities may have to be, at best, severely curtailed. If not, we may eventually go the way that other clubs have recently gone, and just close up shop.

If anyone has constructive suggestions about how we could handle this dilemma, please let us know.

### CALENDAR OF 2019



#### Members Function

Our next members function will be a lunch at Mooma at 12:30 pm on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November.



To see old newsletters visit our website at:

[tinyurl.com/martonghist](http://tinyurl.com/martonghist)

#### Our E-mail:

[martonghist@gmail.com](mailto:martonghist@gmail.com)

#### QR CODE FOR WEBSITE



Sponsor our newsletter!  
Only \$20 per issue.

## Marton ceremonially renamed after 150 years



Mrs Gwen Nielsen cutting the anniversary cake. Gwen is the only surviving original founding member of the Historical Society formed in 1965.

On 5<sup>th</sup> October the Historical Society celebrated the occasion in our Village and the Memorial Hall with many displays of our town. A re-enactment was held of the 1869 public meeting when locals heard the proposed name for the first time and voted to use it.

The large crowd at the re-enactment was invited to vote for or against the name "Marton". The decision was unanimous to reaffirm the name.

The occasion was a resounding success and our heartfelt thanks go to the many local organisations who helped organise the day and who set up stalls displaying various aspects of Marton's history and present day activities.

Visitors contributed very generously towards the costs of the day. Many gave more than the requested gold coin donation – for which we are most grateful.



Anniversary visitors dressed in period costume.

## Members Passing

Sadly, since our last newsletter we have lost two more members: Jean McFarlane and Muriel Oldfield.

---



### JAMES KENDRICK — 1827 - 1899

James Kendrick arrived in New Zealand in 1846, a member of the 65<sup>th</sup> Foot Regiment stationed at Wahapu Barracks, Bay of Islands. On obtaining his discharge from the Regiment in 1852 he settled in Wellington and married Mary Gooder. James operated a Sawmill and had a family of seven children.

**1864** – James and family, hearing of the prospects in the Rangitikei, arrived at the settlement of Tutaenui, purchasing a small section on Calico Line. Here he built a small cottage for the family of clay bricks excavating from a pit on his land. He prospered by part time making Wellington boots for the Garrison soldiers, farming and making clay bricks.

**1870** – He purchased land in the Ross Street to Harris Street block, building a two-storey house and establishing a brickworks yard on the corner of Beaven and Ross Streets, the first major industry in Marton. He later opened another yard on Ross Street opposite Hunia Street. Brickyards became the family businesses with Joseph Kendrick with a yard at Crofton and in 1904 Alfred Kendrick shifted the business to Vera Street.

This business today is Marton Brick & Tile, owned by Mr. Michael Meehan, on the same site.

**1865** – James Kendrick was very involved in early Marton Royal Rangitikei Rifles. He was a founder officer and held the position of Bugler and a Founder member of the first Foresters Lodge founded in the Travellers Rest Hotel.

**1867** – He formed the Royal Rifles Band. James had a passion for band music; it is believed that this Brass Band was the first in NZ. He did everything – obtaining the band instruments from England, writing the music and building the stands. This band was very popular. Public interest was great and they were always in demand. He led the band at the opening of the Wanganui Town Bridge and played in Wellington for a Royal occasion, and a band Rotunda was built in Marton Park, entertaining the public each week.

So you can see what an important personage Mr James Kendrick was in the development of our town.

## ROD'S REMINISCENCES

### Children's Ward

In the early 1950s it was apparently normal to remove children's tonsils (& adenoids) in the belief that they would gain certain unspecified benefits from the procedure.

My Grandmother would often make comments about when I would be "getting my nose fixed". I pretty well had to ignore these because I really had no idea what she meant.

Then, one day, the announcement came. Today was the day. My Sister and I would be going to Wanganui hospital. Our Mother drove the car.

Half way there, a further announcement: "You do realise, don't you, that you won't be coming home with me tonight?" .Well – NO we didn't realise, how would we be supposed to realise that? But I guess we do now!

I think the children's ward at Wanganui hospital was in the old building, maybe behind those on the rise behind the TB isolation huts – now, the staff car-park. The long room had beds down each side, all filled with little kids obviously with various problems — and mostly fairly unhappy. One had his/her (not sure which) entire pelvis and legs encased in plaster as the doctors were apparently trying to slowly turn the child's feet around to face the front. As far as I could gather, they were originally facing straight outwards, or possibly even completely backwards – a kind of prehistoric reversion to our biological past. Evolution has played some strange tricks on our bodies over the aeons.

At the end of the ward above the entrance door was a bank of 5 coloured lights. These would mysteriously flash in various combinations from time to time — presumably summoning particular staff on urgent missions. How things had to be done before the days of radio pagers and cell phones!

As it turned out, my Sister was diagnosed with a cold. It was decided that she was precluded from having an anaesthetic until it cleared up; so she had to just wait there in bed for several days, while I went off for my operation.

The anaesthetic seemed to consist of a gauze mask placed over my face and a smelly liquid from a bottle sprinkled over it. Presumably that was ether, but it may have been chloroform — the latter is at least non-flammable, unlike the former which can be used as an engine starting fluid.

I woke up with the standard really sore throat and was mollified by being offered ice-cream. I was not allowed to go home after the normal period because I had a large blood clot kind of thing in my throat. Every day, the doctor would come and look to see if it had gone away, but it hadn't. After some days he got tired of waiting and took to the clot with a pair of forceps and broke it up.

Meanwhile, one time I had to go to the toilet; so got out of bed and wandered off there. I started feeling a bit light headed, but of course, didn't know what that presaged. Next thing I knew, I woke up lying on the floor in the cubical. Interesting – I wonder how I got here? I told a nurse about the incident later. From her reaction, I gather I was not supposed to get out of bed without permission. Discipline in hospitals was similar to the military in those days.

Many years later, my regular GP had a look in my throat and said that it looked as if my tonsils etc had been "ripped out". I gather he thought that modern surgical technique would have done a better job.

*That's all folks. Rod and the committee*