

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2014

NEWS AND VIEWS

St Matthews's school visit

St Mathews School visited us twice earlier this year. As they had never visited before, the first visit was a familiarization exercise to look over the place and to get an idea of what we have here. They then went away and had a think about what learning projects they could undertake when they came back on a more focused visit.

On their second trip they came armed with sketch pads and cameras. One group spent a lot of time upstairs in the cottage with their Headmaster, three or four of the older girls studied all the old clothing we have — upstairs in the Workshop and in the front room of the cottage. Meantime the younger boys seemed mainly interested in the military looking stuff in the Fox room — particularly the ammunition bandoliers and the wooden dummy Home Guard drill rifles.

Members meeting

Our recent members meeting was attended by around 15 members. It was a discussion about the local men who served in WW1. There was some interesting information about the men that came from the descendants of those men. Some of the families discussed were John and Gin Griffin, Angus McDonald, Raymond Coleman known as Toby and William Moss.

The Historical Society also welcomes more stories from other descendants of soldiers from our local area.

CALENDAR OF 2014



AGM/ Bi- Monthly gathering
Tuesday 6th of May

Where: MHS Archives Room,
Wellington Rd, Marton

When 1.30pm

Guest speaker to be confirmed

If anyone needs transport
please phone Maureen
3276104, Rod 3276099 or Pat
3276063.

Rangitikei Weekend is to be
held on the 17th and 18th of
May. We will be open from 10
till 3. If anyone is available to
help please phone Pat or
Maureen.

**Sponsor our newsletter! Only
\$20 per issue.**

SOCIETY UPDATES

Thanks to our volunteers

A big thanks to all involved in helping with research, village visits and with keeping the village tidy. Thanks to: Maureen, Pat, Franklin, Peter and Elaine, Kylie, Lynne and Bryan.

Research

We recently researched the soldiers who were patients at Brokenhurst Hospital after receiving wounds in Belgium or France. The information is for a centenary celebration in London. Many soldiers were cared for at a number of hospitals in southern England. We forwarded information on Lieut-colonel Charles F.D Cook who was a lawyer in the firm Fullerton-Smith, Miles & Cook from 1907-14. His home was on the site where the Edale rest home is today. A week later we received a reply from an ex local lady Jane Thomas (nee Anderson) the daughter of the late Vic and Jo Anderson. Jane is the President of the NZ Women's Association and also part of a group set up by the High Commission in London to research interesting stories of soldiers that recovered and returned to NZ after WW1. Many soldiers were in Brokenhurst, Walton on Thames and Codford hospitals.

Fact

They grow big pumpkins nowadays but in 1914 they grew very large Swedes. Mr James Griffin grew a swede weighing 40lbs and another 36lbs on his farm at Upper Tutaenui. These Swedes were on display in Palmerston North.

List of Donations

- China Teaset from Dawn and Richard Gudopp
- Turkish hat from WW1 from June Pullman
- Band Medals from Peter Ritter

HELP WANTED

Do you have any of the following items that you could donate to the Society?

- ⇒ Matching bedside tables
- ⇒ Lowboy chest of drawers for adults bedroom
- ⇒ Kitchen shelves
- ⇒ What-not display rack
- ⇒ Display rack (suitable for holding pamphlets)
- ⇒ Plates, Bowls, Cups and cutlery

Society membership

We would love to get some new members on board – so please mention Marton Historical Society to your friends and family. If they are interested, we can provide them with an information pack. If you have any ideas about recruiting new members, please let us know!

Rod's Reminiscences — Summer Holidays

Every year at Christmas holiday time, the Parkinson family packed up the Ford and embarked on their annual exodus to Tangimoana where they owned what we might call a “batch”, although I don't think they used that term.

I think the house had about two rooms, an open veranda along the front, no phone or electricity and no plumbing of any kind (except maybe a cold water tap fed from a water tank on the other side of the back wall). There was a wood fired cooking range in the main room and no doubt a candle or two for essential lighting after dark. The “outhouse” in the back garden operated by virtue of a large can under the wooden seat. I don't recall ever being initiated into the secret of how it got emptied.

The house is still there but the veranda has been covered in and it all looks quite a bit different.

The main channel of the Rangitikei River ran right by the town in those days and an anti-submarine net had been laid on the bank to help stop the river eating its way towards the town. There was a little creek with boat sheds along its bank. Some of these had little rail tracks from the shed down into the water.

Like Foxton, the main river channel no longer flows right past the town; so I suspect that boating there is not like it was.

The town had a good set of tennis courts and a children's playground had a most magnificent wooden slide – I don't recall a better one existing anywhere else in the district at the time. It was worth travelling to Tangimoana just to have a go on it. These all got a bit run down in later years and the slide became broken and un-useable. Welcome to the dawn of the age of vandalism.

Someone had a battery operated radio that was used to receive weather forecasts and so on. I remember asking how the radio got its information about what the weather was going to be, and was told it got it from out of the air. In retrospect, the informer was obviously referring to radio waves travelling through the air, but I thought they meant that the radio got its weather information directly from the atmosphere – like a barometer does. To a 4 year old, one explanation is as good as the next; however I then began to vaguely wonder how the radio got its news broadcasts.

Cars weren't the most reliable beasts in those days and something went wrong one time on the road to Tangimoana, south of Ohakea. Tools were fetched from wherever they were stashed in the vehicle, laid out for use on the running board and eventually the problem was fixed.

The journey continued, but a new problem seemed to appear – a sort of distant rattling noise. After a few miles the car was stopped for investigation of this new phenomenon. Oh Heck! The tools – or what was left of them – were still on the running board. We back-tracked a few miles to see what we could find of the ones that had fallen off, and found two or three, but some were never seen again.