



February 2021

Volume 5, Issue 1

Gore District Historical Society

The Bulletin

WELCOME

Hello members and friends,

2020 was unprecedented and Covid-19 cast a long shadow. However we were fortunate that in our corner of the world we were free to celebrate Christmas without restrictions.

Christmas came to New Zealand with the first British settlers. Christmas cakes in Britain began life as plum porridge to line people's stomachs after a day of religious fasting. Over time other fruits and honey were added and a pudding was created. By 13th century dried fruits, sugar and spices arrived in Britain and cakes similar to those of today emerged among the wealthy. The celebratory cakes were initially made for Twelfth Night, but in the 17th century the Puritan Government banned all the trappings of Christmas with the result that riots erupted in some areas. 18 years later Charles the second became King and restrictions ended. In late 19th century Queen Victoria banned Twelfth Night because some activities did not meet with Victorian moral standards. Confectioners lost revenue, so changed the cake to a Christmas cake. The first icing before technology led to sugar being refined, then spread on the cake, and returned to the oven to set. It looked like a frozen lake and was called 'icing'.

Let us make 2021 a year of optimism. Remember that life is like a jar of jalapeño peppers. What we do today may be a burning issue tomorrow.

Best Wishes for a wonderful year ahead.

Helen Seaton

President

GORE HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND THE HOKONUI HERITAGE RESEARCH CENTRE

Currently closed for redevelopment. Please make contact:

Telephone (via the Visitor Centre) - 03 203 9288

Email - heritage@goredc.govt.nz



Shopping Local

Remember to check out the wonderful array of goods and books celebrating our local history and what makes our district unique at the Gore Visitor Centre.



Where have
all the
dresses
gone?

Shrouded in
the upstairs
store



FROM THE MUSEUM

Work is almost complete with the packing down of the Win Hamilton Wing portion of the Museum. Conservator Laurence Le Ber and along with Rosemary Jackson Hunter have led the charge with help from John Dennison and Stephanie Herring.

All the exhibition objects have been recorded, packed and stored according to their conservation needs. Some have migrated to the Museum Store upstairs while more robust objects have found a home in the Maruawai Centre on one of the dozen or more shelves that John has built to accommodate the influx.

Laurence Le Ber packing one of the three domed collection objects on display. He custom made boxes to protect the delicate glass.



“Take care of our children. Take care of what they hear. Take care of what they see. Take care of what they feel. For how the children grow, so will the shape of Aotearoa” - Dame Whina Cooper



NZ SOCIETY OF GENEALOGISTS—GORE

The NZSG Gore monthly meetings include a speaker or a demonstration relating to family history / genealogical research. Visits to other repositories are a frequent highlight. The group welcomes those working on a genealogical / family history project, offering their support and assistance. Meetings: First Tuesday/month 7pm @ Gore Visitor Centre [Speaker/demonstration begins at 8pm].

The February meeting featured speaker Jill Wellford who recently published a family history on the Whittingham's, a prominent family in the brewing industry and in Gore. The focus of the meeting was on family heirlooms with examples and stories shared. These included an old 1938 scrapbook with Aunts and Uncles signatures, 1850 silver pocket watch, silver cruet set, Silver hair clasp, many photos 1909 diary, picture made of ancestors hair, brass tobacco tin given by Queen Mary to all soldiers fighting in WW1, two 44cm crocheted table clothes with a State Registered Mental Nurse badge.

Over the past months Bruce and the heritage team have moved the genealogical collection from upstairs in the Hokonui Heritage Research Centre to the Maruawai Centre, in a temporary space for the foreseeable future. Work is continuing on consolidating the collections. The majority of records are accessible on Genealogy Meeting Nights and on Tuesdays from 1.30-5pm. There remains no access to hard copies of *The Ensign*.

Please make an enquiry if you wish to access the materials outside of Genealogy Meeting nights heritage@goredc.govt.nz

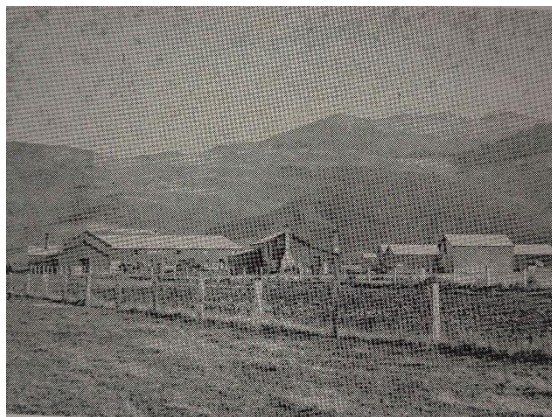


On the move! Bruce has created quick order out of the chaos of moving the genealogical materials to the Maruawai Centre.

HERITAGE MONTH—MARCH 2021

Southland's Heritage Month is almost upon us again with an exciting range of events and activities to get involved with across the province. See the next page for details of our annual bus tour and find a copy of the Heritage South pamphlet for all the exciting activities across the region.

With the Museum closed this year, we have opted to hold a series of talks, co-opting in voices of those who are involved with the development of the Maruawai Centre.



MONDAY'S AT MARUAWAI

Monday 1 March @ 7pm • Costume Packing Workshop

Join us in observing the expertise of Conservator, Laurence Le Ber, and Rosemary Jackson-Hunter as they pack away one of the costumes previously displayed in the Genge Gallery. Pick up some tips on how to care for your treasured textiles as we go as well as learning some of the histories behind the costumes previously displayed in the Gallery.

Monday 8 March @ 7pm • Gore Arts & Heritage Precinct Development

Discover what the future holds for our Arts & Heritage Precinct as Jim Geddes shares his vision on where our next steps will take us in looking at our rich heritage.

Monday 15 March @ 7pm • History Resources for Schools

Educators are invited to join local heritage institutions and providers to learn of the rich and diverse local resources available to support them in building a strong local history curriculum.

Monday 22 March @ 7pm • Our Built Heritage

Join us for a screening of *The Last Tour*, a film that follows retired architect and former Maitua man, Mick Hesselin, as he shares the stories and the significance of former buildings in Invercargill's CBD. Mick will also join us in person to share some of his knowledge on our local buildings.

Monday 29 March @ 7pm • A Taste of Maruawai

Concluding the month, prepare your tastebuds for a culinary journey through time and space as we explore our heritage through local kai and discover the stories that come with them. *For catering purposes, please register with heritage@goredc.govt.nz or call 203 9288 by Wednesday 24 March.*

Entry to these events is by koha.
For enquiries, please contact heritage@goredc.govt.nz

RABBIT CANNING

Coming on the annual bus tour? Did you know there were Rabbit Canning factories at both Croydon and Maitua?

English rabbits were released in Bluff in 1862 as a food source and sport for hunters. By the 1870s, the rabbit population had exploded in Southland. Farmers struggled to stop them from eating grass meant for sheep. One solution to the rabbit problem was to eat the eater. The Gore Meat Works began rabbit preserving at Croydon Siding in April 1890. This was a tasty solution to the rabbit problem as well as providing employment and income for Gore. Some trapped rabbits while others worked in the factory skinning rabbits, preparing the meat, and making and labelling the cans for export. Within months, the Gore factory sent its first shipment of 1000 cases of tinned rabbit to London. The Gore factory paid sixpence per pair of rabbits to hunters, processing 5000-6000 rabbits a day. After 1900, the Croydon Siding rabbit canning works closed as the Maitua Freezing Works began exporting frozen rabbit carcasses.

DIARY DATES

Gore District Historical Society Room Meeting

15 Feb—Jane Boreham @ Medical Alarms

15 Mar Bus tour

12 Apr —tba

10 May —tba

14 Jun —tba

12 Jul —tba

Other dates:

March—Heritage Month
(see inside cover for more)

28 Mar—Gala Day, Hokonui Pioneer Village & Museum

GOING LOCAL—GDHS Annual Bus Tour

It's time to uncover our very local stories. On 31 March 1971 the Waimea train line closed to the public. So with a nod to it and the Kingston Flyer the tour will head to Mandeville to see the real thing and explore along the way industries of our past including flour milling and rabbit canning. Explore the rich heritage of Dolamore Park with expert Vic Herring and enjoy a catered lunch before heading south where coal and gold tell ore the story alongside villages that now only exist as names. The tour will conclude with a visit to Waimumu Downs to discover plans to enrich our environmental heritage. Limited numbers so register early.

⇒ Monday 15 March

⇒ Meet at the Maruawai Centre, Norfolk Street, Gore @ 9.30am

⇒ Cost \$35—catered lunch included

⇒ For enquiries, please contact 203 9288 or email heritage@goredc.govt.nz

⇒ Registration—Payment is required by 8 March. Please deliver to the Gore Visitor Centre (at the Maruawai Centre, Norfolk St, Gore) with following written clearly on the envelope:

- Your name
- Number of attendees
- Contact phone number

*From the
Ensign files
8 May 1971*

Water Mattress Made By Gore Firm

The first of its kind in New Zealand. The new water bed, an American invention, a prototype of which has been constructed by the Gore firm of Potters Supplies. To inflate the "bed" one has only to use ordinary tap water. To bring it to the proper heat an electric blanket

should be placed on it for a period. Already enquiries from outside sources are being made for the invention, which is constructed of virgin vinyl. Bert Shields demonstrated just how easy it is to get the water bed into its proper form.

ABOUT US

Gore District Historical Society

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(via Visitor Centre)

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Curator—Gore Historical Museum

Would you like to learn more about our past?
Visit historical sites in Southland & Otago?

Join us for our monthly Room Meetings where:

- Guest speakers regularly join us to share their historical knowledge
- We share our own local historical knowledge
- We explore the district on guided bus trips
- We visit historical sites and related events
- We close with a traditional cup of tea and a natter

Meetings - All Welcome

2pm - second Monday of the Month

St Andrews Church Hall

Contact: Helen Seaton 208 1379
Research Centre 203 9288 (via Visitor Centre)