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PROSPECT

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Matareka

by Mavis Fénelon

During the 1970s, a favourite walk for Epsom people was to meander up Golf Road and into the park. In those days we were an 'old fashioned' family street with toys, bicycles, trolleys, dinghies, vegetable plots and all the usual paraphernalia of that time bedecking our gardens. Soon to be added to all that would be the 40-foot launch *Matareka*; the intention being that she would be back in the water within twelve months. Neighbour David Cole predicted three years, but it was not until ten years later that she was finally completed and hauled back to Okahu Bay to be re-launched.

Matareka was built in 1907 by the famous Auckland boat builder, Arch Logan. In 1903 Mr William Spencer Whitley, a merchant in the city, commissioned Arch Logan to build a 35-foot launch to be named *Matareka*, but four years later he replaced her with the current 40-foot *Matareka*. She has been described as Arch Logan's finest launch and cost £1,014.16s. In 1982 when Jack Taylor, of Pope Marine, surveyed *Matareka* he told us he remembered her when she had the original red plush upholstery, and gilt inlay in the wooden panels lining the cabin. In his survey he made the comment that he considered she still had another 100 years ahead of her. The double-skinned hull was constructed of heart kauri with carvel planking on the outside and diagonal planking on the inside, all supported on longitudinal stringers, thus affording the required strength without the need for ribs.

The Whitleys were a Parnell family, and when *Matareka* was launched on 19 September 1907 she was christened by Mr Whitley's two-year-old granddaughter Reka, who in later years resided at Selwyn Village. She used two bottles of 1895 French Champagne from Reims — Charles Heidsieck and Roussillon & Co — and we still have the necks of the broken bottles tied with crumbling red and white ribbon. Reka's brother, Roland Whitley (the AA man who visited the schools), was a personal friend of ours and very kindly gave us the heavy china plates, cups, mugs and jugs which were used on board, and bore *Matareka*'s name. He also gave us an enormous Winkelmann photo, in

lasted. Unfortunately even fluoridation has not been able to counterbalance the damage done by the current fad for constantly sipping 'energy drinks' high in sugar. Today only 42% of primary and intermediate schools have a fixed on-site clinic and many are not designed for modern dentistry. In some areas children may wait up to three years to see a 'dental therapist'. Their numbers have dropped from 860 to 500 since 1990, while pay issues have prompted many dentists to pull out of free dental schemes.

In recent years, '#17 Kelly Street' has been in the news as the Institute of Environmental Science & Research Ltd whose Air Quality group was based on that site, decided to sell it. The Minister consented to the sale on 22 December 1998 subject to various conditions, and a report dated 10 June 2003 analysed the sale process. It starts by saying 'the property was known to be contaminated with mercury — a legacy of its earlier use as a Dental School', and goes on to say, 'The full extent of the contamination did not begin to emerge until after the ESR engaged Tonkin & Taylor, consultant engineers, to undertake an independent assessment of the contamination. The work began in December 2000 . . .' Two hundred and forty soil samples were tested both in New Zealand and Australia. Almost half of them showed levels of mercury more than double the 6.6mg/kg set by the ARC. Remediation of the site was necessary before it could be developed, and this was done in late 2004.

But can the training school really be blamed for this contamination of the site? Certainly mercury was a component of fillings. The earlier copper amalgams had to be heated, but later the silver filings were just ground up with mercury in a mortar and pestle. All trainees were made aware of its hazards and its usage was strictly monitored. Any accidental spill was neutralised by scattering 'flowers of sulphur'. It is hard to see how even a spill could make its way through lino-clad floorboards to contaminate the soil below in sufficient quantities to constitute a hazard.

SOURCES

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similar to the American 1957 Airotor drill, the predecessor of the modern high-speed drills.

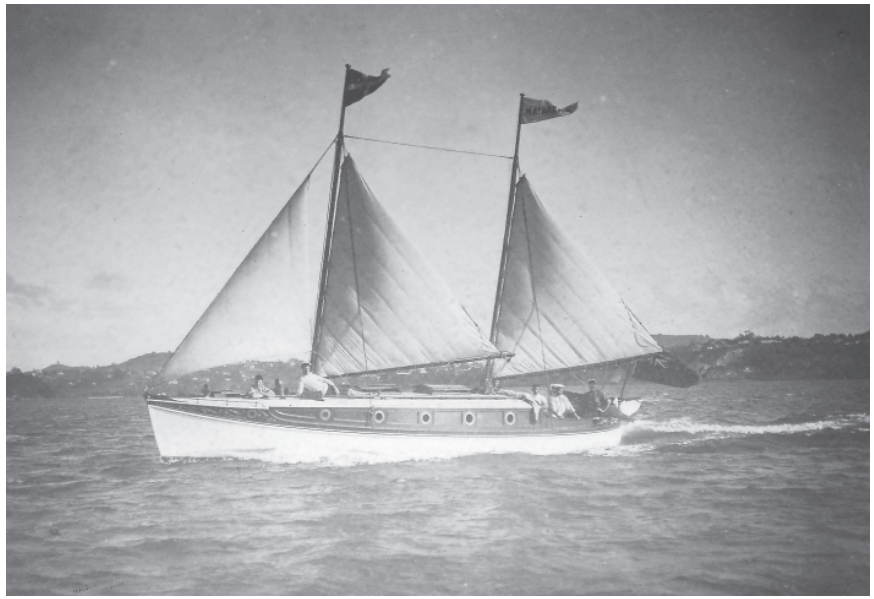
Additional training schools were opened in Mt Eden, Auckland, in 1952 and Christchurch in 1959. They offered a two-year training course. The first year was spent on theory — anatomy, physiology, hygiene — and on familiarisation with real teeth. They used extracted teeth set in plaster 'jaws' to practise their drilling skills. To familiarise themselves with the proportions, anatomy and arrangement of teeth, the students carved triple lifesize sets of teeth in soap. It was only in the second year that they examined, filled and extracted the teeth of real patients — under close supervision. They were also lectured in how to give lessons in the schools on dental hygiene. A bus would arrive regularly at local schools and several dozen children get on board for a trip to the clinic for checkups, etc.

In the first year the Mt Eden clinic had students who had already completed their first year training in Wellington. The number eventually climbed from 20 to 80 students. There were typically four or five dentists and about eight tutors on the staff. At the end of the two-year course, those who had passed all their theoretical and practical exams were awarded a Diploma in Dental Nursing.

The students were paid a very basic salary. Those boarding in one of the two hostels — in Ngauruhoe Street (later Metropolitan College) or at 'The Glade' in Almorah Road — had their board money deducted in advance. Most of them walked or biked to the clinic.

The school proved to be a victim of its own success. By the early 1970s the School Dental Service had succeeded in treating all children. A 1973 World Health Organisation investigation showed that tooth loss had been reduced almost to zero. The education programmes in schools, the introduction of fluoride in toothpaste and/or water and the work of the dental nurses had produced such a major reduction in dental decay that the demand for additional dental nurses declined. The intake numbers were reduced in all three training schools and then in the early 1980s, both the Auckland and Christchurch schools were closed.

It would be nice to be able to say that that happy state of affairs has



Above: Matareka *off Mission Bay, 3 May 1908*

Below: The Whitleys in the cockpit of Matareka*, c.1908; on the left is William Whitley, and next to him Henry Winkelmann*

its heavy old frame, taken off Mission Bay when there was not a house in sight. Unfortunately, they had burnt the plans of *Matareka* only six months before we bought her, but did pass onto us her entire complement of flags which included her pennants for the NZ Power Boat Association and her role as Flag Ship for the St George's Rowing Club. John Goulding, also a resident of Golf Road, has an interesting collection of medals which his family won in the St George's races. Two other people who took an interest in her were 'Sailor' Edgecumbe, a well-known identity in the boating world, and Mr Widdicombe, who collated the Winkelmann collection for the museum and kindly gave us some spare photographs of *Matareka*.

In the 1960s our family enjoyed the adventure of spending Easter holidays at Ponui Island. It was great fun driving through to Maraetai in a car 'packed to the gunnels', and meeting with Ernest Chamberlin who would take us, and other guests, aboard his boat the *Ponui II* across to the island where we would disembark in the dark, and often in the rain, and land on the shore via a dinghy. We slept in the original cottage used by the Chamberlin family when they arrived on the island in 1853 and before they had built their homestead, which pre-cut and ready to assemble, had come with them from England on a sailing ship. In our Epsom garden we have a rose bush grown from a cutting of the Souvenir de Malmaison which also came on the ship with them and which, until recently, grew outside the old homestead.

We shared the use of the cottage with Ruth Chamberlin's parents, Dr and Mrs Warren of Pentland Avenue, Mt Eden, and Dr and Mrs Maidment who lived in the university house in Fern Avenue. Ruth's brother, Dr Alec Warren (Medical Superintendent at Auckland Hospital) and his family, stayed at Wharera which was twenty minutes walk around the rocks at low tide, or a considerably longer walk over the hills when the tide was high. One afternoon, Louis, Raoul, Sue-Ellen, Catherine and I walked around to Wharera when it was all closed up and peeped through the heavy green venetian blinds. The interior was incredibly beautiful with rimu match lining, built-in kauri furniture, a heavy oak dining table and sideboard, and the most wonderful fireplace. Built on the top of a hill, it had a commanding view past

Dental school nurses' hostel in Almorah Road, late 1950s School Dental Service

Dental clinics were established at many schools. The clinic set up at Maungawhau School in 1931 is today, with the swimming pool, now the oldest remaining building on site. The dental nurse taught such basics as how to clean your teeth. I can still remember being shown the 'Bertie Germ' films about 1946, and being told that a mixture of salt and soda was much better for teeth than toothpastes such as Colgate.

Several generations of children suffered regular visits to the 'murder house' as clinics were evocatively known. My own memories are inextricably linked to the smell of the little meths burner used for softening the old copper amalgam blocks, and to the slow speed of the old drills where every rotation seemed to vibrate right though your body. Electric power drills had been introduced around 1914 and operated at approximately 3,000rpm. Sir John Walsh, Dean of the Otago School of Dentistry from 1946–71, obtained a patent in 1950 for a drill operating at 60,000rpm but local government apathy and commercial lack of interest prevented it ever reaching production. It was in fact very

to gum disease — or the local water plus the strains of another pregnancy. Certainly the ensuing baby — my mother Olive Beryl Stubbs — recalled that her own earliest memories were of toothache. It seemed that a dentist only had to touch one of her teeth with a probe and it would crumble. Her second teeth proved no better and she had a partial plate by the age of twelve! When she started pupil teaching at sixteen, she spent her first month's pay on getting a full set of false teeth — and to the day she died reckoned it was the best money she ever spent. Her case was not unique.

By international standards, New Zealand dental health was poor, and the appalling state of many mouths was revealed by the inspection of recruits in World War One. Between a quarter and a third were rejected for service because of dental defects! In 1915 the NZ Dental Corps was formed under Thomas Hunter (later Sir Thomas) to travel overseas. Their work on plastic surgery and jaw injuries greatly enhanced the reputation of New Zealand dentists and proved the value of a properly organised and funded state dental scheme. After much debate on costs, needs and principles, it was decided to set up a national system to care for the dental needs of primary school age children.

In 1921 the School Dental Nurse scheme began with Sir Thomas Hunter KBE as the first director. It had been argued that it would take too long to train enough dentists to treat all children while at the same time it would be a waste of their comprehensive training to concentrate on the limited field of child treatment. On the other hand, to train women for only two years would cost less initially and they would be paid less when working. They were also considered temperamentally more suited to deal with children.

Girls were trained to give limited treatment to schoolchildren. In practice this involved examining teeth and performing fillings as well as extracting teeth when necessary, and teaching oral hygiene. They would refer serious dental problems to appropriate experts and keep records of treatment which followed pupils from school to school. This was a new, even revolutionary concept and made such a marked contribution to general health that it attracted considerable overseas interest and was copied in other countries.

Waiheke right up the gulf to the harbour bridge. It was a dream, but in such an isolated position was not an easy place for anyone to maintain. Imagine our amazement when in 1969 Ruth phoned us to ask if we would like to shift into Wharera and use it as our permanent holiday home. In later years our children would tell people we enjoyed the life so much that our only reason for coming back to the city was so they could attend school. It was difficult living and had it not been for Louis's farming background and engineering abilities, and Ernest's constant support, it probably would have been impossible to sustain. We painted the house twice during our time there, once with the help of a number of chaps from the Devonport Naval Base who, along with Raoul and Sue-Ellen, were studying for their Engineering degrees at the University of Auckland. Even they were amazed at the effort required to transport all our goods by boat and then cart them to the top of the hill. When our generator failed we turned to oil lamps and candles, but in the early 1990s when our wet-back range, fuelled by pinecones, started to fall into disrepair we decided the day had come for us to bid farewell to our home on the hill.

Wharera had been built in the 1920s by William Goodfellow (later Sir William Goodfellow) who had married Irene Chamberlin. When he was away on his long trips to Britain she would take their six children home to Ponui and live at Wharera. During the time Wharera was being built, Ernest Chamberlin (whose mother was a Goodfellow) was attending Auckland Grammar and living with his Granny Goodfellow at 30 Golf Road, next door to the Laird family whose son Geoff was also at Auckland Grammar. Norman Thorne lived across the road but attended King's College. Ernest and Geoff spent holidays at Ponui and helped to haul materials from the beach, up the steep narrow path, to the Wharera building site.

The realisation dawned on us that if we were to spend considerable time on Ponui we could not expect Ernest to take us backwards and forwards — though he very generously did so for more than a decade — so we set about looking for a suitable craft. Meg and Howard Pitcher who lived in Fern Avenue suggested we should buy a launch, and Owen Cleave at 24 Golf Road backed up that suggestion. Louis and I spent

interminable days walking the marinas at Westhaven, getting a feel for the various launch designs.

Armed with some idea of our requirements we proceeded to look at 'boats for sale' and after some weird experiences checking out what was advertised, came upon just the very thing. It was a double-ender which had been in Russell for some time and was being converted to a cray-fishing boat. Engine mounts were of heart kauri timber from the original Russell Post Office and the cabin was the old wheelhouse from the *Kewpie Too*. She had been brought to Auckland and moored in Island Bay, past the Chelsea sugar works. From the deck up she was the ugliest boat on the harbour, but oh, that hull! Information gleaned from 'old salts' of the Auckland boating fraternity convinced us she was an Arch Logan, so having negotiated a sale subject to inspection, she was put on the grids at Westhaven for a marine survey. Every second person who went past asked if she was an Arch Logan and certainly, it was the Arch Logan hull which clinched the deal.

Louis working on Matareka *while the family looks on, 1972*

than pulled, while the use of vulcanite for dentures meant that properly fitting ones were possible for the first time. The use of nitrous oxide as a safe anaesthetic began here in 1874 although it was not in common usage as it could only be used safely for three minutes.

According to T.W.H. Brooking, 'By 1900, the former toothpullers had become highly proficient mechanics', and the number of practising dentists increased steadily. When the first Dental Act was passed in 1880 it was estimated that there were about 50 in the whole country. By 1901 there were 282 registered. This increase reflects the growth of the population, particularly in the cities, as well as a significant percentage increase in the number of women.

> The increasing life expectancy, which was already higher than in most of the rest of the world, put the loss of teeth into a different perspective. Someone who doesn't expect to outlive their teeth by very much regards extraction with a different attitude to someone looking forward to their Biblical threescore years and ten. As the standard of living rose, dental treatment became less of a luxury while concern with cosmetics made uniform false teeth more desirable than uneven real ones.

A Dental Board had been set up in 1882 but proved to be an advisory body with very little power beyond making sure that the examination for registration maintained a reasonable standard and provided an adequate test of biological knowledge as well as mechanical skills. Some progressively minded dentists formed a New Zealand Dental Association in 1889 with membership limited to those duly qualified and entitled to be placed on the Dentists' Register of New Zealand, but by 1891 it had faded away. That year, a new Act set up four Dental Boards but only those in Wellington and Dunedin ever operated, and in 1904 another Act put control of dental training and registration back under the University of New Zealand. In 1907 a Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree became available from the School of Dentistry in Otago.

It was at this time that my mother's family came to New Zealand. Family tradition says that when my grandmother — Teresa Mary Stubbs — arrived in Hamilton, she was 33 years old with perfect teeth. In little more than a year, she had false teeth. This may have been owing

A victim of its own success

by Jeanette Grant

The articles in the papers lately over the contamination and eventual use of the Edenvale Road/Kelly Street site, set me thinking about the days when there was a dental nurse training school there.

One hundred and fifty years ago, toothache and halitosis were the common fate of most people and teeth were in fact regarded as a liability to be dispensed with if they caused unnecessary pain.

Dentistry before the 1870s was primitive. Training was by apprenticeship only, as in any other trade, and essentially dentists extracted teeth. They were not alone in this as it was a service also provided by chemists, doctors, blacksmiths, quacks — or in fact anyone with a strong pair of wrists. A visit to a dentist was avoided as long as possible as there were no local anaesthetics yet available and early drills were operated by hand. No wonder that doses of alcohol or laudanum were preferred by many.

In New Zealand, registration for both chemists and dentists was introduced in 1880 but the first Dental Register of 1883 included all those already in practice. Unhygienic and painful treatments still abounded, even though as early as 1863 Alfred Boot of Dunedin had written a pamphlet on the preservation of teeth in which he advocated regular cleaning and scaling from early childhood. His ideas that cleanliness and continued care were preferable to cure were remarkably progressive, and fortunately he and a few other competent and progressive dentists trained a significant number of others.

They were greatly aided by several major technological innovations which appeared around the 1870s. John Greenwood had invented a treadle drill based on his mother's spinning wheel in 1790 but foot operated drills did not come into general use for almost a century. Then for the first time it was possible to drill and fill cavities on a large scale, while the adjustable dentist's chair greatly increased the range of operations which a dentist could perform. The introduction of new and cheaper filling materials such as gutta percha and various amalgams meant New Zealanders could afford to have their teeth filled rather

Because of the huge amount of work ahead, we decided the most sensible thing would be to bring her home to Golf Road and set her on chocks in the driveway. When she arrived, the children in the street gathered to see her, and while Dave Wyllie of Boat Haulage backed her carefully through the gate, Robin Staub took a spade and quickly cleared away our ivy-covered Easter Bunny stump where Easter eggs were to be found, but which was now about to foul the prop. It is incredible the changes which need to take place for such undertakings. For ten years we lived with a workbench, circular saw and 100 boxes of assorted tools in our sitting room, and the Staub family coped with 40 feet of boat under construction. Although a long haul and very hard work, it was also great fun, but it was only through the amazing forbearance of our children, the unfailing support of our parents Florence and Leonard Cooper and Vera Fénelon, and the friends who helped us, that the final result was achieved. We ended up using the *Ponui II* cabin design, with its easy access from bow to stern up and over the cabin top, in the event of our needing to attend to a dinghy or barge under tow.

Chris Laird (Geoff's son, living at 28 Golf Road) and George Tattersall (from Beckenham Avenue) helped tremendously, and other friends, including Harry Goodfellow, Richard Ross (who had lived in Gardner Road and was married to Marion Goodfellow), Ron Haydon, Robert Alford, Mr Grattan, Brian Marino, Ken Hogan, John Arlott, David Cole, and Billy Apple, also contributed in time and effort.

In 1982, neighbours gathered in Golf Road to see her depart for Okahu Bay where we were met by a large group of friends. Chris was instrumental in getting her under way, and before long numerous people had enjoyed a short run from Okahu Bay to St Heliers Bay, including Reka and Roland Whitley.

Hundreds of people will have wonderful memories of their time spent on *Matareka* — children's birthday parties held on Rangitoto, picnics at Motuihe, Anniversary Days on the harbour, scuba diving for scallops in the Firth of Thames, joy rides around the inner harbour, adventurous holidays spent with us on Ponui, and that one day, every Easter, when there was a huge gathering of people at Wharera —some of whom had arrived in their own boats, some we had collected from

Matareka *at Ponui, 1982*

Ammunition Bay, others already on the island — to join in the shared lunch which was spread out on the old oak table. *Matareka* has spent most of her time cruising the gulf but she made a return trip to Russell when we spent a holiday in Kura Beale's bay with Jill and Den Woodward and Lorraine and Tom Marshall and families. On another occasion we headed for Coromandel, spent a night in Kennedy Bay riding out a storm, and negotiated the sandbar at Whangapoua to visit the Bell Family, Betty and Noel Barclay and Shona and Bill Caughey and family.

In conclusion I quote from Ronald Carter's book *Little Ships*: 'Take care of her, you fortunate owner of a Logan craft, for you are in possession of something very beautiful, very staunch, and very fast; and as the years roll on, an ageing masterpiece which, unfortunately, with the passage of time will some day vanish for ever.'

SOURCES

Carter, Ronald, *Little Ships: the story of the birth and growth of New Zealand's yachting fleet from the earliest recorded events to the year 1940,* Reed, Wellington, 1944.

During World War Two all footwear was in short supply, and department store George Court Ltd offered the opportunity to have existing shoes rebuilt, a process that involved 'more than just repairing'. In those days of scarcity, coupons were needed to buy shoes, with women's footwear requiring two coupons, but men's shoes requiring three. It was always a mystery to our family that in the early 1940s, when scarcity and rationing were part of everyday life, a new pair of shoes belonging to my father was stolen from under his bed one evening during the days of the blackout in Mt Eden. Those were also of course the times when the key was always left in the front door as a regular practice!

Department stores continued to offer shoe repair facilities. In the mid-1950s I remember taking my favourite 'Robin Mond' black suede, court shoes to be re-soled at Milne & Choyce Ltd who would have contracted repairs out rather than attended to the work themselves. Alas, such was our conformity in dress and shoe styles in the 1950s that the shoes came back definitely not a pair! Though both the same size, one was definitely much the worse for wear. Despite my concern and protest, nothing could be done or proved, and I never felt the same about those shoes again. I know that Mr Wheaton would never have mixed pairs of shoes up and nor would Col today. Shoes are like twins that deserve respect for their interdependence and shared lives. They belong together — like pikelets and like rubber heels.

We certainly hope that Col will not be like Baba Mustafa who had to 'cobble all night and cobble all day' to make a living, and we trust that although none of his family plan to take up the trade, he may long continue to be our specialist cobbler in Mt Eden. I absolutely trust my soles to him.

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Interview with Colin Wigg.
'The Sole of Newmarket', *The Aucklander*, 6 February 2006, p.10.
Brown, J. Edward, 'Shoes to Last', *New Zealand Memories*, 58, February/March 2006, p.33.
Franklin, E.C., *Mount Eden's First Hundred Years,* Auckland, Mt Eden Borough Council, 1956.

In some circles these days, especially for young people, it's not cool to polish shoes and look after the leather. As an older generation well knows, if shoes are given a good polish with the appropriate leather dressing even before they are worn for the first time, and regularly thereafter, the leather is protected and less liable to be scuffed and to need attempts at remedial work by a shoe repairer later.

The endless cycle of fashion plays its part too in ensuring visits to the cobbler, for those stiletto heels wear down quickly, or snap, and need replacing. Knee-length boots sometimes need taking in at the seams so that they fit snugly. Buckles need re-sewing. Bags too, are repaired — catches replaced, straps and handles reattached.

Although shoe repairs were the essential business of cobblers, home repairs were fairly common too. Visits to Mr Wheaton were a regular feature of life for our family, but my father in fact performed many half-soling and re-heeling jobs for us himself in the days when a new pair of school shoes was needed each year. He painstakingly cut out the leather for worn-out soles and worn-down heels, sewed the new soles with waxed thread, and attached the new heels on to the shoes; for this task he used a heavy iron last that held the shoe firmly in place as he worked. Hardware or ironmongers' shops, shoe shops and chain stores sold shoe repair leather, brass tacks, steel tacks and heel and toe plates. Green and brown leather, the former known as 'green hide', were sold in pieces. The green variety was generally agreed to be harder wearing and to last longer, although it was very hard to work with, according to Col. I recall those greenish soles being rather slippery to walk on when one's shoes were newly repaired. Unfortunately, I don't think the hours of work my father put into our footwear was particularly appreciated or even acknowledged at the time, but I still have that shoe-last in my kitchen, and remember his labour with gratitude now.

For those who were not prepared or skilled to be 'home-cobblers', there were rubber soles and heels, sold with the appropriate glue, and a scraper to roughen the old leather, so that the new rubber soles would hold fast. My father-in-law would say with a smile as he stuck two pikelets, butter-side together, for a satisfying mouthful, that 'like rubber heels they go best in pairs' and that was, of course, how the soles and heels were sold.

Matareka

To Catherine

We bought this craft when you were two
Little knowing the work to do
But thirty odd years and a life-time on
We think of all those good times gone.

Ten years in the drive
When daddy did strive
To restore that fair craft
People thought he was daft!

Then came that great day
When she was away
And with pride family Whitley
Joined us all at Orakei.

But her place really lay
In that special wee bay
Where our hearts were by far
At our home, 'Wharera'.

Through seas of calm or waves so wild
She ploughed to Ponui when you were a child
Then, unloading the gear, her bow on the shore
We climbed the steep path as we'd done before.

Those magical days will never fade
For souls are entrenched in the life that we made
Midst the grandeur, the freedom, the hills, sky and space
Of that haven we made our own special place.

Matareka will soon be one hundred years old
She will outlive us all, so we have been told
Her elegant hull the Gulf seas will ride
For her builder Arch Logan, in a tribute of pride.

So thanks to you
And Raoul and Sue
For all the work that you have done
To help her another hundred to run.

Mavis Fénelon

Janet and Greenwoods Corner

by Jim Millar

My wife, Janet, was born in December 1936 while her parents, Henry and Elsie Cooper, lived in Pukehana Avenue. When she was quite young, the family shifted to a rather bigger house in Liverpool Street, the property backing on to the tennis courts of the Fairholme Club. As a child she remembers sitting on the back fence, looking enviously at the players, but not allowed to join in until she was older. Subsequently, she achieved some local distinction when, together with her father who was an Auckland cricket and hockey representative, she won the senior club mixed doubles championship. Championship tennis was to become her main sporting interest and she has enjoyed playing and watching the game until the present day. She represented Auckland University in her student days as well as Waiata Tennis Club, where she served as secretary, and later president.

From her home in Liverpool Street she was able to walk or bike to school: from 1942–7 to Royal Oak Primary; in 1948–9 to Manukau Intermediate; and from 1950–4 to Epsom Girls' Grammar School where she was a prefect in her final year. She was in Standard 2 (now Year 4) when the Second World War ended but can still remember the days of food and petrol rationing (although they did not own a car until 1954). There was an air raid shelter in the next door neighbour's back garden and practice drills at school, when everyone had to evacuate the buildings and shelter in the ditch round the perimeter of the bottom field. This was rather a light-hearted exercise as far as the children were concerned but emphasised the possibility of attack once the Japanese entered the war.

Also there were holiday visits by train, or with an aunt and uncle who lived in Ponsonby and possessed a car, to farming grandparents at Kohekohe near Waiuku, and a farming aunt and uncle who lived at Toko near Stratford, or 'townie' shopkeeper relatives in Tauranga. Blackberry-picking along the roadsides of Mt Roskill was enjoyed. There was a far closer relationship between town and country in those days and comments from those living south of the Bombay Hills that

Shoppe'. It is firmly set in the traditional ways of the trade. Col employs the same machinery and methods that were used by his father before him. As well as the major task of repairs, he still enjoys making sturdy, comfortable leather shoes and slippers for men; these are sold to a small clientele as a sideline of the business, but he thinks that particular hobby may finish soon. With many shoe stores and a shoe repair outlet currently in every shopping mall, the days of small, suburban, speciality stores and services are heavily challenged.

Col outside his shop, 1980s Photo: Colin Wigg

Other things have changed too. There is of course the obvious fact that shoes now are generally cheaper, both in price and in construction, and therefore more 'disposable'. Although fewer people have their shoes repaired, some, having bought expensive shoes or a particularly comfortable pair, want to have their wear prolonged beyond one season and have them re-soled. Twice as much synthetic material and rubber, rather than leather, is used to replace soles and heels, yet some people still request leather, which is not nearly as long-wearing as modern synthetic materials.

Metal heel and toe plates are a thing of the past. Nailed to shoes 'fore and aft' to prevent wear, many of us still remember Kirby's pert advertisement for non-slip heel and toe plates which used to feature during the interval at local cinemas; but the firm disappeared a long time ago. Now rubber half-moon 'plates' perform the same function and are much quieter than those tapping metal affairs which were very expensive for Kirbys to import.

and shoe polish, he was a kindly, grey-haired man of few words, his deafness being attributed by my father to Mr Wheaton's service as a soldier in World War One. The smell of leather, and the thunder of the heavy industrial sewing and buffing machines operating out the back of the small dark shop, together with the thud of the leather punch and hammer, was interrupted by our loud ringing of the bell for attention. The ranks of mended shoes lay together in pairs on the shelves behind the counter, polished and somewhat battered and creased, shaped and stretched by interaction with determined and busy feet. Hardly a glimpse of any of the alternative colours of today's fashion, but everywhere the ubiquitous black and brown leather. Wrapped in newspaper and string, (brown paper was a later luxury), and carried back home, they were immediately restored to active duty again.

Today, Epsom and Mt Eden have two famous shoe repair shops just over their borders — the lone-star 'Shoe Sheriff' in his hold-out position in Newmarket, who advertises that the shop has been on Broadway 'since 1945'. It is now run by Peter Croad, who has been in the business since the 1970s and is looking forward to having some new neighbouring businesses built around him again; the other is Gemmell's in Symonds Street, also well known.

But we are delighted to record that we still have our very own cobbler. Colin Wigg of The Cobble Shoppe, now at 315 Dominion Road, Mt Eden (he recently moved next door from 313) is the last remaining exemplar of those traditional boot-makers and shoe repairers who operated in the Eden and Epsom districts. Thirty years ago his father John, who had been apprenticed to the trade, bought the business of C.G. Nicholl, boot & shoe repairers — formerly, saddlers. In 1972 they were advertising themselves at 313 Dominion Road as stockists of 'Monarch Doctor Last' shoes, a specialist line, which was then made in the South Island and sold only through selected boot-makers.

Colin was a lad of 13 or 14 when the shop was purchased, and when he left school, his Dad, rather than letting him opt for the alternative of going on the dole, insisted that he work in the shop. He's been there ever since, having learned 'on the job'. After he took over from his father about 20 years ago, the shop has become known throughout the district as 'Col's Cobble

'JAFAs' did not know anything other than what went on in Auckland were certainly not common if, indeed, they were made at all.

Greenwoods Corner was the focal point for all the family's basic shopping needs. Apart from three buildings, one a grocer on the corner of Empire Road and the other two a grocer and a fruit shop on either side of Ngaroma Road corner, all of the shops that she knew as a child were built in the period between the Great War and the mid-1930s. Just after the Second World War the Ngaroma Road grocery shop (Parry's) had been taken over and converted into a furniture store. By the 1940s there were three groceries, all belonging to different 'chains'. Self Help had taken over from Albert French on the Empire Road corner; a little further towards Greenwoods Corner was Marriott's; and on the opposite side of Manukau Road was a Blue and White store. There were two butcheries, the AMC next to Self Help, and opposite a branch of Hellaby's, managed for many years by Ray Carlyon. Next to Doug Drake's fruit shop was Jack Inwood, the stationer, who also operated the post office. It was not until the late 1950s that a new brick post office was built, set back from the street opposite Empire Road to service the community for the next 40 years or so. Then it was closed and a more limited facility returned to the stationer's, which had passed through several ownerships during that period. Beyond the post office site were two more shops of special appeal: a fish shop and a lolly shop which often had intriguing displays. Because money was not that plentiful she was unable to make many purchases there. However, there were occasions when one or other member of the family had to visit Dr Gillot's surgery in the lovely old house next door.

Jan remembers Mr Hawken, the chemist, who established his business in the early 1920s, as well as Mr Leach's bike shop, a very important operation since cycling was a fundamental aspect of life in those days, especially for schoolchildren. Mr Watson's shoe repairing business; Mr Nelson's drapery; and Daya's fruit shop — all of these were on the western side of Manukau Road running down towards Pah Road. A 'new' block of shops was built in the mid-1930s, the frontages set back from the line of the older shops, no doubt because some forward-thinking council officer envisaged the future need for wider streets.

Particularly memorable in this group was Annie Chamber's dairy where Janet would go with her father on Saturday evenings to be joined by many other 'locals' as they awaited the delivery of the 'pink paper', the forerunner of the *8 O'clock*, eagerly sought because it contained the results of, and commentary on, Saturday's sports events.

So, along with school, the local tennis club and (a ten minute walk away towards Greenlane) the Gardner Road Presbyterian Church where she was baptised and later attended Sunday School and Bible Class, the Greenwoods Corner shops played an important part in her life. To go further afield — Queen Street shopping or maybe the pictures on a Friday night, or a Sunday visit with the family to her Ponsonby uncle and aunt — required one or more tram trips. Greenwoods Corner, the 'end of the section', was five minutes' walk away, rather less if one had to run to catch the tram, for the service was less frequent on Sundays and waiting till the next one could be very frustrating.

Henry Cooper, her father, was appointed headmaster at Auckland Grammar School in 1954. Subsequently, the family moved to a bigger house in Ridings Road, Remuera, from where Janet attended Auckland University College and Auckland Teachers' Training College before spending a year teaching at her old secondary school, Epsom Girls' Grammar School. While at university she continued her sporting interests, representing in both tennis and hockey. It was at the 1956 Easter Tournament in Wellington that I met her, and subsequently, in 1959, we were married. We had several short rental stays in Mt Eden flats and a 'house-sitting' year at her aunt and uncle's place in Ponsonby (where our older daughter, Susan, was born) while they were overseas. We then spent four years while I did my mandatory country service stint teaching at Wairoa, where I had been born some 30 years previously, and where our other two children, Jeanette and John, were born.

On returning to Auckland at the beginning of 1965, we bought our present home in Ngaroma Road, 200 metres from the Greenwoods Corner shops. So for the last 41 years Janet has lived within a quarter of a mile of the place where she was born. For all but ten of her nearly 70 years, Greenwoods Corner has been no more than a five minute's walk away.

rather gruesome task of sewing the parts of a corpse together, in real life cobblers were not called upon to undertake such macabre work. Their job was a vital one, however, in the days when boots and shoes were relatively expensive, built to last, and when going by 'Shank's pony' or 'walker's bus' was the usual way of getting around the neighbourhood, and going long distances further afield. I remember hearing from my bedroom the constant sound of footsteps walking up to the tram in the morning, and back down quiet Pencarrow Avenue in the evening, as a regular feature of everyday life in Mt Eden.

In *Mount Eden's First Hundred Years*, local historian Eric C. Franklin wrote: 'Mount Eden people were pedestrians before the days of modern transport. Many walked daily to and fro from Queen Street, and often walked miles at night to attend meetings, dances, or other events. This was good exercise . . . It was also good for the local bootmaker, Ambrose Coad, who was one of the busiest cobblers in Auckland.' Ambrose Coad, 'boot-maker', appeared in the Newton Road/Upper Symonds Street area in the Auckland Directory for 1882–4, but by 1890 he was working in premises at the top of Mt Eden Road.

Just as there are many variants of the words that follow in that old nursery rhyme, 'Cobbler, Cobbler, mend my shoe, have it done by half past two! . . .' so there have been numerous bootmakers making a living in the Epsom and Eden district. There were far too many to list in total, but some names might be mentioned. In 1911, Alexander Blackadder was in the Mt Eden shopping centre, and John Wood Jeffs at the Ranfurly Road shops from the mid-1920s. John Jeffs was still working at his Manukau Road premises in 1947; in that same year, W.G. Dick had a shop near the Regent Theatre (now the Lido) between King Edward Avenue and Alba Road; Ray Watson was at Greenwoods Corner; Horace Chambers in the Mt Eden shops just before Essex Road; B. Antunovick near the Crystal Palace; and Cyril Shanley was at the Wairiki Road shopping centre.

Best of all, I remember Eric Wheaton in his shop opposite the top of Pencarrow Avenue — 'Mr Wheaton' to us children. He had bought the business from another boot-maker in the mid-1930s and continued there until the late 1960s. In his black apron, hands stained with dye

Hearts and soles

by Helen B. Laurenson

I sit and cobble at slippers and shoon.
From the rise of the sun to the set of moon:
Cobble and cobble as best I may,
Cobble all night and cobble all day,
And I sing as I cobble this doleful lay:-
The stouter I cobble the less I earn,
For the soles ne'er crack nor the uppers turn,
The better my work, the less my pay,
But work can only be done one way.

And as I cobble with needle and thread
I judge the world by the way they tread:
Heels worn thick and soles worn thin,
Toes turn'd out and toes turn'd in,
There's food for thought in a sandal skin.
For prince and commoner, poor and rich,
Stand in need of the cobbler's stitch.
Why then worry what lies before?
Hangs this life by a thread — no more.

Many will remember hearing the words and music of Baba Mustafa's bass solo from Act II of *Chu Chin Chow*, the famous operetta based on the story of Ali Baba and the 40 thieves from *The Arabian Nights.* With lyrics written by Oscar Asche and music by Frederic Norton, the show opened at His Majesty's Theatre in London on 1 August 1916, where it ran for 2238 performances, and in the Manhattan Opera House, New York, on 22 October 1917, where 208 performances were given. A film was made in 1934, and *Chu Chin Chow* on screen or in live performance delighted audiences for many years. Actor and singer Frank Cochrane, who originally played Baba Mustafa, the philosophical cobbler, on the stage of His Majesty's Theatre, also played the same character in the film version.

Whilst in the original Ali Baba story Baba Mustafa performed the

When she returned to Auckland, the shopping centre had not changed a great deal and many of the shopkeepers were the same people she had known in her childhood. Ray Carlyon still ran the butchery; Mr Leach was still the local expert on bikes; the Dayas continued to provide fresh fruit and vegetables; Mr Hawken dispensed medicines as well as providing helpful advice on numerous minor ailments; and Mr Watson mended shoes as well as ever. But things were about to change. With the arrival of the supermarkets in the late 1960s, and especially with the nearby Pack 'n Save and its associated mall at Royal Oak in the 1970s, local shopping centres felt the winds of change. Gone are all the old grocery chains and fruit shops, their role being taken over by 'convenience' stores and 'superettes' which provide a range of food and drink items, but at a higher price than the supermarkets. Only one butcher's shop remains and is now in private ownership. The chemists (there were two businesses for a number of years) are now combined and have moved to the Greenwood's Medical Centre about half a mile down Manukau Road towards Royal Oak. As mentioned earlier, the post office has closed, and limited postal facilities are provided by the stationers, which enhances its business by acting as the local Lotto agency attracting as it does a considerable amount of through traffic, people on their way home from work to Onehunga and Mangere. Other shops benefit, too, as these migratory customers may well make further purchases while they are stopped.

Another business of enormous significance was Peter Philpott's hardware shop. This was a 'mecca' for home handymen in the days when 'do it-yourself' was an economic necessity for those with young families. He gave up operations, much to the regret of people like myself who valued his advice on all household repair and maintenance matters, when GST was introduced, but would probably have gone anyway with the growth of superstores such as Mitre 10.

One of the old-type local businesses has survived: Doris Stirling's plant shop on the corner of Ngaroma Road. This remarkable lady, now in her late seventies, still runs a highly successful operation despite the competition from Plant Barns and other megastores. Her knowledge of a wide range of plants as well as local growing conditions is legendary and

she draws customers from a wide area. So is there any reason why Janet would shop at Greenwoods Corner, a walk of 200 metres, rather than drive half a mile or so to the supermarket and mall at Royal Oak where the prices are cheaper especially for food, and the range of shops is that much greater? The answer, of course, is that she shops in both places.

First, there is the butcher — better meat, better choice, perhaps a bit more costly, but personal service more than compensates. Then there is the plant shop; probably more frequented by me than by her, but a welcome source of garden advice as well as garden requirements. On the opposite corner of Ngaroma Road is a dress shop. There are several at Greenwoods Corner, two or three specialising in garments for the 'significant' woman — with tempting items, some of which 'just have to be purchased' according to Janet. The hairdressers — ladies' on the Empire Road corner, men's near Ngaroma Road — receive regular visits. Most of our groceries are bought at the Royal Oak supermarket, but there are emergencies — something needed for baking, a bottle of wine for dinner — where the convenience store justifies its title. There's the stationers cum post office — a packet of envelopes, a refill for the biro, a bereavement or birthday card, some stamps or registration of the car — where the Indian staff provide friendly and efficient service. Not so often visited by us, but very useful when you need it, is the photographic shop on the corner of Orakau Road and similarly, the dentist on the second storey of the building on the corner of Empire Road.

As much used as any of the above operations is the ASB Bank, a landmark building at the apex of the triangle formed by Manukau and Pah roads, and one which Janet, because of her community activities as well as for personal business, visits several times each week.

Probably the most significant change in recent years has been the proliferation of 'eateries'. Since she does most of her own baking, only occasionally are delectables bought from the mouth-watering array at Greenwood's Kitchen. More often patronised is the Chinese-owned seafoods shop, which sells excellent fish (and fish and chips!). Then there are the occasional visits to one or other of the excellent restaurants at least one of which has an Auckland-wide reputation for the quality of its meals.

So for most of the past 70 years, Janet has had a close relationship

city on occasion to see a film. An early memory is seeing a silent film at the Crystal Palace on Mt Eden Road.

When I was 16 years old 1 had a motorbike. I used to make long excursions to Whangarei and New Plymouth, for example. My first car was inherited from my father, who died when I was 21.

When I left school, I started to learn draughting and then went to work in a shoe factory. Later I worked at laying carpet for Milne & Choyce.

We married in 1966. After the children were born, I stayed at home for some years and looked after the children, while my wife worked. It suited us, because I had a problem with my back at the time and she had a good job as a nurse. However, it was quite an unusual arrangement for those times.

From the 1970s onwards the area changed considerably. Some of the older houses were demolished, or sections were redeveloped with additional houses or units on the site. There has been a lot of infilling, and nowadays we don't see neighbours nearly as much as we used to. We don't even know some of the people who live around us, in contrast to the camaraderie there used to be.

Brick-and-polystyrene units alongside a traditional Epsom villa Photo: J. Denny

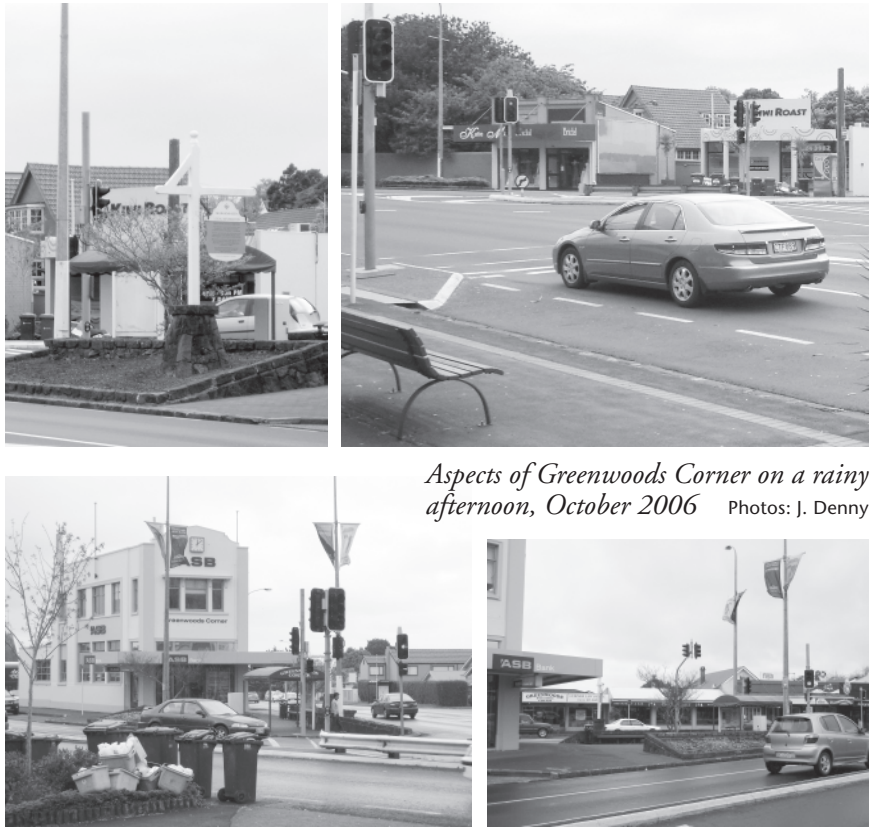
play weekend football, my Uncle Isaac (who came to live with us) and I continued to make weekend trips to Waiheke over the winter to tend and harvest our flourishing garden there. An example of the different attitude that people had to distance travelled and time involved is illustrated by my uncle's weekly journey. He worked at Otahuhu railway workshops, and on Fridays would catch a train to Newmarket, a tram up Manukau Road to Ranfurly Road, and he would then walk from there to Disraeli Street and pick me up. We would walk to Mt Eden for the tram to the bottom of town, and catch the steamer, *Onewa*, to Waiheke, which was then a two-and-a-half hour trip. On arrival at Ostend we would have a half-hour walk to the bach. In all Uncle Isaac would have been travelling four-and-a-half to five hours.

My schooling was disrupted by the war. I started off at Junior Model Country School, on the site where the Kohia Terrace School is now located, and after a year went to the Normal School, which was then part of the Teachers' Training College. When the war broke out the Defence Department took over the old Teachers' Training College building, and the college moved to the Normal School building. The pupils were dispersed to other primary schools. I went to Newmarket Primary for a time, and then to Epsom Primary School. I stayed there until as a senior I went to Seddon Memorial Technical College.

My parents shopped mostly in Mt Eden Village. The village had a big range of shops then, catering for almost all family needs, for example, a fish shop, Farmers' Trading Company grocery shop with deliveries by a boy on a bicycle, an AMC (Auckland Meat Company) shop, a shoe shop, four or five dairies, and a post office. Other than that my mother went to Symonds Street to shop. In addition, I remember Buchanan's horse and cart coming round with bread deliveries every day.

Melville Park was a hub of activity, especially with girls' hockey during the winter. A popular activity for the local lads during World War Two and the early post-war years was soccer, and the Eden Soccer Club was very strong. As teenagers my brother and I didn't have many outings other than the weekend trips to Waiheke, but we did visit the

with Greenwoods Corner; although there have been fundamental changes in the nature of the business operations over that period, the community servicing aspect of the shopping centre is still highly significant. Because of its location at the divergence point of routeways leading to Onehunga (via Manukau Road) and Hillsborough, and further afield, Mangere (via Pah Road), the profitability of local businesses is to a greater or lesser extent dependent on capturing through traffic. But to Janet and her many friends and acquaintances who live to the west of One Tree Hill, Greenwoods Corner will continue to be a focal centre for the foreseeable future. However it is unlikely to retain its present character for the same length of time as it did during Janet's childhood years.



Aspects of Greenwoods Corner on a rainy afternoon, October 2006 Photos: J. Denny

The part that Eden and Epsom have played in my life

by Gail Griffin

This actually began in the year 1943 when my parents as newly-weds moved to Mt Eden. My father, Francis (Frank) Ferrif, was a returned soldier invalided out of the army. He had come home to his family in Sandringham for a time, then found a job, and after a period where he and his sweetheart got to know one another again, they married in Devonport in September 1943. After a family tea at my maternal grandparents' home in Albert Road, they left for a short honeymoon on Waiheke Island.

They returned to a very small bed-sit in the home of the mother-in-law of my father's eldest sister, Kathleen. Mrs Margaret Coleman had been living at 26 Milton Road, Mt Eden, for at least two years before she let the bed-sit to the couple who were to become my parents. They

The house at Milton Road Photo: Gail Griffin

Stacey Cox's lifelong home in Disraeli Street

slope, with a rise at the end, which enabled the trolley to slow to a stop before reaching Gillies Avenue — very necessary because the trolleys had no brakes. My parents didn't have a car until the 1950s, but I remember Mr Sargeant of St Andrews Road was one of the first people in the area to have a car, an Austin 10, and he drove everywhere in second gear, up hill and down.

Of course for most people, trams were the main means of transport in those days. Life was lived at a different pace and people thought nothing of walking and then catching trams and trains to get about. I remember the honesty of people particularly. When the trams were crowded and the conductor couldn't collect everyone's fare, people would push their way through the tram to offer it to the clippie before disembarking.

My parents had a bach on Waiheke Island, and as a boy I used to go over there every weekend with the family. When my brother began to

Many people in the street bought their sections in the 1930s. However, during the early years of my life not all the sections in the street were developed. The houses to the east of Mt Eden Road and through Epsom were not constructed as part of group housing schemes by a developer, but were individually built for owners. This is in contrast to the area between Mt Eden Road and Dominion Road where there was a lot of group housing, with houses which were basically identical but with some individual features. In our vicinity, some people camped on their section while their house was being built. I remember Mr Lane who built a mud hut to cook in, using bent corrugated iron for the roof, a wooden frame and then earth sods for walls. Along the road, Mr Shewan built a small stone cottage, which still exists, with a tin cooking shed adjacent, until his house was built. An enduring feature of the area was the low stone walls which people constructed themselves from volcanic stone off their properties. Many of these walls had pieces of broken glass inserted into them, and the story was that that was supposed to discourage rats from nesting in them.

My memories of the suburb as a whole were of a lot of volcanic rock and fennel. At the northern end of St Andrews Road there was a dell or big hollow, now filled in. In my youth, the dell was infested with rats, which nested in the big ti-tree. Some of their nests, made of straw, were a metre in diameter. As boys we would go and shake the trees so that the rats fell out around us. The windmill in St Andrews Road was quite a striking feature of the landscape, visible from a considerable distance, although it wasn't nearly as big as Partington's Mill in the city. Of course, in my young days it was just an empty shell, with no roof. The miller's house was still there at that stage — a tiny white cottage with entry from St Andrews Road.

As a boy I mainly walked or got about by bicycle. My parents let me wander everywhere as a young lad, as did the other parents in the street. Children made their own entertainment, mainly playing with marbles and tops, or toys fashioned with simple equipment, made at home. I can remember playing cricket on Mt Eden Road and only having to move aside when the trams came by. Every boy in the area had a trolley. Kimberley Road was the favourite for trolley rides because it had a long

and Mrs Coleman shared a kitchen, laundry and bathroom. While my mother Phyll, (née Fowler) was at work (Macky Logan's) this proved quite satisfactory but once she left work as an 'expectant mother' I suspect that she found the close proximity to her landlady a trifle inconvenient.

In September 1944 my mother went to Nurse Coyle's, in Sandringham (corner of Mars Avenue and Sandringham Road), and on the seventh day of that month I came into the world — none too happy I gather. After the requisite time 'lying in' Mother was mightily glad to get out of the 'nursing home' even if it was to go home to Mrs Coleman's. Once home in Milton Road I began my residency in Mt Eden.

Mother walked a lot pushing my pram. I know that she often met her father who was working in the town. They met for a cup of tea in a tearooms. Fred Fowler was a 'floorwalker' at Milne & Choyce. Phyll also saw quite a bit of her mother-in-law, Minnie Ferrif. Minnie and her husband Joseph lived across in Tranmere Road, Sandringham. As a family we continued to live at this address (pram to pushchair for me) until my father was offered a job that came with a house, at Howard's Store in Palmerston North. I was to live here, attending kindergarten and starting primary school at College Road, until I was nearly six years of age.

We then moved north again to work in the town of Waiuku. My father liked living and working there, and met up with many old family friends. His maternal grandfather, John Gracie, had been born there, and his great-grandfather, Ralph Gracie, had been one of the earliest purchasers of land at Pura Pura where a village had been planned around 1854. Pura Pura is now part of the Otaua area. The village never came to fruition, as Waiuku grew up some four kilometres away handy to the Manukau for portage of goods to and from Onehunga in Auckland. My father was to manage the grocery shop (Town & Country Stores) here for some three years before the Hellawell Brothers transferred our family to Auckland. This time it was to Mt Roskill to manage the newest IGA (Town & Country Store) in May Road. My mother was thrilled — back to Auckland and the family and friends.

Once I finished secondary school I got my first full-time job which was with the Auckland Public Libraries — all I had wanted to do was

work in the City Library under the clock in Wellesley Street! When I had stayed with my maternal grandparents during the school holidays — coming up from Waiuku on the Road Services bus — my grandmother always took me to the public library in Wellesley Street, now the City Art Gallery. Unfailingly I was able to borrow books on her library card. After the small library at Waiuku, managed by Mrs Doull, I was overawed by the huge edifice with rooms full of books. I got my wish and worked there for several weeks over the early summer holiday period of 1961. I was then sent to work on the Mobile Library which then worked out of the St Helier's branch. I spent the next three months travelling across Auckland early in the day and returning in the evening from plying books in the book mobile to the various areas of Auckland City. When a permanent vacancy became available, which I applied for and got, it was at the Epsom Branch Library. So began my association with Epsom. When I began work there the branch librarian was Janis Bell. I was to work for her for some two years and then I worked for and with Heather Harris.

My memories are of the disgruntled would-be borrowers who came in to join the library — from just across the road — and were more than annoyed to find out that because they lived across Manukau Road in One Tree Hill Borough they would have to pay to join the library! Indeed the position of this branch library was a veritable pain, as would-be borrowers came just a short distance but found that they lived in Newmarket, One Tree Hill, Mt Eden or Mt Roskill districts and unless they paid a 'sub' they were unable to borrow books.

We had the interesting experience at Epsom of having the Auckland Public Library's variously called 'stack' or 'morgue' collection held in the old shed at the rear of our library. Within the dusty confines of the old shed was the repository or stack of elderly materials. I never minded getting the key, grabbing a torch and going out with a handful of request cards, which had come through from the Central Library, and dusting off old volumes once I had located them on the shelving in the large shed. My, how OSH would have loved to have seen us climbing up to the shelves (in various states of repair) to get the needed volumes. Another real humbug was starting the big oil heater, which sat in the middle left of

Early memories of the Epsom district

Transcript of an interview with Mr Stacey Cox

by Norma Bush

This is an edited transcript of an interview with Mr Stacey Cox, with assistance from his wife, Mrs Bronwen Cox, recorded on 16 May 2005 at their home at 70 Disraeli Street, Epsom, Auckland.

My parents were both English. My father, Walter William Cox, was born in Bournemouth, England, in 1892 and served in the Scots Guards during World War I. He was wounded at the battle of Mons, declared unfit for further action and in 1921 underwent plastic surgery by New Zealand surgeon, Major Harold Gillies, one of the pioneers of skin grafting. Major Gillies also recommended that he move to a more temperate climate. My mother, Elsie Emily Cox, also came from Bournemouth, where her family owned an ironmonger's shop.

In 1922 my mother and father came to New Zealand, living first in Eden Terrace, and then moving to our present address in Disraeli Street in about 1925.1 was born there in 1931.

I have lived in this same house ever since I was born. The house is just 100 years old, built in 1905 of heart kauri. It is very unusual, being a narrow, two-storey weatherboard house with a gable in the front and quaint, intricately detailed windows. The story in the family is that it was built by a Dutch builder and is reminiscent of narrow Dutch gabled houses. It was originally gas-lit but was changed to electricity in the 1920s. The original owner of the house was thought to have something to do with horses, as horseshoes were found in the garden for years after our family moved here. Our nextdoor neighbour, Mr Perkins, a cabinetmaker by trade, built an extra room on to this house.

When I was a lad, everyone knew all the other people in the street. No-one bothered to lock their doors when they went out. Neighbours were very supportive of each other. The Epsom/Mt Eden area was always a very pleasant, friendly place to live.

Auckland Teachers' College — reminiscences of the 1960s

by David Armishaw

I lived in Rae House from February 1960 to November 1963 during each university year. As I remember, Rae House was built during World War Two as military accommodation in a barrack-type configuration. After the war it became a male student facility in two-person rooms with two bunks in each.

Most of the men were primary school trainees with a number of tradesmen doing a one-year technical training course. There were also about ten first- or second-year secondary school studentship young men studying at the University of Auckland — including myself.

In 1960, in my second year at the university, I was in the eastern end, rooming with a language student — Warren Lambert. For the following three years I moved to the western end by the swimming pool — to a smaller room which although it had two bunks was considered too small for two inmates. At some stage (with no permission) I removed the top bunk.

The cook was a Mr Lawrence, and apart from the Sunday night curry the main meals were not notable. The warden lived next door but I have no memory of him because I cannot remember any contacts. He certainly did not figure in our social goings-on in the house, although there may have been warnings from time to time! We had a committee which dealt with the day to day organisation.

Rocklands Hall and Epsom Cottage were the two girls' hostels and these figured in our social contacts. Epsom Cottage was by the entrance to the secondary college and was said to have been a home for unmarried mothers. While I was in Auckland it housed about six or seven young women doing the two-year home economics course.

the main part of the library. What a swine of a thing that was to start — and then successfully to get it to stop at the end of the evening.

When I think back I had many experiences at Epsom Library, for I was later to work there just on Friday nights for some years. I went from filing book cards in wooden trays to the 'latest' computerised gadgetry in the course of my employment there. But still the families who came in stayed the same, the children just got bigger!

After four years with Auckland Public Libraries I left to go to Library School in Wellington, but refused to sign a bond and work for the City for a further four years, and paid my own way. I returned later that year to work in the small but interesting library at the Secondary Teachers' College in Epsom. It was here that I was to do a range of duties and get to master most of them. Small libraries are the places to go to get the best hands-on experience at everything — reference work, compiling bibliographies, serials, loans, purchasing, cataloguing — along with all the usual mundane tasks of shelving and mending books. I was to catch up with some of the borrowers from Epsom Branch Library here — they were students and staff whom I already knew, and some of the neighbours living just over the fence from the college (in Epsom Avenue) were thus already known to me. During this period I did my shopping in the Mt Eden shops — in those days you could buy everything you wanted at the Village. Not quite a pin to an anchor but more the modern equivalent — hardware, cottons, etc.

After three years I moved on to work at the University of Auckland Library, where I could specialise in cataloguing. I was married by then, and the travel was easier as at that time I lived at Torbay, on the North Shore. When I stopped work to have a family I moved back to this side of the bridge — Mt Albert this time — and I was asked by Heather Harris to work 6pm to 9pm on Friday nights with, or alternating with, June Gibb to assist on those busy nights. So in 1972 began the link with Epsom again. I was to continue those Friday nights with breaks to represent the addition of a new family member until 1989. Epsom Branch Library had undergone many changes physically and technologically, as had the reading habits of the locals as the effects of TV took their toll — so that the once buzzing social connection during

evening borrowing periods of the early 1960s had been replaced with a quick dash in and out by the majority of readers of the 1980s. The social aspect of the library's place in the community had changed significantly.

I also renewed my association with Mt Eden as I moved to live at 9 Hona Avenue (off Kingsview Road) in 1981. My children went to Eden Epsom Play Centre, Mt Eden Kindergarten, Maungawhau School, Normal Intermediate, and joined cubs, scouts and all that plethora of local activities that could involve children — and their parents! My

The house at Hona Avenue Photo: Gail Griffin

involvement with committees encompassed Mt Eden Kindergarten, Maungawhau School PTA, Maungawhau School Committee, and Scout committees (Balmoral, Kitchener and St Andrews). I cannot forget the eight years serving on the School Patrol on the Auckland Regional Road/Balmoral Road pedestrian crossing used by the Maungawhau School children. This pedestrian crossing was unique in being patrolled by parents as it was considered a dangerous crossing and a distance from the school, which meant teachers could not get there easily or quickly after class. Today it is controlled by lights.

reliance on other people's cooking which so alarms the older generation, is in fact nothing new. If you read Samuel Pepys' diaries, you will see that in the late seventeenth century he had no cooking facilities in his home. They were always 'sending out' for meals.

The introduction of the microwave oven has met with a varied reception. Many homes manage as well as ever without it. Others find it invaluable for re-heating meals, softening butter for baking, making sauces, lemon cheese, etc. In other homes it has almost totally replaced the conventional oven for daily use. Its speed and comparatively light power drain are real attractions. However, it is hard to find recipes for cakes which will still be moist the following day. The addition of honey or condensed milk seems to be essential, otherwise the cakes have to be eaten within mere hours of baking.

Another major change has been the entry of men into the kitchen. Apart from professional chefs most would only have worked there if they had been reluctantly dragooned into helping with the washing up at home. Then in the 1980s the intermediate schools reduced sex discrimination by making everybody study everything, so girls learned basic metalwork and woodwork, and boys were introduced to basic cooking and sewing. This meant that when they went 'flatting', they were more prepared to take their turn — and many found they enjoyed it.

Looking back over one hundred years, my house has experienced changes in its power supply, in storage and cooking facilities, in the range of foods available both raw and preserved, in the popular recipes and the personnel willing to work in the kitchen. One thing however remains unchanged. The kitchen is the heart of the home.

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about making for herself. Recipes for bread, cream cheese, bath salts and so on are all readily available again.

In other ways, our tastes have completely changed. Garlic in mid-century was something horrible you had heard that French peasants used. Parents condemned their children's fondness for smothering everything in tomato sauce. Salads were made from lettuce. The idea of eating other vegetables raw did not arrive until the late 1950s when the post-war generation began having their overseas experience, and coleslaw hit the dinner tables of the country. Previously all vegetables had been cooked in the English style — boiled to death in plenty of salted water for half an hour. Almost the only variation was the roasting of root vegetables. Certainly there was no shortage of basic vegetables. Every suburban male was expected to be a gardener, and the original half-acre sections provided plenty of room for fruit trees and rows of cabbages, silverbeet and tomatoes. Half a dozen fowls were a common sight in a fenced-off corner of a suburban garden, eating scraps and supplying eggs.

One thing however has been slow to change — the tradition of hospitality. In pioneer days, it was taken for granted that every visitor would be fed, and in an urban setting that translated into a terrific pride in baking skills. This was reinforced by the New Zealand tradition of 'Ladies a plate', so that a housewife might feed her family daily with traditional unimaginative 'meat and three veges' meals, but be a real artist with cakes and other baking for special occasions.

The large number of working wives, and the increased variety of 'bought' baking readily available, has reduced the amount of such home baking, particularly recipes with yeast which require much more preparation time. There has also been a tremendous increase in the number and variety of places supplying cooked meals. Traditional fish and chips have long been joined by Chinese, Indian, Thai, Vietnamese and other Asian meals, but now the ethnic balance is being redressed by the addition of European-style roast meals, while supermarket freezers can supply single servings in incredible variety, and professional hangi or barbecue firms can be employed to feed dozens or hundreds as required.

They say that 'there is nothing new under the sun'. This 'modern'

By 1995 some of the family had grown up and moved on, so those of us who remained moved to a smaller house, closer to the city end of Mt Eden in Charlton Avenue (off Valley Road). So my involvement with Mt Eden continues.

As time permits my interest in genealogy continues to reveal more facts and I find my family had earlier connections with the Epsom–Eden area, with paternal relatives the Gracies having lived in Kensington Avenue, Brentwood Avenue, Brixton Road, Kowhai Street, Edendale Road, Avenham Walk in Mt Eden, and Fernleigh Avenue in Epsom. Francis and Catherine (Tyler) Kneebone and James and Eva Tyler in Mountain Road; and with maternal connections, Mary and her son Fred Connell in Sun Glen Road (now Peary Road), Mt Eden. In what has been a comparatively short span of time, places have changed and it is hard today to remember it all as it was when I first remember Mt Eden, or first worked in Epsom. So many gradual changes that only a chance remark or old photograph will remind one of what was once in an area. The increased amount of traffic and the commercialisation of so many streets have also added irretrievably to those changes.

The house at Charlton Road Photo: Gail Griffin

The library that never was . . .

by Jeanette Grant

Despite all its other manifold advantages, Mt Eden today still has one serious lack. It has no public library of its own.

As early as July 1841 the new settlers in Auckland started appealing for donations for a proposed library. Twelve months later, a Mechanics Institute was founded and its library was opened on 30 September 1842 in a cottage on the corner of Chancery and O'Connell streets.

In 1869 the Public Libraries Act empowered authorities to establish public libraries, provided admission to them was free. In 1879 the Auckland City Council took over the Mechanics Institute library which became the nucleus of the first free Auckland public library. It was opened on 7 September 1880 in the old institute building, but a new library in Wellesley Street was built and opened on 26 March 1887.

The Grafton Library near the start of Mt Eden Road followed a generation later on 19 March 1913. The new electric trams made both of these available, if not exactly convenient, for twentieth century Mt Eden residents. However as the appeal of the Symonds Street shopping area declined and light industry replaced housing in the inner suburb, patronage of the Grafton branch declined — in contrast to rises in all other branches. From 1960 only limited services were offered and it was closed completely in 1991.

Several businesses came and went before Keith Galbraith opened Galbraith's Alehouse in 1995. Today this well known micro-brewery, making classic ales and lagers on site, is an independent family-run business, open seven days a week in the old library building.

A 1960 report by Dr Andrew Osborn, Librarian of Sydney University, condemned the fact that in Auckland, 42 per cent of the metropolitan population had no form of library service. The blackest spots were Mt Albert, Mt Eden and Mt Roskill.

The Epsom Library had opened on 27 August 1918, but it was only free to Auckland City residents. Would-be borrowers from 'independent boroughs' like Mt Eden, One Tree Hill or Newmarket had to pay an annual subscription to join. This was resented by people who lived virtually next door but paid their rates to a different council.

needed for baking. Recipe books contained instructions for preserving by such methods as:

> Cover the fresh eggs by means of a bit of wool, with butter, in which is 2 or 3% of salicylic acid. Each egg, after receiving this, should then be placed in a box filled with fine and absolutely dry sawdust. If care be taken that the eggs do not touch each other, and that they be carefully covered with the sawdust, it is said that they will keep fresh for several months.

It was automatic to break them individually over a basin rather than directly into a cake in case one had gone rotten.

Until 1940 most cities had daily deliveries of bread and meat. Even so, many housewives still baked their own bread. Certainly they were kept busy feeding their families. New Zealand was the land of sheep, and our diet reflected that. Mutton was the most common meat, eaten roasted hot with mint sauce, boned and stuffed as 'Colonial Goose', cold with salad, made into a mutton pie or smoked as a mutton ham, etc. Chicken was a treat for celebration days only and in fact many people preferred rabbit. Skinned rabbits were commonly available on sale in the fish shops until the Rabbit Destruction Council was set up in 1952 and the sale of rabbits for profit was forbidden. Things we today regard as expensive delicacies were then commonly available — large crayfish, whitebait for fritters, toheroa soup, stewed eels. Specialist butcher shops still survive, but by far the greater amount of meat sold is in pre-packaged form at supermarkets. Here at least you have the advantage of being able to handle the product and choose whether or not to buy. As a teenager I used to cycle down to the Economy Meats in Dominion Road and ask for a leg of mutton by price — 'about 12/6' — and know that I would get a leg large enough to do four people for three meals. The cat was supplied with 'three pennyworth of cat's meat please' bought fresh daily as there was no fridge.

A look at an old recipe book reveals that some things are perennial favourites. Pikelets date from at least 1880. Scones, gems, ginger beer are all there. Anzac biscuits came out of World War One and we still contest with Australia the origins of the pavlova. It is fashionable again today to make as a hobby the things the housewife once had no option

The milkman with his horse-drawn cart had started off with big churns full of unpasteurised milk which would be bailed out into the buyers' billies. The first *Agricultural Bulletin* on pasteurised milk was published in 1898, and in the larger cities pasteurised milk was available before World War One. Glass milk bottles came in the early 1940s in half-pint, pint and quart sizes, and were the only permitted containers for milk from 1950 to 1988. The early ones were wide mouthed and sealed with a cardboard disc; this had a partly perforated central circle which could be pushed in to insert a drinking straw. During the Depression, the Government ordered that every school child be provided with a free half-pint bottle of milk a day. As there was no refrigeration at the schools, the crates of bottles sat out in the open in a 'milkstand' (in the shade of a tree if you were lucky), so it was lukewarm and horrible to taste by morning playtime. In this way, several generations of school children learned to hate milk!

Milk was not the only commodity sold 'in bulk'. Biscuits were kept in square metal tins — plain, malt, chocolate wheaten and broken — and sold by weight. Dairies and grocers' shops were equipped with scales and the customers' orders were weighed out and wrapped or placed in brown paper bags. There was no plastic or sellotape. Your purchases were carried home in a basket or even in a trundler — the ancestor of the modern suitcase with wheels. A large grocery order would be delivered after school hours by 'the grocer's boy' riding a heavy bike with a rectangular frame in front of the handlebars to hold a large basket.

The housewife had much more responsibility for the quality of the food she supplied. If making a fruitcake for instance, it was necessary to spread out the dried fruit — sultanas, currants or raisins — and pick out the stalks and other debris by hand. Many households kept their own hens but these would not provide a steady supply all year so there were many techniques for preserving eggs and keeping them fresh for the months when the hens were not laying. Commercial products such as 'Ovaline' could be bought. This was a salve, which had to be rubbed over the entire shell. They were then submerged in a tin of water and kept in a cool place — often in the basement — until the eggs were

It was not until 22 November 1975 that the new Mt Albert Library alongside the St Lukes Shopping Centre (now Westfield) was opened. This was a partnership between the Mt Albert Borough Council and the Auckland Public Library and proved so successful that the Mt Roskill Borough Council asked for a similar deal, and the new Mt Roskill Library was opened beside the Three Kings Shopping Centre on 20 August 1977. Mt Eden was now encircled by other boroughs' libraries but still had none of its own.

There was however a parallel library service operating from back rooms. Stationers' shops nearly always had a small library at the rear, and others were found in association with wool shops, drapers, etc. In a time when the two-car household had not yet been born, they catered for housewives who did not have the money or the time to spare to make a special trip all the way 'into town' to borrow books — particularly when the public library limited borrowing to a maximum of two books for two weeks. In those pre-computer days (ie before the 1980s) each book had a card in a pocket at the back. This was signed by the borrower and dated. The librarian then placed that card in a little cardboard 'pocket' with the borrower's name already on it. The combined item was then filed by the book's Dewey number (or author's name if fiction) in a wooden tray labelled with the correct due date. On return, the date stamped on the issue slip in the book indicated which tray to look in; the card was then found and returned to the book and the named pocket was available for the borrower to choose another volume. This pocket system enabled librarians to control the number of items issued to any one borrower

Moreover, these public libraries displayed an intellectual snobbery in dividing their collections into 'FREE' and 'RENTAL' sections. Non fiction and fiction 'of literary merit' were free. Mysteries, westerns and love stories had to be paid for (science fiction did not yet exist in comparable numbers). These of course were the light relaxation reading most in demand and the tiny local libraries filled a real need — at prices very similar to the mainstream libraries.

In Mt Eden Road you could find the Ascot Book Club behind the wool shop in the shopping centre itself. Piggotts — 'the up to date

Library' — was in a stationer's at number 613. Just down the hill at number 701 in the Wairiki Stationers the Wairiki Book Club, which began in 1937, still operated, though on a very small scale, until July 2006. In Dominion Road there was the Balmoral Library at number 523 and Keans Lending Library at number 533. Elsewhere in Auckland there was the Remuera Book Club, the Universal Library and many others.

They would typically charge about 6d for ten to fourteen days. Borrowers each had a code number either numerical or based on their initials (my mother was C16). This was written beside the date-due stamp, so if another family member was getting books it was easy to see which ones had already been read.

Comparatively few such little libraries survive. Even the shops they were hosted in have often disappeared under the competition of supermarkets. Certainly there is no lack of interest in books if the current number of bookshops both new and secondhand is any indication. In Auckland, the 2006 *Yellow Pages* has three pages of entries.

Of course, libraries exist to educate and inform as well as to entertain, and there is one recent development which I feel is not given sufficient recognition. As the computerization of the public library system proceeded in the 1990s, it became for many people their first point of contact with a computer. While children learned to use computers at school (and pestered their parents for one at home), those people not actively in the workforce often had no other opportunity to familiarize themselves with the computer culture. For a few years it was not unusual to see preschoolers showing their mothers how to search the catalogue, and the importance of this unstressed contact in a familiar setting should not be overlooked.

Today most branches have sufficient terminals for library users to search the internet as well as the catalogue, while conversely, the home computer provides access to the catalogue and users are encouraged to do their own reserves and renewals online.

A far cry from those issue cards in the little pockets!

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as the electricity supply was still unreliable and restricted in rural areas. However, the newly built state houses were all outfitted with electricity, and by the 1956 census 57% of New Zealand homes had electric ranges. By 1981 this had risen to 92%. New cookbooks appeared teaching the special skills for their use — skills we now take for granted. Baking and roasting became more scientific and less a matter of intuition. Kitchen temperatures reduced.

Houses built at the beginning of the twentieth century usually had a main kitchen with an adjacent scullery for washing up and a pantry lined with shelves for storing preserves and other foods. Refrigeration had not yet reached the domestic market (in fact home refrigerators did not become common until after World War Two). Keeping fresh food from spoiling was a constant challenge for the housewife. It was common practice for a larder to be built on the south (coldest!) side of the house. This was often only a cupboard projecting outside with an open bottom covered with fine mesh which would allow the air to circulate freely but keep out the flies. Aunt Daisy is reputed to have recommended keeping a spider in the safe. Meat, butter and milk sat here, often in a pan of water or covered with a damp cloth to cool by evaporation.

Ice chests were available by the early 1900s but these were only of use where there was a steady supply of ice. The daily purchase of perishables was therefore forced on the housewife. Advertisements show that considerable ingenuity went into producing butter coolers where the natural evaporation of water could keep dairy products fresh. It is no wonder that daily milk deliveries were necessary. The milkman, with a couple of boys helping, delivered the bottles in the evening so that if they were not brought in immediately, they sat out in the cool of the night and did not 'go off'. Until the 1940s domestic milk was produced on small farms supplying town milk. While few people in the expanding suburbs actually kept their own cows, there were still small herds within the city limits, at least until the 1960s. I can remember one in Hillsborough, just over the road from the Masonic Village, and I was told by Miss Katie Melville who had lived in our house as a child during the Depression, that in her childhood our section was two acres in size, large enough for a cow (or cows?), and my workroom was the dairy.

1900–39, but by 1950 production had declined to only 8,000 per annum, and ceased after 1965.

A major drawback with these ranges was the fact that they had no temperature gauge. Cooks had to test it by feeling the knob on the oven door or by putting a piece of paper or a sprinkling of flour on the oven tray. If it turned golden in five minutes, the oven was moderate; if it turned brown it was hot; dark brown was very hot, and to reduce the temperature, a pan of cold water was placed in the oven. In summer cooking was an ordeal, but in winter the stove could heat most of the house as well as the water. A whole technique of cooking evolved to utilise a heat source which was present most of the day. Soup simmered day-long and rich rice puddings were cooked all day, being constantly topped up with full-cream milk.

Gas stoves had been in use in England since the 1830s and came to New Zealand once gas works were operating in the main cities in the 1860s. There was considerable prejudice against them, and in 1877 the Wellington Gas Co published a booklet proclaiming their safety and the advantages of gas for cooking — a constant temperature, no soot or smoke to spoil the food and no waste of heat up the chimney. They claimed that roasting an 8lb leg of mutton used 4.92d worth of gas as against 7.72d worth of coal. Coal ranges could often operate on wood as well and stayed popular on farms, while the new gas ranges were confined to towns. Census records show that 24% of houses had gas stoves in 1945, as opposed to 38% still using coal/wood stoves and 30% electric. (The other 8% had more than one kind of stove in the house.)

Look at any villa built in Eden or Epsom and you are likely to find the large fireplace opening which originally held a range — with or without wetback. Mine was built in 1903 and had gas laid on. After electricity came to the street in 1921, an electric stove — a Jackson — was installed and the gas pipes blocked off. With power cuts in the 1950s, we had the gas restored to be used for gas fires for heating and a gas ring in the kitchen.

The most significant kitchen development in the 1920s was the advent of imported electric ovens like the Canadian Moffat. In 1926 Shacklock started making their Orion brand. These were slow to take on,

Royal Oak School and the essay competition

by Muriel Williams

My links with this school go back almost to the start. Several of my friends had actually commenced school in Primer 1 the day the school opened in 1924. I was not quite five years old, but I caught up with these children in Standard 1 in 1926, and we stayed together until Standard 6 in 1931. In 1974, Royal Oak School was to have its Golden Jubilee. I joined the Jubilee Committee, and became the recording secretary. When the reunion opened, it was wonderful to meet up with these old friends again, and two of the 'boys' said to me:

"Muriel, you have all our names and addresses, so don't let us lose touch again."

I promised that I would arrange something later in the year, so formed a small committee, and we all went out to dinner together. This was a great success, and we have kept up this dinner every year since. Sometimes we went out at night, then later on we had a shared luncheon at the home of one of our old classmates. As we grew older, we decided to go back to a restaurant for Sunday lunch, and now we meet at Waipuna Lodge. As the school opened on 1 April, we hold our reunions during that month. Of course, several of our members have 'passed on' over the years, but there are still ten of us left, five 'boys' and five 'girls'.

In 1992 Edith Auckram, an earlier president of our Society, became ill with cancer, and when she knew she was dying, she asked me to arrange an essay competition for the five local schools, and to present the winner with a silver cup, engraved 'Edith Auckram Memorial Cup'.

Royal Oak School has won this cup several times over the years, and I have had quite a lot to do with my old school, being invited to different art exhibitions and other functions. In 2005, we arranged for the schools to meet us at the Onehunga Water Works pumping station at the bottom of Spring Street.

As we accept only ten essays from each school, Royal Oak usually bring ten children to the venue. As they were leaving the teacher, Jill Shears, told them that I had been at the school from the beginning and they should arrange an interview with me. I replied that there were still

ten of us and they should meet with us at our luncheon in April. However, she thought of a better idea: "Let's arrange a luncheon at the school, and invite them all there."

Sure enough, we each received an invitation to morning tea, the award ceremony, and lunch on Monday the 19 December, at 10am. Unfortunately, one of the 'girls' had a prior arrangement, and four of the 'boys' were too ill to attend, but the five of us arrived at 10am and were taken into the library, where we were served morning tea, while each of us was interviewed by two pupils. They all had a sheet of paper with a number of questions which they asked us, the first being: "What changes have been made to the school?"

Well, the answer was that everything had changed, as the old school building had been pulled down, and there were buildings all over our old playground. We did not have a hall, we did not have a swimming pool, we did not have a soccer club, a tennis club or a hockey club, etc. So what did we learn?

We replied that we were taught to learn the tables so that we could add and subtract, multiply and divide, and that we learnt the alphabet, and how to spell, read and write, and also English grammar, a subject of which they had no knowledge at all. We did not go out on outings, although I remembered that once we did have a school picnic at Mission Bay, and sometimes we went up One Tree Hill, but only to find different specimens of leaves.

Soon it was time to enter the school hall for the awards ceremony. As I was presenting the Essay Cup and certificates, I had to sit on the platform, while the others were at the back of the hall, behind the school children. The hall was quite full, but there were only the Standards 3 and 4 (now years 5 and 6) present. I was amazed at the number of prizes and cups that were presented, nearly all for sport. But some were for excellent achievement in overseas examinations, competing against 20,000 pupils around the world. Two of these children came in the top one per cent of the total.

After the prizegiving, we were taken back to the library, where we were served an excellent lunch of ham and lots of salads, followed by strawberries, pavlova and whipped cream!

Old style range with drying rack above Photo: Jeanette Grant

scones or a pudding made in it, after which it was washed again and filled with water for tea and washing up.

Roasting was usually done over an open fire — either on a hand-operated spit or on a clockwork spit, which could be wound up with a key and left to revolve slowly. Some kitchens also used the flat iron griddle which hung over the fire. This originated in Scotland and was used for oatcakes, pikelets, pancakes, scones, etc. The New Zealand pikelet differs from the original in being made with sugar. Recipes show it has been popular here since at least 1880.

The open fire made the kitchen a hot and sooty place and so there was a real incentive to seek improvements. Some New Zealand foundries made fire grates or a Colonial oven — simply a cast-iron box with a door in the front, which sat in the fireplace, and had an ordinary fire built on top of it. An extra fire was lit underneath when roasting or baking was necessary. Smoke went up a flue at the back. These burned wood, so someone in the family had a lot of hard work chopping the wood. Imported European coal ranges were available but they were expensive and the installation costs were high, as a bricklayer had to brick them in. The lignite coal available in New Zealand did not suit them, so they were not popular. The pots and pans used on the fires were made of iron and were very heavy.

The best-known New Zealand stove manufacturer was Henry Shacklock, who arrived in Dunedin in 1862 and started the South End Foundry. In 1873 he built himself a new coal range. It was designed for New Zealand conditions with a wide, low firebox to draw in the extra air needed for lignite. More importantly, unlike the imported ranges, it did not need a bricklayer to install it. He produced these whenever work at the foundry was slack, and they proved so popular that he began to mass-produce them — they were soon outselling all the competition. The improved 1882 model was called Orion. It weighed 760kg and cost £6, and thanks to his wife Elizabeth's advice, proved very convenient to use. A very popular feature was the addition of a water tank on one side, which provided 310 litres of boiling water an hour from a tap in front. By 1896 more than 16,000 had been made and he was employing 40 men. The peak period for coal ranges was

The origin of the St Andrew's font

by Linda Cocks and Jeanette Grant — descendants of Peter Gundry

I wonder how many people have crouched down to read the inscription at the base of this font and wondered who the Arthur Gundry it commemorates was?

Arthur Gundry was born on the morning of Sunday 23 June 1844 at Otarihau, Hokianga, the second child of William Richardson Gundry and his second wife Margaret (Makareta) Rautangi of Ngaitapoto, daughter of Te Reti Whatua, principal chief of the Ngaitapoto hapu of the Ngapuhi tribe. He was one of the signatories of the Treaty of Waitangi at Mangungu on 12 February 1840. (The often-repeated story that she was a daughter of Patuone is not correct!) Arthur was baptised on 1 August 1846 at the Wesleyan Native Institute, Auckland, by the Rev Thos Buddle. Arthur was the second of seven children — a family described as 'remarkably handsome and intelligent'.

His father, William Gundry (born Devizes, Wiltshire, on 24 July 1814), had left England when his first wife Helen, née Waters, died within a year of their marriage. His family thought he was going to Australia but he ended up in the Hokianga in 1839 where he bought 500 acres of land. His father, Peter Gundry, was a grocer, and William himself was a chemist with a strong liking for land speculation.

He moved to Auckland and from 1844 had a chemist's shop near the bottom of Queen Street. He bought and sold land in various suburbs — Takapuna, Chelsea, Dominion Road, Onehunga, Karangahape Road, etc. Gundry Street off Karangahape Road is named after him. He eventually married Makareta at St Peter's, Onehunga, on 13 May 1851. The family lived in Onehunga but at one stage owned the house which later became the nurses' home at St Helen's Hospital.

William died suddenly in 1855 aged only 41, leaving six children and his wife Makareta pregnant with their youngest son, Henry.* His grave was one

*SIBLINGS
William John 1840–77, Helen Mary Anne 1847–91, Olivia Margaret 1849–95, Frederick Samuel 1852–69, Fanny Isabella Richardson 1854–70, Henry 1856–?

of those destroyed when the motorway was built through part of the Symonds Street cemetery, and his name appears on the memorial wall there.

His will was probated in January 1856 and the inventory, dated August 1856, gave the value of his estate as £2,576.10s.9d. Makareta later married Matiu Nau on 17 February 1863 at St Paul's, Auckland, but her date of death is unknown.

The Rev Arthur Guyon Purchas was one of William's closest friends and a trustee of his will. The Gundry children in turn lived with the Purchas family at the Onehunga parsonage and got their early education there. Arthur attended the Church of England Grammar School, Parnell, under the Rev John Kinder from 1855, and in 1860 won a scholarship valued at £40 per year for four years to St John's College.

In the summer of 1857–8 he accompanied John Kinder on a sketching tour to Tauranga and Hot Lakes district; a sketch by Kinder of Mercury Island has the artist and Arthur in the foreground.

The Rev Vicesimus Lush visited the college in 1860, and on 23 March recorded in his diary: 'The College youths brought out the first number of St John's College Magazine — a MS with pen and ink illustrations which were exceedingly well done by Arthur Gundry, about 16 years old, a half-caste.'

Arthur left Auckland on 7 January 1863 on the ship *Constance* for Sydney, and from there on 12 February on the ship *Alfred*, arriving at Gravesend on 1 June. He carried with him letters of introduction from Albin Martin. According to *A dictionary of artists 1760–1893* he: '. . . exhibited four pictures at the Royal Academy, two at the Society of British Artists, and one at various other exhibitions. His works were mostly domestic scenes. Among his other achievements he drew for *Punch* and sketched Queen Victoria in pencil at her request. In return for this she gave him a signet ring with her crest on it.' This was reputedly told to Alison Drummond, editor of the Lush diaries, by Mary Wirepa.

Arthur died of fever at Penzance on 23 May 1868. His death was reported in the *Daily Southern Cross* of 29 July, which had this to say: 'His artistic talents were of a very high order, and had he lived he would have undoubtedly attained great eminence in his profession. He was greatly esteemed by a large circle of acquaintances both in this country and England.'

Producing local cookery books has been popular from an early date, and the very earliest known was published in 1887: *Dainties; or, How to Please our Lords and Masters* by Mrs Murdoch of Napier. Housewives were ingenious in adapting English recipes and techniques to suit the different climate and society. One of the earliest and best known aids they had was *Brett's Colonists' Guide and Cyclopaedia of Useful Knowledge* which was produced in 1883 by H. Brett, *Evening Star* office, Wyndham Street, Auckland.

However it is the *Edmond's Cookbook* which must be recognised as the New Zealand icon. First produced as a give-away pamphlet in 1907, it has been continuously in print since then and is New Zealand's best seller. Many, many cookbooks have been produced in New Zealand by individuals and groups, often as fundraising items. For instance 147 were produced in the years 1981–5 alone. They reveal not only the changes in our eating habits, but the changes in technology as our cooking methods evolved.

While some early settlers copied the Maori hangi, most used camp ovens which had been used in Europe for centuries. These were cast-iron pots with a lid, legs and a handle so that they could either stand in the ashes or hang over the fire. They were available in several sizes and the hollow in the lid could be filled with embers to give an even, all round heat for baking. Food could be stewed or baked by standing the pot over the fire and placing embers on the lid. If there was only one camp oven or stockpot the whole meal was stewed in it, and then it was washed and

Kitchen scene at MOTAT Photo: Jeanette Grant

Cooking — from the range to the microwave

by Jeanette Grant

The need for food is a universal constant, but ideas of what is acceptable as food are as varied as the ways of preparing and serving it. In Auckland in 2006 we have access to most of the items considered appropriate today for human consumption, but a century ago the choice was comparatively limited and so were ideas on how to cook it.

The choice of eating-places was also limited. Hotels provided meals for their own guests and often for the public also. However, restaurants in the modern sense were almost unknown here. For many people, the only food they ate which was not prepared in the home came from a staff cafeteria, a pie cart, a fish-and-chip shop or a tearooms. Even Chinese restaurants were virtually unknown before the 1950s.

The natural result was that the housewife was expected to be the cook as well as the childminder, cleaner, seamstress, washerwoman, etc. From the very earliest days of New Zealand as a colony, the housewife complained about the difficulty of getting and keeping domestic servants. They were all too keen to stop working in someone else's house, get married and start worrying about finding assistance for their own housework.

The earliest recipe books were extremely idiosyncratic items, as they were the personal records kept by individual housewives for their own convenience and the instruction of daughters/servants. Many were only a list of ingredients, and in the days before ovens were available with efficient temperature controls, calculating time and heat were skills gained only by experience. Mrs Beeton is still a household name today, for her 1860 *Book of Household Management* has been reprinted and revised for a century and a half. Cookery books printed in Britain neither dealt with distinctly New Zealand produce like kumara and toheroa, nor did they take into account New Zealanders' predilection for eating vast quantities of meat. Unlike the UK, deer and rabbits were regarded as pests and were readily — and legally — available, while the quantity of lamb and mutton eaten inspired local cooks to vary the taste with such recipes as 'Colonial Goose'.

The following year friends of Kinder sent a font, intended as a memorial for Arthur. The *Daily Southern Cross* reported the arrival of the font at St Andrew's, with this summary of Arthur's career:

> From his early days he showed a great talent for drawing, and in 1863 went to England to study art as a profession. He reached London in June of that year, and before the end of that month was hard at work at Mr Cary's Academy in Bloomsbury Street, where several of the first English artists have commenced their career. In the following December he sent a drawing from the antique to the Council of the Royal Academy, and was admitted as a probationer in the usual course. After drawing in the Academy for the allotted time he was again successful, and became a student. In 1864 he began painting in oils, and in 1865 exhibited two pictures at one of the provincial exhibitions, for one of which he received the first silver medal.
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> In 1866 he sent two pictures for exhibition at the Royal Academy, both of which were hung. He was an exhibitor again in 1867 and 1868 at the Royal Academy, and at several of the provincial exhibitions. This unusually early success was due not only to his great talent, but also to his untiring industry and perseverance.

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The buried guns of New Zealand

by Harold Stone

After the end of World War One, a number of guns were brought home to New Zealand and set up as 'memorials to the fallen'. Even earlier, guns had been set up as ornaments. One such was a large muzzle loading gun set up in 1911 in the park in Newmarket, located at the bottom of Khyber Pass Road. It had been purchased originally for the defence of Auckland Harbour in 1885 during the 'Russian scare' and somehow came into the possession of the Newmarket borough. After the Pearl Harbour incident occurred on 7 December 1941, there was real fear that the Japanese advance might threaten New Zealand. In 1942 there came a policy of digging air raid shelters and burying anything that could attract enemy attention. Guns were the top of this list. Those outside the Auckland War Memorial Museum went and so did this one. The main undercarriage unit was dumped and the barrel buried under Newmarket Green.

Many years later, about 1967, the fact that this gun was still buried in the park came to my attention as one of the administrators of MOTAT at Western Springs, and an approach was made to the Newmarket Borough Council in regard to its salvage. The town clerk at the time, Mr Ted Corrigan, conceded that if museum personnel could locate it, the gun could go to the museum.

The army was called in to provide a mine detector in an attempt to locate the gun. This was done on a quiet Sunday morning in September 1968 when there was no traffic noise to hinder the operation. When the gun was located, it was partly under lawn and partly under a flower bed. The town clerk was there and produced a spade. After a few minutes' digging, the business end of a large gun became evident.

The next few days were hectic. A council workman dug until he had exposed the whole of the gun. Then the crane driver found his machine was not big enough. He estimated that the gun weighed around ten to twelve tons. Then he had to set down planks so his machine would not do too much damage to the lawn.

With the ensuing publicity many offers of assistance were experienced. White's Motor Cycle shop, owned by the then Mayor of Newmarket, Mr Bill White, made up large bolts to hold together a wooden base for the gun using timber which was salvaged from some old railway sleepers. An engineering firm in Penrose sandblasted and painted the gun and finally it was ready to go to MOTAT.

Then another problem arose. A deputation of business people had waited on the Newmarket Council, deploring the proposal that the gun go to the museum. Their representations were heeded, and as a result the gun remained in Newmarket. It was initially placed on a traffic island in the middle of Broadway nearly opposite the Rialto Cinema. However, over the next three years, three cars crashed into it, one accident proving fatal. As a result, it was moved in 1972 to where it still stands today, on Lumsden Green, at the very bottom of Khyber Pass Road.

Incidentally, a number of guns are still buried in Albert Park but as the Auckland City Council has shown no inclination to salvage them, a significant aspect of New Zealand's history remains underground.

Muzzle loading gun arriving in Newmarket in 1911

End of an Era, Newmarket Borough Council 1885–1989