



# Epsom&Eden

## District Historical Society Inc

You are warmly invited to the next meeting of our society at  
St Andrew's Church Hall, 100 St Andrews Rd. Epsom  
**2.30 p.m. Monday 5 August 2024**

[Epsom-eden.org.nz](http://Epsom-eden.org.nz)

## More Than Just a Wall

The changing fortunes of an historic plaque at Auckland University



**Our speaker: Stephen Innes** recently retired as librarian at the University, he has joined our society

What happens to our historical monuments when they become out of date? This is a question which confronted Stephen Innes when researching the loss of an historic plaque at the University of Auckland. The Auckland Civic League memorial plaque was placed on the Albert Barracks wall at the Auckland University College in 1915. It was badly damaged during protests by Māori activists at the University in 1983 after a lengthy history of vandalism and calls for its removal on the grounds of cultural offence and historical inaccuracy. The fate of the plaque was a mystery only resolved in

2023 when the University discovered it in Old Choral Hall during renovations, and it has now been donated to the Auckland War Memorial Museum as originally intended. This presentation will examine the changing fortunes of the plaque, beginning with its role as a site of memory of two wars, tracing its complex connections with the women's movement and Auckland society, and analysing the impact of the Māori renaissance at the University from the 1970s. In examining the changing nature of public opinion and the muted response to the loss of this substantial monument, the talk provides several lessons in managing the past within the contested histories of Aotearoa/New Zealand.